



# Work starts on historic Durant Hotel in downtown Flint

Posted by Ron Fonger | The Flint Journal June 09, 2008 19:48PM

**FLINT, Michigan** -- Interior demolition could start this week inside the old Durant Hotel as the Genesee County Land Bank inches closer to a deal that would renovate the landmark downtown building.

"It's progress. It's an indication of how close we are to pulling the trigger -- one way or the other," said Land Bank Chairman Daniel T. Kildee.

The demolition work will include removal of asbestos and lead paint from inside the Durant, work Kildee said would have to be completed whether the building is redeveloped as apartments or demolished.

Neighbors hope it's the former after seeing the Durant slowly deteriorate since it closed 35 years ago.

Land Bank officials have said the redevelopment could cost \$23 million.

"The neighborhood is thrilled. It's such a prominent downtown building," said Rebecca Fedewa, president of the Carriage Town Historic Neighborhood Association.

## Flint Journal extras

### About the Durant Hotel:

- Located at [607 E. Second Ave.](#) in downtown Flint, the hotel was built in 1920.
- The eight-story building has been vacant since 1973. It was named for General Motors founder William C. Durant.
- A preliminary engineering report in 2007 indicated the building can be saved and redeveloped.
- Flint's Historic District Commission has

The Durant is on the eastern edge of the historic neighborhood. Karp and Land Bank officials have said they envision it as being used as commercial space and rental housing aimed at young professionals and college students.

"Our neighborhood will benefit" if it's redeveloped, Fedewa said. "It's one of those things we've been keeping an eye on."

Last year, the Land Bank Board of Directors created a new holding company to push the project forward and signed a pre-development contract with Lansing-based real estate developer Karp & Associates to take the lead in the project.

The Flint Journal could not reach a representative of the company Monday.

Karp has a track record of renovating historic buildings in

approved plans for renovation of the property.

Lansing and elsewhere.

A sale of the property is still to come as the parties wait for grant and other funding to be finalized and for preliminary work, such as the interior demolition, moves forward.

The Land Bank is able to qualify the property for special state and federal financing as owner of the property but expects to get back its investment in the property by selling it to Karp and other investors.

"Things are moving in the right direction," Kildee said.

© 2008 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.