

Tom Masano Auto Park fills gap in Reading

By [Evan Jones](#) Saturday May 23, 2015 12:01 AM

A big gap in the former Baldwin Hardware Corp. manufacturing complex in Reading has been filled.

And for those who like luxury cars, the new owner of the facility at 841 E. Wyomissing Blvd. will bring a go-to destination.

Tom Masano Auto Group cut the ribbon Friday on its new Auto Park, which will cover 28 acres and include a 250,000-square-foot building.

Group President John Masano told the assembled crowd of employees and city officials that the ideas are "endless for what we can do here."

Company founder Tom Masano, who soon will celebrate his 98th birthday, was also on hand.

John Masano said that when he approached his father with the plan for the Auto Park, he was told it was "one of the most exciting days of my life."

The Tom Masano Auto Park, which will sell Mercedes-Benz and BMW brands and Ford trucks, will include:

- An outdoor lot that can hold 600 cars.
- A climate-controlled indoor showroom that can hold 400 cars.
- A 20-bay repair shop.
- A 25-bay reconditioning shop.
- An eight-station car wash.
- A collision repair shop.
- Corporate headquarters for 45 personnel.

Customers also can spend the time in a Wi-Fi lounge with a children's theater while eating brick-oven pizza.

The Masano Group also will invest in landscaping the surrounding neighborhood and will build a path through the property to the Thun Trail.

John Masano credited the City of Reading with helping solve zoning issues in a hurry after Masano Group concluded an agreement of sale to purchase with property owner Stanley Black & Decker Inc. last fall.

"Zoning normally takes 60 days, but we asked them to expedite it," Masano said.

"Six minutes later they came back, and we were rezoned (from industrial) for retail and manufacturing.

"Every time we interacted with the city of Reading, they responded, 'What can we do to help? What can we do?' "

Chris Heinly, chairman of the Reading Redevelopment Authority, said getting new owners for vacant industrial properties was an important win for the city. Stanley Black & Decker closed Baldwin in 2011.

"What happened to Baldwin was unfortunate, and getting reuse from (those properties) is very difficult," Heinly said. "These things really matter."

Reading Mayor Vaughn Spencer said the Auto Park was another sign of confidence in the city from the business community.

"These are the types of things that have to occur in order for the city to turn the corner," he said.

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