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Gas station to be built, 81 years later

Business First of Buffalo - by [James Fink](#) Business First

Construction is slated to begin this spring on an oft-discussed Frank Lloyd Wright-designed gas station in downtown Buffalo.

The filling station, designed by Wright in late 1927, is being developed by businessman James Sandoro as a companion to Buffalo Transportation/Pierce-Arrow Museum along Michigan Avenue. Sandoro said he hopes to start work on the \$10 million project in April or May, with the replica station slated to open next year.

One major shift with the filling station is that it will now be enclosed in a steel and glass structure that may peak at six stories tall. The 60,000-square-foot structure -- slated for the corner of Carroll Street, Michigan Avenue and Seneca Street, soon to be renamed Frank Lloyd Wright Place -- will make it a year-round attraction rather than a seasonal draw.

"Putting it indoors protects the building and makes it accessible regardless of the weather," Sandoro said.

Wright originally designed the station for the corner of Michigan Avenue and Cherry Street, now part of the Kensington Expressway. The station was never constructed.

Sandoro acquired the blueprints and decided to build the station according to Wright's specifications. The station offers a natural tie-in with the Buffalo Transportation Museum, home to a vast collection of local automotive history including Pierce-Arrows and Thomas Flyer cars.

The project is being partially funded by a \$3 million state grant with the rest coming from private funds secured by Sandoro and some foundation support.

When opened, the filling station is expected to be a huge draw with both architectural buffs and automotive historians.

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