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Councilmember Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway Welcomes Famima & Royal Clayton's English Pub to Broadway Spring Arcade

Famima will open its seventh Downtown location and Royal Clayton's will relocate – representing latest in long-line of successes for Bringing Back Broadway initiative

LOS ANGELES (January 19, 2012) – On the eve of its four-year anniversary, Councilmember José Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative announces the historic Broadway Spring Arcade will soon be reactivated with two new tenants: national convenience food retailer Famima and popular Downtown restaurant/bar Royal Clayton's.

The two new businesses, with Royal Clayton's re-locating from its Arts District location, come on the heels of a number of economic development successes for Councilmember Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative, a 10-year plan aimed at the restoration and revitalization of the Historic Broadway Theatre District. The initiative will celebrate its four-year anniversary on January 20, 2012 with a presentation to the Los Angeles City Council.

"The momentum we're seeing on Broadway is thrilling," said Councilmember José Huizar. "Following the roadmap we have developed for the revitalization of this historic street through Bringing Back Broadway, we have achieved a lot in four years and I look forward to an incredible amount of success in the future."

Famima will operate a 1,821 square-foot 24-hour store at 544-546 S. Broadway, and a lease was signed this week to place Royal Clayton's in a 3,500 square-foot space at 543 S. Spring Street. The two projects will activate both sides of the historic building, which dates back to 1924.

Other soon-to-open venues and improvements on Broadway include the popular eatery Figaro Bistro in Broadway's historic Schaber Cafeteria building; Ross Dress for Less reactivating the long-vacant historic Woolworth's Department store building, becoming the first new national retailer to come to Broadway in years; Umamicatessen on Broadway from the Umami Burger team; Two Boots Pizza from New York; Clifton Cafeteria's upgrade and expansion and the Palace Theatre undergoing a million dollar renovation in celebration of its 100th birthday last summer. Councilmember Huizar indicates even more good news is in the pipeline.

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Under Elizabeth Peterson-Gower and Tony Gower's direction, Royal Clayton's gained popularity with Downtown crowds as one of the first establishments offering food and drink in the burgeoning Arts District more than five years ago. Peterson-Gower is serving as project representative for the pub's new location, which will be operated by Tony Gower and owned by Gower Pubs LLC.

The pub was fashioned after a 15th century pub, with found artifacts adding to its distinct décor. A similar ambiance is planned for the Broadway Spring Arcade location, which Tony Gower feels is ideal due to its reminiscence of London's Covent Garden.

"This will be a neighborhood pub – a community house of gathering," Gower said. "We made our name in the Arts District, loved every minute of it and had a great following. Now with all the amazing progress happening on Broadway and Spring Street, we are looking forward to making Royal Clayton's in the Historic Core a big part of the Downtown neighborhood as it continues its revitalization."

The pub, which will employ approximately 35 people, will offer three meals a day as well as late night service and patio dining, beginning this fall. It will specialize in fish and chips, shepherds pie, bangers and mash, Sunday roast, and full English breakfast, as well as healthy California specialties. Plans include an expansive bottled and draught beer selection to complement the pub atmosphere.

Famima plans a 24-hour operation, with an opening in the next couple of months. The store will offer Asian-centric convenience store items and goods including: fresh deli-style lunch boxes, vegan/vegetarian entrees, sushi rice dishes, soups, steamy buns, hot items, grocery items, daily delivered fresh foods and meals, fruits, salads, paninis, baked goods, gourmet chips, Japanese crackers; beverages such as novelty soda pop, energy drinks, juices, soft drinks, eventually beer and wine; health and beauty products and gifts. The location which will employ 10-12 people will also offer an outdoor patio seating area on Broadway.

Project representative Kate Bartolo said Famima considers locating on Broadway a good investment.

"Famima will draw from an already dense surrounding residential and business population," said Kate Bartolo. "As Broadway transitions from a Downtown dividing line into more of a connective corridor, it creates cohesion between Downtown's collection of neighborhoods, enabling Famima's hybrid ethnic gourmet and convenience store to serve a diverse patron base."

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The Broadway Spring Arcade falls within the boundaries of the Historic Downtown Business Improvement District (HDLABID), which provides clean and safe services as well as marketing and economic development support for the area.

"The HDLABID is thrilled to welcome businesses like Famima and Royal Clayton's to our district," said Executive Director Blair Besten. "It's the perfect balance of chain and mom and pop stores that will keep Historic Downtown attractive to a wide variety of people who work, live, and enjoy the nightlife here. Historic Downtown has a lot to offer, and with the partnership between Bringing Back Broadway and the BID, it's clear that more and more businesses are realizing that this area is the heart and soul of Downtown and a great place to set up shop."

Originally known as the Mercantile Arcade, the building was designed by architects Kenneth MacDonald Jr. and Maurice C. Couchot, modeled after 19th century shopping arcades in Paris and London. The Spanish Renaissance Revival/Beaux-Arts structure spans a full block between Broadway and Spring Street, featuring a unique retail arcade/pedestrian paseo. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Broadway Theatre and Commercial Historic District.

According to the Los Angeles Conservancy, the building was constructed on the site of Mercantile Place, a small street that by 1924 had been lined with shops for more than 40 years. A competition was held to find a design suitable to replace Mercantile Place. The winning architects, who were awarded \$60,000 for their plans, preserved the retail activity and ambience of the street through the design of a glass-roofed arcade, which offers retail and a pedestrian paseo/promenade. At the building's opening, 2,000 invited businessmen were entertained by the music of three orchestras provided by Sid Grauman, as well as a variety show of vaudeville and dancing in the arcade.

Hallmarks of the structure are its intricately detailed, looming, terra cotta entrance arches. Thin twisted and beaded columns shape the narrow, delicate arches, which traverse the monumental entranceway arches. The central stories above the arches are sheathed with terra cotta molded to imitate stone blocks and the uppermost stories feature Doric columns, hanging swags and a scalloped cornice.

For more information about Bringing Back Broadway, visit BringingBackBroadway.com.

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