

BUSINESS

# Bob on Business: Sundance leasing move suggests new strategy

by Bob Francis  
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Sundance Square Feb. 14, 2024. (Camilo Diaz | Fort Worth Report)

There's a new but familiar name now leasing in Sundance Square. LanCarte Commercial Real Estate has taken over the leasing for several Sundance Square buildings, primarily office spaces.

Leasing of Sundance Square, owned by Ed and Sasha Bass, had previously been an in-house operation. The news that an outside firm was now working to lease space there was viewed positively by several downtown observers.

LanCarte is offering office space for lease in the 59,313-square-foot Schwartz Building at 505 Main St.; the 56,538-square-foot Burk Burnett Building at 500 Main St.; the 201,767-square-foot Chase Bank Building at 420 Throckmorton St.; and the 99,000-square-foot Cassidy at 407 Throckmorton St.

Along with those buildings, the firm is leasing The Maven at Sundance Square, a coworking space in the Schwartz Building dedicated to empowering women entrepreneurs and creators. The rooms at The Maven are designed in collaboration with Anthropologie.

Sundance Square is a 37-square-block entertainment district in downtown Fort Worth that is home to a mix of restaurants, shops, office buildings and arts attractions. Once owned by several members of the Bass family, Ed and Sasha Bass have **been the sole owners of the square since late 2019.**

Marketing of the property has been described as “chaotic” by several former tenants in the past few years. Sundance Square management has tried a variety of approaches to fill the spaces, including partnering with local small-business owners to create brick-and-mortar storefronts in the center of downtown Fort Worth.

The changes at Sundance Square follow quite a bit of upheaval there, with comedy club **Four Day Weekend**, Reata Restaurant and **Haltom’s Jewelry** vacating the area in recent years. Also, longtime tenant JPMorganChase Bank **announced** it will be the anchor tenant of the new Crescent West high-end office tower in the Cultural District that is expected to open in 2027.

Chase is not the only bank moving out of downtown. Wells Fargo will be the anchor tenant of the new office building under construction at The Shops at Clearfork, vacating space in the City Center Fort Worth tower near Sundance Square.

While there have been several longtime tenants leaving the area, there have been some new openings.

A music and entertainment venue called The Spotlight **opened** in the late spring. It occupied the same location previously inhabited by the storied nightclub Caravan of Dreams, a unique performance space that showcased live dance, theater, poetry and an eclectic mix of musical performances. The club, headed by Ed Bass, had an iconic geodesic dome, and operated from 1983 to 2001 bringing in artists from Lyle Lovett to Dr. John to free jazz exponent Ornette Coleman.

These changes follow the **hiring** of David Cooke, former Fort Worth city manager who is now overseeing Sundance Square management.

Sundance Square spokesperson Bryan Eppstein did not respond to a request for comment.

## More downtown news

In other downtown news, the Bob R. Simpson Building is back on the market. The historic landmark at 110 W. Seventh St. is the last of the buildings that were part of the XTO Energy legacy in downtown Fort Worth.

In March 2022, the building was purchased by Icon Lodging, which operates several hotels in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

In late 2023, a Coppell-based group, Downtown FW Residence LLC, which is affiliated with Icon Lodging, **filed** plans with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to convert the building into a Residence Inn extended stay hotel. According to the filing, the \$33 million conversion of the 120,000-square-foot building was to begin in March 2024 and be complete about a year later.

That plan appears to have checked out as JLL, which had previously marketed the buildings formerly owned by XTO Energy, now is **listing** the building again.

In 2010, XTO Energy was acquired by ExxonMobil and most operations relocated to the Houston area. The other buildings owned by XTO Energy have all been sold and repurposed either as hotels, offices or residences.

The Bob R. Simpson building was originally constructed in 1910 as the First National Bank Building and designed by Sanguinet & Staats. The steel-frame Beaux-Arts style building was expanded in 1926 by another renowned architect, Wyatt C. Hedrick.

In 2005, the building was restored by Bennett Partners which brought back several architectural features including the signature colonnaded banking lobby. The building was then renamed after XTO Energy's leader, Bob R. Simpson.

## High-flying vodka

Pilot Point distilled vodka brand Western Son is taking to the skies with a high-flying new partnership with JSX, the hop-on jet service known for public charter flights between dedicated hangars. Beginning July 24,

Western Son Original Vodka will be available complimentary onboard all JSX flights across the United States and Mexico.

This in-flight debut marks a significant growth milestone for the vodka brand, marking the first time Western Son will be featured as part of a curated premium beverage lineup in aviation.

“To be featured on JSX is a game-changer,” said Erin King, vice president of marketing. King said the JSX partnership will give the Texas-based brand increased visibility “far beyond our home state.”

JSX operates up to 140 public charter flights daily to 28 leisure and business destinations across Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Texas and Mexico. The air carrier currently operates 48 aircraft and employs over 1,000 crewmembers.

*Do you have something for the Bob on Business column? Email Bob Francis, business editor for the Fort Worth Report, at [bob.francis@fortworthreport.org](mailto:bob.francis@fortworthreport.org).*

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