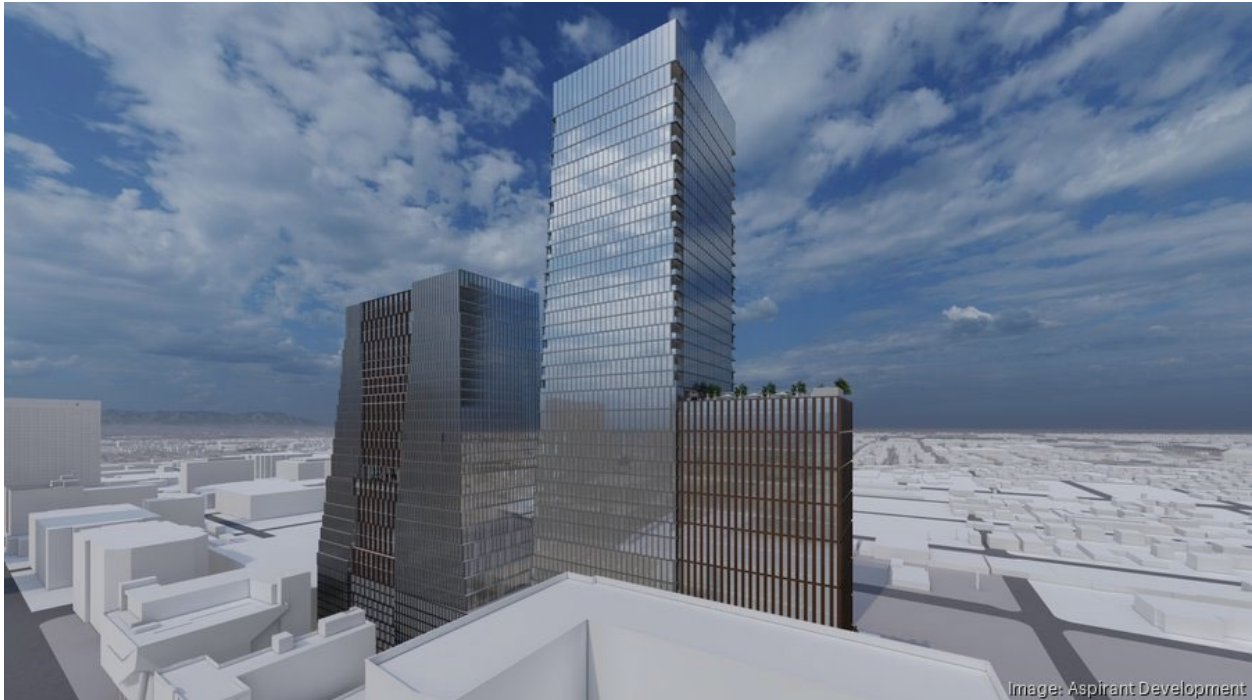


Developer moving forward on Arizona's tallest tower after securing tax agreement with Phoenix



Aspirant Development is moving forward with plans to build Arizona's tallest tower.

ASPIRANT DEVELOPMENT



By [Angela Gonzales](#) – Senior Reporter, Phoenix Business Journal

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Scottsdale-based Aspirant Development finally plans to begin construction on what will become Arizona's tallest tower.

Called Astra, the \$575 million project will include one tower with 45 floors rising to a height of 541 feet — surpassing the former Chase Tower at 483 feet. The second proposed Astra tower will be 36 floors and 424 feet high.

The project is proposed on a 2-acre site on Second Avenue between Van Buren and Fillmore streets in downtown Phoenix.

It's been a long process in the making for Geoffrey Jacobs, a partner with Aspirant Development and a principal with The Empire Group of Cos. [who first told Phoenix Business Journal of his plans to build the project in August 2019.](#)

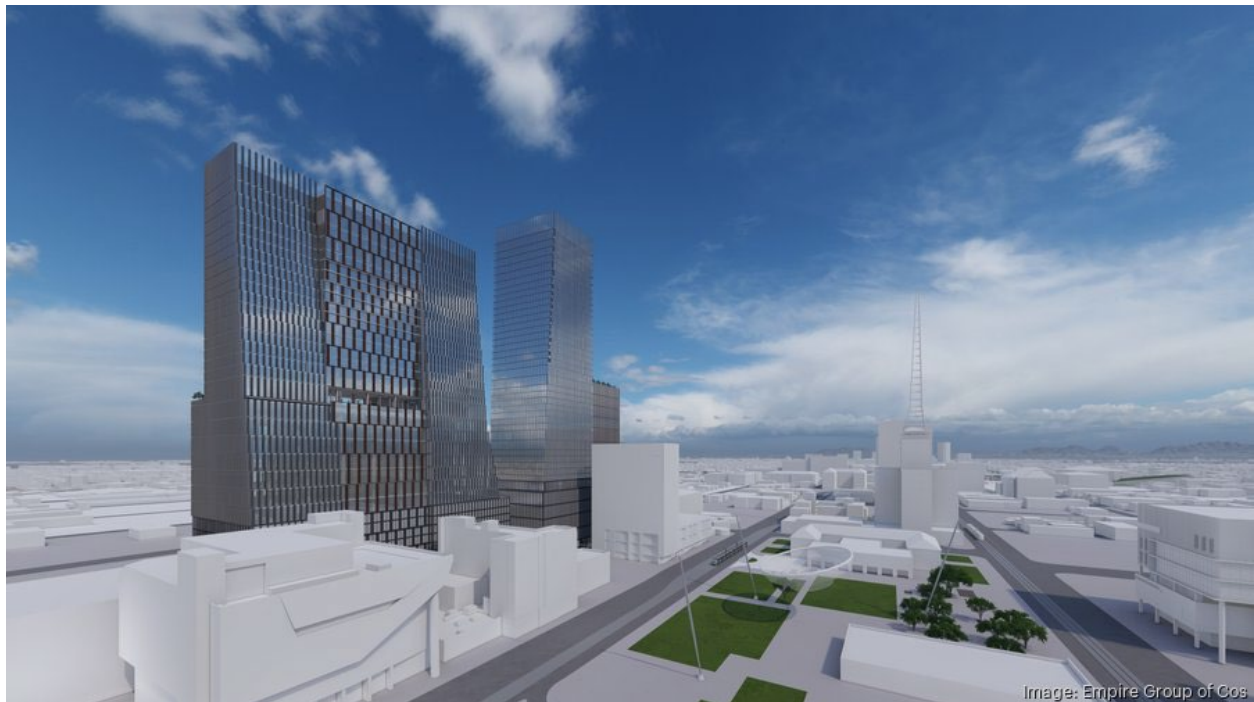
Beginning in the second quarter of 2024, the project will be built in two phases to include 697 apartment units, a 229-room hotel, 36,000 square feet of commercial space, 185,000 square feet of office space and 1,156 parking spaces on 2.18 acres.

Aspirant entered a Government Property Lease Excise Tax agreement, through which Aspirant will convey title of the property to the city when it is issued a certificate of occupancy. The city will lease the property back to the developer for up to eight years. The GPLET means taxes on the project will be abated for up to eight years from the date of certificate of occupancy.

With the site already entitled, the last piece was [receiving approval late last month](#) from Phoenix City Council on the GPLET, Jacobs said.

The city had paused the GPLET property tax abatement program while it was [revamping the program](#), he said, which also held up development for his project.

"Getting through that GPLET process with the city was a big key for us," he said. "Now that we've got the GPLET finished we can finish design work and start going for permitting. It will take a fair amount of time. Now we'll finish putting together all of our financing."



Aspirant Development offers a sneak peak at Arizona's tallest tower.

Originally, Jacobs expected the project to cost around \$350 million, but cost increases over the past three years have pushed the price tag up to \$575 million.

Jacobs estimates it will take 2.5 to three years to build the project, and expects it to open in mid-2027. Gensler is the architect for the project.

If all goes ahead as scheduled, the project is expected to create 4,191 construction jobs and 2,563 permanent jobs.

The estimated one-time construction sales tax revenue to the city is expected to be \$5.4 million, plus an estimated annual commercial rental and transaction privilege tax revenue generation of about \$4.4 million at stabilization, according to city documents.

Aspirant will pay an annual rental payment, per phase, starting at \$25,000 in years one through four, and \$75,000 in years five through eight, according to city documents. The estimated total deposit into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund will be about \$5.5 million.

The project also will include co-living space and workforce housing units, as well as 147 exclusive parking spaces for the neighboring YMCA.

Co-living space is becoming more popular in downtown Phoenix, with Chicago-based [The X Co. set to begin construction on the 19-story X Roosevelt](#) at a time when X Phoenix a few blocks away at Van Buren Street and Second Avenue is [already 100% leased in the first phase](#) and construction underway for the second phase.