

# LensCrafters Ditches Sawgrass Mills Mall for a Community Shopping Center Aligned with National Retail Trend

*Miami Manager secured new retail tenants in South Florida totaling 11,455 square feet, including LensCrafters*

SUNRISE, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, July 26, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In recent years, national retailers have begun to ditch enclosed malls for community shopping centers, and the pandemic has accelerated that trend. LensCrafters just signed a lease at The Gateway at Sawgrass, a community shopping center, to relocate from the Sawgrass Mills mall in Sunrise. The open-air Gateway at Sawgrass is about 2 miles from the mega outlet shopping mall operated by Simon Property Group.

LensCrafters is one of three tenants [Miami Manager](#) secured in Q2 2021 in its Broward County retail centers in Sunrise and Coconut Creek. All the leases total 11,455 square feet of retail space. The other two new tenants are Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale and Salon L V. The tenants are expected to open the doors later this year.

"The LensCrafters deal is a sign of our times," said Miami Manager COO Milton Mekler, who negotiated the lease. "Several retailers traditionally found in enclosed malls are choosing to open off-mall locations. Sephora, Bath & Body Works, Foot Locker and Bloomingdale's are aggressively pursuing the off-mall concept too. We are currently in conversations with a few other national retailers who are considering relocating from an enclosed mall to our shopping centers in the region. This shows that brick-and-mortar retail is not dead. It is simply catching up with consumers' preferences and their always-evolving behavior. That explains why we have had more leasing activity in the first half of 2021 than we have had in a long time."



Milton Mekler, COO of Miami Manager

LensCrafters, an international retailer of prescription eyewear and sunglasses, will occupy 4,216 square feet at The Gateway, which is owned and operated by Sunrise-based Miami Manager. LensCrafters and Miami Manager began negotiating in early 2020, as the pandemic kept people at home to curtail the spread of COVID-19 and enclosed malls were forced to shut down for several months. LensCrafters' new location will be at 157 NW 136th Avenue in Sunrise.

Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale will occupy 6,000 square feet at Miami Manager's Village Shoppes of Coconut Creek at 4690 State Road 7. The Evangelical church currently has nine locations in South Florida.

Salon L V will occupy 1,239 square feet at 181 NW 136TH Avenue in The Gateway at Sawgrass in Sunrise.

Miami Manager's Q2 2021 leasing activity follows an active Q1, when the shopping center owner and operator leased a total of 17,507 square feet to several small to midsize businesses either entering new neighborhoods or expanding their current footprint in South Florida. This new generation of tenants are absorbing some of the space vacated by struggling businesses during the pandemic.

In a sign of a quick recovery, Broward County's retail market performed well in Q1 2021 with strong market fundamentals and limited amounts of new construction, according to Colliers' Retail Market Report for Broward. Limited new supply was added in Q1 2021, but 628,909 square feet remains under construction in the County. The retail market achieved a positive net absorption of 193,693 square feet pushing the vacancy rate down to 5.4 percent, a decrease of 20-basis points quarter-over-quarter. Additionally, the overall asking lease rate increased 3.7 percent quarter-over-quarter, ending the first quarter at \$22.71 per square foot. In the coming year, the retail market is expected to remain stable and on the road to recovery.

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