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## Cabela's may get competition from megamall

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OWATONNA -- A Missouri-based outdoor equipment retailer may open a new superstore at the Mall of America, challenging Cabela's dominance in the outdoor goods market in Minnesota -- including Owatonna.

Cabela's 160,000 square foot store in Owatonna is Minnesota's second largest tourist attraction, after the Mall of America. The outdoor megastore brings 4 million visitors to Owatonna every year.

Bass Pro spokesman Larry Whiteley said the company was looking at the Twin Cities as a possible site for a new store, but would not confirm if the company was considering the Mall of America as a potential site.

However, according to the Associated Press, Bass Pro Shop would be an anchor store for the Mall of America's \$1 billion expansion, known as Phase II. Dan Jasper, a spokesman for the Mall of America, would not confirm if the mall was in talks with Bass Pro.

"My guess would be that Cabela's is probably not afraid of competition," said Brad Meier, president of the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. "My opinion is that I think Cabela's will continue to do well here in Owatonna and attract large numbers of people."

Jasper said Phase II will add 5.7 million square feet to the Mall of America, more than one and a half times its current size. It is expected to include a 6,000-seat performing arts center, three hotels, as many as 300 condominiums, an ice rink and a museum.

Bass Pro's stores range from 175,000 square feet to its flagship Outdoor World store in Springfield, Mo., which is 330,000 square feet. Outdoor World is Missouri's number one tourist attraction. Most of the company's 27 retail locations are in the eastern half of the United States.

The Owatonna Cabela's is 158,000 square feet. The Cabela's that opened in Rogers last October is 188,000 square feet.

"We felt confident having two stores in the region," said James Powell, a spokesman for Cabela's. "There's a great hunting and fishing tradition in the state."

Cabela's, based in Sidney, Neb. has 14 stores in the country, with another 12 scheduled to open in the next couple of years.

The Associated Press contributed to this article.

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