

## Local Business

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### Two mall projects on hold

Developers: Outlets at Corpus Christi Bay, Crosstown Commons will open eventually

By Sara Foley (Contact)

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CORPUS CHRISTI — The developers behind two proposed malls say their projects aren't dead, even though the economy might make them seem that way.

Both an outlet mall in Robstown called the Outlets at Corpus Christi Bay and a Westside outdoor mall called Crosstown Commons will open eventually, two developers behind the projects said Thursday.

"I'll assure you, the project is not dead," said Ryan Gaston, one of the Crosstown Commons developers. "We are still working very closely with a number of interested tenants. Those tenants are on hold in Corpus Christi, just like they are in almost every other market in the U.S. and around the world."

Gaston's company dropped an option to buy more land in the city at an undisclosed location, but hasn't abandoned the plans to buy land where the mall would be, near Crosstown Expressway and Holly Road.

Rick Carduner, with Dolphin Ventures, plans to build an outlet mall near the Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds in Robstown. He said tenants want to be there but can't sign leases until the economy improves.

The outlet mall, originally set to open this year, is now set for a 2011 opening, he said.

"Nobody has financing right now," he said.

Construction was supposed to start on Crosstown Commons in July 2008 and the mall would have opened in 2011. Gaston said he doesn't have a timeline for the opening now.

Both land parcels are under contract but not officially sold, said Matt Cravey, a Corpus Christi commercial real estate broker who is representing land owners in both deals.

The Robstown City Council approved as much as \$14 million in tax incentives for the outlet mall.

The Corpus Christi City Council approved up to

\$40 million in tax incentives for Crosstown Commons.