



Office of Public Affairs

Episcopal Church Selects Development Partner for Downtown Austin, TX Property

Future home of The Archives and Research Center

(April 24, 2017) The Episcopal Church has selected Cielo Property Group to partner in the development of a church-owned city block in downtown Austin that will incorporate space for The Archives of the Episcopal Church and an adjoining mixed-use project.

The Episcopal Church purchased the Austin city block bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Trinity and Neches Streets in 2009 for the purpose of building a national archives facility. The new 67,000-square-foot home of The Archives of the Episcopal Church will include research, exhibit and public space. The facility will serve as a national gathering place where Episcopalians and others can study and celebrate the history, beliefs and work of the Church and provide a cultural amenity for the broader Austin community.

Cielo Property Group was chosen from among 40 private developers who expressed interest in the property.

"The Archives serve the 21st century Jesus Movement as a bridge connecting our history and our future," noted Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. "As a bridge of history, The Archives connect us through our past ultimately to our deeper origins in Jesus of Nazareth who inspired a movement to change the world centuries ago. And as a bridge to our future, by helping us to follow the way of this living Lord Jesus into God's future, thus emerging as today's Episcopal branch of that same Jesus Movement in our time as we step into God's future."

"Years of thoughtful planning have led to this remarkable partnership to achieve the Episcopal Church's goal of a permanent research facility for its historical archives," said Mark Duffy, Director of The Archives of the Episcopal Church. "We are excited by this next step for the Archives in setting down deeper roots in the Austin community where church life, education, research and cultural engagement are valued and affirmed as gifts."

The Church requested proposals from private developers interested in partnering to build the national archives facility and a mixed-use project in 2015, and ultimately selected Cielo Property Group's proposal.

"We wanted a partner who knew Austin and was trusted by the community," said the Rev. Canon Lang Lowrey III, who represented the Church in its search for a development partner. "Cielo is an Austin-based company led by people who really care about making the city a better place. This, combined with their vision and ideas for the property, made Cielo our top choice."

"Cielo is honored to be selected by the Episcopal Church," said founding partner Bobby Dillard. "We understand the importance of this project to the Church and its members, and we're excited to have the opportunity to bring even more positive change to the northeast area of downtown Austin where many exciting things are already happening."

Dillard said the company is in the early stages of designing the mixed-use project, but the concepts are preliminary. Financial details were not released.

The Archives of the Episcopal Church is the official repository of the Episcopal Church including the General Convention, the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, Episcopal Church organizations, and the personal papers of its leadership. The Archives' mission is to honor the community's diversity, educate members for mission, and communicate the faith for future ministry.

Cielo is a privately owned commercial real estate investment and development firm that specializes in redeveloping and repositioning of underutilized properties with strong potential for value enhancement. Founded in 2010, the company has acquired or developed more than 1.3 million square feet of commercial real estate assets in Texas including eight retail and office buildings in Austin's urban core, where the company is developing an additional 500,000 square feet of office, retail and residential projects.

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The Archives of the Episcopal Church: <https://www.episcopalarchives.org/>

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