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Walmart Supercenter Opens to Fanfare

Perris officials hailed the grand opening of the new Walmart Supercenter Wednesday as a boon to the community that will provide jobs, increase shopping choices, add significant revenue through sales taxes and act as a magnet to attract other business to the City.

"This is a great day," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, who led the contingent of City officials at Wednesday's ribbon-cutting ceremony. "We've been working for years to bring this day to fruition and it is finally here. We are excited to be here."

The store at 1800 North Perris Boulevard is approximately 180,000 square feet and will employ more than 400 full- and part-time employees.

Many of those employees were on hand to witness the ribbon-cutting as did a throng of residents who waited for 8 a.m. to arrive and the store opened for business.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch (center) joined other dignitaries and Walmart employees Wednesday to cut the ribbon at the new Supercenter in the City.

Manager Frankie Ahumada, a 25-year-Walmart employee who began as a part-time stocker, said the company is committed to providing quality, affordable merchandise and supports a wide array of non-profit and community-based organizations.

Ahumada said employees pushed hard in recent weeks to get the new supercenter opened for business. He noted that customers began arriving at 6:30 a.m.

"Thank you for supporting us," Ahumada said.

Ahumada presented checks for \$2,000 each to the Perris Boys and Girls Club, Perris High School and the Perris Police Explorers. The Perris High School marching band provided musical selections for the event while the Army ROTC served as the Color Guard. A mariachi band also performed during the opening ceremonies.

The opening of the Walmart supercenter is likely to spur other businesses to set up shop at the Perris Boulevard location. Site developers say written commitments have been signed by Chipotle, Blaze Pizza, Wabba Grill, Panda Express, Firehouse Subs, Yogurtland, Wendy's and other companies seeking to operate in the commerce complex.



Walmart Supercenter Manager Frankie Ahumada presents a check to support the Perris Police Explorers to Chief Mike Judge.

City Manager Richard Belmudez, Assistant City Manager Ron Carr, Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Michael McDermott and Administrative Services Manager Isabel Carlos also attended the ribbon-cutting. Several members of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce also were in the audience.

Chamber vice-president Matt Johnson urged the crowd to support Walmart and future businesses in Perris.

"Help the City grow its business community so we can bring jobs and prosperity to our community," Johnson said.

The new Walmart replaces a smaller, existing store that opened in 1992, the first Walmart in Riverside County. Construction crews broke ground at the Supercenter site about 14 months ago.



The Perris High School Army ROTC provided the Color Guard for Wednesday's ceremony.

Individuals interested in information on employment opportunities can stop by the store's hiring kiosk, or visit careers.walmart.com.

On Saturday, (Aug. 29) store officials are planning an event called "A Big Family Welcome" from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. It is open to local residents, activities are planned and free food will be available while supplies last, according to store officials.

The Supercenter will include a grocery store with fresh produce, meat and a deli counter and a full-service pharmacy where employees can administer commonly requested immunizations such as flu shots.

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