

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

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S. Lake Union getting Tommy Bahama offices

Tommy Bahama plans to move its Seattle offices to the South Lake Union neighborhood where it will lease 78,000 square feet in a new development by Vulcan Inc. and Westlake Partners LLC.

Construction on the six-story building at 428 Westlake Ave. has already begun. Tommy Bahama, which has a 10-year lease on the space, will move into the development next November. The lease ranks among the largest signed in the Seattle area in recent years.

In addition to the company's offices, the building will also include 7,000 square feet of retail. Vulcan did not disclose the cost of the project.

Tommy Bahama, an upscale apparel company, is currently headquartered at the Tower Building at Seventh Avenue and Olive Way in downtown Seattle; its retail group is in another building across the street. Tommy Bahama, which has been at its present location for 11 years, has outgrown its offices there, prompting the move, said Doug Wood, chief operating officer.

About 325 of its employees will relocate to the new South Lake Union building. Tommy Bahama also has offices in New York and runs a 250,000-square-foot distribution center in Auburn. The company, which expects to generate sales of about \$350 million this year, was acquired by Oxford Industries Inc. in April.

Tommy Bahama, which does not have a retail store in Seattle, will not open one at the new building, Wood said. Vulcan has not named retail tenants for the development.

Vulcan owns about 50 acres in the South Lake Union area. The Westlake Avenue project is its latest since January when it announced that architecture firm NBBJ would move into a new building at the southeast corner of Thomas Street and Pontius Avenue. Construction on that project is expected to begin next summer, said Vulcan spokesman Michael Nank.

Architecture firm CollinsWoerman designed the Westlake Avenue building, which will include three floors of underground parking.