



THE VOICE OF AURORA, COLO.



News Living Sports Opinions Special Sections Blogs Multi Media Obituaries Advertising Classifieds Contact Us Home

Friday, January 2, 2009

Archives > News > Business

Print | E-mail | Comment (No comments posted.) | Rate | Text Size

Havana weathers present, looks to '09

By BRANDON JOHANSSON
The Aurora Sentinel

Published: Wednesday, December 31, 2008 2:18 PM MST

AURORA | For much of the country's economy, the 2008 holiday shopping season will be remembered as a dismal one.

Holiday sales fell from 2 percent to 4 percent compared to a year ago, according to SpendingPulse, a division of MasterCard Advisors. Excluding gas and car sales, they dropped between 5.5 percent and 8 percent from Nov. 1 through Dec. 24, as key categories from luxury to electronics posted double-digit sales declines. Sales of electronics and appliances fell almost 27 percent.

And looking ahead, experts say 2009 could be a year marked by similarly slow sales and ultimately, a rash of store closings.

But along Havana Street in Aurora, retailers and business owners have a surprisingly sunny outlook on the economy and are hopeful that 2009 will be a banner year.

"It's going to be a huge year," said Gayle Jetchick, executive director of the Havana Business Improvement District.

The Gardens on Havana, a \$110 million redevelopment project on the site of the old Buckingham Square Mall near East Mississippi Avenue and Havana, is on track to open later this year, with some stores opening their doors to customers in March and others later in 2009. Officials say they hope the new retail space and residential properties will spark redevelopment along the Havana corridor.

Jetchick said business owners along the corridor are looking forward to the project's completion and the thousands of shoppers each week it is expected to attract to the area.

"This is going to be really a big exciting year," she said.

Get breaking news stories sent directly to your email!

100 Years of News
Aurora Sentinel
1908 - 2008



Steve Wilkinson, owner of A+ Mailroom, packs a gift to be shipped Dec. 30 at A+ Mailroom near East Havana Street and Mississippi Avenue in Aurora. (Heather A. Longway/The Aurora Sentinel)



A Kohl's department store, one of the anchors of the shopping district is scheduled to open first, followed in June by the opening of a Dick's Sporting Goods and in September by the opening of a Sprouts Farmers' Market, Jetchick said.

While those projects are on schedule, Jetchick said there have been some snags.

A pet store was supposed to open in the shopping district in 2009, but the store, which Jetchick didn't name, pulled out. Another pet store is in discussions with property managers, she said, but nothing has been finalized.

Finding retailers to rent some of the space also has been a challenge in the tough economic time, but Jetchick said she wasn't too worried about that yet.

While The Gardens on Havana development means the future could be bright for businesses along the corridor, the present has been a struggle, Jetchick said, though not as bad as some sectors of the economy.

"Every time I sit here in the office, the business news is depressing," she said. "Then I go out and work with the businesses and the general consensus is we're holding our own."

Jetchick said many business owners along the corridor are saying the holiday season wasn't as disastrous as it was in other places.

She also said many businesses have accepted that the sagging economy is out of their control and they simply need to wait it out until things get better.

At A+ Mailroom near Havana and Mississippi — across the street from where Gardens on Havana will be — owner Steve Wilkinson said this year was slower than last year at his packaging and mailbox facility.

Search box with a search button.

Daily Headlines E-mail
Local headlines delivered to your InBox!

Advertisement

100 Years of News
Aurora Sentinel
1908 - 2008
The Voice of Aurora for 100 Years

AUTO BODY

STATE FARM
Auto
Life
Fire
INSURANCE

Mark Vissering
(303) 745-0034

AP Associated Press

Rt Sen. Pell, Proponent of Student Grants, Dies

Couple Has Similar Twins for Second Time

Video Essay: Ringing in 2009

The Christmas season in particular was slower than a year ago, he said, though it didn't seem as bad as it could have been.

"It hasn't been too slow," he said.

Wilkinson has owned the mail room for the past two years, though the store has been there under different owners for more than 20 years.

When Gardens on Havana opens, Wilkinson said he expects his business to do well thanks to the influx of shoppers in the area.

"All the retail will help tremendously for all of us, I'm sure," he said. "It looks like it's pretty promising."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

[« Previous Article](#)

Crude ends extraordinarily volatile year below \$45

[Next Article »](#)

Colorado's expected ethanol boom hasn't come

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of aurorasentinel.com.

You must register with a valid email to post comments. Only your Member ID will be posted with the comments.

Registered users sign in here:

*Member ID:

*Password:

Remember login?
(requires cookies)

[Forgot Your Password?](#)

Become a Registered User

Do not use usernames or passwords from your financial accounts!

Note: Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required!

*Create a Member ID:

*Choose a password:

*Re-enter password:

*E-mail Address:

*Year of Birth:

(children under 13 cannot register)

*First Name:

*Last Name:

*Zip Code:

Article Rating

Current Rating: 0 of 0 votes!

Rate File: -

[Return to: Business](#) < | [Home](#) < | [Top of Page](#) ^

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Syndicated Features](#) | [RSS](#) | [e-Edition](#)

Copyright © 2009 Aurora Sentinel. All rights reserved.
Unauthorized reproduction is prohibited.



Aurora Sentinel
14305 E. Alameda Ave.
2nd Floor
Aurora, CO 80012
P: (303) 750-7555
F: (303) 750-7699

Powered by TownNews.com