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By Lisa Fickenscher

Eateries Forced Out By Soaring Rents

Drastic declines in business are affecting a growing number of owners to the point where they end up in court. Real estate attorney Adam Leitman Bailey, who represents both tenants and landlords, spends most days in Supreme and Civil court on Centre Street. His caseload involves more and more eviction proceedings against restaurants.

"Many of them signed expensive leases over the past few years that they can't afford, or they are suffering because their business has fallen off," Mr. Bailey says.

One case that's winding its way through the courts involves Itzocan Cafe, a well-reviewed Mexican eatery on East Ninth Street. But positive reviews couldn't help the cafe when business trailed off this summer. The owners missed rent payments and now owe about \$22,000 in back rent, according to court documents. The landlord wants its tenant out.