

## MetroNational plans to transform former Sears site at Memorial City Hall

The Houston-based developer demolished the store about two years ago, and is working on a mixed-use hub to replace it

Texas / TRD Staff

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A rendering of Memorial Town Square with MetroNational president Jason Johnson (MetroNational, Gensler)

Houston-based developer MetroNational plans to build a 27-acre mixed-use development on the site of the former Sears store it tore down [two years ago](#) at Memorial City Mall. The new project will be called Memorial Town Square.

The project will eventually feature a mix of retail, coworking, traditional office, and multifamily spaces, and will be located at the corner of Gessner Road and Barryknoll Lane.

MetroNational President Jason Johnson outlined the company's intent to construct the facility during a May 16 meeting, according to the Houston Business Journal.

“When it’s done, Memorial Town Square hopefully will provide

a place where families can go to enjoy highly walkable shops, great restaurants, and beautiful green spaces,” said Johnson.

The financial terms of the project were not released, and a spokesperson for MetroNational contacted by The Real Deal declined to comment.

The first phase of the project will focus on building 10 standalone retail buildings with a total of 190,000 square feet, which will surround a new half-acre green space. The plan is to bring in more than 40 tenants, combining top-flight restaurants, local boutiques, creative office spaces, and health and wellness facilities, Johnson says.

“We did a lot of collaborative work with the surrounding community. What we found was that there was a desire for more low-density retail that felt like it was already part of the area. Our goal is to build something that feels like it was there all along,” he said.

The first phase of the development is scheduled to break ground next year, with an anticipated completion date of 2025. As part of the project, MetroNational plans to demolish part of the existing Memorial City Mall to create a new covered entrance.

Once the retail portion of the project is done, the company will start building the multifamily piece, which will consist of a tower with 250-plus units and between 50,000 and 60,000 square feet of first-floor retail.

“We wanted to take particular care of the mall because it was the key part of my grandfather’s vision for Memorial City when he started it 50 years ago,” Johnson said.

The final phase will be a 375,000-square-foot office building, according to Johnson, but there is currently no set timeline for the second and third phases of the project.

The plan to build Memorial Town Square is the latest effort by MetroNational to advance Memorial City, a 300-acre master-planned community in west Houston. The company previously [announced](#) plans to embark on a \$25 million update of the Memorial City Plazas complex, a three-building complex at 800-840 Gessner Road, earlier this year.

It contains nearly 1 million square feet of office space, and construction work on the renovations is already underway, with all three towers slated for completion in Q4 2022.

[[Houston Business Journal](#)] — *James Bell*