

Livonia moves ahead with plan to create mixed-use development city center

'This is where we can create our own destiny.'



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LIVONIA, Mich. (WXYZ) — With the construction of the new senior wellness center underway, Livonia is one step closer to the mixed-use development site leaders have worked on for years.



EXTERIOR | PROPOSED DESIGN

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The completion of the senior center is phase one of four for a walkable and bikeable community area that will eventually have shopping, housing, dining, and office space along Five Mile and Farmington Roads in Livonia.

"A place where our kids can go to and we know that they'll be safe, and they've got some great opportunities to have outdoor festivals or music or art installations," explained Mayor Maureen Miller Brosnan.



It's a plan Brosnan says is years in the making that thousands of community members said they wanted in a 2016 survey about the future of the city.



"We said well alright. We've got the place to build that, we own all of the property at Five Mile and Farmington. This is where we can create our own destiny," said Brosnan.

Residents across town say they've heard about the plans and many we spoke to are on board.



“I think it’s pretty awesome to think about, to imagine. I like downtowns. It’s nice to be able to walk around and go to different restaurants,” said Rita Howell.

Longtime resident Jim Pietraz agreed.



“You know what, I think it would be beneficial to the city to have a downtown area,” said Pietraz. “You look at the city of Plymouth, the city of Northville, their downtown areas are a gathering place.”

To clear space for development, they'll need to clear the land.

The plan includes demolishing all the buildings currently sitting there, like City Hall, Sam's Place, the old courthouse, and the current Senior Center.



Before (2023)



During (2027)

"This is an ambitious plan, but this is not a new plan for the city, and I think that's what's so compelling about this — is that when the City Hall was originally built in the city area, it was with the notion that this in fact would be the city center," said Brosnan.

She says it's not being used as that gathering space it was intended to be. The goal is to change that and keep residents in the city.

"We are seeing a number of communities that have tried this, some of them successfully, some of them not so successfully, and why they're trying this is because we're all as municipalities in the state of Michigan working really hard to keep our talent force here, to keep our workforce here, to keep our young people and our own kids here," said Brosnan.



The construction on the new Senior Center is fully funded and expected to be finished by the end of the year and they also have the funding for a new City Hall.

"We're in the process right now of designing that City Hall and that will move east on the campus," said Brosnan.

The next step will be getting the community to support a property tax millage to pay for demolishing the police station and creating a new one. That could be on the ballot this August.

"We've looked to our own savings, we've looked to outside funding, now we do have to turn to residents and we do have to ask for their investment," said Brosnan.



The details of the millage proposal are still being worked out and expected to be introduced to the city council in February. At that time they will also share the master plan concept for residents to review.

The proposal could be voted on as early as August.

Phase One (2025) - New Livonia Senior Wellness Center northeast of Kirksey Recreation Center.

Phase Two (2026) - New City Hall east of current City Hall.

Phase Three (2028) - New police station, renovations to all fire stations, creation of a central gathering area/park.

Phase Four (2029) - New multi-family residential units, retail and restaurants on the site of the southeast corner of Five Mile/Farmington Roads.

People can expect to see the development come together by 2030.

“By the end of this year, we will have completed construction on a 30,000 square foot senior center, by the end of next year we will have completed construction on a new city hall. By the following year we will have completed construction on a new police station. That is remarkably fast in terms of our ability to clear space,” said Brosnan.

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