



# WHAT'S GOING ON IN DELHI?

February 2022 Edition

Delhi Township has a lot of exciting plans and investments in the works for 2022. Our most significant undertaking for the coming year will be the transformation of our catalytic development in the Plan the Pike strategic redevelopment initiative – Delhi Towne Square. In this Q&A, Township Administrator Jack Cameron addresses some of the most frequently asked questions and common misconceptions about community development and talks vision, timelines and what's next.

## **Q: The land has been empty for a while now. Why is it taking so long to start work?**

A: Development projects typically do not become public until presented to the authority for zoning review and approval. For Delhi Towne Square that reveal would have been in late 2021. As a public entity, however, the standard, behind-the-scenes activity – such as site purchase, financing and partnership agreements – has been public since inception. As a community investment, we've also strived to engage residents for input and insights along the way. If we can stay on schedule, Delhi Towne Square will be right at five years from contract to purchase to ribbon cutting, which is a fast pace when compared to the typical, five- to seven-year timeline for similar developments.

## **Q: Why doesn't Delhi Towne Square include restaurants or retail?**

A: We have absolutely heard tons of great suggestions for retail and dining, and we desire that as well. As we established the foundational elements for long-term investment at Delhi Towne Square, the turnover challenges often associated with retail just didn't "pencil out" in this initial phase. Delhi Towne Square is designed to be the catalyst to spur that type of private investment. What will drive the interest of retail and restaurant establishments? More traffic and more people finding a reason to be in Delhi and on Delhi Pike. We believe this product mix at Delhi Towne Square will enhance a positive investment profile for businesses looking for new markets in which they can thrive. In the meantime, we have a lot of great establishments that already call Delhi home, and I encourage all residents to give their business to these great community partners.

## **Q: Why are there so many similar types of businesses in the Township, especially on Delhi Pike?**

A: It's a fair question as every community wants to have the perfect diversity of businesses. The Township regulates zoning, which encompasses property use versus specific tenant approval. If a business type/use is permitted in a zoning district, the Township is required by law to approve it. As the property owner, the Township does control the uses for the exciting new Delhi Towne Square development project (former Remke's). We are creating an impactful site that will attract more private investment and tenants to Delhi Pike. At the end of the day, all private investment in our community is a win, and we're building a destination we feel will spur additional, diverse investment.

## **Q: What do you mean when you say catalytic redevelopment?**

A: Delhi Towne Square is our beginning, and by creating this destination, we will generate more momentum for continued investment and transformation on Delhi Pike. We have focused on aspects that the community has identified in planning phases, which also will push private investment on Delhi Pike in the direction we hope it to go. Our mixed-use development will create new energy and unique gathering opportunities for neighbors to connect. Every business wants to be part of a thriving community, and this strategic development will position us to better attract that coffee shop, bakery, greater investment in our Kroger store, restaurants or the brewery I've been longing for!

**Q: Why are there apartments versus condos?**

A: The Plan the Pike redevelopment strategy and subsequent studies have continued to point at multi-family rental product as a need in Delhi; we have not had market-rate rental properties built in more than 40 years. We have been thoroughly impressed with our residential partner, NorthPointe Advisors, and its track record for creating community-driven, “urban” living that becomes part of the fabric of the community. NorthPointe was equally impressed with our mixed-use project and the development’s alignment with its strategic focus.

The apartments will be three-story, pet-friendly dwellings with high-end amenities that include granite countertops and sound-proofed walls. The Township will own the ground and will have a long-term lease with NorthPointe and PLK Communities for the apartment buildings. The buildings’ exteriors and any future ownership changes must be pre-approved by the Township.

**Q: How were the initial uses of Delhi Towne Square selected? Why classrooms and a competition-sized pool? That doesn’t feel “typical” for a mixed-use development.**

A: Plan the Pike conceptualized the development direction for Delhi Pike over a 20-year horizon. Although not originally conceptualized as a Township-purchased and developed property, the former Remke site offered us an opportunity to be in control of our destiny. As we began assessing options and what could be built and financially feasible on the site, we looked for partners that fit those criteria.

With vested interest in the property taxes the development would generate, collaboration with Oak Hills Local School District (OHLSD) could not be dismissed. Better swimming facilities and additional pre-K classrooms for young Delhi families were cited as desires of the district. These options also fit well with the family-focused, recreational aspects we identified in concept planning. The competition pool also will anchor (see what I did there) a fitness center, which was identified as another need for the area. With the depth, width and lane requirements met for sanctioned high school and college swim meets, several area schools have already expressed interest in using the swimming facilities. So, no, Delhi Towne Square will not be your run-of-the-mill mixed-use development. We’re extremely proud to have vested partners helping to make this a true community asset.

**Q: Have you seen an uptick in business interest in Delhi due to Delhi Towne Square?**

A: The Township underwent a review and credit analysis for financing by Moody’s, which provides financial intelligence and business analyses used by business leaders for decision making. Since the Township purchased the property, there have been 29 new investments along Delhi Pike between Anderson Ferry and Greenwell. While some investments would have happened regardless, a lot of this activity came as a result of expected improvements and, ultimately, the promise of more potential customers.

**Q: What are the next big milestones on the horizon for the property?**

A: Construction has officially kicked off, and site work should be completed by July. We expect to see vertical construction – buildings coming out of the ground – by late summer. The apartments and the new Township Administration building will be constructed concurrently. We anticipate construction will be completed around August 2023; though we’re only penciling that date in the calendar as we know challenges may lie ahead with COVID, supply chain disruptions, manpower issues and other unforeseen bumps in the road. All in all, we’re excited for Delhi Towne Square to begin taking shape!