

Dream Track

How about a place to store and run your custom vehicle in style? **BY R.J. KING**

Modeled after popular vehicle resorts in Europe, a development group plans to convert a former General Motors industrial complex along Woodward Avenue south of downtown Pontiac into an auto collector's paradise, complete with a one-mile track.

Called M1 Concourse, the 80-acre site will offer condominiums to car enthusiasts looking for a secondary residence or the ultimate man cave. The \$60-million project will offer up to 350 units built with garages that can accommodate between two and 50 vehicles. Prices will start at \$130,000, in addition to a monthly maintenance fee.

The mezzanine-level condominiums will be complemented by a 7,000-square-foot member clubhouse, a 40,000-square-foot events center, an outdoor exhibition area, auto-related shops (paint, parts, detail, repair, restoration), and a public restaurant with a large parking lot.

"When you look at the annual Dream Cruise (in mid-August), you have an entire summer of cruising, but there's no place off Woodward where you can test your car or truck beyond the posted speed limits," says Brad Oleshansky,



»**REV ON A** respite for car collectors and enthusiasts, M1 Concourse along Woodward Avenue in Pontiac will offer public and private access to auto-themed condominiums and garages, a one-mile track, and a motor-inspired restaurant.

founder and CEO of M1 Concourse in Birmingham. "We intend to be a destination throughout the year."

A corporate lawyer and former CEO of MXM Health, a health care training and marketing firm in Ferndale (formerly Big Communications), Oleshansky says M1 plans to close on the property in January with RACER Trust, which was set up during General Motors' bankruptcy proceedings to sell off the automaker's unused real estate holdings. A sales price was not disclosed.

So far, M1 has 325 reservations, Oleshansky says. "People will be free to customize their garages and condos, which can include a lounge, an office, a movie theater, a poker room, or a living space for the weekend. We believe the project will take three to four years to complete," he says.

Work on the track, which will offer a 1/3-mile straightaway and a variety of turns, will start in the second half of 2014; the track will open the following summer. Work on other sections of M1 will begin in March, with the first units to be ready in time for the Dream Cruise.

Among several consultants and strategic partners for the development are JPR Architects in Novi, which designed the Somerset Collection in Troy, along with Lingenfelter Performance Engineering, Platinum Motor Cars, Arrow Racing Engines, and two law firms: Honigman and Dykema.

Oleshansky plans to offer commercial office space of up to 100,000 square feet on the site, preferably to an automotive supplier. "It's amazing to me that metro Detroit doesn't have a project like this, so I'm glad we can bring this forward, especially along Woodward," he says. **db**



PDA Q&A

» THE E-INTERVIEW

HEATHER UBALLE //
President, Save On Everything, Troy

DB: Where are you?

HU: In Minneapolis. We have an office here where we service 1.2 million homes with direct mail and digital coupons. I'm meeting with some of our major clients, and we had our office holiday party last night. Overall, we reach

4 million people per month in metro Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and the rest of the country.

DB: How do you tap social media tools?

HU: Our business has changed tremendously over the last 10 years,

and that accelerated after the (2008 economic) recession. Consumers have really focused on saving money. We introduced a new website in February to better connect customers with saving opportunities, and we work with

our business partners to assist with their online offerings. Some of the businesses we work with don't have websites, so we help them get set up. We help them with social marketing, email marketing, and mobile applications. Some of the businesses don't know where to begin.

DB: Do you have a success story?

HU: There's a restaurant in Minneapolis called Super Moon Buffet,

which is a popular restaurant — but they didn't have much success marketing online. We worked with them and got them the third placement on Google (search) in a short amount of time, and at little cost. By placing them in our digital platform community, helping them with SEO (search engine optimization), and helping them with Facebook and other social offerings, they've since grown their

business quite a bit.

DB: What's the next big thing?

HU: In the spring, we're launching Save On Home Improvements. It's taken some time to get everything ready because we needed to certify that all of the businesses were in good standing. We check with the (respective) Better Business Bureaus — are the companies insured, and do they have good referrals? **db**

—R.J. King