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JOEL BLOCKER/FOR BIZWEST

Randy Shortridge with [Space] Foundry in Fort Collins discusses design points of Confluence, a residential, office and retail project planned for the heart of the River District in Fort Collins. Several developers are buying property within the district along the south bank of the Poudre River that was the center of the city when it was founded in the 1870s on the site of Camp Collins.

REBIRTH ON THE RIVER

Development bringing historic Fort Collins area back to life. **PAGE 10**

LOVELAND

Desktop 3-D printers hit the big time

Aleph Objects prints its own replacement parts, shares its secrets. **PAGE 8**

BROOMFIELD

Kitchen Coop serves up success

Co-working space comes with a side of mentoring for food producers. **PAGE 6**

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Upcoming BizWest Networking Events

Bravo! Entrepreneur Awards
August 26, 2015
Drake Center, Fort Collins

Bixpo B-to-B Tradeshow and CEO Auction
September 24, 2015
The Ranch, Loveland

IQ Innovation Awards
October 6, 2015
Boulder Theater, Boulder

For more information or to register, go to BizWest.com and click on Events



COURTESY [SPACE]-[AU WORKSHOP] / FOR BIZWEST

An architectural rendering shows the various buildings and heights of Confluence, a mixed-use project planned for the northwest corner of Linden and Willow streets on the site of the former parade grounds of Camp Collins.



JOEL BLOCKER/FOR BIZWEST

Randy Shortridge, left, and Jason Kersley, co-owners of [au] workshop and [Space Foundry], stand on the Linden Street bridge with Block One in the background. Block One is a new four-story, mixed-use building that has space for a restaurant that could offer riverside dining. Shortridge and Kersley designed Block One for Encompass Technologies.



From left, Alex Schuman, Connie Dohn and Jon Prouty are building Mill House, above, a 54-unit high-end apartment complex at 311 Willow St. Prouty also has built and is building other projects in the River District.

DOUG STORUM/BIZWEST



New life flowing into River District

From the banks that bore a city, developers reimagine Old Town

By Doug Storum

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FORT COLLINS — A flurry of new urban development in Fort Collins' River District is generating momentum to rehabilitate the area that once was Camp Collins, a military outpost established along the Poudre River in 1864, and by the 1870s had become the city's center.

In ensuing years, the 17-acre area has been home to industrial and agriculture companies scattered throughout, anchored at the east end by the Ranch-Way Feed Mill, the oldest continuously running business in Fort Collins.

But now a few developers are acting on their passion to create a vibrant work/live/play neighborhood that is pedestrian-friendly on the land where the city's founders lived, connecting the river with the bustling Old Town Square.

The River District, now at the northeastern tip of Fort Collins, includes the area just northeast of Old Town Square, including Jefferson, Linden and Willow streets, bordered by the river to the north, North College Avenue to the west and Lincoln Avenue to the east.

Development companies Lagunitas Cos., [Space] Foundry, Blue Ocean Enterprises Inc. and small-business owners have been acquiring small parcels of land in the district from longtime landowners and putting their own stamp on them.

Prouty filling 'blank slate'

Calling these properties a "blank slate," developer Jon Prouty, owner of Lagunitas Cos. in Fort Collins, has completed a couple of projects in the district—a condo/office project called

Roofs-On-The-River and the interior renovation of the Bas Bleu Theatre.

Prouty, The Shuman Cos. and Dohn Construction Inc., both Fort Collins firms, have the 70,393-square-foot, 54-unit Mill House high-end apartments under construction, and Prouty is working through the planning process to convert the historic Feeder Supply building built in 1911 into a restaurant and bar.

"The district is unique because developers have a better chance to define what they want and what is best for the city," Prouty said.

The city recently redefined a set of design guidelines for the district that respects its rich agricultural heritage, which Prouty calls challenging, but important.

"They are just that, guidelines. ... There is room for discussion, it just prolongs the process. ... Some developers don't have a stomach for that," he said.

Randy Shortridge and Jason Kersley of Fort Collins-based [Space] Foundry are planning Confluence, a \$9 million project at the northwest corner of Linden and Willow streets, land that once was used as the parade grounds for the old fort. Confluence will combine office, retail and residential units. Some of the buildings will be five stories tall. Shortridge expects construction to begin during the first quarter of 2016 and open in the first quarter of 2017.

"Redeveloping the district will reconnect the river with the rest of the city," said Shortridge, an architect whose [au]workshop recently designed the 37,000-square-foot Block One, a mix of offices and a restaurant space that when leased will offer riverside dining and 12 apartments nestled up against the Poudre River

"I've been keeping my eye on the River District for seven or eight years. I like the industrial eclectic mix and the energy some of these new projects are creating. I also like that the area is tied to the city's history and has a sense of craft and place."

Todd Simmons
Owner, Wolverine Farm Publishing



at 418 Linden St. Block One is owned by Encompass Technologies and was constructed by Brinkman Partners of Fort Collins. The site previously housed a cement batch plant.

Blue Ocean's big plans

Blue Ocean Enterprises in Fort Collins has submitted plans for the roughly 71,000-square-foot Old Elk Distillery at 360 Linden St. on a long and narrow 1.2-acre parcel of land at the southeast corner of Linden and Willow streets next to Mawson Lumber, the site of an old train depot. Blue Ocean acquired the land from Kiefer Concrete Inc.

About half of the building will be devoted to the distillery, where a variety of bourbons will be made, and the rest will be used for a pub, fine dining, music/event venue, community meeting facilities and office and retail space. The main building will be 52.5 feet tall, with a tower element reaching to 80 feet that will rival grain silos at Ranch-Way.

Blue Ocean Enterprises, founded by Curt and Nancy Richardson, invests in revitalizing and preserving the Old Town area, said Bridget Richards, Blue Ocean's director of marketing and communications. Curt Richardson is founder and chairman of Fort Collins-based Otter Products LLC, makers of OtterBox cases for personal devices.

"We're committed to playing a role in the redevelopment of the River District and are excited to bring a new destination to Fort Collins that will enhance regional tourism and encourage economic growth," Richards said in an email.

'Sense of craft and place'

Across the street from the proposed Old Elk Distillery, Mobb Mountain Distillers, on a much smaller scale, plans to produce products that include a single-malt whiskey. Noah Kroencke, Pat Moriearty and Dave Grant are constructing the interior of the small distillery in 1,000 square feet at 400 Linden St. that they leased from the Godinez family, owners of El Burrito Restaurant next door at 404 Linden St. The family-owned restaurant has been in operation since 1960.

Todd Simmons, owner of Wolverine Farm Publishing, is constructing a two-story, 2,400-square-foot building directly west of the Confluence site to house Wolverine Farm: Letter Press

A plan down by the river

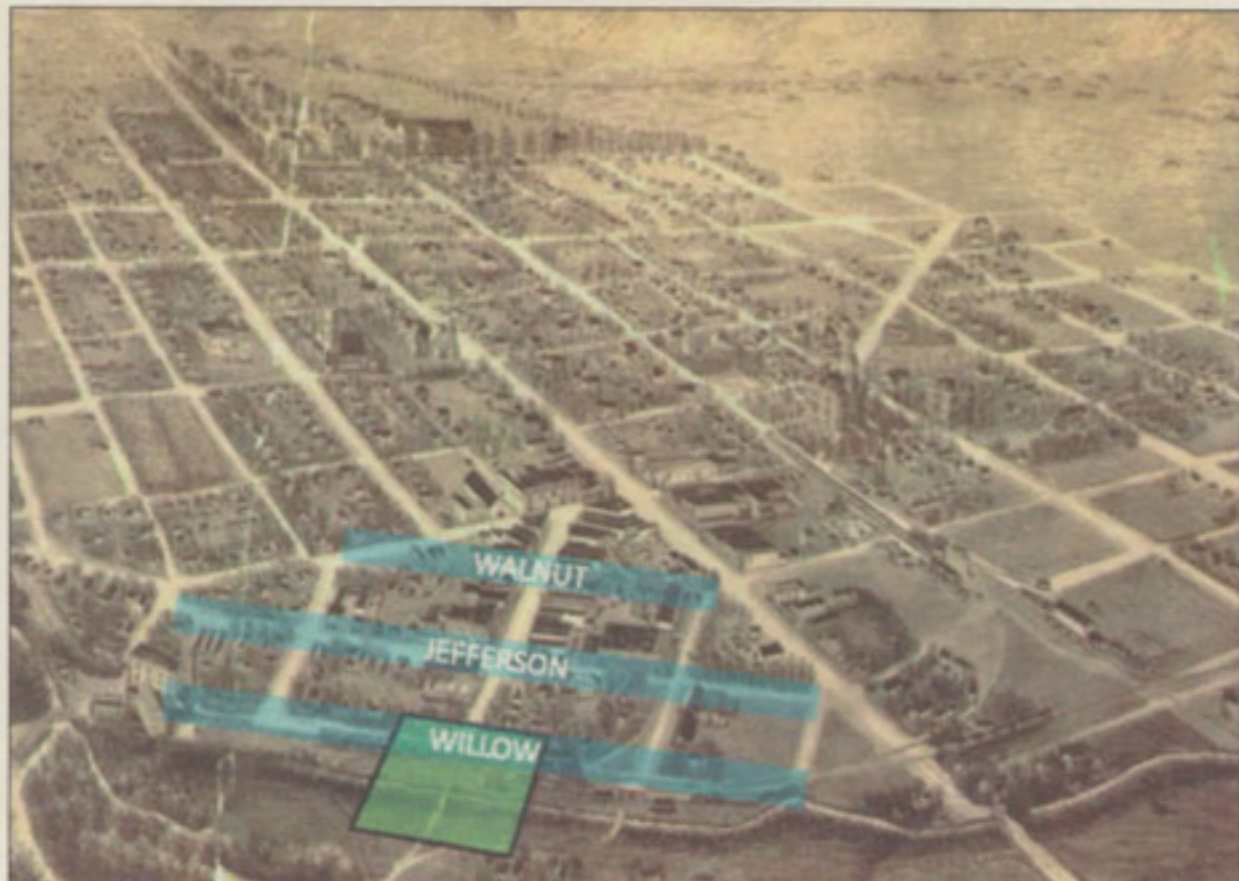
More than a dozen projects have either recently been built, are under construction, or in the planning stages that are revitalizing Fort Collins' River District along the south bank of the Poudre River.

- 1 Powerhouse Energy Campus**
 - 430 N. College Ave.
 - 100,000 square feet
 - Colorado State University
 - Completed
- 2 Northside Aztlan Community Center**
 - 112 Willow St.
 - 50,000 square feet
 - City of Fort Collins
 - Completed
- 3 Rooftops-On-The-River**
 - 214 Willow St.
 - Condominiums/mixed-use
 - Jon Prouty - Lagunitas Cos.
 - Completed

- 4 Bas Bleu Theatre**
 - 401 Pine St.
 - Community theater building
 - Jon Prouty - Lagunitas Cos.
 - Interior completed/ exterior pending fundraising
- 5 Wolverine Farm: Letter Press and Publick House**
 - 220 Willow St.
 - Publish community newspaper/books; event and workshop venue
 - Todd Simmons
 - Under construction
- 6 The Legacy Senior Residences**
 - 413 N. Linden St.
 - Affordable-housing units for seniors
 - Cornerstone Associates/ Fort Collins Housing Authority
 - Completed

- 7 Confluence**
 - 401, 405, 409 Linden St.
 - Office/residential/retail
 - Jason Kersley and Randy Shortridge - [Space] Foundry LLC
 - In planning process
- 8 Mill House**
 - 311 Willow St.
 - Apartments
 - Jon Prouty - Lagunitas Cos.; Alex Schuman - Schuman Companies Inc.; Doug and Connie Dohn - Dohn Construction Inc.
 - Under construction
- 9 Feeder Supply Restaurant**
 - 359 Linden St.
 - Restaurant and bar
 - Jon Prouty - Lagunitas Cos.
 - In planning process

- 10 Old Town Athletic Club**
 - 351 Linden St.
 - Health club
 - CTL[Thompson Inc.
 - Completed
- 11 Block One**
 - 418 Linden St.
 - Office/restaurant/ apartments
 - Encompass Technologies
 - Completed
- 12 Old Elk Distillery**
 - 360 Linden St.
 - Distillery/tasting room; restaurant/pub; music venue; offices/meeting space
 - Blue Ocean Enterprises Inc.
 - In planning process
- 13 Whitewater Park**
 - Put-in and take-out points
 - Bridge overlooks
 - Bank improvements



COURTESY RANDY SHORTRIDGE

A view of Fort Collins' River District looking south shows the city's original street grid that follows the contour of the Poudre River, and the rest of the city's street grid that runs north and south that was implemented when the city began to grow.



DOUG STORUM/BIZWEST

Todd Simmons, owner of Wolverine Farm Publishing, is constructing the Wolverine Farm: Letter Press and Public House at 220 Willow St. It will combine a print shop and community event venue that will serve food.

River, from 11

and Public House. It will be a combination of a print shop and community event venue that will serve food.

"I've been keeping my eye on the River District for seven or eight years," Simmons said. "I like the industrial eclectic mix and the energy some of these new projects are creating. I also like that the area is tied to the city's history and has a sense of craft and place."

Simmons, who said he won't be closing his bookshop located in Bean Cycle at 144 N. College Ave., expects to open the new building by late September. He had hoped for an earlier opening, but delays occurred during the planning process.

"The city was reworking its guidelines for the district while we were going through the planning process," he said. "and that set us back a little bit."

The city is working with developers to help cover the cost of some of the infrastructure and is using the new guidelines to dictate specifications

for roads, curbs, sidewalks and utility improvements, as well as design elements and materials for buildings.

Government involved

The city of Fort Collins and the Downtown Development Authority are partnering to help transform the River District, starting with the necessities, such as utility improvements, sidewalks and crosswalks, parking and improved intersections.

Matt Robenalt, executive director of the DDA, said the city's and DDA's efforts are designed to eliminate deficiencies in infrastructure and make the area more attractive to developers.

The DDA uses tax-increment financing to stimulate redevelopment in the central business district and focus on projects that have benefit for the community.



ROBENALT

Typically, the DDA will partner with a developer, business owner or property owner in a manner that "induces" a private investment in real estate improvements.

The DDA has invested in several of the River District projects, including Block One, \$629,369; Prouty's Feeders Supply and Mill House projects, \$302,644, and his Roofs-On-The-River project, \$260,443; and Wolverine Farm, \$23,197.

Robenalt believes the catalyst for this recent round of developments was Lawrence Mazzotta of Cornerstone Partners, who constructed the Legacy Senior Residences at 413 N. Linden St. next to the river a couple of years ago.

Mazzotta could not be reached for comment, but Robenalt said Mazzotta saw how Colorado State University turned an old power plant into the Powerhouse Energy Campus at the northwest corner of the River District, and the city built the Northside Aztlan Community Center within the district and believed the area had great potential for development.

"That opened up the gates for local investors to see true opportunities," Robenalt said.

One investor that saw the appeal early on was Howard Perko, division manager of the Fort Collins office of Denver-based CTL/Thompson. He recommended that the company purchase the former home of Sears Trostel Lumber and Hardwoods Inc. at 351 Linden St. from Bill Sears, grandson of founder Carl Trostel, and redevelop the building. The Old Town Athletic Club currently leases space in the building.

The building was home to Sears Trostel for 75 years, until the lumber company relocated in late 2005 to new quarters on Riverside Avenue.

The Linden Street building originally was constructed in 1928, on the site of the headquarters of Lt. Col. William Collins, for whom the town is named.

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Whitewater Park

Conceptual plans are being drawn up and the city has earmarked funding to help develop a whitewater park on the Poudre River where it flows alongside the River District. It includes upgrading bridges at Linden and Lincoln streets with overlooks, several put-in and take-out points, riverbank improvements and nearby parking. The rendering shows the view looking southwest from the Linden Street bridge. The primary objective of the park is to provide recreational opportunities to kayak, float, wade and play in the Poudre River.

COURTESY RANDY SHORTRIDGE/FOR BIZWEST