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Top 10 biggest Bradenton business changes in 2022: DeSoto mall, airport, Mixon and more

BY [JAMES A. JONES JR.](#)

DECEMBER 14, 2022 12:13 PM



Millie's Sweets and Treats opens on Bradenton's Old Main Street. "I just love ice cream," owner says.



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MANATEE COUNTY

From plans for two new hospitals in the Parrish-North River area to the tantalizing promise of revitalization of Bradenton’s urban corridor, and the sale of the DeSoto Square Mall, 2022 brought lots of surprises.

The biggest factor in all the commercial changes was booming population growth.

In 2022, the times they were a changing, to quote Bob Dylan.

TOP VIDEOS



PARRISH AMENITIES

During the year, two hospitals announced plans to open hospitals on opposite ends of Moccasin Wallow Road.

- HCA Florida Healthcare purchased nearly 22 acres in the village center of Parrish’s North River Ranch for [a six-story, 150-bed hospital](#) with emergency room services and an intensive care unit as well as an acute treatment center.

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- BayCare Health System announced that it is planning to open a hospital by the end of 2025 on the northeast corner of [Moccasin Wallow Road and Interstate 75](#).

An amenity of another kind was nearing completion on the south side of Parrish, as Lowes, anchor of the [Creekside Commons shopping center](#), 8740 U.S. 301 N., Parrish, announced that it would be opening on Dec. 30.

Other stores previously announced for Creekside Commons include Aldi supermarket, South Philly Cheesesteaks, Five Below specialty discount store, Home Goods, Crunch Fitness, Blossom Nail Lounge and a Verizon phone store.

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THE URBAN CORRIDOR

Two major real estate deals seem to signal growing interest in the revitalization of 14th Street West and recognition of the [promise of the urban corridor downtown](#).

During the year, Steve Herrig, founder and CEO of SUNZ Insurance, purchased two acres of land in downtown Bradenton for \$2.35 million.

An unidentified Seattle-based investor doing business as Fountains Plaza, LLC, a Florida Limited Liability Company, bought The Fountains shopping center, 4808-4848 14th Street West for \$9.5 million. Both deals were brokered and announced by Ian Black Real Estate.

In addition, the City of Bradenton was considering selling its riverfront city hall and building a new one on 14th Street West, a move that could generate [\\$53 million in economic output by attracting new businesses](#) and residents to the area.

AIRPORT EXPANSION

Work started this year on a \$200 million expansion of Sarasota Bradenton International Airport to handle record passenger traffic.

Plans include a new baggage handling system, new escalator, realignment of the concourse wait room, [addition of a ground level terminal](#), cellphone waiting lot and a new ground transportation facility for shuttles, taxis and limos.

The area's rapidly growing population, popularity with visitors and an abundance of new destinations served from SRQ have made it the fastest growing airport in the United States.

BRADENTON'S OLD MAIN STREET

Five retail businesses signed leases to set up shop in Bradenton's \$13.8 million City Centre parking garage and office building.

By year's end, [Millie's Sweets and Treats](#), [The Beach Shop](#), [Pink & Navy](#) and [The Stoked Flamingo](#) had opened on the corner of Third Avenue West and 12th Street West and [Orange Blossom Coffee](#) was expected to open soon.

Pink & Navy is a women's boutique, the Stokes Flamingo sells men's clothing, The Beach Shop offers swim wear and beach accessories, and Millie's sells ice cream and more.

LAKWOOD RANCH

North American Properties of Fort Myers was proposing to rezone 9.6 acres at 16600 State Road 64 E. from general agriculture to allow development of an [80,000-square-foot shopping center](#).

The retail plaza would be anchored by a Publix supermarket and would be the most easterly shopping center to date at Lakewood Ranch along State Road 64.

MIXON FRUIT FARMS

Mixon Fruit Farms, 2712 26th Ave. E., a Bradenton tradition and tourist attraction for 84 years, seemed to be headed to new owners.

Owners Dean and Janet Mixon confirmed in October that they were in the process of [selling the business to an undisclosed buyer](#) but they expected nothing to change there until 2024.

“We have dealt with so much, from NAFTA bringing in all the disease that has killed our citrus trees, COVID closing us down, staffing issues, the hurricane knocking off half the fruit, just to name a few. Because of all the issues, we are having to take a serious look at offers. We don't have a signed contract, at this time, however we are in the process of seeing what can be done on our land,” owner Dean Mixon said.

Dean's father, Bill Mixon, and his parents started Mixon Fruit Farm in 1939 when he bought his first grove at age 16.

"We started with a No. 3 washtub on the back porch, washing oranges by hand," Mr. Mixon said in 2002 of the birth of the business.

DESOTO SQUARE MALL SOLD

Nashville businessman Charles R. Jones and his CRJ Bradenton LLC bought the [58-acre DeSoto Square Mall property](#) at 303 301 Blvd. W. for \$25.7 million, according to documents filed May 5 with the Manatee County Clerk of Courts office.

At year's end, Jones said that plans are in the works for the property that could see it eventually become apartments with some retail.

MORE SELF STORAGE FACILITIES

Still more [large self storage units are planned](#) for Manatee County, spurred by the influx of new residents and the national run-up in the housing market. Among those planned:

- A three-story, 132,500-square-foot facility at 911 64th St. Ct. E., on the southwest corner of Interstate 75 and S.R. 64 near Wendy's.
-

- A 68,124-square-foot unit at 9408 State Road 64 E., across from Haile Middle School.

- A three-story 89,910-square-foot facility at 8030 State Road 64 E., across the road from a Dairy Queen.

- Mini-warehouse space totaling 106,117-square-feet at 12129 U.S. 301 N., Parrish.

- A 76,560-square-foot mini-warehouse and accessory outdoor storage for recreational vehicles and boats at 5906 Lorraine Road.

- A three-story, 120,000-square-foot self-storage facility and a commercial out parcel for retail use on 8.16 acres west of 30th Street East, south of 44th Avenue East and east of U.S. 301, near Manatee Charter School.

MORE INDUSTRIAL SPACE

Barron Collier Companies and Imminent Ventures began construction late in the year on the [Manatee County Logistics Center](#), a 563,451-square-foot Class A industrial park on the southwest corner of U.S. 301 and 44th Avenue East.

It's the latest example of a once rare commercial facility — over-sized warehouse buildings — coming to all parts of Manatee County.

100 YEARS OF SERVICE

The Bradenton Herald turned 100 years old on Sept. 15, 2022.

During a century of service, [the Bradenton Herald reported](#) the community's struggles, challenges and successes through wars, the Great Depression, a terrorist attack on the American homeland, the Great Recession, hurricanes, cycles of growth and development and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The newspaper has been in different buildings, had different owners and evolved

with new technologies during those many decades, but the mission has never changed: to serve our community.

Also celebrating 100 years are the Bradenton Kiwanis Club, Grimes Galvano law firm, and the Florida Department of Health in Manatee County.

Marking 75-year milestones are The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature and the Bradenton Lions Club.



An unofficial rendering shows what the six-story hospital planned for the Parrish could look like. The medical facility will house up to 150 beds just north of Moccasin Wallow and west of U.S. 301. provided rendering *Bradenton*





Brittany Wagner, store manager of Lowes of Parrish, stops by scan central as merchandise arrives at the store on Nov. 17, 2022. Also shown is Doug Stevenson. James A. Jones Jr. jajones1@bradenton.com



Mildred Golden, shown Sept. 12, 2022, is happy to have Millie's Sweets and Treats open on Bradenton's Old Main Street. It's the latest business to open in the City Centre building. James A. Jones Jr. jajones1@bradenton.com



Matthew Peterson, shown 7/7/2022, recently opened The Stoked Flamingo mens clothing store in Bradenton's City Centre building on Old Main Street. James A. Jones Jr. jajones1@bradenton.com

DeSoto Square mall, shown in this 2020 file photo, was sold to Nashville investor Charles R. Jones for \$25.7 million, according to court documents filed May 5. File photo by Tiffany Tompkins ttompkins@bradenton.com

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James A. Jones Jr. covers business news, tourism and transportation for the Bradenton Herald.

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HEALTH NEWS

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EBONY WILLIAMS *THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION*

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While heart attacks don't discriminate based on gender, women are more likely to die from a heart attack than men. Studies suggest that's because women are less able to recognize the symptoms of a heart attack.

Cardiovascular nurse Jennifer Gaydosh knows firsthand how tricky it can be to recognize heart attack symptoms in women.

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