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## Big box store off target in Town Center

By: Cheri March

Come this fall, the El Dorado Hills Town Center's bevy of European-inspired boutiques will be joined by the shopping center's first big box store. Whether or not residents accept it is the question.

Local opinion on Target, slated to open in October, varied.

"It's better than a Wal-Mart," said April Sowa, a sales associate at neighboring store Olive Tree Furniture. "I'd hate to see a Wal-Mart up here."

"I think Target's going to be a great anchor," said Annick Pressler, Olive Tree's owner, "though I'd rather have a Nordstrom."

Potential shoppers were a bit more wary than the storeowner.

"At first, I was pleased about it being more convenient than having to go deep into Folsom and fight the traffic," said Jane Lee, an El Dorado Hills resident.

But Lee said she couldn't shake the feeling that Target just won't fit the Town Center's prevailing theme.

"The fountains, the flowers and the themed shops convey one experience and Target is quite a different one," Lee said. "The whole area begs a story of dueling planning commissions unable to agree on a long-range vision. If all parties had come to an agreement and stuck with the Tuscan-themed shopping experience, El Dorado Hills would have been the jewel of the area."

Cameron Park resident Lori Mortensen was similarly conflicted.

"It will make it easier for me to go to Target," Mortensen said. "But on the downside, I'm always disappointed to see small communities mushroom into large, impersonal cities."

But Mortensen said she's focusing her concerns on even bigger development, including the pending Foothill Oaks Casino in Shingle Springs and a rumor she heard of an El Dorado Hills mall.

"A mall will definitely ratchet up the traffic as much as the Indian gaming casino," Mortensen said.

El Dorado Hills' resident Ann King said she wasn't too concerned about the new store, but she hoped the sheriff's department would beef up security to counteract a potential "drag-down" effect Target might have on the area.

"As long as Town Center doesn't become 'Oh Little Town of Meth-lehem,' we'll be fine," she said. "And if people don't like it, there's always Folsom, with its more contained dragged-down area and tweaker hangouts."

Jodi Mottashed of Cameron Park was a little more optimistic.

Though Mottashed initially deemed the store unnecessary, she's since had a change of heart.

"I realized that our county is losing all of the revenue from the many that travel to Folsom for a simple trip to Target," Mottashed said. "So, even if it doesn't exactly fit, I think the benefit to the county will be tremendous."



Danny Haukedalen sips a glass of chardonnay in a comfortable spot at the upscale Town Center in El Dorado Hills. Local residents wonder if the idea of building a big box store like Target on the fancy grounds was such a good idea after all. Robert Scott/The Telegraph

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