

# URBAN INFILL HOUSING OPTIONS



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## 2. Introduction

Downtown Sacramento is a vibrant community living in the area bound by the Sacramento River to the West, the American River to the North, Highway 80 to the East, and Highway 50 to the South.

The housing supply in Downtown has not grown significantly over the past decade, creating a deficit in supply however the demand for more housing remains high and continues to grow. To alleviate this problem, Mayor Kevin Johnson has introduced a new Downtown Housing Initiative to develop 10,000 places to live in Downtown Sacramento over the next ten years.

The Downtown Specific Plan implements this initiative by looking at growth opportunities over next twenty years. Infill development, redevelopment, reuse, and growth in existing urbanized areas enhances community character, optimizes City investments in infrastructure and community facilities, supports increased transit use, promotes pedestrian- and bicycle friendly neighborhoods, increases housing diversity, ensures integrity of historic districts, and enhances retail viability. This plan is the City of Sacramento's strategy to attract more residential infill development throughout Downtown Sacramento while enhancing the quality of life city-wide.

This document explains the type of housing development that will help Sacramento meet the desired number of housing units and meet the goals of the Downtown Specific Plan. The types of housing developments include:

- Transit-Oriented Development
- Mixed-Use/Multi-Story Housing
- Historic/Adaptive Reuse Housing

Some of the examples shown in this document may fit into more than one category.

The City will highlight and evaluate opportunity sites with high potential for development. The City will be working with development experts, community based interest groups, and the community at large to achieve the best plan possible through engagement tools such as stakeholder meetings, community workshops, and online engagement.



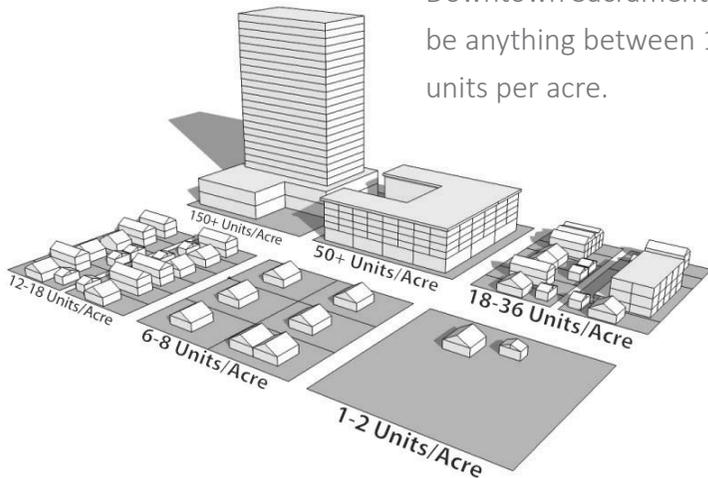
### 3. Goals of the Downtown Specific Plan

- Create a Specific Plan that paves the way for at least 10,000 places to live in the next 10 years
- Develop a varied housing stock that reflects the current diversity of Sacramento
- Maintain the quality of life central city residents experience and further neighborhood livability by including supporting amenities along with housing
- Remove housing development barriers by streamlining the growth and environmental review process
- Maintain the quality of life central city residents experience and further neighborhood livability by including supporting amenities along with housing

## What is higher density housing?

To substantially increase the number of housing units in the Downtown area, higher density housing will need to be built. Higher density does not exclusively refer to high-rise buildings. The definition of density depends on the context in which it is used. For Downtown Sacramento, higher density simply means new residential development at a density that is higher than single family home or attached townhomes.

The image on below depicts different types of housing densities. For Downtown Sacramento, higher density can be anything between 18-36 to 150+ dwelling units per acre.

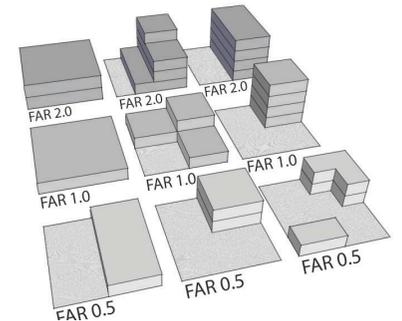


## What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Why is FAR Important to Urban Infill?

What is a “floor area ratio” or FAR? The best way to define an FAR is to give an example. An FAR of 1.0 means that the developer is allowed to build the equivalent of a one-story building over the entire lot, or a 2-story over half the lot. An FAR of 2.0 means the developer is allowed to build the equivalent of a two-story building over her entire lot, or a 4-story over half the lot.

While the FAR examples given above that exceed 1.0 may seem very dense, keep in mind that in most cases an FAR of 1.0 would not allow the developer to build one story over the entire lot, as other local development code regulations would also require space for landscaping/ open space, parking, setbacks, etc.

A truly walkable community that creates healthy transit require FARs to be at least 1.5 to 3.0. Most of the cities that we all love to walk in have FARs that are probably well over 3.0. Low FARs create unwalkable large spaces that are more car-scaled than people-scaled.





## The Cathedral Building

Corner of 12th & K Streets



## Pensione K

Corner of 17th & K Streets

## Transit-Oriented Development:

Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a type of housing development that is located within a half-mile of quality public transportation. Most often this embraces a mixture of housing with office, retail and/or other amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood.

### The Cathedral Building

Density: 79 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 3.0

### Pensione K

Density: 186 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 1.5

### Township 9/Cannery Place

Density: 109.78 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 0.86

# Transit-Oriented Development

## Benefits:

- Reduces vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Less VMT means:
  - Improved public health
  - Reduced dependency on cars
  - Reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Easier transit use, pedestrian activity and biking
- Minimizes length or need for vehicle trips
- Encourages a pedestrian-friendly community



**Township 9/Cannery Place**  
Richards Blvd & N 7th Streets



800 J Lofts

Corner of 8th and J Streets



## Mixed-Use/Multi-Story Housing:

Mixed-Use/Multi-Story housing blends residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or industrial uses into multi-story projects.

### 800 J Lofts

Density: 189 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 4.8

### 1801 L Lofts

Density: 99 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 0.44

### 16 Powerhouse

Density: 114 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 3.14



1801 L Lofts

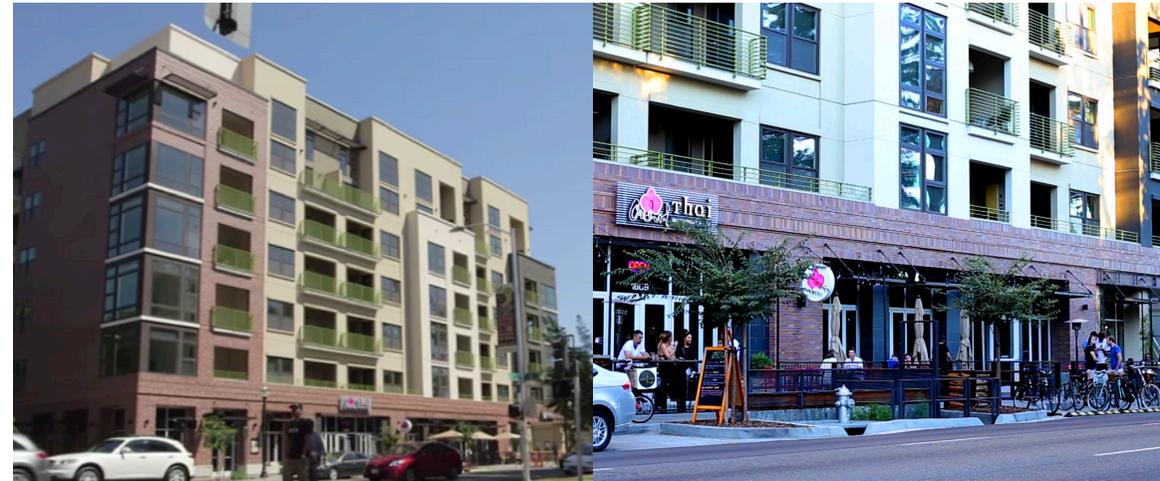
Corner of 18th & L Streets



## Mixed-Use/Multi-Story Housing

### Benefits:

- Supports local retail and entertainment
- Cultivates a safe, vibrant neighborhood bustling with pedestrians
- Leads to more cohesive communities with a strong identity
- Improves access to amenities
- Creates a sense of place through ground floor retail and commercial uses



**16 Powerhouse**  
Corner of 16th & P Streets



## Lofts at Globe Mills

Corner of 11th & C Streets

## Historic/Adaptive Reuse Housing:

Historic/Adaptive Reuse Housing reuses an old site or building for a purpose other than which it was built or designed for. Sacramento has actively readapted many historic buildings to better fit the needs of Downtown’s residents. The Downtown Specific Plan will evaluate key opportunity sites that have 45+ year old properties for historic/adaptive reuse.



## MAY Building

Corner of 10th and K Streets

### Lofts at Globe Mills

Density: 121 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 0.4

### MAY Building

Density: 93 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 2.89

### Warehouse Artist Lofts

Density: 131.5 units/acre

Floor Area Ratio: 0.45

# Historic/Adaptive Reuse Housing

## Benefits:

- Effective reuse of land
- Reduces urban sprawl
- Maintains original building character
- Respects local and national landmarks
- Conserves material and cultural resources
- Adds to neighborhood character



## Warehouse Artist Lofts

Corner of 11th & R Streets

