

FIGURES | CHARLESTON INDUSTRIAL SECTOR | Q4 2023

# Positive Year End Absorption Charleston Positioned For Future Growth

**▲** 3.52%

**△** 399,799

▼ 7.1 M

▲ \$8.43sf

Vacancy Rate

SF Net Absorption

SF Construction

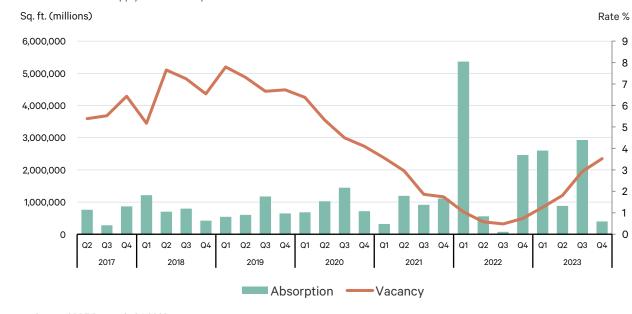
AVG Class A Warehouse Rate

FIGURE 1: Historical Supply & Demand Dynamics

Note: Arrows indicate change from previous quarter.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- \$9.22 Billion in capital investment announced for economic activity across South Carolina in 2023
- Investors continue to show interest in the Charleston market due to strong market drivers, increasing population, and diverse industries continuing to locate here.
- Port Capacity: The South Carolina State Ports Authority continues to invest in critical infrastructure: Navy Base Intermodal Yard under construction
- +400K sq. ft. absorbed in Q4, bringing the YTD total to approx. 6.9-mil. sq. ft.
- Charleston's overall, vacancy rate rose to 3.52% from 2.93% the prior quarter.
- The U.S. Industrial national overall vacancy for Q4 is anticipated to rise through the EOY.
- Charleston vacancies hold 1.7% below the national vacancy of 5.2%
- High profile IOS land acquisitions continue given high barriers to entry for the port market
- Under Construction pipeline expected to increase vacancy in first half of 2024



Source: CBRE Research, Q4 2023

## Leasing Activity

With economic tailwinds, leasing activity remained positive at 593K SF, down from 1.6-million SF in Q3. The third quarter leasing activity was driven by 3PL expansions in the market with close proximity to the port, flight to quality for the consumer goods industry, companies supporting the data center growth as well as existing OEMs growing their off-campus third-party leased space. Tenants are evaluating renewals to remain in place over near-term expansion while continuing to plan future growth in 2024/2025.

**NOTE:** Absorption does not reflect preleasing demand or activity. Per CBRE Research, transactions are not reflected or counted towards absorption until they are delivered. All prelease activity will be counted towards absorption in the quarter in which the building delivers.

FIGURE 2: Notable Lease Transactions in Q4 2023

Transaction Type	Tenant	Address	Size (sq. ft.)	Submarket	Туре
New	COSCO Shipping	2453 King Street Ext.	121,400	N Charleston	Expansion
New	Softex	412 Port City Centre	150,000	I-26 North	Flight-to-Quality
New	Cleveland Electric	1400 Garrot Ave.	81,120	I-26 North	Expansion
New	KION	410 Tradeport Blvd	175,000	I-26 North	Expansion

Source: CBRE Research, Q4 2023

# **Development Activity**

Charleston continues to see new construction starts in Q4 2023 leading into 2024. Contrary to the limited number of new construction starts across the country, year over year new starts are down 90% amount in Charleston, and year over year starts are down 46% nationally. The development pipeline remains robust with the ability to deliver 7+ million square feet in 2024. We anticipate having additional spec announcements throughout 2024 into 2025 as demand, interest rates, and pricing stabilizes.

# Capital Markets - Investment Sales/Expansions

E-commerce, population growth, supply chain diversification, and strong employment will continue to be the dominant demand drivers for the sector. Investor interest remains consistent given the strength of the Charleston market fueled by the port, advance & light manufacturing (automotive, aerospace, defense, Electric Vehicles (EV) and EV Batteries, and Alternative Energy and Fuels) industries. Electric vehicle manufacturing is becoming a key industry throughout the Southeast and Charleston is positioned to reap the benefits of reshoring with companies setting up shop in the region.

FIGURE 3: Q4 2023 Notable Capital Markets Transactions

Building/Address	Size (sq. ft.)	Submarket	Activity
558 Omni Industrial Blvd	360,320	I-26 North	Build-to-Suit
562 Omni Industrial Blvd	364,700	I-26 North	Vacant
566 Omni Industrial Blvd	606,880	I-26 North	Leased

## Deliveries

Construction completions remained robust throughout 2023. The Charleston market has undergone tremendous industrial growth overall with a balance of product across all asset classes and size facilities. The industrial market added a total of 7.9-million square feet of new inventory during 2023.

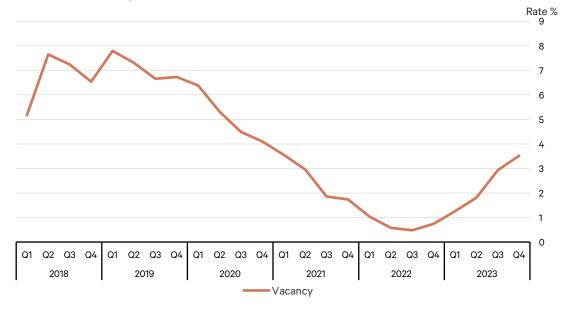
FIGURE 3: Q4 2023 Notable SPEC Construction Completions

Building/Address	Size (sq. ft.)	Submarket	Activity
157 Belgium Way	322,400	I-26 North	Vacant
334 Port City Centre Building 3	168,480	I-26 North	Vacant
334 Port City Center Building 2	165,750	I-26 North	Vacant

## Vacancy

Newly-delivered space throughout the year has increased the overall vacancy rate to 3.52%. Charleston vacancies remain 1.7% less than the 5.2% national average. The vacancy rate has fluctuated for the past four quarters due to new deliveries and will continue to increase into 2024 as the spec supply delivers. Large bulk assets, +300,00 sq. ft. and particularly 500,000 sq. ft. and above have seen the greatest increase in availability. While Q4 2023 deliveries decreased quarter over quarter, a wave of supply will hit the market in the first half of 2024 causing vacancy rates to increase. While bulk assets are carrying the majority of that increase small assets are also impacted by demand and will see an increase in vacancy. Overall market fundamentals that attract both occupier and developers will keep Charleston a low-risk long term.

FIGURE 4: Historical Vacancy

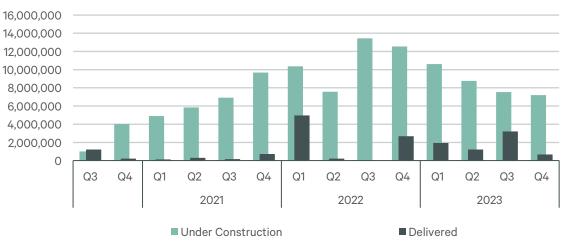


## Market Outlook

**—Port of Charleston:** The Port ended the year with an 11.1% decrease in its container volume year over year from 2022 to 2023. The total TEU volume in 2023 was 2.4 million compared to 2022's 2.8 million passing through the port. Although there was a contraction, this is following the national trend of a 12.8% decrease year over year. The Fiscal Year Infrastructure investments are ongoing at the port, including the near-dock rail yard underway at the Navy Base Intermodal Facility which will allow the port to enhance capacity. A notable project in the Fiscal year is the completion of the Charleston Harbor deepening to 52 feet to become the deepest harbor on the East Coast. The Port of Charleston's continuous improvement plan has proven beneficial contributing to several large economic development announcements throughout South Carolina in 2023.

**-Absorption:** 2023 finished the year on a positive note with 6.9-million of positive absorption. Charleston finished the year at steady pace through economic tailwinds and we anticipate a slight decline in absorption with the wave of bulk supply delivering in the first half of 2024.

FIGURE 5: Construction and Deliveries by Quarter



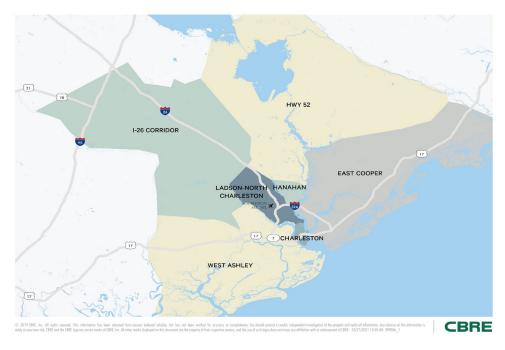
Source: CBRE Research, Q4 2023

FIGURE 6: Market Statistics

Submarket	Building SF	Vacancy (%)	Under Construction	Last 4 Qtrs. Net Absorption	Q4 2023 Net Absorption (SF)
Charleston	1,044,665	0.00	0	0	0
East Cooper	8,773,595	0.50	0	9,620	4,440
Hanahan	7,010,922	0.34	0	180,096	0
Hwy 52 North	6,246,266	0.11	0	145,055	90,975
I-26 North	28,831,498	9.80	5,854,907	5,112,518	315,850
North Charleston/Ladson	30,182,594	2.50	1,343,590	1,424,324	-11,426
West Ashley	1,047,382	1.25	0	25,722	0
MARKET TOTAL	83,136,922	3.52	7,198,497	6,897,335	399,799
Asset Type	Building SF	Vacancy (%)	Under Construction	Last 4 Qtrs. Net Absorption	Q4 2023 Net Absorption (SF)
Manufacturing	24,663,949	0.0	0	128,553	0
R&D/Flex	2,400,476	4.16	0	22,378	-8,150
Warehouse/Distribution	56,072,497	4.26	6,913,497	6,746,404	407,949
MARKET TOTAL	83,136,922	3.52	7,198,497	6,897,335	399,799

Source: CBRE Research, Q4 2023

#### Market Area Overview



### Survey Criteria

The CBRE, Inc. Industrial MarketView report provides statistics based on a revised set of inventory consisting of industrial properties in the following submarkets: Charleston, East Cooper, Hanahan, Hwy 52 North, I-26 North, North Charleston/Ladson and West Ashley. All properties are industrial properties greater than 10,000 sq. ft. Absorption is counted when the lease is signed and is not based on physical occupancy; when a building delivers, preleases are counted as absorption in the quarter of delivery. Historical data is reflective of the current set of inventory rather than previously published report figures and is subject to revision as additional information becomes available.

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