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Big Lots moving to former Toys R Us location

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Nov 29, 2020



Bowling Green liquidation, is
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Bowling Green's Toys R Us store, which closed in 2018 as part of the company's bankruptcy liquidation, is being renovated to make way for the Big Lots retailer to move into the space.

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Vacant for more than two years, the former Toys R Us store at 3000 Scottsville Road in Bowling Green is getting a new tenant.

Demolition has started on part of the 45,000-square-foot building in preparation for discount retailer Big Lots renovating and then moving into the building.

Built in 1989 and renovated in 2011, the Toys R Us store closed in 2018 as part of the New Jersey-based toy retailer's bankruptcy and liquidation.

Now Big Lots, a Columbus, Ohio-based discount retailer that started with a single store called Odd Lots in 1983, is planning to move from its current Bowling Green location at 2445 Nashville Road into the higher-profile Scottsville Road location.

A manager at the local Big Lots confirmed those plans Friday, and permits filed with the city of Bowling Green give insight into the company's plans.

According to those permits, Big Lots is spending \$50,000 to demolish a portion of the building and then plans to spend \$600,000 to renovate the commercial building.

No timetable for completing the renovation was given, and efforts to get more information from Big Lots corporate management over the Thanksgiving weekend were unsuccessful.

The Bowling Green Big Lots, located next to the Western Kentucky University Center for Research and Development near Campbell Lane and Nashville Road, is part of a company that has thrived in spite of the trend toward online retailing.

In October, Big Lots was included, along with Walmart and Kohl's, by the Motley Fool financial advice company as an example of a retailer that has thrived in spite of the trend toward online shopping that has led to closures of many brick-and-mortar stores.

The no-frills Big Lots stores carry a variety of merchandise, ranging from mattresses, couches, lamps and kitchen appliances to toys, snacks, groceries, pet food and cleaning supplies.

According to Marketwatch.com, Big Lots is expected to post net income of \$246.46 million on \$5.32 billion in revenue for 2020. The company now has more than 1,400 stores across 47 states.

In contrast, Toys R Us collapsed under the weight of competition from online retailers like Amazon and its own heavy debt load and declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy in September 2017.

The company listed debt of \$5 billion in that bankruptcy filing and eventually decided to liquidate all 800 of its U.S. stores.

On Jan. 20, 2019, the company emerged from bankruptcy as Tru Kids, with plans to open some smaller stores and boost its online presence.

In November 2019, Toys R Us opened a retail store in Paramus, N.J., followed by a second location at The Galleria in Houston.

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