

# Northern Colorado BUSINESS REPORT

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## NCBR ARTICLE

## MARKETPLACE

### PODCASTS

Jeff Nuttall



Kristen Tatti

### DEPARTMENTS

Briefcase  
Corrections  
Economic Indicators  
Events  
ExecStyle  
Leads/Public Records  
Letters  
On the Job  
Stocks  
The Edge  
Time Out

### CALENDAR

« Jan. 2010 »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

- 1/6/2010 - Envision Professional Development
- 1/9/2010 - Comic fun & book signing
- 1/14/2010 - Economic Forecast

Submit an event  
Register for an NCBR Event

### WEATHER

Fort Collins, CO  
-6°F  
Fair  
Greeley, CO  
0°F  
Fair



### NCBR Poll

A nice holiday bonus  
this year would be?

\$\$\$

## Green development set for north Fort Collins

By staff

April 24, 2009 --

FORT COLLINS - Another big North College Avenue development is about to get under way, this time bringing green-powered residential and commercial growth to an area of Fort Collins targeted for blight reduction and economic stimulation.

Union Place, a 10-acre site about a block west of College and south of Willox Lane, will be the second major development in the North College Urban Renewal Area. North College Marketplace, a 20-acre King Soopers-anchored commercial development near the northeast intersection of College and Willox, is expected to open in August 2010.

Union Place is expected to break ground this summer and be ready for its first new residents by the end of 2010, according to city URA planner Christina Vincent.

Vincent said the mixed-use development will include 75 housing units covering the gamut of single-family residential, condominiums, loft apartments above streetside commercial properties and even Habitat for Humanity pads, with 30 percent of the homes set aside as affordable housing units.

There will also be 19,000 square feet of commercial space within the site plan, Vincent said, and every unit within the project will be heated and cooled with geothermal energy brought up from 300 feet below the surface.

"The entire site will be geothermal," she said. "The need for natural gas will be practically nonexistent."

### LEED certified

Vincent said the project has numerous green elements in addition to the thermal energy component, including LEED certification for all of the structures and even a section with houses recycled from another part of Fort Collins and moved into the development. Local developer Mike Jensen plans to relocate 10 homes on the city's south side into the project, Vincent said.

"This is just the project we've been waiting for in terms of the priorities of the URA," she said, noting that Union Place will use renewable resources, provide affordable housing, be a destination work and living site for the area and add needed infrastructure to a part of the city that's been underdeveloped for decades while other sections of Fort Collins have been growing rapidly.

The \$27 million project will receive about \$2.2 million in tax-increment financing to help build infrastructure improvements, including a north entrance to Mason Street that will eventually connect with the Mason Corridor transit project that now has its northern end at Cherry Street.

- Gifts
- Time off
- Holiday party
- Still employed next

year

[Results](#) | [More polls](#)**SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS**

Blueprints  
 Book of Lists  
 BOOMERS: A Guide to  
 Life after 50  
 Commercial Real Estate  
 Source Book  
 Event Planning Guide  
 Giving Guide  
 Links Golf Guide  
 Mercury 100  
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Union Place is being developed by Boulder developer Donna Merten, owner of Merten Inc. Merten said the guiding principle for the project is to demonstrate sustainability. "It's a spotlight for how communities can look with all these sustainable elements," she said. "The goal is to show there are other alternatives to building a standard development and there are many sustainable alternatives available."

Brad Duckham, the company's marketing manager, said the use of geothermal is one big sustainable feature of Union Place. By drilling down to about 300 feet, air naturally cooled to between 52 and 55 degrees is delivered to buildings that only have to provide a few more degrees to be comfortable in the winter. And the geothermal acts as a heat sink in the summer, Duckham noted, making it easier to cool the structures.

**URA paying off**

Other green features include the virtual elimination of storm water piping by making surfaces more permeable and the use of xeriscape plantings. The southeast corner of the development will be turned into a 2.5-acre detention pond and a park-like feature for the area, Merten said.

"We'll put a path around it and make it a more aesthetic amenity for the community," she said.

Merten said participating in the city's URA development program, with a portion of the taxes generated by the project applied to infrastructure improvements, helped make it possible.

"We wouldn't have been able to accomplish the project without it," she said.

Merten said she's hoping to break ground in late June or early July and get all of the infrastructure improvements complete by the end of 2009. Building construction is expected to begin in early 2010, and Merten said she already has 14 lots presold.

Dean Hoag, owner of RMB Recycling Center and president of the North College Business Association, said Union Place has strong backing from his group. "It's obviously going to help bring development up here, and the green part is pretty neat," he said. "This project is going to be very unique."

Hoag said the city's 2004 URA policy for the North College area, which extends from the Poudre River on the south to the Larimer-Weld Canal on the north, is beginning to bear fruit with North College Marketplace and Union Place.

"We put the URA in place to give (the area) a boost and I think that's helped these projects get started and come to our area," Hoag said.

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