

Last Class A building rising at Kraft Office Center

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(Photo: Courtesy Schenkel Shultz Architecture)

The last Class A building is rising at the Kraft Office Center.

A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for Thursday, though construction has already started on the roughly 63,000 square foot building off Kraft Road, south of Pine Ridge Road. Developer Fred Pezeshkan said the project is one of the first Class A buildings to come out of the ground since the Great Recession.

"This is the last site we have," he said. "All along it has confirmed there is a demand for a Class A office building close to I-75."

Class A refers to projects built to the highest standard with first-class finishes. Such upscale projects typically command higher rents

The project is going up behind Germain Auto Images. It will include a two-story parking garage with 100 spots.

Pezeshkan said he purchased the roughly 20-acre property in 2005 with two partners and would have finished developing it years ago if it hadn't been for the Great Recession, which brought commercial construction to a screeching halt after the collapse of the housing market.

"If we didn't have the recession we would have probably built this building in 2006 or 2007. But you don't get everything you want in life," he said.

Pezeshkan bought the land, in part, to build a new headquarters for Kraft Construction before Manhattan Construction acquired the local firm in 2008. A longtime partner in Kraft, he served as its CEO and chairman when the Naples-based commercial construction company, founded in 1968, was bought out.

Other buildings at the Kraft center are fully leased and the decision to build the last one was driven by several tenants that wanted to expand, Pezeshkan said.

"The time is right to build one," he said.

ACI Worldwide, a leader in banking and payment solutions, will grow its offices at the Kraft center, taking up the entire building at 3520 Kraft Road for its headquarters.



A rendering of what the last Class A office project at the Kraft Office Center will look like from the outside. *(Photo: Courtesy Schenkel Shultz Architecture)*

Two other tenants will relocate to the new building, giving them more room to spread their wings. Above Property, a software solution business, has claimed the fourth floor. Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida, a not-for-profit organization providing primary medical, behavioral and dental care that was sharing space with ACI, will move to the first floor. Each floor will span about 15,000 square feet.

Manhattan Construction is building the project, which is expected to be completed by September of next year.

KP Pezeshkan, vice president of Manhattan, said projects like these keep locals employed, generating jobs to get them built and then providing jobs after companies move in.

The building, he said, is "part of the ever changing evolution of development and construction" in Collier County.

"Much like an ecosystem balances life, development and construction must have the same balance in a community to keep it healthy," he said.

When the last building is completed Kraft center will have about 250,000 square feet of offices including First Florida Integrity Bank's stand-alone headquarters.

There are plans to open a coffee shop on the ground floor of the new building to serve the hundreds of employees working on the campus.

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