



COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT CASE STUDY

Nine Mile Corner Erie, CO

Owner

Evergreen Devco Inc.

Management/Development Company

Evergreen Devco Inc.

Type of Project

Retail Power Center

Size

780,850 square feet of retail on 45 acres

Architects

G3 Architecture and Galloway Engineering

Major Tenants

Lowe's, King Soopers, Taco Bell, Five Guys, Sapporo Sushi, Chip Cookies, University of Colorado Health, Modern Dental, Chase Bank, Great Clips, AT&T

Demographic

The population of Erie is 30,447 residents and 3.6 M in the Denver Metro Area.

Public Sector Support

Creation of an Urban Renewal Authority and Metropolitan District with \$17,775,000 in tax-exempt bonds issued by the Nine Mile Metropolitan District, The Town of Erie owned the 45-acre property and contributed the land.

How a Public-Private Partnership – and a Court Battle – Shaped Nine Mile Corner

By Steve McLinden

Contributor, Commerce + Communities Today

Development is the commercial real estate industry’s long game, but Evergreen Devco went into a three-year overtime thanks to a court case over rights to control the land around an Erie, Colorado, mixed-use development. Boulder exurbs Erie and Lafayette battled up to the Colorado Supreme Court over rights to control the land that would become Evergreen Devco’s Nine Mile Corner project.

Evergreen Devco managing principal and CEO Tyler Carlson’s patience paid off. Erie eventually prevailed, and 10 years after Nine Mile Corner was conceived, the brownfield project opened with highly sought-after anchors—home improvement store Lowe’s and grocer King Soopers—in place.

The fully occupied Nine Mile Corner, so named for its location exactly nine miles from the center of Boulder, received a [2025 ICSC Excellence in Community Advancement Award](#) in the Rural New Development category at ICSC LAS VEGAS in May.



Public Funding and Retail Anchors Set the Stage for Success

The town of Erie and its Urban Renewal Authority issued \$17.7 million in tax increment financing-funded public improvement bonds to finance Nine Mile Corner’s public infrastructure. The public plug was a much-needed cog in transforming 45 blighted acres into just over 25 acres of retail and 20 acres of multifamily and green space, said Carlson. The tax increment property and sales tax bonds allowed Nine Mile to finance construction of expanded roads and other infrastructure improvements needed for the site without levying additional property tax mills, he



said. “The town of Erie was fantastic in their support and in helping us deliver the right public financing and zoning balance to make Nine Mile Corner a success,” he said. “In the end, we worked out a great public-private partnership that was a win-win.”

King Soopers built a 100,000-square-foot Marketplace store to fit the site, which is about 20,000 square feet smaller than its traditional Marketplace format, that opened in November 2024. The center’s first anchor tenant, a 97,900-square-foot Lowe’s with a 27,600-square-foot garden center, debuted in 2022. Other occupants include an 8,000-square-foot UCHHealth urgent care center, Five Guys, Taco Bell, Sapporo Sushi & Grill, Chick-fil-A, Valvoline, Modern Mint dentistry, Magic Nails, AT&T and Restore Hyper Wellness. “Everyone who has opened at Nine Mile Corner is performing well,” Carlson said. “We knew this would be a desirable site. People are voting with their feet.”

Construction on the project’s 290-unit multifamily component, Outlook Nine Mile, was completed in 2022. “We recognized in the planning stage that there were few housing-rental options for area residents,” said Carlson. “We felt it was important to address that lack of housing diversity in the project.” The fast-growing town of nearly 40,000 added more than 900 new residential units, mostly single-family, in 2024 alone, according to the city.

A Decade in the Making: Legal Battles, Historic Preservation and Site Challenges

Brownfield site remediation included the leveling of a drained lakebed, Carlson said. “We had to do a significant amount of geotechnical work to stabilize the property. This was a very expensive site to develop.” A major widening of Arapahoe Road, which intersects Highway 287 at Nine Mile Corner, had to occur before the project could move forward, and city utilities had to be extended to the site, amid other major expenses, Carlson added.

While researching the site, Carlson discovered that a post-World War I highway beautification project called the [Road of Remembrance Gateway](#) once ran along Highway 287 at the site and includes two surviving pillars. After talking with area historic groups, Carlson decided to preserve and design around them. “That was another engineering change we had to factor in,” he said. “We ended up preserving one of the pillars in a median.” Adding more complexity, Erie’s town manager, its mayor and most of the board of trustees turned over during the development. Their replacements “fortunately supported Nine Mile and had good relationships with Evergreen and saw eye-to-eye with the previous decisionmakers,” Carlson said.

Though the site sits within Erie town limits, a three-year court delay began in 2016 when the adjoining city of Lafayette filed to condemn roughly half the site, stating buffer space from development activities at the property was necessary to preserve Lafayette’s “unique character.” Lafayette was home to a small-format, landlocked King Soopers less than a mile from the Erie development tract. The case went to the Colorado Supreme Court in 2018 and moved to the Colorado Court of Appeals, a state appellate court, which found that Lafayette “had an unlawful motive” to prevent the store and its associated tax revenue from relocating, according to a summary from a three-judge Boulder County District Court panel.

But friction between the two cities persisted. In 2019, Lafayette, Erie and the Erie Urban Renewal authority approved a settlement that came to be known, [according to the Boulder Daily Camera](#), as the “Nine Mile Corner peace deal.” It outlined that Lafayette and Erie would share tax revenues from King Soopers equally, but that a 150-foot hillside buffer space would be created instead of the originally planned 250-foot buffer. Evergreen Devco

finally acquired the full 45 acres in October 2020, and construction on Nine Mile Corner began a month later.

“Erie has been fantastic in their support of this and in their approval of the right zoning balance that Nine Mile Corner needed to succeed,” Carlson said. “We were able to work out a great public-private partnership. Erie saw development in their growing town as a good thing, not a bad thing.”

Community-Focused Design and a Tenant Mix That Resonates

The design for Nine Mile Corner’s shop spaces blends Erie’s downtown architectural style with other traditional main street elements. “We’re at the western entry point of town, so we wanted to let people know they were entering Erie,” he said. “We created beautiful architecture and a design with character that was tied to the look of the town.”

Nine Mile Corner is one of the few major double-anchored centers to come out of the ground in the U.S. in the past few years, Carlson said, adding that the combination of Lowe’s and King Soopers is ideal. “Grocery draws the daily-needs traffic while Lowe’s draws broader regional traffic. With our other tenants, we have become a one-stop shop for weekly and monthly needs. It was a rewarding project.”

What’s Next for Evergreen Devco in Erie

Looking ahead, Evergreen Devco is now moving forward on another local brownfield mixed-use project, [Erie Town Center](#), on 20 acres over an old coal mine. It’s expected to be anchored by a specialty grocer, Carlson said. •

