

Arizona Daily Star®

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Published: 01.31.2008

Business booms in Sahuarita

By Tim Ellis

ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Sahuarita residents soon will have a dozen more reasons to avoid the long drive to Tucson — or even the other end of town.

At least 12 shops, restaurants and health-care clinics are under construction in the Marketplace at Rancho Sahuarita, the big commercial complex in the northern portion of town just east of Interstate 19.

All structures will be completed by July, and all the new businesses should be open by September, said Cort Chalfant, senior vice president with The Rancho Sahuarita Co., the developer of the complex and the master-planned residential community next door.

The first two businesses opened last month: the 4,307-square-foot JPMorgan Chase Bank branch and the 108,000-square-foot Fry's Marketplace.

Construction continues on the L-shaped, 18,360-square-foot building at the north end of the 25-acre commercial complex where the next businesses are expected to open. That building will house the Carondelet Medical Group office, a primary- and urgent-care clinic that Carondelet officials expect to open in May.

A dental clinic and real estate office also will be located in the building.

Work also is under way on a 5,600-square-foot building just south of the Chase bank that will house a sandwich shop, a dry-cleaner and a coffee shop.

Another structure to be built south of the Fry's Marketplace will house several other shops, including a nail salon, hair salon, mailing and shipping franchise, insurance and tax-preparation offices and a sit-down restaurant.

Chalfant said Rancho Sahuarita Co. officials selected the businesses for the complex by surveying the businesses that are most needed within the area.

Surveys show that there's a market for another, bigger family restaurant, among other things, he said.

Kathy Ward, Sahuarita's economic-development manager, said a new survey conducted for the town and several Sahuarita-Green Valley companies and agencies confirms the need for "a range of restaurants" and many other kinds of businesses.

The survey by The Buxton Company, a Fort Worth, Texas-based business consulting firm, also shows that stores that specialize in clothing and sporting goods also would likely prosper, Ward said.

What new businesses would you like to see come to Sahuarita?

"Restaurants! I have kids, so I'd like to see a nice, sit-down restaurant like Chili's or Outback. Also, a dry cleaners and a nice flower shop."

Brian Armstrong

Rancho Sahuarita

"A nice coffee place, and not necessarily a Starbucks. A nice place, with couches. And a good fast-food place — maybe a Carl's Jr."

Erica Farmer

Rancho Sahuarita

"Lots of new shops in general, but especially a nice sit-down restaurant. Like a Cracker Barrel or Olive Garden."

Jim Collom

Rancho Sahuarita

"A Trader Joe's! Definitely. And a Target."

Marcellina Dennis

Los Arroyos

New business?

If you're new to the area and opened a business in the last six months in Vail, Corona de Tucson or Sahuarita, we want to hear from you.

E-mail reporter Tim Ellis — tellis@azstarnet.com — with your name, daytime phone number, the

The survey is "hugely useful" she said, because it reveals detailed information about the approximately 70,000 people who live in the retail trade area that extends well beyond the Sahuarita-Green Valley community.

"It shows not only ... who the people are, but how much money they have, and how they will spend it," she said.

Ward will lay out the findings of the survey — known by the long-winded title: Community ID of Demographics and Psychographics in the Regional Trade Area — in a Feb. 6 briefing at Town Hall for investors, developers, leasing agents, brokers and others she's invited.

Commercial development in and around Sahuarita has been booming over the past year, following the red-hot pace of residential development over the past few years, Ward said.

"The adage is, 'retail follows rooftops,' " she said.

"So now that we have the increased population that retailers look for, we should see more commercial development in the short term," she said.

It's also good news for the town's budget, because it provides another source of revenue now that residential development has slowed due to the nationwide housing slump, said A.C. Marriotti, the town's finance director.

Even better, it's a more sustainable type of revenue compared with that stemming from development, which mainly is generated upfront from building-permit fees and construction sales taxes.

Revenue from the town's 2 percent sales tax will continue to come in year after year, Marriotti said.

"This is really what will sustain our operations for the long-term," he said in an e-mail.

"We do not want to (nor can we) rely on one-time revenues," he wrote.

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name of your business and its location.

And keep your eye on the East Side/Sahuarita section of the Arizona Daily Star for our new feature: "You don't have to drive to Tucson for that anymore."

Some new commercial enterprises

Reay's Ranch Investors SuperStop

Address: 795 W. Via Rancho Sahuarita.

Hours of operation: Open 24 hours.

Phone number: 207-7039

Fry's Marketplace

Address: 15950 Rancho Sahuarita Blvd.

Hours of operation: Open 24 hours.

Phone number: 648-7700

JPMorgan Chase Bank branch

Address: 15960 S. Rancho Sahuarita Blvd.

Hours of operation: 9 a.m.-p.m. Monday-Thursday; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, drive-thru opens at 8:30 a.m. Monday-Saturday

Phone number: 399-1512

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• *Contact reporter Tim Ellis at 807-8414 or tellis@azstarnet.com.*

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