

Prep work moves forward at Hall of Fame Village powered by Johnson Controls

[cantonrep.com/story/news/2021/08/03/hall-fame-village-prepares-next-group-buildings/5393929001](https://www.cantonrep.com/story/news/2021/08/03/hall-fame-village-prepares-next-group-buildings/5393929001)



CANTON — Workers are moving dirt, installing utilities and preparing ground for the next large pieces of the Hall of Fame Village.

A 180-room Tapestry by Hilton hotel will back up against George Halas Drive NW, just south of Fulton Road. The hotel will be connected to an 85,000-square-foot, football-themed water park.

Two other buildings — a total of 82,000 square feet — will be built south of the hotel, leading toward the Constellation Center for Excellence in an area dubbed the retail promenade.

Work on those buildings, which will be home to a Don Shula's restaurant and Topgolf Swing Suites and other businesses is expected to begin before the year ends.

Meanwhile, crews have finished a spectator plaza and scoreboard on the east end of Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium, while construction of the 75,000-square-foot Constellation building continues on the west end of the stadium.

HOF Village phase two

The buildings are part of the \$300 million second phase of the project, known as Hall of Fame Village powered by Johnson Controls. Hall of Fame Resort & Entertainment Co. is leading the development, which is referred to as the destination and is one of the company's three business units.

Work on the first phase occurred before Hall of Fame Resort became involved in the project. The development included construction of Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium and several youth fields that are south of McKinley High School.

All of the construction is underway on property around the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the stadium and high school.

Plans include building three more youth athletic fields to join the five already constructed and in use. The second phase also included renovations of the DoubleTree by Hilton hotel in downtown Canton.

New buildings, streets

The major construction will occur north and west of the Hall of Fame and stadium.

Anne Graffice, executive vice president of public affairs for Hall of Fame Resort, said most of the current work involves preparing the site. That includes installing sewers, waterlines and other utilities, as well as rebuilding and aligning some streets.

Those projects will take a break this week, so as not to interfere with festivities marking enshrinement for the Hall of Fame's 2020 and 2021 classes.

"They're trying to button things up before the enshrinement," Bill Sherer II said. As business manager for Ironworkers Local 550, vice president of the East Central Ohio Building & Construction Trades Council and president of Canton City Council, Sherer has different insights on the project.

"I've very confident that things are moving ahead with the Hall of Fame Village," he said.

Supply chain, shipping delays

Steel for the new buildings has been ordered, but supply shortages have delayed delivery.

"We're doing as much as we can do," Graffice said.

Work on the Constellation Center for Excellence began last fall. Plans are for the building to be ready for tenants by October.

Last week, crews started installing a mesh video display that will cover part of the building facing the stadium. It's possible that the system will be operable for the Hall of Fame Enshrinement festivities.

"We're hopeful that it will be ready to roll," Graffice said.

Delays tied to the coronavirus pandemic slowed the arrival of the video display in Canton, Graffice said. The equipment was shipped to the United State from Asia. A worker shortage delayed the equipment being unloaded from a ship in California, then factored into getting it moved across the country.

East end zone finished

Work is complete in the stadium, Graffice said. Crews have installed a scoreboard and other equipment on the east end where a viewing plaza has been created.

That's a change from earlier designs where traditional seating was anticipated.

The space is similar to plazas that have been added to Progressive Field in Cleveland and other stadiums around the country. It's large enough to accommodate 1,300 people, but likely will be limited to about 750 people, Graffice said.

Food and beverages will be served in the area, and it's open enough to bring in food trucks.

Special ticketing will be required for the space, Graffice said. Hall of Fame Resort envisions businesses and organizations possibly reserving the space or buying ticket packages different events.

Graffice said the plaza is versatile, interactive and offers a different experience for people attending and event. The company expects it will be engaging and exciting, she said.

More recent development plans have called for work on the second phase of Hall of Fame Village to be finished by 2023. That would be followed by a third phase, which could bring the total project to nearly \$1 billion.

"We're all working really hard to make it a reality," Graffice said.