

2006 was a big year for local retail

December 29, 2006

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Retail development was a constant in Shreveport-Bossier City this past year, from renovations of longtime shopping centers to breaking ground for new ones.

"Retail in Shreveport-Bossier City is where it's been for the last six years. Not counting the housing market, retail has done considerably better than most other segments of real estate including office and industrial," said Jim Dowling, president of Coldwell Banker Dowling Gosslee Beauvais and Associates, which has played a key role in a number of developments in Shreveport and Bossier City.

"It was certainly a very good year for new retail development. It was just a continuation of the trend that we've been seeing in north Bossier and southeast Shreveport really since 2000."

Following are a few of the highlights and announcements in retail development for 2006.

- Shoppes at Bellemead announced several new businesses this year, including Talbot's relocation from Mall St. Vincent in September, custom jewelry store James Avery Craftsman and upscale Mexican restaurant Cantina Laredo, which both opened in November.
 - Stirling Properties announced the coming of businesses to their forthcoming shopping center on Airline Drive in north Bossier City. The center will be anchored by Target and will include PetSmart, Best Buy, Belk, Ross Dress for Less, Bed Bath and Beyond, PJ's Coffee, PJ's Wine Café, Chick-Fil-A and more. Target, Best Buy and PetSmart are scheduled to open next summer and the remaining businesses will open in fall 2007.
 - Louisiana Boardwalk in Bossier City welcomed several new businesses, including Build-A-Bear Workshop, Nike Factory Outlet, Banana Republic Outlet, Wet Seal and more. The opening of long-awaited Copeland's Cheesecake Bistro was pushed to 2007.
 - JCPenney and Kohl's were announced to be the anchor stores of the forthcoming Regal Court, a new shopping center to be set off of the Youree Drive corridor next to Kings Crossing Shopping Center. Also, Regal Court developers SDI Realty announced the coming of DSW Shoes, La Madeleine's, P.F. Chang's, T.G.I. Friday's, Buffalo Wild Wings, Logan's Roadhouse and The Capital Grille-Longhorn. Other businesses will include a major chain bookstore and major sporting goods store. JCPenney and Kohl's are scheduled to open in fall 2007. The rest of the center is set to open by January 2008.
 - Uptown Shopping Center underwent renovations for the first time in three decades. The project, which began in June, featured the addition of new businesses including Starbucks Coffee, longtime restaurateur Giuseppe Brucia's new Italian restaurant Ristorante Giuseppe and a New Balance shoe store. Other new businesses included The UPS Store, Electric Beach, The Moppet Shoppe and the area's first Gymboree Play & Music Center.
- Another shopping center that got a makeover this year was the 50-year-old Bossier Crossroads, whose 28 tenants include Ralph & Kacoos, Gunn's Shoe Shop and more. And Broadmoor Shopping Center underwent reconstruction after a fire nearly destroyed the historic retail center in 2005. The project also included the opening of new tenants PJ's Coffee and Tea, Dallas-based franchise The Dinner Station and Fit After 50 fitness center and more.
- In August, local developer Rand Falbaum announced the coming of Alexandrine Place, which will include a state-of-the-art Home Design Center, Orr BMW dealership, IberiaBank and retail shopping center IberiaBank Pointe. The Home Design Center is scheduled to open in February, while the remaining businesses are set to open by the end of 2007.
 - Despite the massive retail shift to southeast Shreveport, Southern Hills continued to experience business growth with a host of new businesses, including Bodacious BBQ, Counter Culture, Joey's '57 Chevy Café, El Vaquero Mexican Restaurant, Boomerang Carwash, Ark-La-Tex Portable Storage (PODS), Amazing Space Storage, Swamp Island Roadhouse and more. The Southern Hills Business Association also announced the coming of various new businesses in 2007, which include Direct Buy, Stone America, Kids Safety Town and more.

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