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Major stores opening in Queen Creek

By Christina Caldwell
For the Tribune



MARKETPLACE REVS UP: SuperTarget is one of many stores open at Queen Creek Marketplace.

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Queen Creek and Santan-area residents no longer have to drive to Gilbert or Chandler to shop at major national retailers. Stores in Queen Creek's largest retail center, Queen Creek Marketplace, are beginning to open their doors.

The shopping center, on Ellsworth Loop Road just south of Rittenhouse Road in Queen Creek, has already seen the opening of SuperTarget, Cost Plus World Market, Kohl's and PetSmart.

Dozens of other stores, including Sports Chalet, Tilly's, Bed Bath and Beyond, Stein Mart, Ulta and JCPenney, will open in the coming months.

The 1.1 million-square-foot center is due to be finished at the end of this summer.

Queen Creek Marketplace isn't the only complex being built at the town's center. More retail space, including another large complex called Cornerstone at Queen Creek, is under construction at Rittenhouse and Ocotillo roads. Cornerstone will have 380,000 square feet of shopping and dining, including a Wal-Mart Supercenter, Panda Express and Danny's Family Car Wash.

Business complexes and a new Queen Creek library will also be part of the town center.

The town is encouraging residents to keep tax dollars in Queen Creek by shopping at the town center since a slowing housing market has adversely affected the town's tax revenue in the past months.

Queen Creek's economic development director, Doreen Cott, said the two retail centers could have a large impact on the town's sales tax revenue.

"The town estimates collecting approximately \$5 per square foot in retail sales tax dollars from each of the commercial centers ... monthly," Cott said. "We will actually net about \$2.50 a square foot because we will be repaying the developers back for the loop road improvements and the other off-site improvements that were made in that area."

Cott said that the town thinks a greater impact for Queen Creek is the convenience and options for residents.

Katie Covey, a 37-year-old Queen Creek resident, said she is looking forward to the completion of the project.

"We're thrilled about having something out here for us so we don't have to drive so far to get to anything," Covey said. "The closest Target was up on Power, and we'd also go to Chandler. (We're) thrilled about Target, really excited about the Stein Mart and World Market. Those are stores we frequent often, so it's nice that they're close."

Queen Creek Marketplace and the retail centers around it signify a new outlook on the town, Cott said.

"I think it shows the town is really growing and is able to support these large retail centers because they wouldn't build in Queen Creek if they didn't feel the market was here," she said. "It just shows that kind of turning point for Queen Creek where we've gone from the small neighborhood centers to where we can support these large retail centers."



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