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New Ownership Brings New Life to Historic Los Portales Mall with Orchard Street Market Vision

Carefree, AZ. (July 1, 2026) – The Town of Carefree is excited to see new energy and investment coming to one of the Town's most recognizable historic properties. Los Portales Mall, a longstanding architectural landmark in the heart of Carefree since the 1980s, is preparing for a new chapter under new ownership, with a vision to restore the character and life the property was once known for while bringing it into the modern world.



The new concept, Orchard Street Market, is being led by co-founders Ken Martindale and Sharon Aulicino, along with operating partner Charlie Yamashita. Their vision is to restore and reimagine the building while preserving the distinctive features that have long made the property special, including its architecture, stained-glass dome ceilings, charming archways, and inviting atmosphere.

Following months of collaboration between the Town of Carefree and the new ownership group a Sales Tax Development Agreement was unanimously approved at the June 2, 2026, Council Meeting to support significant reinvestment in the property. Over the past few decades, the property has faced increasing challenges, including aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance, underutilized spaces, and areas that no longer meet modern code requirements. The necessary improvements that address these challenges will create new opportunities for curated retailers, restaurants, artisans, and community gathering spaces.

The project aligns with the Town's economic development objectives of encouraging reinvestment in existing commercial properties, supporting locally owned businesses, enhancing the visitor experience, and expanding the Town's long-term sales tax base.

"Los Portales has long been one of Carefree's most iconic landmarks. This investment represents an opportunity to breathe new life into a treasured property, create new destinations for residents and visitors, and strengthen the economic vitality of our Town Center for decades to come," said Mayor John Crane. For many longtime residents and visitors, Los Portales Mall represents an important part of Carefree's history. In its prime, the property was filled with shops, restaurants, and gathering spaces that made it a beloved destination and helped define the Carefree Town Center experience. With Orchard Street Market, the goal is to recapture that same sense of activity and connection while introducing fresh, modern offerings that reflect the needs of today's residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Town also recognizes the importance of the current tenants who have continued to contribute to Los Portales and the broader Carefree business community. As the project moves forward, the Town will work with property ownership and current tenants to explore creative solutions that may help those businesses remain in Carefree, should they choose to do so.



According to the Orchard Street Market vision, the upper level will include a fresh market and artisan makers, while the lower level will feature a curated mix of restaurants, wine bars, and experiential concepts designed to give people a reason to stay long after shopping is done.

Carefree Town Administrator Kristen Krey says, "This project is exactly the type of strategic reinvestment the Town hopes to encourage. It transforms an underutilized property into a destination that will generate economic activity, attract visitors, support local businesses, and strengthen the long-term vitality of Carefree's commercial core.

The Sales Tax Development Agreement reflects the Town's commitment to encouraging strategic private investment in Carefree's commercial core while protecting the unique charm and character that make the Town special. The Town is excited to support a project that honors Los Portales' past, strengthens its future, and brings new vitality to the heart of Carefree.

Updates on Orchard Street Market project will be shared on orchardstreetmarket.com and through Town of Carefree communications and webpages as needed.

About the Town of Carefree

Carefree, a picturesque community of over 3,700 residents nestled in the serene Sonoran Desert Foothills, is known as one of Arizona's friendliest small towns. Since its incorporation in 1984, Carefree has embraced a unique desert lifestyle, blending harmonious architecture with a vibrant culinary scene, a thriving art community with numerous galleries, and a commitment to health, wellness, and sustainability.

The town hosts a variety of events year-round, from art festivals and farmers' markets to outdoor concerts and non-profit fundraisers, all fostering a welcoming and engaged community. Whether you're looking to live, visit, or explore, Carefree offers a peaceful yet enriching experience.

Learn more about Carefree's culture, events, and opportunities by visiting carefree.org or calling 480-488-3686.