

## B&B Theatres to Open Huge Complex in Houston by 2027

July 12, 2025

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Missouri-based B&B Theatres, the fifth-largest movie theater chain in the United States, is making its entrance into the Houston market with a bold \$750 million development that promises a one-of-a-kind entertainment experience. Set to open by spring 2027, the 90,000-square-foot cinema and leisure complex will anchor Friendswood City Center and include what the company claims will be the largest ScreenX auditorium in the world.

The 106-acre mixed-use project, led by developers Wolfgramm Capital and Tannos Development, broke ground last year along FM 528 in Friendswood. For B&B Theatres, a

family-owned company with roots dating back over a century, this move signals its continued growth into high-potential markets, especially in regions seeing significant demographic and economic expansion.

“This is going to be unlike anything you’ve seen in Houston,” said Brock Bagby, president of B&B Theatres, in an interview with the *Houston Chronicle*. The highlight of the facility will be a record-breaking ScreenX auditorium, a cutting-edge format that projects visuals on three walls to create a 270-degree panoramic viewing experience. According to Bagby, the Friendswood location will boast a 272-linear-foot screen, making it the largest ScreenX ever built.

ScreenX, developed in South Korea, is a premium theater format that immerses audiences by extending the visuals beyond the traditional screen. The format has gained popularity globally and is a major attraction for younger moviegoers seeking more engaging cinematic experiences.

In addition to ScreenX, the complex will feature a 4DX auditorium. Developed by South Korean firm CJ 4DPLEX, 4DX technology incorporates environmental effects such as wind, snow, rain, motion, and scent to enhance the on-screen action. Bagby noted that horror films in particular benefit from these effects, adding that, “People love it... the jump scares are that much scarier.”

Beyond movies, the project will include a range of family-friendly attractions aimed at making it a full-day destination. Plans call for Spark Immersive Bowling, a modern twist on bowling that integrates animated lane projections with themes like Angry Birds and seasonal visuals. The facility will also include a high-tech arcade with more than 100 games, virtual reality rides, and a full-service restaurant offering New American cuisine and movie-themed cocktails. An outdoor stage and patio space are designed to host live music, events, and lawn games.

As cinema chains continue to evolve to remain competitive in a digital age, B&B Theatres’ investment reflects a confidence in experiential entertainment and in suburban markets like Friendswood that are seeing rising household growth. Amid broader industry challenges, including labor disruptions and policy volatility at the federal level, private sector innovation in leisure and entertainment is delivering what the government can’t: real, local investment that enhances quality of life and offers consumers meaningful choices.

With the Friendswood location, B&B Theatres is not just opening a movie theater; it's building a destination.