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BREAKING NEWS: 3:01 PM

Flaherty picked to develop Barton, Lugar parcels

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The Indianapolis Housing Agency has selected Flaherty & Collins Properties to lead an effort to develop land that surrounds two downtown public housing towers.

The group's board picked the locally based developer from five contenders at a meeting this afternoon. The parties still must negotiate a development agreement with details, including the price for three parcels surrounding the John J. Barton and Lugar Tower apartments.

Flaherty's charge is to develop additional residential or commercial space at the base of the 21-story Barton and 15-story Lugar buildings to better integrate the aging concrete buildings into the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Housing Agency didn't put a price on the three parcels, which total about 3 acres. It hopes to partner with Flaherty to secure low-income tax credits and federal funds, and also complete a \$14-million renovation of the actual towers.

The properties include a triangle-shaped parcel, now a park, in front of the Barton, built in 1967, and small pieces on either side of the Lugar Tower, built in 1974.

Flaherty has been working on plans for four floors of market-rate apartments over first-floor retail for the Barton property, which is sandwiched between the Murat Theatre, the Athenaeum and an Indianapolis Fire Department station. The Lugar Tower parcels likely would be developed as residential only.

Flaherty recently restarted construction on another downtown project, the \$33-million Cosmopolitan on the Canal. That project was badly damaged by a March fire that was ruled arson.