

A sign things are coming along

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Promenade is expected to have at least 24 more stores by July

The Promenade at Casa Grande is about to get a lot busier.

At least six new stores are scheduled to open by sometime next month, with another 11 set for April, four in May and three in June. A couple of the openings could occur yet this month.

Two stores - Best Buy and Bed, Bath and Beyond - are likely to open before the end of the month. Several sources said Best Buy plans to open on Friday, Feb. 29. And Catherine Gentile, public relations manager for Bed, Bath and Beyond, said that chain plans to open its 25,000-square-foot store "by March 1."

"There won't be a grand opening per se," Gentile said. She added that company policy is that "as soon as we can open the doors, we do."

Applebee's has been added to the list of restaurants committed to the shopping center, with a tentative opening in August on a pad fronting Florence Boulevard. Olive Garden and In-N-Out Burger previously had been announced, but have not targeted opening dates as yet, according to Melissa Rupp, a spokeswoman for Westcor Development Corp., which operates the center at the northeast corner of Florence Boulevard and Interstate 10.

Stores about to open (by the end of March) in the second phase include: Bed, Bath and Beyond; Best Buy; Famous Footwear; GNC; Sally Beauty Supply; and Shoe Pavilion.

While mall management with Westcor leases the space to the stores, it's up to the chains to set their own opening dates. Rupp emphasized that those openings may not occur right away after the lease's effective date, and are set at each store's discretion and not necessarily coordinated by the center.

Stores with planned April openings include: Bath and Body Works; Claire's Boutique; Cost Plus World Market; Essence of Nails & Spa; Eyemasters; Fashion Bug; Kristyn's Hallmark; Marshall's; Michael's; Sports Authority; and Zumiez, a store specializing in skateboarding gear, clothing and accessories.

May openings are planned for: Dress Barn; Maurice's; Old Navy; and a Wells Fargo branch bank.

June openings are planned for: Lane Bryant; Ross Dress for Less; and Ulta.

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