

Hirschfeld, Nichols selected for Sakura Square



Project team members include Chris Crosby, Melissa Rummel and Randy Nichols of Nichols Partnership; Gary Yamashita and Tim Higashid of Sakura Square LLC; and Bill Pruter of Nichols Partnership. Not pictured is Barry Hirschfeld Jr.

Sakura Square LLC and Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple have chosen the Nichols Partnership/Barry Hirschfeld Jr. team as their preferred developer for the redevelopment of Sakura Square and the temple in downtown Denver. Sakura Square covers one square block bordered by Larimer, Lawrence, 19th and 20th streets.

“We are excited to enter into this next phase of the development process on this important city block with Nichols Partnership, Barry Hirschfeld Jr. and their team,” said Gary Yamashita, project manager and CEO of Sakura Square LLC. “Together we look to establish a cultural gateway that preserves and celebrates the Japanese and Japanese-American experience.”

Completed in 1972 as a result of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority's efforts to transform the city center, Sakura Square was purchased by members of the temple (then known as Tri-State Buddhist Church) to preserve the temple and create a mixed-use development to house Japanese-American-owned businesses and the Tamai Tower apartment building. The temple was built in 1947 on the site of what was the heart of Denver's Japanese community post-World War II. "In 2016, the temple celebrated its 100th anniversary and we look to create a vibrant downtown destination for the next 100 years," explained Yamashita.

"We believe that Sakura Square is a legacy project that will further solidify Denver as a world-class city; we are extremely honored to have been selected to lead the redevelopment and have assembled an incredible team to ensure that Sakura Square remains a cultural destination and economic engine for generations to come," stated Randy Nichols, president and founder of Nichols Partnership. Other key members of the development team include Shigeru Ban Architects, Anderson Mason Dale Architects, Tres Birds Workshop, DIG Studios, KL&A and Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP.

Barry Hirschfeld Jr., a Denver native with over 20 years of living and working in Japan, will act as an overall cultural ambassador for the project including to spearhead the connection between the U.S. and Japan. "I look forward to attracting best-in-class tenants, capital and other key partners from Japan in order to make the project successful," stated Hirschfeld.

Japan-based Pritzker Architecture Prize recipient Shigeru Ban stated, "We are honored to be part of the Sakura Square team. All over the world we work to create great places to build communities and bring people together. We look forward to creating a new destination for the Japanese community, the sangha of the temple, the people of Colorado and everyone beyond." The Denver-based architectural firm of Anderson Mason Dale, led by Principal Andy Nielson, will be involved in all phases of community engagement, master planning and design.
