

***City Council
Economic Vitality Committee
Meeting Agenda***
Thursday, October 9, 2025
City Hall
749 Main Street
3:00 P.M.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.

- You can call in to **+1 346 248 7799 or 833 548 0282 (toll free)**
Webinar ID **#838 1396 0621**
- You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website here to link to the meeting: www.louisvilleco.gov/council.

The Board will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments to the Board prior to the meeting at VZarate@LouisvilleCO.gov.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of September 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes
5. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
6. Business Matters
 - a. Economic Vitality Committee 2026 Work Plan Discussion
 - b. Staff Updates
 - c. Development Updates
7. Committee Member Comments

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or special transportation, should contact the City Clerk's Office at 303 335-4536 or MeredythM@LouisvilleCO.gov. A forty-eight-hour notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4536 o 303.335.4574.

8. Potential Future Agenda Items
 - a. Sundance Update
 - b. Business Satisfaction Survey Results
9. Adjourn

City Council Economic Vitality Committee

Minutes

September 25, 2025

Regular Meeting

3:00 PM

Call to Order – Mayor Leh called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Roll Call was taken and the following members were present:

Committee Members: ***Mayor Chris Leh - Chair***
Councilmember Deb Fahey
Councilmember Judi Kern

Staff Present: ***Diana Langley, City Manager***
Samma Fox, Deputy City Manager
Rob Zuccaro, Community Development Director
Vanessa Zarate, Economic Vitality Manager
Austin Brown, Economic Vitality Specialist

Others Present: ***Seven members of the public***

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Leh called for changes to the agenda and hearing none asked for a motion.

Motion: Councilmember Kern moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fahey. **Vote:** All in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Leh called for changes to the August 14, 2025 meeting minutes and hearing none asked for a motion. **Motion:** Councilmember Kern moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fahey. **Vote:** All in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

2024 INTERNATIONAL CODE SERIES ADOPTION – EVC REVIEW

Director Zuccaro gave an overview of the City's draft building codes that be presented to Council for adoption in October. The proposed 2024 International Code Series (I-Codes), with amendments, would replace the 2018 International Code Series and 2021 International Energy Code, with amendments. Director Zuccaro asked for Committee feedback regarding the proposed codes. Director Zuccaro also clarified that this is

City of Louisville

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another opportunity for businesses or other members of the community to provide feedback on the proposed code adoption package.

Councilmember Fahey asked if any other communities have joined the cohort since the first presentation. Director Zuccaro responded that one community has adopted the code, but he referenced a table of communities in the cohort and noted that about half of them have indicated that they are going to consider it. Councilmember Fahey asked for clarification whether Louisville could still join at some point if they decide to do so. Director Zuccaro confirmed that is correct.

Councilmember Fahey also asked if there are additional insurance costs associated with the installation and possession of sprinklers for homes. Director Zuccaro confirmed that having the sprinklers installed would increase the value of homes, which would result in pros and cons relating to the value of the home and the cost of insurance.

Councilmember Kern reiterated the Fire Chief's comment from the Council discussion that the installation of sprinklers would help with a small house fire but would not have much of an impact on an event similar to the Marshall Fire. She also asked if there is a difference in efficacy of sprinklers in single family housing vs multi-family housing. Director Zuccaro confirmed that sprinklers have existed in multi-family housing for some time and clarified that the draft code is for single-family residential only.

Councilmember Kern asked if staff has talked to developers or general contractors building houses in the area to get a sense for the actual cost of installing sprinklers in new homes. Director Zuccaro responded that staff will attempt to get more data before first reading.

Mayor Leh asked for clarification that sprinklers are required in commercial buildings. Director Zuccaro confirmed that they are required.

Public comment from Iona Kearney: Ms. Kearney, President of the Louisville Chamber of Commerce, commented that the Chamber of Commerce is in support of the BCBOA base code rather than the cohort code. She added that the Chamber asks that affordable housing be kept in mind when considering residential fire sprinklers.

Public comment from Mike Kranzdorf: Mr. Kranzdorf, downtown property owner, agreed that he would prefer the BCBOA minimum code to the cohort code, highlighting its simplicity.

Public comment from Mike Deborski: Mr. Deborski commented that while the cohort code considers other regional communities, many businesses compete with other businesses in different parts of the country. He added that adding additional amendments to the code can often hurt a business's margins. He noted that the City should want businesses to be able to afford to locate in Louisville. He added that the

code amendments also makes housing more expensive and noted that very few of his employees can afford to live in Louisville.

Mayor Leh asked Councilmember Kern whether DRCOG has had discussions about the code update. Councilmember Kern responded that the group has not specifically discussed it but noted that there have been individual conversations among members of the group that are in favor of moving towards the 2024 code. She cited that there are some cost factors that have been identified by municipalities as they are beginning to explore the codes.

Mayor Leh wondered how some of the changes that are happening federally with taxes and incentives might impact the code. He asked if there are any federal incentives that businesses can take advantage of that may no longer be available. He wondered whether staff might be able to provide some of this information to Council. Director Zuccaro responded that it's a broad topic and that staff would need to explore how incentives that are generally non-mandated relate to the building code.

Mayor Leh offered that the IECC might have some information and added that incentives may not be as big a consideration as he originally thought they were. Director Zuccaro responded that it's not the City's intention to adopt a code that would have a business doing something so outside of the norm that they would be relying on incentives to meet the code requirements. Manager Zarate added that businesses don't always engage with staff or programs to fill gaps, citing difficult requirements or small benefits.

Mayor Leh wondered how many businesses are engaged with Xcel and will be impacted by their program changes. Manager Zarate confirmed that staff talks to Xcel about programming, grid capacity, and other things. She added that Economic Vitality staff can generally help walk businesses through local to federal options for business incentives.

Councilmember Kern commented that she appreciates that there are incentives rather than mandates and emphasized increased encouragement for businesses. She concluded that if the City is flexible and nimble, we can allow the business community to be flexible as well.

Mayor Leh attempted to wrap up the discussion. He stated that there probably doesn't need to be a motion but noted that the Committee can provide input to Council when the time comes.

Councilmember Kern asked whether Manager Zarate had anything else that she could share from the conversation with the Chamber Advocacy Committee. Manager Zarate responded that the Chamber requested that residential sprinklers are considered from affordable housing perspective, in both cost and impact, and that they were supportive of moving away from the all-electric requirements.

Mayor Leh followed up, asking if anyone quantified impacts on affordable housing. Director Zuccaro responded that there are a lot of policy decisions that impact affordable housing. He added that most municipalities will try to find middle ground. He concluded that Advocacy group was concerned about affordable housing generally and would like to emphasize that.

Councilmember Fahey asked if affordable housing units are required to build to the same standards of other non-affordable units in the same building or development. Director Zuccaro confirmed that the City's current inclusionary housing requires that affordable units must be built to the same standards as other units.

STAFF UPDATES

Manager Zarate gave an overview on staff updates and asked for questions. She noted that Louisville participated in Downtown Colorado Inc.'s Metro Mobile Tour, highlighted the 2025 IEDC annual conference, and gave a brief update on the Business Satisfaction Survey.

Councilmember Kern asked how staff is communicating and advertising the survey. Manager Zarate responded that the survey includes a brief justification as to why the survey is important and why businesses should participate. She added that the survey has been sent out in various newsletters and e-blasts, and that she has reached out directly to many Louisville businesses.

Public comment from Mike Deborski: Mr. Deborski commented that businesses might be a bit inundated by surveys.

Councilmember Kern wondered how staff can reach businesses that may be feeling overwhelmed. Manager Zarate responded that staff encourages businesses to take the survey anyway, emphasizing the importance of feedback and how it can help lead to policy changes.

Councilmember Fahey added that the City has received quality feedback from the business community at the monthly Business Beat roundtables.

Councilmember Kern emphasized that residents like to understand where policy changes are coming from. Survey results from the business community can help Council facilitate discussions and frame them for residents.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Manager Zarate gave an overview on the development updates. She highlighted Birdie Bar's grand opening and the King Soopers groundbreaking and asked for questions.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mayor Leh recognized Manager Zarate for being named as one of BizWest's 40 Under Forty 2005 honorees. He concluded that this is a huge accomplishment for Manager Zarate and a feather in the cap for Louisville.

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Manager Zarate commented that there has been quite a bit of interest in Main Street designation in the survey results and that it may be coming to the Committee in the future.

Councilmember Kern asked if there could be an update on the impact that the Front and Center project may have to downtown Louisville in January 2027, and how it may impact Sundance. She also asked if there could be recurring updates on Sundance. Manager Zarate confirmed that staff is in discussion with Visit Boulder and other regional counterparts and added that staff may not always have updates to share, but can include them when relevant.

Mayor Leh commented that there are a number of big projects in 2026 that the EVC may be involved in discussing, citing Sundance, including short-term rentals, the impact on infrastructure and hotels, and Front and Center and its impacts to Street Faire and the Farmers Market, etc.). He also noted that he would like an opportunity for the EVC to talk about results of Business Satisfaction Survey results in November or December and hear directly from businesses. He concluded that he would also like to have a discussion around an EVC Work Plan.

Councilmember Kern agreed and added that the Sundance conversation should be more than just an update from staff. She stated that she would like to be able to bring in the business community when discussing Sundance and related items such as short-term rentals and micro-transit.

Councilmember Fahey agreed and stated that she would like to explore partnering with RTD and/or Commuting Solutions to address transit concerns for Sundance. Manager Zarate confirmed that a lot of those conversations are happening between communities, but there are a lot of moving pieces that cannot be decided yet.

Councilmember Kern asked if staff has been or will engage with the hotels in Louisville. Manager Zarate responded that staff is in conversations with Louisville hotels and added that there is a regional approach with other hotels.

Councilmember Kern stated that she would like for businesses to have a voice in conversations around transit or potential shuttles from McCaslin to downtown and back. Manager Zarate confirmed that a lot of conversations are taking place, including with the Chamber, but there are a lot of moving pieces at the moment.

Mayor Leh noted that it's important for Council, as well as other groups to figure out their role within the Sundance conversation.

Councilmember Fahey stated that she would like to see more information on impacts during construction of the Front and Center, including effects on Street Faire and the Farmers Market during construction. She also requested that the Business Satisfaction Survey results include the percentage of businesses that responded to the survey.

City Manager Langley requested patience for the Front and Center project and noted that staff is still not certain when construction will occur. The project team is still working on layouts for Street Faire and the Farmers Market.

Regarding Sundance, she also asked Manager Zarate if there is concern about certain agencies trying to get ahead of others in terms of distribution of information or prematurely sharing certain information with the EVC. Manager Zarate responded that several items have been identified that need to be addressed, such as food and beverage, housing, and transportation. But she noted that there is still work to be done and cautioned putting the cart before the horse on ideas. She concluded that once there has been a need identified, other teams will be looped in.

Mayor Leh proposed that the EVC discuss a work plan at their next meeting in October. He also proposed discussing the Business Satisfaction Survey results, including action items, in November and a more detailed discussion about Sundance in December.

City Manager Langley asked if the EVC wants to see Business Satisfaction Survey results prior to them being shared at Economic Vitality Day on November 10. The Committee responded that no, that would not be necessary.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Mayor Chris Leh

Austin Brown, Economic Vitality Specialist

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC VITALITY COMMITTEE 2026 WORK PLAN

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025

PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

The Economic Vitality Committee has expressed interest in creating a 2026 work plan to help guide conversations and EVC Meetings.

Staff has identified the following as potential work plan items for 2026

- Business Satisfaction Survey Implementation
 - Programming and policy updates based on feedback provided in the 2025 Business Satisfaction Survey
- Evaluation of City Processes
 - Code evaluation following adoption of Comprehensive Plan
 - Planning and building processes
- Incentive Evaluation
 - Regularly review incentive policy and bring forward any needed changes to align with market and business needs
- Sundance
 - Promotion
 - Festival license or some sort of short term rental policy
 - Transportation needs
 - Construction projects interaction with Sundance
 - Hotel cooperation
- Louisville Revitalization Commission Collaboration
 - Identify opportunity areas for additional collaboration with urban renewal tools
- Louisville Collateral and Promotion

Please provide additional feedback and staff will bring back a completed work plan to EVC.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no additional fiscal impact to creating a EVC work plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

SUBJECT: EVC WORK PLAN

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025

PAGE 2 OF 2

Staff recommends EVC review and provide feedback.

ATTACHMENT(S):

SUBJECT: STAFF UPDATES

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025

**PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER
AUSTIN BROWN, ECONOMIC VITALITY SPECIALIST**

SUMMARY:

In the following, staff provides updates on recent activity related to economic vitality functions.

Business Satisfaction Survey

Economic Vitality has launched the bi-annual Business Satisfaction Survey, which will be live until October 17th. The survey results will be published in aggregate before the end of the year. To date, we do not have many survey results so we are encouraging everyone to share with their networks so we can reach a wide cohort of our business community.

Downtown Patio Program

The Downtown Patio program will end on November 3, with removal of the patios. This popular program installs over 30 patios downtown to extend outdoor seating and programming during the warm months. Staff is planning to bring the program back in 2026.

October Business Beat

The October Business Beat roundtable will be held in partnership with the City of Lafayette and Workforce Boulder, highlighting the services Workforce Boulder can provide to our communities. This collaborative roundtable will highlight the partnership between economic vitality organizations and is intended to extend the promotion and reach of each organization.

Metro Denver Economic Development Site Selector Conference

Staff will be participating in the annual Site Selection Conference hosted by Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation. The event brings in national site selectors to tour them across the metro and introduce them to partners, programs and incentives available to them and the businesses they work with. Staff will be participating in the pitch session with the U.S. 36 Collaborative and will be in attendance at the site selection feedback dinner. Please reach out to Vanessa with questions.

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025

PRESENTED BY: VANESSA ZARATE, CECD, ECONOMIC VITALITY MANAGER

SUMMARY: UPDATE

In the following, Staff provides updates on recent activity related to construction and development. These updates are for the most frequently asked about sites and not for every site in a review process or under construction. All updates and timeframes are subject to change.

Site	Update
800-804 Main Street (former Wildwood Guitars)	The building is under contract and they have submitted plans to the City for reuse of the building.
809 Main Street (old Waterloo)	Project is continuing construction for the build-out of the restaurant space. There has been interest in the site, with multiple tours, but no LOI or leases signed to date.
816 Main Street (former Empire)	Staff is working with ownership and interested parties towards a sale. Site has been relisted on line for sale.
833 Main Street (former Chase)	Staff is working with ownership to assist with reinvestment on site. Staff has executed a lease of the parking spaces through at least the end of the year.
1301 Courtesy Road (Delo Boom)	Delo Boom is working through City processes to construct 140 units of housing. The project will consist of studios through three-bedrooms and 13.5% affordable units.
950 Spruce Street	Construction has completed with the retail and office spaces currently being marketed for rent.
947 Pine Street (former gas station)	Birdie Bar, an eatertainment use with a bar/restaurant and simulated (virtual) golf games is open!
1303 Empire Road (Ironton)	Ironton has approved plans for a new distillery and event center.

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT UPDATES**DATE: OCTOBER 9, 2025****PAGE 2 OF 2**

540 County Road (Louisville Grain Elevator)	The Grain Elevator has new owners that have engaged the City to turn the building into an activated space. Their TIF review has been started with Pioneer Development Company.
1171 W Dillon Road (former Lowe's)	The New King Soopers Marketplace plans were approved by City Council and they continue working through the process. The project is now under construction with a planned summer 2026 opening.
1164 W Dillon Road (Cinebarre)	University of Colorado has purchased the site and is currently working on public engagement for their plans for the site.
550 McCaslin Boulevard (former Sam's Club)	Relish has opened to the public!
575 McCaslin Boulevard (former Carrabba's)	Staff is working with the broker representation to market and attract a new user to the building. No lease signed to date.

If you would like to add a site to these updates, please let me know.

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.

Women of Distinction

Calendar item

Commercial Showcase

Distinctive Homes

On the Job

News Tip



REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION | SEPTEMBER 17, 2025 | 3:13:49 PM

Commuting Solutions to manage Redtail Ridge transportation plan

LATEST NEWS

Report: USDA move to Fort Collins could create hundreds of new jobs

Fort Collins staff gives approval to two-story commercial building downtown

Boulder's Integral Consulting acquires Pennsylvania firm

Fort Collins Funkwerks taproom to close, but brand will live on



An artist's rendering of a portion of the Redtail Ridge development in Louisville. Courtesy Sterling Bay.

By BizWest Staff

LOUISVILLE — Commuting Solutions, an organization that helps improve and expand transportation options in the northwest Denver metropolitan area, has been selected by the Redtail Ridge Metropolitan District to serve as the mega-development's transportation demand management coordinator.

Redtail master developer Sterling Bay LLC **broke ground in May on Redtail**, a 2.5-million-square-foot biotechnology- and health-care-centric business park on the empty, roughly 400-acre Louisville property adjacent to U.S. Highway 36, which was previously home to a massive Storage Technology Corp. campus.

"The Redtail Ridge project presents an extraordinary opportunity to enhance multimodal connectivity locally and within the region," Commuting Solutions executive director Audrey DeBarros said in a prepared statement. "We look forward to working alongside the Redtail Ridge Metro District,

University of Colorado banks \$229M in best-ever fundraising year



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Sterling Bay, and the City of Louisville to optimize access to multimodal travel options in and around this new development. Our collective efforts will minimize single-occupancy vehicle traffic and promote more sustainable travel across the region.”

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BUSINESS

King Soopers to open new Marketplace store in Louisville

The store, 1171 W. Dillon Rd., is anticipated to open next year



Construction continues on a new King Soopers location at Arapahoe Avenue and U.S. 287 at Nine Mile Corner in Erie on Monday, Feb. 19, 2024. (Matthew Jonas/Staff Photographer)

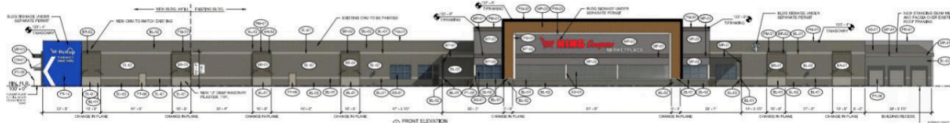


By **ALVARADO GAMEZ** | jalvarado@denverpost.com

UPDATED: September 17, 2025 at 11:10 AM MDT

[King Soopers](#) has begun construction on its newest location in Louisville, redeveloping and expanding the former retail site at 1171 W. Dillon Rd. into one of its Marketplace format stores.

The 122,000-square-foot Marketplace store will feature a range of amenities, including sushi, a Murray's Cheese Shop and a [Starbucks](#) cafe. Shoppers will also have access to pickup and delivery services, a drive-thru pharmacy and a new fuel center equipped with five pumps and eight EV charging stations.



Exterior plans of the new King Soopers store. (Rendering provided by King Soopers)

“We are thrilled for the opportunity to serve the Louisville community with another store and remain committed to being a great community partner,” said Chris Albi, President of King Soopers.

“This project allows us to grow our footprint, better serve our loyal customers, and invest in the future of this community.”

Up Next - Renowned primate expert Jane Goodall dies at 91



The new site represents a \$23.6 million investment and is part of King Soopers' long-term growth strategy, according to a Friday news release.

Additionally, in alignment with their [Zero Hunger | Zero Waste](#) social impact plan, the retail giant said it donated \$5,000 to [Community Food Share](#), a food bank fighting food insecurity across Boulder and Broomfield counties.

King Soopers employs over 22,000 associates and has 120 grocery stores across 37 cities in Colorado.

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Originally Published: September 17, 2025 at 10:57 AM MDT

Around the Web

REVCONTENT

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News Tip



SEPTEMBER 21, 2025 | 11:18:36 AM

So you want to build an ADU?

New state law eases rules, but costs dampen demand

LATEST NEWS

Report: USDA move to Fort Collins could create hundreds of new jobs

Fort Collins staff gives approval to two-story commercial building downtown

Boulder's Integral Consulting acquires Pennsylvania firm

Fort Collins Funkwerks taproom to close, but brand will live on



Scott Rodwin, CEO of Rodwin Architecture and Skycastle Construction in Boulder, oversaw approvals for this existing accessory dwelling unit in Lyons. Courtesy Scott Rodwin.

By **Beth Potter**

As more residents lament the expense of living on the northern Front Range, a new state law recently went into effect that is meant to make some housing more affordable in existing neighborhoods.

In an effort to make it easier for homeowners to build the new accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, and therefore ease Colorado's housing shortage and affordability woes, state legislators last year passed **House Bill 24-1152**, which in part allows ADUs to be built by right on any single-family residence lot in communities up and down Interstate 25.

Also called "granny flats" or "in-law apartments," ADUs are most commonly 500- to 800-square-foot structures built in a homeowner's backyard.

University of Colorado banks \$229M in best-ever fundraising year



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Communities such as Boulder, Fort Collins and Lyons have had a variety of rules in the past, such as requiring an owner to live on the property that has an ADU, that certain parking and design restrictions must be met, or other requirements.

Now, the new state law states that any homeowner with a single-unit detached home must be allowed to build an ADU, either internal to the existing home, attached to the home or detached from the home. Such dwellings are commonly attached to existing homes or in basements; are added or converted space in garages; or built as standalone buildings on homeowner properties.

But while the new law went into effect on June 30, there does not appear to be a huge rush to build the new units, local experts say. That could be because the cost per square foot to build the accessory homes from the ground up are estimated at \$300 to as much as \$1,000 per square foot, they say.

“After they’ve passed all of this, people are saying I’m completely pro-ADU, but ... it’s not going to make money,” Fort Collins Board of Realtors president Marcus Valdez said, explaining that the finances don’t currently make sense for most investors.



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If people want their parents to live close by and can factor that cost into their budget, it might make sense to build an ADU, but if a homeowner wants to build a money-making rental for a college student to lease, “you probably will lose money,” Valdez said.

Valdez said that smaller buildings still cost just as much per square foot as larger buildings.

“I don’t think anyone is anti-affordable housing,” Valdez said. “I think it’s going to be awesome, but it’s not currently awesome.”

Some are having success, however. Sam Coutts, a landscape architect at Ripley Design Inc., decided to build an ADU in the basement of his home and now has rented it out with positive cash flow.

“We have a long-term rental, and it’s amazing,” Coutts said.

Coutts said got a home-equity loan from a bank and hired a general contractor who added another entrance to his home. Ripley Design can help residents who are interested in exploring ADU options, too, he said.

Two Boulder-area architects suggest that costs are even higher to build standalone accessory dwellings in and around Boulder County than they are in Larimer County.

Boulder-area architect Lance Cayko, principal and partner at Longmont-based F9 Productions Inc., estimates that he designed plans for more than 30 ADU projects over the last 18 months, but only five or six of them got built because of the high price per square foot.



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Lance Cayko, principal and partner at F9 Productions, designed the Crystal ADU, which he estimates would cost about \$128,000 to build. Courtesy Lance Cayko.

"They've all been unique," Cayko said. "It's difficult to price them out as an architect because they're so small."

For architect Scott Rodwin, CEO of Boulder's Rodwin Architecture and Skycastle Construction, building codes governing things such as a building's strength to withstand high winds can make the price per square foot higher than expected.

On the plus side, government officials seem to be trying to make the building process easier, Rodwin said. And he thinks that neighbors may be starting to talk with other neighbors about what it might take to build more ADUs in neighborhoods.

"The biggest obstacle is the \$800 per square foot to build an ADU," Rodwin said. "My hope and belief is that as people consider that it's not actually that hard anymore ... when one

person on a block does it, neighbors will hear about it, and it will spread.”

Rodwin said he oversaw an ADU built at a Lyons residence that musicians have used when coming to play at the annual RockyGrass bluegrass festival as a positive example of a new accessory dwelling unit that helped the community.

Studio Shed Acquisition LLC, a Louisville-based prefabricated building company that uses the Studio Home by Studio Shed trade name, took off during the COVID-19 pandemic building panelized kits that are delivered and assembled on-site, co-founder Michael Koenig said.

Sales on the units slowed down slightly as interest rates went up, Koenig said. But the company now has sold 6,600 buildings in all 50 states in the 18 years it has been in business, with California as its biggest market and Colorado as its second-biggest market, he said.



Studio Shed LLC in Louisville took off during the pandemic as people searched for backyard buildings that they could easily add to their existing homes,

according to Michael Koenig, co-founder. The company, now called Studio Home by Studio Shed, makes panelized kits that builders put up at the customer's home. Courtesy Studio Home by Studio Shed.

"Regardless of (interest rates) we've definitely been seeing a significant uptick in leads and site visits and consultations. ... we're thrilled with the interest," Koenig said.

Homeowners are anticipating interest-rate cuts, and there's been more interest nationally in what accessory dwelling units are and how they can help people financially, he said. Koenig estimates that his company can pre-build a unit for 30% to 40% less than a typical building on site. The company saves on construction waste because of the controlled environment where workers put together the panels and the models all being built the exact same way. Koenig did not give a price per square foot for his building products.

"We have continued to put a lot of time and attention and marketing assets around ADUs ... particularly on the Front Range. So our overall cost is lower, and the quality is higher," Koenig said.

Last year was probably the hottest year ever for accessory dwelling units at F9 Productions, Cayko said. Consumers are interested in the dwellings because of what Cayko calls the "HGTV-ication" of the buildings. People see things online or on HGTV and want to build one themselves, he said.

"They're not affordable yet. I think it's a great law, though, even though I don't usually agree with draconian laws. ... I think it's the right step forward," Cayko said.

In addition to reducing the mechanisms by which municipalities can restrict ADUs, Colorado's new law also sets aside millions in taxpayer funds to set up programs to encourage the new units. **(See related story.)**

The state has published **this interactive map**, which users can manipulate to learn more about the local application of state laws such as HB 24-1152 .

Officials around the region are considering ways that municipalities can incentivize the construction of ADUs, and some communities have published specifics on how ADU regulations are locally applied.

For example, Boulder codes require homeowners to fill out specific **accessory dwelling unit applications**; Broomfield code requirements were recently modified **to allow tiny homes as ADUs**; Dacono officials are considering allowing accessory dwelling units **in agriculturally zoned areas**. A **Fort Collins website** is meant to help homeowners navigate a more streamlined approval process; and Windsor allows properties with an existing accessory dwelling unit to also be allowed to **have one short-term rental license**.



Examples of possible ADU locations on a single-family lot. Courtesy Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

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VICINTY MAP:



AdventHealth Avista’s current hospital site is just northwest of the Redtail Ridge property, while AdventHealth’s newly acquired parcel is in Redtail’s southwest corner. Source: Louisville planning documents.

By Lucas High

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LOUISVILLE — When health care system AdventHealth finishes building its **new Avista hospital** campus in Louisville's **Redtail Ridge mega-development** — likely in about 15 years — the facility and its satellite medical offices could total about 800,000 square feet, with buildings that reach as high as five stories, documents submitted to city planning staff and officials show.

AdventHealth plans to build a new Avista hospital to replace the existing facility at 100 Health Park Drive.

The new hospital “is proposed to be located on the northwest corner of the Via Varra & Northwest Parkway intersection in Louisville, Colorado. At full buildout, the project is proposed to include a hospital and additional medical office buildings totaling approximately 800,000 square feet. By approximately the 2030 horizon, Phase 1 of the hospital and medical office buildings is expected to be complete, with approximately 435,600 square feet of hospital use (with 200 beds) and 80,000 square feet of related medical office building uses,” according to a traffic report compiled by engineering consultants with Kimley-Horn & Associates Inc.

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“For purposes of this study, Phase 2 of development is anticipated to be complete by 2040, which would include an additional 204,000 square feet of hospital use (100 additional



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beds) and 80,000 additional square feet of medical office space,” the traffic study continued.

To accommodate that development, a series of new roadways, lanes and intersections will likely be necessary, but “(b)ased on the analysis presented in this report, Kimley-Horn believes AdventHealth Louisville will be successfully incorporated into the existing and future roadway network.”

Louisville’s Planning Commission is scheduled Thursday to review several proposed land-use changes that would facilitate the development of the new hospital.

One of those land-use requests includes establishment of three height zones on the site of the planned new hospital, the tallest of which would allow for “five story buildings (maximum of 85’ tall, 90’ to parapet, 105’ to mechanical penthouse),” planning documents show. “Due to some of the unique requirements for hospital and medical office developments, the proposed maximum heights are taller than what would be expected in non-medical office buildings.”

AdventHealth also is requesting approval for a “density swap,” a fairly rare mechanism by which the health system proposes to shift some of the developable square footage it has remaining on the current hospital site to the Redtail site where it intends to build the new facility. The swap would bring the total developable square footage within Redtail from a bit more than 2.5 million to a tad over 2.9 million.

“Part of the intent of the ‘density swap’ is to limit the gross new development area between the (the existing hospital site and the new one), and thus, limit any potential traffic impacts and impacts on City water and sewer utilities,” planning documents show. “As part of this request, the applicant provided a traffic study and analysis of wastewater infrastructure capacity to demonstrate that adequate infrastructure would be in place as

part of the Redtail Ridge development. The City's Public Works Department determined that there is adequate water infrastructure in place and did not request an analysis."

AdventHealth had been under contract to purchase a roughly 40-acre tract within the Redtail property for about three years, but finalizing the deal appeared shaky at times during the project's bumpy ride through the city approvals process, with rumors that Advent leaders were considering moving the hospital to another nearby community.

That deal was finalized in February. Boulder County real estate records show that Redtail Ridge Portfolio LLC, an entity registered to the Chicago address of Sterling Bay's offices, sold the parcel to PorterCare Adventist Health System, an entity registered to AdventHealth's regional office in Greenwood Village, in mid-February for \$34 million. Avista's current hospital site is just northwest of the Redtail property, while AdventHealth's newly acquired parcel is in Redtail's southwest corner.

The site is accessed only by Health Park Drive, which dead-ends at the hospital. Over the years, the hospital has been unsuccessful in securing a new interchange off of U.S. Highway 36. Poor access adds to the time required to reach the facility, making it difficult to attract new patients.

Additionally, Avista's landlocked location does not offer opportunities to expand, hospital officials have said, with the community missing out on potential new services because the hospital has no room to grow. A new hospital at Redtail Ridge would provide Avista with a far larger market service area, putting it closer to a wider population base.

"AdventHealth is continually planning for the future to meet the evolving health care needs of our communities. Our vision remains clear, to make care more accessible and convenient

for patients,” the hospital system said this week in an emailed statement to BizWest. “Our commitment remains centered on expanding access, delivering whole-person care, and serving with excellence. At this time, we are not releasing any specific plans. When we are able, we look forward to sharing those details.”

At long last, Redtail Ridge broke ground in May. For about six years, developers have their sights set on building a 2.5-million-square-foot (or perhaps roughly 2.9 million square feet after the density swap) biotechnology- and health-care-centric business park on the empty, roughly 400-acre Redtail Ridge property, which was previously home to a massive Storage Technology Corp. campus.

Denver developer Brue Baukol Capital Partners LLC bought the Redtail property from Phillips 66 (NYSE: PSX) in 2020 for \$34.93 million, and began planning a development project that at the time was called Nawatny Ridge. As part of a July 2022 real estate transaction conducted by a series of holding companies, Sterling Bay and its partner, Harrison Street LLC, acquired the site from Brue Baukol for just under \$128 million, Boulder County warranty deeds show. When Sterling Bay entered the picture, the developer added plans for flex-lab-office spaces aimed at biotechnology tenants.

Concerns from residents — mostly centering around flattening of the site, traffic, the size and location of public spaces, sustainability and economic viability — nagged the project, which was eventually redubbed Redtail Ridge, for years, culminating in an April 2022 special election in which Louisville voters repealed a previous approval of the project by city officials.

After the election, allowable development on the site reverted to a set of land-use guidelines approved in 2010, and Sterling

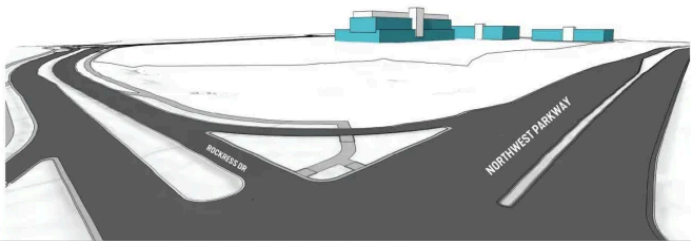
Bay has since worked through the city's entitlement and approvals process in an effort to finally begin development on the Redtail site.

Sterling Bay, in partnership with Piper Sandler Special District Group, secured \$88 million in general obligation bonds this year that will fund some initial horizontal infrastructure development on the site.

Mortenson Co. is providing construction services, and architecture firm Perkins & Will performed design work for the initial horizontal development phase.

EXAMPLE LAYOUT

Possible building mass resulting from the design parameters on Hospital Parcel



EXAMPLE LAYOUT

Possible building mass resulting from the design parameters on Hospital Parcel



AdventHealth has requested the establishment of three height zones on the site of the planned new hospital, the tallest of which would allow for “five story buildings (maximum of 85’ tall, 90’ to parapet, 105’ to mechanical penthouse),” planning documents show. Source: Louisville planning documents.

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Technology

Denver-area tech co. buys rival, aims to boost customer base by 35%



Martin Mrugal, Alchemer's CEO
ALCHEMER



By [Jackson Guilfoil](#) – Reporter, Denver Business Journal
Sep 24, 2025

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Story Highlights

- Alchemer acquires Chatmeter, expanding customer base by 35%.
- Chatmeter will merge with Alchemer in first quarter 2026.
- Alchemer combines direct feedback with Chatmeter's indirect feedback expertise.

A Louisville company specializing in customer feedback technology acquired another tech firm working in the same field, the company announced on Wednesday.

Alchemer, which has 185 employees, bought Chatmeter – a 101 employee customer intelligence company – for an undisclosed price. Chatmeter will continue operating normally until the first quarter of next year, when it will merge with Alchemer. The deal closed last Friday.

Based on the deal, Alchemer expects to expand its customer base by 35%, according to spokeswoman Michelle Baum.

It's unclear how many Chatmeter employees will be retained when the companies integrate. Until the year's end, Chatmeter will continue operating as normal and Alchemer “wants to take time to get to know the business, the people, and the culture before considering any changes,” Baum said.

Formerly called [SurveyGizmo](#), Alchemer rebranded in 2020 after over a decade in business. The company was founded in 2006.

[KKR](#), the global investment and private equity firm, became Alchemer's majority investor in 2022.

“Chatmeter’s focus on actionable customer insights aligns with Alchemer’s vision of empowering organizations to create meaningful outcomes through feedback,” said John Park, Alchemer chairman and partner at KKR, in a release.

Alchemer specializes in surveys and in-app prompts on its customer experience platform, which the company calls direct feedback. Indirect feedback is more Chatmeter’s forte, which Alchemer’s customers will now be able to use and learn more about customer responses to their products. Alchemer’s customer feedback technology is used by over 11,000 organizations.

“Indirect feedback, like a Google review or Instagram story, is an authentic and powerful signal of how customers feel, and Chatmeter is the gold standard for marketing and operations teams that want to collect, understand and act on these insights,” Martin Mrugal, Alchemer’s CEO said in a release. “By combining Chatmeter’s reputation insights with Alchemer’s ability to collect direct feedback and connect data with integrations, businesses gain unmatched clarity into customer insights, fueling better customer experiences and measurable growth.”

The sale process was managed by Lincoln International, which served as the lead financial advisor, and Weil, as the legal advisers to Chatmeter. Dechert served as the legal adviser to Alchemer.

“This marks a defining milestone for Chatmeter,” said John Mazur, CEO of Chatmeter. “Our mission has always been to help brands understand and act on the voice of their customers. Now, with Alchemer, we can unify every signal into a single source of truth – giving companies the clarity and speed to innovate, strengthen relationships, and grow with confidence.”

Mrugal will continue leading the company but Mazur’s role moving forward is uncertain, Baum said, adding that Mrugal “will collaborate with John on the best role to utilize his leadership and strengths.”



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SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 | 7:36:16 AM

BizWest names 40 Under Forty Class of 2025

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By BizWest Staff

BizWest has named the 40 Under Forty Class of 2025, honoring emerging leaders who are shaping the future of the Boulder Valley and Northern Colorado.

To qualify as a 40 Under Forty recipient, honorees must be younger than 40 years of age as of Oct. 7, 2025, not have been a previous 40 Under Forty honoree, have achieved a leadership role at his or her organization, have had an impact on, as well as maintained, leadership in his or her organization, live or work in Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer or Weld counties, have received professional recognition for significant achievements, and have worked to help others through community service and charitable giving.

Honorees will be celebrated during a ceremony Oct. 8 at The Grainhouse, 1781-B RainDance Drive in Windsor.

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Honorees for 2025 include:

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- **Whitney Allison**, Bike Sports.
- **Michelle Amacker**, AFC Urgent Care.
- **Gii Astorga**, Greeley Downtown Development Authority.
- **Mitchell Benner**, The Group Inc./Shattered Darkness Podcast.
- **Cody Bird**, Town of Wellington.
- **Drew Britton**, Alpine Bank.
- **Heidi Burgard**, FNBO.
- **Diana Bustillos**, Latino Chamber of Commerce.
- **Donald Cecil**, City of Loveland.
- **Whitney Coulter**, Fischer, Brown, Bartlett, Larsen & Irby PC.
- **Sarah Crosthwaite**, Town of Johnstown.
- **Nicholas DeBruyne**, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti LLP.
- **Tony DeMario**, Heath Steel.
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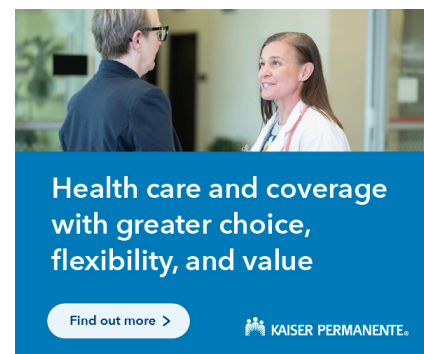
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8 OCT	Boulder Valley and NoCo 40 Under Forty Celebration
10 OCT	Flood and Peterson Annual Symposium

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- **Anna Ivanova Bissell**, Open Path Investments.
- **Arnold Jakobsen**, Telos Creative.
- **Katie Johnson**, Be the Gift.
- **Connor Koval**, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti LLP.
- **Zach Larrick**, Highcraft Builders.
- **Laura Malpica**, Latino Chamber of Commerce.
- **Erica McCary**, Goodlight Creative.
- **Aaron McUmbert**, Northrop Grumman.
- **Marchel Morningstar**, Consolidated Resource and L&L Fabrication.
- **Benjamin Reiter**, City of Loveland.
- **Izabella Ruscitti**, Berg Hill Greenleaf Ruscitti LLP.
- **Garrett Scallon**, The Water Valley Co.
- **Richard Self**, Real Capital Solutions.
- **Chris Senesi**, HDR.
- **Jill Simonds**, Savvy Strategic Partners.
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- **Mary Timby**.
- **Evan Wendlandt**, Town of Windsor Economic Development.
- **Vanessa Zarate**, City of Louisville.



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Energy

Xcel Energy agrees to settle Marshall Fire litigation for \$640 million



Image: Don Ireland

Burnt homes are seen in Louisville near Larkspur Court, off Via Appia Way, following the Dec. 30, 2021, Marshall Fire.

DON IRELAND | SPECIAL TO DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL



By [Jackson Guilfoil](#) – Reporter, Denver Business Journal
Sep 24, 2025 **Updated** Sep 24, 2025 2:08pm MDT

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On the eve of a jury trial over liability for one of the most destructive wildfires in Colorado history, Xcel Energy has agreed to settle [lawsuits accusing the company of igniting the blaze](#).

Xcel Energy Inc. said it expects to pay roughly \$640 million over the [Marshall Fire](#) without admitting wrongdoing in the late 2021 inferno that killed two, razed over 1,000 homes and scorched 6,000 acres in Boulder County.

The settlement has been reached in principle over all claims by "insurers, the public entity plaintiffs, and individual plaintiffs, the power company said just after noon Wednesday.

About \$350 million of that payout will be funded by its insurance coverage and not from its customers, the company said. The settlement are subject to finalization and plaintiffs opting into it.

“Despite our conviction that PSCo equipment did not cause the Marshall Fire or plaintiffs’ damages, we have always been open to a resolution that properly accounts for the strong defenses we have to these claims. In resolving all liability from the claims, this settlement reinforces our longstanding commitment to supporting the communities we serve,” said Bob Frenzel, chairman, president and CEO of Minneapolis-based Xcel Energy Inc., in a release. “We recognize that the fire and its aftermath have been difficult and painful for many, and we hope that our and the telecom defendants’ contributions in today’s settlement can bring some closure for the community.”

The Marshall Fire erupted near the foothills south of Boulder on the morning of Dec. 30, 2021, racing east in high winds, cross U.S. Highway 36 and burning down suburban neighborhoods on the west sides of Superior and Louisville.

The wildfire broke out on a day with sustained wind over 50 miles per hour that frequently gusted well over 75 miles per hour, quickly spreading the flames.



Remains of Element Hotel in Superior following the Marshall Fire.

DON IRELAND | SPECIAL TO DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

A trial encompassing claims by dozens of property owners and insurance companies was scheduled to start jury selection Thursday.

Estimates of potential damages in the case from Xcel Energy's [U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission](#) filings [exceeded \\$2 billion](#) in the worst-case scenario where it lost in court. The total legal risk range identified by the company stretched from \$185 million to \$2.4 billion.

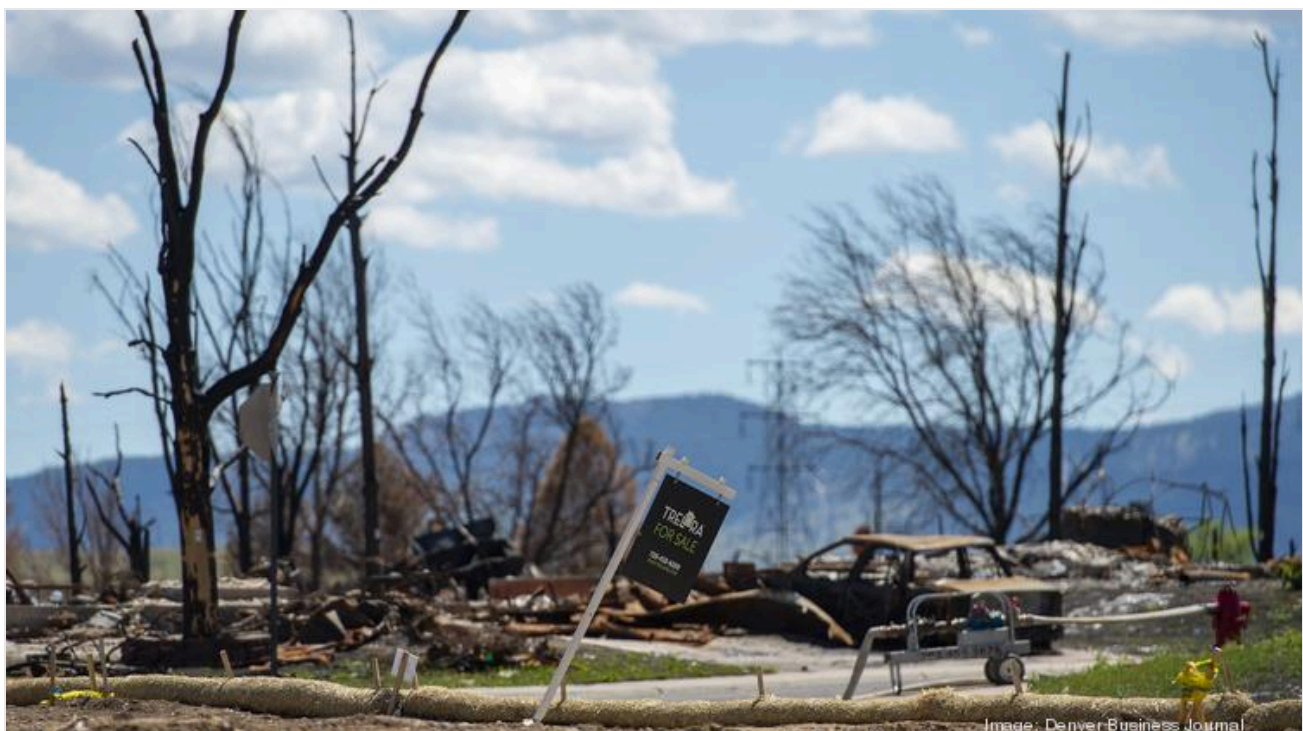
That lawsuit combined over 300 individual cases filed by over 4,000 plaintiffs, which included insurers, individual plaintiffs and public entities. They mostly accused Xcel of neglecting to appropriately maintain its power lines near

Marshall Mesa and ensure they were safe in a notoriously gusty area; the lawsuits also criticized Xcel for failing to cut power coursing through the transmission lines ahead of winds that were forecast to be severe.

The telecommunication defendants Qwest Corp. and Teleport Communications America, LLC will contribute to the settlement, according to Xcel.

In 2023, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office [issued a report identifying two likely sources of the fire](#): sparks from a line connected to an Xcel power pole and a trash fire that was thought to have been extinguished in the nearby property belonging to the Twelve Tribes religious sect.

Xcel Energy disputed the report's conclusion.



A for sale sign marks a cleaned property in the Sagamore neighborhood as crews work on clean up from the Marshall Fire on May 25, 2022, in Superior.

SETH MCCONNELL | DENVER BUSINESS JOURNAL

A nearby smoldering underground coal seam was eyed as a possible source for the fire, too. Investigators with the Boulder County Sheriff's Office did not find evidence the seam caused the fire but couldn't rule it out entirely.

Minneapolis-based Target Corp. [sued over the Marshall Fire](#). It accused Xcel and Qwest – a Colorado operating business of Lumen (NYSE: LUMN) – of helping cause the fire via an unmoored telecommunications line on an Xcel power pole. The unmoored line allegedly hit and untethered another line owned by Teleport Communications, ultimately resulting in electricity arcing out into the dry brush during a severe windstorm featuring 75-mile-per-hour gusts the morning of Dec. 31, 2021.

An Xcel spokesperson did not respond to questions about how much the telecommunications companies will pay in the settlement or about how Target is included in the settlement agreement.

The arcing was captured on video by a police surveillance camera at a hiking trailhead parking lot. On the footage, the Marshall Fire's first flames are visible over 110 feet from the Xcel power pole, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office report said.

The Marshall Fire immolated suburbs in Superior and Louisville. Target's Superior store was heavily damaged by flames and smoke. For about half of 2022, the store was closed for repairs.

Xcel Energy is Colorado's largest power utility. It supplies about 1.6 million households and businesses.

THE LIST

The 29 biggest aerospace companies in the Denver-area

Number of full-time-equivalent employees in the Denver area

LOCAL NEWS

New King Soopers could be a 'top' sales tax generator for Louisville

Groundbreaking ceremony for the new King Soopers location took place this month



Louisville Mayor Chris Leh attends a Sept. 12 groundbreaking ceremony for the new King Soopers location at 1171 W. Dillon Road. The City Council issued King Soopers an incentive deal that includes a \$15 million tax rebate. (City of Louisville/Courtesy photo)



By **JULIA KING** | jking@prariemountainmedia.com

PUBLISHED: September 26, 2025 at 8:31 AM MDT

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A new King Soopers location in Louisville saw a groundbreaking ceremony this month, and the store — slated to open in summer 2026 — is expected to be “one of the top sales-tax-generating entities in the city,” according to city staff.

Current projections show Louisville could pocket around \$22 million in sales tax revenue through the first 12 years of operation, even after the City Council issued King Soopers an incentive deal that includes a \$15 million tax rebate.

“There has been a desire for an additional grocer in the area for many years,” said Vanessa Zarate, economic vitality manager for the city. “King Soopers has also been trying to enter the market in this area for multiple years.”

The rebate agreement will end at whichever component comes first, the \$15 million total rebate or the end of a 12-year period where the business is in operation.

The Louisville City Council in August 2024 agreed to rebate 75% of new sales tax generated from the King Soopers. The total sales tax rate for the city is 3.775%, but the project is only eligible to receive a rebate of the city's 3% general sales tax. The city will keep the entirety of the 0.775% sales tax generated for parks and open space, historic preservation and the Louisville

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According to city staff projections in 2024, which Zarate said are still accurate, Louisville is projected to keep nearly \$1 million in sales tax revenue from the King Soopers location during its first year of operation. That number would continue to increase to more than \$3 million per year once the rebate agreement concludes, according to the 2024 city staff document. The city will also receive 15 cents from bags sold at this new location as part of the 25 cent bag tax, to be used by the city's Sustainability Division to implement programming, the document says.

A "kickoff celebration" occurred this month, according to a news release, to mark the redevelopment for the upcoming 122,000-square-foot King Soopers Marketplace location at 1171 W. Dillon Road — a former Lowe's site that has sat vacant for three years.

The store will offer features including a Murray's Cheese section and a Starbucks. Shoppers will also have access to pickup and delivery services, a drive-thru pharmacy and a new fuel center with five pumps and eight EV chargers, according to the news release.

Because the location has been vacant for over a year, the project is eligible for a vacancy bonus from the city, at \$1 per square foot, the city staff document says. That vacancy bonus will provide an additional incentive of \$100,000 to the project.

By its 12th year of operation, the King Soopers location is projected to see nearly \$100 million in gross retail sales, per year.

The city staff document from 2024 says the King Soopers Marketplace could be a "new anchor establishment on the McCaslin Corridor and for the west side of Louisville."

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King Soopers is not planning to close its South Boulder Road location, and “there is a thought that this new location could relieve some of the burden” on that location, the city staff document adds.

The new site represents a \$23.6 million investment and is part of King Soopers’ “long-term growth strategy,” according to the news release.

Louisville spokesperson Grace Johnson said there are some “minor roadway improvements” planned for Dillon Road on the west side of McCaslin Boulevard as part of the King Soopers project. If there are traffic impacts for these improvements, the city will communicate those through its normal channels, including the “Construction, Closure, (and) Traffic Impacts email list, our website and social media,” Johnson said.

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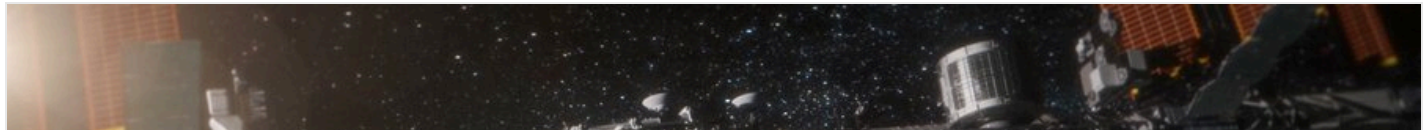
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PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER



Image: Sierra Space

A rendering of the Dream Chaser spaceplane, just right of center, made by Louisville-based Sierra Space, at the International Space Station.

SIERRA SPACE



By [Greg Avery](#) – Managing Editor, Denver Business Journal
Sep 27, 2025

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Story Highlights

- NASA backs off from Sierra Space's Dream Chaser ISS cargo missions.
- Dream Chaser's first flight delayed to 2026, won't dock at ISS.
- Sierra Space shifts focus towards defense and military applications.

A Denver-area company is no longer being relied on by NASA for future cargo flights to the International Space Station, and the agency is minimizing its future support for the Colorado-built spacecraft's development.

NASA and
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times, w

PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER

only after succeeding in a much-delayed demonstration that will take place over a year from now.

The Dream Chaser has been at NASA test facilities and was expected to launch and then dock with the ISS on its debut flight this year.

On Thursday, those plans were publicly changed to cancel ISS docking during that first flight and eliminate the minimum number of missions NASA will use the spacecraft.

“After a thorough evaluation, NASA and Sierra Space have mutually agreed to modify the contract as the company determined Dream Chaser development is

best served by a free flight demonstration, targeted in late 2026,” NASA said in an announcement posted online.

“NASA will provide minimal support through the remainder of the development and the flight demonstration,” the statement said. “As part of the modification, NASA is no longer obligated for a specific number of resupply missions; however, the agency may order Dream Chaser resupply flights to the space station from Sierra Space following a successful free flight as part of its current contract.”

Dream Chaser is designed to launch atop a rocket and then return from orbit flying autonomously to a runway, landing like a smaller version of NASA’s former space shuttles. The company has said it would also develop a piloted version of Dream Chaser and use it to fly people to the commercial Orbital Reef space stations that Sierra Space is developing in partnership with Jeff Bezos’ Blue Origin.

Under the new contract with NASA, Sierra Space will keep space agency officials in the loop on the status of the Dream Chaser program and the space station’s cargo needs.

PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER

The test flight is slated for late 2026, in part to time it for launch vehicle availability, Sierra Space said. The company expects the demonstration mission to prove Dream Chaser’s technology and deliver critical data to NASA, it said.

“This transition provides unique capabilities to meet the needs of diverse mission profiles, including emerging and existential threats and national security priorities that align with our acceleration into the Defense Tech market,” said Fatih Ozmen, executive chair at Sierra Space, in the company’s statement. “Together with NASA, we are seeking to preserve the exceptional potential of Dream Chaser as a national asset, ensuring its readiness for the next era of space innovation.”



Rendering of Sierra Nevada Corp. Space Systems Dream Chaser space plane and cargo module attached to the International Space Station.

PROVIDED BY SIERRA NEVADA CORP.

The company has contracted Centennial-based rocket giant United Launch Alliance Vulcan r

PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER

NASA, as part of a program encouraging private sector spacecraft development, had originally contracted the Dream Chaser in 2016 and targeted 2019 for the start of its ISS cargo missions. The space agency had already put more than \$300 million behind Dream Chaser by the time the contract to fly ISS cargo missions was first awarded.

It's not clear how much public money has gone into Dream Chaser since then.

Delays in the development of the autonomous, winged spacecraft pushed back its debut mission by several years.



Sierra Space's Tenacity DC 101, the first Dream Chaser spacecraft built at the company's Louisville headquarters, pictured Oct. 30, 2023. The autonomous space plane, an uncrewed cargo hauler, has its wings folded up, which allows it to fit inside the fairing of the rocket used to launch it into orbit.

GREG AVERY

Elon Musk
of North
company

PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER

Now, NASA is scheduled to de-orbit the ISS in 2030, raising questions about how many cargo resupply flights would be available for Dream Chaser in the following three years if it successfully proves capable in a late 2026 demonstration.

“Development of new space transportation systems is difficult and can take longer than what’s originally planned. The ability to perform a flight demonstration can be a key enabler in a spacecraft’s development and readiness, as well as offering greater flexibility for NASA and Sierra Space,” said Dana Weigel, manager of NASA’s International Space Station Program.

Sierra Space completed building the first Dream Chaser, named Tenacity, nearly two years ago. The spacecraft was sent to NASA's Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility in Ohio for extensive tests before launch, which, at that time, was expected by the end of 2024.



In a file image of the first center.

GREG AVE

PREPARING STAND OUT STUDENTS FOR CAREER

But the company has grown quiet about Dream Chaser's progress in recent months. It has laid off dozens of staff members since Tenacity's completion.

Tom Vice, the CEO who was brought on to build the business into an operational spaceflight company, [resigned in January](#).

In recent months, Sierra Space, a company spun off from defense contractor Sierra Nevada Corp., has emphasized a new focus on building satellites for the U.S. military and has been increasingly focused on defense applications for its space technologies, including the Dream Chaser.

T H E L I S T

THINGS TO DO

Louisville calls for community participation in creating new parks and rec plans

A public survey was sent out to Louisville residents in late September, and an open house will be held on Oct. 29 to discuss the PROS department's new guidebook



The Louisville Municipal building in September. (Photo by Cliff Grassmick/Staff Photographer)



By **JULIA KING** | jking@prariemountainmedia.com

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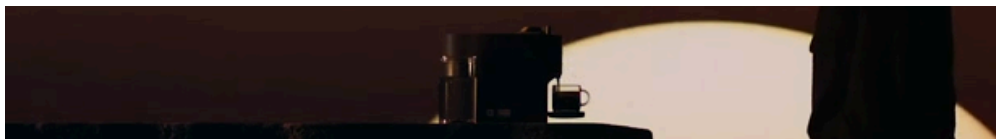
A public survey and open house in October will allow Louisville community members to weigh in on new plans that will guide the Parks, Recreation & Open Space Department for the next 10 years.

[An announcement on the city of Louisville's website](#) says a new PROS department guidebook will include two related plans: The Long-Range Plan for parks, open spaces, the Louisville Recreation & Senior Center, and Coal Creek Golf Course; and the Trails Master Plan for trails and trail connections. Together, those plans will replace the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan, last updated in 2012, according to the city's website; create the city's first Trails Master Plan, as identified by the City Charter; complement previous plans, including the City Comprehensive Plan; and "inform future studies, plans, and priorities."

All households in Louisville were sent a postcard last week inviting them to participate in a survey, the city's announcement says, and residents should have started receiving the postcards on Saturday. The city is planning to launch an open-link survey Oct. 9, available to anyone interested, including those who do not live in Louisville but visit, work or spend time in the city. Open-link responses will be analyzed separately from the statistically valid sample, the announcement adds, but "they will still provide valuable feedback" to guide the city's planning.

Responses are confidential and collected by independent research firm RRC Associates. Louisville residents who don't receive a postcard can email support@rrcassociates.com.





Public discussion with staff and consultants will also be facilitated at an open house from 12:30 to 2 p.m. or 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 29 at the Louisville Recreation & Senior Center, at 900 W. Via Appia Way.

The city is encouraging community members to address the following topics through the survey and at the open house: trails and trail connections; pickleball and tennis courts; mowing and land management; golf course facilities; preschool and youth programs; playgrounds and park shelters; outdoor recreation amenities; native plants and noxious weeds; recreation and senior programs; the Memory Square Outdoor Pool; education and volunteer opportunities; dog parks; sports fields; golf course maintenance; public land acquisition; youth and adult sports; pools and aquatics amenities; sustainable practices; “or anything else PROS related.”

The process to create the parks and recreation plans will happen in phases and is expected to be finalized and adopted by winter 2026.

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Reimagining Main Street, Louisville sets the stage for a downtown makeover

Construction on Main Street is expected to begin in 2026 for the first phase of a yearslong plan



A mural painted on Main Street. The first phase of Louisville's Downtown Vision plan is expected to add to the area with new greenery and updated street crossings, among other potential changes. (Cliff Grassmick/Staff Photographer)



By **JULIA KING** | jking@prariemountainmedia.com

PUBLISHED: October 1, 2025 at 8:31 AM MDT

Louisville is preparing to give its historic downtown a new look after the urban renewal authority in the city signed off on a conceptual design in September for the first phase of a yearslong plan.

Specifically, that first phase will reimagine the Steinbaugh Pavilion area and key stretches of Main and Front Streets.

Louisville leadership decided to pursue the downtown revamp in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and the devastating Marshall Fire in 2021, both of which impacted businesses in the heart of the city, said Vanessa Zarate, Louisville's economic vitality manager.

"Most businesses are still feeling those effects, just from disruption of services, the destruction of customers to their spaces. Any disaster has a pretty significant impact on community and the business community," Zarate said.



In part, the redesign may create a plaza area around the Steinbaugh Pavilion by converting nearby parking spaces, while a stretch of Front Street between Spruce and Walnut streets could be rebuilt without curbs, creating a more pedestrian-friendly corridor. The aim is to create a secondary gathering place off Main Street, according to Louisville's [Downtown Vision Plan](#) that will guide development for years to come, although the plan says the curbless streets will not become pedestrian only.

Other projects in the first phase of the vision plan include a wayfinding program, an [advisory bike lane](#) on Front Street that will link South Street to the Coal Creek Trail, and streetscape upgrades on Main Street, with new trees, landscaping and street crossings. ("Wayfinding" is a term for a system of signs designed to help residents and visitors navigate the city.)

Construction on Main Street, Front Street and the Steinbaugh Pavilion area could begin in 2026.

"Residents want something very unique, so we're trying to do things a little different," said Jordan Jefferies, a Louisville assistant city engineer. "We're going to be adding a lot of trees. We're going to add some greenery and make the downtown feel a little bit more natural, create gathering spaces, encourage people to gather downtown. It's going to be a little bit more pedestrian friendly."



George and Colleen Brin have breakfast with their granddaughter Ruby Berk

The cost for the first phase of projects is expected to fall somewhere around \$9 million, funded by the urban renewal authority — called the Louisville Revitalization Commission — which is bonding against its future revenue for the project, according to Zarate.

The long game

[The Front & Center Project](#) is the city's name for the implementation of the Downtown Vision Plan, which outlines three phases. The first phase, already funded, focuses on “short-term” ambitions.

Future phases could reshape much more of downtown, though their funding sources remain uncertain. A second phase, projected to cost up to \$7 million, would add upgrades to Walnut and Spruce streets, a redesign of Pine Street, new alleyway “activations” and a sculpture walk devoted to local history, according to the vision plan document.

A third phase, roughly estimated to cost in the range of \$13 million to \$18 million, envisions curbless blocks of Main Street, new plazas at City Hall and the History Museum, and additional streetscape changes.

The plan notes that grants, partnerships and the city's Capital Improvement Projects fund are possible sources of funding. Funding connected to the Louisville Revitalization Commission won't be an option for phases two and three of the plan, because the commission will sunset in 2032, Zarate said.

The Downtown Vision Plan is designed to be flexible, and not every element might be realized.

“The vision plan is not an all-or-nothing undertaking,” the finalized plan notes. “Each project is evaluated and selected based on its individual benefits.”

History at the core

Through all the changes that do happen, Jefferies said, Louisville's history will remain visible. New features such as art and signs could give a nod to the city's history, including its coal mining roots that date back [more than a](#)



The statue in honor of John Breaux, the late "Angel of Louisville" who was well-known in eastern Boulder County for picking up trash in the area — and for his smile. (Cliff Grassmick/Staff Photographer)

Designs will give “a nod to the historical features of Louisville,” Jefferies said. While nothing is set in stone, he envisions using materials like timber and steel connectors, reminiscent of “an old mining shack or a Western building.”

“The whole Steinbaugh Plaza area is just going to be a really cool event space,” Jefferies said. “Louisville is already known for having great events, and I think this is just going to take things to the next level.”

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