



## Tobin Development Corporation

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By Staff

### **In brief: General Growth | 300 E. Randolph | Indiana lease**

Analyst calls General Growth management 'bloated,' 'discredited' Brookfield Asset Management Inc.'s proposal to recapitalize General Growth Properties Inc. would entrench the "bloated, inefficient and discredited GGP management — a blight on the REIT landscape," according to a report released Thursday by analyst David Fick of Stifel Nicolaus & Co. Simon Property Group Inc. is likely to raise its \$9 a share bid for General Growth before a March 3 bankruptcy court hearing, possibly to around \$12 a share, the report says. But Indianapolis-based Simon's "demanding approach and hyperbole in recent public pronouncements serve to portray it as a bully — alienating regulators, tenants and (General Growth) representatives who might otherwise be motivated to do a swift deal," the report says.

### **4 floors remain at Blue Cross building**

Four floors, or about 131,000 square feet, is the only remaining space on the market at the newly expanded East Loop headquarters of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois. The available floors, 37 through 40, are part of the 24-story vertical addition completed this year, which increased the size of 300 E. Randolph St. by 900,000 square feet, to a total of 2.3 million, according to Mark Parrish, a Grubb & Ellis Co. executive who's leasing the space. Blue Cross, parent company Health Care Service Corp. and law firm Baker & McKenzie LLP will occupy virtually the rest of the building, according to Mr. Parrish. The four floors are essentially unencumbered, he says.

### **General Growth headcount down 25% in last 2 years**

After two years of layoffs and resignations, General Growth Properties Inc.'s total work force has been cut by 25%, to about 3,200 employees, compared to 4,200 workers in Feb. 28, 2008. The possibility of a takeover by Simon Property Group Inc. has raised the prospect of further staff cuts at General Growth, which had 3,500 employees a year ago. The Chicago-based real estate investment trust had about 4,700 workers in 2006 and 2007. The current workforce number was provided by a General Growth spokesman, who declined to say how many employees work at company's headquarters at 110 N. Wacker Drive. The previous years' figures were taken from annual reports. Simon, with a larger real estate portfolio, had 5,200 employees in January, including 1,900 part-time workers, and 1,000 employees at its Indianapolis headquarters.

### **▶ BP Leases Big NW Indiana Building**

BP Products North America Inc. leased a 574,249-square-foot distribution building in Northwest Indiana for use related to the expansion and modernization of the refinery in Whiting, Ind. The building, called Midpoint USA, is in Portage, Ind., about 27 miles east of

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Whiting, is the portfolio of Workers Realty Trust II L.P., a union investment fund advised by New Vista Investment Group LLC, according to New Vista's Web site. Chicago-based New Vista was started last year by two former executives with Commonwealth Realty Advisors Incorporated.