

Riverwalk outlet stores to open in May

By: Robin Shannon, Reporter March 25, 2014 0

The development group in charge of the \$70 million renovation and expansion of the Riverwalk Marketplace into an upscale outlet mall said today the stores will be ready for shoppers in time for Memorial Day weekend.

Dallas-based Howard Hughes Corp., announced this morning that The Outlet Collection at Riverwalk will hold a grand opening event May 22 in Spanish Plaza, just outside the mall's entrance followed by a weekend of activities at the shopping center.



Courtesy of Howard Hughes Corp.

General contractor VCC of Irving, Texas, began its renovation early last year and added 50,000 square feet of space to the mall, bringing its total area to 250,000 square feet. The layout will remain the same, but many of the stores on the upper level have been widened to accommodate the demands of new national tenants. The mall will also feature more windows to let in more natural light.

According to the Hughes Corp. release, nearly 100 percent the mall's space has been leased by well-known national retailers, many of which will be opening their first location in Louisiana.

Anchor tenants include Last Call Studio by Neiman Marcus, Coach Factory Store, Coach Men's Factory Store and Forever 21.

Other retailers on the 70-store roster include Tommy Bahama, U.S. Polo Association, Hartstrings Childrenswear, Sunglass Warehouse, New Balance Factory Store, Red Mango, Loft, Chico's, Kenneth Cole, Gap and Famous Footwear.

Food offerings include Café Du Monde, Mona's Café, Raising Cane's, The Fudgery and Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill.

The complete list of tenants can be found at the Riverwalk website.

During a hard hat tour of the construction process in November Hughes Corp. said that the mall was about 94 percent leased, and it was still talking with other possible tenants to fill the roughly 15,000 square feet still available.

Cruise ship passengers are expected to provide shoppers to the upgraded mall. The renovated property will also include elevator access to the Port of New Orleans Julia Street Cruise Terminal, just below the mall's southern entrance. The Port of New Orleans estimates it will serve as many as 1 million passengers in the coming year when larger cruise ships dock in the city.

Howard Hughes Corp. was created in November 2010 as a spinoff of former Riverwalk owner General Growth Properties, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in April 2011. In 2012, Hughes announced plans to remodel the property into an upscale outlet center. According to Hughes, the Riverwalk will be the first outlet mall in a downtown setting.

The company will hold a job fair for retail positions in April.

Reporter Robin Shannon can be reached at robin.shannon@nopg.com.