

# GAZEBO EXPRESS

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## BOUTIQUE HOTEL TO ANCHOR PREMIER HIGHLAND DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneur hopes 10-acre business park, boutique hotel attract other high-end developments to Highland

Seven months after Veterinary Surgeon Claude Gendreau unveiled plans for nearly 10 acres along Main Street, the project is poised to advance.

Gendreau and members of his team will appear before the Plan Commission March 15 to discuss combining a series of adjacent residential parcels into a Planned Unit Development near Prairie Avenue.

PUD designation is necessary as a first step toward creating a professional office park that will come with its own 30-room boutique hotel.

"When I look at properties, I look to see if my project can be a catalyst for others," Gendreau said. "I believe the plan for Highland will attract other high-end development."



The Plan Commission is eager to learn more about Gendreau's vision.

"This is unique for Highland and our surrounding communities," Building Commissioner Ken Mika said. "It's a premier development with architecturally significant buildings and ample green space."

For Gendreau, it's all about positive change. "Northwest Indiana is developing rapidly," he said. "I want something very positive for the area: something that makes a difference."

### BUSINESS IS BOOMING

Cecile Petro has been fielding inquiries for commercial space, particularly downtown. With more than 90 percent of all downtown storefronts already taken, the Redevelopment Director is working to accommodate requests.

"We have many businesses that want to come in," she said. "Right now, though, we just don't have many vacancies"

Happily, it isn't just downtown businesses that are booming. It's nearly the same case along Highland's other retail hubs. Spaces that may become available soon are:

#### FIRST MIDWEST BUILDING:

Petro expects demand to be strong for the First Midwest Bank building at Highway and Fourth Street. First Midwest bought Standard Bank and Trust and moved to the branch at Ridge Road and Fifth Street.

#### HYDRANT STOREFRONT:

The Hydrant storefront, 2849 Highway, will become available when the business moves to a larger downtown location.

"It's important for businesses to come to us when they need retail, commercial or light industrial space," she said. "We do everything we can to match spaces with businesses as they become available."

