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Cinemark to build 14-screen movie theater at Carson mall

Cinemark's proposed multiplex at the SouthBay Pavilion will give the nation's third-largest theater chain one of its highest-profile locations in the L.A. region.

By Richard Verrier, Los Angeles Times

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Cinemark Holdings Inc., the nation's third-largest theater chain, is bulking up in Los Angeles County with plans to open a multiplex at the SouthBay Pavilion shopping mall in Carson.

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Vintage Real Estate, which owns and manages SouthBay Pavilion, said it had recently signed a lease with Cinemark to bring a 14-screen theater to the mall.

Set to open in December 2014, the multiplex will be among the highest-profile locations for Cinemark in the Los Angeles region.

PHOTOS: Celebrities by The Times

The Plano, Texas, circuit, which has 5,259 movie screens in the U.S. and Latin America, already has a dozen cinemas in the Los Angeles area and is expanding its footprint in Southern California. Cinemark, which also operates the Century Theatres chain, also plans to open a new theater in Playa Vista.

The Carson theater will include the latest digital projection and sound equipment as well as an extra-large-screen auditorium known as Cinemark XD: Extreme Digital Cinema. It will feature a 72-foot wall-to-wall screen, plush seating and digital surround sound.

"Our new high-tech theater will be the perfect entertainment environment for enjoying the best that Hollywood has to offer," Cinemark Chief Executive Tim Warner said.

Cinemark's expansion comes as other theater chains are stepping up their presence in Los Angeles. AMC Entertainment opened a dine-in theater in Marina del Rey last year. Cinepolis, Latin America's largest theater chain, opened its first Los Angeles-area theater in Westlake Village in July. And Drafthouse Cinemas of Austin, Texas, has signed a letter of intent to open a theater in downtown L.A.

"Cinemark is a premier operator, and its theaters at SouthBay Pavilion will be a tremendous addition to this underserved market," said Fred Sands, chief executive of Vintage Real Estate, a Los Angeles company that owns and manages retail centers across the country.

PHOTOS: Hollywood Backlot moments

The Carson mall is undergoing a renovation and expansion that will include the addition 20 stores and restaurants.

Construction of the 57,000-square-foot multiplex will begin this summer.

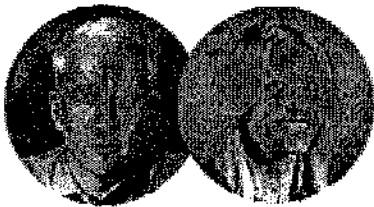
Sands said the Cinemark theater will fill a void in the local market because the nearest theaters are miles away in Torrance and Redondo Beach.

"Bringing the multiplex to the mall is a major milestone in our ongoing renovation and reposition program," he said.

More than 500,000 people live within five miles of the 1.1-million-square-foot mall, which is anchored by Ikea, Target, Sears and JC Penney. An Old Navy store will be moved to make way for the Cinemark theater.

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