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Frank's Americana Revival owner looking to grow the company

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The owner of Frank's Americana Revival in River Oaks is looking to invest millions in his company following the completion of his current project to grow his restaurant.

Mike Shine, 61, wants to expand his company by four to six restaurants over the next decade, he told the Houston Business Journal. Currently, Shine operates Frank's, at 3736 Westheimer Road, with his partner and son, Chris, and his chef and son, Colin.

His expansion plans are occurring as he's wrapping up a 2,000-square-foot, \$400,000 addition onto Frank's for private events space and a kitchen, he said. That project is slated to end in late March or early April.

"The business has continued to grow every year," Shine said. "It's become an iconic restaurant, especially in the River Oaks community."

No leases have been signed for the new restaurants, but Shine expects to have a deal worked out by this summer, he said. That restaurant, which could be a turnaround opportunity, could open sometime in 2018. Costs for a new restaurant could be about \$600,000 to \$800,000.

Meanwhile, the expansion project at the Westheimer location was in response to a lack of small private events space in Houston, Shine said. The restaurant also struggled to accommodate catering requests, which a separate full kitchen should address, he said. The Houston area saw an uptick in restaurants turning into private events space this past year.

Frank's new private events space can be split into three separate rooms, or used as one large room, and can serve a total of about 70 people. Each space will have flat screen TVs and full audio capabilities. Events have already been booked, Shine said.

The new space, which overtakes part of an adjacent retail building, will connect with the restaurant and expand the eatery to about 6,100 square feet, he said. Houston-based Issac Preminger Architecture &



COURTESY

Mike Shine, back, and his son and partner, Chris Shine.

Design Intl. PLLC designed the project.

"We want to get to the point that, whenever I decide I'm not doing this anymore, I (have) built a company that (my sons) can get their hands on and do something with," Shine said.

Houston restaurant woes

Several restaurants have closed after the Super Bowl with some in the industry saying there are more closures to come.

The tough business climate for restaurants in part has to do with the saturation in the industry and with recruiting, said Shine, who is a past president of the Greater Houston Restaurant Association and is still active with the organization.

There were about 4,500 restaurants when he started working in Houston restaurants about three decades ago. Now there are more than 10,000 eateries in the area.

With the growth, recruiting has become a challenge. Open positions at his restaurants used to attract about 50 resumes, but now he only gets about 10 responses, Shine said. But the pay for positions is relatively the same at restaurants across the Bayou City due to industry's thin margins.

"There are just so many other opportunities out there," Shine said, "I don't think our labor pool is as large as it could be."

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