



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 24, 2025**

**Contact:** Jayma File, NAIOP Colorado  
Office: 303-782-0155  
[Email: jayma@naiop-colorado.org](mailto:jayma@naiop-colorado.org)

## **The 23rd Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge Sets Its Sights on the Thornton Shopping Center Redevelopment Project**

**DENVER, COLO.** – Graduate students from the University of Denver and the University of Colorado are set to compete in the 23rd Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge, presented by Land Title Guarantee Company and NAIOP Colorado. This year, the Challenge spotlights the redevelopment of the historic 15.6-acre Thornton Shopping Center site. The event culminates with final project presentations on April 30, 2025.

This year's sponsor, the City of Thornton, seeks innovative and sustainable redevelopment proposals to transform the site into a mixed-use community hub. The project must balance retail, dining, social spaces, and limited residential use, delivering a vibrant, tax-generating destination that reflects the city's commitment to placemaking and economic revitalization.

“The redevelopment of the Thornton Shopping Center represents an unparalleled opportunity to reinvigorate a cornerstone of our community,” said Jan Kulmann, Mayor of Thornton. “We are excited to see the innovative and impactful ideas these students will bring to the table as we strive to create a space that serves our residents and strengthens our economy.”

Competing teams will act as developers, crafting proposals to address zoning changes, environmental challenges, and the site's community-centered vision. Plans should incorporate

spaces for socializing, public gatherings, and outdoor dining while maintaining strong pedestrian connectivity to the adjacent Original Thornton neighborhood. The project is uniquely positioned within an Opportunity Zone, adding exciting dimensions to the financing strategies students may explore.

The Challenge not only serves as a platform for students to demonstrate their real estate expertise but also underscores the value of innovative thinking in tackling complex urban redevelopment projects. According to Margo Black, the 2025 Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge Chair, “This year’s project exemplifies how creative minds can envision transformative solutions for communities. The Thornton Shopping Center site presents an opportunity to balance the needs of residents, businesses, and the city’s broader goals.”

The event brings together leaders from Colorado’s real estate industry, providing students with a platform to present their innovative concepts to a panel of esteemed judges and an audience of over 700 professionals. The winning team will receive scholarships and the prestigious NAIOP Cup.

As a long-standing supporter of the Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge, Luke Davidson, Sales Manager, Commercial Markets Team at Land Title Guarantee Company, emphasized the program’s unique impact: “This event not only highlights impactful development opportunities like the Thornton Shopping Center but also brings together the brightest emerging talent in our industry. Year after year, it stands as the premier networking event for Colorado’s real estate community, fostering connections that shape the future.”

Tickets for the event will be available through the NAIOP Colorado website in February. Don’t miss the opportunity to witness how these future real estate leaders tackle a challenging site and shape the future of urban redevelopment.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **About the City of Thornton**

The City of Thornton, home to over 155,000 residents, is a vibrant and growing community just north of Denver. Known for its welcoming neighborhoods, expanding job opportunities, and scenic outdoor parks, Thornton provides a unique balance of urban amenities and suburban charm. Thornton remains committed to fostering a vibrant community that enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Visit [www.thorntonco.gov](http://www.thorntonco.gov) for more information.

**About Land Title Guarantee Company**

Land Title Guarantee Company is Colorado's leader in title insurance, delivering unsurpassed transaction excellence since 1967. Land Title's Commercial Markets Team is recognized for consistently insuring more than \$10 billion annually in commercial transactions. Land Title's Commercial title, closing and sales teams – consisting of 50 experienced team members - deliver the best of both worlds: the benefit of working with the nation's strongest underwriters coupled with the team's deep knowledge of Colorado real estate laws, customs, and markets. For more information and to view a sampling of commercial closings, visit our website at [www.ltgc.com/commercial](http://www.ltgc.com/commercial).

**About NAIOP**

NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, is the leading organization for developers, owners and investors of office, industrial, retail and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP comprises 21,000+ members and provides strong advocacy, education and business opportunities through a powerful North American network. For more information, visit [www.naiop-colorado.org](http://www.naiop-colorado.org).

---