

Temple Terrace Downtown Plan To Get Rolling In 2008

Tribune Staff Report

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TEMPLE TERRACE - Expect to see changes in the downtown district by the end of next year.

The city's long-planned urban redevelopment project "will shift into high gear in 2008," Temple Terrace city spokesman Michael Dunn said in a release Friday.

On Tuesday, the Temple Terrace City Council sold nearly 18 acres at the southeast corner of 56th Street and Bullard Parkway to Ram Development Co. and Pinnacle Realty Advisors for \$14.4 million. The Ram and Pinnacle team, which the city refers to as a master developer, wants to build a mix of residences, offices and stores on the site.

Two shopping centers, which are showing signs of time, would be torn down and replaced by a \$45 million residential and commercial village with space for civic and cultural activities.

"The pedestrian-friendly main street will create a New Urbanist-style sense of place," Dunn said in the release.

The master plan was approved in March, but a downturn in the real estate market prompted the developer to seek "a market adjustment" and other revisions, the release stated.

The city called the renegotiated agreement "a win-win solution for the citizens of Temple Terrace."

"I feel wonderful," Temple Terrace Mayor Joe Affronti said in the release. "We're making tremendous progress. We're not there yet, but I think this is a huge step forward toward getting us there."

The plan also includes space for a 20,000-square-foot arts education center, which would put many city programs under one-roof – theater space, classrooms, dance studios among others. A 172-space parking garage and 24,000 square feet of residential quarters also would go up on the property.

Improvements to 56th Street and surrounding roads are planned. A future phase two development covering 8 acres is on the drawing board, Dunn stated in the release.

City and development officials expect to reach a sales-purchase agreement in early February with plans to close on the property about July 1. Construction could start by the end of 2008, city officials said.