

Geared to grow organically

By: Stephanie Basalyga in Real Estate and Development September 11, 2014 1:44 pm



A 16,000-square-foot former machine stamping building in the Central Eastside Industrial District will become production, office and event space. (Ecotrust)

Ecotrust has taken a giant step forward with plans to create a mixed-use space where regional producers will be able to connect with Portland's growing food-focused businesses and startups.

The nonprofit group on Wednesday completed its purchase of a 16,000-square-foot former machine stamping building and warehouse on Southeast Salmon Street in Portland's Central Eastside Industrial District. Working

with Portland-based **Redside** as the developer, Ecotrust plans to renovate the warehouse into **The Redd**, which will feature production, office and event space for small local enterprises.

In a release issued by Ecotrust, Amanda Osborne, the organization's vice president of food and farms, said the hope is that The Redd "will vault the regional food system forward" by offering manufacturing and processing space along with a commercial hub.

In recent years, Ecotrust has worked to build connections to help small and midsize regional food producers get their products to market. The exact plan for how The Redd will fit into that network – and what its tenant mix will look like – has been left open-ended on purpose, according to Oakley Brooks, a spokesman for Ecotrust.

"We're deliberately leaving it open at this point to invite people in," he said. "We want to let people join in and figure out what it's going to be. It's an organic thing."

Preliminary descriptions of the project call to mind shades of downtown incubator spaces and food-focused projects such as the **James Beard Public Market**. But Brooks said The Redd will be unique to Portland.

The building at 831 S.E. Salmon Street, constructed in 1918, has been vacant for awhile; however, remnants from its previous tenant, **Custom Stamping**, remain.

"There's this huge machine in the center (of the building) that was used for stamping metal grills for trucks," said Melynda Retallack, director of development and sustainability for Redside. "It's going to stay. Ecotrust wants to keep it there to speak to the history of the building."

The building also needs exterior improvements as well as work to address what Retallack described as "deferred maintenance."

"It's basically a big warehouse," she said. "It's totally uninsulated, ... some windows are missing. There's been a lot of discussion about keeping the sense of height of the space, but with modifications to make it suitable for (its intended uses)."

Walsh Construction is a partner in the project and also will serve as general contractor for the renovation. **Opsis Architecture** and **Green Gables Design and Restoration** will handle design aspects.

Design work, now in the preliminary stages, is expected to continue through the end of the year. Construction, which Retallack estimates will take about seven months, is likely to begin near the end of 2015.

Ecotrust has set the opening of The Redd for mid-2016, according to Oakley.

The nonprofit organization hasn't decided whether a green building designation such as **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design** will be pursued, but Oakley said the end result will be sustainable.

"We definitely want it to be a strong green building," he said.

The Redd

Location: 831 S.E. Salmon St., Portland

Building description: Constructed in 1918; 16,000 square feet; previously housed a machine stamping company and warehouse

Owner: Ecotrust

Developer: Redside

Architects: Green Gables Design and Restoration, Opsis Architecture

General contractor: Walsh Construction