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Perris Breaks Ground on Perris Plaza Expansion Project



The City of Perris celebrated the ground-breaking August 21 for the Perris Plaza expansion. Dignitaries included City Manager Richard Belmudez, Assistant City Manager Clara Miramontes, Mayor Pro-Tem Malcolm Corona, Mayor Michael Vargas, City Councilwoman Tonya Burke, City Clerk Nancy Salazar, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, City Councilman David Starr Rabb and developer Patrick Wood.

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It happened in Las Vegas.

Two years ago, Perris City Councilmembers and top administrators met with developer Patrick Wood and representatives of Ross and Burlington about locating to the community.

Months of negotiations and discussions followed as the City's economic development team hammered out details of the move, which expanded to include five additional businesses locating to the Perris Plaza shopping Center along with the two anchors.

All the hard work paid off Aug. 21.

Wood joined with Perris Mayor Michael Vargas, Mayor Pro-Tem Malcolm Corona, City Councilmembers Tonya Burke, David Starr Rabb and Rita Rogers, City Clerk Nancy Salazar, City Manager Richard Belmudez and Assistant City Manager Clara Miramontes in breaking ground on the 133,000-square foot expansion—which includes Planet Fitness, Ulta Beauty Mountain Mike's Pizza, Five Below and Hibbett Sports in addition to Ross and Burlington.

Initial construction is set to begin by September. Wood said he hopes the project is completed within nine months.

"This is a big deal for us," Wood said. "We are glad to be here. We're excited to be here. We are proud and honored to be part of this community. It's Perris' time for these type of developments. We knew Perris was the place we wanted to be."

Wood praised the efforts of the City's elected representatives and economic-development specialists for fast-tracking the development. The Perris Plaza—visible from nearby I-215 and Nuevo Road and Perris Boulevard —provides an excellent for the seven new businesses to thrive by attracting not only City residents but travelers motoring up and down the freeway and nearby thoroughfares.

On a roll

Assistant City Manager Miramontes said development at the Perris Plaza, which was in planning since 1992, slowed following the construction of a Food 4 Less warehouse store and the opening of the Regency Perris 10 Theatre in 1996. The meeting in Las Vegas between Perris staff and elected representatives and the Wood Investments team breathed new life into the shopping center.



Developer Patrick Wood smiles as he discusses the expansion of the Perris Plaza shopping center while City Manager Richard Belmudez looks on.

"We made our pitch and waited very anxiously," Miramontes said. "Now we're ready to start grading. We're on a roll. We're on the move. We're moving along."

City Manager Belmudez said breaking-ground ceremonies are public celebrations. The real work of development--the plan checks, blueprints, engineering and site modifications--takes place out of the spotlight with no fanfare.

"To get to this point is a big deal," said Belmudez, praising the "persistence and diligence" of Wood and his team.

Mayor Vargas said the Perris Plaza expansion provides two benefits every community needs--jobs and tax revenue. The new businesses will employ dozens of people and provide significant tax dollars to the City's general fund.

"This is another big milestone for our community," Vargas said. "Our residents have been asking for more retail and more places to eat. This project provides both. It's also big because it will open doors to even more retail."

Jobs and revenue

Mayor Pro-Tem Malcolm Corona grew up in Perris and remembers shopping with his parents at the Perris Plaza.

"I'm super-excited to be here," Corona said. "Make sure you come here to shop local! It's always exciting to open up more retail options. Our residents want it and the City is listening, the staff is working and the results are here today."

City Councilwoman Tonya Burke called expansion at Perris Plaza a "great project and a powerful economic engine" that will bring more commerce, jobs and money to Perris while satisfying demands for more choices to shop and eat. Just as important, Burke said many of the jobs available when the expansion is complete will become available to Perris high-school and college students as well other deserving residents.

"We are a team that works on behalf of our residents to make sure we expand our employment and business choices in Perris," Burke said. "It's the right time, it's the right season. This is just the start. The best is yet to come."



The site plan for the Perris Plaza expansion. Initial work is set to begin in September.

City Councilman David Starr Rabb, a Deputy District Attorney in San Bernardino County, said he would shop for clothing at Ross.

"I'm looking forward to this project," he said. "It's going to be a great project and a good move forward for this City. This City continues to move forward. A lot of hard work from staff behind-the-scenes has culminated in today's ground-breaking."

Beyond Vegas!

Councilwoman Rogers injected humor in her comments at the ground-breaking.

"They say what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas but we're glad what happened in Vegas is now in Perris!" Rogers said.

She added that two years from meeting to ground-breaking represents breakneck speed for such a major development.

"This is one of the fastest-moving projects we've ever turned over," Rogers said. "It will be a big hit. I'm ready for this ground-breaking. I'm ready for the buildings to go up. I'm ready to spend some money in this shopping center!"

City Clerk Salazar said she's already looking forward to shopping at Ulta Beauty when the store opens.

"It's exciting to see how much Perris is growing," she said. "I know a lot of our people are looking forward to shopping here. We're progressing as a City. We're growing."

Other Perris City staffers at the ground-breaking included Assistant City Manager Darren Madkin, Administrative Services Director Isabel Carlos, Human Resources and Risk Supervisor Saida Amozgar, Director of Community Services and Housing Sabrina Chavez, Chief Information Officer Arturo Cervantes, Public Works Director Daryl Hartwill, Director of Planning and Economic Development Grace Williams, Planning Manager Kenneth Phung, Associate Planner Nathan Perez, Business Liaison Michelle Ogawa, Finance Director Jennifer Erwin, City Engineer Habib Mollagh, Counter Services Supervisor Veronica Arana, Code Enforcement Supervisor Robert Trejo, Recreation Coordinator Josh Estrada, Recreation Leaders Jordan McClanahan and Estella Magana, Accounting Specialist Lizbeth Curiel, Redevelopment Project Manager Rebecca Miranda, Administrative Assistant Sylvia Arvizu, Perris Green City Farm Program workers Eduardo Sida and Martin Martinez, Audio-Visual Specialist Everett Hamby IV, IT Specialist Dimitris Kokkos and Intern Karina Espinoza. Planning Commissioners Brady McCarron, Ivan Marin and Ruben Arras also attended.



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