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Avondale industrial site counted on for good jobs

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The Arizona Republic

Aug. 28, 2007 12:00 AM

City officials are betting on the Avondale Commerce Center to bring in new employment opportunities and decent-paying jobs to Avondale and southwest Valley residents.

The project is crucial to Avondale's economic development, City Manager Charlie McLendon said.

"One of the biggest advantages that we see is, prior to the time this was constructed - and there's a couple of other industrial buildings that went up around the same time - when we would get economic development leads for a place to locate, we didn't have anything to refer them to in our community," McLendon said.

"Now we've got space for companies that are looking for a place to locate to come to. They can contact our economic development office, and we can refer them to these locations," he said.

Phase 1 of the commerce center is complete and made up of four single-story buildings, each offering nearly 79,000 square feet of industrial-flex space. The four buildings total 315,400 square feet of space.

The suites offer dock-high and grade-level doors and range from about 9,800 to 78,800 square feet of contiguous space.

"It's more of a mixed-use industrial project where we can accommodate several different types of users with manufacturing and warehouse needs to wholesalers looking for a showroom component," said Riley Gilbert, leasing associate for RDB Development, the developer and builder of the project.

Gilbert said that so far, only one tenant has signed a lease, but RDB is aggressively marketing the project, including cold-calling prospective tenants, talking to brokers and handing out fliers.

The new tenant is Big Pan, a company that provides restaurant supplies for restaurant kitchens.

Big Pan has leased 20,000 square feet.

The three phases of the commerce center, which sits on 82 acres, will be completely built and ready for occupancy in the first quarter of 2008.

The center is south of Interstate 10, between El Mirage Road and 127th Avenue.

That is a prime location for businesses, because their signs will be visible from the freeway, and customers will be able to exit on Dysart Road or Avondale Boulevard to reach the businesses, Gilbert said.