

= Willow Grove Park Mall =

Willow Grove Park Mall is a three @-@ story shopping mall located in the unincorporated community of Willow Grove in Abington Township , Montgomery County , Pennsylvania at the intersection of Easton Road and Moreland Road ( Pennsylvania Route 63 ) . The mall contains over 130 stores along with several restaurants including The Cheesecake Factory . The Willow Grove Park Mall has Bloomingdale 's , Sears , Macy 's , Nordstrom Rack , and JCPenney as anchor stores . It is owned by Pennsylvania Real Estate Investment Trust ( PREIT ) . The Willow Grove Park Mall is the third most profitable mall in the Philadelphia area .

The Willow Grove Park Mall opened in 1982 on the site of the former Willow Grove Park . The mall , developed by Federated Department Stores and The Rubin Organization , was originally anchored by Bloomingdale 's , B. Altman and Company , and Abraham & Straus .

In 2000 , PREIT and the Pennsylvania State Employees ' Retirement System acquired the mall , with a renovation completed in 2001 that added Macy 's as an anchor . PREIT became the sole owner of the mall in 2003 .

= = Location = =

The Willow Grove Park Mall is located on the site of the previous Willow Grove Amusement Park in the unincorporated community of Willow Grove in Abington Township , Montgomery County , Pennsylvania , 15 miles ( 24 km ) north of Center City Philadelphia in the northern suburbs of the city . The mall is bordered by Pennsylvania Route 63 ( Moreland Road ) to the northeast , Easton Road to the southeast , and Old Welsh Road to the southwest . The mall is located near Pennsylvania Route 611 and is a little more than a mile from the Willow Grove exit of the Pennsylvania Turnpike . The Willow Grove Park Mall serves as a transit hub for four Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority ( SEPTA ) bus routes . The Route 22 bus runs between Olney Transportation Center in North Philadelphia and Warminster via the Willow Grove Park Mall and the Route 55 bus runs between Olney Transportation Center and Doylestown by way of the mall . Both the Route 22 and 55 buses have several trips from Olney Transportation Center that terminate at the Willow Grove Park Mall . The Route 95 bus runs between the Willow Grove Park Mall and Gulph Mills . The Route 310 bus connects the mall to business parks in Horsham . The mall is also near the Willow Grove station on the Warminster Line of SEPTA Regional Rail . The Willow Grove Park Mall has a market area that covers eastern Montgomery County along with Northwest Philadelphia , North Philadelphia , Northeast Philadelphia , and portions of central Bucks County .

= = Stores = =

The Willow Grove Park Mall currently contains five anchor stores . The largest is Bloomingdale 's , which is 237 @, @ 537 square feet ( 22 @, @ 068 m2 ) and opened in 1982 . The Bloomingdale 's store is one of two located in the Philadelphia area . The second largest is Macy 's , which is 225 @, @ 000 square feet ( 20 @, @ 903 m2 ) and opened in 2001 as part of a mall expansion . The third largest anchor store is Sears , which is 175 @, @ 584 square feet ( 16 @, @ 312 m2 ) and opened in 1982 as B. Altman and Company before becoming Sears in 1987 . In 2015 , Sears is reducing its space to 96 @, @ 000 square feet ( 8 @, @ 919 m2 ) on the first floor while leasing 77 @, @ 500 square feet ( 7 @, @ 200 m2 ) of space to Primark , mainly on the second floor . Another anchor space opened in 1982 as Abraham & Straus before becoming Strawbridge & Clothier ( later Strawbridge 's ) in 1988 . Strawbridge 's closed in 2006 , with a part of the former space on the third floor reopening as The Cheesecake Factory in 2007 , which is 10 @, @ 310 square feet ( 958 m2 ) in area , and a 7 @, @ 500 square feet ( 697 m2 ) Bravo Cucina Italiana that opened in 2011 . In addition , a relocated two @-@ story 17 @, @ 000 square feet ( 1 @, @ 579 m2 ) Forever 21 opened in a small portion of the former Strawbridge 's in December 2011 . The lower two floors of the Strawbridge 's space became a 114 @, @ 000 square feet ( 10 @, @ 591 m2 ) JCPenney store in

2012 , the mall 's fourth largest anchor . The remaining area of the former Strawbridge 's on the third floor opened as a 41 @, @ 000 square feet ( 3 @, @ 809 m2 ) Nordstrom Rack in 2012 , the mall 's smallest anchor store .

In addition to the anchor stores , the Willow Grove Park Mall contains over 130 smaller stores , including Abercrombie & Fitch , Coach , a two @-@ story H & M , J.Crew , Lucky Brand Jeans , Sephora , Victoria 's Secret , and Williams @-@ Sonoma . The mall also contains a food court with eleven spaces as well as three sit @-@ down restaurants : Bravo Cucina Italiana , The Cheesecake Factory , and T.G.I. Friday 's . As of 2011 , the Willow Grove Park Mall has a nonanchor occupancy rate of 94 @. @ 4 % .

= = History = =

The current site of the Willow Grove Park Mall was originally Willow Grove Park , a popular amusement park that existed from 1896 to 1975 . In 1978 , Federated Department Stores and The Rubin Organization announced plans to build a US \$ 25 million mall on the site of the former amusement park . The plans for the mall were approved by Abington in 1979 , which included a downsizing to three anchor stores from four among concerns from residents about the size of the future mall . The Willow Grove Park Mall opened on August 11 , 1982 . The mall was designed with a Victorian theme honoring the former amusement park . The developers of the Willow Grove Park Mall were Federated Department Stores and The Rubin Organization and the architect was RTKL . When the mall opened , the original anchor stores were Bloomingdale 's , Abraham & Straus , and B. Altman and Company . Bloomingdale 's had relocated to the mall from a freestanding store in Jenkintown . When it opened , the Willow Grove Park Mall was intended to be an upscale mall . In 1984 , Federated Department Stores sold its share of the mall to the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States for US \$ 43 million . In 1986 , B. Altman and Company closed its store , which reopened as Sears in 1987 . Sears relocated to the mall from a store in Abington . Around this time , the store selection at the mall broadened to also target the middle class . In 1988 Abraham & Straus closed and became Strawbridge & Clothier , which had relocated to the mall from a store in Jenkintown .

The mall was acquired by PREIT and the Pennsylvania State Employees ' Retirement System in 2000 for US \$ 140 million from a group of pension fund clients managed by Lend Lease Real Estate Investments . In 2001 , the mall underwent a major renovation which included the addition of Macy 's as an anchor , the construction of a 212 @, @ 000 square feet ( 19 @, @ 695 m2 ) parking garage with 800 parking spaces adjacent to Sears and the food court , and the addition of a carousel at the third floor entrance opposite the food court . The renovation of the mall cost US \$ 25 million . PREIT assumed full ownership of the Willow Grove Park Mall in 2003 by acquiring the Pennsylvania State Employees ' Retirement System 's 70 % share of ownership for US \$ 122 @. @ 3 million . In 2005 , a mosaic wall with images from the former Willow Grove Park was installed in the mall . The mosaics were created by the Abington Art Center 's Youth Empowerment Program and the Abington Township Balanced and Restorative Justice Program from designs made by Carol Strinton @-@ Broad . In 2006 , Strawbridge 's closed due to the acquisition of its parent company May Department Stores by Federated Department Stores ; a portion of the former store on the upper floor became home to The Cheesecake Factory in September 2007 . The lower two floors were planned to open as Boscov 's ; however , it never opened due to the chain filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2008 .

On July 28 , 2011 , it was announced that JCPenney would open a store on the lower two floors of the vacant Strawbridge 's . In addition , it was announced that Bravo Cucina Italiana and Nordstrom Rack would open stores on the third floor of the former Strawbridge 's . Bravo Cucina Italiana opened in November 2011 while Nordstrom Rack opened in May 2012 . Forever 21 also relocated to a larger store at the former Strawbridge 's site in December 2011 . The JCPenney store opened in October 2012 . On January 30 , 2015 , it was announced that Sears would lease some of its space to Irish retailer Primark . Sears would remain in its space on the first level while Primark will operate in the remainder of the space , mainly on the second level .

On November 25 , 2006 , during one of the busiest shopping weekends of the year after Thanksgiving , a small fire broke out in the Forever 21 store that forced the evacuation of 6 @, @ 000 shoppers ; no injuries were reported . On the evening of June 15 , 2011 , a 16 @-@ year @-@ old boy from Upper Moreland Township who was smoking synthetic cannabis jumped from the third level of the parking garage , suffering injuries .

= = Economic impact = =

The Willow Grove Park Mall serves as a major regional attraction for Abington Township and is the third most profitable mall in the Philadelphia area . In the Pennsylvania part of the Philadelphia area , the Willow Grove Park Mall is the second most profitable mall after the King of Prussia Mall . The mall is regarded as one of three most successful locations for retailers entering the Philadelphia market due to its location and store selection . In 2011 , the Willow Grove Park Mall saw sales per square foot of \$ 400 . The mall employed 1 @, @ 871 people in 2010 , making it the third largest employer in Abington Township with 8 @. @ 06 % of the jobs in the township .

The opening of the Willow Grove Park Mall led to the decline of retail along Old York Road in Abington and Jenkintown , with department stores such as Bloomingdale 's , Sears , and Strawbridge & Clothier relocating from this area to the mall during the 1980s . A Lord & Taylor store in the same area closed in 1989 , but was eventually replaced by the King of Prussia location in 1995 .