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VACAVILLE — Work to renovate Nut Tree Village's Market Pavilion and Bocce Grove into the Eats & Sweets Court and the Village Grove is under way.

The goal is to make both areas customer-friendly and generate more activity around Nut Tree's cluster of casual dining restaurants, said Sean Whiskeman of Westrust, the leasing and marketing group for Nut Tree Village.

Work to remove four of the Nut Tree's eight bocce courts to make way for a family-oriented park began Monday and is expected to take three weeks, Whiskeman said.

"We want to open out that beautiful grove of trees to be a more inviting place for families," Whiskeman said. "It will create a place where people can enjoy the shade."

The fireplaces to be built in the park will be patterned after ones at the original Nut Tree. A playground will be constructed in June, and the lighting will be improved.

"It will be a great way to open this park to the public," said Whiskeman, who added that the work will not affect parking for customers.

The work on what will be renamed the Village Grove coincides with the openings of new stores and restaurants in the nearby buildings.

Those include Matsu Sushi, the Thai restaurant Spice, the Huntington Learning Center and the Bead Gallery, where customers can create their own custom jewelry.

Plans to redesign the area now called the Market Pavilion will see the enclosed area just west of Fenton's Creamery become an open children's play area.

This area will still be covered by the breezeway but will be open at both ends. That will make the storefronts for Made in California, Winters Fruit Tree and the Vintage Sweet Shoppe more accessible storefronts.

The front of the building that now houses Villa Corona will be pushed back 20 feet from the roadway to create room for outdoor dining. Two new restaurants — the Cheese Steak Shop and What's Up Dog! — will share the dining area.

The new restaurants re expected to open in August.

"There will be better signage out front to better advertise the businesses," Whiskeman

said.

Westrust is also working on bringing in other tenants.

These renovations are expected to be finished by mid-June.

Whiskeman said Westrust is working closely with current tenants to ensure that any impacts will be minimized. Villa Corona and the Vintage Sweet Shoppe will be moving to nearby locations.

"None of the tenants will be impacted financially by these moves," he said.

Debbie Dever of the Vintage Sweet Shoppe said the move will be good for her store "because we'll have an outside venue. I expect the number of customers will double at least."

Westrust is making the changes to increase foot traffic and make the small stores accessible to customers.

Last year, the lack of business made it too tough for some tenants of the Market Pavilion to stay open. Three of them went out of business.