



## Perris News

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### Rio Ranch Market Comes to Historic Downtown Perris

The deli counters and dairy cases have been installed, new wiring and exhaust fans are going in and a crew of skilled laborers is working with a sense of urgency to complete renovations on the new Rio Ranch Market on 4th Street.

The location, just west of Interstate 215, formerly housed a Stater Bros. market which closed several years ago. The City's Redevelopment Agency loaned the grocer \$350,000, money which is set aside for community and business development, to help restore the Rio Ranch Market and several other businesses in the 4th Street shopping center, the City's oldest.

City officials say the money is well spent as the refurbished shopping center will attract thousands of visitors weekly and generate \$10.4 million in annual sales. About 80 new jobs, ranging from \$8 an hour to \$110,000 a year, will be created. The store is expected to open by December. The bulk of the new employees are expected to come from the Perris Valley.

Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Michael McDermott said the City loan will help pay for new facades for the entire complex, along with trees, landscaping and parking lot improvements. Those in turn are sure to attract new shops and stores to the center.

Already, McDermott said, the City has been contacted by business representatives eager to call the new shopping center home.

"It's going to be a very nice, modern shopping center," he said.

City officials said Rio Ranch comes to Perris with a well-established reputation as an outstanding corporate citizen. The market sponsored a back-to-school event, handing out 350 backpacks to deserving students. Rio Ranch also will sponsor events at Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said the City's investment in Rio Ranch shopping center will reap huge benefits in the future.

"We are helping remodel the center and in turn we will make it attractive and see many people shop there and spend money," Busch said. "I talk to people in other cities all the time and they say they wish the things that are happening in Perris were happening in their towns. It's nice to accomplish good things for our City."

Construction workers are concentrating on restoring the 24,000-square-foot interior to the former Stater Bros. market. Construction manager James Taylor said work crews removed the old ceiling and replaced it with new insulation. They are painting interior walls, putting in new pipes and ducting, pulling electrical wires, installing gas lines and exhaust systems. They soon will be installing stoves, ovens and a tortilla maker and a juice bar.

The store also will include an outdoor seating area and a color scheme of red, green, orange and brown. While Rio Ranch started out by appealing to a Latino audience, in recent years it has expanded its selection to include a wide-range of other cuisine, including pizza.

Taylor says the work is about 60 percent completed. Exterior façade work is expected to start in the next few days.

"We are definitely excited about this project," he said. "It is going to look sweet. The community is going to get something good out of it."

Perris City Council members agree.

"This is a perfect fit for Perris," said Councilman Mark Yarbrough. "It was a shame to lose Stater Bros. but we are getting a very powerful anchor tenant that will bring quality products to our community."

Yarbrough said the City will reap sales and property tax revenues while generating jobs for Perris residents, who will in turn spend the money they earn at Rio Ranch throughout the community.

Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers said she recently inspected the building and chatted with some of the workers responsible for the renovations. She said a new supermarket in Downtown will be a boon to residents who live in the most historic section of Perris, including families and seniors who do not drive.

Rogers said a recent job fair to fill positions at Rio Ranch drew more than 2,000 people who filled out applications. The one who are hired will be truly exceptional workers, she said.

"Jobs are our number one priority," she said. "It is critical that we go out and market our City. Even in these difficult times, we are able to recruit businesses that bring good jobs to Perris."

City Councilman Al Landers said the renovations to the 4th Street shopping center shows "the heart of Downtown Perris is beating strong, even during these difficult times." He said motorists who come to Rio Ranch to shop will be getting off I-215 to find a new interchange and new bridge over 4th Street and a new supermarket to explore.

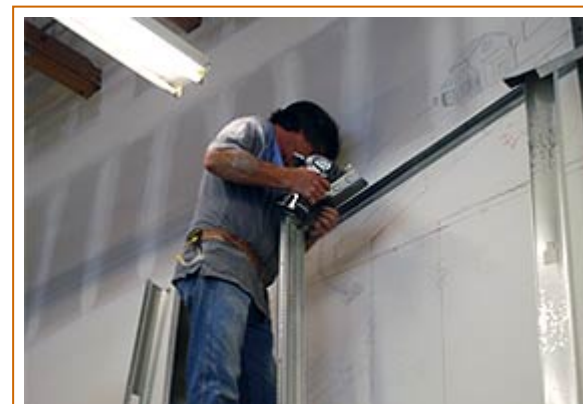
"New businesses still want to come to the City of Perris," Landers said. "I am proud of our staff and our council who are committed to moving Perris forward in an aggressive and progressive manner."



Construction foreman James Taylor inside the Rio Ranch Market on 4th Street, where a construction crew is working to get the store open by December.



A workman cuts pipe at the market, which will employ 80 workers and is expected to generate \$10.4 million in annual sales.



Work on the interior walls is part of the ongoing renovations.