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## Greenville County Square on track for early 2023 move. Here's the latest on construction

**Tim Carlin**

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Most of the external construction is now complete on Greenville County's new two-building government headquarters at the corner of Church St. and University Ridge, just south of downtown.

Contractors also installed the building's elevators and the HVAC system, and construction is on track for employees to fully move into their new space within the first quarter of next year, likely in February or March, said Greenville County Administrator Joe Kernell.

"Progress is going very well," Kernell said.

The construction of a new county government building and attached parking deck is the first phase of the County Square redevelopment project valued at \$1 billion — the largest in Greenville County history.

### Preparations for move already underway at County Square

Much of the rest of the redevelopment project hinges on county employees vacating their current building, a project that Kernell said is already underway.

All state agencies that were housed inside County Square, along with the County Health Department, which was located across the street, have moved to an office on Halton Road, Kernell said.

He added that about 300 county emergency services employees are gearing up to move to a new, 50,000 square-foot space at McAlister Square — a move that will be partially funded by the county's American Rescue Plan Act funding.

The new County Square was designed by architecture firm Foster and Partners, the company responsible for Apple Park in California and the Hearst Tower in New York City.

Kernell highlighted how the building's design relates to its intended purpose.

"The whole vision of the building, its glass, it's open, it's transparent, and that's how we want people to view Greenville County government," Kernell said.

Phil Mays of RocaPoint Partners, the developer responsible for the redevelopment project, called the Foster-designed County Square a focal point of the redeveloped site and said the building "is very illustrative of the quality we're looking for."

In its early developmental stages, the project put city and county government officials at odds during a months-long negotiation process over scale and the inclusion of affordable housing within the project.

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By the time the project was greenlit by Greenville City Council in January 2020, both sides had made concessions.

The city won on questions about scale, design and affordable housing. The project cut maximum building heights from 20 stories down to 12, and redevelopment will also be subject to downtown design guidelines. The city will also create a plan to include lower-cost apartments on the site using both city and county-matched funds, according to Greenville News archives.

The county, meanwhile, will not have to take final development plans and traffic improvements back to the city planning commission for approval as the project continues.

## Next steps in County Square redevelopment process

Once the county relocates early next year, the current County Square will be demolished, Mays said.

After demolition, Mays said work will begin to install sewer lines and other infrastructure needed to support future tenants on site. Mays estimated that work will take between one to two years to complete before tenants can begin moving in.

Traffic congestion and parking both in and around the County Square development were early concerns for developers, who submitted hundreds of pages of traffic-related plans to the city.

With around 5,500 people potentially working at County Square and housing for about 2,800 people slated to be built all by 2026, according to the project's application, developers projected they will need 5,263 parking spaces.

Kernell said there was a possibility of road detours near University Ridge once demolition begins, but since much of the project will be closed off to the public, those potential traffic issues could be limited, he said.

While Mays could not reveal any specific businesses coming to County Square, he said the developer is having "many meaningful discussions" with potential tenants.

Once completed, County Square will include walking and biking paths with connections to the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail and a park-like setting that will house the county's veteran's memorial, Kernell said.

Mays called the project's walkability "one of the most important aspects."

Along with walkability and accessibility, Kernell said continuing to develop Greenville in a responsible way that allows the downtown area to flourish has been important.

"We want this to just be a very accessible, user-friendly experience," he said.

*– Tim Carlin covers county government, growth and development for The Greenville News. Follow him on Twitter @timcarlin\_, and get in touch with him at TCarlin@gannett.com.*

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