

Bossier City welcomes shopping center

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Inclement weather couldn't dampen the optimism of at least 30 people who came out Wednesday afternoon to celebrate the grand opening of Stirling Bossier Shopping Center in Bossier City.

"It's an awesome addition and shows the growth pattern of our city toward north Bossier," said Lisa Johnson, executive director of the Bossier Chamber of Commerce.

"Time will tell if this development will be the center of retail, but it's definitely the beginning as we see more growth along the Airline Drive and Benton Road corridors."

At least 13 stores — including Target, Best Buy and PetSmart — have opened in the 600,000-square-foot development. The latest additions to Phase I are Justice and After Hours Formalwear, which opened Wednesday.

Next will be Lane Bryant/Cacique and Catherine's on Saturday. About eight more businesses, including FedEx Kinko's, are scheduled to open by Dec. 1, according to Stirling Properties officials.

The development cost about \$40 million, including help from Bossier City with infrastructure improvements.

The grand opening crowd Wednesday mainly included city officials and representatives of Stirling Properties and Brown Builders.

William H. McFadden, Stirling Properties' property manager and associate broker for the Bossier City office, mentioned the firm is negotiating with several other major retailers for Phase II. They kept mum on who those retailers are. But Rhonda Sharkawy, retail development and leasing executive for Stirling Properties' commercial division, did say they're in talks with at least two food users for two out parcels and a large anchor tenant.

Phase II, which is expected to debut in the summer, will add about 125,000 square feet to the center, Sharkawy said. Phase III, which is in the planning stage, will include an additional 100,000 square feet.

Some attribute the sudden retail explosion in north Bossier to Barksdale Air Force Base, the influx of residents to Bossier City and numerous subdivisions.

"The residents needed something out here," said Robert L. Dischler, Stirling Properties' senior property manager. He said he expects more mixed office/retail developments and the firm is looking to bring entertainment options as well.

Johnson thinks Bossier City is ready for the retail boom. "The city, parish have worked so well together and have a wonderful vision to make sure there's no duplication and that infrastructure moves in a smooth fashion. The future is only positive."



Bill McFadden (right) of Stirling Properties shakes hands with Bossier City Mayor Lorenz Walker as Gerald Songy (left), executive vice president of Stirling Properties, looks on following a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the grand opening Wednesday of the Stirling Bossier Shopping Center. (Douglas Collier/The Times)

AT A GLANCE

Stirling Bossier Shopping Center is at Interstate 220 at Airline Drive in Bossier City. Following are business that are open and what's coming.
Open: Target, Belk, Best Buy, Ross Dress for Less, Bed, Bath and Beyond, Shoe Carnival, Justice, Capital One, PetSmart, Chick-fil-A, After Hours Formalwear and Geico.

Scheduled openings

Saturday: Lane Bryant/Cacique and Catherine's.

Mid-November: AT&T, Quiznos, Today's Tanning and Serenity Spas.

Early December: FedEx Kinko's, Garden Style and Wondercuts.

Summer: Phase II.

Send e-mail to Rhonda Sharkawy at rsha@stirlingprop.com to learn more about leasing opportunities at the shopping center.

Multimedia:



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