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Megaplex in the works for development

July 8, 2007

By **CINDY WOJDYLA CAIN** Staff Writer

JOLIET -- The proposed Bridge Street Town Centre has its first tentative tenant -- an 18-screen movie theater.

Santa Monica-based O&S Holdings, the company that plans to build the center at the northeast corner of Interstates 55 and 80, announced the deal on Thursday.

Rachel Forman, a spokeswoman for O&S, said Regal Entertainment Group of Knoxville, Tenn. has agreed to build a theater complex with at least 3,000 seats.

"They're committed to the project," Forman said. "But we don't have a fully executed lease."

Regal is the largest motion picture exhibitor in the world, according to the company's Web site. Regal operates 6,386 screens in 539 locations and operates approximately 18 percent of all indoor screens in the United States.

Forman said O&S will be releasing information about additional tenants in the next two months.

Bridge Street Town Centre would include 1.5 million square feet of retail space; 800 multifamily and single-family units; and 200,000 square feet of office space, according to the O&S Web site.

Don Fisher, Joliet's director of planning and economic development, said the site could have 1 million square feet of office space, including corporate headquarters.

"It's a big one," he said. "It will be a super-sized Bolingbrook Promenade."

City officials are not releasing any information about possible tenants at the site because the project has not been given official city approval yet, Fisher said. For now, city officials are working to get access to the site off Houbolt Road near Joliet Junior College.

The original road route would have cut through the JJC campus, separating the school from its agricultural fields. After opponents spoke out against the plan, the city went back to the drawing board, Fisher said.

"We're on our seventh version of a new alignment," he said.

Eventually, city officials will bring a road plan back to the JJC board, Fisher said.

Fisher said he expects work to start on the project in late summer or early fall 2008.

Reporter Cindy Wojdyla Cain may be reached at (815) 729-6044 or at CCAIN@SCN1.COM

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