

**BUSINESS**

# Emily Griffith Foundation, Zocalo plan affordable housing, retail in Denver

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The foundation that supports [Emily Griffith Technical College](#) has laid claim to a prime corner in downtown Denver where it plans to build a high-rise, mixed-use development that would advance the school's mission and support the surrounding community.

The Emily Griffith Foundation, with help from Denver-based Zocalo Community Development, recently acquired three-quarters of the city block across the street from [Denver Public Schools' Emily Griffith Campus at 1860 Lincoln St.](#), the project team announced Monday.

Plans call for the surface parking lot at 1811 Lincoln St. to be developed into an approximately 20-story building with 200 income-restricted apartments, a day care/early childhood education center, a workforce development center operated by Emily Griffith, rooftop gardens and a nonprofit event space.

[Emily Griffith](#) students also will be able to get hands-on training in a street-level "social enterprise hub" providing high-visibility retail space for some of the technical college's 50-plus certificate programs.

"Our barbershop, our spa, our salon could move out to street level," foundation president Alby Segall said.

“It’s really about social enterprise and bringing it to the ground level, where the community can participate,” he said. “We’re very much into the concept, as is Zocalo, that we engage this very rapidly growing community in Denver that’s to the north and the east of us.”

A total of three parcels, bounded by 18th and 19th avenues, Lincoln and Broadway, were purchased by the foundation, with financing provided by Citywide Banks. The other two parcels, at 1830 Broadway and 1855 Lincoln St., house another surface parking lot and a 320-space parking garage. The rest of the block belongs to [Trinity United Methodist Church](#), which has been worshipping at 18th and Broadway since 1888.

Zocalo and the foundation hope to break ground in the second half of 2016 — in time for Emily Griffith Technical College’s 100th birthday in September, Zocalo development manager Iván Anaya said.

Details of the development agreement have not been finalized, but the project will benefit the foundation financially, he said.

“The technical college has had a very strong influence and in many ways has driven the growth of Denver’s middle class over the past century,” Anaya said. “This project now helps the college and the foundation further their mission.”

The number of income-restricted apartments makes the project among the largest built in central Denver in the [current rental construction boom](#).

[Another project, in Five Points](#), will add 223 affordable units at 2300 Welton St. and 515 Park Ave. W. In July, Mayor Michael Hancock announced a goal of [\\$15 million a year in affordable housing funding](#).

The apartments in the Emily Griffith building will be targeted at families making 50 to 90 percent of area median income, Anaya said. Denver’s area median income for a family of four is \$79,900.

“In so many ways there’s a demand for this,” Anaya said. “It shouldn’t just be the upper stratus of income that gets to live, work and play in close proximity.”


In addition to freeing up space in the college’s main building, the project also should provide the foundation with the long-term financial support that’s been needed since it was created in 1991, Segall said.

The 13-story Emily Griffith Campus currently houses the main campus of the technical college, Emily Griffith High School and the Downtown Denver Expeditionary School, along with DPS administrative offices.

“We’ll be able to provide a greater amount of support for scholarships, and we’ll be able to provide the kind of moneys that are necessary to start new programs that the workforce demands, like advanced manufacturing and retail management and property management,” Segall said. “We’ll be able to bolster that for the college.”

The former Emily Griffith building at 13th and Welton streets is “not actively for sale right now,” according to a DPS spokeswoman. The district, however, is planning to market and hopefully sell the historic building within the next year.

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