

AutoZone continues with plans for store

By Nick Baptista, The Valley Springs News/ September 12, 2014

AutoZone is moving ahead with plans to build a store in downtown Valley Springs.

Competitor O'Reilly Auto Parts has already broken ground, poured concrete and started framing across State Route 26 from the proposed AutoZone site.

"AutoZone wants to open up as quickly as it can," said Fred Katz of Roseville-based Katz Kilpatrick Properties, a shopping center development company working on behalf of AutoZone.

Over objections from CalTrans, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors approved the AutoZone proposal July 22.

CalTrans opposed AutoZone receiving direct access off State Route 26. Instead, CalTrans wanted the landowner, Lawrence Vosti, to complete a previously approved circulation plan for property he owns contiguous to the AutoZone site.

Vosti is not ready to develop the adjacent 30-plus-acre property and spend \$2.5 million in improvements on a road system that would reach the back of AutoZone after taking a half-mile diversion.

The ball is now in Caltrans' court. Paperwork for CalTrans consideration was sent Wednesday and the agency has 60 days upon submittal to approve, ask for a revision or deny the request, Katz said.

In addition, plans for the development have been completed and will be submitted to the county by the end of the week, he said.

Those plans call for the 1.5-acre site to have a 7,200-square-foot AutoZone and another 7,200-square-foot commercial building.

"We're doing everything we can to make this move right along," Katz added, and although O'Reilly is already building its store, that will not deter AutoZone from entering this market.

AutoZone could employ up to 14 people and add more than \$30,000 a year in sales and property taxes.