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Former Downtown Raleigh Furniture Store Gets New Tenants

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RALEIGH, N.C. -- The awning still displays the name of a Raleigh staple, but now after more than 70 years as the Heilig-Levine Furniture Store, there is something new moving in. The biggest renovation project right now in downtown Raleigh centers on one of the city's historic landmarks -- the Heilig-Levine Furniture store.

"It will, kind of, have that 24/7 feel to it," developer Greg Hatem said.

Over two years, Developer Greg Hatem will spend \$8 million to restore 50,000 square feet at the corner of Hargett and Wilmington streets. Offices, apartments and two restaurants are planned for four buildings there. One of the restaurants involves a courtyard. The project is seen as a key downtown connector. It will be right between businesses on the new Fayetteville Street and nightlife at Moore Square. Built just after the Civil War, the store was once a hotel. There is history inside that Hatem is trying to keep. Painted letters from an old sign company and a Coca-Cola ad discovered under plaster add to the character. "They saw that, and they were sold on the space immediately," Hatem said. A marketing firm has plans for the space and the North Carolina State's College of Design has already set up shop. Raleigh Mayor Charles Meeker said another advantage for the Heilig-Levine building has to do with Hargett Street. By next spring, Hargett will go from one-way to two-way, making the building easier to access.

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