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Zanjero project to include boutique hotel, retail, office space

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The Arizona Republic

May. 15, 2006 04:35 PM

A new 20-story hotel with a high-end restaurant will be coming to Glendale, as developers unveil another piece of the retail and entertainment puzzle shaping up around Glendale Arena and Cardinals Stadium.

Nevada-based Marathon Commercial Development said Monday it plans to build an upscale urban village on a third of Glendale's 151-acre Zanjero project just off Loop 101.

Earlier this year, Marathon paid Zanjero's developer, Citation Land Co., more than \$30 million for the parcel, located at the corner of Glendale and 91st avenues.

The village, called the Districts at Zanjero, will mix housing, shops, restaurants, Class-A office space and a 20-story boutique hotel with a fine-dining establishment on the top floor.

Plans call for about a half-million square feet of retail and restaurant space, 200,000 square feet of office space, two- and three-story for-sale residential lofts above retail, and three mid-rise residential towers.

Construction is set to begin next year, with the first phase expected to be completed before the 2008 Super Bowl, which will be played at the new \$455 million football stadium that February.

"Considering they are starting at the same time that Cardinals Stadium is being finished and two years after the arena opened, that's not bad if they can get it in before the Super Bowl," said Glendale Councilwoman Joyce Clark, whose district includes Zanjero and other nearby projects. "That will be a major feat, and they will be complemented for having done so."

The Districts project marks yet another economic victory for Glendale.

Right next door, Cabela's will be rolling out its 165,000-square-foot outdoors mega-store in August. Nearby Cardinals Stadium will be hosting its first game that month.

And by late October, Westgate City Center, across the street from Zanjero, will be lighting up its flashy billboards for the opening of its first 500,000 square feet.

"Glendale is a fast-growing city that is turning into the entertainment mecca of the Phoenix Valley," Marathon President Barry Smith said in a prepared statement. "The Districts at Zanjero will provide the live-work-shop-dine-play atmosphere that the city needs and that retailers, visitors and homeowners alike will want to be a part of."

The Henderson, Nev., developer currently is working with Terrapin Properties, a Chicago company that specializes in building housing in mixed-use projects. Marathon also is negotiating with a boutique hotel developer.

Two other 100-room hotels, a Hampton Inn and Homewood Suites, are planned at Zanjero. And work is being done on a 312-room Renaissance Hotel next to the arena at Westgate.

About 1.5 million people live within a 30-minute drive of Zanjero and other neighboring projects, while about 300,000 employees work within 10 miles of the area, according to Marathon.

That's made development along the freeway corridor particularly lucrative.

"What Westgate and the surrounding developments have created is a focal point for the entire West Valley," said Jeffrey Hecht, a spokesman for the Ellman Cos., which is developing Westgate. "They will eventually become the city center for the entire West Valley."

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