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TANYA RAGAN

PRESIDENT, WILDCAT MANAGEMENT

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“We’re seeing people return to the office, and we see activity with leasing. ... It’s exciting to feel the energy and the activation return to downtown.”

More than a year after the COVID-19 pandemic left Texans sheltering in place, things feel like they’re getting back to normal, especially in downtown Dallas.

“We’re seeing people return to the office, and we see activity with leasing. We’re seeing our residents return to our small businesses and support those businesses. It’s exciting to feel the energy and the activation return to downtown,” said Tanya Ragan, president of Wildcat Management.

Ragan has a special place in her heart for downtown. The Minnesota native says she’s been downtown for 15 years and is currently involved in several ventures in the area. Since 2014, her real estate firm, Wildcat Management, has owned the historic Purse Building at 601 Elm Street. She is also Chairman of downtown’s West End Association, a non-profit dedicated to preserving and developing the historic district.

While life has returned to downtown, the onset of the pandemic came at an unfortunate time for Ragan’s firm, which was finalizing a major lease at the Purse Building, one that would have seen a single user take the entire 65,000-square-foot property. Built in 1905, the building has been mostly vacant for nearly 30 years.

“Everything paused during the pandemic, and we were placed on hold,” said Ragan. “We’re back to the drawing board if you will. We are redefining some of our plans. Things have changed a little bit in how they looked pre-pandemic, but we’ve come full circle. We’re in several conversations right now with prospective users that have identified the building on their shortlist. I’m certainly feeling not only the energy but also the urgency. Some conversations previously took a little longer. Today, things are coming together at a different speed. I’m incredibly optimistic and certainly very energized by seeing this level of activity.”

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