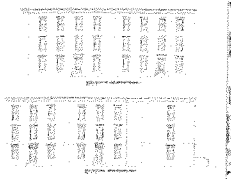


Play Louisville owner has a new Butchertown development project

Maggie Menderski, Louisville Courier Journal Published 9:39 a.m. ET July 23, 2018 | Updated 9:42 a.m. ET July 23, 2018



(Photo: Courtesy: Todd Roman)

The owner of Play Louisville is making another move in Butchertown.

But this time, it's not a dance move.

Todd Roman, who co-owns Play at 1101 E. Washington St., has a \$3 million apartment project in the works just across the street from his nightclub and theater.

In the past two years or so, he's purchased four lots that take up about a half acre of the block to the west of Play.

Downtown living: [Where you can live on a typical income around downtown Louisville \(/story/money/louisville-city-living/2018/07/09/what-median-rent-gets-you-downtown-louisville/651599002/\)](#)

Louisville gay bars: [Here are 7 LGBTQ-friendly bars you should visit \(/videos/entertainment/2018/06/06/louisville-gay-bars-here-7-lgbtq-friendly-bars-you-should-visit/35717355/\)](#)

Roman is working through four separate zoning changes now, but if all goes according to plan, he'll begin construction on 15 apartments sometime this year.

When he's done that block will be home to a three-story brick building with one- and two-bedroom units at about 900- and 1,200-square-feet, respectively.

It's an entirely new building, but the façade and the windows are designed to look as though the structure has always been there. These are apartments, but they're in a quaint neighborhood, he told me, and it's important that they look that way.

"It's going to feel much more like home than that you're in some big complex," he said. "Many people if they're moving into Butchertown are buying into the philosophy and the mindset and the lifestyle of Butchertown."

Buy Photo



Todd Roman, co-owner of Play Louisville, stands at the future site of 15 apartments he plans to build in Butchertown at North Johnson and East Washington streets. (Photo: Maggie Menderski/Courier Journal)

It's too early to know exactly what they'll lease for, but given the market, he expects to charge about \$900 per month for a one bedroom and \$1,200 to \$1,500 for a two-bedroom unit.

Roman hopes to welcome his first residents in the second half of next year.

But those 15 unit are hardly the only newcomers to Butchertown.

More: [Cheap mimosas and boutique bar](#) [9 new things to know in Louisville \(/story/money/2018/07/23/new-things-try-louisville-butchertown-nulu-portland/779879002/\)](#)

In the five years since Roman expanded Play from its flagship Nashville location to his Louisville home, he's watched the neighborhood transformation from his corner of Washington Street.

Play alone brings about 2,000 or 3,000 people into the Butchertown neighborhood every week, he said, and neighbors such as Butchertown Market, Copper & Kings Distillery and Butchertown Grocery all serve as draws. There's been growth, too, on the edge of the NuLu border with the Butcher Block retail strip.

It's truly remarkable how far the neighborhood has come, Roman told me.

He grew up in Fern Creek and his family brought its livestock to Butchertown back in the day when that's predominantly what the neighborhood was, a butcher town.

Read this: [What's coming to NuLu? This developer paid millions for half a block \(/story/money/louisville-city-living/2018/07/10/indianapolis-developer-buys-property-downtown-louisvilles-nulu/769598002/\)](#)

The community's evolution, though, still has a way to go.

Roman demolished two dilapidated buildings to make room for the apartment project, and eventually, he'd like to see someone come in and redevelop the site on the other side of Washington Street.

That land neighbors Butchertown Grocery restaurant, and he's hopeful some retail or even an actual grocery store move onto that spot. The 11,300-seat Louisville City soccer stadium will open in 2020, and retail, hotels and offices are all slated to follow.

That whole development is just an eye shot from the club.

Butchertown is steadily on its way to becoming one those places where people live, work and play.

Roman quite literally added Play five years ago.

Now the rest is following.

Related: [That giant boutique in Butchertown Market is getting its own wine bar \(/story/money/2018/05/25/work-metal-butchertown-market-wine-bar/629653002/\)](#)

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City Living reporter Maggie Menderski covers retail, restaurants and development in downtown and its nearby urban neighborhoods. Reach Maggie at 502-582-7137 or cityliving@courierjournal.com. Follow her on Twitter and Instagram @MaggieMenderski. Support strong local journalism by subscribing today: courier-journal.com/maggiem (<https://www.courier-journal.com/maggiem>).

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The project will cost \$2.5 million to \$3 million. | Courtesy of Todd Roman

Todd Roman, who owns LGBTQ bar Play in Butchertown, told Insider Louisville that a proposed apartment development is just the next step in plans for continued investment in the neighborhood.

“We are very committed to our investment in the area and plan to further that investment,” Roman said in a phone interview.

Insider previously reported that Roman and partner Joseph Brown filed plans with the city to construct a 15-unit apartment building on vacant property spanning 1043-1051 E. Washington St. At the time, they were not ready to talk about the project.

Earlier this week, however, Roman provided some more details. The three-story development, which will be built from the ground up, will feature a mix of one- and two-bedroom units ranging from 900 square feet to 1,100 square feet. The exterior will be brick and stone.

“We are very cognizant of this historic nature of Butchertown and want to do something that complements the neighborhood,” he said.

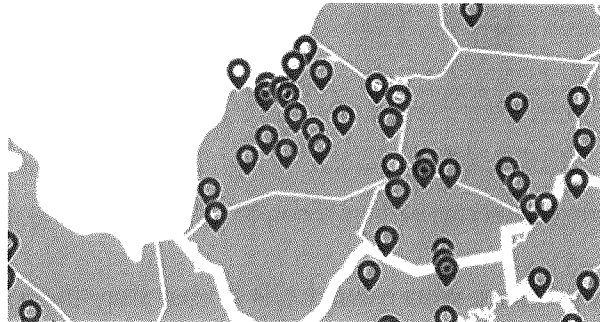
Rental rates are not set but will be competitive, Roman said.

While the development won’t have a pool or fitness center like much larger complexes nearby, the development will have a crucial amenity: 23 off-street parking spaces. Parking in Butchertown is a top concern for businesses and residents, Roman said, adding that the developers also are looking at creating a rooftop garden as part of the project.

The project is still moving through the city approval process, but Roman said he hopes that construction will start this year. It will take about nine months to complete. The development will cost between \$2.5 million and \$3 million. —
Caitlin Bowling

Improvements planned for more than 1,000 Kentucky bridges

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has hired the consulting firm Stantec to help plan, develop, manage and oversee the rehabilitation or replacement of more than 1,000 bridges in Kentucky, including nearly 20 in Jefferson County.



Pin drops represent bridges that are part of the program. | Courtesy of Stantec

The endeavor, called Bridging Kentucky, represents an estimated \$700 million investment in all 120 Kentucky counties and aims to extend the life of the bridges by 30 years. In instances where a bridge must be replaced, the new bridge will have at least 75 years of useful life.

Stantec is helping to evaluate and prioritize the bridge improvements through a data-based screening process and to determine the best solution for each bridge. Construction on some bridges is expected to begin late this year.

“This is a transformational program for the bridge infrastructure in Kentucky,” Tony Hunley, Stantec’s program manager for Bridging Kentucky, said in a news release. “The combination of innovative approaches, aggressive timing, and commitment at the highest levels of the Transportation Cabinet will serve as a model to other states looking to address their aging infrastructure needs in a bolder way.” —*Caitlin Bowling*

City sold 125 vacant properties last fiscal year

Louisville Metro Government’s Landbank Authority completed the sale of a record 125 vacant and



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From the Louisville Business First:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2018/07/23/play-nightclub-owners-branch-out-with-planned.html>

Play nightclub owners branch out with planned Butchertown apartments

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Jul 23, 2018, 1:40pm EDT

The owners of Play Dance Bar in Butchertown plan to bring a quiet, intimate level of living to the bustling neighborhood, which continues to see commercial growth through new restaurants, shops and a planned soccer stadium.

Todd Roman and business partner Joseph Brown hope to land the needed rezoning change soon to build a 15-unit apartment complex at 1043-1051 E. Washington St., not far from the nightclub.

The partners filed plans with Louisville Metro Government in May to rezone those properties to allow for the new apartment complex. The partners are pursuing an R-8A zone, which is one of several higher-density multifamily zoning districts in the city. The parcels currently have a mix of residential and manufacturing zoning.

Roman said Monday that the three-story complex will have one- and two-bedroom apartments with standard features and appliances as well as more than 20 parking spaces. The building has been estimated at nearly 20,000 square feet.

Roman said the apartments will be built in a manner that is conscientious of the feel of the neighborhood. One-bedroom units will start at about 900 square feet, and two-bedroom units could max out around 1,200 square feet.

He said rental rates should range between \$900 and \$1,500 per month.

"One of the main things we are selling is a more quiet living situation, similar to the culture of Butchertown," Roman said. "Some people prefer not to be in a super-large complex. They'd prefer to be in a more quaint neighborhood feel."

The business partners are working with Louisville-based Studio Kremer Architects on the design but have not chosen a general contractor for what is expected to be a \$2.5 million to \$3 million investment.

Roman expects a 10-month buildout, and he said the building will have no shared public amenities.

"Our selling point is the quaintness," Roman reiterated. "You'll know pretty much all your neighbors. ... The quality of build also will be better than you sometimes find in larger developments."

Roman said he has been fond of Butchertown since he was growing up in the Louisville area, delivering livestock to the neighborhood. Play has been open for five years, and he said he and Brown started looking a few years ago for land for this project, which started out as a likely duplex but grew to something more.

The partners' business holdings include multiple nightclubs, a restaurant and an office park but no apartments.

"We thought it would be an incredible investment in the area, and we are really fortunate we have individuals in Butchertown like Andy Blieden" who have been investing here for years.

Blieden, a longtime Louisville real estate developer, is largely viewed locally as the lead architect of Butchertown's renaissance. He developed the Butcher Block retail and restaurant complex and Butchertown Market, which has a number of businesses

"He's an incredible guy," Roman said of Blieden. "We see [things] very much alike."

Pair Blieden's work with Copper & Kings American Brandy Co., Butchertown Grocery, Butchertown Pizza Hall and the \$65 million Louisville City FC stadium that recently broke ground, and you have the ingredients to create a pre-eminent neighborhood, Roman said.

"We think it can be one of the star areas in Louisville."

Marty Finley

Reporter

Louisville Business First



