

FIRST INDUSTRIAL REALTY TRUST INC
Form 10-K
February 26, 2018

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 10-K

ý ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934
For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017

or

.. TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF
1934

For the transition period from to

Commission File Number: 1-13102 (First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.)

333-21873 (First Industrial, L.P.)

FIRST INDUSTRIAL REALTY TRUST, INC.

FIRST INDUSTRIAL, L.P.

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its Charter)

Maryland (First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.) 36-3935116 (First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.)

Delaware (First Industrial, L.P.) 36-3924586 (First Industrial, L.P.)

(State or other jurisdiction of (I.R.S. Employer
incorporation or organization) Identification No.)

311 S. Wacker Drive, 60606
Suite 3900, Chicago, Illinois
(Address of principal executive offices) (Zip Code)

(312) 344-4300

(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Common Stock (First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.)

(Title of Class)

New York Stock Exchange

(Name of exchange on which registered)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:

None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. Yes No

First Industrial, L.P. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. Yes No

First Industrial, L.P. Yes No

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Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. Yes No

First Industrial, L.P. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. Yes No

First Industrial, L.P. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, a smaller reporting company, or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer," "smaller reporting company," and "emerging growth company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.:

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company

(Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Emerging growth company

First Industrial, L.P.:

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company

(Do not check if a smaller reporting company) Emerging growth company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.

First Industrial, L.P.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. Yes No

First Industrial, L.P. Yes No

The aggregate market value of the voting and non-voting stock held by non-affiliates of First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. was approximately \$3,374.2 million based on the closing price on the New York Stock Exchange for such stock on June 30, 2017.

At February 23, 2018, 120,167,509 shares of First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.'s Common Stock, \$0.01 par value, were outstanding.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Part III incorporates certain information by reference to First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.'s definitive proxy statement expected to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission no later than 120 days after the end of First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.'s fiscal year.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This report combines the Annual Reports on Form 10-K for the period ended December 31, 2017 of First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc., a Maryland corporation (the "Company"), and First Industrial, L.P., a Delaware limited partnership (the "Operating Partnership"). Unless stated otherwise or the context otherwise requires, the terms "we," "our" and "us" refer to the Company and its subsidiaries, including the Operating Partnership and its consolidated subsidiaries. The Company is a real estate investment trust and the general partner of the Operating Partnership. At December 31, 2017, the Company owned an approximate 96.8% common general partnership interest in the Operating Partnership. The remaining approximate 3.2% common limited partnership interests in the Operating Partnership are owned by certain limited partners. As the sole general partner of the Operating Partnership, the Company exercises exclusive and complete discretion over the Operating Partnership's day-to-day management and control and can cause it to enter into certain major transactions, including acquisitions, dispositions and refinancings. The management of the Company consists of the same members as the management of the Operating Partnership.

The Company and the Operating Partnership are managed and operated as one enterprise. The financial results of the Operating Partnership are consolidated into the financial statements of the Company. The Company has no significant assets other than its investment in the Operating Partnership. Substantially all of the Company's assets are held by, and its operations are conducted through, the Operating Partnership and its subsidiaries. Therefore, the assets and liabilities of the Company and the Operating Partnership are substantially the same.

We believe it is important to understand the differences between the Company and the Operating Partnership in the context of how the Company and the Operating Partnership operate as an interrelated, consolidated company. The main areas of difference between the consolidated financial statements of the Company and those of the Operating Partnership are:

Stockholders' Equity, Noncontrolling Interest and Partners' Capital. The 3.2% equity interest in the Operating Partnership held by entities other than the Company are classified within partners' capital in the Operating Partnership's financial statements and as a noncontrolling interest in the Company's financial statements.

Relationship to Other Real Estate Partnerships. The Company's operations are conducted primarily through the Operating Partnership and its subsidiaries, though operations are also conducted through eight other limited partnerships, which are referred to as the "Other Real Estate Partnerships." The Operating Partnership is a limited partner, holding at least a 99% interest, and the Company is a general partner, holding at least a .01% general partnership interest through eight separate wholly-owned corporations, in each of the Other Real Estate Partnerships. The Other Real Estate Partnerships are variable interest entities that both the Company and the Operating Partnership consolidate. The Company's direct general partnership interest in the Other Real Estate Partnerships is reflected as noncontrolling interest within the Operating Partnership's financial statements.

Relationship to Service Subsidiary. The Company has a direct wholly-owned subsidiary that does not own any real estate but provides services to various other entities owned by the Company. Since the Operating Partnership does not have an ownership interest in this entity, its operations are reflected in the consolidated results of the Company but not the Operating Partnership. Also, this entity owes certain amounts to the Operating Partnership, for which a receivable is included on the Operating Partnership's balance sheet but is eliminated on the Company's consolidated balance sheet, since both this entity and the Operating Partnership are fully consolidated by the Company.

We believe combining the Company's and Operating Partnership's annual reports into this single report results in the following benefits:

- enhances investors' understanding of the Company and the Operating Partnership by enabling them to view the business as a whole and in the same manner as management views and operates the business;
- creates time and cost efficiencies through the preparation of one combined report instead of two separate reports; and
- eliminates duplicative disclosures and provides a more streamlined and readable presentation for our investors to review since a substantial portion of the Company's disclosure applies to both the Company and the Operating Partnership.

To help investors understand the differences between the Company and the Operating Partnership, this report provides the following separate disclosures for each of the Company and the Operating Partnership:

- consolidated financial statements;

a single set of consolidated notes to such financial statements that includes separate discussions of each entity's stockholders' equity or partners' capital, as applicable; and
a combined Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations section that includes distinct information related to each entity.

This report also includes separate Part II, Item 9A, Controls and Procedures sections and separate Exhibits 31 and 32 certifications for the Company and the Operating Partnership in order to establish that the requisite certifications have been made and that the Company and the Operating Partnership are both compliant with Rule 13a-15 and Rule 15d-15 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and 18 U.S.C. §1350.

FIRST INDUSTRIAL REALTY TRUST, INC.
 FIRST INDUSTRIAL, L.P.
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FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This report may contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Exchange Act"). We intend for such forward-looking statements to be covered by the safe harbor provisions for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements are based on certain assumptions and describe our future plans, strategies and expectations, and are generally identifiable by use of the words "believe," "expect," "plan," "intend," "anticipate," "estimate," "project," "seek," "target," "potential," "focus," "may," "will," "should" or similar words. Although we believe the expectations reflected in forward-looking statements are based upon reasonable assumptions, we can give no assurance that our expectations will be attained or that results will not materially differ. Factors which could have a materially adverse effect on our operations and future prospects include, but are not limited to:

- changes in national, international, regional and local economic conditions generally and real estate markets specifically;
- changes in legislation/regulation (including changes to laws governing the taxation of real estate investment trusts) and actions of regulatory authorities;
- our ability to qualify and maintain our status as a real estate investment trust;
- the availability and attractiveness of financing (including both public and private capital) and changes in interest rates;
- the availability and attractiveness of terms of additional debt repurchases;
- changes in our credit agency ratings;
- our ability to comply with applicable financial covenants;
- our competitive environment;
- changes in supply, demand and valuation of industrial properties and land in our current and potential market areas;
- difficulties in identifying and consummating acquisitions and dispositions;
- our ability to manage the integration of properties we acquire;
- potential liability relating to environmental matters;
- defaults on or non-renewal of leases by our tenants;
- decreased rental rates or increased vacancy rates;
- higher-than-expected real estate construction costs and delays in development or lease-up schedules;
- changes in general accounting principles, policies and guidelines applicable to real estate investment trusts; and
- other risks and uncertainties described in Item 1A, "Risk Factors" and elsewhere in this report as well as those risks and uncertainties discussed from time to time in our other Exchange Act reports and in our other public filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC").

We caution you not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements, which reflect our outlook only and speak only as of the date of this report. We assume no obligation to update or supplement forward-looking statements.

PART I

THE COMPANY

Item 1. Business

Background

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc. is a self-administered and fully integrated real estate company which owns, manages, acquires, sells, develops and redevelops industrial real estate. The Company is a Maryland corporation organized on August 10, 1993 and a real estate investment trust ("REIT") as defined in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code"). As of December 31, 2017, our in-service portfolio consisted of 164 bulk warehouse properties, 92 regional warehouse properties, 183 light industrial properties and 45 R&D/flex properties, containing an aggregate of approximately 59.3 million square feet of gross leasable area ("GLA") located in 21 states. Our in-service portfolio includes all properties that have reached stabilized occupancy (generally defined as properties that are 90% leased), developed and redeveloped properties one year from the date construction is completed and acquired properties that are at least 75% occupied at acquisition or one year from the acquisition date.

We began operations on July 1, 1994. The Company's operations are conducted primarily through the Operating Partnership, a Delaware limited partnership formed on November 23, 1993 of which the Company is the sole general partner (the "General Partner"), with an approximate 96.8% and 96.7% ownership interest ("General Partner Units") at December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively. The Operating Partnership also conducts operations through the Other Real Estate Partnerships, numerous limited liability companies ("LLCs") and certain taxable REIT subsidiaries ("TRSs"), the operating data of which, together with that of the Operating Partnership, is consolidated with that of the Company as presented herein. The Company does not have any significant assets or liabilities other than its investment in the Operating Partnership and its 100% ownership interest in the general partners of the Other Real Estate Partnerships. Noncontrolling interest in the Operating Partnership of approximately 3.2% and 3.3% at December 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively, represents the aggregate partnership interest held by the limited partners thereof ("Limited Partner Units" and together with the General Partner Units, the "Units").

Profits, losses and distributions of the Operating Partnership, the LLCs, the Other Real Estate Partnerships and the TRSs are allocated to the general partner and the limited partners, the members or the shareholders, as applicable, of such entities in accordance with the provisions contained within their respective organizational documents.

We utilize an operating approach which combines the effectiveness of decentralized, locally based property management, acquisition, sales and development functions with the cost efficiencies of centralized acquisition, sales and development support, capital markets expertise, asset management and fiscal control systems. At December 31, 2017, we had 160 employees.

Available Information

We maintain a website at www.firstindustrial.com. Information on this website shall not constitute part of this Form 10-K. Copies of our respective annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to such reports are available without charge on our website as soon as reasonably practicable after such reports are filed with or furnished to the SEC. You may also read and copy any document filed at the public reference facilities of the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at (800) SEC-0330 for further information about the public reference facilities. These documents also may be accessed through the SEC's Interactive Data Electronic Application via the SEC's home page on the Internet (www.sec.gov). In addition, the Company's Corporate Governance Guidelines, Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, Audit Committee Charter, Compensation Committee Charter and Nominating/Corporate Governance Committee Charter, along with supplemental financial and operating information prepared by us, are all available without charge on the Company's website or upon request to the Company. Amendments to, or waivers from, our Code of Business Conduct and Ethics that apply to our executive officers or directors will also be posted to our website. We also post or otherwise make available on our website from time to time other information that may be of interest to our investors. Please direct requests as follows:

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.
311 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 3900
Chicago, IL 60606

Attention: Investor Relations

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Business Objectives and Growth Plans

Our fundamental business objective is to maximize the total return to the Company's stockholders and the Operating Partnership's partners through an increase in cash flows and increases in the value of our properties and operations.

Our long-term business growth plans include the following elements:

Internal Growth. We seek to grow internally by (i) increasing revenues by renewing or re-leasing spaces subject to expiring leases at higher rental levels; (ii) increasing occupancy levels at properties where vacancies exist and maintaining occupancy elsewhere; (iii) controlling and minimizing property operating and general and administrative expenses; and (iv) renovating existing properties.

External Growth. We seek to grow externally through (i) the development of industrial properties; (ii) the acquisition of portfolios of industrial properties or individual properties which meet our investment parameters within our target markets; (iii) the expansion of our properties; and (iv) possible joint venture investments.

Portfolio Enhancement. We continually seek to upgrade our overall portfolio via new investments as well as through the sale of select assets that we believe do not exhibit favorable characteristics for long-term cash flow growth.

Our ability to pursue our long-term growth plans is affected by market conditions and our financial condition and operating capabilities. See "Summary of Significant Transactions in 2017" under Item 7, "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations."

Business Strategies

We utilize the following six strategies in connection with the operation of our business:

Organizational Strategy. We implement our decentralized property operations strategy through the deployment of experienced regional management teams and local property managers. We provide acquisition, development and financing assistance, asset management oversight and financial reporting functions from our headquarters in Chicago, Illinois to support our regional operations. We believe the size of our portfolio enables us to realize operating efficiencies by spreading overhead among many properties and by negotiating purchasing discounts.

Market Strategy. Our market strategy is to concentrate on the top industrial real estate markets in the United States. These markets have one or more of the following characteristics: (i) favorable industrial real estate fundamentals, including improving industrial demand and constrained supply that can lead to long-term rent growth; (ii) warehouse distribution markets with favorable economic and business environments that should benefit from increases in distribution activity driven by growth in global trade and local consumption; and (iii) sufficient size to provide ample opportunity for growth through incremental investments as well as offer asset liquidity.

Leasing and Marketing Strategy. We have an operational management strategy designed to enhance tenant satisfaction and portfolio performance. We pursue an active leasing strategy, which includes broadly marketing available space, seeking to renew existing leases at higher rents per square foot and seeking leases which provide for the pass-through of property-related expenses to the tenant. We also have local and national marketing programs which focus on the business and real estate brokerage communities and multi-national tenants.

Acquisition/Development Strategy. Our acquisition/development strategy is to invest in industrial properties in the top industrial real estate markets in the United States.

Disposition Strategy. We continuously evaluate local market conditions and property-related factors in all of our markets for purposes of identifying assets suitable for disposition.

Financing Strategy. To finance acquisitions, developments and debt maturities, as market conditions permit, we may utilize a portion of proceeds from property sales, unsecured debt offerings, term loans, mortgage financings and line of credit borrowings under our \$725.0 million unsecured revolving credit agreement (the "Unsecured Credit Facility"), and proceeds from the issuance, when and as warranted, of additional equity securities. As of February 23, 2018, we had approximately \$720.8 million available for additional borrowings under the Unsecured Credit Facility.

Future Property Acquisitions, Developments and Property Sales

We have acquisition and development programs through which we seek to identify portfolio and individual industrial property acquisitions and developments. We also sell properties based on market conditions and property related factors. As a result, we are currently engaged in negotiations relating to the possible acquisition, development or sale of certain industrial properties in our portfolio.

When evaluating potential industrial property acquisitions and developments, as well as potential industrial property sales, we will consider such factors as: (i) the geographic area and type of property; (ii) the location, construction quality, condition and design of the property; (iii) the terms of tenant leases, including the potential for rent increases; (iv) the potential for economic growth and the general business, tax and regulatory environment of the area in which the property is located; (v) the occupancy and demand by tenants for properties of a similar type in the vicinity; (vi) competition from existing properties and the potential for the construction of new properties in the area; (vii) the potential for capital appreciation of the property; (viii) the ability to improve the property's performance through renovation; and (ix) the potential for expansion of the physical layout of the property and/or the number of sites.

Industry

Industrial properties are typically used for the design, assembly, packaging, storage and distribution of goods and/or the provision of services. As a result, the demand for industrial space in the United States is related to the level of economic output. Accordingly, the competition we face to lease our existing properties and acquire new properties varies with the level of economic output.

Item 1A. Risk Factors

Our operations involve various risks that could adversely affect our business, including our financial condition, our results of operations, our cash flow, our liquidity, our ability to make distributions to holders of the Company's common stock and the Operating Partnership's Units, the market price of the Company's common stock and the market value of the Units. These risks, among others contained in our other filings with the SEC, include:

Disruptions in the financial markets could affect our ability to obtain financing and may negatively impact our liquidity, financial condition and operating results.

A significant amount of our existing indebtedness was issued through capital markets transactions. We anticipate that the capital markets could be a source of refinancing of our existing indebtedness in the future. This source of refinancing may not be available if volatility in or disruption of the capital markets occurs. From time to time, the capital and credit markets in the United States and other countries experience significant price volatility, dislocations and liquidity disruptions, which can cause the market prices of many securities and the spreads on prospective debt financings to fluctuate substantially. These circumstances can materially impact liquidity in the financial markets, making terms for certain financings less attractive, and in some cases result in the unavailability of financing.

Furthermore, we could potentially lose access to available liquidity under our Unsecured Credit Facility if one or more participating lenders were to default on their commitments. If our ability to issue additional debt or equity securities or to borrow money under our Unsecured Credit Facility were to be impaired by volatility in or disruption of the capital markets, it could have a material adverse effect on our liquidity and financial condition.

In addition, price volatility in the capital and credit markets could make the valuation of our properties more difficult. There may be significant uncertainty in the valuation, or in the stability of the value, of our properties that could result in a substantial decrease in the value of our properties. As a result, we may not be able to recover the carrying amount of our properties, which may require us to recognize an impairment loss in earnings.

Real estate investments fluctuate in value depending on conditions in the general economy and the real estate industry. These conditions may limit our revenues and available cash.

The factors that affect the value of our real estate and the revenues we derive from our properties include, among other things:

- general economic conditions;
- local, regional, national and international economic conditions and other events and occurrences that affect the markets in which we own properties;
- local conditions such as oversupply or a reduction in demand in an area;
- increasing labor and material costs;
- the ability to collect on a timely basis all rents from tenants;
- changes in tenant operations, real estate needs and credit;
- changes in interest rates and in the availability, cost and terms of mortgage funding;
- zoning or other regulatory restrictions;
- competition from other available real estate;
- operating costs, including maintenance, insurance premiums and real estate taxes; and
- other factors that are beyond our control.

Our investments in real estate assets are concentrated in the industrial sector, and the demand for industrial space in the United States is related to the level of economic output. Accordingly, reduced economic output may lead to lower occupancy rates for our properties. In addition, if any of our tenants experiences a downturn in its business that weakens its financial condition, delays lease commencement, fails to make rental payments when due, becomes insolvent or declares bankruptcy, the result could be a termination of the tenant's lease, which could adversely affect our cash flow from operations. These factors may be amplified by a disruption of financial markets or more general economic conditions.