

Mammoth Wal-Mart coming to Calgary

Grocery Competition Heats Up; Super-sized store set for southeast

BY MARIO TONEGUZZI, CALGARY HERALD APRIL 14, 2009

CALGARY - Retail giant Wal-Mart is planning its first Supercentre format for Calgary at the Deerfoot Meadows shopping complex.

An official with the company confirmed Monday the store will be about 185,000 square feet and will include a full grocery component. Construction will start soon, with a planned opening in early 2010. This will be the ninth Wal-Mart in Calgary.

"It is what we have been trying to do in many markets -- introduce a modern format Wal-Mart that is more relevant to today's customer," said Kevin Groh, director of corporate affairs for Wal-Mart Canada.

"What we know is that customers want one-stop shopping and they want the best prices, and to us that means they want Wal-Mart Supercentres. So we're in the process in various markets of bringing the modern format Supercentre in with new stores, but also by expanding or renovating existing stores. We do plan to open or expand in various locations to bring our modern store to Calgary.

"The first step will be Deerfoot Meadows."

The Deerfoot Meadows shopping complex is west of Deerfoot Trail and south of Glenmore Trail.

Groh said Wal-Mart will join other retailers there in a regional hub.

According to the City of Calgary's latest building permit data, the estimated construction value for the Wal-Mart Supercentre, at 7979 11th St. S. E., is \$10.96 million.

"The Deerfoot Meadows Wal-Mart Supercentre will be a significant and important component in the evolution of the Meadows as a dominant retail centre," said Michael Kehoe, an Alberta-based retail specialist with Fairfield Commercial Real Estate Inc.

"The Supercentre concept, with its gorilla-sized retail footprint and one-stop shopping advantage, will be an instant success with consumers across the greater Calgary region."

Bentonville, Ark.-based Wal-Mart has eight stores in Calgary. Groh said those eight serve more than one million customers each month.

"We're doing a brisk business in the existing stores and we think we can extend that out to at least this additional location and by improving some of our other locations. So we'll be generally looking at the market with an eye to new, modern stores or modernizing existing stores," said Groh.

"What we see is that more and more there's a preference to one-stop shopping. And people with busy lives,

they're looking to check more items off their list in one spot. And so both in Alberta and in other provinces where we've introduced the Supercentre, it's been a very successful format."

He said the company has 50 stores in Alberta with 22 of them Supercentres. A typical Supercentre format is about one-third bigger than a regular Wal-Mart.

In southern Alberta, the Supercentre format can be found in Airdrie, Olds, two in Lethbridge, Okotoks, Sylvan Lake and Pincher Creek.

Groh said the company has 312 stores across the country with 56 of them in the Supercentre format.

Wal-Mart's plan is to have 82 Supercentres in Canada by early next year through construction of new stores and expansion of existing ones.

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Wal-Mart Supercentres - First Supercentre in Calgary to be located at Deerfoot Meadows (7979 11th St. S. E.); - To open early 2010; - 185,000 square feet, including a full grocery store component; - The company has eight regular stores in Calgary; - 22 of the company's 50 Alberta stores are in the Supercentre format; - 56 of the company's 312 Canadian stores are in the Supercentre format; - Closest existing Supercentres to Calgary are in Airdrie and Okotoks.

Source: Wal-Mart Canada

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