

# Local shopping center transforming into mixed-use complex anchored by 325-unit housing development

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A former shopping center in a prominent corridor of Huber Heights is transforming into a mixed-use complex anchored by a \$100 million housing development. The massive project will activate the area with new residents, businesses and amenities.



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Marian Meadows, located at Brandt Pike and Fishburg Road in the southern part of the city, has been targeted for redevelopment for more than five years. In recent months, the project has gained momentum with the signing of a Columbus-based company that will develop the residential portion of the property, as well as city approvals and demolition work to prepare the site for other uses.

Though the housing complex is the largest component of the project, several other developments will round out the site. These include new commercial buildings, a library, senior center, and potential medical and civic uses. Here's a breakdown of each portion of the project, including where they stand today and when they are expected to be complete.

## **New housing**

The city partnered with Homestead Companies, a full-service real estate development firm headquartered in Columbus, to construct two housing complexes that will operate independently.

One of the residential developments is an independent senior living community. The three-story, 125,000-square-foot building will feature 133 units, and will be surrounded by a 10,000-square-foot amenity village with a fitness center, healthcare facility, an art room, game room, pub, salon and pet grooming area.

The second residential development is a market-rate, multi-family apartment complex. The six-building complex will total 195,000 square feet, and will include 192 one- and two-bedroom apartment units, as well as a clubhouse with a pool, grill station and outdoor fire pit.

The site also will feature a retention pond surrounded by green space and walking paths, providing another amenity for residents. The space also could be used by the city for various events such as Christmas tree lightings and farmers' markets.

The residential component alone will cost around \$40 million. However, when including the other aspects of the projects such as utilities, streetscapes and amenities, the total cost would be closer to \$100 million.

Matt Canterbury, president of development at Homestead Companies, said the housing project will fill a significant void in Huber Heights.

"Huber Heights has less rentals than any other of the municipalities around Dayton, so it's underserved when it comes to apartments," Canterbury said. "Both of these complexes will give this area what it needs, which is a stimulus of new rental opportunities."

The city has already executed a development agreement with Homestead to sell 17 acres for the development. At \$50,000 per acre, the sale totals \$850,000.

Homestead will now create preliminary development plans, review the engineering and architectural aspects of the project and submit a final development plan. Canterbury said that will likely be completed in the second quarter of this year, with construction to follow. Homestead is aiming to complete the project by the first quarter of 2024.

### **New commercial developments**

The first new commercial buildings on the Marian Meadows property will be a doggie daycare center and a library.

Dogtown, which formerly operated a Sit, Stay 'N Play Dog Park on the site, is constructing a two-story dog hotel. Dogtown's parcel will be ready for construction once they have closed on the property and it is in their possession, Huber Heights Assistant City Manager Bryan Chodkowski said.

"They've got site plan approval and all the other approvals they need, so they're ready to go as soon as we can get the land over to them," Chodkowski said, adding Dogtown hopes to be open by year's end or in the first quarter of 2023.

A branch of the Dayton Metro Library also is heading toward construction. The library received approval from the city's planning commission, and city council has been briefed on the project. A public hearing will soon follow, and then council will vote to approve the development plan for the project. Once approved, the project is expected to take roughly 13 months, meaning it would open around April 2023.

Though some properties at the site will be demolished to make way for new developments, others will remain. The city is spending \$2.4 million on facade and facility improvements to these buildings to benefit existing businesses and help attract new tenants.

The city also has engaged with Apex Commercial Group to help add tenants and resign existing tenants, which include convenience/retail businesses such as a fast food restaurant, cell

phone store, pet store, nail salon and fashion boutique. They are also in discussions with a flower shop and a couple restaurants that have expressed interest in locating there.

If all goes to plan, occupancy rates for the commercial buildings should increase significantly from when the city first purchased the properties several years ago.

"For the buildings that remain, when we took possession of them they were about 50% occupied," Chodkowski said. "Right now we're seeing a lot of activity for those particular spaces, so we hope to get that up around 80% to 85% occupied within the next few months."

### **Civic uses**

The city also looks to construct a new senior center on the site. It has engaged with Dayton architect LWC Inc., which is involved with the library project and has helped with the façade improvements for the commercial buildings, to conduct a needs assessment for the project.

City council has been briefed on plans for the senior center and will be asked to adopt legislation supporting its development. Once it receives council approval, this portion of the project will be underway.

Additional municipal uses are targeted for the development as well. Chodkowski said the city is about out of usable office space for administrative and other purposes. As a result, the city is looking to potential move some of its offices to the property, which also would free up space at the current municipal building.

Beyond the city's plans for the space, Premier Health may also look to build a new facility on property it owns in the area.

When the city purchased Marian Meadows, Premier owned a 20-acre parcel at the site. The city purchased the majority of that land, but kept a five-acre parcel for potential future development.

Though Premier has no immediate plans to build on the site, Chodkowski said he hopes the activity being generated there will convince the health network to consider a project.

“There will be 300ish housing units largely geared toward the senior population across the street from that site, so there’s a client base that didn’t exist before,” he said. “That new population, plus the existing population, could be enough for them to look at the space and consider having a use for that property.”

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