

Michael Staenberg has a vision for Chesterfield, its mall and its valley

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By *CORY EDWARDS*

The office building at 2126 Innerbelt Parkway is a beautiful place to work. Green and efficient, it was cool on this hot summer day thanks to LED lighting and a white roof adorned with solar panels. The interior features bare brick walls, skylights and a glass-enclosed metal staircase.

The brick walls are covered in colorful modern art: abstract paintings, sculpture, photography, and mixed media creations from all over the world.

The building's owner, The Staenberg Group [TSG], occupies its second floor.

TSG's lobby contains photos created by local artist Diane Katzman. Each one displays the wit and wisdom of the company's CEO, Michael Staenberg. Staenberg himself took the lead in rehabbing and beautifying the 20-year-old building, a job he took seriously.

Throughout his career as a commercial real estate developer, Staenberg has come to believe "it's the little things" that can lift a person's spirit, ultimately helping those who pass through his developments become better citizens.



Michael Staenberg

Known in West County as the driving force behind much of Chesterfield Valley's progress since the Great Flood of 1993, Staenberg's holdings include:

- Partial ownership of Chesterfield Commons, a 2-mile long open air shopping center on the south side of Chesterfield Airport Road.
- Chesterfield Valley Square, a retail center located just west of the Commons and anchored by Bar Louie and Oishi.
- The District, formerly Taubman Prestige Outlets, which is to become a "retailtainment center complete with a 3,300 capacity, indoor music venue.
- Thirteen acres of raw land at 17511 Chesterfield Airport Road, adjacent to the existing Lou Fusz Ford dealership.
- The former Sears building at Chesterfield Mall.

Staenberg is deeply committed to his investments in Chesterfield.

The late Louis S. Sachs, the man behind much of city's early development, often was referred to as "the father of Chesterfield." It was Sachs who developed Chesterfield Village, the commercial/retail center that formed the city's basis, and which he envisioned as the city's downtown.

Given Staenberg's many holdings, he seems to have replaced his former mentor as the new visionary in town.

On the raw land at 17511 Chesterfield Airport Road, he's working to establish a to-be-named car dealership along with a few other outparcels.



Chesterfield Valley Square

Additionally, he believes Top Golf promises to turn the north side of I-64 in Chesterfield Valley into an entertainment destination. His transformation of Chesterfield Prestige Outlets into The District is part of that vision. The entertainment-focused development will have a music venue, restaurants and retailers unique to St. Louis, he said. He's also forming partnerships with "several exciting entertainment people" who he declined to name.

As the owner of the Sears building at Chesterfield Mall, Staenberg has a seat at the table for any redevelopment of that mall property. He wants to make sure it is redeveloped properly. The mall and its anchor tenants are bound by a reciprocal easement agreement. Under that agreement, TSG, Macy's, and Dillard's all have a say in redevelopment efforts.

TSG also has made a bid to buy Chesterfield Mall from its current owners, Hull Property Group.

He said he believes the mall can become a new “downtown Chesterfield,” which he said will require both public and private funds.

“You can’t ask a private developer to do everything,” he said.

*Want to know more about the man behind the developments? Be sure to pick up the fall edition of **tour/st** magazine, available Sept. 15 at 400 locations from Clayton to Wentzville, including local Dierbergs, Schnucks and Straub’s markets.*