

# Construction, Design & Engineering



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## Unico unveils plans for Platte Street Plaza

Unico Properties LLC, a subsidiary of Unico Investment Group LLC, announced plans for Platte Street Plaza. The proposed vision will transform the underutilized passageway at the base of the Highland Bridge on Denver's Platte Street into a dynamic public plaza designed as a gathering space and pedestrian/bicycle thoroughfare from Highland to Union Station. Platte Street Plaza is a public-private partnership between the city of Denver and Unico, with the \$1.7 million in equity required for the project furnished by Unico.

"Our vision for Platte Street Plaza will fill a gap in the current streetscape, creating a central community gathering place for the neighborhood," said Unico Vice President and Regional Director Austin Kane. "We are working closely with the city of Denver to offer a parklike setting at the heart of Platte Street. Not only is this a boon to residents of and visitors to Denver, the plaza will also entice people to stop and explore the surrounding

dining, retail and entertainment options in the area."

Located between The Circa Building and historic Zang Building, Platte Street Plaza will function as an urban park with trees, shade, seating and free Wi-Fi. The plaza's design promotes connection and relaxation, while keeping safety top of mind with clear sightlines and additional lighting incorporated throughout the area.

Platte Street Plaza will be equipped with power to host community and civic activities – from neighborhood meetings and farmers' markets to pop-up events and more. To ensure the plaza remains an enduring asset in the community, Unico has committed to overseeing its ongoing maintenance.

"Recognizing how busy this corridor is, we're committed to maintaining clear pathways for both pedestrians and cyclists," added Kane. "We know construction can be a hassle, but we assure you that the final plaza will be worth it. We're building

this on behalf of the community and hope everyone feels welcome to enjoy it once complete."

The plans for Platte Street Plaza align with Denver Parks & Recreation and the Downtown Denver Partnership's master plan for downtown Denver's outdoor spaces, The Outdoor Downtown. The 20-year plan focuses on enhancing quality of life in the downtown area through investment in parks and public spaces.

It also aligns with the Downtown Denver Partnership's Urban Forest Initiative, which aims to create a healthy tree canopy throughout downtown Denver to benefit the community and local businesses. According to DDP's website, downtown Denver's current tree canopy is 4%, with plans to increase it to 10%.

Additional partners on Platte Street Plaza include landscape architect Dig Studio and general contractor Swinerton. ▲

## Bryan Construction completes Chinook Trail Middle School

Bryan Construction Co. announced the completion of a school project in Academy School District 20, which serves north Colorado Springs and El Paso County. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies took place at Chinook Trail Middle School in preparation for the new school year. School administrators, faculty, parents and students attended the event, along with representatives from Bryan Construction, MOA Architecture and RTA Architecture.

"Academy School District 20 is a leading district in the state of Colorado," said Doug Woody, Bryan Construction project executive. "We have enjoyed working with

them to construct a campus which exceeds the standard of excellence in education for Colorado Springs residents."

Chinook Trail Middle School is a new school that broke ground in March 2018. The \$41 million, 125,000-square-foot campus has been constructed to educate 1,000 students using high-performance classrooms as well as athletic facilities including tennis, football and softball. The new school incorporates sustainability and energy-efficiency design and construction standards to ensure a healthy learning environment for the students, as well as long-term energy savings. ▲



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## Vertex Builders building fourth project for SimonMed Imaging

Vertex Builders is underway with the construction of a fourth project for SimonMed Imaging, a low-cost medical imaging company with locations across the nation. The newest project by Vertex is located in Littleton and contains MRI, CT and X-Ray imaging services. The project is shelled space in an existing building and will be completed in September.

"It's once again a pleasure to work with SimonMed Imaging and help them to fulfill their space requirements for their growing company," said Brady McQuinn of Vertex Builders. "One of our areas of expertise is in the health care industry, and we understand the unique needs of providers such as SimonMed." ▲

## 50Fifty DTC Offices: Clutch designs for Fios Capital, Galena Foundation

Denver-based Fios Capital and Galena Foundation recently opened adjacent offices on the seventh floor of 50Fifty DTC. The offices are distinctive but adjoined – each driven by unique objectives, design preferences, functional requirements and organizational structures. Clutch Design Studio designed the spaces.

Behind separate entrances and private office environments, a shared conference and break room area connects the two, allowing both companies to benefit from heightened amenities without allocating disproportionate space to a limited set of functions.

Having functioned as a remote staff for five-plus years, Fios Capital decided to invest in a small office where associates

could connect, meet with clients and advance.

The goal was to create a sophisticated environment that allowed for limited collaboration while protecting the privacy of each employee and her work. In addition, the office needed to set the tone for a high-caliber client experience without requiring a receptionist.

To allow audio privacy between offices, Fios Capital is equipped with a sophisticated sound masking system. Visual privacy is provided by a three-band vinyl film that wraps the interior glass walls, allowing complete privacy at the seated level and limited privacy when standing.

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## Northeast Denver Housing Center: Moline at Stapleton affordable apts. complete

Developed by Northeast Denver Housing Center, designed by Cuningham Group and built by Palace Construction, the Moline at Stapleton apartments will provide a home for 180 families earning up to 60% of Denver's area median income and be distributed among one-, two- and three-bedroom units. Project amenities include multiple community spaces, bike storage, a children's play area, 206 parking spaces, and easy access to transportation, shopping and health care.

"Placing housing units in communities of opportunity where you find good transportation access, shopping, jobs and schools is key for the long-term well-being of residents and their dependents, said Getabecha "Gete" Mekonnen, executive director NDHC.

The project is among the first completed new construction projects to receive funding from Denver's Affordable Housing Fund.

"The process of delivering affordable homes throughout Denver is more important than ever, and requires the commit-

ment and support of numerous entities," said Tasha Jones, senior director of marketing and community relations for Brookfield Properties' mixed-use division. Brookfield Properties (formerly Forest City) donated the land and financial support. "We are working with local builders and the city of Denver to continue our commitment to build affordable homes in the Stapleton community, delivering a diverse mix of affordable housing options in one of Denver's largest master-planned redevelopments."

The landscape is another carefully considered amenity, which comes together to create three distinct environments that focus on the ideas of rest, gather and play. Rest promotes rejuvenation and relaxation by connecting the fitness and yoga studio with an outdoor zen space. Gather has a focus on bringing people together around a community demo kitchen, lounge and outdoor grill area. Play provides an interactive landscape with a playground structure to encourage use by all ages.



The Unfound Door

Moline at Stapleton will provide affordable housing for 180 families.

"The development is intended to address the isolation of affordable housing and instead foster connectivity with the community through massing and scale, along with pedestrian walkways," said Erik Okland, principal of Cuningham

Group. "The groups of units in the development, nurturing strong ties between neighbors and making a more welcoming environment for residents."

Other public finance partners include the Colorado Housing

and Finance Authority, First-Bank, RBC Capital and the state of Colorado. Denver Economic Development & Opportunity provided \$2.6 million in gap financing from the housing fund for the \$36 million project.▲

## DLR

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two-story central gathering spot for students, faculty, staff and industry partners dubbed the Learning Commons. This open space features technology stations, huddle rooms and a coffee bar, encouraging campus users to mingle and interact.

"DLR Group's design is modern industrial, with a mix of polished concrete, painted steel columns, beams and joists, and wood to create a warm and inviting space where students, community members, and business partners can test ideas and solutions. Glass provides transparency and adds to the energy

and excitement of what's happening inside the facility," said DLR Group Principal Bob Binder, AIA. "All interior spaces are flexible, mobile, and expandable to respond to changes in the marketplace and can evolve as the local and regional economy shifts."

Students choose from in-demand career and academic pathways in technology, business and health, and they can complete their selected pathway through a hybrid of in-person labs, classes and online coursework. Students can embark on general transfer pathways to four-year institutions within those fields and complete stackable certificates in areas like accounting clerk,



DLR Group

Sturm Collaboration Campus

certified nursing assistant and a variety of IT certifications.

The campus was funded in part by a private gift of up to \$10 million from the

Sturm Family Foundation, the largest in the history of the 13-institution Colorado Community College System. A future phase two of develop-

ment includes a second building of similar size and 300 additional parking spots. JHL Constructors served as the design-build partner. ▲

## 50Fifty

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The design allows Fios Capital to maintain a clean office aesthetic.

Galena Foundation thrives on employee interaction, and wanted to craft a warm, open-door environment that promoted efficiency while allowing ample opportunities for communication.

The new office marks an expansion, and includes traces of its former location (fur-

nishings, key features) while enhancing functionality and showcasing the personal interests and background of their founder, namely mining, engineering and geology.

Galena Foundation's founder has deep roots in mining, engineering and geology. He presented Clutch with a U.S. Geological Survey topographic map of the Front Range that served as a starting point for the design.

The USGS map was abstract-

ed to create a graphic metal screen that lines the interior glass walls and front desk. To create the seamless screen detail, structural framing was custom engineered with cold-formed steel studs. Large steel panels were cut off site, welded on site, then primed and painted in place. No mechanical fasteners are visible; the screen appears to float and casts shadows on the walls behind.

To capitalize on the building's glass facade and interior

light wells, both interior and exterior office walls are largely glass, flooding the space with soft, natural light.

The shared central area was designed to support both offices – providing additional conference and break room amenities – while maintaining separation between the two.

The program called for a high-caliber conference room across from a modern, casual break room. Clutch employed a custom vinyl screen to allow

shared light between the two spaces while minimizing distraction during meetings.

Both offices include a clerestory on interior walls to allow light sharing throughout the space.

The offices are separated by latching pivot doors that allow each office to be locked off from the shared space.

Soft neutral tones line the shared space, creating a bridge between largely dissimilar office environments. ▲