

# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

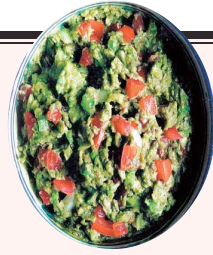
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## Segerstroms give YMCA land for new center

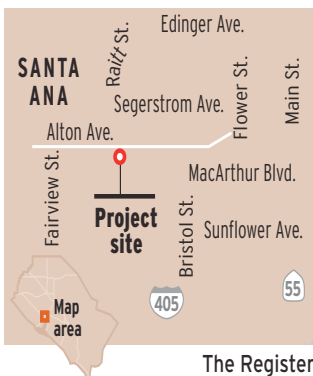
The YMCA of Orange County has received a 2.5-acre gift of land from the Segerstrom family to build a center in south Santa Ana, officials announced Wednesday.

Fund raising will now begin for the \$15 million center, which will include a soccer arena, 32,000-square-foot fitness center and rock-climbing course.

The land is part of the Armstrong Ranch area, where fields of lima beans are being replaced with housing developments, the county's largest Catholic church and Segerstrom High School.

- By Courtney Perkes

### YMCA on the way



The Register

### MORE ON LOCAL 1

**PLANS:** The gift helps make possible a \$15 million YMCA.



**ARTIST'S RENDERING:** The new YMCA facility in south Santa Ana, which would open in 2006, will include rock climb-

ing, a speed-soccer arena, a pool and fitness center and education programs.

COURTESY C.J. SEGERSTROM & SONS

# Segerstroms' gift praised

The donation of the land in Santa Ana enables the YMCA to move forward on a new facility in an area with few parks for a young population.

By COURTNEY PERKES  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

**SANTA ANA** • A Segerstrom family donation of 2.5 acres of farmland in south Santa Ana will make possible a state-of-the-art YMCA to meet an array of needs in a youthful, densely populated city with a shortage of parks. Neighbors and community

leaders praised the gift, which has been in discussion for several years but was formally announced Wednesday.

"We have a small park here, but it really doesn't offer anything for us," said Ann Soto, whose family lives within walking distance of the planned YMCA. "We leave the city area for other places."

The \$15 million YMCA

would open in 2006 and offer rock climbing, a speed-soccer arena, a pool and fitness center, and education programs such as diabetes prevention. Without the gift, worth an undisclosed amount of money, the project would not be possible, said Libby Borgen, director of marketing for the YMCA of Orange County. The donation also solidifies

plans for the final piece of the 90-acre Armstrong Ranch, the largest chunk of developable land left in the city.

The Segerstrom family developed South Coast Plaza and farmed the Armstrong Ranch lima bean fields for about 70 years.

"The family was pleased to

**CLOSE:** About 80,000 kids younger than 18 live within two miles of the new YMCA.

## YMCA: \$10 million still needs to be raised so building can begin in '05

FROM PAGE 1

do something that we trust will be of great benefit to the community," said Paul Freeman, spokesman for C.J. Segerstrom & Sons.

The YMCA offers programs in the city but does not have a center. More than 80,000 kids younger than 18 live within two miles of the site, at 2100 W. Alton Ave., Borgen said.

The YMCA still needs to raise \$10 million of the total cost so construction can begin next year.

"In a time of budget crunches and a lot of parks-and-rec programs being cut back, this is a great time for an organization like the YMCA to step forward," said Roman Reyna, a program director for the YMCA and city resident. "Some of the programs that they're bringing in here are going to be phenomenal."

South Santa Ana resident

Ignacio Muñiz, a physical education teacher and father of three, said he already is imagining family bike rides to the center. "We would probably be there at least two or three times a week. The things they offer, especially for low-in-

**"Some of the programs that they're bringing in here are going to be phenomenal."**

ROMAN REYNA  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR FOR  
THE YMCA

come students who can't pay for fitness programs or swimming lessons, are a great advantage for them."

Vince Fregoso, senior planner for Santa Ana, said YMCA officials took the needs of the community into consideration. For instance, they surveyed residents before replac-

ing a planned basketball gym with the soccer arena.

Armstrong Ranch is already under construction.

New houses on 35 acres are selling in the mid-\$800,000s. The Diocese of Orange owns 15 acres on which it tentatively plans to open Christ Our Savior Cathedral-Parish in five years, Fregoso said.

And last year, Santa Ana Unified School District broke ground on Segerstrom High School, which will be built on 38 acres purchased from the family for \$40 million.

"That's going to be a great complement to the high school, and it will be a great asset for that end of town," said school board President Rob Richardson about the YMCA. "This will be filling a void."

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