



G.J. McCarthy/Staff Photographer

Big Town, the Dallas area's first enclosed shopping mall when it opened in 1959, was razed in 2006. FedEx, attracted by the location at Interstate 30 and U.S. Highway 80, is opening an automated sorting facility on the site.

Fedex plans
distribution hub
where Big Town
mall once stood

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From shopping to shipping

A Mesquite property with a storied past will be the site of a large FedEx distribution hub.

FedEx will locate a large regional distribution center on the former site of the Big Town shopping center on U.S. Highway 80 near Buckner Boulevard.

The development tract was the site of the Dallas area's first shopping mall, which opened in 1959.

Big Town mall was demolished in 2006 and the property rezoned for industrial construction.

Dallas-based developer Scott Rohrman's 42 Real Estate LLC is building the 334,000-square-foot shipping hub for FedEx.

"It will take up most of the site," Rohrman said. "We'll have the building finished by December.

"But they are installing an automated sorting facility, which will take six months or longer to get running," he said. "FedEx probably won't start operations until September of next year."

It's expected to employ 500 people.

FedEx chose the site because of its location at Interstate 30 and U.S. 80, which is also close to LBJ Freeway.

Rohrman's firm will own the building and lease it long-term to FedEx.

"We are developing in 15 states for FedEx," he said.

The first enclosed shopping center of

its kind in the state, Big Town originally contained Sanger Bros., Montgomery Ward and J.C. Penney department stores.

At one time there was a small amusement center, bowling alley and movie theater on the property.

Big Town's business declined after construction of larger shopping centers in the area.

In 2005, after the shopping center had closed, it was temporarily used to house people displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

A Dallas real estate partnership bought the site in 2012.

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