

Casino is a good fit for Arundel Mills - Baltimore Sun

Written by Administrator
Friday, 29 October 2010 16:22 -

As [Election Day](#) quickly approaches, there continues to be much confusion among Anne Arundel County residents about exactly what the proposed casino at Arundel Mills means for the area around the mall and for Anne Arundel County. Even after all this time, the question I am most asked is still: "Now, where will this casino be located?" As vice president/general manager of Arundel Mills, I believe that all Anne Arundel County residents need to know, straight from the source, why I believe Maryland Live! is a great fit for Arundel Mills.

Maryland Live! will be a separate, free-standing facility, separated from Arundel Mills by the inner mall ring road. Shoppers won't even know gaming is there unless they choose to enter the casino — and they must be 21 to do so. Those who do not wish to patronize the casino will see only a well-designed and well-kept building similar in size to a full-line department store, with a parking structure.

Arundel Mills is and will remain a family-friendly environment, one that offers many shopping, dining and entertainment options for our customers of all ages. As with any facility, it is up to parents to choose which activities are appropriate for their family — just as parents now choose whether or not to take their children to Dave & Buster's because alcohol is served, or which movies to see at Cinemark based on whether or not the content of the film is appropriate for their family.

Maryland Live! brings a state-of-the-art parking structure at Arundel Mills, complete with a "smart park" system with the green and red lights you have seen at BWI Airport. The structure will mean a net gain of more than 5,000 parking spaces, all available free of charge during all mall hours for Arundel Mills shoppers. In addition, access improvements will be made to the roads in and around Arundel Mills. We know that traffic and access are a concern and strongly believe that the development of Maryland Live! will help address these concerns rather than add to them.

One of the top customer requests we get at Arundel Mills is to add more restaurants. Maryland Live! offers an unprecedented opportunity to fill this request. The facility will add restaurants like The [Cheesecake Factory](#) , [Obrycki's](#) Crab House & Seafood Restaurant, Ruth's Chris Steakhouse and a [Bobby Flay](#) concept to the Arundel Mills area. Restaurants like these would not be a possibility without Maryland Live!

Maryland Live! brings the combination of retail and gaming to our county. It's no accident that

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some of the most successful shopping centers in the United States are adjacent to casinos. The combination maximizes tourist visits and creates a revenue-generating powerhouse — in this case, for Anne Arundel County. Arundel Mills is already the top tourist destination in Maryland; retail, hotel rooms and transportation already exist and do not need to be re-created for Maryland Live! as they would at virtually any other location in Anne Arundel County. Arundel Mills makes sense — from a revenue perspective, from an environmental perspective and from a tourism perspective.

The last thing Arundel Mills would do is jeopardize our already very successful facility. The center is 100 percent occupied — a distinction that very few shopping centers nationwide can claim. Our goal, first and foremost, has always been and will always be to offer all of our shoppers, both local and visiting, a great shopping, dining and entertainment destination. Maryland Live! is one more way for us to do so.

Gene Condon is vice president/general manager of Arundel Mills.

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