



Zocalo to start work on 2020 Lawrence

by Jennifer Hayes

Zocalo Community Development is taking the LEED in the burgeoning Arapahoe Square neighborhood with its latest mixed-use project.

The Denver-based firm, which specializes in sustainable multifamily and mixed-use development, will start vertical construction in the next 30 days on 2020 Lawrence – an approximately \$60 million development and the first LEED-certified U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-insured multifamily project in the nation.

“2020 Lawrence gives us the opportunity to push into a burgeoning downtown Denver neighborhood,” David Zucker, LEED AP and principal with Zocalo Community Development, said of the project, which will be the first development in the planned urban renewal area and is expected to spur further interest in the pioneering area. Zucker’s partner at Zocalo is Chris Achenbach.

Located at the northeast corner of 20th and Lawrence streets, 2020 Lawrence will consist of a 10-story building comprising 231 apartment units above 9,200 square feet of ground-level retail space for three tenants.

Like Solera, its adjacent sister community at 1956 Lawrence St., 2020 Lawrence will offer sustainable features to urban rental residents. Green features include a solar-powered



Image courtesy of MBR Studios
Vertical construction will start in the next month on 2020 Lawrence, a LEED Gold-certified, 231-unit mixed-use property in the Arapahoe Square neighborhood.

mechanical system in which a third of the heating and cooling energy will be generated from the rooftop solar system. The building is expected to reduce energy consumption by 60 percent from code-built apartments, added Zucker.

Designed to meet LEED Gold certification, 2020 Lawrence also includes 9-foot ceilings, spacious closets, European-styled kitchens with environmentally sensitive materials and is set to offer the means for each tenant to monitor and track his or her energy usage.

As well, 2020 Lawrence will include a large fitness center, community garden, yoga studio, and gathering space and deck on the roof of the building, in addition to a lobby designed to foster a sense of community with 24-hour-a-day coffee and beverages, informal work rooms for telecommuters and home-based workers, communal spaces and a “velo” room with parts

to repair bicycles and set up rides.

At 2020 Lawrence, like Solera, Zocalo and its property management team will continue to partner with area restaurants and bars, such as Snooze, Marco’s Pizza, Gin Mill and Biker Jim’s, to further create a sense of neighborhood between retailers and residents, commented Zucker.

In addition to environmental responsibility, 2020 Lawrence also is responding to a growing sense of economic and fiscal responsibility.

Apartments at 2020 Lawrence will comprise studio, one- and two-bedroom units from 500 to 1,100 square feet – 15 percent smaller than the average unit size in downtown.

“We see it as a trend in that the strength of the multifamily market over the next 10 years will be in individuals earning \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year, those that can afford \$1,400, \$1,500 and \$1,600 in rent a

month,” explained Zucker. “Downtown hasn’t seen as much of this type of product.”

The smaller sizes and subsequently lower rents – 15 percent to 20 percent below the current average net monthly rent – will attract tenants previously unable to afford living in downtown Denver, he added.

“Whether you are a tree hugger, a dollar hugger or health hugger, LEED multifamily has something for you.”

Shaw Construction is the contractor for 2020 Lawrence, designed by John Gagnon of JG Architects. The building features brick, metal panels and a significant amount of glass, as well as 288 parking spaces.

A HUD 221(d)(4) loan, arranged by Jennifer Quigley of Wells Fargo Multifamily Capital in Boulder, was funded for the development.

Berkshire Property Advisors is Zocalo Community Development’s equity partner in 2020 Lawrence.

Zocalo Community Development will deliver 2020 Lawrence in 2013.

In addition to 2020 Lawrence and Solera, Zocalo Community Development’s other LEED-certified community was the RiverClay condominium project. RiverClay, which received its certificate of occupancy in the third quarter of 2008, sold out in second quarter 2009 while Solera was completed in September and is expected to be fully leased in two months.▲