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Pivotal Group's Midtown Phoenix mixed-use project heads to planning commission




An aerial rendering of "The Central Park" project being proposed in Phoenix by Pivotal Group.

WITHEY MORRIS BAUGH PLC



By [Ron Davis](#) – Reporter , Phoenix Business Journal
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A major mixed-use project in a prime location in Phoenix is poised to take a big step forward.

The Central Park will be heard by the city's Planning Commission on Dec. 7. The roughly 18-acre project, proposed by Phoenix real estate investment firm Pivotal Group, is adjacent to Steele Indian School Park on the northeast corner of Central Avenue and Indian School Road.

Pivotal Group, led by CEO F. Francis Najafi, has been trying to develop The Central Park for more than four years. It originally was proposed as an office-heavy development with [six towers and 2.3 million square feet of space](#). City Council approved an application to re-zone the site during the summer of 2019 and Pivotal Group had [kicked off the marketing of the first phase](#) to potential tenants in early 2020.

Covid-19's disruption of the business world would soon send Pivotal Group back to the drawing board. Nearly three years later, Pivotal Group revamped the project. It kept the same name but shifted its focus to multifamily and amenity-heavy development.

Central Park project now includes two multifamily towers

The new-look The Central Park would be made up of a 21-story residential tower; an 18-story office tower; a market/grocer space with an adjacent restaurant; a 320-unit senior independent living community and a pair of eight-story, luxury multifamily towers, according to project documents submitted to the city of Phoenix.



The site plan for the 18-acre The Central Park project in Midtown Phoenix.

PIVOTAL GROUP VIA CITY OF PHOENIX

The office component for The Central Park has been reduced from 850,000 square feet to 245,000 square feet. In total, the development would offer almost 78,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space and 1,450 residences designed in a "walkable, vibrant, mixed-use setting," project documents state.

It would be developed over multiple phases, said Julia Najafi, a vice president with Pivotal Group.

View the accompanying slideshow below to see updated renderings of The Central Park project:



Project developer Pivotal Group has been trying to develop The Central Park for more than four years.

As the name suggests, the "nucleus" of the project is an open space plaza that would be the central gathering point throughout the development with landscaped areas featuring trees, seating areas and artwork. Withey Morris Baugh PLC's Benjamin Tate — a land-use attorney on the case — said the vision for the project is that it becomes a gathering place for Uptown and Midtown Phoenix and the "lobby" for Steele Indian School Park.

"It's a 74-acre hidden gem in the city of Phoenix," Tate told the Business Journal. "You could drive past it and not even realize that it was there. And it's largely because we've got this 15-acre site right on the corner that separates the streets from the park. We want to bridge that gap and become the gateway to Steele Indian School Park."

Pivotal Group is working with California architecture firm AO Architects as project designer. As of Nov. 30, no additional businesses, namely a general contractor, have been added to the project team.

The updated project with modified stipulations has already been heard by Phoenix's Planning Hearing Officer and Encanto Village Planning Committee.

Should the planning commission give a thumbs up, the project would then go to Phoenix City Council for final approval, which would likely take place sometime in January, Tate said.

Julia Najafi said it's too early to identify a specific timeline for when it would start construction – or a development price tag – should The Central Park receive the necessary approvals.