

Spring Hill Mall (Hill)
Spring Hill opening projects 2,000 jobs

By PATRICIA BOMBARD

The opening this year of Homart Development Company's Spring Hill Mall, expected to generate more than 2,000 job opportunities, may have repercussions affecting a corridor from Elgin north to Crystal Lake, according to some employment authorities.

Homart officials have said there may be as many as 3,000 jobs available when the 140-store mall in West Dundee is fully opened, and James Marino, manager of the Illinois Job Service office in Elgin, said there is a large number of people in nearby communities "who can use" one of the different types of jobs that will be offered.

Marino pointed out that the jobs available will primarily be entry-level positions, with flexible hours. He said they are the type of jobs that help housewives with child care problems, and teenagers needing work.

"Students from this area are having a very difficult time finding jobs," Marino added.

Marino said his office helped provide applicants for jobs at Woodfield Mall during the last Christmas season, and he estimated the number of jobs available in a large mall

"probably doubles" during the busiest holiday season of the year.

In addition to the jobs at the mall, Marino predicted that the shopping center may provide a boost to the Elgin-Crystal Lake corridor because of an increase in public transportation. He said the large number of visitors to the mall may prompt the Regional Transportation Authority to provide bus service to the mall from outlying areas.

If this happens, anticipated Marino, the increase in public transportation from Elgin or Crystal Lake to the mall "could open up jobs in Carpentersville and Crystal Lake to Elgin" residents. "It would really help a lot of people," Marino added.

He said a number of factories in Carpentersville would become possible places of employment for Elgin residents with the added transportation, and added that Carpentersville residents might also find new job opportunities in Crystal Lake within reach with more bus service.

Marino also pointed out that the opening of the mall will probably have "a rolling effect" that will generate even more jobs because of the additional spending power of the

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residents employed by the mall. Much of the employees earnings will go back into the community in goods and services purchased, and will spur the growth of new businesses, and creating more jobs, explained Marino.

He said the entire effect should create an even healthier community. "The worst thing that can happen to a place is not to have new jobs," he added.

Marino said his office has been in contact with Homart Development Company about providing applicants and interview services for the mall, but he said the company is not ready to begin recruitment activities yet.

He said a new development, such as the mall, generally does not begin to seek employees until about four to six weeks before the scheduled opening. Homart officials are projecting that at least a portion of the mall will be open by August of this year.

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