



2ND & PCH Nearly Ready For Its Closeup

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Next Thursday, Oct. 24, nearly a decade of work will come to fruition for Jean Paul Wardy, president of CenterCal Properties.

That day will end the wait of nearly a quarter-century for property owner Ray Lin and a fair share of the Long Beach community hoping for something of quality at the southeast corner of Second Street and Pacific Coast Highway.

It's called 2ND & PCH. Thursday will be the grand opening for the new commercial center.

"We were working on this site for six years before we signed a deal with the property owner to develop the site," Wardy said Tuesday during a hard-hat tour of the block-long property. "Retailers actually came to us looking for a location. They hadn't been able to find a site."

On the other side, the city and property owner Takisun (the Lin family) had struggled to find an acceptable development on the site. It had been home to the SeaPort Marina Hotel, once a high-end hotel on the city's east side, but most recently a rundown property used at least partially for longer term housing.

Takisun took two different runs at developing the land with a residential component with two different developers. Both were shot down at the City Council level of the permitting process.

That made way for CenterCal, which proposed a commercial center that fit within the current zoning restrictions, including building height and use. With the signing of Whole Foods as the center's anchor, leasing and permitting began in earnest in 2017.

"I've been pretty hands-on since the beginning," Wardy said. "We had a vision early on, and the leasing has gone great."

"There's no doubt customers are shopping differently these days. The online shopping is convenient. You need to offer something people can only find here, and offer a high-quality experience. With our list of retailers, restaurants and services, we've accomplished that."

Retail tenants at 2ND & PCH range from the familiar to the highly specialized — Urban Outfitters, lululemon, Athleta, Warby Parker, gorjana, Paper Source, The Shade Store, Linne's Boutique, and Free People.

Restaurants and eateries exhibit the same mix — Shake Shack, The Bungalow, Ola Mexican Kitchen, Hungry Angelina, Tocaya Organica, Caffè Luxxe, Noble Bird Rotisserie, Urban Plates, Otosan, The Italian Homemade Company, and Tuesday's Sweet Shoppe.

Wardy said the same customer-centric approach was used for service providers. Large gyms along the lines of 24-Hour Fitness weren't considered.

Instead, individual experiences are stressed in the new businesses, including Barry's Bootcamp, Hawt Yoga, Sephora, Motion Stretch Studio, Holly and Hudson Nail Lounge, The Solution, BOXHAUS, LATHER and Be Fit Pilates.

There also will be financial help available with Chase and HSBC banks and TSG Wealth Management. AT&T Mobility will handle cell phone needs.

The center should be fully leased by next summer, Wardy said.

One item — a movie theater or entertainment venue — was left off the list on purpose, he said

"We have a number of great restaurants and bars that undoubtedly will have some (entertainment),)" he said. "As for theaters, there are two in close proximity (at Marina Pacifica and the Marketplace)."

Impact on businesses in close proximity, including those on Second Street in Naples and Belmont Shore, has been an often-raised concern in discussions about 2ND & PCH.

"It's been our experience that a center bringing more people to shop who hadn't shopped in the area before has a good effect," Wardy said. "With lots of activity, basically everyone will prosper."

The center's architectural style is followed throughout, with flat roofs, clean lines and attention to detail. There is significant landscaping around open areas and common seating spaces, and the parking — with more than 1,000 spaces in a garage at the eastern end and on roofs (with bridges between buildings) is expected to be adequate, Wardy said. A street runs through the center, giving access to the parking.

"With our goal of providing a great customer experience, we've kind of obsessed over details," Wardy said. "I think it turned out well."

http://www.gazettes.com/news/business/nd-pch-nearly-ready-for-its-closeup/article_7e006efe-f03d-11e9-9fa6-13a8aa72ddd2.html