

Blighted Kmart Plaza in Holyoke to be replaced with a modern development

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HOLYOKE — After years of vacancy, the long-stalled Kmart Plaza redevelopment is finally moving forward.

Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia announced Wednesday morning that the City Council unanimously approved a special permit the night before that allowed the demolition of the former Kmart building, clearing a major hurdle for redevelopment of the prominent site.

City officials say the project will remove a longstanding blight and make way for a new, modern building aimed at attracting high-quality anchor tenants.

Plans also call for a full revitalization of the surrounding plaza, with upgrades focused on appearance, functionality, safety and long-term viability.

Developers have framed the project as a “first-in-class” destination designed to spur additional investment in the area.

“This project represents exactly the kind of responsible redevelopment we need,” Garcia said. “It will eliminate a long-term vacancy and strengthen our tax base through significant reinvestment in Holyoke.”

Before winning final approval from the full City Council, the proposal first went before the Development and Governmental Relations Committee on May 18, where it received unanimous support.

After opening the public hearing, the committee heard from attorney Daniel Glissman of MacDermid, Reynolds & Glissman, representing Cypress Acquisitions LLC.

Glissman said the applicant was seeking a special permit to demolish the long-vacant former Kmart building at 2201 Northampton St., which is considered a preexisting nonconforming structure because it lacks proper setbacks and is physically attached to the adjacent retail plaza.

He was joined by colleague Amy Souchuns and developer Don Bouvier, the managing director of development at Cypress Equities. Bouvier provided background on the company.

Bouvier said the Dallas-based retail developer has been studying the site since mid-2025 and is looking to acquire the property, demolish the existing structure and redevelop it with a new use anchored by a major tenant.

“We’d like to acquire the property, tear it down and build back something that’s better than what’s there today,” Bouvier said, adding that the project is contingent on receiving local approvals.

Glissman said that the proposal does not seek to preserve any of the site’s existing nonconformities. Instead, any future development would comply with current zoning.

The project would involve a multimillion-dollar investment, including demolition of the building, upgrades to the parking lot and restoration of the adjacent plaza façade, which is currently connected to the Kmart structure.

The development team said demolition could begin as early as December, with a 60-day rough timeline, followed by a construction phase requiring additional approvals.

Committee members voiced strong support for the proposal, calling it a long-awaited opportunity to redevelop a blighted property and improve safety, aesthetics and economic activity in the area.

The committee unanimously approved the special permit and sent it to the full City Council, which later approved it.