

# BMW claims shuttered Livonia sports bar for high-end motorcycle dealership

LIVONIA, MI, UNITED STATES, June 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A major transformation is underway at a long-vacant restaurant property at one of Livonia's busiest gateways.

The city recently approved plans to convert the former Doc's Sports Retreat on Victor Parkway near Seven Mile Road and Interstate 275 into what the owner says will be the largest exclusive BMW motorcycle dealership in the United States.

The building, vacant since 2018, will be fully renovated and expanded as part of a \$6 million investment by BMW Motorcycles of Southeast Michigan.



Livonia native Charlie Knoll, owner of BMW Motorcycles of Southeast Michigan, is investing \$6 million in the project.

Owner [Charlie Knoll](#), a Livonia native and Stevenson High School graduate, said the project is more than a business decision – it's a chance to reinvest in his hometown.

“

You'll see ducks, swans, and deer out the window. It feels more like a nature preserve than a motorcycle showroom.”

*Charlie Knoll*

“This property has been an eyesore for years, but it's got so much potential,” Knoll said. “We're going to turn it into a high-end dealership that embraces both the BMW brand and the natural setting of the site.”

Knoll bought the 4-acre parcel in March 2023. His dealership, which he purchased in 2021, currently operates out of a leased space at 14855 N. Sheldon Road in Plymouth Township.

The new location will include nearly 20,000 square feet of showroom and service space. It will also serve as a flagship location for BMW Motorrad, the company's motorcycle division, Knoll said.

A high-visibility site with history  
The site has been home to several restaurants since the early 1990s, including Cantina del Rio and Rio Bravo.

Doc's Sports Retreat opened in 2005, attracting fans with more than 70 TVs, a poker room, and live music on the patio.

The establishment closed in September 2018 after business declined.

A failed hotel proposal followed, leaving the building vacant since.



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Knoll said initial plans called for new construction on the parking lot near the I-275 on-ramp, but rising costs prompted a shift in approach, prompting plans to retrofit the existing structure instead – preserving the site's pond views and distinct glass atrium while adding about 4,000 square feet of new construction.

"It's not your typical dealership," Knoll said. "You'll see ducks, swans, and deer out the window. It feels more like a nature preserve than a motorcycle showroom."

#### City support

The redevelopment received unanimous approval from both the Livonia Planning Commission and City Council.

Mark Taormina, Livonia's Planning and Economic Development Director, said the city sees the dealership as a strong fit for a prominent site that languished for years.

"We've been working with [BMW of Southeast Michigan](#) for several years, and this is a great project for that location," Taormina said. "It's a great site, great location right on the pond, and a great brand name."

Taormina said previous redevelopment plans, including a dual-branded hotel, never came to fruition.

Construction is already underway, with demolition, utility restoration, and site prep in progress.

If all goes as planned, Knoll expects the new dealership to open in spring 2026. His current Plymouth Township location will remain open in the meantime.

Knoll is also marketing roughly two acres of the property for future commercial use and said he hopes another high-quality business will join the development.

"The zoning is flexible, and it's a prime piece of land," Taormina said. "Whether it's a corporate user or something else, we're optimistic it will be a good fit next to BMW and help strengthen that corner of the city."

Though Knoll now lives in Birmingham, his roots in Livonia run deep—and he hopes the project contributes to renewed energy in the city.

"I know there's been debate about the city center and the millage," Knoll said. "But I hope this sends a message that people still believe in Livonia. I do."

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