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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT | MARCH 23, 2023 | 2:28:03 PM

Developer proposing 'exciting, challenging and complex' mixed-use project in Boulder



Lucas High

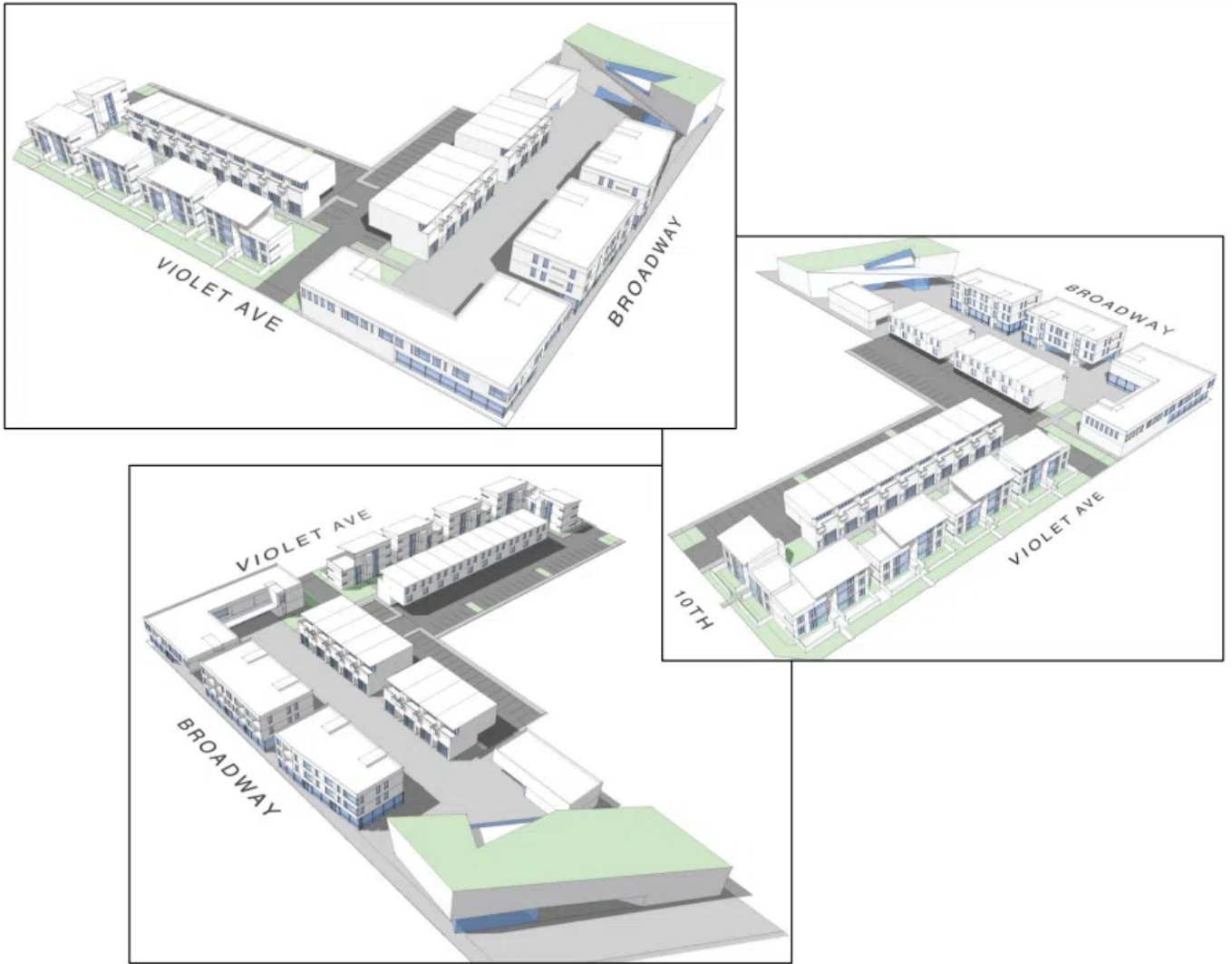


Figure 10: Architectural Sketches of Proposed Project

Plans for the North Boulder Creative Campus call for 17,000 square feet of museum space, 17,500 square feet of storefront commercial space and 72,750 square feet of residential space, split between 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and live/work units that will average about 1085 square feet. Boulder planning documents.

BOULDER — A 100,000-square-foot mixed-use development proposal in North Boulder — which is planned to include housing, retail, light industrial space, art studios and a new home for the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art — is poised to test the flexibility of Boulder’s land-use, zoning and project approvals.

Emerald Development LLC, a venture led by NoBo native Andrew Ghadimi, hopes to build the North Boulder Creative Campus on about two acres at 4401 Broadway.

There’s just one catch: The scope of the ambitious project, and the building uses it anticipates, puts it outside of the bounds established by Boulder land-use codes, used to help Boulder leaders responsibly grow the city over the long term.

In order to shepherd the project, which has apparently received rave reviews from NoBo neighbors and community arts and cultural groups, through the city’s approval process, officials must decide whether to amend the land-use code itself to expand the uses and building sizes allowed, or rezone the specific parcel (an unpopular concept known as spot zoning) where the creative campus is planned. Neither option is without challenges.

“When we embarked on this project, we knew it wouldn’t be easy,” said Trestle Strategy Group founder Danica Powell, who serves as a representative of Emerald.

Plans for the North Boulder Creative Campus call for 17,500 square feet of museum space, 17,500 square feet of storefront commercial space and 72,750 square feet of residential space, split between 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and live/work units that will average about 1085 square feet.

The Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art element, which would be spurred by a land donation from the developer worth about \$2.4 million, would include about 6,500 square feet of gallery space, 4,000 square feet of community areas and a 2,500-square-foot rooftop.

The opening of a new BMoCA flagship operation in Northern Boulder would be a major coup for the neighborhood, which has begun making a name for itself as one of the city’s top art havens.

“As a regional museum, BMoCA has an opportunity to be a resource for local artists, presenting new thought and diverse creative perspectives at the forefront of contemporary art. BMoCA’s mission is to inspire creativity and foster community through contemporary art, and to be a safe and welcoming space for dialogue,” according to a



“A flagship in North Boulder’s Arts District would allow the collaboration with the Art District, North Boulder Library, local artists, and our diverse creative community to provide valuable benefits for the entire city.”



from neighbors concerned about increased traffic or noise, or simply **the presence of people who live in apartments or below-market-rate homes**. Opposition to the North Boulder Creative Campus has, thus far, failed to materialize; quite the opposite seems to be the case.

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Boulder principal planner Chandler Van Schaack said city staff has received an “absolute flood of emails in support of the proposal.”

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| <p>Boulder Planning Board member Laura Kaplan said it will be up to city leaders to determine if the project provides benefit to the community. “We’re asking for the exceptions it is asking for.”</p> <p>Dr. Jim Anderson named president of Larimer County Dental Society</p> <p>August 23, 2023</p> | <p>AGC Biologics adds capacity in Longmont plant, Boulder expansion plans grow</p> <p>AGC Biologics adds capacity in Longmont plant, Boulder expansion plans grow</p> <p>August 23, 2023</p> | <p>Windsor, DD seeks name change, board expansion</p> <p>Windsor, DD seeks name change, board expansion</p> <p>August 23, 2023</p> |
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North Boulder Creative Campus is an interesting, exciting, challenging and complex project,” Planning Board member Sarah Silver said, but getting across the finish line could be an exercise in massaging the city’s at times rigid code and project approvals process into a form that’s flexible enough to accept such a unique proposal.

“What you’re hearing is not that we’re opposed; what you’re hearing is that this is a Rubik’s cube that’s going to take a while for the pieces to come together,” she said.

Editor’s note: This story includes an updated square footage figure for the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art element of the project provided by BMoC. A previous version used a figure provided in city planning documents.