

# Mall brings hot retailers to Pinal County

## Developers hail growth of center in Casa Grande

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 ARIZONA BUSINESS GAZETTE

The first regional mall in Casa Grande celebrated the grand opening of its second phase last month.

The Promenade at Casa Grande just east of Interstate 10 on Arizona 287 is drawing shoppers from throughout Pinal County who otherwise would head to Chandler Fashion Center or SanTan Village in Gilbert.

The open-air mall covers more than 130 acres and includes more than 1 million square feet of shopping space. It is anchored by Target, Dillard's and JCPenney. Tenants include Victoria's Secret, Sports Authority, Best Buy, Kohl's and ULTA.

A handful of restaurants about the mall's Harkin's Theatres, which is visible from I-10.

The mall's first phase opened in November and its second phase was finished in early May.

The Promenade's developer said it's not so much that the new Casa Grande mall will bleed business from San Tan Village and Chandler Fashion Center as it means that shop-

pers in Casa Grande, Florence and other parts of Pinal County will no longer have to drive 45 minutes to Chandler or Gilbert to shop at department stores or specialty retailers.

"Pinal County is such a large trade area," said Todd Chester, project manager for the Promenade at Casa Grande and a partner in the Phoenix real-estate investment company WDP Partners. "This project alone in Casa Grande could easily survive on its own, but it's drawing from the whole Pinal County area."

The \$153 million development is a joint project of WDP Partners, Westcor and the Pederson Group.

"This is the retail hub of Pinal County," Chester said. "Residents come to Casa Grande to do a lot of their

See **CASA GRANDE** Page 17 shopping.

"And if they were going to go to a Dillard's or a Target or a Claire's, then yes, they would have driven to Tucson or to Chandler or to Gilbert.

"So the leakage that the city of Casa Grande was seeing was from their residents going to Tucson and Gilbert and Chandler."

Even though competing malls in Chandler and Gilbert no longer draw as much business from Pinal County, Westcor isn't losing out on revenue because it owns those malls.

"We are fortunate to be in a

market where we have explosive growth compared to the rest of the country," said Sheila Hunter, senior property manager for SanTan Village.

"Casa Grande has grown enough to support its own shopping center, so I don't think it's a pull from one shopping center to another. It's more of a reason to come to the center for a specific reason."

The weather is also a factor for shoppers. SanTan Village and the Promenade at Casa Grande are both open-air shopping centers that operate like strip shopping centers.

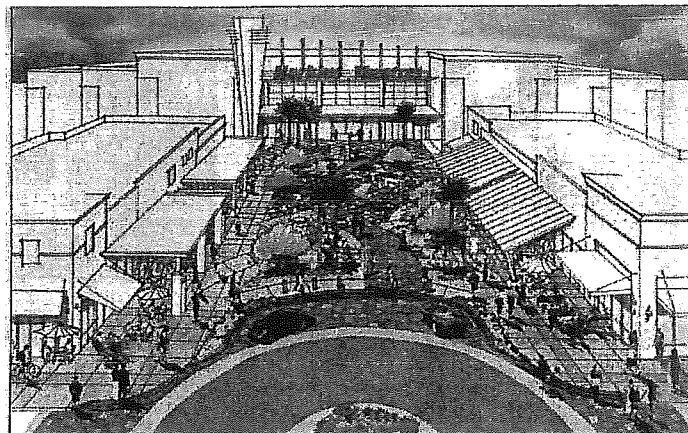
Chandler Fashion Center is a traditional indoor mall anchored by four major department stores: Nordstrom's, Macy's, Dillard's and Sears.

Christina Lanoue, senior property manager of Chandler Fashion Center, said Westcor expects a 14 percent growth in the number households in the next four years.

Chandler opened "with explosive growth" and eight department stores vied for the four anchor spaces available.

That wouldn't be the case in today's recessionary market, said Chester, of WDP Partners.

"There's always a number of tenants that we're still chasing, but today, we have signed deals for 93 percent of the center," he said. "Two years ago, if this would have happened, we probably would have had to put off the project."



WP CASA GRANDE RETAIL LLC

This rendering shows the Promenade at Casa Grande. The open-air mall covers more than 130 acres near Interstate 10.