

Cantor Fitzgerald, Silverstein Properties Partner on Mixed-Use Development in South Carolina

Opportunity Zone Project Calls for Apartment Complex and Anchoring Medical Office



The Sawmill project in Summerville, South Carolina will include an apartment complex, medical offices, a grocery store and space for future retail developments. (Cantor Fitzgerald)

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CoStar News

July 5, 2024 | 4:11 P.M.

A joint venture between Cantor Fitzgerald, [Silverstein Properties](#) and Charleston-based Turnbull Development has been created for a mixed-use apartment complex in an opportunity zone near Charleston, South Carolina.

The proposed project is expected to include 365 apartment units across three separate buildings, along with a 40,000-square-foot Roper St. Francis medical office building at the corner of Berlin Myers Parkway and Highway 78 in Summerville, South Carolina's downtown district. The joint venture has already closed on \$54 million in construction financing from SouthState Bank to develop the project that is likely to break ground this month.

"Summerville is a desirable residential destination near Charleston that benefits from the region's job and population growth," Alex Cosio, vice president at Silverstein Properties, said in a statement. "With preconstruction completed and financing in place, this development is positioned to further invigorate an already bustling community."

The joint venture's development is part of a larger master-planned project known collectively as Sawmill. Situated on 57 acres and anchored by the St. Francis medical office, the larger project is expected to include a neighborhood grocery store, retail outparcels and provide Charleston-area residents with a walkable living option close to transit, jobs and public services.

"Sawmill will be a vibrant, region-transforming community," Milton Thomas, president of Turnbull Development, said in a statement. "We have spent the last four years developing the master plan, moving through entitlements, and working with the town of Summerville to ensure this will ultimately be one of the region's premier mixed-use developments."

The deal comes as rents in the Summerville area have grown slower and registered cheaper than the Charleston market at large. Over the past year, rents in Summerville have grown just 22 basis points to \$1,608. In contrast, the wider Charleston market has seen an 87 basis point expansion in asking rents that has brought rates to \$1,777, according to CoStar data.

And while demand drivers such as job and population growth have been strong, rental growth has been held down by a 25% expansion in inventory since 2020. A CoStar analysis showed the greatest surge in inventory was among high-end apartments,

leading to a 40 basis point decline in asking rents for the most expensive apartments in the area over the past year.

Cantor Fitzgerald and Silverstein began investing in qualified opportunity zones in 2019. The partnership has 11 opportunity zone projects in various stages of development with total estimated project costs exceeding \$2.2 billion, or roughly \$203 million per project on average.

Cantor Fitzgerald's investment platform is responsible for \$13 billion in assets under management comprising various financial vehicles. New York-based Silverstein Properties has been involved in more than 40 million square feet of real estate projects, including [7 World Trade Center](#) in Lower Manhattan, the city's first LEED-certified office building completed in 2006.