

BUSINESS



Robert Wright / New York Times

The pandemic has made the rooftop deck at the Astoria Lights in Queens, N.Y., even more popular.

Apartment buildings shifting focus on amenities

By **C.J. Hughes**
NEW YORK TIMES

After the Sept. 11 attacks, some landlords installed sturdy posts outside their buildings to guard against future strikes.

A legacy of the current health crisis? Kettlebells with handles made with copper instead of steel.

Opting for the brown metal known for its antimicrobial properties instead of steel is among the steps some developers are taking to keep viruses out of their amenity spaces.

While slow to embrace major changes — some developers say they're hopeful that pandemics will not be a concern when their projects finally open in 2023 — developers are making tweaks in the face of the COVID era.

They're adding cabanaled roof decks, repurposing lounges as outdoor schools and switching out built-in couches for more movable versions to facilitate social distancing, as well as adding ventilation systems that are deluxe even by the standards of luxury apartments.

“We haven’t had drastic changes,” said Whitney Kraus, the director of architecture and planning for Brown Harris Stevens Development Marketing, but added, “I don’t think amenities will ever go back to the way they were before.”

Some upgrades will likely appeal whether a disease is rampaging or not.

The residents of Astoria Lights in Queens, for instance, will probably enjoy a new roof deck long after the COVID-19 crisis has passed.

After watching residents throng to an existing public roof deck after it reopened in July and noticing that units with private terraces at the Rowan, a nearby project, were hot commodities during the lockdown, the co-op decided to boost the complex’s amount of outdoor space, said John Petras, a RockFarmer co-managing principal.

The planned new deck will be the third at the buff-brick four-building co-op. Plans for the deck, which will be presented to the co-op board for approval this fall, will offer about a dozen private cabanas, curtain-lined seating areas measuring about 100 square feet with starting prices of about \$45,000 a pop. Putting them atop a prewar structure won’t be a snap, Petras said: “It’s a major job and a major expense,” about \$250,000 for the deck alone. “But there is a demand.”

In fact, six of seven cabanas on the building’s second deck, which had been planned pre-COVID, sold quickly, he added.

Quarantine has forced tweaks to other amenities. A planned basement co-working center will now install dividers around workspaces, to make them more private, while ham-

mocks in courtyards will be similarly cordoned off. And a rooftop garden on the second deck, has been redesigned to include walking paths.

“We’re not going to go all in on protecting the building against pandemics, assuming they will keep happening,” Petras said. “But for now, we’re doing everything we can.”

Rental complexes seem to be rationing amenities differently. Gotham Organization, a rental developer at work on new projects, is undertaking a sort of test drive on some existing properties to see what works.

Properties like Gotham West in Manhattan and the Ashland in Brooklyn, for example, now require tenants to use an app called Amenity Boss — created this spring in response to lockdowns — to reserve their outdoor time in public courtyards, roof decks and terraces.

And when Gotham reopens its gyms this month, capacity will be limited to 33 percent of what is permitted. Six-foot social distancing will also be required, which Gotham will enforce by unplugging some treadmills and other workout machines.

To make up for the reductions, Gotham will keep gyms open round the clock, said Phil Lavoie, Gotham’s chief operating officer.

Other apartment building gyms are going even further by imposing 20 percent capacity restrictions.

Jeremy Brutus, a co-founder of Urbn Playground,


said that since only about a quarter of a building’s tenants ever use the gym, developers probably shouldn’t spend endless amounts of cash on germ-free products. “Everybody is really searching for creative solutions right now.”

One sparing-few-expenses example might be 378 West End Ave., a 58-unit condo from Alchemy Properties under construction on the Upper West Side.

In the building’s gym, Alchemy has opted for equipment with copper handles instead of steel ones. Studies have found that the coronavirus can’t survive as long on copper as on steel, although copper equipment can cost at least six times more than steel.

The developer is also emphasizing air quality. The entire building uses hospital-grade MERV 13 filters, and amenity rooms will have an extra safeguard: a special ionization system, tucked into ducts, that zaps viruses that might sneak through.

Similarly, key fobs unlock lobby doors, so no touching is required. Kraus, of Brown Harris Stevens, said that motion-triggered faucets and automatic toilets are also bound to be deployed in shared spaces soon.



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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
MUNICIPAL SETTING DESIGNATION
CITY OF HOUSTON**

Virtual Meeting: Microsoft Teams Platform
Date – Time: October 26, 2020 – 6:00 PM

For meeting link and additional project information go to:
<https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/msd-calendar>

Applicant: Univar USA Inc.

Site Location: 8425 Market Street, Houston, TX 77029

Legal Description: TRS 22C & 22E; GLENDALE; TR 22A; GLENDALE

Contaminants of Concern: 1,1,1-trichloroethane, 1,1,2-trichloroethane, 1,1-dichloroethene, 1,2-dichloroethane, 2-butanone, 2-hexanone, 4-methyl-, 2-pentanone, acetone, benzene, chlorobenzene, chloroform, cis-1,2-dichloroethene, trans-1,2-dichloroethene, toluene, methylene chloride, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene, vinyl chloride, TPH

This designates an area in which the use of impaired groundwater is prohibited for use as potable water (i.e. drinking, cooking, bathing etc.). If you have questions or comments, please contact the City of Houston MSD Program at (832) 394-9003 or email at msd@houstontx.gov.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has also cated Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds to the State of Texas (State) to reduce or eliminate risks related to disasters. The City of Houston is seeking input on applications to the State for funding of flood mitigation projects. You can view the CDBG-MIT applications to the State at the following location on-line: <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies>.

The following table summarizes the proposed applications.

Project	Estimated Cost	Local Share	CDBG-MIT
5th Ward	\$115,021,697.31	\$15,021,697.31	\$100,000,000.00
Kashmere Gardens	\$94,879,858.50	\$948,798.58	\$93,931,059.92
Sunnyside	\$11,251,647.34	\$11,251,647.34	\$100,000,000.00
Allied Park	\$8,265,850.39	\$82,658.50	\$8,183,191.89
Braeburn Glen	\$6,378,191.58	\$63,781.92	\$6,314,409.66
Port Area*	\$99,021,350.52	\$990,213.51	\$98,031,137.01
Huntington Village	\$78,588,284.42	\$785,882.84	\$77,802,401.58
Grand Total	\$513,406,880.06	\$29,144,680.00	\$484,262,200.06

Please review and comment on the applications the City of Houston proposes to submit to the State for CDBG-MIT funding. A final virtual public meeting to review the proposed applications will be held on Monday, September 28, 2020 from 5:00PM to 6:00PM. A link to access the meeting is available online: <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies>.

You may provide comment for inclusion in the applications to the State through October 1, 2020. After October 1, comments will be incorporated into the ongoing project development process. Comments will be accepted by email to: drainage.study@houstontx.gov or by mail: Houston Public Works, 611 Walker Street, 20th Floor, Houston, TX 77002, Attn: TDO Planning.

The CDBG-MIT application summaries shall be made available in an accessible format or another language, upon request.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
MUNICIPAL SETTING DESIGNATION
CITY OF HOUSTON**

Virtual Meeting: Microsoft Teams Platform
Date – Time: October 28, 2020 – 6:00 PM

For meeting link and additional project information go to:
<https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/msd-calendar>

Applicant: 340 West 26th Street, LLC

Site Location: 340 West 26th Street, Houston, Texas 77008

Legal Description: LTS 18 19 20 21 & TRS 17 & 51D BLK 30; HOUSTON HEIGHTS; TR 22B BLK 30; HOUSTON HEIGHTS

Contaminants of Concern: 1,1-dichloroethene, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene, cis-1,2-dichloroethene and vinyl chloride.

This designates an area in which the use of impaired groundwater is prohibited for use as potable water (i.e. drinking, cooking, bathing etc.). If you have questions or comments, please contact the City of Houston MSD Program at (832) 394-9003 or email at msd@houstontx.gov.

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES

Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO)

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, TX (METRO), will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 12 Noon** to receive public comment on its proposed January 2021 changes to METRO service. The public hearing will be held by telephone and video conference call on the Zoom virtual meeting platform.

The public may join the virtual hearing on Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81623720367> or by calling: **346-248-7799 or 1-888-747-5597** (Toll Free). Meeting ID: 816 2372 0367. Participation on Zoom is only necessary if you want to provide comments during the public hearing. Or visit [RideMETRO.org/Pages/BoardStreamingVideo.aspx](https://www.metro-tx.gov/Pages/BoardStreamingVideo.aspx) to livestream the virtual meeting. A video recording of the hearing will also be archived at RideMETRO.org.

Based on the current guidance from public health officials recommending the limitation of in-person public meetings to slow the spread of the Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, the public hearing will only be conducted virtually. The proposed service changes include:

Route realignments to routes 56, 66, & 89; schedule changes to routes 4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 25, 26, 27, 28, 40, 45, 47, 50, 54, 56, 65, 66, 68, 73, 82, 86, 88, 89, 96, 99, 108, 137, 151, 402.418, all Park & Ride corridors, and METRO Rail Red, Green, and Purple Lines; and the discontinuation of routes 412 & 413. METRO will continue to make temporary schedule adjustments in response to social distancing and workforce availability.

Copies of proposed route maps and available timetables will be made available beginning on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 for public review online, and in the lobby of the METRO RideStore, located in the Lee P. Brown METRO Administration Building, 1900 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77002.

HOW TO COMMENT ABOUT THE SERVICE CHANGES

It is recommended that anyone wanting to make public comments register as a public speaker with the METRO Board Office at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing. Interested participants can call 713-739-4834 or send an email to boardoffice@RideMETRO.org and provide their name, address and telephone number. If you pre-register, your comments will be heard first at the public hearing. Your name will be called at the appropriate time for you to make your comments. Alternatively, you may provide public comments after the pre-registered speakers, by selecting the “Raise Hand” feature on the Zoom platform online, or by pressing *9, if joining by telephone. Those calling in will automatically be placed on mute. After an unregistered speaker’s name or number is recognized, their microphone will be unmuted and they will be asked to provide their comments.

You may also provide comments by writing to us at METRO, ATTN: January 2021 Service Change, 1900 Main Street, Houston, TX 77002.

Comments may also be faxed with a subject line referencing “January 2021 Service Change” to (713) 652-7956. You may call METRO Customer Service at (713) 635-4000 or submit comments through the METRO website at RideMETRO.org.

Comments should be received by METRO no later than Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at noon.

HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

For individuals with special needs, assistive services or copies of public documents in an alternate format can be provided. Individuals with impairments may call (713) 750-4271 a minimum of five (5) working days prior to the public hearing.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

Upon request, METRO provides free language assistance to help patrons who have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English in accordance with its language assistance plan. Request for language assistance and other accommodations should be directed to the Board Office at 713-739-4018, or via e-mail at METROPublicAffairs@RideMETRO.org at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing.

1. This Public Hearing conforms to requirements described in the Federal Transit Administration’s Circular 9030.1E, published January 16, 2014, page VI-7.

2. METRO does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or in treatment or employment in, its services, programs, and activities.


3. METRO is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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The Houston Housing Authority (“HHA”) is soliciting sealed proposals to engage the services of a National Broker with Commercial Real Estate experience in accordance with the requirements and terms and conditions specified RFP 20-49 Real Estate Brokerage Services.

Interested parties who wish to respond to this solicitation must submit the required documents in a sealed envelope by 10 A.M. Central Standard Time (CST) October 20, 2020 to the Houston Housing Authority Attn: Kevin M. Coleman, MS, C.P.M., Subject: RFP 20-49 Real Estate Brokerage Services - DO NOT OPEN 2640 Fountain View Drive Houston, Texas 77057.

RFP 20-49 can be obtained by going to the doing business with HHA section of HHA’s website at www.housingforhouston.com, or by sending an e-mail to HHA’s Procurement Dept. at Purchasing@housingforhouston.com.

 A Fair and Equal Employment Opportunity Agency. For assistance: Individuals with disabilities may contact the 504/ADA Administrator at 713-260-0528, TTY 713-260-0574 or 504ADA@housingforhouston.com

**Sealed Proposal Solicitation #TS06-21
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Cooperative Purchasing Program
Temporary Staffing, Direct-Hire and Other Employer Services**

Pre-Proposal Conference: 10/13/20 @ 9am
Response Deadline: 12/15/20 @ 1pm
Public Opening: 12/15/20 @ 2pm
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX.
Per ADA, reasonable accommodation provided with 24 hour prior notice.
713-993-4554 or www.hgacbuy.org for info.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. will conduct a prescribed burn between October 2020 and April 2021 on Sheldon Lake State Park & Environmental Learning Center. For additional information, call Sheldon Lake SP: (281) 456-2800.

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**Sealed Proposal Solicitation # PE05-21
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Cooperative Purchasing Program
Traffic Control, Enforcement & Signal Preemption Equipment**

Pre-Proposal Conference: 09/30/20 @ 9am
Response Deadline: 12/02/20 @ 1pm
Public Opening: 12/02/20 @ 2pm
3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, TX.
Per ADA, reasonable accommodation provided with 24 hour prior notice.
832-681-2514 or www.hgacbuy.org for info.

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS

The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas (METRO) is planning to issue the procurement documents listed in this advertisement.

RFQ No. 4020000184: METRONext North Houston Highway Improvement Project (NHHIP) General Engineering Consultant. Solicitation will be available on or about 10/01/2020.

Prospective bidders/proposers can view and download these solicitations by visiting METRO’s website at <https://www.ridemetroapp.org/procurement/>. If you are unable to download the documents or are having difficulty, please contact METRO Plan and Bid Room at (713) 739-4881.

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Houston-Galveston Area Council
Cooperative Purchasing Program
Traffic Control, Enforcement & Signal Preemption Equipment**

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
CONSTRUCTION MANAGER-AT-RISK
Klein ISD New TEP Building Package # 3

Klein ISD

Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. as Construction Manager-At-Risk for Klein ISD, in accordance with Texas Government Code 2269, will receive bids or proposals from all qualified subcontractors for the **Klein ISD – New TEP Building Package # 3** project. **Package # 3** will consist of the following scopes of work: **Masonry, Misc./Ornamental Metals, Divisions 7-12, Fire Sprinkler, Plumbing (excluding make-safe & site underground) and Division 32.**

Pre-Proposal Conference will be held October 7th, 2020 via Go-To Meeting. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/278607181> or via phone 1 (224) 501-3412.
Access Code 278-607-181

Questions should be sent to **Charles D. Reagan** at creagan@satpon.com or **Art Theriot II** at arttheriot@satpon.com by **October 12, 2020**.

Bids or proposals are due **October 21, 2020** at 2pm, bids or proposals should be emailed to houstonbids@satpon.com, faxed to 713-996-1400, or mailed/delivered to the Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc., 11750 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77079. Late bids will **not** be accepted.

There will be no public opening of bids or proposals. All bids or proposals shall be available after award of contract, or the 7th day after final selection of bids or proposals, whichever is later. After receipt of bids or proposals, Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. will conduct its evaluation of the subcontractor bids or proposals in relation to the project requirements and will select the bid(s) or proposal(s) that offers the best value to Klein ISD.

Klein ISD, the Owner, reserves the right to waive any informality and/or to reject any, or all bids, or proposals.

Contact **Charles D. Reagan** at creagan@satpon.com or **Art Theriot II** at arttheriot@satpon.com for additional information on this project.

Drawings and specifications will be available **September 25, 2020** on www.satpon.com and in the Satterfield & Pontikes Construction, Inc. office located at 11750 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77079.

Drawings and Specifications may also be reviewed at:

Associated General Contractors
Building Connected
McGraw Hill Construction/Dodge, www.construction.com
Virtual Builders Exchange, 3910 Kirby, #131, Houston, TX 77098, (832) 613-0201

The Contract may be awarded to a proposer per the following criteria: 1. Offeror’s submitted base proposal – 50%; Offeror’s experience & reputation – 15%; Quality of offeror’s good and services – 15%; Offeror’s safety record – 2%; Offeror’s proposed personnel – 5%; Whether the offeror’s financial capability is appropriate to the size and scope of the project – 5%; Offeror’s ability to complete project on time – 5%; Offeror’s performance in responding to warranty – 3%. The District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and the right to negotiate with any proposers after submission of proposals. In addition, the District, at its discretion, may waive any formalities or minor irregularities regarding the proposals.

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