

Bike-repair rooms popping up in new apartment complexes in Denver

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Apartment complexes are sprouting up all over the Denver metro area, many of them featuring a new amenity: bicycle-maintenance rooms.

A nod to the growing popularity of two-wheelers in urban settings, bike rooms have been built at two downtown apartment buildings — Solera, which opened in 2010 at 1956 Lawrence St., and Skyline 1801, a renovated building at 18th and Arapahoe streets, which expects its first new tenants to move in late this month.

Bike maintenance and repair rooms also are planned for at least six other apartment buildings under construction or planned for the area, including two projects by Zocalo Community Development: Cadence, at 17th Street and Chestnut Place, and 2020 Lawrence Apartments.

Bike rooms are also in the blueprints for two Nichols Partnership projects: Cruise, a renovation at 1899 Gaylord Street in City Park West, and a planned 314-unit apartment complex above an urban grocery store at 20th Street and Chestnut. And they're planned for Riverfront Park, 1900 Little Raven St., and The Retreat at Flatirons, in the Broomfield Business Center.

In addition, bike rooms are featured in at least four other complexes across the country.

"More and more, we see a biking culture taking hold here," said David Zucker, a principal and development manager at Zocalo.

Zocalo pioneered the bike-room concept locally — the company calls it a "Velo Room" — at Solera.

"We will be doing it at 2020 Lawrence and at Cadence, and we take bigger steps at each project," Zucker said. "Whether you have an expensive bike or a beat-up old cruiser, people like to ride."

Susan Maxwell, director of real estate for Zocalo, said the Velo Room at Solera includes "all the tools that you might need — Park brand tools, a stand to put your bike on while you work on it, a workbench, aprons, air pumps, tubes and lube, and other supplies. Also, consumables such as gel packs and energy bars, as well as maps on the wall for the more than 800 miles of bike trails in the Denver area."

Skyline 1801 has a bike room as well as wall-mounted bike racks in each unit.

Meanwhile, developer Dan Schuetz of the Nichols Partnership is taking the bike-room concept a step further with Cruise.

The entire 61-unit building — currently being preleased by Boutique Apartments and scheduled for occupancy Jan. 1 — has a bicycle motif.

"We have a ton of bike storage and a complete bicycle-repair station," Schuetz said. "David Zucker has a nice bike station at Solera, and I'm not ashamed to say I'm copying the idea from him."

Cruise also will display the bicycle-themed artwork of local artists, and for every renter who signs a one-year lease, ownership is giving away an Electra cruiser bike.

"There's quite a community of people who enjoy cycling here, and we want to tie in to it," Schuetz said.

Not surprisingly, BikeDenver, a bicycle advocacy group, is excited about the proliferation of bike rooms.

"Bicycling is booming right now in Denver, and adding bike amenities in downtown properties is more than just clever marketing," said BikeDenver executive director Piep van Heuven. "This is a response to demand."

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