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New 52K-sf Rooms To Go prototype store set for Exchange at Gwinnett

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A new 52,000-square-foot prototype Rooms To Go store will be included in the Exchange at Gwinnett development in north Gwinnett County.

Rooms To Go CEO [Jeffrey Seaman](#) told Atlanta Business Chronicle the company plans to build the store at the 100-acre, \$320 million mixed-use project planned by Fuqua Development LLC. It's located at State Route 20 and Interstate 85, between the Mall of Georgia and Coolray Field, home of the Atlanta Braves' AAA affiliate, and is planned to include retail stores, restaurant and entertainment destinations and apartments.



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The new stores sell the Seffner, Fla.-based home furnishings retailer's traditional merchandise alongside its children's line, Rooms To Go Kids, and patio furniture (the company acquired South Florida-based Carls Patio Inc. in 2018.)

The store will break ground in the first quarter of 2020 and is expected to open in 2021, Seaman said. The site is currently being cleared for construction, he said Dec. 4.

According to Gwinnett County property records, an affiliate of Rooms To Go bought land within a 52-acre parcel at the site of the Exchange at Gwinnett development in Buford on Nov. 7, 2019, for \$7 million from an affiliate of [Fuqua Development](#), which has partnered with [Batson-Cook Development Co.](#) and [Novare Group](#) on the project. It was one of three transactions on Nov. 7 in which the Fuqua affiliate sold off parts of the development.

Rooms To Go is also building the [new, larger format stores in Tampa at Columbus Drive and Dale Mabry Highway](#), as well as two in Orlando, Fla., and one in [Daytona Beach, Fla.](#) Construction on the Tampa store is expected to start in January and wrap up by the end of the year.

“We are really excited about the store opening in Florida; this is our first in Atlanta. We hope to have more of them,” Seaman said.

“It is not easy to find the kind of locations where we like for Rooms To Go to be located where we can find 52,000 square feet. That part of metro Atlanta is strong and growth is strong and we are thrilled to do this,” Seaman said.

The company has also renovated existing stores so they can incorporate both the Rooms To Go and Room To Go Kids lines and to add space for the outdoor furniture line, Rooms To Go Vice President Peter Weitzner said. The company is expanding its McDonough, Ga., store as well as an existing store in Texas, he said.

Rooms To Go’s store sizes have grown over the years, from an initial 15,000-20,000 to 25,000 square feet, then to 40,000 square feet and now the more than 50,000 square feet, Weitzner said.

Having all the product lines in one store is about efficiency of operation since the expansion into outdoor furniture, he said.

In Kennesaw, Ga., the company has a standalone Rooms To Go Patio store, he said. “It works fine but it’s much more efficient to have it all in one building,” he said.

Fuqua Development closed on the first, 67.5-acre phase of the development on Nov. 8 with proceeds of a \$26.7 million acquisition and construction loan from Trez Forman Capital, according to an announcement. Simultaneous with the

closing, Fuqua sold three parcels totaling 33 acres to entities including the Rooms To Go affiliate, as well as developers of a Top Golf location and The Worthing Companies, which seeks to build a 450-unit apartment community, according to the announcement.

According to Gwinnett property records, an affiliate of The Worthing Cos., Worthing Exchange at Gwinnett LP, paid the Fuqua Development affiliate \$11.02 million for the land on Nov. 7. Another Fuqua affiliate, Fuqua BCDC Golf Project Owner LLC, paid the main selling Fuqua affiliate, Fuqua BCDC Gwinnett Project Owner LLC, \$4.85 million for another part of the site, property records show.

Fuqua plans on selling off another 13 acres, or four parcels, which will be developed with an Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, a 123-room hotel and restaurants, according to the announcement. It also said Fuqua will retain the remaining 21 acres and has plans to build 56,000 square feet of restaurant/retail space on a portion of the land. Committed tenants include Starbucks, Chipotle and City Barbeque, according to the announcement.

A 29,896-square-foot Sprouts Farmers Market store appears to be planned for the Exchange at Gwinnett site as well, according to a [commercial building permit](#) filed with the Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development on Aug. 21.

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