

# Work to begin on Landmark

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Construction is now expected to begin on the Landmark Business Park in April, nearly two years after the project was approved by the the Watsonville City Council.

The city's biggest industrial development won city approval in June 1985, but was delayed by a lawsuit filed by Santa Cruz County and by problems in arranging financing. The lawsuit was settled in October 1985, and last year the council agreed to allow the public improvements to be built in phases along with the project — a key move as far as the developers are concerned.

"We see the light at the end of the tunnel, and we don't think it's a locomotive," said Chuck Allen, a partner in Heritage Development/Landmark Real Estate, the company developing the complex.

Had the council not allowed Heritage to build the public improvements in phases, the project might never have been built, Allen said.

"We struggled drastically for a long time to finance the entire construction, going to lender after lender after lender." Then, he said, the company decided instead to build the park in stages, based on expected demand for the space.

"The absorption of the whole project (by the market) will

probably take seven to 10 years," he said. "To put all the streets in at once and pay interest — nobody wanted to do that."

The Landmark Business Park includes 160 acres between Harkins Slough Road and Highway 1, and between Struve and Watsonville sloughs. Of that 160 acres, 54 will be preserved as open space.

The first phase of the project will include the development of 25 parcels, and the construction of the new Landmark Parkway from Main Street across Harkins Slough Road and into the project — about half a mile of new road. Heritage will also put in a traffic light at Main Street where Landmark Parkway and Clifford Avenue will meet.

Allen expected the first phase to cost about \$3 million, and said the market will dictate

when work will begin on the next phase.

Heritage is working hard on selling the lots or finding interested tenants, Allen said, and already has fairly firm commitments from at least four firms. Companies interested are for the most part from out of town, and include light manufacturing and a warehousing/distributing firm.

Some of the firms are buying their own lots, Allen said, and others have only indicated an interest in leasing. Heritage is arranging partnerships, matching investors with prospective tenants, Allen said, so that an investor who may be interested in buying Landmark property can be paired with a company that is looking for a new location but doesn't want to buy the lot and build itself.