

A Huge Year For Huge Projects In the Metro Area

By Geoff Smith

Commercial development was in full-swing this year with the addition of two major stadiums, and either the ground-breaking or proposal of several high-rise developments. The following projects are really only the highlights as many more were proposed, broke ground or are on the way.

Mixed-Use Tech Projects for Alpharetta: Two major projects were announced this year in Alpharetta that would cater to the city's booming tech market. Fuqua Development LLC is working on a 62-acre, mixed-use project at the southwestern corner of GA400 and Haynes Bridge Road. It would include 430 apartments, 70 townhomes, 78,800 square feet of retail, 36,000 square feet of restaurants, 500,500 square feet of office and 17 acres of greenspace. Initial renderings show 10-story office buildings, and 5-story buildings with street-level retail. The other project is a 220,000-square-foot building on 24 acres just south of Windward Parkway. It will be broken into two buildings connected by a 5,000-square foot clubhouse housing a conference center, coffee bar and gym.

Avalon Phase II: This project is well-underway with delivery of product schedule for next year. It will include 550,000 square feet of office space with Microsoft as a tenant, multifamily units, a hotel and a 74,000-square-foot conference center.

5-Tower Sandy Springs MARTA Project: Initial plans were submitted, and from what I've heard, this project is close to becoming a reality. While I hear the allowable height of this project has been lowered by some degree, plans initially called for five, 50-story buildings surrounding an existing pentagon-shaped office building on 13 acres next to the Sandy Springs MARTA station. Plans are also in the works to build a tunnel from the development directly underground to the MARTA station.

4-Tower Mixed Use at Dunwoody MARTA Station: Plans were released for a project being called Dunwoody Crown Towers that would include two 24-story office towers, a 28-story hotel, two 30-story condo towers and a 13-story building with a mix of condos and a hotel. The project would sit north of 285 and south of the Best Buy shopping center along Hammond Dr. near the Dunwoody MARTA station. A large-scale project had been in the works for years on this site. I have not heard anything lately about it, but 2017 is right around the corner.

16-Story Tower Proposed at Dunwoody MARTA Station: A Texas developer released plans to build a high-rise on the north side of Hammond Drive next to the Dunwoody MARTA station and Perimeter Mall.

\$95-Million Mixed-Use Around Avondale MARTA Station: This project broke ground in November and will include 378 apartments, 92 affordable senior living units, a new plaza and 21,000 square feet of commercial space.

Brookhaven's New City Center Around MARTA: A company has been working with the city of Brookhaven and its residents to develop a large, mixed-use development centered around the Brookhaven-Oglethorpe MARTA station. It would include an 8-story office building, a 125-room hotel, 340 apartments, 107 condo units, 100 senior living units and almost 56,000 square feet of restaurants and retail.

Norcross Creating New Urban Center: Norcross put out request-for-proposals for development of 6.8 acres located at two key corners of its Lillian Webb Park. Initial concepts include two new parking decks, and three- and four-story, multi-use buildings housing retail, commercial and residential components.

Sandy Springs Building Downtown: Sandy Springs broke ground on a development that will include a new City Hall, a studio theater with meeting space, and a performing arts center, all centered around a 4-acre park with large water fountains.

Atlanta, Buckhead Serious About Capping Highways: Leaders in Atlanta and Buckhead have proposed building caps over I75/I85 and GA400 in order to create more developable real-estate, which would go a long way in bringing more east-west connectivity to those areas. The Buckhead 'cap', or bridge, would be a 9-acre park over GA400 and MARTA's Buckhead station. The intown cap is a little more vague, but renderings show parks and high-rises.

\$700-Million Mixed-Use Project on Man-Made River in Hall County: Many people quipped that this project was a myth and would never get built. The project would sit on 508 acres and include 265-single-family homes, 215 townhomes, 600 multifamily units, 242,000 square feet of retail space and 424,000 square feet of office space. And yes, all would sit along a man-made river. Well, I reported on it in late April and Hall County Planning Commissioners gave it their approval in July. It was tabled at the first County Commission meeting and I have not heard where the project stands now.

Geoff Smith

gsmith@lendtheway.com

770-674-1433

Personal: NMLS#104587

Business: NMLS#70876



**The views and opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect the views of Assurance Financial Group*