

Reston Town Center is getting a facelift



Reston Town Center's common areas, one of which is shown here in the foreground, will get an upgrade in the coming months.

By [Rebecca Cooper](#) – Senior Staff Reporter, Washington Business Journal
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[Boston Properties](#) plans to spend \$4 million to \$5 million to give Reston Town Center's public plaza a makeover.

The 30-year-old Reston Town Center, which was a vanguard of the now ubiquitous town center concept, will undergo a multi-million dollar renovation of its common areas with an eye toward updating the 3.6 million-square-foot mixed-use center.

The revamp, driven by owner Boston Properties (NYSE: BXP), will mainly focus on the central gathering areas in the site. The project would be completed in the next 18 months.

The improvements will include the installation of artificial green turf on the area where the ice skating rink is set up in the winter. There's the possibility for some kind of outdoor beer or wine garden setup there, said [Lisa Stoddard](#) of CBRE, who represents the property in lease deals.

The project will aim to soften existing public spaces, and make them more modern and contemporary, so that people are more inclined to hang out. The plan includes creating more programs and events to engage people, so that there is always “interactive things going on on the green,” Stoddard added.

We don’t yet know what it will look like as the project is still in the design phase, but it will have a more modern feel. Boston Properties has hired Streetsense as the architect.

“It’s time for an upgrade,” Stoddard said. “It needs to catch up.” The focus on place-making is “a must-do to be successful,” she added.

Reston Town Center opened in 1989 as one of the first of its kind. It has a healthy schedule of events throughout the year, hosting concerts on Saturdays in the summer, the Taste of Reston and the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival annually.

The makeover of the common spaces will go along with an ongoing effort to lease up vacancies and continue to tweak the tenant mix at Reston Town Center, Stoddard said. Restonians shouldn’t expect to see many more restaurants, except in some cases as they replace existing ones. True Food Kitchen and North Italia are both slated to open there later this year, but they are both replacing restaurants that closed.

Restaurants currently make up about 35% of the retail tenant mix, and Stoddard doesn’t believe it should go much higher than that.

Instead, the landlord is actively seeking entertainment uses, as well as more apparel and other “on-trend brands,” and more boutique fitness.