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PRESS RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Catherine Nguyen, Director of Marketing & Communications - CAST
cnguyen@cast-sf.org | 415.556.9888 x111

**City of Denver approves \$1.35 million for CAST's first multi-use
affordable arts space in Downtown Denver near 16th Street corridor**

*Denver Downtown Development Authority supports the continued transformation of
vacant downtown spaces with creative investment*

DENVER, CO – July 2, 2026 - On June 24, CAST reached a major milestone in its Colorado expansion with the [Denver Downtown Development Authority's \(DDDA\) approval of \\$1.35 million](#) in funding to support the acquisition and transformation of a vacant commercial space at 444 17th Street into a permanent home for Denver's creative community.

The future 6,300-square-foot cultural hub will bring together affordable artist studios, a nonprofit gallery, a microcinema, and flexible space for exhibitions, screenings, performances, and public programming. In addition to creating long-term workspace for Denver-based artists working across new media and film, the project will also provide accessible fine arts storage space.

"The 17th Street location was envisioned in response to the lack of infrastructure for film and video-based artists in the Denver Metro area," said CAST Managing Director of National Programs Louise Martorano. "Over the last 18 years of working with artists across various media and mediums, there was a consistent request for affordable and secure screening space, performance space, and more opportunities and spaces to share contemporary film and video work. There is already an expansive community of independent video, performance artists, and filmmakers in Colorado, so this resource is with them in mind and the communities that surround their practices and ideas."

The space will be operated by CAST in collaboration with local grassroots organizations, Denver-based filmmakers, and regional film festivals. The project represents CAST's first permanent arts facility in partnership with the City of Denver and [Denver Arts & Venues](#), helping reestablish downtown as a destination for arts and culture.



"Artists deserve the space and the stability to keep doing their work here," said Denver Arts & Venues Executive Director Gretchen Hollrah. "We are excited to work alongside CAST to create permanent, affordable places for Denver's creative community that help fuel Denver's economy."

The project will proceed to Denver City Council for final review and approval, with an anticipated opening in Spring 2027.

"I truly believe this will be a great complement to the existing efforts to support independent film and media in downtown Denver," added Martorano. "Since the news dropped, I have already heard from our friends at Denver Film and Colorado Creative Industries with words of support and excitement around potential future collaborations. The DDDA's funding approval is a validation that artists need permanently affordable space to thrive, that culture matters, and it's worth every effort and process to protect."

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About Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST)

Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) is a community-centered real estate organization committed to ensuring artists and cultural workers can stay anchored where they create. Founded in 2013, CAST works in deep partnership with communities across the San Francisco Bay Area and Denver, particularly communities that have endured systemic oppression and historical underinvestment. CAST models new ways to secure and steward affordable, inclusive spaces for creative and cultural expression by applying real estate financing tools and structural models in innovative ways, building community knowledge and agency, and creating and holding space for visioning and arts activation. Its programs and services have helped arts organizations build pathways to ownership, enabled artists to secure long-term affordable leases, and created dedicated spaces for cultural connection and exchange. Learn more at cast-sf.org or follow CAST on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Bluesky](#).

About the Denver Downtown Development Authority (DDA or DDDA)

Denver's DDA, approved by voters in 2024, is building a vibrant downtown Denver through strategic and catalytic investments that promote economic growth and revitalization. Guided by a [Plan of Development](#), the DDDA has committed over \$165 million across 13 projects to date. The DDDA has a seven-member Board of Directors, that includes the current City Council President, and other members are appointed by Mayor Mike Johnston for four-year terms. Learn more about the DDDA at denvergov.org/DDA.