

Shopping

Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri

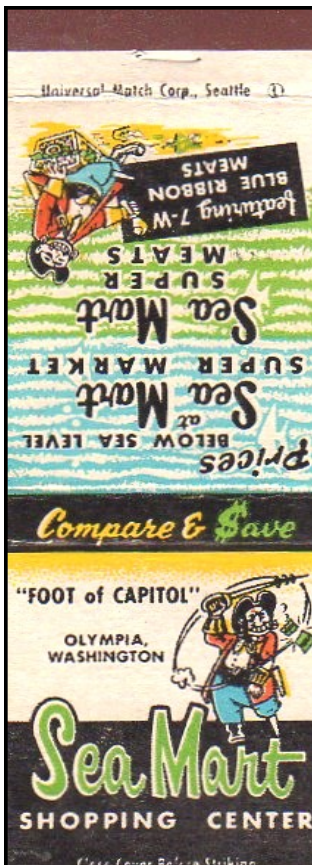


Shopping centers have existed in some form for more than 1,000 years as ancient market squares, bazaars and seaport commercial districts. The modern shopping center, which includes everything from small suburban strip centers to the million-square-foot superregional malls, had its genesis in the 1920s.

The idea is generally attributed to J.C. Nichols of Kansas City, MO. His Country Club Plaza, which opened in 1922, featured unified architecture, paved and lighted parking lots, and was managed and operated as a single unit. In the later half of the 1920s, as automobiles began to clog the downtown areas of large cities, small strip centers were built on the outskirts. The centers were usually anchored by a supermarket and a drug store, supplemented by other convenience-type shops. The typical design was a straight line of stores with space for parking in front. Grandview Avenue Shopping Center in Columbus, Ohio, which opened in 1928, included 30 shops and parking for 400 cars.

But many experts consider Highland Park Shopping Village in Dallas, TX., developed by Hugh Prather in 1931, to be the first planned shopping center. Unlike Country Club Plaza, Highland Park occupied a single site and was not bisected by public streets. And its storefronts faced inward, away from the streets, a revolutionary design. In the 1930s and 1940s, Sears Roebuck & Co. and Montgomery Ward set up large, freestanding stores with on-site parking, away from the centers of big cities. Nighttime shopping was inaugurated at Town & Country Shopping Center in Columbus, OH, bringing shopping center promotion to a new level. The early 1950s marked the opening of the first

two shopping centers anchored by full-line branches of downtown department stores. Northgate in Seattle, WA, opened in 1950, and Shoppers World in Framingham, MA (the first two-level center), debuted the following year. The concept was improved upon in 1954 when Northland Center in Detroit, MI, used a “cluster layout” with a single department store at the center and a ring of stores around it. The parking lot completely surrounded the center. Northland was also the first center to have central air-conditioning as well as heating.



Centers

Mall of America, Bloomington, MN



In 1956, Southdale Center in Edina, MN, the first modern regional mall, opened as the first fully enclosed mall with a two-level design. It had central air-conditioning and heating, a comfortable common area and, more importantly, it had two competitive department stores as anchors. By 1964, there were 7,600 shopping centers in the United States and 13,174 by 1972. In 1976, Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston, MA, emerged as the first of the “festival marketplaces”. 1976 also marked the debut of the first urban vertical mall, Water Tower Place, which opened in Chicago, IL.

The 1980s saw an unparalleled period of growth in the shopping center industry, with more than 16,000 centers built between 1980 and 1990. In 1990, a Gallup poll found that people shopped most frequently at superregional malls and neighborhood centers. Americans average four trips to the mall per month. Between 1989 and 1993, new shopping center development dropped nearly 70%. The sharp decline was attributed to the Savings and Loan crisis, which helped precipitate a severe credit crunch.

The largest mall in the United States is currently Mall of America in Bloomington, MN., which includes a seven-acre amusement park, nightclubs, restaurants and covers 4.2 million sq. feet. The largest mall in North America is West Edmonton Mall, in Alberta, encompassing 5.5 million sq. feet.

As the 1990s ended, Internet retailing was seen as the wave of the future. In July 1998, *Time* magazine predicted the demise of the shopping mall. In 1999, TenantConnect began installing broadband Internet connections inside malls. Also, retailers at Simon malls carry handheld scanners

through the mall, and scan items they are buying. The information is loaded into computer kiosks. Shoppers can have their list of items forwarded to friends or relatives and can type in their credit card number and check out immediately, or wait until they go home. Mall employees pick-up scanned items at the mall and customers have the option of picking up the items at the mall or having them delivered.

[<http://www.icsc.org/srch/about/impactof-shoppingcenters/briefhistory.html>]

FRED TOTTEN, VENDOR, BEAVER FALLS, PA.

Beaver Valley Mall
Monaca, PA 15061

Humphreys
Saloon and Eatery

775-4969

Humphreys
Saloon and Eatery

Beaver Valley Mall
Monaca, PA 15061

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Pueblo Mall

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Corpus Christi,
4535 S.P.I.D.
Seaford

853-5664

Longhorn
Restaurant

Best Steaks
in Texas

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