

First auto dealer to make mall debut

■ Pierotti Volvo-Nissan-Hyundai-Suzuki to open for business on Dec. 9 in auto mall

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FREMONT — After months of delays, the first area auto dealer is about to open its doors in the new auto mall in southern Fremont.

Pierotti Fremont Volvo-Nissan-Hyundai-Suzuki has set Dec. 9 as its first day of business in its new

\$5 million 52,000-square-foot car showroom and service center.

It will be alone there for at least a half year, because no other dealership has yet started construction within the 45-acre complex.

Hank Pierotti, who has just sold his dealership to general manager Jim Fletcher, said he expects things to stay that way for at least seven months.

By that time, he expects to be joined by Lexus of Fremont or Claridge Motors Ltd., which sells Rolls Royce, Porsche, BMW and

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Mercedes Benz automobiles.

Claridge and Lexus are the only dealerships headed to the mall that have gone through the city's planning approval process.

Having other dealers in the mall is important because the success of the auto mall concept depends on increased foot traffic as the result of putting a number of dealers in one spot.

"I honestly believe the way the other dealers are talking that they're going to go soon," Pierotti said. "There are just some stipulations they have to meet before they do, (set by) manufacturers and the city."

The Pierotti dealership, one of the first to locate in town,

has been selling cars on its lot at Decoto Road and Fremont Boulevard since the 1960s.

When complete, the 45-acre auto mall is expected to house at least seven dealers selling a minimum of 22 makes of automobile.

Catellus Development Corp., which sold the dealers the land, has another 38 acres that could be used for additional dealerships if the mall grows rapidly.

Owners in the mall area include: Pierotti; Claridge; Lexus; Hank Torian's Autowest franchise; Frank Meads' Mazda franchise; Mark Hamilton's Lincoln-Mercury/Jeep-Eagle franchise; and Chrysler Corp.