

TOP STORIES OF THE YEAR:

#7: City sees busy year of economic development

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HIGH POINT — Despite the coronavirus pandemic, economic development in High Point had its share of highlights in 2020.

The year started with LIFlex committing to invest \$7.6 million in a new building and creating 46 jobs at its packaging production facility on Gallimore Dairy Road.

Even after the pandemic took hold, more good news came, including the announcement that DC Blox is considering building and operating a multi-tenant data center in the Piedmont Centre business park in the largest capital investment project in the city in at least 20 years, at \$305 million.

City leaders expect to learn as soon as this week whether DC Blox will develop the project here.

Another potential large investment that officials are positive about landing is the Britanno Group's proposed \$100 million, 120-job film studio project along W. Green Drive, which it announced in July.

The company and its investors haven't yet decided whether to proceed with the project. The City Council has authorized possible incentives for it and the DC Blox project if they come to fruition.

State building reuse grants were awarded for two projects in the city.

One is Ariston Hospitality, which will be opening a manufacturing facility at 1581 Prospect St. The company is a manufacturer of high-end contract furniture for hotel, senior living and hospital facilities. The company plans to invest a total of \$1.5 million and create 15 new jobs in the first two years.

The other is High Pint Brewery and Public House, which will be opening in the former beauty school building at 1114 Eastchester Drive.

The company's investment in the property will exceed \$1.5 million and up to 27 jobs will be created in the first two years.

Another company, Hot Shots Distributing, is considering moving its specialty hot sauce distribution facility to High Point from Charlotte.

In the downtown area, Peters Development continued a series of investments and property acquisitions near Truist Point stadium.

In 2020, it renovated 645 N. Main Street, which is now the corporate headquarters for it and two related companies, Bethany Medical Center and Peters Holdings.

The building features a rooftop event/meeting space.

An adjacent office building at 665 N. Main St. was demolished and will be redeveloped into a mix of retail and office space.

Across the street, the company purchased several buildings surrounding the Dog House restaurant and plans to develop a commercial and residential complex there.

Peters Development also bought two shopping centers: the former Main Street Square, now known as Peters Plaza II and what's been known as Fairfield Square on S. Main Street, which will be renamed Peters Plaza III.

Next to the stadium, Elliott Sidewalk Communities has a mixed-use building under construction that will include a food hall.

Down the block, the Congdon Yards project opened the first phase of its campus in November with The Generator, a commercial-grade woodshop production and prototyping facility.

It's one aspect of a project being funded through a \$30 million investment from David Congdon and The Earl and Kathryn Congdon Family Foundation.

High Point will soon be without its top economic developer, with the retirement Jan. 1 of EDC President Loren Hill after 20 years in the job.