

Bojangles' to expand in Triad

BY LAURA YOUNGS

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Fast-food giant Bojangles' Famous Chicken 'n' Biscuits is planning as many as five new locations and several store remodels in the Triad as part of a larger, multimillion dollar expansion this year. Total investment could top \$5 million.

Eric Newman, executive vice president of Charlotte-based Bojangles', said sites in Reidsville and Dobson in Rockingham and Surry counties, respectively, have been submitted for new restaurants, but declined to give the specific sites. Franchise agreements are not in place yet, but he said those locations will likely be open by year end.

A third, 3,800-square-foot location opened in January in Yanceyville on N.C. 86 in Caswell County. While plans are not yet in for more restaurants, Newman said the area could get as many as five in total this year — at a cost of about \$1 million each, including real estate. Each location usually employs about 50 part-time and full-time workers, he said.

Additionally, the company is planning to renovate the interior and grounds of five existing Triad restaurants. Renovations tend to run at least \$160,000 per restaurant. One of those is the Mayodan restaurant in Rockingham County; Newman declined to say where the other four renovations will occur.

Last year, Bojangles' opened four new company stores in the Triad, including a

BOJANGLES' RESTAURANTS INC.

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Address: 9432 Southern Pine Blvd.,
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Phone: (704) 940-8600

No. of stores: 435

rebuilt one in High Point, as well as ones in King and Walkertown in Forsyth County, and in Greensboro on Pisgah Church Road.

The Triad has 52 Bojangles' restaurants, second only to the Charlotte region. Newman said the company has been using community banks to finance the expansion, as they're more likely to lend in a tight credit market.

Bojangles' isn't the only fast food company broadening its reach. Greensboro-based Biscuitville is planning to build seven new restaurants in the state this year, and by mid-March, will have renovated 40 locations.

Steve Ellis, vice president of Staubach Retail of the Carolinas, said such chains are taking advantage of an environment in which people are opting for less expensive options when dining out. The recession also means fast-food franchises can often find cheaper real estate and construction costs.

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