

Cornerstone of Glenwood business being transformed

Trumm building is down, Glenwood State Bank expanding

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With the rumble of heavy machinery, a cornerstone of Glenwood's downtown landscape came down a few weeks ago in cascades of crashing bricks and plumes of dust. Once the site is prepped, work on the space's new building will begin; Glenwood State Bank, the building's neighbor to the east, is expanding to the corner.

That corner, Franklin Street N and Minnesota Ave. E, has long been a staple of Glenwood's downtown commerce—first as a department store, then as a series of grocery stores, and finally, a drug store. Trumm Drug, the latest business to occupy the corner building, recently moved to Glacial Ridge Health System's new Ridgewood Villa addition, leaving the space available.

Peter Nelson, Glenwood State Bank president, stressed that Trumm Drug was always “driving the ship” when it came to the decision. “We never want a business to leave downtown,” he said. But when Trumm decided they had other plans, Nelson said GSB was ready to take on the downtown space. The answer of why, he said, is a simple one: growth.

“From 1997 on we've doubled our staff and haven't changed our square footage at all,” said Nelson. In that time, GSB has also grown five times from a \$50 million to a \$250 million institution. “We needed to do something,” said Nelson.

Why not renovate?

Nelson said engineers were called in to evaluate the existing Trumm building, and the consensus was that there were too many structural challenges to make renovation a feasible option.

“We recognize there are emotions and memories [in that building],” said Nelson. While the building itself may have served its life, Nelson said GSB plans to honor the businesses that have contributed to downtown Glenwood's prosperity throughout the years. As the Trumm building came down, GSB saved some pieces of history in the form of bricks. “Those will be used to carry on the history of the building,” said Nelson. The details haven't been set, but one idea is to incorporate the bricks into planters, with the names of corner businesses engraved into the stone.

“We're taking the opportunity to make the building more efficient for our operations and create a better experience for our customers.” At the same time, Nelson said GSB is looking forward to adding to the progress being made across the community, mentioning the courthouse renovations, Glenwood Lutheran Church's renovation and expansion, plans to update city buildings, and the 2018 Complete Streets project. “We will have a beautiful downtown to match our beautiful lake,” said Nelson, something he feels will stimulate downtown business growth.



Project timeline

Nelson said he anticipates the new addition being completed next June. At that point, GSB will start using the new building and begin remodeling the existing GSB space. The existing Glenwood State Bank building will be undergoing extensive remodeling, including ceilings, flooring and a new electrical system. "Every wall is changing," said Nelson. Once completed, the existing GSB building will flow seamlessly into the new corner space.

The target date for everything to be completed is Fall 2017.

Nelson said he appreciates people's patience as the project progresses, and realizes there are challenges ahead with construction. In the end, Nelson said he feels those challenges will be outweighed by benefits of the finished product.