

LOCAL

Is a Tesla dealership coming to Tallahassee? Proposal gives insight on plans



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Tesla drivers and fans in the Big Bend could get their wish with a dealership landing in Tallahassee, a first for the region and a lot closer than the nearest one in Jacksonville.

The city's Development Review Committee will hear a site plan proposal from Moore Bass Consulting Group on June 12 for a 39,037 square foot dealership at 2412 W. Tennessee St., the site of the former Saturn car dealership that was demolished in 2016.

"I truly believe that, if approved, this project and tenant would be a great addition for the city of Tallahassee, Leon County, and other surrounding counties and provide convenient access for vehicle sales, service, and delivery," said Rob Truett, managing principal for Truett Realty Group, the firm serving as project developer.

Truett Realty Group, based in Delray Beach, Florida, has developed Tesla dealerships across Florida. Tesla has 14 dealership locations in Florida, according to its website.

"I am very grateful to have this opportunity and, if approved, it would help beautify the streetscape on Tennessee Street, in my opinion, and continue to elevate the community at large," said Truett, who earned a degree in accounting from Florida State University in 2004.

The site plan proposal submitted by Moore Bass Consulting Group obtained by the Tallahassee Democrat through a public records request, calls for two single-story buildings: a 5,539 square-foot sales center and a 33,498 square-foot service building. The location on West Tennessee Street is on 6.21 acres between Dixie and White drives.

Tesla is considered the leader in electric vehicles sales and is known for its energy efficient luxury vehicles. Headquartered in Austin, Texas and owned by Elon Musk, the company designs electric vehicles that range anywhere from \$40,000 to over \$100,000.

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Neil Rambana and his wife Elizabeth Ricci, owners of Rambana & Ricci, P.L.L.C., a Tallahassee law firm specializing in immigration matters, are both Tesla owners. Rambana has owned five Teslas to date and says the car is “an amazing drive” and easy to maintain despite the absence of a Tesla service center in the city.

“We’ve had several Teslas and if something comes up, they just send people out,” Rambana said of his maintenance routine.

But the pending site approval excites him.

“There isn’t anything like it in this part of the state so I think it would be great for us to get one,” Rambana said. “It would be for people west of us and north of us so I think that would be great.”

Rambana said he’s purchased his vehicles from Tesla dealerships in Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando and Aventura.

According to the company's website, there are only six Tesla supercharging stations available in Tallahassee, and Rambana says as a Tesla owner, he wishes there were more.

“I would love to see more charging stations around town because it is an amazing thing to have zero emissions,” Rambana said.

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