

# Spring Hill has meant progress for Dundee

By JILL JÁNOV  
The Northwest Herald

WEST DUNDEE — After nine years, Spring Hill Mall continues to attract more people to shop, work and live in Dundee Township villages.

The mall provides jobs for about 3,000 people, and its presence has prompted other developers to build stores and homes around it.

"It's progress," said Calvin Grafelman, West Dundee Village trustee. "It brought with it a lot of jobs, growth and more traffic."

Each day, an average of 14,000 cars drive through the parking lot and an average of 35,000 people shop and work at the mall, Spring Hill Mall General Manager Diana Miller said.

About 500 people have moved to West Dundee and about 700 moved to Carpentersville since the mall opened in 1980.

"It's been a very positive impact on development west of the river," said Carpentersville Village Manager Curt Carver.

The sales tax generated from the mall helps West Dundee and Carpentersville pay for village services and maintain tax rates, officials say.

"It's been positive from the aspect that we've been able to accept a number of projects and provide a high level of municipal services that we would not have been able to without putting a burden on the residents," said Joseph Cavallaro, West Dundee

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Bonnie Trafelet / The Northwest Herald

Since Spring Hill Mall opened in 1980, traffic has increased considerably at Ill. Routes 72 and 31 in West Dundee.

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Courtesy photo

Shown is an aerial view of the land in West Dundee before Spring Hill Mall was built.

## **Mall**

Village Administrator.

West Dundee has the second lowest property tax in Kane County, he said.

Spring Hill Mall is located on the boundaries of Carpentersville and West Dundee. It has 140 shops and six major department stores. Twenty percent of the regional mall is in Carpentersville and the remaining 80 percent is in West Dundee.

West Dundee receives about \$1.5 million in sales tax annually. Last year, Carpentersville received \$373,801 in sales tax from Spring Hill Mall.

Money is not the only thing the regional mall has added to the area.

Carpentersville Police Sgt. Verne Lagerstrom said although

the number of crimes — such as retail thefts and vehicle vandalism — has increased, the current rate is not rampant and it may be less than average for a mall the size of Spring Hill.

“The mall is seen as a good thing,” Lagerstrom said. “There is nothing abnormal about the (criminal) incidents. Much more good comes from it than problems.”

There are 300 acres surrounding the mall, which was once the D. Hill Nursery Co. The company dated back to 1855 and in the 1920s it was known to be the world’s largest producer of evergreen trees.

“It was beautiful, quiet, serene and there was no pollution,” said the fourth generation son of D. Hill Nursery, Platt Hill. “It was like having a big arboretum in

your backyard.”

David Hill opened the nursery in 1855. The soil gradually became depleted from four generations and more than 120 years of evergreen production. The trees took longer to grow as the soil depleted.

In 1978, the fourth generation son, Platt Hill, decided to close the nursery and open Platt Hill retail gardening store on the corner of Ill. Routes 72 and 31. He sold the parcel to the Homart Development Corp. of Chicago to build the mall. Homart sold portions of the land to restaurants and stores.

“He would be amazed,” Platt Hill said his great grandfather’s reaction to the mall would be if he were alive. “But I don’t think he would say it was necessarily bad.”