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Project would create urban plaza adjacent to Tysons Metro

By Jonathan O'Connell

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Another big Tysons Corner development is in the works.

NV Commercial, based in Tysons, submitted plans to Fairfax County in late November for a 1.3 million-square-foot mixed-use project for the intersection of Leesburg Pike and Chain Bridge Road, adjacent to the coming Metrorail station Tysons Central.

The project, if approved, would create an urban plaza -- or "European styled esplanade" -- at the entrance to the Metro station surrounded by towers ranging from six to 33 stories. In all, the project would comprise 612,000 square feet of housing, 510,000 square feet of offices, 152,000 square feet of hotel rooms and 33,500 square feet of shops and restaurants. The iconic structure will be a 33-story tower with housing on the higher floors and hotel rooms below.

Like other Tysons developers, NV Commercial worked to acquire existing lower density properties, purchasing one parcel and agreeing to contracts with landowners on three others. First- and second-story retailers including Clyde's of Tysons Corner, Men's Wearhouse and a liquor store currently occupy the site, along with surface parking lots.

The project could expand if NV Commercial can sign a final holdout. The owner of a 31,000-square-foot parcel along Leesburg Pike, 8334 Leesburg Pike Associates, lists a mailing address in Houston. Stephen Cumbie, NV Commercial president, said the company was "still pursuing that parcel and we're in active discussions with the owner."

"We hope to ultimately be able to make a deal with him, too," he said.

Clyde's Restaurant Group owns the site of its restaurant and parking lot, and submitted for zoning changes as a partner with NV Commercial. Jeff Owens, Clyde's chief financial officer, said the 400-seat restaurant opened 30 years ago and that it would reopen in the new development, though he said the company had

not determined where. "I think the key is that Clyde's at Tysons is going to survive, even if it's not at that exact little spot," he said.

The proposal from NV Commercial and Clyde's is the newest in a string of major mixed-use projects proposed for Tysons after construction on Metrorail began and the county approved an amended master plan for the area in July. The Georgelas Group, a McLean developer, has proposed up to 6 million square feet, a total of 18 buildings on 28 acres. Capital One proposed 4.4 million square feet of development for its 28-acre headquarters site.

Cumbie said a limit on the amount of office space that may be approved for Tysons was a factor in submitting last month.

"We're not sure what's really going to happen when that level of density is achieved, so the uncertainty is a concern," Cumbie said. "So I think there has been, frankly, a race to submit."