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2018 N.H. retail rundown: Mixed-use developments, renovations, restaurants and non-traditional users - by Bryan Wright

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It has been both exciting and interesting to see how the retail sector has evolved in the New Hampshire market so far this year. This evolution includes mixed-use developments focused on the increasingly popular Live Work Play concept and a spike in the number of renovated and redeveloped centers – seemingly to attract restaurants and new non-traditional users.

Mixed-Use Developments

Live Work Play developments are on the rise and are a trend that is here to stay. The largest projects are Woodmont Commons in Londonderry, Merrimack Park Place in Merrimack, Tuscan Village in Salem, Gateway Park in Windham, and Market & Main in Bedford. These developments strive for convenience, consisting of a mix of retail, restaurant, entertainment, residential, hotel, medical, office, and R&D/flex users.

On a smaller scale, there is an increase of residential with retail development in the market. The Orpheum building in downtown Dover, now under construction, will house 130 residential units and about 7,000 s/f of restaurant/retail space. In downtown Manchester, the Citizens Bank building at 875 Elm St. and the Ted Herbert building at 922 Elm St. are being converted into new retail/restaurant space at the street level with apartments above.

Another development is the Residences at Riverfront Landing in Nashua. Phase I is almost complete with two residential buildings (76 apartments per building) and a clubhouse. In addition, another 5,700 s/f building has been constructed to feature a restaurant, retail, or office overlooking the Merrimack River.

Renovations & Redevelopments

In Nashua, the former Sports Authority at Royal Ridge Center was split and leased to HomeGoods and Sierra Trading Post, which are now open. Day's Jewelers is building a new home at 565

Amherst St., which will be the company's second location in the state.

At the corner of Rte. 102/Derry St. and Rte. 3A/Elm St. in Hudson, a brand new 13,000 s/f CVS replaced an old industrial building. CVS is moving from a smaller unit at the Hudson Mall and is set to open in September. The developer is also planning on opening a Cumberland Farms and a 5,500 s/f restaurant on the surrounding lots.

Rockingham Plaza in Salem is undergoing multiple renovations. Bob's Discount Furniture will be moving a few units down to take over the former Shaw's space at the entrance of the plaza. The Christmas Tree Shop is in the process of renovating its façade. Additionally, on the pad site, the former Denny's building was demolished and a new building is being built to house a 4,200 s/f Panera Bread and a 3,500 s/f Verizon store.

In Manchester, the former Osram facility on South Willow St. has been converted to retail. The Shoppes at 655 South Willow consist of about 90,000 s/f of retail space and 100,000 s/f of self-storage. Units are now being turned over to tenants.

Also in Manchester, the North End Shops at Livingston Plaza upgraded its façade, pylon, lighting, and parking lot at the end of last year. The Dollar Tree recently opened a new location at this plaza.

The Merrimack 360 plaza in Merrimack, home to Planet Fitness, Great Clips, Altitude Trampoline Park, Dollar General, Thirsty Moose Taphouse, and Hayward's Ice Cream, is finishing its final renovations and rebranding, and has been open for a couple of months.

Restaurants

One of the most active segments in retail continues to be restaurants, whether it's a new concept or existing users adding locations. In Nashua, Qdoba has opened a new location at the Aldi-anchored center at 270 Amherst St., while Panda Express has taken over the former Noodles Company space at the Daniel Webster Shops. Wok & Roll will open its first location at 291 Main St. and plans to open more locations throughout the state. Across the street, Wingstop opened its first N.H. location in the former Quiznos building.

Outside of Nashua, Wrap City, a NH-based fast casual restaurant, opened its third and fourth locations in Tilton and Brickyard Sq. in Epping.

In Rochester, MOOYAH has opened up its first location in the state at The Ridge.

At Market & Main in Bedford, Red Heat Tavern will open its first location in N.H., and The Friendly Toast's second location in N.H. is currently under construction.

In Manchester, 110 Grill is opening its fourth location in N.H. at 875 Elm St. and Tucker's announced its fifth location in the state at 725 Huse Rd., as well as a sixth location in Merrimack.

Non-Traditional Users

This evolving retail segment encompasses products or services that are more likely purchased at a store's physical location rather than online. Activity-based businesses, for example, are gaining popularity. Kid's World, an indoor playground, opened its first location at 288 N Broadway in Salem. Altitude Trampoline Park will open its third location in N.H. at the former Circuit City pad site at the Steeplegate Mall in Concord.

Outlook

As we move into the fall season and the second half of the year, we expect these trends in the N.H. retail sector to continue. With new tenants coming into the state, other established businesses growing, and non-traditional users seeking out retail space, it is no surprise that plazas are being built or renovated to attract these tenants. These are encouraging signs for the retail market and we envision a strong ending to 2018.

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