

Barry McWhirter, President/CEO McWhirter Realty Partners

1. **How long have you been a tenant?** We moved to Atlanta Galleria in May of 2014 after selling our office building in Vinings. We were looking for a location that allowed us to consolidate our operations to one floor and easily access major interstates.
2. **How many employees do you have?**
It can range anywhere from 15-20 because we have employees who float between our Marietta office and Atlanta Galleria. Luckily, our current space allows for this flexibility.
3. **What does your company do?**
McWhirter Realty Partners is a commercial real estate firm providing brokerage, property management, acquisition and development services throughout Georgia and neighboring states. A large portion of our business is in the 20-county Metro Atlanta area, so it's important that our people can access I-285 and I-75 quickly during different times of the day to reach our customers if we need to.
4. **Why is the Cumberland area and Atlanta Galleria a good place for you to do business?** We've been a Cobb County-based business for over 30 years and do a lot of work with Cobb County and the city of Marietta. As a result, keeping our office in Cobb County was very important to us. In addition to the location, the building and campus amenities and nearby restaurants and banks make this a good location for our business.
5. **What Atlanta Galleria amenity do you use the most? (gym, restaurants, etc.)** For me, the three amenities I enjoy and use daily are the covered parking, the sandwich shop in the building and the athletic club. I enjoy being able to get to work and having everything here so I don't have to leave.
6. **What are your thoughts on economic development in the Cumberland area and future growth?**
We've been very familiar with this area for a long time and always have been impressed with the Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID). The stadium is generating a lot of energy in the area, but I don't think this has too much of an impact on our business other than being a good location for our office. Once the stadium opens it may impact us by offering a convenient location to entertain clients, but we won't know for sure until it's finished.
7. **What business successes or milestones have you achieved lately?** It feels like the deals we close – sometimes on a daily basis – are our greatest successes. We handle a lot of transactions, but they're all incredibly important to us. However, in the real estate industry, surviving the last six years is probably the greatest achievement possible.
8. **What challenges are you confronting?** It seem like the economy is still very fragile. We do a lot of leasing representing both tenants and landlords and we're not seeing a lot of tenant movement, and we think that's directly related to the economy. While the banking industry has corrected itself, it's still challenging to find the right projects to pursue when the base is fragile.

Even in this uncertainty, construction prices are way up. For example, high-rise apartments are being built like crazy, which has increased material and labor prices. On the other hand, you have some segments that are still questioning where the economy is going. For example, we have very

few medical tenants moving around or expanding because of the uncertainty in the healthcare market right now.

9. **What does your office do to have fun together and build comradery?** Frankly, everyone loves Food Truck Tuesday. Most employees plan their week to be here on Tuesday and go out to the courtyard on those days.

10. **Overall, how do you like being a tenant at Atlanta Galleria?** The property and management have exceeded our expectations and it pleases me that we made the right decision to move our business here. A lot of our people are independent contractors, so keeping them happy with the right office location was very important to us. It's much easier to do that in an environment with so many amenities. In the greater vision for our business, this is where we need to be. When we made the decision to move here, it was for a long time, and I don't see us going anywhere any time soon.