

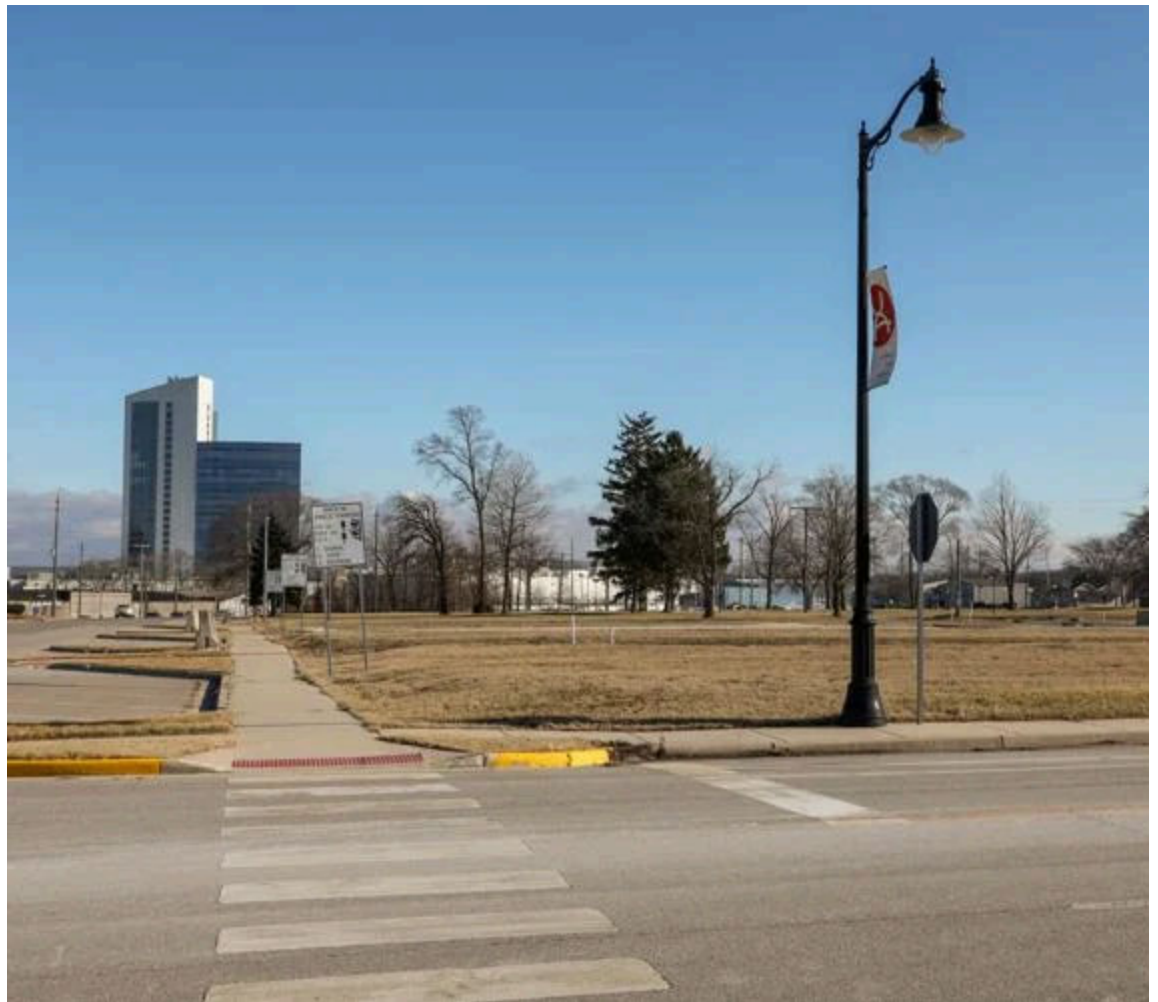
https://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/200-to-300-million-development-would-bring-grocery-store-and-apartments-to-downtown-michigan-city/article_51cef740-ccbc-11ef-8de5-a79172f7627a.html

ALERT **TOP STORY** **EDITOR'S PICK**

\$200 to \$300 million development would bring grocery store and apartments to downtown Michigan City

Joseph S. Pete

Jan 8, 2025



Michigan City is evaluating proposals by developers for 5th and Pine development at southeast corner of Fifth and I
John J. Watkins

Joseph S. Pete

A proposed \$200 million to \$300 million development is expected to bring at least 500 apartments and a grocery store to downtown Michigan City, an area where residents currently don't have many options to buy fresh, healthy food to cook at home.

Nine development teams made proposals for the Fifth and Pine site in downtown Michigan City. The Michigan City Redevelopment Commission has narrowed it down to four finalists, Michigan City Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch said.

"It will mean 500 more units plus a grocery store," she said.

The redevelopment commission requested more in-depth financial projections and hopes to select a developer within the next 90 days, said Clarence Hulse, a member of the redevelopment commission and the executive director of the Economic Development Corporation Michigan City, Indiana.

"It's going to be a fantastic mixed-used project and bring an urban-style supermarket to Michigan City," he said. "It will be roughly 40,000 square feet. They have the ability to have more retail spaces on the first floor."

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Michigan City assembled about eight contiguous acres stretching from Pine Street to East Michigan Boulevard along Trail Creek, putting together three large parcels between 5th and 6th Street. The site stretches for three blocks that include the former Memorial Hospital site at 5th Street and Pine Street. It's meant to be a gateway to downtown, as it borders the Franklin Street commercial drag where much of the downtown action is and fronts E. Michigan Boulevard, one of the main ways drivers get downtown after coming off Interstate 94.

Michigan City touted Fifth and Pine in a request for proposals as a "signature marquee development" with quality urban design and architecture that matches its surroundings. It pitched the project as a way to build on the \$649 million being invested in the South Shore Line Double Track project that's bringing a new train station downtown and the \$400 million in private-sector investments in downtown Michigan City.

"The city's continued commitment to its downtown vision and facilitation of development is evident with its decades-long perseverance in acquiring the numerous properties required to assemble the eight-acre parcel of this offering together with its proactive promotion and facilitation of major public and private investment in the downtown area. City leadership knows how critical these efforts are to Michigan City's economic future and growth as a truly special place to live, work, visit and invest," Michigan City said in the request for proposals. "The city has and will continue to work with and support other public and private partners who share its vision and commitment to smart growth, quality development, placemaking and lasting lakefront urban experience. Additionally, the city currently owns and is in pursuit of additional parcel assembly within key redevelopment areas identified in the plans that abut or are in close proximity to the properties. These comprehensive redevelopment efforts will collectively enhance the value of the properties, and continue to 'knit' downtown into a vibrant, attractive and active community."

Developers have proposed bringing in middle-market supermarkets that are well-known in Chicagoland, Hulse said. All four have locations in the Chicago metropolitan area and two have other locations in Northwest Indiana.

"Downtown Michigan City is a food desert, which is why we're so adamant about bringing a supermarket to the north side," Hulse said. "We want to make sure the north side is not a food desert going forward."

Hundreds of new housing units are now under construction or planned in downtown Michigan City, where large construction cranes have become commonplace. A grocery store will help ensure they fill up with residents, Hulse said.

They won't have to travel far to buy groceries and even could walk to grab milk, produce and other staples.

"It's perfect with everything going on downtown," he said. "It will drive more residential to the community."

Michigan City sees the development as filling a gap that will tie together various attractions in and near downtown, extending the bustle of the pedestrian-friendly area downtown and bringing more residential and urban density to the downtown. The hope is to expand the downtown's footprint and bring in more residents who would patronize local businesses and spark more reinvestment and redevelopment.

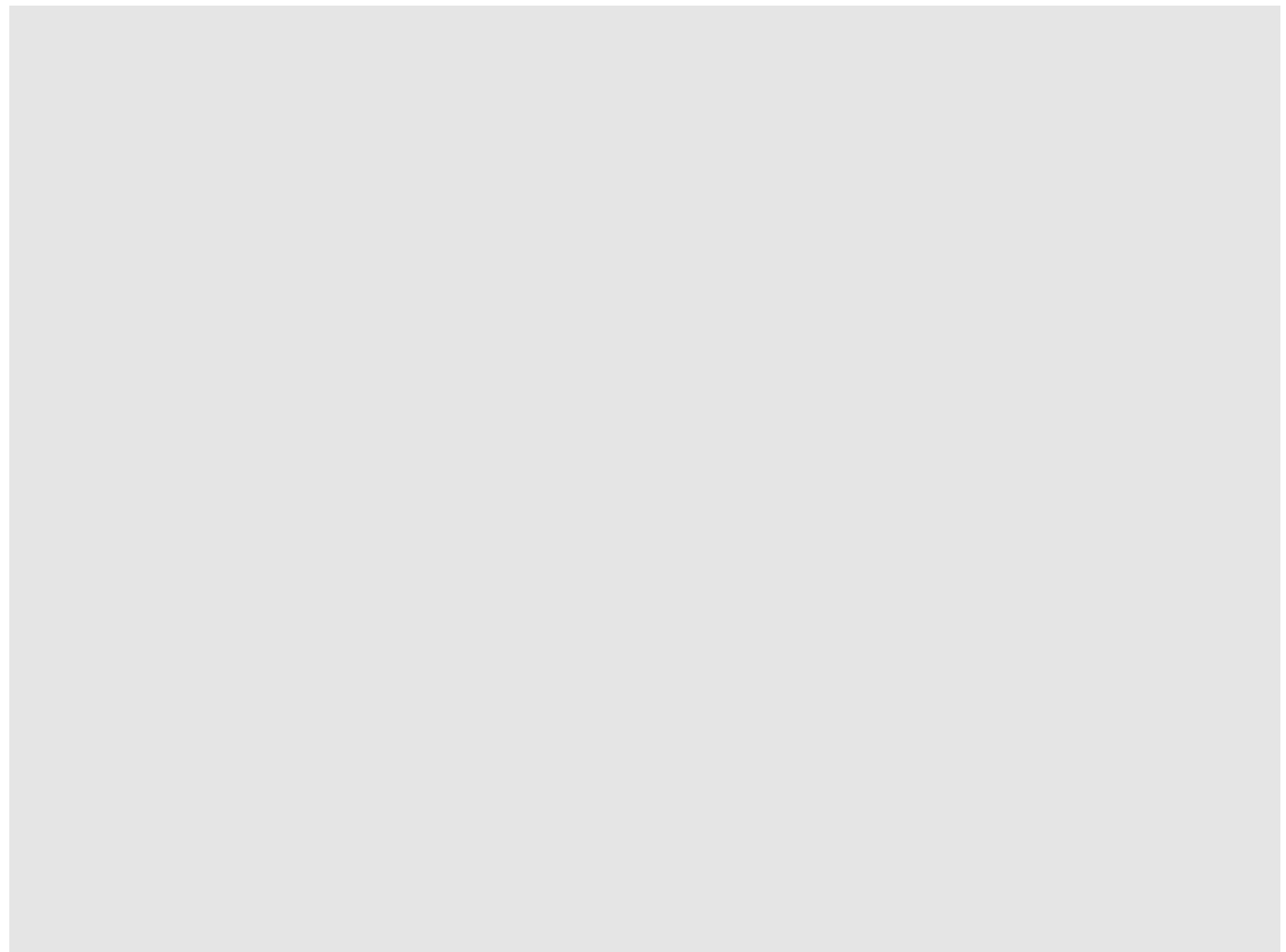
"The properties are bound in a unique context abutting the Franklin Street Historic Commercial District to the west, the growing, more 'urban' downtown to the north, Trail Creek, the Marina and Blue Chip anchors to the east and the lower-rise/density residential of the Elston Grove Historic District to the south," Michigan City said in the request for proposals. "In many ways the properties serve a key linkage between these zones and anchors, offering a chance to cohesively link the pedestrian experience down 5th Street through new retail and related programs, while mitigating the broader scale shifts from higher density to the north, and lower density to the south across the development."

Many massive projects are now under construction or planned in downtown Michigan City, including the 14-story Sola, the Singing Sands working housing project and the \$101 million, 12-story Franklin Street tower by the new South Shore Line station.

"This will mean an estimated \$200 million to \$300 million in investment, so again it will be transformative," Hulse said. "It will transform Michigan City."

NWI Business Ins and Outs: Unbeatable Eatables, DRIPBaR Crown Point, Taco Depot and Flashback Antiques open; Da Burger House closes

Open



The longtime south suburban staple Unbeatable Eatables opened its first Indiana location just across the border in Munster.

The sandwich shop started in Country Club Hills in 1979. It prides itself on freshly slicing high-quality meats and cheeses and using twice as much in each sandwich as competitors.

It has subs stuffed with corned beef, salami, bologna, turkey, tuna salad and ham and cheese. The chain's best-selling sandwich, the Poseidon, promises "an adventure in eating" with beef, turkey, ham, American and Munster cheese.

Options include party subs, box lunches and regular sandwiches. The menu also encompasses soup, salads, specialty wraps and Vienna Beef hot dogs. Desserts include shakes, malts, ice cream and sherbet.