



ICSC Commerce & Communities Today

HBC is converting parts of its department stores into WeWork coworking offices. The retailer plans to open its first five SaksWorks units next month in the New York City area, including in former Lord & Taylor stores in Westchester County and Long Island and the Saks Fifth Avenue in Brookfield Place. More SaksWorks are in the works.

Russian discount supermarket chain Mere wants to expand in the U.S. The company is hiring a project manager and commercial property expert to research locations in Georgia and Alabama, negotiate leases and open stores.

Regional supermarket operator Lowes Foods is testing a concept that will offer made-to-order, ready-to-eat, heat-and-eat and grab-and-go options in a food hall. An in-store chef will oversee the culinary experience. The locations also will feature event spaces for birthday parties, book clubs and team celebrations. The company has not set an opening date for the first location, a 25,000-square-foot store in a former Earth Fare in Huntersville, North Carolina. Lowes Foods operates 80 full-service supermarkets in the Carolinas and is a subsidiary of grocery distributor Alex Lee.

Jeff Devlin, host of the DIY Network's Stone House Revival, opened the Schoolhouse Woodworking shop at PREIT's Exton Square in Pennsylvania. The space offers retail, a workshop for DIY events and space for consultations with potential renovation clients.

Wegmans will open its first Manhattan store in the former Astor Place Kmart in the second half of 2023. The company, which opened its first New York City location in the Brooklyn Navy Yard in October 2019, bought out Kmart's lease in the Vornado Realty Trust property.

Office furniture brand Herman Miller inked a lease for its latest store, on Dallas' furniture row on Knox Street. The store will open this fall. The brand, a division of MillerKnoll, will operate a 1,500-square-foot unit near other furniture flagships, including Crate & Barrel, Pottery Barn and RH. Herman Miller operates nine stores.

German Doner Kebab will open its first U.S. restaurant this month, at the American Dream megamall in New Jersey. The brand launched two Canada restaurants — in Ottawa and Surrey, British Columbia — in 2020 and opened a flagship in downtown Toronto this month. Expansion plans include 100 restaurants in Canada over the next 10 years, as well as locations across the U.S. In addition to American Dream, it has deals in place in New York City and Houston. The company's first location opened in Berlin in 1989, and the brand operates 70 restaurants worldwide.

Through the end of the second quarter, 22% of U.S. gyms have closed permanently due to COVID-19, according to Planet Fitness CEO Chris Rondeau. "At the same time, more Americans are realizing that fitness is essential to physical, mental and emotional well-being," he said on a second-quarter earnings call. "We believe Planet Fitness is the place that fills that gap with our affordable, non-intimidating workout environment, and as a result, we are confident in achieving and possibly exceeding our long-term target of 4,000 locations in the U.S." The company opened 24 Planet Fitness locations during the second quarter, bringing its total to 2,170. It plans to open 75 to 100 next year.

South Korea-based bakery chain Paris Baguette hired CBRE to expand throughout the U.S. and Canada. The company wants to open 30 locations ranging from 2,000 to 3,200 square feet in 20 markets this year and will attempt to grow to 1,000 locations over the next 10 years.

Bass Pro Shops will open its third St. Louis store, a 75,000-square-foot unit, in the second half of 2022. It will take space formerly occupied by Ross Dress for Less and Toys R Us.

Fast-casual Mexican restaurant chain Bubbakoo's Burritos ended the first half of 2021 with 52 stores, a 70% year-over-year increase. The brand has another 25 units under construction to open by year's end. It's well on its way toward its goal of operating 100 stores by 2022.

Hispanic-owned Presidente Supermarket, which operates 30 stores in South Florida, will open seven this year. It's also cooking up a warehouse distributors concept, Omax Plaza Wholesale, to be housed in a 100,000-square-foot building on 24 acres in Kissimmee, Florida.

Climbing, skiing and mountaineering equipment manufacturer Black Diamond will open its first East Coast store this fall, in a former L.L.Bean in downtown Burlington, Vermont. The company operates a store in Innsbruck, Austria, and four in Colorado and Utah.

[BurgerFi hired Katz & Associates to add to its 120 locations. Its spaces typically range from 2,000 to 2,400 square feet, plus 500 square feet for outdoor patios/seating areas. Seventeen leases have been executed. The goal is 15 more this year and 35 in 2022. BurgerFi has 120 restaurants.](#)