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King Soopers submits building permit application for N. College site

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King Soopers might be a few short months away from breaking ground on a mega-grocery store in North Fort Collins.

The company on Jan. 26 submitted its building permit application to the city of Fort Collins for a 122,619-square-foot grocery store that would anchor the North College Marketplace, just north of the intersection of Willox Lane and North College Avenue.

Marketplace developer Eric Holsapple of Loveland Commercial LLC said infrastructure work is likely to be completed in April and the property turned over to King Soopers for construction.

The value of the grocery store was estimated at \$9.95 million, according to the building permit application.

King Soopers officials did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment.

Improvements to North College Avenue and Willox Lane, tied into the marketplace project, are expected to start in the spring as well.

Developer impact fees and the Fort Collins Urban Renewal Authority are funding the \$4.7 million College/ Willox improvements project. The city engineering department will host an open house Feb. 18 on final designs for College and Willox.

The City Council, acting as the Urban Renewal Authority, approved using \$8 million in tax funding for North College Marketplace, which is expected to generate about \$16.4 million for the area in the next 21 years and employ between 300 and 400 people.

Holsapple said negotiations with three or four other tenants are well under way and might be able to open about the same time as King Soopers. The marketplace has pad sites for restaurants, banks, fast food and retail.

Bullfrog Wine & Spirits, now located across the street in the Albertsons plaza, hopes to be among the businesses opening at the marketplace.

Owner Dwight Whitney said it is still his intent to move but much depends on a bill in the state Legislature that would allow convenience stores to sell full-strength beer.

Passage of that bill, Whitney said, would impact his beer sales and could result in the need for a different size store.

"We have settled on the fact that we will look at what the situation is after the legislative session and see if there is a ballot issue. Everything kind of hinges on that," Whitney said.

The bill has five House sponsors but as of Thursday had no Senate sponsor.

King Soopers and the North College Marketplace, expected to be built out in 2013, is considered the first step in a long-awaited renaissance of North Fort Collins, an area many residents believe has suffered from benign neglect.

"We're excited to be a part of it," Holsapple said.

Additional Facts

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> A public open house will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Feb. 18 at 281 N. College Ave., conference Room A, on final design plans for the College/Wilcox Roadway Improvements Project and preliminary design plans for the North College Phase II Roadway Improvements Project.

> Construction at North College Avenue and Wilcox Lane will begin in the spring. Developer impact fees and the Fort Collins Urban Renewal Authority are funding the \$4.7 million College/Wilcox improvements project. North College Phase II improvements between Vine Drive and Hickory/Conifer Street will begin in 2011.

> For more information, visit www.fcgov.com/northcollege.
