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Work nears on hotel at downtown's Encore project

By [Kevin Wiatrowski](#)

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TAMPA — A Tampa developer is getting closer to beginning work on a [hotel planned for Encore](#), the Tampa Housing Authority's ongoing redevelopment of land on the northwest edge of downtown.

Developer Frank DeBose has asked Tampa City Council to tweak the zoning of property at Cass Street and Governor Drive at the south entrance to Encore. The property covers two lots designated for condos and hotels.

One of those lots straddles the zoning districts created for downtown and Encore. The conflict needs to be ironed out before development can move forward, said Leroy Moore, chief operating officer for the housing authority.

"We were set to close in July, when this came up," DeBose said Tuesday.

Once that fix is made, in six to eight weeks, the way will be cleared to close on the hotel property, probably in early September, DeBose said.

DeBose's Pinnacle Group will pay the housing authority \$7.8 million for the site under an agreement last year with the authority.

The condo project will start later, DeBose said.

DeBose said he envisions three buildings spread across the two lots. Along with the condo and the hotel, there will be low-rise residential and street-level retail, he said.

The hotel will house two separate brands, each with a different price point and target audience. DeBose said he will release the names when he closes on the property.

DeBose's project is the latest step toward creating the music-themed Encore on the site of the former Central Park Village.

The Hillsborough County Commission is scheduled to vote today to issue \$21 million in bonds to finance construction the 203-apartment Tempo, the authority's fourth apartment block in the heart of Encore.

A fifth apartment building will await the start of commercial development at Encore, including a possible grocery store, Moore said.

Work on the Tempo has been held up by a city challenge to the recent federal historic designation of the nearby Bro Bowl skateboard park. The Bro Bowl sits in Perry Harvey Sr. Park, which the city wants to redevelop in conjunction with the work now going on at Encore.

State officials [recently sided with the city](#) proposal to demolish the Bro Bowl and build a replica at the north end of the park. The city built the skateboard park 36 years ago.

Another zoning tweak that will need the city council's approval will allow a small amount of surface parking within Encore's boundaries. To this point, all the parking within the project has been in garages.

The surface parking is being requested for a potential grocery along Nebraska Avenue, Moore said.

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