



UPDATE FROM MAYOR DEBRA JONES

April 2021

Our City leadership cares about your livelihood. We work to foster an economic environment where businesses can thrive and offer good jobs to our residents. Fortunately, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19, new business development is strong in the City of Victorville.

We issued 75 percent more commercial building permits in 2020 than we did in 2019, and we're attracting new businesses from a variety of sectors to invest in our City. Not only are these businesses bringing new jobs to Victorville, but also they are strengthening our economy and creating an environment where local businesses can re-build and thrive following downturns caused by the pandemic.

An Amazon Last Mile Delivery Station is moving into the retail building that once housed a Walmart on Bear Valley Road. The delivery station will serve as a local sorting and package delivery center as part of Amazon's new concept to speed delivery to customers. This new business is expected to bring 150 new jobs to Victorville, which is great news for our community.

We're also excited to see yet another large retail space occupied in Victorville. Recently, Car X Change moved into the former Target building on Palmdale Road; Cardenas Markets moved into the old Ralphs also on Palmdale Road; Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) opened in the property that once housed Michaels; Harbor Freight moved into the former furniture store on 7th Street; and Shark Solutions moved into a vacant building on Hesperia Road. With the addition of these new businesses, Victorville's large retail centers are experiencing a resurgence. These larger "anchor" stores draw customers to shopping centers, which increases the success of smaller adjacent stores.

Other notable retail projects under construction in Victorville are the new Chick-fil-A and Dutch Bros. Chick-fil-A will be located on the site formerly occupied by Marie Callender's on Mariposa Road. Construction is well underway and is expected to be complete in June or July. Dutch Bros. will be part of a larger multi-tenant building currently under construction on Bear Valley Road near John's Incredible Pizza.

I'm also very happy to report that a few healthcare facilities are in the works. Western Dental is building a 4,768 square foot facility on La Paz Drive, next to Harbor Freight; and Desert Ridge Transitional Care, a 170-bed, skilled nursing facility is under construction on 11th Avenue. Plans have also been submitted for two hotels: an 87-room Holiday Inn Express on Mariposa Road at Talpa Street and a four-story Avid Hotel near Bear Valley Road and Cottonwood.

Although these new businesses are cause for optimism, we know that some of our local businesses are still struggling from the negative impacts of COVID-19. For this reason, we have provided monetary assistance and resources to help our small businesses with their economic recovery.

Our City Council voted to allocate \$445,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant dollars to establish the Reopening Victorville Small Business Assistance Grant Program. Small businesses could apply for grants of up to \$15,000 each to help them continue operations and retain employees. In phase one of this program, the City assisted 16 local businesses. Phase two recipients will be notified in the coming weeks.

Additionally, since the start of the pandemic, our Economic Development Division has been sharing information about grant programs and resources to assist our small businesses. This information is posted to our website and distributed to subscribers of our email blasts. You can view these helpful resources and register to receive our emails at vv.city/businessassistance. I also invite you to reach out to our helpful Economic Development Team at (760) 955-5032.

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