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Main Street Commons showing signs of life

By David Woodfill
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Workers install carpet inside Mountainside Fitness Center's new gym, opening in Gilbert at the end of May.

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Nearly five years after its unveiling, the first tenants of Main Street Commons in Gilbert will celebrate grand openings about two weeks apart.

Mountainside Fitness, a 42,000-square-foot membership-based gym, will follow the 127-room Hyatt Place hotel when it opens May 30 at the northwest corner of Val Vista Drive and the Santan freeway stretch of Loop 202.

Hyatt Place officially opened May 14. A 96-room Hampton Inn under way to the east of the Hyatt will open in July, according to town officials.

A three-story building positioned at the south end of the project will be home to the gym, the company's new headquarters, 38,000 square feet of office space and 15,000 square feet of stores on the ground floor.

"This is kicking off that south end of the development adjacent to the freeway corridor," said Town Manager George Pettit.

Development services director Greg Tilque said the openings of Mountainside and Hyatt Place are welcome news for Main Street Commons, which stalled after the economy tanked.

The project, a highly touted urban oasis heralded as the next Kierland Commons, was eventually parceled and sold late last year by developer Woodbine Southwest Corp. to other developers.

The upscale retail, office and residential project was expected to break ground in 2005 and fully open in 2007.

Tilque said there's still no timeline for construction on the main components of the project. Like Kierland Commons, Main Street would look like a small city with condos, street-level retail stores and restaurants built below swanky offices.

"That's going to take some time," he said. "But it's (the openings) certainly an encouraging sign."

Tom Hatten, founder and CEO of Mountainside, said the fitness center is one of the company's most unique.

The gym - designed with an urban-style layout with retail at the ground floor and offices above - features breath-taking views of the Santan, Superstition, Camelback and McDowell mountains. It also has a miniature movie theater and virtual reality cycling machines among other high-tech amenities.

"We don't mess around," Hatten said. "We really take it to that next level."

Cameras in the child care area allow parents to supervise their children from small television screens on the workout equipment.

The kids are provided exercise equipment that are specially designed for children.

"They're supervised by their own personal trainer," said Brigid Hatten, Tom's wife and editor of a quarterly health magazine the company publishes called M Fitness magazine.

The Gilbert location will also feature a new salon Hatten is unveiling called 91 East Salon & Spa. The number represents the year Hatten started his business.



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