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Allentown's PPL Plaza officially renamed



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The former PPL Plaza in downtown Allentown has been renamed Grand Plaza. (File photo) –You can call it Grand Plaza now.

The property formerly known PPL Plaza has been renamed by the New York Developer, which purchased the property earlier this year.

Somera Road Inc. hired Altitude

Marketing of Emmaus to come up with a new name for the property that had been built for PPL offices in 2002 as one of Allentown's first redevelopment projects.

When PPL spun off Talen Energy, the newly formed company moved to a City Center Development building, Tower 6, right down the street.

The firm said the name pays tribute to one of the earlier uses of the property – even before the Hess's Department Store, which was knocked down for the current building – when the Grand Central Hotel was located there up until the late 1890s.

The 240,000-square-foot, LEED Gold-certified building, is fronted by a large concrete public area with fountains, and is a popular spot for downtown events, making it an important redevelopment project for the larger downtown community.



“Grand Plaza is a classic name that signifies the ideal evolution for this property, which is already renowned for its impressive, inviting plaza,” said Ian Ross, managing principal of Somera Road.

While the name change is the first step in the company’s plans to reinvent the property, plenty of work is still planned.

Somera has hired architectural firm ESa for the interior renovations of the property and Hawkins Partners Inc., a landscape

architecture and urban design firm, to lead the refresh of the well-known outdoor plaza. Both firms are based in Nashville, Tennessee.

Renovations will include a refreshed lobby and common areas and work to completely reimagine the existing plaza to a more welcoming city center location by adding seating options, trees to provide shade and planters for more green space.