

Commercial Real Estate

Greater Austin YMCA kicks off redevelopment for downtown property

A high-profile New York developer is helping the nonprofit remake its Townlake site with a refreshed facility and new housing



The exterior of the Greater Austin YMCA's Townlake facility which could be redeveloped to add a new facility and housing options.

GREATER AUSTIN YMCA



By [Sean Hemmersmeier](#) – Staff Writer, Austin Business Journal
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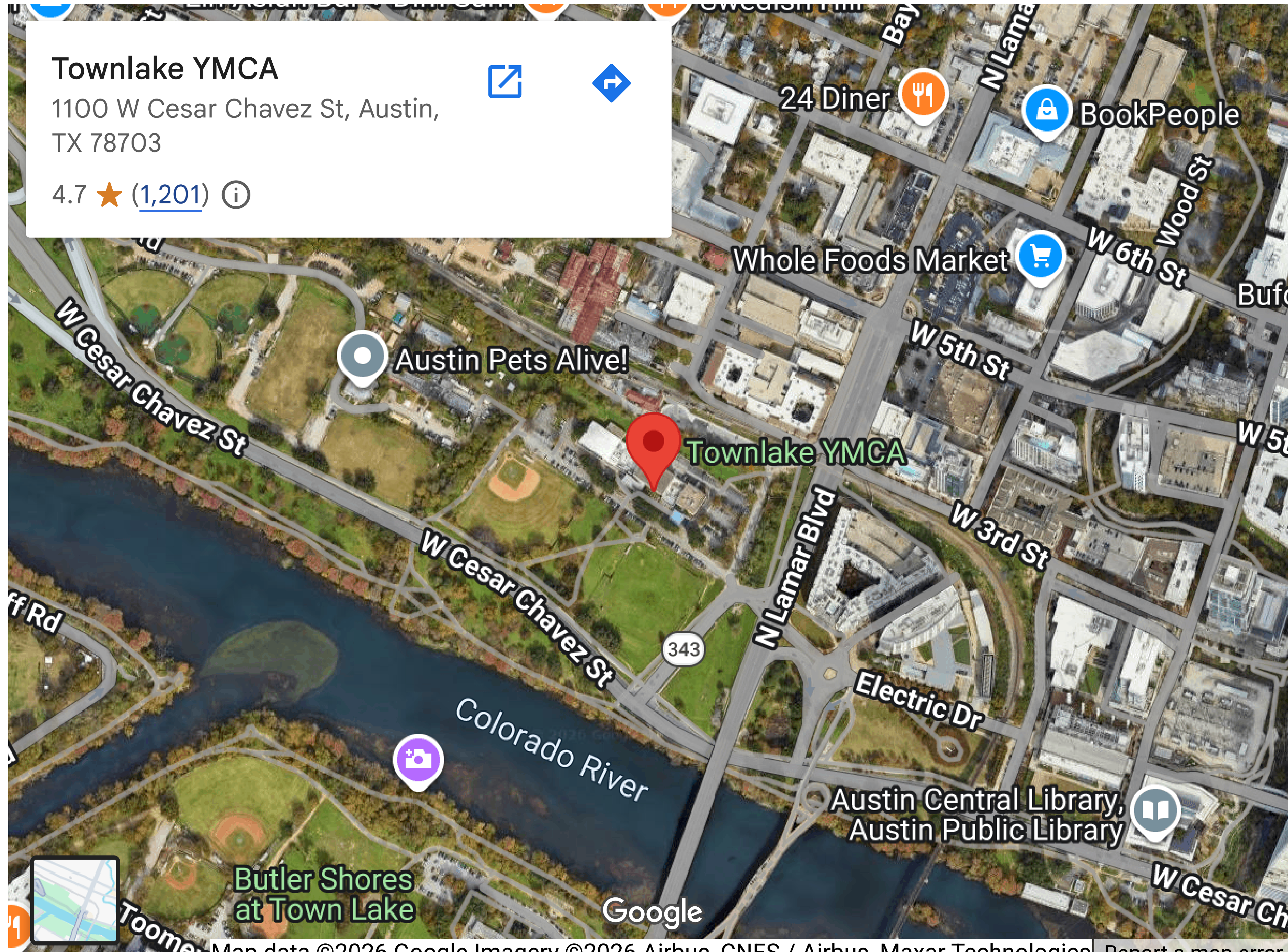
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The Greater Austin [YMCA](#) took a key step forward on its plan to transform its downtown land holdings.

The YMCA announced on July 27 that it had officially submitted its Planned-Unit Development application to the city of Austin to redevelop the Townlake YMCA site. The plan calls for a new YMCA center, market-rate housing and 90 affordable rental units. The YMCA is partnering with Millennium Partners, a New York real estate firm, to handle the overall redevelopment of the 4.8-acre Townlake site.

"The PUD submission marks a major milestone in our greater vision for the future of Austin," said Kathy Kuras, president and CEO of the Greater Austin YMCA. "This project is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform downtown Austin and address our community's most pressing needs."

The current 75,000-square-foot YMCA facility on the site would be replaced with a 110,000-square-foot building. The new location would be the flagship facility for the nonprofit in the Austin region.



[Previous presentations](#) made to Austin's Environmental Commission indicated the project would include five new buildings, three of which would be market-rate condos. Of the other two buildings, one would be a standalone affordable housing building and the other would be the new YMCA facility.

"Millennium Partners' philosophy has always centered around thoughtful urban development that generates meaningful public benefit for generations to come," said Richard Baumert, a partner at Millennium Partners, in a statement. "The proposed development is one of a kind and will serve as a prototype for future YMCA developments nationally and globally, and is a scalable model for integrating wellness, housing, sustainability and community development."

This proposed redevelopment could generate more than \$1 billion in taxable value, according to the announcement.

The affordable residential units will be crafted through a partnership with Foundation Communities.

In addition to the proposed redevelopment, the PUD application outlines other improvements that should be made at the YMCA Townlake site. Those include installing a blackwater recycling system, a closed-loop water management system and new on-site solar and geothermal systems. The application also calls for restorations made to Lady Bird Lake and other nearby habitats.

Developers use the PUD method to transform sites in Austin in major ways. Other sites that have utilized PUDs are the Mueller and Colony Park projects. Several sites in the heart of Austin have received approval on their PUD proposals but haven't started construction, including Endeavor Real Estate Group's plans to transform the old Austin American-Statesman site into a mixed-use development. The Related Co.'s plans to build roughly 735,000 square feet of [commercial space and close to 1,000 residential units on South Congress Avenue](#) also fall under that category.

But a PUD proposal takes a lot of time and review from the city of Austin before it can move forward. The YMCA's PUD will be evaluated by various city commissions and will need eventual sign-off from the Austin City Council. A YMCA spokesperson said the organization expects the project to be ready for city council review by the first quarter of 2027.

The YMCA's website said the city review process could result in changes or tweaks to the project, and the timing of the PUD approval will depend on the city. When news of the redevelopment of the [YMCA's Townlake facility was first shared](#), the goal was to break ground in early 2028.