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“Project envisioned as Round Rock focal point” Austin American Statesman

WILLIAMSON COUNTY ■ DEVELOPMENT

Project envisioned as Round Rock focal point

If approved, \$250 million center could revitalize area near I-35 with convention space, hotel, retail

By Katie Humphrey

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Round Rock could see a new \$250 million downtown sprout along West Palm Valley Boulevard if the long-term vision of a proposed mixed-use development takes root.

The development, dubbed Citi Centre, would replace an aging, partially vacant strip mall and surrounding buildings on 13 acres between Mays Street and Interstate 35 on West Palm Valley Boulevard.

The 1.1 million-square-foot Citi Centre would include offices,

apartments, townhomes, retail and restaurants, anchored by a 35,000-square-foot convention center and a nine-story hotel.

But the grand vision would begin with a more modest first phase: 27,000 square feet of retail and restaurants on the corner of Mays Street and West Palm Valley Boulevard. If the city approves that site plan next month, construction would begin in January and be completed by August.

Two Midland-based groups, RRE

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Moman Architects

The Citi Centre in Round Rock, seen in an artist's rendering, would span 1.1 million square feet with offices, townhomes, retail, a convention center and a hotel. The \$250 million project would replace an aging strip mall.

PROJECT: Construction for first stage would be done in August

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Realty Partners Ltd. and BKRX Ltd. are behind the Citi Centre development.

“This will be a great draw for this new downtown area,” said Kevin Flahive, an Austin-based attorney representing the developers. “There is nothing there of this nature.”

The second phase will probably require city officials and developers to negotiate a planned unit development, which allows more flexible zoning for mixed uses, and an economic development agreement. No details have been drawn up.

City of Round Rock officials previously have said that the intersection of North Mays



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Street and West Palm Valley Boulevard is the one they most want to spruce up.

The strip mall on the northwest corner has been partially vacant for about two years

since an H-E-B grocery store closed.

“That particular shopping center is going on 40 years old and has outlived its useful life,” said Jim Stendebach, the city’s planning director. “We actively encouraged the developer to come up with something more than a paint job on the building.”

City officials said they hope that Citi Centre, designed by Round Rock-based Moman Architects, can be a focal point for the city, with mixed uses, wide sidewalks and walkable areas.

“They have got a great vision for how this city wants to grow and the image we want to portray in the future,” said Joe Vining, senior vice president of

the Round Rock Economic Development Partnership.

The souring economy hasn’t muted discussion of the project. Flahive said the developers want to complete plans and negotiations for when conditions improve.

Round Rock City Manager Jim Nuse said he expects the first phase of the project to move forward and the balance to be completed over time.

“Central Texas and Round Rock are one of the bright spots of optimism on the planet right now,” Nuse said.

“There are some people who are still pretty bullish on the area here.”

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