

# 16-screen theater is coming attraction

Facility to go up at Harmony, Timberline will be first in N. Colorado with stadium seating

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Welcome to the millennium where, in Fort Collins, big is in and small is out.

Builders are preparing a lot on Harmony and Timberline for the biggest stadium seating theater to come to Northern Colorado. Meanwhile, two of the city's oldest and smallest movie theaters, Campus West and Foothills Twin Cinema, plan to close in the upcoming months.

Cinemark USA, a Texas-based movie theater chain, has applied for a building permit to construct a 16-screen theater complex at Harmony Village shopping center.

The closing deal is expected July 6.

"All over America, theaters are consolidating," said Steve Pfister, a local real estate broker from Realtec Commercial Real Estate Services who is working on the deal. "Over the next 10 years, most small theaters will be closing down."

Cinemark is following the trail of the 10-screen Carmike Cinema and Loveland's Metrolux 12 Theaters.

Pfister said most theater chains are now building up to 32-screen complexes; and although Harmony Village will be the biggest in town, it is still on a comparatively small scale.

Work on the parking lot, the building's base and utility lines have begun, but the construction of the building isn't expected to start

until mid-July, Pfister said.

The completion of the theater is estimated for April 2000.

"When it's done, this will be a very attractive facility, stadium seating and all," said Fred Sauer, from Alliance Construction Solutions, which is doing site development and infrastructure for the theater.

Complete with ceramic tile work and the newest sound system, Sauer said the complex will be different from what movie-goers are used to.

Instead of a sloped floor, stadium seating — a growing trend in movie theaters — means the seats are raised on tiers so the rows are elevated one above the other, allowing an unobstructed view of the screen.

The 67,000-square-foot complex is one of the first businesses to begin construction at Harmony Village. A few new restaurants, a First National Bank, retail buildings and a Schrader's Country Store will also occupy the area, Sauer said. All are expected to be completed by summer 2000.

Cinemark USA officials were unavailable for comment; however, a company theater recently built in Virginia is equipped with features like wall-to-wall screens, high-backed rocking chairs and armrests that retract.

Cinemark has one theater in Colorado Springs, two in Denver and there are five or six other prospective locations in Colorado, Pfister said.