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City Creek to open its first condos this month

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The 10 million annual visitors won't come for two years, but City Creek Center will open the first doors of its 700 new downtown Salt Lake City households by month's end.

And, in two weeks, a restaurant will open at those nearly complete Richards Court condos, across the street from the LDS temple.

That update on the \$1.5 billion-plus, 23-acre downtown face-lift came Tuesday from H. David Burton, presiding bishop of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, saying the full City Creek Center is on schedule to open "about this time" in 2012.

Speaking at a breakfast fundraiser for Envision Utah, Burton also unveiled pictures of the project's underground parking. The 5,400 stalls, which replace the previous 4,000 terrace and rooftop stalls, are just about finished.

"When we started, the economy was bursting at the seams. We all know what's happened since," said Burton, calling City Creek downtown's one "bright spot."

Carrying their hard hats and lunch coolers, thousands of construction workers cram downtown every day. When City Creek opens, the retail sector is expected to employ 5,000 people.

A video simulation showed a rendering of the 50,000-square-foot Harmons grocery that soon will rise just east of State Street along 100 South. Sleek, silver and futuristic, the modern market is set to open in 2011.

Individual elements are mostly on schedule. Burton noted the frame for the sky bridge across Main Street is complete, while the already-humming food court served 2,000 meals Monday. Deseret Book's flagship store recently opened on South Temple as well.

Besides the 90-unit Richards Court on South Temple between Main and West Temple, the Deseret Building (formerly the First Security Bank Building) on the corner of 100 South and Main will wrap this year. Burton notes the latter's rehab will be as close to "Class A" office space as possible, given the building's age.

In 2011, Burton says Harmons will open its doors as will City Creek's South Temple office building. Most of the living space also is slotted for next year. That includes the Regent condos, the rental units on Main between 100 South and South Temple and the towering Promontory condo building on the corner of South Temple and West Temple. Burton says officials will begin marketing the Promontory condos this summer.

The biggest challenge is making the massive project -- given the city's famously big blocks -- walkable. To increase the ambiance of urban living and shopping, the former Crossroads and ZCMI mall blocks basically have been diced in half.

Deciding, as Burton says, to open "some of the legacy streets of years gone by" will bring the capital's downtown back to the future.

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