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Walgreens plans Spenard store in lot to be vacated by Johnson Tire

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Johnson's Tire Service is opening a new store, expanding another and closing a third -- and Walgreens wants to build a new store in the space being vacated in Spenard.

Johnson's announced this week it plans to close its store on Minnesota Drive between Northern Lights and Benson boulevards at the end of the year. Meanwhile, Walgreens has filed paperwork with the city planning department saying it wants to build a 15,000-square-foot store in the area being vacated. A hearing on those plans is scheduled before the city Planning and Zoning Commission on Jan. 9.

Johnson's says it's consolidating operations from the Minnesota store into an expanded and remodeled "superstore" on Denali Street. That includes moving current employees to the Midtown location. The company is also opening a new store in South Anchorage around O'Malley Road and the Old Seward Highway, near Lowe's. The new store is scheduled to open next summer.

Plans filed with the city show the new Walgreens in roughly the same place as the current tire store, with a drive-through window on the west end of the building. The property is zoned commercial but the site plans need city approval.