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Gateway Quarter lures business

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OVER-THE-RHINE - Hoping to prosper from new development and people willing to shop in rejuvenated areas in this neighborhood, specialty home accessories and gift store Metronation is moving to a new site that will triple its size.

The business owned by George Crawford, Jerry Schmidt and Melissa Walters plans to move from Ninth and Elm streets downtown to a 2,650-square-foot space at 1213 Vine St. that's part of the Gateway Quarter project.

The Gateway Quarter is being marketed as a hub for arts-oriented residential and commercial activity, a roughly \$20 million joint development project encompassing properties within a block of 12th and Vine streets.

Crawford says the expansion will allow Metronation to carry larger pieces of furniture, including couches, chairs, dining-room furniture, Murphy-style beds and other items, ranging from \$300 to \$3,000.

The store also will have an expanded baby and children's department that will offer merchandise including boys' and girls' clothes, educational toys and other items priced from \$10 to \$80.

The store also will carry a larger selection of existing items such as jewelry, watches and root candles.

Crawford says he's confident the area will become one of the city's hottest neighborhoods.

Metronation is timing its opening to the Over-the-Rhine Summer Tour of Homes on June 3.

He is hopeful the expansion from Elm Street will allow Metronation to pick up business from people from the suburbs willing to shop in the rejuvenated area, as well as a growing number of people buying condos there.

"The developers have done a tremendous job of breathing life back into this area," Crawford says.

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