

Markets at Choctaw progress continues

By Ryan Horton
Contributing Writer

While most of the current work on the Markets at Choctaw development is still happening behind the scenes, progress is becoming clear as a new fast food restaurant prepares to open and work on another commercial building recently began.

Construction of a Taco Bell building should be complete within weeks, and walls are going up now for a commercial suite building.

The Taco Bell building is clearly visible from NE 23rd Street, just west of Mazzio's.

"Everything is on schedule for their building to be ready mid-August," said Choctaw City Planner Chad Denson.

A multi-suite commercial building is now being constructed southeast of Walmart, and each of those suites are expected to be complete before December.

The suites are expected to include a Great Clips hair salon, a Sprint Store, Japanese steak house and open office space that is still available.

"Right now we're building the space, which we'll turn over to them this fall. I would expect an early first quarter of next year opening for those businesses," said Leland Clark of Sooner Investment Realty.

During the first City Council meeting of August, Choctaw officials approved a new drive entrance to be added to the Markets at



-Staff photo by Ryan Horton

Taco Bell is one of several businesses scheduled to open in the Markets at Choctaw retail center.

Choctaw development.

The new drive will provide easy access to the future site of a HealthCARE Express urgent care facility and also a restaurant known for "specializing in roast beef sandwiches."

The new entrance will be added west of the recently constructed NE 23rd entrance leading to Taco Bell.

"The new drive is to accommodate an urgent care facility, and will also serve another fast-food restaurant that remains to be named, pending a closing agreement," said Clark. "It's still a little early to announce the proposed fast-food restaurant, but we hope to have everything squared away in a week or two."

Just like the Midwest City location, Choctaw's

HealthCARE Express will be open weekdays 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on the weekends.

While residents remain anxious for announcements of restaurants and stores coming to Choctaw, the development company is focused on closing purchase agreements before disclosing any potential businesses.

However, rumors of a movie theatre remain only rumors while several additional dining establishments are expected to be announced in the near future, said Clark.

"We're still looking for a couple nice sit-down restaurants to fill the remaining outer parcels," said Clark. "We've had no discussion with a movie theatre, and are expecting

2006 for \$3.1 million. Since purchasing the land city officials have been working on improving infrastructure and bringing businesses to the 38-acre site.

The Markets at Choctaw idea was conceived as a way to enhance the city's main business district, increase sales tax revenue, attract major investment to the area and expand the city's employment base.

Walmart opened a Supercenter to anchor the development in July of 2014, and Sooner Investment Realty, based in Oklahoma City, was brought in to complete the 38-acre site.

With a primary focus on the development of both small and large retail shopping centers, Sooner Investment has developed many successful Oklahoma sites such as Midwest City's Town Center Plaza, the University Town Center in Norman and Del Crest Heights in Del City just to name a few.

City officials are confident residents and visitors of Choctaw will be satisfied with the results produced by the developers who have had many successes in thriving neighboring cities.

"Good stuff is coming," said mayor Randy Ross. "Additional restaurants and commercial business will be coming soon that will allow people to do some shopping they've never had the opportunity to do in Choctaw. Hopefully, we'll save some people some driving time for what they want."

Timeline

MAY 2006 The city of Choctaw buys 38 acres of land along NE 23rd Street.

JULY 2014 Walmart Supercenter opens and Sooner Investment Realty is brought in to completed the development.

AUGUST 2016 Taco Bell is scheduled to open.

DECEMBER 2016 A multi-suite commercial building expected to open.

to fill the rest of the development with retail."

City officials purchased the land, located along NE 23rd Street between Mazzio's and Braum's, in May of