



By [Gloria Lloyd](#) – Reporter, St. Louis Business Journal
2 hours ago

For decades, St. Charles residents have crossed bridges to commute to jobs, attractions and even restaurants. But officials backing a major riverfront development in St. Charles say when they're finished, jobs — and even more residents — will likely come to them.

Developer CRG has started construction on the first phases of Riverpointe, a \$350 million development more than a decade in the making, which, over the next five years, looks to revitalize 120 acres along the Missouri River at Interstate 70 and Main Street, building on the success of the neighboring 27-acre mixed-use development that opened in 2012, The Streets of St. Charles.

With a 30-acre riverside lake, the new waterfront stretching between the Ameristar casino and the Family Arena would be lined with office space, retail, hotels and residential developments.



[Enlarge](#)

This rendering shows the Riverpointe development in St. Charles, Missouri, highlighted by a 30-acre lake built along the riverfront and a pedestrian bridge to a natural barrier island, Bangert Island.

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The casino is already one of the largest tourist attractions by numbers in the St. Louis area, and, with the new development, St. Charles officials hope to draw in even more outsiders, plus, in a best-case scenario, a corporate headquarters that could make [some of those commutes outside the county unnecessary](#).

City officials said St. Charles is already the third most-visited city in the state with 11 million visitors annually, and Riverpointe could further elevate that popularity, said [Scott Drachnik](#), president and CEO of the Economic Development Council of St. Charles County.

“It’s going to add new landmarks to the metropolitan region,” Drachnik said. “We’re going to think about the Arch, we’re going to think about the Cardinals, we’re going to think about the zoo and we’re going to think about things like Riverpointe. And that’s good for everybody in metro St. Louis.”

Water at the forefront

In a strategy similar to CRG's \$500 million [Wildhorse Village development](#) in Chesterfield, life at Riverpointe will revolve around the waterfront between the mainland and a 160-acre Missouri River barrier island, called Bangert Island. It's a county park permanently shielded from development by covenants designed to preserve its natural state.

As sludge filled the slough between the island and the mainland, Bangert stopped resembling an island. But if the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signs off, CRG will dig out the slough to create a narrow manmade lake, about 150 to 250 feet wide and a mile long, that can be used for kayaking, paddle boating and other water activities.

RECOMMENDED

RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

House with 'hashtag' design lists in Denver for \$10M (Photos)



RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE

Entire condo tower sells to single buyer after completion (Photos)



CAREER & WORKPLACE

Here are the most in-demand Oregon jobs in a record year for hiring



Today, the ground at the site of the first phase is largely natural and rustic, matching Bangert. Plans call for transforming it into office buildings, 500 apartments, 150 hotel units, 100,000 square feet of riverfront restaurants and retail, all likely incorporating rooftop patios and gardens to take advantage of the lake and river views. Another 75 to 200 owner-occupied townhouses or condos are to be built along the riverfront.

All the projects will surround a central plaza with a “Riverwalk” path constructed along the lakefront for public access, with an amphitheater hosting events and a pedestrian

bridge leading to Bangert Island. The nearby expanse of the Katy Trail, the popular statewide bike path, will be rebuilt to capitalize on the water access.

Building a massive development on the river has its critics, notably the Sierra Club, which has taken an official stance against the project. Speaking to the City Council, club volunteer [Caroline Pufalt](#) questioned whether the development would impact flooding and the natural atmosphere of Bangert Island and asked, "Is there any reasonable guarantee of sufficient future private investment? And would such investment be an addition to St Charles, or would it just subtract from other parts of the regional economy?"

To St. Charles Economic Development Director [Mike Klinghammer](#), the city's newfound focus on the river is a few hundred years overdue. As historic Main Street was constructed in the late 1700s and 1800s, buildings faced away from the river rather than toward it, as they would be built today, possibly due to the site's history of repeated flooding.

"St. Charles and St. Louis have both done the same thing of ignoring our waterways, and especially when we talk to people from outside the area, they're just amazed that we don't have more focus on the waterfront property that we do have," he said. "St. Charles just never got developed that way over the last 200 years, and so we're now actively trying to engage the Missouri River and the nature along it as part of the development itself."

Commercial prospects

The prospect of creating a new, more vertical riverfront project to expand on the success of The Streets of St. Charles attracted so much development interest during the pandemic that the city tripled the scope of the project from 40 acres to 120, acquiring land for a future 80-acre entertainment district in addition to the sites under contract by St. Louis-based CRG, the development arm of Chicago-based Clayco.

In the past, development of the land was held up by different owners and hesitation from the Army Corps to develop in the flood plain, but this time the city took control of the sites and raised the grading about 30 feet with Corps approval, which brings the site above the 500-year flood plain.

Hoping to avoid tax-increment financing, the county road board contributed \$7 million from a county transportation sales tax to the city to fund Riverpointe infrastructure, said St. Charles County Executive [Steve Ehlmann](#). The Army Corps added another \$1 million for digging out the slough, and the state contributed \$6 million for infrastructure. The development has incentives from a Community Improvement District and a Transportation Development District, but officials did not respond to requests for comment on possible future incentives. CRG is financing the project on its own, said [Jeff Tegethoff](#), an operating partner of CRG who is heading up the development. '

Vertical construction starts this quarter, and the first phases will finish construction in about five years, Tegethoff said. A developer has not yet been chosen for the final phase, but it will most likely not be CRG, which will focus on building out the first 40 acres.

“It’s hard to find anywhere throughout the Midwest where you’re seeing this much development going on in this concentrated of an area,” said Tegethoff of Riverpointe and Wildhorse Village.

The office buildings, likely ranging from 400,000 to 500,000 square feet total, could be built as either speculative space or a build-to-suit corporate headquarters and could start construction in early 2023 along with the residential housing and hotel, said Tegethoff. Taken together, officials expect the live-work-play atmosphere at Riverpointe to help grow the county from 405,000 people today to a population of 450,000 to 500,000 by 2030, forecasting a preliminary economic impact of \$1.5 billion.

“Hopefully Riverpointe will be the next magnet to attract people to come across that bridge in the opposite direction for a change,” Ehlmann said.

But city officials don’t want to stop there, and have plans to extend the Riverwalk for miles north. For St. Charles native Klinghammer, the scale of the projects is unlike any ever seen in the city.

“We’re an old town that is awakening and seeing what is possible,” he said.

THE PACE OF RIVERFRONT PROGRESS

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Here's a tentative timeline for work on the project.

NOW: CRG is making progress on site work for Riverpointe, as well as on Chapter at The Streets, an apartment complex from CRG on the last remaining site in Streets of St. Charles.



[Enlarge](#)

Construction of Phase one of the Riverpoint development project

DILIP VISHWANAT | SLBJ

May 2022: Vertical construction begins on Chicken N Pickle, a a pickleball-focused dining and entertainment concept that in August became [the first announced destination at Riverpointe](#).

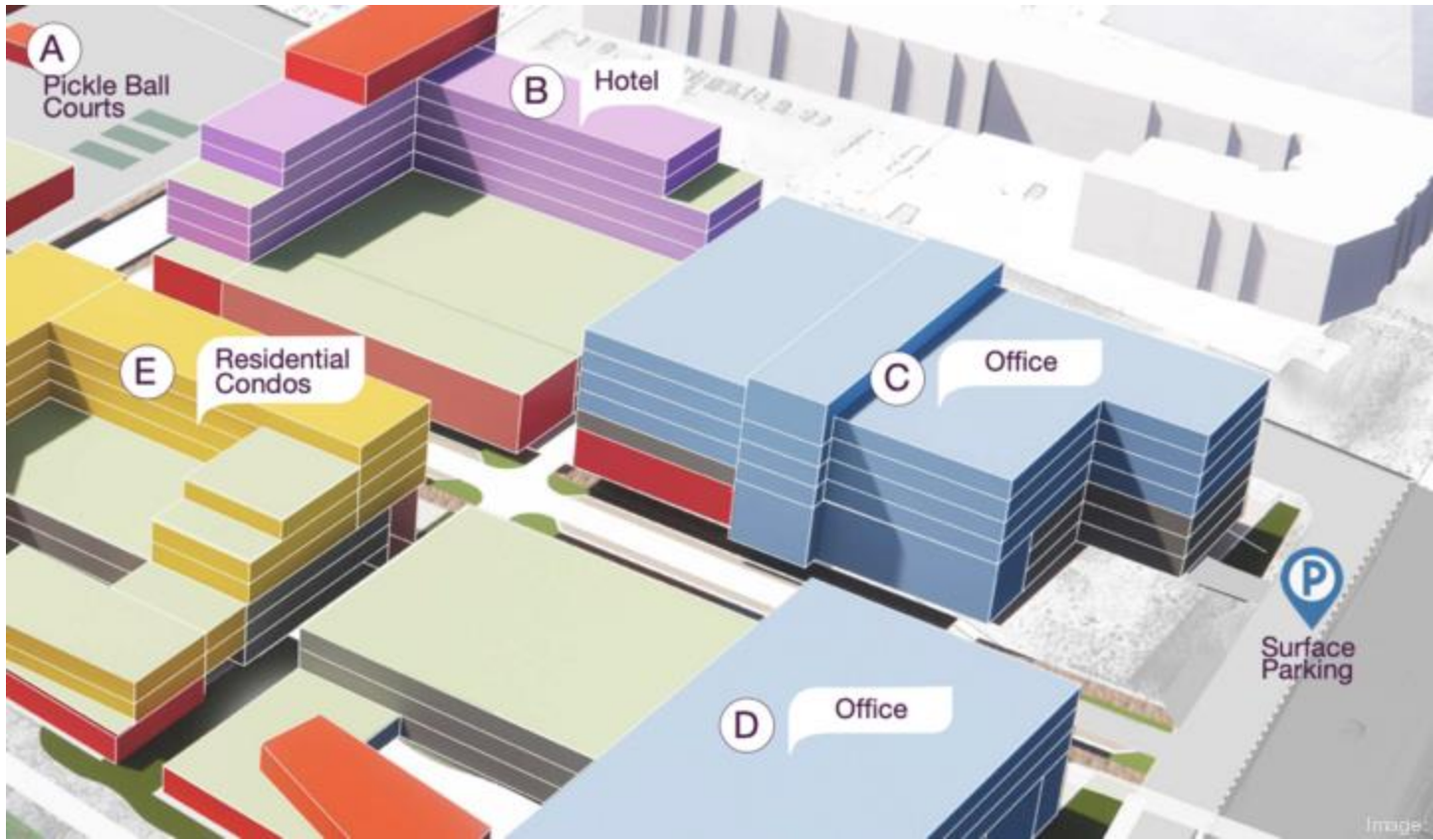


[Enlarge](#)

Kansas City-based Chicken N Pickle is bringing a location to Riverpointe in St. Charles.

KACY MEINECKE

Early 2023: Construction could start the first office building, the hotel and the for-sale residential, townhouses and condominiums.



[Enlarge](#)

This rendering shows the Riverpointe development in St. Charles, Missouri
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Second quarter 2023: Chapter at The Streets to finish construction.



[Enlarge](#)

This rendering shows Chapter at The Streets, an apartment complex from CRG on the last remaining site in Streets of St. Charles.

CRG

Mid-2023: Construction on infrastructure finishes.



[Enlarge](#)

This rendering shows the Riverpointe development in St. Charles, Missouri
LAMAR JOHNSON COLLABORATIVE

2027: Construction of Riverpointe projected to be near completion.