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Gloucester, Mathews included in fried chicken chain expansion

BY BILL NACHMAN

Bojangles', a fried chicken and biscuit restaurant chain, has announced plans to open 15 new stores throughout Hampton Roads including stores in Gloucester and Mathews.

Chris Bailey, director of franchise development for the Charlotte, N.C.-based chain, said March 9 that the new stores are expected to be built in the next five years. Bailey could not provide specifics on the Gloucester and Mathews stores, but said a franchisee is looking at sites for those and other locations in the

Peninsula area. Other franchisees plan to add stores in South Hampton Roads, he said.

Bojangles' has more than 300 stores in the United States, Bailey said, with most owned by franchisees. In addition, the company has a small number of foreign stores, with restaurants in China, Honduras, and Mexico proving to be popular with residents seeking "food like they eat in America."

The typical Bojangles' store has about 3,500-3,700

square feet, Bailey said, and planned by East Coast Quality Foods, Inc., a franchisee which has committed to build 6-10 restaurants in the Peninsula area, Bailey said. The Middle Peninsula stores will join several other new stores on the Peninsula, he said, with stores planned in Newport News, York County and elsewhere.

Fried chicken continues to be the company's main draw, Bailey said. Bojangles', under a different franchisee, had a store in Gloucester for several years in the mid-1990s.