

## McKay's Mill tenants bank on completed road Cool Springs connector will open area to more than residential traffic

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FRANKLIN — Publix came in late August. Walgreens followed in the fall.

It's the height of convenience for homeowners like Donna Holland, who likes having everything handy in her neighborhood, McKay's Mill.

But how soon will the newly finished office spaces fill at the center of the 3-year-old development? Holland is hopeful that will happen quickly. It's the topic of neighborhood chatter and source for wide speculation.

"I just took my first load to the brand-new dry cleaning place," she said. "I had heard that Starbucks was coming but then, for whatever reason, decided not to."

Holland and her neighbors aren't the only ones wishing for salons, boutiques and other small professional offices. Those working at businesses that have opened in the heart of McKay's Mill believe additional shops would create more reasons for people to stop — and more commerce for all.

"Twenty-five people today," said Tony Chen, scrutinizing lunch receipts at New China. "This is so-so, but for a Monday, it's not bad."

There's about 20,000 square feet of office space among the 10 remaining available units, said Matthew Fuller, marketing director for the Florida-based Barclay Group.

"The tenants who have moved in tell us they are doing very well, and they are happy with their locations," he said.

So is it difficult selling space in a community that draws exclusively residential traffic?

Fuller says that won't be the case, and he expects open spots to fill as soon as the neighborhood is connected to Cool Springs Boulevard via Oxford Glenn.

"That's what will make this project a success," Fuller said. "Right now it dead ends. It's about 300 yards short of connecting. It would open it up to the entire Cool Springs area."

The section of road is expected to be finished by this summer or early fall. It was initially thought it

would be finished sooner, Fuller said.

"You can get to it if you are willing to take some back roads," he said. "There's no doubt it's kept traffic from the shopping center. Once that road is completed, it will certainly help all our retailers."

To help potential businesses visualize the potential for growth, Fuller said the firm had an aerial photo taken of the neighborhood and the gap between it and the boulevard. The area will also be an appealing place for business once the McEwen Drive interchange opens, he said.

Also appealing to business is the local demographic, Fuller said. Through independent research, the average income in the area is \$93,000. With 1,200 homes available, it's a lot of shoppers.

"It is a terrific opportunity for somebody, especially restaurants," Fuller said. "It is a captive market out there," he said. "The closest grocery store is on the other side of (Interstate) 65." •

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