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Gwinnett is Great! Really!

ViaSat. National DCP. The Dennis Group. **VetConnexx**. Gwinnett County economic developers have tallied a **string of deals** in the past year despite some high-profile losses. (Remember the greatest hitter of all time, Ted Williams, only hit the ball less than four out of every 10 times.)



We sat down with Gwinnett Place CID's **Joe Allen** and Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce's **Kellie Brownlow** over salad and sandwiches at the Gwinnett Place Drive Chili's last week to discuss all things real estate. And boy, did we get an earful (and mouthful). Kellie and Joe shared a list of **deals** that recently hit the mall area, including:

- * ViaSat, which is adding **275 jobs** into a **\$10.5M, 60k SF facility**.
- * National DCP, a Dunkin' Donuts supplier, which **moved** from New England with **125 jobs**.
- * The Dennis Group, which bought a **60k SF facility** and plans to hire up to **150 employees** in the next two years.
- * MorphoTrust, which **inked a 10k SF call center** at the Gwinnett Corporate Center.
- * And VetConnexx, which **opened a 30k SF call center** at 3100 Breckinridge Blvd.



It's good news that's been **overshadowed** by two **high-profile losses** in Gwinnett: Fiserv, which is moving to Alpharetta, and NCR, which is **eyeing moving its HQ** to Midtown. (Tabloids love to focus on the negative.) Joe says many of these deals took place in Gwinnett Place's popular **opportunity zones**, where tenants are getting **tax breaks** for new jobs. "Every company is global. It's why we're able to do so well with the Gwinnett Place OZ," Kellie says. "Most of the interest we have received in office has been in the **OZ**"



The CID also is eyeing its next big project following the Pleasant Hill Road diverging diamond interchange (which Joe says sees a **43% drop in traffic** delays traveling from Club Drive to Satellite Boulevard). Currently, the CID tapped Pond & Co to lead a master plan development for Gwinnett Place that could create a **transportation-centered activity hub** with green space and a "main street" that officials hope is a **catalyst** for urbanized mixed-use development. (Legend has it that wherever you build a main street, Bob Seger shows up.) Joe says it would be similar to what the City of Duluth has done to its downtown, and what Sandy Springs is currently mulling, with plans to maybe even **hire a master developer**. The study will determine the exact area around the mall that could be ideal.