

New-look Barlow's project done

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Barlow Foods Inc. has completed an expansion and remodeling of its flagship store at Rochester that placed the supermarket among the largest in Minnesota.

President Stephen R. Barlow and Rochester Mayor Chuck Hazama this morning cut a ribbon to mark the new look of the grocery at 1315 Sixth St. N.W.

The \$5.5 million project enlarged the store to 78,000 square

feet, a 50 percent addition. It also replaced conventional displays for several departments with a "European style, open marketplace" featuring free-standing islands for products.

The remake brought some back-shop operations, such as meat cutting, out in view of customers. It also added improvements such as a breakfast bar, juice bar, smokehouse and a food court. Ethnic and health food sections were enlarged; a video section and child-care area were

added.

The remodeling, done over the past five months, features a new, two-story glass entry.

Barlow said earlier the store also would change business strategy with lower grocery prices to meet tough competition in the area market. In the past, Barlow Foods has concentrated on variety and premium service.

The supermarket has stayed in business during the project by directing shoppers around work areas. Barlow had expected to

add about 75 workers to the enlarged store, bringing its work force to about 370 full- and part-time employees.

The grocery expansion is the core of an \$8 million program at surrounding Barlow Plaza. Subsequent stages will include exterior remodeling at retail and office buildings off of what is now Sixth Street Northwest. Barlow also has talked about closing off Sixth Street, which runs through the site, and installing more parking.