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Airport project seeks to bring more businesses to Casa Grande

By JILL ZAREND-KUBATKO, Valley Life Editor

May 17, 2007

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Hoping to bring in additional manufacturing light industrial and other businesses to Casa Grande, Copper Mountain Development Group purchased a 13-acre piece of property facing Pinal and Piper Avenues, adjacent to Casa Grande Municipal Airport, in 2004.



Staff photo by Steven King, Construction of some industrial condos is proceeding near Casa Grande Municipal Airport.

Now John Breitreitz, president, and Jeff VanHise, vice president, of Gallo Construction Inc., along with partners Bill Matz of Escondido, Calif., and Jim Hollenbeck of Scottsdale, are developing Casa Grande Airpark Industrial Condos and Hangars.

"The nature of the park makes it easy for businesses to relocate and to avoid having to find a piece of property and develop it on their own," said VanHise, who has received compliments from the community on the construction of a facility that should become a great asset to the Casa Grande Valley.

The 136,000-square-foot airpark complex will be home to 26 business condos, with light industrial zoning (I-1), eight airplane hangars with their own taxiway, a restaurant and grassy park with ramadas and picnic tables.

"The land sat there for sale for a long time," said Breitreitz, who has been with Gallo Construction since 1980, when he was a field superintendent and Robert Gallo owned the enterprise. "The way Casa Grande was developing we thought it was time."

The acreage is special in that one can purchase property near the airport

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instead of leasing from the city like at other airports. Casa Grande Municipal Airport is outside of the Class B flying zone - pilots don't have to file flight plans nor stay grounded when other airports are required to shut down, be it from an emergency or a presidential visit.

"This makes it very desirable and makes this airpark very unique," said VanHise, who came to Gallo in 1998 as office manager.

Breitkreitz and VanHise purchased Gallo Construction in 2002 from Robert and Miriam Gallo, who retired that year. The company began business as Gallo-Sgrignoli in 1970 as developers and builders in Casa Grande.

Gallo Construction has done a significant amount of construction within Casa Grande. At the airport alone they built the airport terminal, buildings for Goss Hawk Unlimited and Valley Pump & Machine Works, three units with 10 hangars and several other buildings.

They also constructed a gymnasium in Stanfield, completed plant renovations for Saxon Motorcycles, renovated the Boys and Girls Club of the Casa Grande Valley from a high school gymnasium, renovated the Social Security building, built retail space, offices and strip centers along Cottonwood Lane and many other projects from Florence to Maricopa.

They were recently awarded a \$9.9 million contract for remodeling projects with the Casa Grande Union High School District.

Phase 1 of four at Casa Grande Airpark Industrial Condos and Hangars had a groundbreaking in November 2006. Phase 1 will house Gallo's headquarters in its keystone suite. The company plans to move from its nearby Centennial Boulevard location in August. Phase 2 is anticipated to begin later this year. The entire complex is estimated to be completed in two years, depending on the economy and other factors.

The site is seen by 22,000 commuters a day driving along Pinal Avenue.

"This is the biggest project we have ever done," said Amy Breitkreitz, project manager.

The buildings, designed by Gerald Deines Architects, are masonry block construction. Units range from 2,660 to 18,000 square feet. Most units will have an outside storage area.

The restaurant will be 1,700 square feet and will cater to people from town and employees from the airpark as well as pilots. The grassy park also will be available for employees at the airpark.

"We will have a place to eat and to walk to," Amy Breitkreitz said.

The majority of subcontractors used by Gallo in this undertaking are local, John said.

"We try to keep it in town."

Commercial Properties Incorporated in Tempe is handling the sale and leasing of the space. National Bank of Arizona is financing for the venture.

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