

**RETAIL**

# B57bn growth binge targeted for 2017-19

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Thailand's retail sector continues to thrive, with the Thailand Shopping Center Association (TSCA) predicting that 57 billion baht will be spent during 2017-19 on expansion.

Some 20-30 billion baht of the total is estimated to come from investments by Central Pattana Plc, the SET-listed property and retail developer under Central Group of Companies.

Other investments include 3-5 billion baht by Siam Future Development, 5 billion by Platinum Group, 7 billion by Terminal 21 Pattaya and the rest from other TSCA members such as Mega City, Iconsiam, Seacon Square, Rangsit Plaza, Index Living Mall, Pacific Park and The Mall Group.

Some funds will be allocated to renovate and redevelop existing shopping complexes, the association said.

Development of new shopping centres is expected to take place across the country, particularly in tourist destinations and near infrastructure megaprojects such as the much-touted Eastern Economic Corridor.

"TSCA members are united in embracing government policies for countrywide development, and we will invest where the state plans to build infrastructure megaprojects such as motorways, double-track railways and high-speed railways in major provinces," said TSCA president Wallaya Chirathivat.

According to the TSCA, new shopping complexes due to open from the fourth quarter of this year through 2019 include Central Plaza's Korat and Mahachai branches, Iconsiam, Central Phuket Foresta in Phuket and The Market Bangkok by Platinum, Terminal 21 Pattaya and the Thung Maha Mek and Dusit branches of Market Place.

Ms Wallaya expects that by 2019, TSCA members will have combined gross floor area of 9.1 million square metres, up 3.3% from this year.

The retail gross floor area of total shopping complexes in Thailand is estimated at 19 million sq m, with the number expected to increase by 10% to 20.9 million sq m

by 2019.

The number of retail shopping complexes under the TSCA will increase to 107 shopping centres, up from 97.

Revenue from shopping complexes contribute 15% to the country's GDP.

There are 13 shopping centre operators under the TSCA, including new members such as Pacific Park in Chon Buri, LH Mall & Hotel Co and Boonthavorn Ceramics.

Nopporn Witoonchart, chief executive of Siam Future Development Plc, the operator of J Avenue lifestyle centre and Market Place neighbourhood store, said the company will spend 3-5 billion baht to build new retail projects and redevelop and renovate its existing projects from now until 2019.

Of the total 3-5 billion baht budget, 600 million will be spent demolishing the current Market Place at Thung Maha Mek, which occupies a two rai plot.

The company bought another four-rai plot in the same area, with the first phase of the redeveloped Market Place to open in November.

The firm expects to finish the redevelopment by 2018. The retail space for the new Market Place Thung Maha Mek will be tripled to 12,000 sq m.

Another 1 billion baht will be spent to renovate the Market Place in Thong Lor.

The company will demolish the current Market Place in Thong Lor by year-end. The new Market Place Thong Lor will be revamped as a mixed-use project, replacing its existing neighbourhood store concept.

The space for the new Market Place Thong Lor will be expanded to 20,000-30,000 sq m, up from 6,000 sq m. The project will comprise five floors of office buildings and retail space.

The Market Place Thong Lor will sit on a nine-rai plot and is scheduled to be open for business by the end of next year.

"Market Place Thong Lor will be our flagship store downtown," Mr Nopporn said.

Moreover, SF will allocate 400 million baht to build Market Place Dusit in the Ratchawithi area with retail space of 10,000 sq m. The remaining budget will be used to complete phases 3-5 of Megabangna, covering 350 rai.



**Wallaya: Members united on policies**