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Last updated: July 9, 2008 10:30pm

**Famous Footwear Warehouse For Tejon Ranch**

By *Don Jergler*

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Famous Footwear

TEJON RANCH, CA.—Construction is moving forward on a 350,000-sf warehouse-distribution facility at the 1,450-acre Tejon Industrial Complex that will house Famous Footwear, a retail division of Brown Shoe Co. Located within a new 177-acre Foreign Trade Zone, the facility is expected to be operational in mid-2009.

Clayco Inc., a St. Louis-based design-build firm working with the retailer recently paid \$2.5 million for a fully-entitled, 23.75-acre parcel at Tejon Ranch. The size of the parcel leaves room for future expansion, according to Tejon executives.

A recent 10-K regulatory filing by Brown Shoe states: "During the first quarter of 2008, operating lease commitments increased by \$44 million primarily due to the signing of an operating lease for a new West Coast distribution center, which is expected to be operational in mid-2009, and retail and other equipment leases."

Tejon executives declined to provide the terms of the deal. Clayco and Brown Shoe couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

The 177-acre FTZ the property sits within was recently set up by a joint venture pf Tejon Ranch and The Rockefeller Group Development Corp. The duo is now developing speculative warehouse buildings on the property.

Clayco says it selected the location for Famous Footwear's warehouse after a reviewing other sites in California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah, Tejon executives say the strategic importance of Kern County and the Central Valley to California's growing logistics sector was a deciding factor in the deal.

"It is another retailer that is obviously focused on supply-chain efficiency and distribution patterns realizing the Central Valley as a whole and Tejon Ranch really works for them from a cost standpoint for efficient logistic operations," says Barry Hibbard, vice president of industrial and commercial development with Tejon Ranch.

Hibbard sees Kern and Tejon as a major attraction for future large distribution warehouses and turnkey facilities for distributors, manufacturers and retailers.

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"The Central Valley is really starting to pick up steam," he says. "It gives users the ability to use both ports, Los Angeles/Long Beach, and Oakland." Initially, Famous Footwear is supposed to bring 120 full-time positions to Kern County when this modern warehouse facility opens. Hibbard says the Central Valley has a large supply of affordable labor, "where people literally stand in line for a \$10 an hour job."

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Senior Vice Presidents Tom Taylor and John DeGrinis, SIOR, of Colliers International are the brokerage representatives for Tejon Industrial Complex, a master planned commercial and industrial development at the junction of Interstate 5 and Highway 99, south of Bakersfield. The development is home to 3 million sf of warehouse facilities including IKEA's Western North American Distribution Center, Oneida Ltd's West Coast Distribution Center and more than 60-acres of retail offerings, including: a Petro Travel Plaza, Best Western Hotel, In-N-Out Burger, Starbucks and Iron Skillet Restaurant.

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