

Chiquita leases NASCAR Plaza space

By Kerry Singe
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Chiquita Brands International officially has a new home.

The banana giant signed a lease for more than 130,000 square feet in the NASCAR Plaza building and plans to move in by September, real estate firm Cushman & Wakefield | Thalhimer announced Monday. [Chiquita](#) will occupy six floors.

“We are pleased to finalize the location of our new global headquarters in Charlotte,” said Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Fernando Aguirre. “NASCAR Plaza is the perfect location to base our global operations, and we look forward to joining the vibrant business community in the uptown area.”

The building will also feature some form of Chiquita branding on it, but spokesman Andrew Ciafardini said the details are still being worked out.

The company [announced](#) it was leaving downtown Cincinnati for Charlotte last year. Chiquita will bring 400 jobs and is in line for roughly \$24 million in state and local incentives, provided it meets jobs and investment targets.

About half of those jobs are expected to be workers who relocate from Cincinnati, and about half are expected to be filled by local job candidates. The company has been taking applications and interviewing prospective employees in Charlotte.

“We continue to identify candidates for the remaining positions available and are on schedule to be fully transitioned into the NASCAR Plaza by the end of August,” said Ciafardini, in an email. He didn’t specify how many jobs remain open.

The announcement was a coup not only for uptown but also for NASCAR Plaza, which has struggled to attract tenants since it opened adjoining the NASCAR Hall of Fame. The building once faced foreclosure, though those proceedings were eventually stopped when an investor bought the loan.

Construction of its office space began this month and is expected to be completed by the end of August. LSP3 has been retained as Chiquita’s architectural firm.

Broker Warren M. Snowdon, senior vice president in Cushman & Wakefield | Thalhimer’s Charlotte office, said in a statement it was an honor to work with Chiquita. Ralph Oldham, Cristy Nine and Patrick McCoy of

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Cushman & Wakefield | Thalhimer, in conjunction with Alan Bascom of Cushman & Wakefield Corporate Occupier & Investment Services, handled the lease negotiations on behalf of Chiquita Brands International.

Anne Vulcano and Jessica Brown, with CBRE, represented the landlord, Trinity Capital Advisors. Staff Writer Ely Portillo contributed.

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