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Neo at SoDo: New development with retail and compact living

Rendering of Neo at SoDo, a mixed-use project that will include apartments and retail.
MASTER MANAGERS REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

By Trevor Fraser – Staff Writer, Orlando Business Journal
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STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- Neo at SoDo seeks commercial tenants for retail space.
- The project includes 73 apartments on upper floors.
- B&C Development LLC invested $15 million in the project.

A mixed-use project in SoDo is ramping up and looking for commercial tenants.

Maitland-based broker LQ Commercial Real Estate Services is marketing to fill the 7,468 square feet of retail that will comprise the first floor of the four-story Neo at SoDo, which is under construction at 3509 S. Orange Ave. Retail parcels start at 1,136 square feet.

B&C Development LLC, an investment partnership tied to Celebration-based Management Masters, bought the 1.21 acres for the project in 2022 for $2 million. The total budget for the land and the buildout is $15 million, according to the company.

The project will include 73 apartments on the upper floors, ranging from 400-square-foot studios to 613-square-foot one-bedroom units. Marcos Bigucci, partner and manager in Management Masters, said the reason for the smaller size is so the units can be affordably priced, though the building is not a tax-credit affordable project.

"The location is in an area with a lot of demand," Bigucci said. "Because they are small, the affordability is higher."

Marcos Bigucci, partner and manager, Master Managers Real Estate Development
MASTER MANAGERS REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Lease rates for the retail space and apartments were not available. The average retail lease rate in the downtown market is $41.04 per square foot, versus $29.84 per square foot in the wider metro, according to analytics firm CoStar Group. The average apartment rent in Orlando is $1,734 per month, according to Berkadia.

Multifamily broker Andrew Green with Foundry Commercial, which was not involved in the sale, told *Orlando Business Journal* the market for developing in downtown Orlando has been hampered by pricing gaps between costs and financing.

"With where the economy is going in 2025, that gap in theory should shorten," Green said. "The biggest problem that land developers have been seeing is that pricing per unit has been to the point where they can't underwrite what the brokers are guiding them to."

Andrew Green, Foundry Commercial
FOUNDRY COMMERCIAL

Green said the retail portion adds another source of revenue to the project, making it more likely to succeed.

"In SoDo, I'm sure that project will do extremely well as that submarket is heavily surrounded by the [Orlando Health] hospital system."