

Commercial Real Estate

# A last look inside Chesterfield Mall ahead of its demolition



Image: SLBJ

The soon-to-be-demolished Chesterfield Mall.

DILIP VISHWANAT | SLBJ



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Oct 14, 2024

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Workers were busy Monday continuing to prepare the Chesterfield Mall for demolition, which will start Tuesday. As the six-month demolition process kicks off this week, much of what is left behind – including movie theater seats, murals, stray dolls and medical equipment – will be demolished along with the mall.

Although owner The Staenberg Group tried over the past year to sell or salvage anything people might want from inside the mall, remnants of the once bustling facility were still strewn throughout the 1.2 million-square-foot structure Monday morning.

Large signs also pointed out what is planned to replace it: [TSG's \\$2 billion mixed-use redevelopment Downtown Chesterfield](#), intended to be the downtown-style area that Chesterfield has never had. The 96-acre mall site is planned to be redeveloped with 2,500 apartments or housing units, retail, restaurants, a hotel and possibly office space. The plan is to create a walkable, urban area alongside the neighboring \$1 billion development already underway from developer CRG, Wildhorse Village. The Chesterfield City Council last year approved roughly \$300 million in tax incentives to create new infrastructure for the combined projects.

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***See photos of the shuttered Chesterfield Mall in the gallery below:***



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After [demolition begins Tuesday](#), it will take about six months, TSG officials said. Grading and infrastructure for Downtown Chesterfield, covering new utilities and sidewalks, is projected to take about a year. Construction could then start on new buildings, in what will likely be a two-year process. TSG anticipates that tenants could start moving to the site in 2028.

The mall has been permanently closed since Aug. 31, a date long advertised to remaining [tenants](#). Still, the many shops inside still had items such as walkers, electric wheelchairs, kiosks, signage, couches and plants. The mall's temporary pickleball courts, added a few years ago as a way to use open space at the food court, are still there. So are various standing arcade games that weren't able to be sold.

A film crew that has chronicled dead malls in the past has been taking footage inside the mall for a documentary showcasing its closure and demolition. They've been busy exploring the various things left behind by onetime shoppers or shop owners, destined to be demolished along with the building at some point in the six months.

The darkened AMC Theater, which closed in May 2023, still had its red seats as of Monday, but the movie screens were removed to allow workers to take out the speakers and audio equipment located behind them, mall owner TSG said.

Although the Cheesecake Factory restaurant at the mall only closed Aug. 18, taggers already added graffiti to its walls and ceiling. Without their usual trimming, some of the mall's remaining plants have already outgrown their contained beds and begun wrapping vines around escalators.

Many of the plants inside the mall were claimed by people who wanted them, and in some cases, part of the branches or trunks of large trees were cut off on the mall floor and left behind while the rest was taken out.

The mall has locked gates, cameras and round-the-clock security on site, but some intruders have been caught in the building, TSG said. Electricity has been shut off.

Although some of the large glass shop windows were claimed by people who wanted to reuse them, some of them have been broken, with glass left behind on the mall floor.

Messages spray painted on the mall's glass railings were painted either by vandals or to warn them off:

"I wouldn't go this way"

"I'm Watching"

"Dogs - Be Aware - Motion Detected!"

When the V-Stock store closed July 28, its owner left behind thousands of books, which TSG donated to various organizations. Some books were still left behind, though.

Some remnants of the mall's closing week are in place, until they're demolished along with the mall.

An Aug. 21 West Newsmagazine 2024 high school football issue was set on a kiosk, ready to become part of Chesterfield Mall history.

