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The community newspaper of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park & Tolleson, AZ

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Wednesday, February 28, 2007

2/21/2007 8:59:00 PM

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## Estrella Falls mall to be outdoor

*On schedule for spring 2009 opening*

*Sara Bisker*  
staff writer

Drawing inspiration from the natural desert landscape, the developers of Goodyear's Estrella Falls Mall announced Wednesday afternoon that the regional shopping center will be a pedestrian-friendly, open-air market.

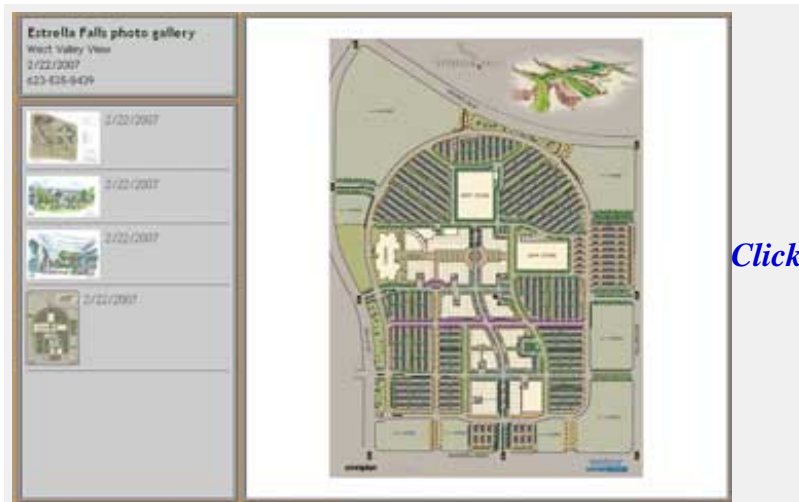
The announcement came during a one-on-one meeting with representatives from Westcor, the company that's designing and building the 1-million-square-foot-development between Pebble Creek Parkway and Bullard Avenue north of Interstate 10.

The mall is scheduled to open in 2009.

A slightly curving street will move drivers and shoppers from the southern collection of stores to the mall's northern section, said Ron Lorch, assistant vice president of design and planning.

The concept is intended to represent the feel of an "Arizona cienega, or a spine that can be seen across the desert floor, guiding the natural procession of the layout of the Valley," Lorch added. Lush trees and shade structures will provide for more comfortable walking during summer months.

Most mall areas are required to be about 10 percent landscaping, but Estrella Falls will have a minimum of 25 percent to allow shoppers to enjoy their visit and the surrounding amenities,



[HERE](#) for an interactive photo gallery of the Estrella Falls mall!

Litchfield Park, AZ

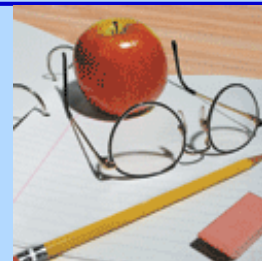
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Lorch said.

Estrella Falls will have several shade structures and amenities, including water structures, that will enhance its outdoor appeal, he said.

### **Why outdoors?**

The decision to make Estrella Falls an outdoor center was driven by two factors, said Garrett Newland, assistant vice president of development for Westcor.

First, he said, the success of the Chandler Fashion Center caused a buzz around department stores.

"When Westcor opened Chandler Fashion Center, they had eight or nine stores vying for four spots," he said.

The other factor was a general consensus among shoppers desiring an outdoor destination.

"There's lot of studies nationally about how consumers are spending less and less time shopping and they want convenience. Retailers want a platform to offer it," said Karen Maurer, assistant vice president for development and marketing.

An outdoor mall also allows for flexibility in design and maintenance, Newland said.

"One of the upsides to an open-air center is its sustainability and flexibility," he said, explaining that future department stores easily can be added to the site. Also, a store can be temporarily closed for remodeling or repairs without disrupting neighboring stores or restaurants.

Two yet-to-be-named department stores and a movie theater will mark the north, east and west portions of the development, respectively, while more than 15 other buildings will house the expected 100 tenants, Newland said. High-end purse and shoe designer Coach is the only confirmed tenant of Estrella Falls.

### **Parking convenience**

Parking will completely surround the outer ring of retail shops and restaurants to allow for pedestrian movement. Some parking, including valet, will be available in front of some restaurants and shops, Newland added.

By placing parking spots around Estrella Falls, shoppers will be able to park closer to the store in which they intend to browse, rather than having to park at one location and walk through several stores or corridors in order to arrive at that destination, Maurer said.

Estrella Falls also will feature a free-standing two-story air conditioned food court.

The power center located adjacent to the mall is scheduled to open in 2008, Newland said.

Representatives from Westcor presented their design plan at Wednesday night's Goodyear Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and will make another presentation Monday night to the Goodyear City Council. That meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. at the Goodyear Justice Facility located on Litchfield Road south of Van Buren Street.

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