

The 10 Biggest Charlotte Real Estate Stories Of 2017

December 18, 2017 | Melissa Oyler, Bisnow Charlotte 

In 2017, Charlotte was named the **most up-and-coming city in America** while dropping from the **second to the third-largest banking center** in the U.S. This has been a year of change, including **growth** and more **growth** amid **changes in the aftermath of HB2**. Of course, we cannot forget about that time commercial real estate pros were named among **Charlotte's most annoying**. Here are the biggest stories we followed this year.

10. Major League Soccer In Charlotte – Almost – Dies



After going back and forth most of the year about where to pitch Major League Soccer and how to pay for it, Charlotte's bid fell apart before the **December deadline** to apply.

Who beat Charlotte? **Cincinnati, Detroit, Nashville and Sacramento** are all on the pitch, MLS announced recently.

Charlotte is not ready to call the whole thing quits; MLS plans to name two more teams in coming years.

9. Is The Open-Office Plan Dead?



Move over, open office — today's employees are demanding a flexible workspace, Charlotte industry experts say.

“Tenants want open floor plans but also a place to collaborate and a place to have a private conversation,”

Trinity Partners Director of Office Tenant Representation Ann-Fleming Powell said at *Bisnow's* Charlotte Office Development conference in Uptown in October.

Employers benefit as well, with the ability to make internal changes as workforce demands shift.

A report released later that month analyzed how national office design trends are changing. Businesses are finding the open-office trend is not always the most effective use of space.

8. Future Of Eastland Mall Site



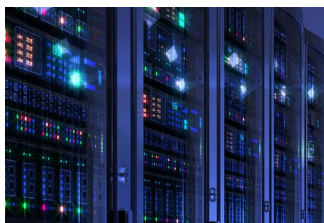
The razed Eastland Mall, a favorite of ice skating fans in the 1980s, then later the site of an infamous gang shootout, still faces an uncertain future.

The mall shuttered in 2010 and the City of Charlotte acquired the site in 2012. In March, the city seemed ready to hire Texas firm Jacobs for the site's redevelopment, but the vote for Phase 2 of the project stalled with council members unwilling to immediately pony up \$545K.

Three developers that expressed interest in the site in October have renewed interest in the property.

"I would like for someone to come in and kind of mass develop all 69 acres; I'm not in favor of a hodgepodge 30 acres here, 60 acres there," Charlotte City Council Economic Development Committee Chair James Mitchell told *Bisnow*.

7. From Textiles To Tech: How The Region Is Diving Into Data Center Development



Data centers are taking advantage of the region's infrastructure that was once used to power factories.

Charlotte has about 25 data centers and surrounding rural counties are making a name for themselves in the data center industry as well.

A data center report in October showed Charlotte and Raleigh-Durham are quickly gaining ground in the data center industry. CBRE's Data Center Solutions Vice President Ben Rojahn said low-cost land, power and Duke

Energy's renewable energy interests were Charlotte's attractions for the fast-growing industry.

6. Uptown Office Space: More Towers, More Retail, Dog-Approved



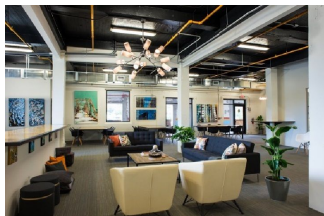
Office space Uptown thrived in 2017. Bank of America kicked off the year by **deciding to keep its space** at 525 North Tryon St., where it remains the largest tenant. The bank **also nabbed 500 SF** at Lincoln Harris' planned office tower at 620 South Tryon St.

A lease was signed for a **dog-friendly space** (and employees) at 800 West Hill St. John Portman opened his office tower on top of a parking garage at 615 South College Ave. **Arden Group bought BB&T Center** at 200 South College St. **Duke Energy might be planning an office tower** at 522 South College St. and **The Fallon Co. acquired** 301 South McDowell St.

Ally Financial Inc. **announced plans to anchor Crescent Communities' planned office building** at 601 South Tryon St. **Uptown's newest skyscraper**, 300 South Tryon, officially opened its doors in November. Stream Realty **finalized a \$15M renovation** at 300 South Brevard in December under architecture and interior design firm Progressive AE.

It is not all work and no play. Developers also made moves to bring **retail to Uptown in a big way**.

5. Co-Working Spaces Thrive Across The City



Working anywhere but in a traditional office was popular all over the city, even for corporate America's employees **commuting from the suburbs**. WheelHouse locations opening next year will provide space for corporate employees who live in commuter neighborhoods with a 45-minute or longer drive to Uptown.

Co-working giant WeWork **opened its first Charlotte location** at 615 South College in August, with plans to nearly double its space in 2018. Having reached almost its full capacity, the additional space will add more than 800 desks.

Office Evolution last week **announced plans to open** in the University City area.

“We are putting these locations in the suburbs,” Office Evolution franchise owner Jason Ward said. “They are close to home, close to major commuting arteries.”

4. Northwood Investors Spends Cool Billion-Plus For Ballantyne Corporate Park

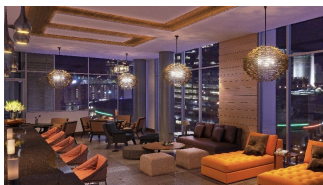


Northwood Investors **dropped a pretty penny for most of Ballantyne Corporate Park** in March, and The Bissell Cos. handed over 4M SF, four hotels, a golf course and hundreds of undeveloped acres.

“This transaction represents one of our largest acquisitions to date and reinforces our commitment to Charlotte,” Northwood President and CEO John Kukral said.

Developers were busy in Ballantyne in 2017, including breaking ground on **Lincoln Harris’ Rea Farms** in April. The multi-use development includes an apartment complex, **Life Time (which dropped “Fitness” from its name in October)**, a senior living facility and a Harris Teeter-anchored retail village.

3. Apartments Everywhere; High-Paying Renters Are Demanding Amenities



Multifamily is hot, but even Charlotte should expect it to cool down, **industry experts said** in May.

Apartment dwellers have become accustomed to increased rents but they **are expecting more amenities**: saltwater pools, penthouse lounges and spas are just the beginning.

Developers are able to get financing, but land and finance costs are increasing.

Still, all one has to do in Charlotte is blink and a new apartment complex appears. Notable new multifamily developments include **Draper Place, Crescent Atherton, E.C. Griffith Co.’s apartments** planned for west of Uptown, **Parkwood Station**, and the list goes on.

2. The Gold District And Camp North End: Adaptive Reuse Is The Rage



Adaptive reuse was a buzzword in Charlotte's submarkets this year. Big plans are underway in **The Gold District**, a pocket of South End that intends to take on NoDa for the unofficial title of Charlotte Arts District.

"After we're done with it, this whole place is going to be a walking gallery," Gold District board member and Magnolia Emporium owner Randolph James said.

The 75-acre Camp North End's Boileryard **signed eight new tenants** this summer. Camp North End used to be a Ford plant, was used during World War II for missile assembly, and is now being redeveloped as mixed-use by ATCO Properties.

Camp North End is so large, it was one of the sites Charlotte offered up to Amazon's HQ2, ATCO's Camp North End Development Director Tommy Mann told *Bisnow*.

1. Charlotte To Amazon: Swipe Right



2017 could easily be called the year of North America's love affair with Amazon, and **Charlotte was not left off of its list of suitors**. The city went full throttle in its efforts to woo the online retail giant's second headquarters site and is **now playing the waiting game** with the rest of the continent.

Whichever city wins the bid should be prepared: HQ2 could bring not just 50,000 jobs but **rising rents and crowded office real estate** to go along with it.

Neighboring Raleigh-Durham **could suffer most of all**, a recent study said.

Related Topics: **CBRE, Charlotte, Northwood Ravin, Amazon, data center, adaptive reuse, Crescent Communities, WeWork, Bank of America, Jacobs, open office, The Fallon Company, Trinity Partners, Data Centers, Lincoln Harris, Northwood Investors, Charlotte CRE, The Bissell Cos, Ballantyne Corporate Park, Office Development, Duke Energy, South Charlotte, Uptown**

Charlotte, Charlotte MSA, Charlotte Mayor, Life Time Fitness, Major League Soccer, Jason Ward, Life Time, Charlotte Real Estate, James Mitchell, Tommy Mann, City of Charlotte, Rea Farms, 615 South College, 300 South Tryon, ATCO, Southpark, Charlotte, Bisnow event, John Portman & Associates, SouthEnd, Charlotte, Co-working, CBRE Charlotte, South End Charlotte, West Charlotte, NoDa, Charlotte, high apartment rents, BB&T Center, luxury urban apartments, open offices, open office space, Charlotte East, 300 South Brevard, John Kukral, Eastland Mall, Charlotte, NC, luxury apartment amenities, Charlotte South End, Midtown Charlotte, Camp North End, E.C. Griffith Co., Gordon Beckman, Amazon HQ2, Draper Place, Ally Financial Inc., Ann-Fleming Powell, WheelHouse Coworking, Life Time Athletic Charlotte, Links at Rea Farms, Advent Coworking, Charlotte data centers, Raleigh-Durham, Charlotte County Council, Charlotte Major League Soccer, The Gold District, Life Time Athletic, Randolph James, Magnolia Emporium, Charlotte Arts District, Amazon HQ2 winner, Major League Soccer expansion, Major League Soccer Detroit bid, Major League Soccer Sacramento bid, Major League Soccer Nashville bid, Office Evolution, CBRE Data Center Solutions, Ben Rojahn, WeWork Charlotte, Harris-Teeter, Crescent Novel, Crescent Atherton, Parkwood Station, Boileryard, Amazon HQ2 Charlotte, Progressive AE