



Sevier Co. Events Center brings \$1 billion in development

October 14, 2007

By WHITNEY HOLMES
6 News Reporter

SEVIERVILLE (WATE) -- The Events Center in Sevierville has been open for business for almost a month now and so far, business is good.

"Just for the remainder of 2007, we have all but one week booked at our Events Center," shared Sevierville Mayor Bryan Atchley. "And for the next five years we are over fifty percent booked."

In fact, the 250,000 square foot building has events booked 19 years from now.

Unlike the other four convention centers in the state, this one has attractions that do not tie people up all day. The center itself is not a moneymaker, but its ability to draw people in, is.

"What we have booked at the Events Center are events that are two to three hours a day. So, where are the people the rest of the time?" asked Atchley. "They are out in the community playing golf. They are at our recreational facilities. They are out shopping. They are out eating."

The center is also spawning new development. Along highway 66, there is \$1 billion worth of private investment in the form of shops and restaurants. This attracts hundreds of new jobs and people looking to open their wallets.

"Retail shopping, restaurants, entertainment. None of that would have happened without the Events Center," explained Atchley. "If you were here five years ago you wouldn't recognize Sevierville today."

A resort and condos are now being built up around the center with a completion date set for July 2008. In addition, another golf course will be added to the one already available with a completion date set for spring 2009.

"The change in the last five years and the next five years, you ain't seen nothing yet," Atchley predicted.