

# Suffolk News-Herald

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The Bojangles' restaurant chain is adding more than 80 new locations in the state of Virginia and 18 specifically to the South Hampton Roads area. *Contributed Photo*

## 'Bo' coming to HR

By Lauren Wicks  
Staff Writer

Move over KFC, there is a new poultry chain that wants its piece of the burgeoning Suffolk business community.

Bojangles', the famous chicken and biscuits chain that boasts a spicier and more Cajun flavor-driven menu, has announced plans to open 18 new locations in the South Hampton Roads area over the course of the next five years. These openings are a part of what Bojangles' officials are referring to as "one of the company's most aggressive development plans in the U.S."

"It's a major growth push for us," said Chris Bailey, director of franchise development for Bojangles'. "We have finally found the right spots and the right times. It's a perfect storm so to speak, everything is just converging together."

In addition to the South Hampton Roads push, the company also has plans that include opening more than 30 new locations throughout the region during the next five years.

"Overall...we're going to open 80 locations in the state of Virginia," Bailey said. "Particularly the markets where (Suffolk is) based at we'll have 18 in the next five years."

As of right now, there are only 19 Bojangles' restaurants in the whole state. The closest Bojangles' restaurant to Suffolk is located on Northhampton Boulevard in Virginia Beach, and the next closest being on Briarfield Road in Hampton.

However, despite being small in number, the two



locations success was a key to the expansion of more restaurants in the surrounding Tidewater area. According to a press release regarding the expansion, these openings will not conflict with the locations currently operating but are planned "to conveniently accommodate the brand's growing fan base in the area."

By accommodating the brand's fan base in nine other Southeastern states, Bailey credits the company growing with their customers as a key to this expansion plan.

"Operationally the system has continued to strengthen," he said. "We have gotten better at this as we have gone along. We hit the right points with the right franchises hitting the right times...It seems like a lot... it's not that difficult to do when you have the right groups to work with."

Bojangles' is slated to take its place in Suffolk with a Bridge Road location in North Suffolk by June. However, a new location will premiere even sooner in Carrollton. Right now, the restaurant is scheduled to open in April.

From there, plans are then in the works for Hampton, Newport News and Yorktown to follow later in the year.

Bailey added that if Suffolk citizens are traveling south, the company plans on having a location available so "every 10 to 15 miles" there will be a Bojangles' ready to serve any hungry travelers.

In all, the total expansion effort for Bojangles' will

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# Bojangles: Coming here

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generate more than \$50 million annually for circulation into the local economy, not to mention employment opportunities for local workers. On average, each location will hire anywhere from 25 to 35 workers.

“We have become a significant employer in the markets that we’re in,” Bailey added.

Bojangles’ was founded in 1977 by Jack Fulk and Richard Thomas.

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