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Developer locks up infill site for high-end self-storage facility

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A local developer who locked up a Denver infill site for a high-end self-storage facility is ready to break ground.

Leetsdale Self Storage should be able to achieve the highest rents in Denver, according to Charles "Chico" LeClaire of Marcus & Millichap's national self-storage group, who is marketing the 885-unit facility for sale at an asking price of \$10 million.

"That's one of the best sites in the city," said Eric Bush, president of Bush Development Inc., which is developing the project. It is located on Leetsdale Drive at East Exposition Avenue between two Public Storage facilities that have the highest rents in Colorado – rents comparable with retail space. Both of the older facilities have been 90 percent leased, considered full for self-storage properties, for years, according to LeClaire.

Monthly rents are projected at \$1.65 per square foot, which equates to \$99 for a 50-sf unit, or \$118.80 for a climate-controlled unit the same size.

The high rents allowed Bush Development to put more money than usual into the building's materials and design, said Bush. "I would be willing to bet this is the most expensive one ever built (in the Denver area)," he said.

All but 27 of the units will be interior, so they won't be subject to huge temperature fluctuations that can damage artwork, furniture and other possessions. Of those units, 20 percent will be climate-controlled.

Bush Development is the last in a series of developers that have tried to develop the property over the years.

The site was targeted for an extended-stay hotel, but the deal fell apart in 2001.

"We thought it was going to be a highly contentious site," said Bush. The two neighborhood organizations within the immediate vicinity agreed it was a "much quieter use," he said, adding, "We gave them a building that is better looking than the extended-stay hotel."

The 70,000-sf building on 2.35 acres of land will be three stories with a walkout level and will feature articulation and large windows for aesthetic appeal. Brick veneer, block and EIFS will be used on the

exterior walls. Dauer Haswell Architecture Group is the architect for the building, which will be built by Waner Construction.

While elevators will serve the interior units, there also will be drive-up storage for exterior units.

The Public Storage facility at 5080 Leetsdale is the only other self-storage facility between Cherry Creek and Leetsdale Self Storage, which likely will be the last on Leetsdale between downtown Denver and Parker Road.

"Really, I don't see another one going in that area for years to come because there's no dirt left on Leetsdale," Bush commented.

LeClaire expects the property to be under contract before completion and to be turned over to a new owner upon receipt of the certificate of occupancy approximately nine months from now.

"It's an infill location that's going to be uniquely positioned. I think there will be a lot of regional and national players that will be very interested in getting into that particular market," he said.◆◆