

## Country Visions' retail space opening on track

By David Nordby  
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BRILLION – Country Visions Cooperative is still on pace to open the retail portion of its new Brillion location this fall.

The farm supply cooperative purchased the former Shopko Hometown on West Ryan Street this spring and is waiting to have plans approved by the state.

Retail, warehousing and offices will fill the 36,000-square foot steel building that sits on 5.7 acres of property. Those three aspects have been planned for since the purchase was finalized.

Approximately 9,500 of the 36,000-square-feet will be open to the public for retail. The goal opening for that is sometime in October. The warehousing and offices are planned



Country Visions has its corporate office in Reedsville, but will soon have additional offices in Brillion in the former Shopko Hometown building. (David Nordby/BN)

to be complete by spring 2021.

The retail area of the building will

not have a direct relationship with the office area. Around 30 employees will

work in the corporate area.

"It will be pretty much two separate things entirely. There is access from the office to the retail, but really you won't have customers going back and forth. We will have a separate entrance designated for the corporate side and that will have a more corporate look to it, as opposed to the retail. Customers will know which side the retail and which side is the office," Country Visions Cooperative President and CEO Steve Zutz said.

Multiple vendors that the cooperative works with have experience with filling spaces like the Brillion



Country Visions has a strong presence in Reedsville, which is expanding to Brillion. The portion of the former Shopko Hometown building that will be used for retail is expected to open later this year. (David Nordby/BN)

building.

"They come up and set up the designs for you and such," Zutz said.

The wide-open space of the building allowed for Country Visions to

plan to use the building in multiple ways.

"It makes it kind of easy to decide what you want on the inside," Zutz said.

Inside the building, the project has started.

"We've kind of razed the inside of the building per se, took out the offices that were on the inside and the pharmacy and the eyecare area, that's all taken out of the store now," Zutz said.

Shelving, flooring and some ceiling tiles have also been removed.

"Most of the inside work is ready for construction, but we can't start anything until state-approved plans come back, which is the end of this month," Zutz said.

The outside of the building will be officially marked as Country Visions Cooperative's property in the coming weeks.

"A sign will be here so they can actually see who owns the building. It

takes four to six weeks to get a sign designed and installed. I wanted to get it up there as soon as possible so people know we are over there," Zutz said. "We get a lot more questions now that there is a little activity over there."

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, the plans have been able to move forward in recent weeks.

"Really nothing in the last month has slowed us down. I shouldn't say that because who knows what the future holds, right," Zutz said.

The building housed Shopko Hometown until spring 2019 when Shopko closed operations.

Country Visions is based in Reedsville. It is a return to Brillion for the company, which had a location in Brillion decades ago.