



DriveTime

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DriveTime, a Phoenix-based used car sales and finance company, is revving up for the Jacksonville market.

The company, which touts itself as the largest automotive financing dealership for people with credit issues, has plans to open four dealerships and an inspection facility in the Jacksonville area.

Permit applications for a 2,400-square-foot dealership at 1831 Cassat Ave., between San Juan Avenue and Park Street, have been filed with the city engineering and concurrency offices. According to the applications, construction is estimated at \$400,000.

Ashley Engler, a spokeswoman for DriveTime in Scottsdale, Ariz., said the first dealership is scheduled to open by early November on Blanding Boulevard. The Cassat Avenue location will be one of two to open in December, and a fourth will open in a yet-to-be determined location next year.

Each store will employ about 14 people; a full-service inspection center, scheduled to open in 2006, will employ about 50 people, Engler said.

The company, which operates nine dealerships in Orlando and seven in Tampa, plans to employ more than 100 people in Jacksonville with a total payroll, including benefits, of more than \$5 million. DriveTime already employs more than 380 people in the state, according to a news release.

Once the stores are open, employees also will volunteer at a local school. The company operates SchoolTime, a program that partners the company with at least one school in the area to donate time and resources to the school. DriveTime is partners with 15 elementary schools in the eight states in which it operates.