

# Furniture store set to open downtown

After sitting empty for more than two years, the former Gambles Building at Fifth and Main streets in Rapid City will open its doors on Monday.

It will be the home of the Furniture Mart, a division of Freed's Fine Furnishings. The South Dakota Furniture Mart in the Northgate Shopping Center will be vacated in about a month, said Jim Freed, a partner in the store.

Jerry Freed, who bought the build-

ing with partners Ka and Diane Alberts in May 1991, said the new store's opening was delayed until street work at the downtown intersection was complete.

The store, which has slowly filled with new furniture for the past few months, features about 48,000 square feet of space. That is more than twice the space in the Northgate store.

Plans for the vacant Northgate space are unclear. Officials at Ecceleston, a New York real estate com-

pany that owns the shopping center, were not available for comment Friday.

"We think it will be a good location for us," Freed said. "It will be the kind of store that will respond to consumers' needs."

The store will feature mid-priced furniture. Freed's Fine Furnishings on Sturgis Road in Rapid City sells higher-end furnishings.

The corner building most recently was the site of Michigan National

Corp.'s South Dakota-based credit card operation, called Independence One Bank.

Michigan National sold its credit card business to Chase Manhattan Bank in 1989, and Chase moved the credit card operation to Tampa, Fla., in January 1990. The move put about 100 people out of work and left a big vacancy in the downtown landscape.

"This plugs a hole in downtown Rapid City," Freed said.