

RETAIL

Cafe Yumm! opening biggest restaurant yet

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The Register-Guard

Published: Friday, February 2, 2007

North Eugene's Delta shopping area will get several additions this spring, with locally owned restaurant chain Cafe Yumm! confirmed as the largest tenant in a newly completed commercial building on Green Acres Road at Delta Highway.

"This will be our new flagship," said Ed Gerdes, secretary and general counsel for Cafe Yumm! "It's going to be our biggest store yet."

The rice-and-beans-and-sauce restaurant will occupy 2,340 square feet of the 11,574-square-foot Cornerstone building, which will have six tenants. The Cafe Yumm! outlet is scheduled to open April 15, and three other new tenants are expected to be open by mid-May.

Commercial real estate broker Jeff Elder, of the firm Evans Elder & Brown, said three spaces in addition to the Cafe Yumm! storefront have been leased - to a food outlet, a cellular phone store and another retailer - while two spaces remain available. Elder said he was not at liberty to name the other tenants, which have not announced their plans.

"We're wanting to make sure the tenants in this building are compatible, and don't have any (duplication) with the tenants in the other buildings," Elder said.

The Cornerstone building, a project of Eugene developer Steve Lee, sits just south of the three-building North Delta Center, which Lee developed three years ago with local builder Greg Vik. Lee's new building is architecturally similar to the North Delta Center - located just west of Home Depot - and was built to complement the existing buildings and their tenants, Elder said.

The cost of the new building's shell was about \$160 per square foot - a total of more than \$1.8 million - while individual tenants will be responsible for interior improvements, he said.

For example, Cafe Yumm! will spend about \$300,000 on everything from kitchen equipment to lighting to a heating and air conditioning system, Gerdes said.

"It's going to be stylistic, and it's earth-friendly in terms of using lots of recycled materials," Gerdes said, citing tabletops and wall panels. "It's as environmentally friendly as we can get."

The new Cafe Yumm! outlet - a model for future locations of the chain - has been designed by Hornall Anderson Design Works of Seattle, which also came up with the primary model for the Starbucks coffee chain.

And at least one more Cafe Yumm! - in either Springfield or west Eugene - is expected to be built late this year, Gerdes said. Negotiations are under way for space in both areas.

Cafe Yumm! owners Mark and Mary Ann Beauchamp indicated a year ago when they gave up their location in the Fifth Street Public Market that they hoped to expand into north Eugene, Springfield and west Eugene.

Gerdes said north Eugene rose to the top of the list when Lee began developing the building

last year. "It's underserved in that area for healthy, delicious-tasting food," Gerdes said. "And we've gotten lots of requests to open up out there, in addition to the West 11th (Avenue) and Gateway areas. So our customers are driving it."

The existing locations of Cafe Yumm! are at Eugene's Oakway Center and the Meridian, at 1801 Willamette St.

Gerdes said the new restaurant will hire the equivalent of about 15 full-time employees. It serves a menu anchored by beans-and-rice bowls, with sauce and a variety of toppings.

Retail Notebook runs on Fridays. Joe Mosley can be reached at 338-2384 or jmosley@guardnet.com.