



## RETAIL HUB

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### RESTAURANT ROUNDUP

#### POLITAN ROW CLOSES

Rice Village food hall Politan Row has closed. New Orleans-based Politan Group opened the hall last year. A statement provided to the Houston Business Journal indicated Covid-19 was the reason behind the closure. Politan Row was open only four months before having to shutter when the pandemic hit.

#### JONATHAN'S THE RUB MOVES, ELIMINATES BYOB

Jonathan's The Rub BYOB is moving to 9090 Katy Freeway, inside a mixed-use office building, according to a press release. It will open before the end of April 2021, with the original location at 9061 Gaylord St. remaining open until then.

With the move comes some big changes. With its new name, Jonathan's The Rub at Campbell Place, the restaurant will no longer allow bring your own bottle, instead offering a full bar.

#### DAVID CHANG TO COMPETE FOR HOUSTON CHARITY

Celebrity chef David Chang, owner and founder of New York-based Momofuku, competed on ABC's "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" Nov. 15. His winnings will go to Houston restaurant charity Southern Smoke, according to a press release. Chang previously helped Southern Smoke raise money in 2017 for Hurricane Harvey relief.

#### HOT DOG FRANCHISE OPENS FIRST HOUSTON LOCATION

Dog Haus, a hot dog restaurant at 8422 Highway 6 N., opened Nov. 21. The 3,264-square-foot franchised restaurant serves hot dogs, corn dogs, burgers, wings, milkshakes and has a beverage menu with beer, wine, micheladas and other cocktails. It's the first location in Houston and the fifth in Texas.

#### COMMON BOND RAISES FUNDS

Common Bond's drive-thru concept, Common Bond On-The-Go Coffee & Bakery, reached its maximum fundraising goal on Next-Seed for its upcoming Garden Oaks location. Its offering sold out in 47 minutes.

Its maximum goal was \$225,000. The company said the rest of the funds needed will come from its tenant improvement budget and additional equity investors. The majority of those funds will go to build-out and equipment.

#### SHAKE SHACK TO OPEN IN THE WOODLANDS

Shake Shack Inc. (NYSE: SHAK) will open its location in The Woodlands Mall in November. It will be at 1201 Lake Robins Drive, Suite 700. It was originally supposed to open earlier this summer.

### GROWING BUSINESS

# TAKE IT OUTSIDE

## How CityCentre maintained success, added new tenants amid Covid-19

CityCentre hasn't seen any closures of its retailers or restaurants due to Covid-19, which its developer, Houston-based Midway, credits to its design and outdoor-friendly concept.

Restaurants in particular are doing well. As of September, traffic at CityCentre's retailers and restaurants was around 80% and 92%, respectively, of their business from that time last year, said Robert Williamson, senior vice president of investment management at Midway.

While customers can shop at national retailers online, depleting traffic from local stores, diners ordering food from restaurants do so locally.

What makes CityCentre different from other shopping centers is its design, Williamson said. The mixed-use district at the southeast corner of Interstate 10 and Beltway 8 features wide sidewalks and retailers have made social distancing easy, with businesses installing now-typical measures, like signs and floor markets.

Earlier this year, retail experts said that outdoor shopping centers would be the way of the future, and CityCentre is one such concept. Restaurants at CityCentre, many of which already had patio space, have increased tables outside.

"The restaurants here have been very good in adapting to operating in this new environment. Some of them, like Bella-green, really didn't have to do anything because they already had a nice big patio on the green. Same thing with Cyclone Anaya's," Williamson said.

However, the center is seeing a dramatic drop in office traffic as employees work from home due to Covid-19. CityCentre's office component is normally 90%



SHANNON O'HARA

Robert Williamson, senior vice president and investment management, Midway

leased. Now, 37% of the offices are physically occupied, which has heavily affected lunchtime traffic at restaurants.

Still, those restaurants, like many across the city, have shifted to delivery and to-go, becoming available to the growing number of apartment communities around the area.

Some retail landlords in Houston are forgiving rent or issuing deferrals, as previously noted by industry experts.

Williamson declined to give exact details on how Midway is working with tenants, stating it's case-by-case, but said that Midway isn't able to forgive rent across the board.

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anybody. At the same time, we have a mortgage to pay, same as tenants have bills to pay," Williamson said.

CityCentre is still opening new tenants, with Yi Peng Thai Dining, an upscale Thai restaurant, opening several weeks ago. Glasses company Warby Parker opened its fifth Houston-area location a month ago, and Lululemon expanded its location.

Those tenants had been in the works for some time, and their openings were slowed by Covid-19.

However, all are now open. In addition, Bateel, a gourmet date retailer, will open its second American store later this month.