



The Insider

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Introducing, The Atrium Center.



A premier contemporary event venue.



Who are we? Few of us when we were youngsters really envisioned where we'd be today. Growth — whether personal or what's physically around us — affects our life choices. I won't go into personal development, but focus, rather, on the latter — why growth helps us develop into who we are as a community.

Growth brings both costs and benefits. Many times, the benefits outweigh the costs. Growth equals life. Oppositely, communities that do not accept change or growth become smaller and less vibrant. Being stagnant equates to a community's certain death.

It seems harsh, but it's true. How does a community die? First, resident populations die while younger ones migrate to find new job opportunities or better schools. Businesses move or close because they no longer have local populations to support them. Local infrastructure depreciates and eventually must be replaced. A community that does not grow will become less attractive to new development and new younger families. Population ingress and the area's birth rate must exceed the death rate in order for growth opportunities to occur.

Positive attributes of growth include more businesses, more buildings, and newer infrastructure. A place that has more people, businesses, and structures also mean there are greater choices for all who live here in terms of where and how they want to live, work, shop, recreate and spend time with their families.

Newer communities create construction opportunities and construction jobs. These types of jobs typically pay in the mid-\$20 per hour range, whereas a typical retail position may be a \$10-\$15 an hour position. So faster growing communities providing more income directly results in more disposable income being spent in the community where the growth occurs. A greater demand provides a direct correlation with greater competition which results in lower prices and a greater selection for the area's consumers and businesses that purchase within our community.

Additional growth also brings in a more diverse mix of residents, providing a more vibrant community, more cultural festivals, and recreational opportunities for the whole community. All these attributes result in a community developing a personality that changes over time.

Our little, but growing East Montgomery County community has a personality just as each of us does. Change is happening in our community at breakneck speed. Land is being developed into commercial buildings and homes. Older buildings are being demolished to allow for new development. Bringing change to our community is a process. It can involve new schools, new shopping, new infrastructure, new business opportunities, new jobs, and new recreational opportunities.

I will caution, however, while growth is good, it's never a good idea to grow too quickly or do a 180 with our community's personality. We live in a very competitive world. We can never let go or forget the history of how our area came about, but we have to remain competitive with other communities and bring in amenities that keep us growing in a responsible way. This is a balancing act in which community engagement and involvement are especially important.

Every day, EMCID is approached with opportunities, and we attempt to bring the best and brightest ideas to the construction stage for our area. You will soon see new facilities and a refocused marketing strategy of how we position our area for positive growth. Seeing what works or doesn't work in other growing communities gives us some benchmarks to work from.

Focusing on our strengths and not our weaknesses provide us greater competitiveness than a lot of communities. We must look in the mirror every day and challenge ourselves to not say, it's good enough. We want better for our community. We always have more to learn.

Our organization's promise to you is we will be your servants to ensure we bring the amenities you want that keep in line with East Montgomery County's personality. There is a big difference between serving and being a servant. Providing service looks for a thank you and recognition. Being a servant doesn't assign value or importance to different kinds of service. Servants serve because what they're doing is what's important and needed at that moment. Nothing is beneath the dignity of a servant if it makes the life of another better.

Trish McCordy



Repurposing Buildings Important in EMC



For the past couple of months, various construction crews began working to repurpose empty buildings across East Montgomery County with restaurant concepts such as Russo's New York Pizzeria, BB's Tex-Orleans, Puebloritaville Mexican Kitchen and Rosati's Pizza and Sports Pub.

Bringing new life into unoccupied buildings is commonly referred to as adaptive reuse which is important because it allows for new businesses to reuse existing buildings, generate revenue in these spaces, and provide an option for residents to enjoy for lunch or dinner. Also, adaptive reuse is both appealing and practical because businesses can save money by reducing certain costs.

"It is critically important to transition an empty building to a business we need in EMC such as a seafood restaurant like BB's," EMCID President/CEO Frank McCrady said. "Typically, the first step a business needs to do when opening a new location is to build a new building, but with repurposing, these buildings are already constructed and will need some remodeling work. In most cases, there is not a huge rebuild on the building, so it is more cost-efficient and quicker than a complete rebuild."

Restaurant concepts are not the only ones to engage in adaptive reuse in EMC. Command Energy, located in the East Montgomery County Industrial Park, moved into an existing empty industrial facility several years ago when they were looking to relocate to EMC.

Puebloritaville Mexican Kitchen

Puebloritaville - Mexican Kitchen, a sister restaurant of the Pueblo Viejo restaurants, will open a new restaurant in the former Coals Smokehouse restaurant located at 25069 FM 2090 in Splendora. The owners have not released an opening date yet but have worked steadily to renovate the new location.

Russo's New York Pizzeria

Russo's New York Pizzeria will open a new location in Valley Ranch Town Center this summer.

"We offer chef special dishes that are very unique, such as burrata pizzas, truffle mushroom pasta & pizza, homemade gnocchi pasta, osso buco ravioli, along with gourmet salads, sandwiches, and appetizers," said Anthony Russo, CEO and Founder of Russo's New York Pizzeria & Italian Kitchen.

BB's Tex-Orleans

BB's Tex-Orleans is remodeling its newest location in EMC at 25635 Hwy. 59 where Pollo Tropical was located, next to Panda Express.

Featuring NOLA-style po'boys, homemade gumbo, crawfish, an oyster bar, seafood boil choices, fried seafood, and Texas and Louisiana-inspired cocktails; BB's is expected to open in late 2021.

Rosati's Pizza and Sports Pub

Rosati's Pizza will open its fifth franchise in Texas with the newest franchisees, Calvin Dodson and his partner Darren Frankenberger, who plan to open a Rosati's sports pub located at 25661 Hwy. 59 this summer.

Calvin and Darren are excited about the location they picked because the location offers a highly trafficked shopping center with a major grocery store retailer and is right off Hwy. 59/69.

"Rosati's success and family-owned environment piqued our interest but their food sealed the deal," co-franchise owner Calvin Dodson said. "We are very impressed with their corporate environment and look forward to providing authentic Chicago-style pizza in the Kingwood area."



EMCID Building To Reopen

The East Montgomery County Improvement District Complex in New Caney, home to EMCID, the Greater East Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and others, is transitioning into The Atrium Center, an event venue specializing in meetings and conferences, weddings, anniversary celebrations, birthday parties, and community events.

Like many other organizations and businesses, being shut down during the pandemic gave EMCID time to reflect on the building's purpose moving forward and refocus efforts to actively recruit organizations, businesses, and private citizens to reserve the spaces for their events.

"For 20 years, the EMCID Complex has served as mainly office space for us and others and has hosted many luncheons, weekend events, and community meetings," said Frank McCrady, President/CEO. "While our building has been closed to the public for the last year, we've had time to assess the building, and we're currently making repairs and improvements to the facility. We feel now is the time to reintroduce our venue to the public with a new emphasis on hosting events."

The new name — The Atrium Center — is appropriate for the building, considering the main feature is the large atrium with 20-foot windows overlooking the pond and fountains. In all, the venue includes about 15,000 square feet of leasable space, plus outdoor areas.

Improvements to the venue will include new carpet and event space furnishings, abstract paintings by local artists to enhance the building's contemporary style, and an enlarged usable outdoor space by the pond and fountains.



Open as The Atrium Center

The shift from office building to event venue was also made possible with the hiring of Ryan Bonifas, Director of Venue & Events. Bonifas has more than 15 years of experience in venue and event management, most notably at Fair Park in Dallas and Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth. He has produced and managed festivals, concerts, consumer shows, meetings, and conventions with up to 50,000 people in attendance.

"The Atrium Center is a beautiful, contemporary venue, and the modest enhancements we're making now will make it a highly sought-after place for private events and even businesses that want to hold training courses or after-hours retreats for their employees," he said. "I love this venue. The more time I spend here, the more I enjoy it. The Atrium Center has a lot of flexibility and can provide guests a great experience and clients the ability to host multiple sessions or events simultaneously."

The Atrium Center is currently booking events for 2022 and is taking smaller events on a case-by-case basis this fall when repairs and improvements to the building will be completed.

The venue will still house the offices of EMCID, the chamber, and the Precinct 4 Montgomery County Constables detectives.

For more information about the Atrium Center, visit www.AtriumCenterTX.com or call 281-354-5020.



Rendering by Brandon Nash.

Business Briefs and Happenings

Meckka Dance Project Opens Near Cumberland Crossing

Meckka Dance Project opened a new dance studio in the Cumberland Crossing retail center located at 21693 FM 1314 in Porter.

Located next to Domino's Pizza and Southern Maid Donuts Porter, Meckka Dance Project is a competition dance and performing arts company that provides training in all genres to inspire and cultivate well-rounded dancers.



Urgent Doc, Titus Car Wash Open in New Caney

Construction continues on the Caney Crossing development in front of the Walmart Supercenter New Caney where Titus Express Car Wash and Urgent Doc - New Caney, Texas opened in June.

Additionally, Gadget Cure, a cell phone and tablet repair company, is expected to move in next to Urgent Doc, an urgent care walk-in.



Burger King to Open in New Caney

Joining neighboring businesses such as La Michoacana, Taco Bell and Laura's Dog Grooming; Burger King will open a new location at 20185 Hwy. 59 in New Caney. This will be the second franchise location in East Montgomery County. An expected opening date has not been released yet.



Sherwin-Williams Set to Open in Valley Ranch

Sherwin-Williams is the newest business to join the Valley Ranch shopping center. Located next to Chipotle Mexican Grill, work has begun on the location which will feature a variety of paints, stains and supplies to update your home or business.



D&A NY Pizza and Pasta Opens in Porter

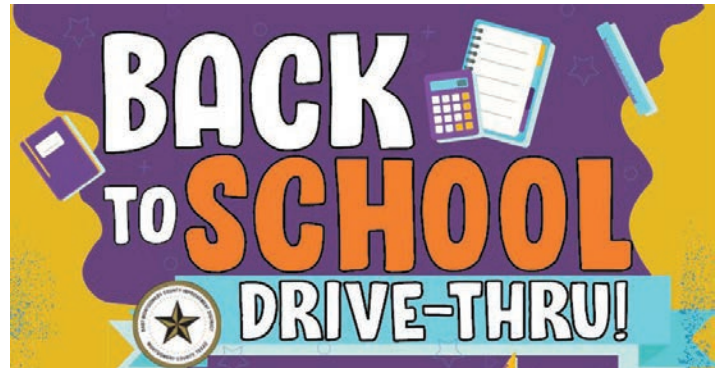
Grab an authentic New York pizza, pasta, calzone or Stromboli from the new food truck – D&A NY Pizza and Pasta – located at 23562 Ford Rd. in Porter. There are several benches outside to enjoy your lunch or dinner al fresco or swing by and grab a pie when you pass by on your way to or from work.



Back to School Drive Thru Set for Aug. 6

Stock up on those much-needed school supplies for FREE at the annual EMCID Back to School Drive Thru on Friday, Aug. 6 at Randall Reed Stadium located at 21360 Valley Ranch Pkwy. in New Caney.

During the drive-thru event, EMCID staff and volunteers will hand out school supplies for the upcoming school year for students pre-k through 8th grade. Supplies are given out on a first-come, first-serve basis. The drive-thru starts at 5 pm and goes on until supplies run out.



Electronics Recycling To Be Held Sept. 18

EMCID will host an Electronics Recycling Event Saturday, Sept. 18 in the EMCID parking lot located at 21575 Hwy. 59 in New Caney from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. It is free for anyone interested in dropping off their electronics for recycling with CompuCycle Electronics Recycling.

Accepted items: Desktop Personal Computers, Cellphones and Telephones, Printers, Fax Machines, Copiers, Monitors, LCD's, LED's, Laptops, Laptop Batteries, Servers, Radio Equipment, Hard Drives, Telecommunications Systems, DVD/CD/VCR Players, Stereo equipment, Network Equipment, POS Equipment, Test equipment, Memory chips, Routers & Hubs, Plotters, Medical Equipment, UPS Batteries, Projectors, Cables & Wires, Gaming Consoles, Tablets and PDA's, Lab Equipment, GPS Equipment, Seismic Equipment, Scrap Metal, Plugs & Connectors, Circuit Boards, Keyboards, Mouse, and Speakers, Lithium Batteries, Lead Acid Batteries, Storage Equipment, Main Frames, Video/Audio Equipment, Aviation Equipment.

Acceptable items must be removed from packaging materials.



EMCID Directors Present Checks



The EMCID Board of Directors presented a \$224,830.12 check to Montgomery County Emergency Services District #7 (East Montgomery County Fire Department) and a \$53,400 check to Splendora ISD for the continued assistance with fire services and playground equipment at Timber Lakes Elementary, respectively.



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\$1,600
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EAST MONTGOMERY COUNTY
SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Important Dates

July-August 2021

Fourth of July Observed (EMCID Closed)
EMCID Regular Board Meeting
Back to School Drive Thru
EMCID Regular Board Meeting

July 5		
July 8*	5:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex, Suite 200A
August 6	5-8 p.m.	Randall Reed Stadium
August 12*	5:30 p.m.	EMCID Complex, Suite 200A

**Dates subject to change*

Please visit www.emctx.com/calendar for an up-to-date listing of events.

The Insider is a bi-monthly newsletter produced by the East Montgomery County Improvement District. Please direct questions or comments to: Kelley Mattlage, Chief Communications Officer, kmattlage@emctx.com.