

\$43 million mixed-use development set to replace downtown Arlington library

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ARLINGTON — Construction is set to start early next summer on a \$43 million five-story mixed-use development where downtown Arlington's Central Library has stood for four decades.

Developers told the City Council on Tuesday that the project, 100 Center, will include 40,000 square feet of space at street level for uses such as shops, offices and restaurants, as well as about 240 market-rate apartments wrapped around a parking garage.

Arlington [has been working](#) with Atlanta-based Integral Development and Dallas-based Catalyst Development for a couple of years to redevelop the site of the aging library on Abram Street. City officials say they believe that 100 Center, expected to open east of City Hall in 2017, will be a centerpiece for downtown's redevelopment potential and help bring even more vibrancy to the area.

"This is really exciting for Arlington," Councilman Robert Rivera said. "What I think I personally like about it most, it mirrors the structures you see in successful downtowns across America. I have a feeling this will be a genesis of new things for our downtown."

Arlington, which will retain ownership of the library land, approved a long-term ground lease and parking lease with the developers Tuesday. Revenue from those leases will help offset a portion of the larger public library set to open north of City Hall in 2017, officials said.

As part of a public-private partnership, Integral and Catalyst will seek \$6.8 million in funding this month from the downtown tax increment reinvestment zone to pay for demolishing the 40-year-old George W. Hawkes Central Library and building a 607-space parking garage to support the mixed-use development. Arlington will own the parking garage and lease spaces back to the developer for \$18 per space per month for the life of the lease.

Demolition of the Central Library, which will close [Dec. 23](#), could begin as early as February. Construction on 100 Center is expected to start in June or July and take about 22 months to complete.

The brick, stone and glass building will include architectural details designed to complement nearby developments, such as the Levitt Pavilion and the University of Texas at Arlington's College Park, Catalyst Principal Paris Rutherford said. Other features include landscaping, sidewalk patios and benches to create an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians and shoppers on Abram, Main, Center and Mesquite streets.

"We don't have the same facade anywhere," Rutherford said. "It's got a different look for each face of the building as it moves around the four blocks. It's a custom fit into downtown versus something that looks canned. That is important to us."

Besides restaurants and shops, the developers plan to offer storefront office spaces for small businesses as well as research and development lab space to support UT Arlington.

Change is coming

Mayor Robert Cluck said while downtown has seen a surge in off-campus student housing development in recent years, it hasn't lured the mixed-use development city leaders have been seeking.

"This is the beginning of change for Arlington. I think this is a really, really good project," Cluck said. "It's shocking because we've never had it. Now we're going to have it and we're going to enjoy it."

While the developers are seeking money from the downtown reinvestment zone, they are not asking for a property tax abatement on the building.

The city has said it expects to receive about \$4.2 million in lease revenue from the project. The ground lease starts at \$60,000 a year, with regular increases and can be extended for up to 99 years.

"We certainly want a high-quality, visually appealing project that fits really well with our new city library and Levitt Pavilion. We are also looking to take a piece of property that is owned by the public and utilize that land area for private purposes, which certainly helps cover costs of other things such as infrastructure we need to maintain and build," said Jim Parajon, director of community development and planning.

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