

Leasing continues at Gateway TradePort in Pontoon Beach

Commercial real estate firm JLL has announced a national contract packaging company has signed a lease to locate at Gateway TradePort in Pontoon Beach, taking up 217,000 square feet of the 543,227-square foot warehouse in Building 2.

JLL, the firm exclusively hired to handle leasing for the industrial park, is also currently negotiating with another tenant to lease additional space in the park.

With a new tenant in the industrial park’s second building, NorthPoint Development has announced plans to begin construction on a third building starting in early 2021. Gateway TradePort 3 will have 624,000 square feet, 40-foot clear ceilings (only the second of its kind in St. Louis – Building 2 being the first), and 23-year tax abatement.

The quick leasing of Buildings 1 and 2 is further evidence of the growing interest in the park and within the Metro East submarket of the St. Louis region, according to JLL Managing Director David Branding.



Gateway TradePort Building 2 in Pontoon Beach. A third building is now planned.

“As a top 20 U.S. industrial market, St. Louis is following national growth trends as industrial real estate markets continue to accelerate in reaction to COVID-19. As work-from-home becomes the new norm, and stay-at-home orders increase, we’ve seen e-commerce, logistics, and consumer

product companies with COVID-19 related products driving up demand in the Metro East and throughout St. Louis Metro. I expect these same companies to be a driving force for leasing volume throughout 2021.”

The industrial vacancy rate in the Metro East area is currently 5.7 per-

cent, down from 7.8 percent in the first quarter of 2020. In the third quarter alone, more than 1 million square feet has been absorbed in this submarket.

Much of this interest has been fueled by booming e-commerce growth and the need to build “last-mile” infrastructure — distribution and warehouse centers that are strategically located to get products to customers’ doors as quickly as possible.

The 600-acre Gateway TradePort industrial park is located at the intersection of I-270 and I-255.

Eventual plans for the park call for a total of 11 industrial buildings with a combined 7.8 million square feet. It’s the fifth, ground-up industrial development in the St. Louis market by NorthPoint Development.

JLL is a Fortune 500 company with annual revenue of \$18 billion, operations in more than 80 countries and a global workforce of more than 94,000 as of March 31, 2020. JLL is the brand name, and a registered trademark, of Jones Lang LaSalle Inc.

Boeing runs test of aerial refueling drone out of Mascoutah

Boeing and the U.S. Navy have for the first time flown a test of the MQ-25 drone, considered a significant milestone in the development of the unmanned aerial refueler.

The flight was conducted by Boeing test pilots operating from a ground control station at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah.

The successful 2.5-hour flight with the Cobham Air Refueling Station – the same ARS currently used by F/A-18s for air-to-air refueling – was designed to test the aircraft’s aerodynamics with the ARS mounted under the wing.

“Having a test asset flying with an ARS gets us one big step closer in our evaluation of how MQ-25 will fulfill its primary mission in the fleet – aerial refueling,” said Capt. Chad Reed, the U.S. Navy’s Unmanned Carrier Aviation program manager. “T1 will continue to yield valuable early insights as we begin flying with F/A-18s and conduct deck handling testing aboard a carrier.” Future flights will continue to test the aerodynamics of the aircraft and the ARS at various points of the flight envelope, eventually progressing to extension and retraction of the hose and drogue used for refueling.

“To see T1 fly with the hardware and software that makes MQ-25 an aerial refueler this early in the program is a visible reminder of the capability we’re bringing to the carrier deck,” said Dave Bujold, Boeing’s MQ-25 program director. “We’re ensuring the ARS and the software operating it will be ready to help MQ-25 extend the range of the carrier air wing.”

The Boeing-owned T1 test asset is a predecessor to the engineering development model aircraft being produced under a 2018 contract award. T1 is being used for early learning and dis-

covery, laying the foundation for moving rapidly into development and test of the MQ-25. Following its first flight last year, T1 accumulated approximately 30 hours in the air before the planned modification to install the ARS.

Earlier this year the Navy exercised an option for three additional MQ-25 air vehicles, bringing the total aircraft Boeing is initially producing to seven. The Navy intends to procure more than 70 aircraft, which will assume the tanking role currently performed by F/A-18s, allowing for better use of the combat strike fighters.

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