

Drawing up Brownsburg's new 'downtown'

Tim Evans, tim.evans@indystar.com

Published 6:02 a.m. ET Feb. 10, 2017 | Updated 1:08 p.m. ET Feb. 10, 2017



(Photo: Flaherty & Collins)

Work begins this spring on the first phase of a major redevelopment project town officials hope will create Brownsburg's new "downtown."

The public-private project involving the town and three developers will transform a section of North Green Street (Ind. 267) into "a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant, economic center," said town manager Grant Kleinhenz.

The development site was formerly occupied by St. Malachy Catholic Church and School on the west side of Green Street, and a dentist office and several small rental homes on the east side.

Kleinhenz said the development, which could eventually include a new town recreation center, represents what is likely the largest private investment in Brownsburg's history.

The three developers — Scannell Properties, Envoy Inc. and Flaherty & Collins — plan to put about \$70 million into the projects that will bring new restaurants, retail shops, offices and hundreds of apartments to the heart of the Hendricks County town with a population of about 23,000. A 212-space parking garage, along with streetscape improvements, such as the addition of a dedicated left-turn lane, sidewalks and bike paths, rain gardens and other pedestrian amenities, are included in the plans.

Key to each of the three independent projects will be exterior designs that creates the feel of a downtown district.



Brownsburg Town Center
Master Plan | September 2016



The Town Center masterplan shows a proposed office building and two mixed-use projects that will include ground-floor retail spaces, topped by apartments. (Photo: Town of Brownsburg)

Work also will include a new entrance to Arbuckle Acres Park and improvements to an east-west street between Green and Grant streets.

What remains of Brownsburg's current downtown, a small business district ravaged over the past century by fires and the demolition of many of its original business buildings, is about three blocks south of the proposed new developments. As Brownsburg has boomed over the past decade, nearly doubling in population since 2010, much of the new retail and commercial development has been centered about a mile north near I-74 and Northfield Drive.

The new projects, Kleinhenz said, give the town an opportunity to recreate a downtown atmosphere, while bringing new and much-needed residential and retail options.

"This is a big deal for Brownsburg," said Kleinhenz. "It represents a new kind of development for us. This kind of development is happening all over in the doughnut counties (outside Indianapolis), from Whiteland to Zionsville and Fishers and Carmel, and we're excited to see is coming to Brownsburg."

Buy Photo



A section of North Green Street in Brownsburg is set to be transformed by a mixed-use development of offices, retail and apartments that officials hope will become the town's new downtown. (Photo: Tim Evans / IndyStar)

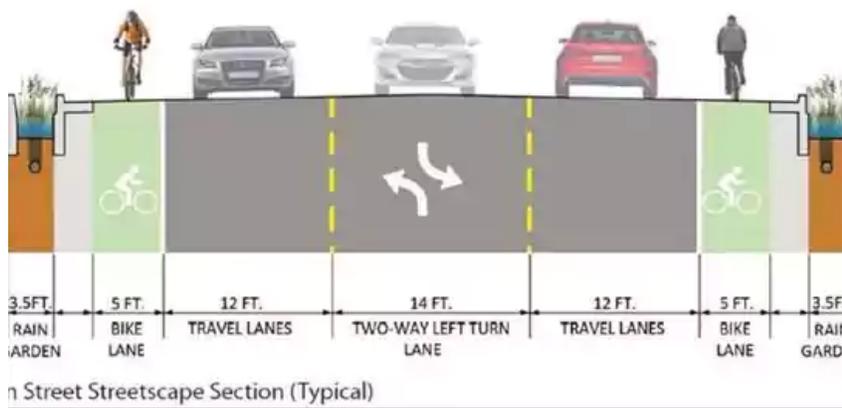
A two-story, 28,000-square-foot building on the northwest portion of the development site will be the first new construction. The project, developed by Indianapolis-based Envoy Inc., will include 115 individual office suites, according to Shelby Bowen, vice-president of development for Envoy.

The complex, which Bowen said will open in late 2017 or early next year, is similar to recent projects in Plainfield, Carmel, Fishers and Noblesville. It will include all-inclusive office spaces in various sizes, parking, conference rooms and "no-term" leases that make the space more accessible to new businesses.

"It will be great hub," Bowen said, "for entrepreneurs and small businesses."

Kleinhenz said the town is working with Flaherty & Collins on plans for a mixed use development to the south of the Envoy office suites, also filling a portion of the former church site.

Tentative plans call for a multistory project, with commercial and retail space on the ground floor and apartments on the other floors. Kleinhenz said Flaherty & Collins will invest about \$30 million in the project that backs up to Arbuckle Acres, a 68-acre wooded park that includes baseball and softball diamonds, basketball and tennis courts, seven shelters and more than a mile of walking trails along White Lick Creek.



A rendering of improvements planned for North Green Street in Brownsburg includes a dedicated turn lane, bike lanes and sidewalks. (Photo: Town of Brownsburg)

If the current negotiations are finalized soon, the town manager said the developer could break ground as early as this summer.

The third phase of the project, which also will break ground this summer, will transform the east side of Green Street into a retail, commercial and residential hub. The work is being led by Scannell Properties.

Town officials approved a development agreement Thursday with Scannell for the four-story project with about 11,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor and 170 luxury apartments on the other floors. The project also will include a landscaped pedestrian courtyard and a 212-space parking garage financed by the town.

Kleinhenz said Scannell is set to invest about \$20 million in the project, and the town will pay for the \$4.3 million parking garage with taxes generated by the new developments.

David Ravensburg of Scannell Properties described the project as "a contemporary interpretation of traditional brownstone mixed-use development."

He said the work could be completed by mid- to late 2018, capping a dramatic transformation expected to bring hundreds of new residents, businesses and jobs to Brownsburg.

Call IndyStar reporter Tim Evans at (317) 444-6204. Follow him on Twitter: @starwatchtim.

Read or Share this story: <http://indy.st/2ktHzCK>

