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New Flowery Branch City Hall could be finished by year's end



Deotric Everett, of Lmi Systems Inc. of Tucker, prepares to install wiring Monday, Dec. 4, 2017, inside the new Flowery Branch City Hall. - photo by Scott Rogers

Jeff Gill

Updated: Dec. 5, 2017, 6:37 p.m.



The new Flowery Branch City Hall could be completed by late December, with officials moving into new offices by mid-January.

And they're excited about the transition.

"I'm particularly proud of the evidence room," Police Chief David Spillers said. "We literally have a closet now that's 3 (feet) by 5 (feet), with a thousand pieces of evidence. What we're moving into is quite a radical difference."

City employees won't have far to travel in the move. With most offices now on Main Street, they'll jump one block over to the new Pine Street extension.

New Flowery Branch City Hall

Construction is set to wrap by year's end on the new Flowery Branch City Hall, with officials hoping to move into new offices by mid-January.

By: JEFF GILL



The road, along with sidewalks and streetscaping, is expected to be done by mid-January, City Manager Bill Andrew said.

The City Hall, originally set for a December completion, was beset early on by heavy rains.



"We've had quite a few rain days," Andrew said in July. "Minimally, it's been 12-17 rain days a month for the last three months."

During a tour of the \$5 million building earlier this week, workers were busy inside and outside the red brick structure.

In addition to city offices, the 18,000-square-foot building also bounded by Church Street, Chestnut Street and Railroad Avenue will feature a large community/meeting room, where the City Council will hold meetings but also where events can be held.

"There's a real lack of (large meeting space) in South Hall," Andrew said, adding that the space, along with the historic train depot nearby, could be managed for the city by a private company.

"That would get us out of having to clean it, manage it and schedule it," he said.

With tall windows, the room is meant to have a sort of "warehouse look," similar to industrial buildings that once stood downtown.



The property also will feature a plaza separating the building from Pine Street.

"There's been talk if we set up a bandstand ... you could have people filling this whole area, really," Andrew said.

Andrew's office will overlook the new Pine Street stretch, which will connect Church Street to Railroad Avenue.

"Hopefully, it will be a view of some shops down there," he said.

Downtown Flowery Branch has had a sort of business revival in the past few years, and the hope is the project's completion will spark further growth.

In March, the city sent out a request for proposals "to create a walkable mixed-use community in Old Town."

"Flowery Branch is not just seeking to sell land and buildings," Mayor Mike Miller said in the request. "We are offering marketable sites in a desirable location, within walking distance to Lake Lanier.

"The city is also prepared to provide significant financial incentives and has already made major public investments to enhance the success of this important project for our community."

The area covers 8.7 acres and 13,100 square feet of city-owned space.

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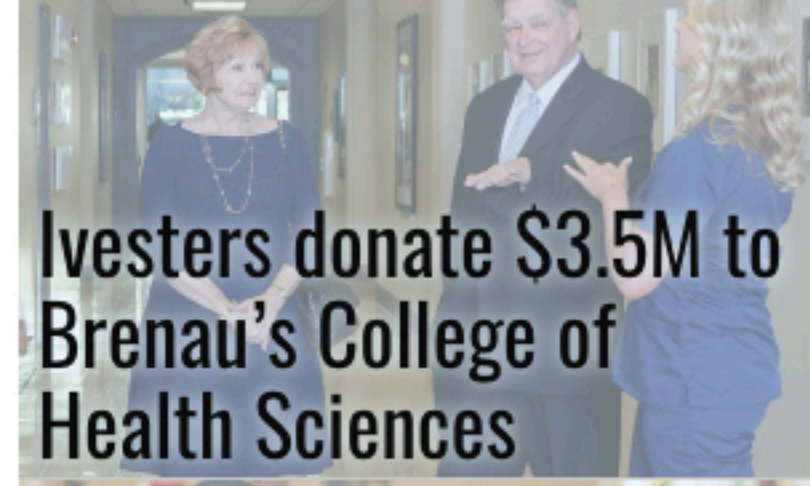
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