



# The Future of Retail Centers

Adaptation,  
Repositioning, and  
Redevelopment





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# Malls in Transition



# Mall Sites Are Changing

- Closure of department stores (Sears, Macy's, JCPenney)
- Online shopping
- More variety of uses beyond just retail



This transition presents  
opportunity to reposition,  
rethink, and optimize



# Our Session's Focus



# Why Mall Sites?

- Developed years ago and communities have grown up around them
- Infill development with existing infrastructure in place
- More of trend to “do everything in one place”



# Our panel members have significant experience in:



- Retail positioning
- Mall redevelopment
- Economic opportunity and development
- Placemaking, architecture, planning, and permitting



# Key Takeaways

- Gain familiarity with trends and market forces affecting retail centers
- Understand what uses and changes can contribute to their future success



# Arcade Providence



**Former Arcade Providence Mall, Providence, RI**

**Developer/Owner: Evan Granoff/130 Westminster Street Associates, LLC**

- Formerly nation's oldest indoor shopping mall, historic heart of downtown Providence
- Now 48 micro-loft apartments on the upper two floors, with a first floor of small business retail, including a full-service local foods restaurant, a coffee shop/whiskey bar, casual dining, and several unique retail shops



**Arcade Providence**, former Arcade Providence Mall, Providence, RI  
Developer/Owner: Evan Granoff/130 Westminister Street Associates, LLC

# Amazon Distribution Center



Former Rolling Acres Mall, Akron, OH  
Developer/Owner: Amazon

- 640,000 square feet





**Amazon Distribution Center**, former Rolling Acres Mall, Akron, OH  
Developer/Owner: Amazon



# Arsenal Yards



**Former Arsenal Mall, Watertown, MA**

**Developer/Owner: Boylston Properties and The Wilder Companies**

- 20-acre property, 325,000 square feet of retail space
- 160,000 square feet of office space, a 150-room hotel, 425 residential units, and entertainment options including a movie theater

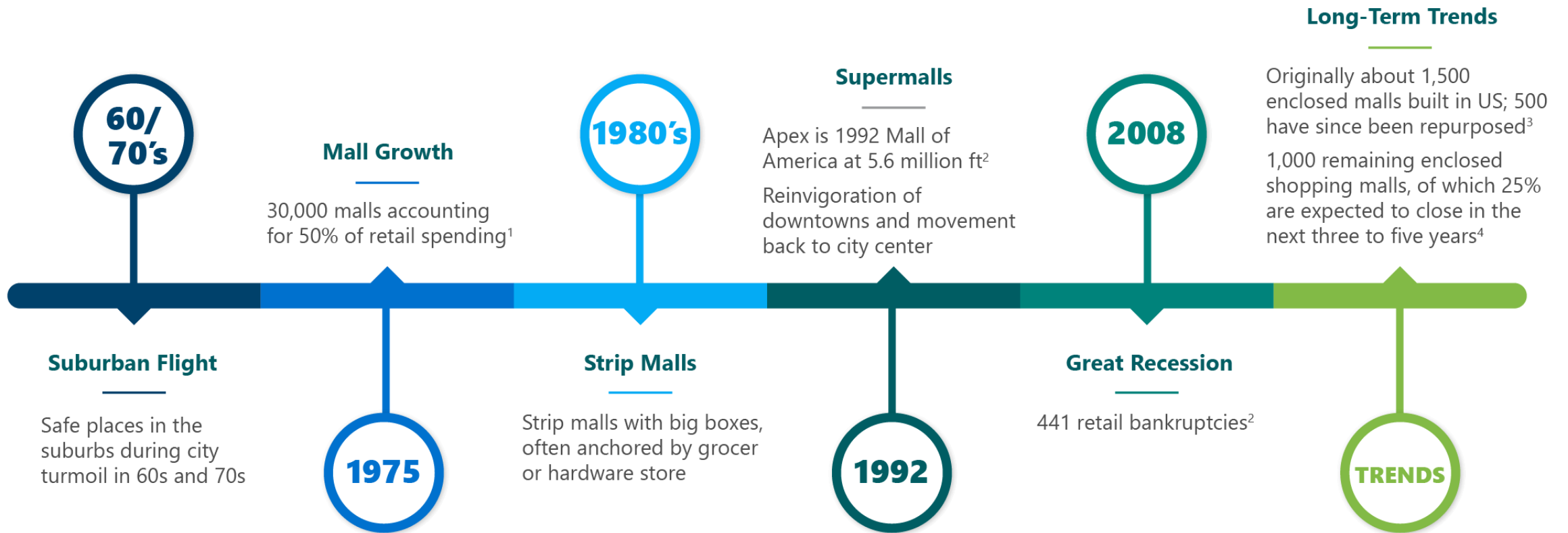


**Arsenal Yards**, former Arsenal Mall, Watertown, MA  
Developer/Owner: Boylston Properties and The Wilder Companies

# Past



# Timeline



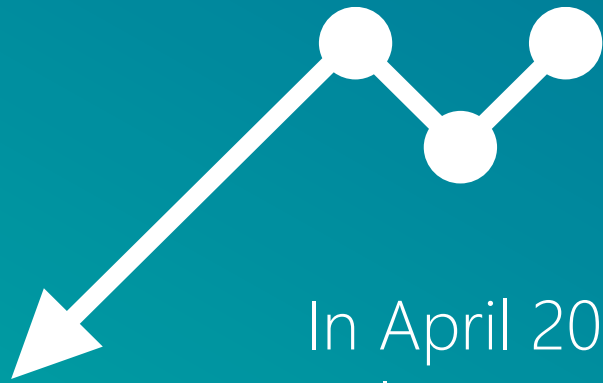


# Present





# E-commerce Accelerated by Pandemic



In April 2021, the in-person shopper traffic volume was nearly 30 percent lower when compared with April 2019<sup>5</sup>



# Trends

**578.5B**

U.S. e-commerce sales totaled \$27.61 billion in 2000 and \$578.5 billion in 2019<sup>6</sup>

**64%**

Percent of holiday budget anticipated to be spent online (2020)<sup>7</sup>

**14.1%**

E-commerce made up 14.1% of global retail sales in 2019<sup>8</sup>

**75%**

Over 75% of people are shopping online at least once a month online<sup>8</sup>

**22%**

E-commerce will make up 22% of global retail sales in 2023<sup>8</sup>



# Future



We don't know the future, but the following ingredients will be key to retail centers' success:

Local & Unique

Flexibility

Diversity

Security



# Local & Unique



- “Non-Amazonable” businesses will win:
  - Placemaking
  - Tourists tend to shop in person
  - Watch products get made (food, spirits/brewery)





# Flexibility



- Lenders should appreciate value of local businesses as attractions
- Leases to encourage variety of uses, not preclude them
- Zoning bylaws should avoid being too prescriptive on parking



# Diversity



- Be open to a variety of uses:
  - Residential
  - Services: healthcare and childcare, schools
  - Entertainment/Recreation: indoor ropes course, bike track
  - National chains as complementary, no competition



# Security



- Mix of uses extends the “shopping day”
- Adds comfort
- More eyes on the street, similar to a downtown





# Thank You!





## Photo Credits:

Arcade Providence: Thad Russell

Amazon Distribution Center: Mike Cardew/*Beacon Journal*

Arsenal Yards: Malls.com





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