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## Developer pays \$4M for Dillard's building in Aurora

Denver Business Journal - by [Paula Moore](#) Denver Business Journal

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**Miller Weingarten Realty LLC** has purchased the Dillard's building at the old Buckingham Square mall it's redeveloping for \$4 million, and hopes to start demolishing the Aurora retail center late this fall.

The redevelopment also finally has a name -- The Gardens on Havana.

Englewood-based Miller Weingarten has been working the last few years to redevelop the outdated, 60-acre Buckingham Square site as a \$100 million, open-air "lifestyle center" with retail space and housing.

"We're hoping to start remediating the mall in the early part of the fall, then demolish it. ... We'll start demolition on the south side, next to Target, and go north to Dillard's," said John Loss, Miller Weingarten executive vice president.

The site requires little environmental remediation, according to Loss, which likely will take 30 to 45 days to complete.

The Gardens on Havana will include roughly 550,000 square feet of new retail space, ranging from large clothing, sporting goods and electronics stores to small village-type shops. The developer is talking to potential stores, but isn't saying yet which ones will be in the project.

Some 400 residential units -- including for-sale and rental housing -- are planned in three separate areas of the project. Developers are analyzing an exact breakdown of housing.

Miller Weingarten continues to work its way through the city of Aurora planning process, according to the company.

Diane Truwe, Aurora's development services director, said in an e-mail that the city is "still working with the developer, but has no new news at this time."

Miller Weingarten acquired the 208,000-square-foot Dillard's department store building from Dillard's Inc. on July 18, according to Arapahoe County real estate records.

Dillard's closed its Buckingham Square store in July 2006. The Little Rock, Ark.-based retailer opened a 180,000-square-foot new store soon after at the nearby Town Center at Aurora, the redevelopment of Aurora Mall.

The local developer continues to negotiate with the owners of the main mall structure to take control of the building. Those owners include real estate investor Sherman Dreiseszun of Kansas City, and the Morgan banking family he's related to, and the local Hayutin family of Weststar Management Corp.

Buckingham Square, which opened in 1971, includes roughly 900,000 square feet of space. It's located at South Havana Street and East Mississippi Avenue.

Miller Weingarten already owns the separate Mervyn's building behind the mall.

Minneapolis-based Target Corp. plans to keep its Target Greatland superstore at the mall as it is for now, but will expand the location in case it wants to convert the store to a SuperTarget. The Target Greatland -- which offers more general merchandise than

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standard Targets, but not the groceries of a SuperTarget -- remains open.

Among the other few tenants still operating at the mall are Aaron's Rents and World Savings Bank. Most tenants' leases were terminated earlier this year.

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