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# Slurpees to land at airport

7-Eleven, Petro-Canada new retailers

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*Mike Deal / Winnipeg Free Press Stella's owner Tore Sohlberg says business at his airport eatery has been better than expected.*

Slurpee sales will really be taking off this fall in Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg Airports Authority announced Wednesday a 7-Eleven/Petro-Canada convenience store/gas bar/car wash will be one of next additions to the retail lineup at Winnipeg's Richardson International Airport, along with a Harvey's fast-food restaurant.

"We're going to help Winnipeg maintain its reputation as the Slurpee capital of Canada," WAA president and CEO Barry Rempel told the WAA's annual meeting.

Rempel said the 7-Eleven/Petro-Canada should be opening around October, while the Harvey's should be ready by the end of the summer. They will join 21 other retail tenants in or near the new terminal, which opened at the end of last October.

Rempel also confirmed that at about the same time as the new 7-Eleven/Petro-Canada is going up, the old airport terminal will be coming down.

"By October, you will see that basically gone," he told reporters after the meeting. And once it's gone, paving crews will turn a portion of the site into a temporary parking lot for airplanes.

That news won't sit well with local advocates who tried unsuccessfully to save the old terminal, arguing it's one of Canada's finest examples of modernist architecture. But the WAA said no one came forward with a viable plan for redeveloping it, so it's coming down to make way for a new Western Canada Aviation Museum and another yet-to-be-determined building.

Rempel said some of the ideas being bandied about include a medical clinic/triage centre for people flying into Winnipeg for medical treatments, or a mini-terminal for smaller aircraft.

"There are a lot of ideas bubbling, but we don't know what is going to stick on the wall. But it has to have an aviation connection."

Christine Alongi, WAA director of communications, said work crews have already begun removing asbestos from the walls of the old terminal -- a delicate process that will take several more months to complete.

Once the asbestos is removed, crews will begin demolishing the building one wall at a time, she said, rather than bringing in a wrecking ball.

Harvey's will be joining Stella's Cafe & Bakery as the only two eateries in the pre-security, or arrivals, area of the new terminal.

The locally owned Stella's, which specializes in homemade soups, breads, sandwiches, cinnamon buns, salads and desserts, has been open since Dec. 17. Owner Tore Sohlberg said so far, it's been an unqualified success.

"The business has been pretty much what we planned on," Sohlberg said. "And it's exciting to be at the airport. It's a dynamic area, with lots of people coming and going. So there's lots of activity."

He said the 80-seat eatery/lounge got off to a better-than-expected start because the winter-charter and holiday-travel seasons were in full swing when it opened. With the charter season now over, sales have slowed a bit.

"But who knows what the summer will bring. It could get quite busy again."

Rempel said the 7-Eleven/Petro Canada will be built at the Wellington Avenue entrance to the airport campus, and will provide car-rental companies and their customers with a convenient place to wash and gas up their vehicles.

He said there's still room for at least one more retail outlet on the pre-security side -- they're not sure what -- and another retail store on the post-security side where a McNally Robinson bookstore was supposed to go.

Some of the suggestions the WAA has received are for a store that sells Apple products, a luggage store, or a Manitoba-themed gift store.

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