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Athletic apparel retailer plans State Street flagship

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A rendering of the new structure at State and Monroe.

Champs Sports plans a two-level flagship store on State Street, where it will join co-working firm WeWork in the former Amalgamated Bank headquarters building.

The athletic apparel retailer, a division of Foot Locker, leased 16,037 square feet on the first and second floors of the building at State and Monroe streets, according to landlord Tishman Realty.

The retail lease is a key step in a redevelopment of the property by New York-based Tishman Realty and its investment partner, a unit of Paris-based financial services firm AXA Group. That venture bought the five-story property at 100 and 112 S. State St. from Amalgamated Bank for \$35 million last year.

At the time, Tishman's acquisition was seen by some as a big bet that the developer could attract retailers farther south on State Street than they've historically been willing to go.

"We felt like there was room to grow south," said Jason Blum, a Chicago-based vice president at Tishman Realty. "Monroe is the southern tip of Millennium Park, and with (PrivateBank Theatre) across the street we felt we would be able to create a southern anchor on State Street."

Tishman Realty is benefitting from a dearth of available space. State Street storefront vacancy all but vanished in 2015, when overall Loop retail vacancy fell to its **lowest level in at least 14 years**, according to a report by Chicago-based Stone Real Estate.

After buying the property from Amalgamated in March 2015, the Tishman Realty venture bought out the final year of Men's Warehouse's lease in the three-story structure at 112 S. State and demolished that building. It is in the process of replacing that with a five-story structure connected to the former bank headquarters, creating one 70,000-square-foot structure.

Earlier this year, WeWork leased the top three floors, or 43,200 square feet, for offices. There remains about 10,000 square feet of retail space, 5,500 square feet on the ground floor and another 4,400 right above it on the second floor. The space will be leased to one or more retailers, according to Tishman Realty.

The landlord will turn over the space to Champs Sports in late October, according to Tishman Realty. After building out its space, Champs Sports is expected to move in sometime in 2017.

A Foot Locker spokeswoman did not return calls requesting comment.

The landlord was represented by Paul Bryant and Andrew Becker of Oakbrook Terrace-based Mid-America Real Estate Group. Champs Sports was represented by Mid-America's Michael Wexler and Jim Farrey of Chicago-based J. Patrick Realty.

New York-based Foot Locker already has another concept a block north on State Street. The **32 South State store**, a collaboration between Foot Locker's Footaction store brand and Nike's Jordan brand, sometimes attracts long lines of customers for limited releases of Jordan shoes.