



Wal-Mart Gets Warm Welcome in Miami Gardens

Samantha Joseph, Daily Business Review
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Walmart at 3799 NW 167th St. in Miami Gardens
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Shut out of Midtown Miami for years, the world's largest retailer set up shop in another Miami-Dade County neighborhood with relative ease.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the new anchor tenant at the Palmetto Gardens Plaza in Miami Gardens, opened a 40,000-square-foot Neighborhood Market occupying nearly two-thirds of the shopping center still under construction on Northwest 167th Street.

The retailer will add about 100 jobs and boost traffic at the plaza just off the busy Palmetto Expressway at Douglas Road, where T-Mobile, Cell Phone Repair and Lee Nails stores will round out the tenant roster.

"With Wal-Mart operating seven days a week, we are able to offer tenants excellent exposure and increased customer activity," said Alan S. Macken, plaza owner and principal of Macken Companies Inc. "The business strategy enables us to contribute to the neighborhood through job creation while also attracting a better tenant pool that recognizes the benefit of neighboring a Wal-Mart."

His warm welcome is a stark contrast to passionate opposition facing the retailer in Miami's trendy Midtown neighborhood, where some residents filed suit to block a 203,000-square-foot outlet.

Wal-Mart won the latest round of Midtown sparring in November when city commissioners gave it the green light and granted a special permit despite a lawsuit and loud protests from a group of residents opposing the mega store.

In Miami Gardens, the new outlet is a miniature version of the superstore, a supermarket concept that deviates from the big-box format to occupy smaller spaces and compete with aggressively growing dollar stores.

As deep discounters like Dollar Tree, Family Dollar and Dollar General expand and chip away at market share from larger competitors, Wal-Mart struck back with its smaller Neighborhood and Express formats to dot the landscape between its outsized stores.

The new store is less than four miles west of a Wal-Mart Supercenter on Northwest Second Avenue and about three miles south of another on Northwest 27th Avenue.