

back



Downtown Development

The Development Scene: The Latest Info on 94 Downtown Projects



By Donna Evans, Richard Guzmán, Jon Regardie and Ryan Vaillancourt | Updated 4 days ago

DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - To understand why people are so bullish on Downtown Los Angeles, just look at nearly any neighborhood in the community. Odds are, you'll see a healthy batch of projects moving forward.

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Consider Little Tokyo, where Second Street south of the Doubletree Hotel is giving way to a pair of big apartment complexes. Think of Chinatown, where the Jia Apartments and the Lotus Garden are both scheduled to debut next month. There's the Financial District, where Carmel Partners' 700-unit rental building, complete with a Whole Foods, is rising at Eighth Street and Grand Avenue, with a 2015 opening planned. Then there's the Historic Core, where developments include a dramatic re-envisioning of the Pershing Hotel as low-income housing.

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Not only are a lot of projects happening, but a lot of different *kinds* of projects are happening. In addition to approximately three dozen purely residential plays, there is a replacement for the historic Sixth Street Viaduct and several hotels, including Broadway's boutique Ace Hotel. An Urban Outfitters is also coming to Broadway, in an old theater, and a large brewpub is planned for the former Crazy Gideon's space in the Arts District.

Everywhere you turn, there is something new to see. In the following pages, Los Angeles Downtown News details the latest information on 94 Downtown projects.

NEW PROJECTS

These projects were either publicly announced, were revived or gained prominence in the past four months.

BARRY SHY PROJECTS: Developer Barry Shy is in the planning stage for three new residential projects that he expects will break ground within 12 months; the structures would be built concurrently. They include the transformation of a 12-story building at Broadway and Olympic Boulevard, immediately south of the under-construction Ace Hotel. Shy plans to convert it into 150 apartments. At the same time, he is working on a 250-unit apartment building on the parking lot south of the first project. The building would rise 13 stories along Broadway, but would be 20 stories tall on the Olympic side. He is planning a third structure at 916 S. Hill St.; it would have 250 apartments in a 20- or 21-story tower. Shy plans to build the three projects at the same time as SB Omega, a 40-story tower planned for Sixth and Main streets.

DELIJANI BROADWAY THEATERS: The plan to reactivate four historic Broadway theaters is moving forward, said Kate Bartolo, a land-use consultant working on the project with the Delijani family. In June, the city Zoning Administrator approved liquor and various other permits for close to a dozen proposed bars, restaurants and lounges at the Palace (630 S. Broadway), Los Angeles (615 S. Broadway), State (703 S. Broadway) and Tower (802 S. Broadway) theaters. The approval consolidates permits for all four venues so they can be developed as a single "theater complex." The most extensive work would take place at the Los Angeles Theatre, where plans call for two restaurants and two bars, all with outdoor patios. Bartolo said the Delijanis are now looking for renters for the spaces in the approximately century-old buildings. There is no timeline yet on when new businesses would open in the theaters.

PACMUTUAL BUILDING: Rising Realty Partners, the father-son company run by Nelson and Christopher Rising, is updating the 1921 Pacific Mutual Building at 523 W. Sixth St. The Risings paid \$60 million for the Financial District landmark in 2012 and have their headquarters there. Chinatown-based architecture firm Johnson Fain is overseeing the architectural and interior improvements on the complex that is comprised of three buildings anchored by a 12-story Beaux Arts edifice. The project will include the creation of a pocket park with an 80-foot-high wall. A landscaped courtyard on Sixth Street will hold patio dining for the restaurants Tender Greens and Le Pain Quotidien. The courtyard is expected to open this fall.

REDBIRD AT VIBIANA: A late fall opening is expected for a restaurant from Bill Chait and chef Neal Fraser. The approximately \$2 million establishment will fill a ground floor space of a rectory adjacent to the former St. Vibiana's cathedral. The property at Second and Main streets is owned by Tom Gilmore and Richard Weintraub, who are also partners in the project. Redbird would be Chait's third Downtown restaurant.

THE BLOC: Developer Wayne Ratkovich's \$160 million plan to transform Macy's Plaza into a modern office and retail hub has been renamed The Bloc. Ratkovich closed on the acquisition from Jamison Properties this spring, and Downtown-based architecture firm Johnson Fain is handling the planning and design on the 40-year-old complex bounded by Seventh, Eighth, Hope and Flower streets. The complex holds a 700,000-square-foot office tower, a 487-room Sheraton hotel and a 400,000-square-foot shopping area anchored by a 240,000-square-foot Macy's. Plans call for creating an open-air complex on the street level, with the towering, unfriendly brick walls being replaced by windows and dining terraces. Ratkovich previously undertook renovations of historic Downtown structures including the Oviatt Building and Fine Arts buildings at theblocdowntown.com.

TOPAZ: Jade Enterprises, a development company with a long history in the Fashion District, has submitted plans for a 159-unit apartment complex in the Historic Core, but is still waiting on entitlements, said a company spokesman. The plan calls for erecting a seven-story building at 550 S. Main St. on what is now a parking lot. The Jade spokesman would not comment on specifics of the plans, but according to documents filed with the

city, the project, dubbed Topaz, is just north of the Santa Fe Lofts at Sixth and Main streets. It would stretch between Main and Los Angeles streets. The proposal would require some special city approvals, including a transfer of floor area rights to allow the proposed density.

TRACTION AVENUE BREWPUB: Following a neighborhood uproar, Downtown nightlife proprietor Cedd Moses has scrapped a 3,000-square-foot bar from his project at 828 Traction Ave., but is moving forward with the rest of the 17,320-square-foot, 258-seat brewpub. Moses' license would allow 5,000 barrels of beer to be sold off-site annually, and the restaurant would have full alcohol service, said Eddie Navarrette, chief consultant for F.E. Design & Consulting, which is representing the project. More than half of the business, which would occupy the site of the former Crazy Gideon's electronics store), would be dedicated to manufacturing and kitchen and beer service, Navarrette said. The craft beer would be brewed on site, with the facility also offering 27 skeeball lanes and two ping pong tables. Also in response to neighborhood protests, the project's two outdoor patios would close at 11 p.m.

URBAN OUTFITTERS/RIALTO THEATRE: Construction has begun on the transformation of the 1917 Rialto Theatre into an Urban Outfitters, said Jessica Wethington McLean from the office of 14th District City Councilman José Huizar. The project at 810 S. Broadway will restore the theater's marquee. The 10,000-square-foot store is scheduled to open in early 2014.

URBAN VILLAGE AT SOUTH PARK: A groundbreaking for a housing complex from Orange County-based development company Urban Village has been pushed to the end of the year, said founder Brett Shaves. The firm expects an approximately 16-month construction process for a seven-story, 100-unit building that will have four live/work residences on the ground floor. The site at 1027 S. Olive St. south of Olympic Boulevard is currently a parking lot. The project, Urban Village at South Park, would rise adjacent to the AT&T Center and the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. Studios in the building would range from \$1,400-\$1,600, and one bedrooms would go for approximately \$1,750-\$1,900.

RESIDENTIAL

916 GEORGIA ST. : Bruce Beck, a spokesman for TRG, a Century City real estate services firm, declined to provide an update on the project that has been proposed for 916 Georgia St. in South Park. The developer had previously announced plans to turn a three-story apartment complex near L.A. Live into luxury rentals. TRG in the spring paid \$3.05 million for what it said is a 100-year-old building at 916 Georgia St. The 18,000-square-foot structure is on the same block as the under-construction Marriott hotels complex. Initial plans called for TRG to spend \$1 million on upgrades to the building by next March.

950 E. THIRD ST. : Legendary Development is finalizing the site plan for a 472-unit apartment complex on a six-acre site that abuts the Southern California Institute of Architecture. Legendary hopes to break ground next spring, said project spokesman John Lytell. The development, which calls for seven structures to rise around a 922-space parking facility, already has entitlements. To proceed, Legendary needs approval for a site plan change, which it is expected to get. The project at 950 E. Third St. would be comprised of five- to six-story structures. Once it starts, construction would take about three years, with a first phase of 248 units. The project cost has not been finalized.

1027 WILSHIRE: Planning and the search for financing for an apartment complex at 1027 Wilshire Blvd. in City West continues, said Hamid Behdad of the Central City Development Group. The company is partnering on the proposed 376-unit project with the Amidi Real Estate Group. The development would be across the street from 1010 Wilshire, a corporate housing complex that Amidi created. The building would also contain 6,500 square feet of retail and 5,000 square feet of office space. The timeline will depend on how long it takes to secure financing, said Behdad.

1111 SUNSET: Exterior work on the former Metropolitan Water District headquarters at 1111 Sunset Blvd., which developer Linear City is converting into 92 apartments, is 80% complete, said company partner Yuval Bar-Zemer. The project is on target for occupancy in January, added Bar-Zemer, whose company also created the Arts District's Biscuit Company and Toy Factory lofts. Linear City paid \$6.8 million for the seven-story structure just east of Dodger Stadium. Residences will measure 800-1,000 square feet. The 1973 building was originally designed by William Pereira. At linear-city.com.

AVA LITTLE TOKYO: The structural concrete for a two-level underground parking garage was recently poured for the first part of a two-building project by Avalon Bay Communities in Little Tokyo. Crews are now framing the 104-unit, six-story apartment building at the southeast corner of Second and Los Angeles streets. Phase one will include 13,500 square feet of retail space and is scheduled to open in late 2014. Work is also underway on phase two, a 176-apartment building with street level townhouses facing a promenade. Completion of phase two is expected in early 2015.

AVANT: A topping off has occurred and windows and drywall are being installed in a pair of seven-story buildings that comprise the first phase of the \$154 million Avant in South Park, said Kim Manning, a representative of developer Century West Partners. A fourth quarter opening is expected for the project that will bring 247 apartments to two former parking lots at 1360 S. Figueroa St. and 1355 S. Flower St. The structures will be connected by a walkway. Construction on phase two, a building at 1420 S. Figueroa St. with 193 units, began in late April. Excavation and shoring for an underground parking lot is complete and wood framing is scheduled to begin early next year for that portion of the project. The complex, which will create a total of 443 units, will hold studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments as well as live-work residences above 11,000 square feet of retail space. The project will include a fitness center, outdoor pool and media room. At centurywestpartners.com/avant.

BALTIMORE AND KING EDWARD HOTELS: Eric Shomof, vice president of Pacific Investments and the son of longtime Downtown developer Izek Shomof, said the family is slowly working on beautifying the common areas of the hotels at Fifth and Los Angeles streets. The vision includes reactivating the ground-floor retail spaces, which had been used for storage or shut down for more than 30 years. Izek Shomof purchased the buildings between Skid Row and the Historic Core in 2012 and has been overseeing a phased upgrade of the 265-unit Baltimore and the 150-room King Edward hotel. The work is being conducted in a manner that doesn't displace current residents, the younger Shomof said. There is no anticipated completion date for the buildings, he said.

BARKER BLOCK: Construction continues on phase two of the Barker Block, and model units are slated to open in the Arts District development in December, one month after the sales gallery begins operating. Developer CityView and its financial partner, Blackstone, are behind the \$25 million second phase, which will create 68 for-sale lofts and townhomes. Kor Group, which developed the 241-condominium first phase in 2006, remains involved in the project, and will market the second phase. The 72,451-square-foot effort at 530 S. Hewitt St. will create lofts that range from 650-2,000 square feet and townhomes that are 1,100-1,300 square feet. Interior elements will include steel staircases with wood steps and dual-pane windows. The project is also incorporating exposed brick, heavy timber beams and other historic elements from the nearly century-old building originally constructed for the Barker Furniture Company. Prices have not yet been determined.

DA VINCI: Work continues on developer G.H. Palmer Associates' 526-unit apartment complex in City West and an opening is expected early next year for the 578,172-square-foot project at 909 W. Temple St., said company head Geoff Palmer. The project, rising on a 193,000-square-foot lot, will have five floors of housing above three levels of parking and 8,200 square feet of street-front retail. Residences will contain stainless steel appliances and granite countertops. The project will offer a fitness center, a pool and barbecue areas. The Da Vinci's design follows the same Italian-inspired style as Palmer's other apartment complexes in Downtown. At thedavinciapts.com.

EIGHTH AND GRAND APARTMENTS: San Francisco-based Carmel Partners broke ground in January on a 700-unit apartment complex at Eighth Street and Grand Avenue, and in July the company and Whole Foods announced that a 42,000-square-foot supermarket would open there in 2015. Crews have completed excavation and shoring for the four-level underground parking structure and will begin pouring foundations shortly, said Dan Garibaldi, the firm's senior vice president of development. Since buying the three-acre property last year for \$63 million, Carmel has made some modifications including a façade redesign and the addition of retail space and parking. With most units featuring floor-to-ceiling glass and balconies, Carmel is building the entire development in a single phase. The apartments are scheduled to open in fall 2015.

EIGHTH AND HOPE APARTMENTS: Construction continues on Wood Partners' 22-story apartment tower in South Park. As of last month, eight floors of the 290-unit building at 801 S. Hope St. were visible. The project by the Atlanta-based developer calls for one- and two-bedroom residences with floor-to-ceiling glass walls,

balconies, a pool deck and a six-floor garage with two underground levels, along with 5,000 square feet of retail space. Completion is expected by late 2014.

FOURTH AND BROADWAY TOWER: Izek Shomof, who has turned a number of old Historic Core buildings into modern housing, is working on what would be his first ground-up project. Architects are currently preparing designs for a tower at least 22 stories high, with up to 400 units, on the southeast corner of Fourth Street and Broadway. The tower would rise where a one-story retail building with rooftop parking now stands. Shomof's son, Eric Shomof, vice president of Pacific Investments, said they are working with several city departments, but declined to offer additional details.

G12: A 640-unit residential complex at 12th Street and Grand Avenue is now known as G12. Developer Sonny Astani and parking lot giant L&R Group are in the plan check stage for the \$250 million project that Astani said is slated to break ground early next year. Astani and L&R purchased the land last year for \$29 million. The site is bounded by 12th and Olive streets, Pico Boulevard and Grand Avenue. The partnership is planning a two-phase development, with the initial segment consisting of a 347-unit, seven-story structure. The complex will eventually have 42,000 square feet of retail space. The property currently operates as a parking lot.

GATEWAYS APARTMENTS: SRO Housing Corp. expects to finish construction on a 108-unit affordable housing project by the end of this month, said Joseph Corcoran, SRO's director of development. The project is rising on a formerly vacant 22,000-square-foot lot at Fifth and San Pedro streets. All apartments will be efficiency units with an average size of 300 square feet. The project will aim for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification. Crews have installed solar panels on the roof and are doing interior and exterior finishes, Corcoran said. At srohousing.org.

HELLMAN/BANCO POPULAR BUILDING: According to the most recent information available, Neighborhood Effort, a development team run by Allen Gross and his wife Arax Harutunian, is in the plan check stage for a conversion of the Herman H. Hellman building (also known as the Banco Popular Building) at Fourth and Spring streets. The project would create 212 apartments, 20% of which would be set aside as affordable housing. Plans call for units that would average 610 square feet, with an overall range of 481-1,576 square feet. Once construction begins it would take about 18 months.

JADE ENTERPRISES PROJECT: Jade Enterprises, a commercial property owner with significant holdings in the Fashion District, is still looking to get city entitlements for a 419-unit, two-building complex at Pico Boulevard and Flower Street, said a company spokesman. Jade has submitted plans to the city to build its first Downtown residential project; the complex would rise on two side-by-side parking lots over 42,000 square feet of commercial space.

JIA APARTMENTS: The first move-ins for the \$92 million project from developer Equity Residential are expected to begin in October, said Allison Geiman, a project representative. The Jia will open in phases with full completion expected by early 2015. Work began last year on the six-story edifice at 639-643 Cesar Chavez Ave., at the southern entrance to Chinatown. The development will house 280 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments and 18,000 square feet of retail. The project is being designed by Thomas P. Cox Architects and will include a plaza, 17-foot wide sidewalks and a 588-car subterranean garage. A temporary leasing office is at 880 N. Alameda St. According to the project's website, studios start at \$1,770 and two-bedrooms begin at \$2,650. At equityapartments.com.

LORENZO: The first phase of the project is complete and move-ins began in May at G.H. Palmer Associates' \$300 million, 950-unit apartment complex, said company head Geoff Palmer. The project sits on a 9.4-acre lot at Flower Street and Adams Boulevard near USC. It includes 495 units and follows the Italian Renaissance-inspired design seen in Palmer's numerous other Downtown projects. It offers four swimming pools, two indoor basketball courts and a sand volleyball court. Rents for the one- to three-bedroom residences pitched to university students start at \$826 a bed. The second phase of the project is under construction and is scheduled to open in March 2014. At thelorenzo.com.

LOTUS GARDEN: An October opening is expected for the \$24 million Lotus Garden apartment complex, said Katelyn Silverwood, a spokeswoman for developer Affirmed Housing Group. A 63-car garage in which vehicles will be moved vertically and horizontally to allow for a space-saving stacking effect is complete. The 60-unit

development at 715 Yale St. is for families earning 30%-60% of the county's median household income. Rents at the eight-story complex will range from \$370 for studios to \$1,236 for a three-bedroom apartment.

NEW PERSHING APARTMENTS: Skid Row Housing Trust is in the process of transforming the former Pershing Hotel at Fifth and Main streets into the New Pershing Apartments. Construction is in the early phase and completion is scheduled for October 2014, said Dana Trujillo, housing development director for SRHT. The former 69-unit residential hotel has been dismantled, though the historic facades have been preserved. The development, designed by Killefer Flammang Architects, will offer studio and one-bedroom units that run 350-500 square feet, roughly three to four times larger than the original SRO units. The new building will offer community space, social service offices, an outdoor courtyard in the center of the building and ground floor commercial space facing both Main and Fifth streets.

OLYMPIC AND BROADWAY APARTMENTS: A groundbreaking is scheduled for January 2014 for developer Geoff Palmer's two-building, ground-up apartment project on two plots at Broadway and Olympic Boulevard. One structure would be a 10-story, 439-apartment building on what is now a parking lot between Broadway and Main Street across from the upcoming Ace Hotel. Plans for the second building call for a six-story, 247-unit structure on a lot on Broadway south of Olympic; the land currently holds a small building that is slated for demolition. The project is a partnership between G.H. Palmer Associates and parking lot giant L&R Group. Unlike Palmer's other projects, which are known for their Italian Renaissance-inspired design, plans call for buildings that fit with the look and style of the neighborhood. They will be clad in a red brick veneer. The G.H. Palmer website says the complex will open in 2015. At ghpalmer.com.

OLYMPIC AND HILL APARTMENTS: The Hanover Company is moving forward on a 281-unit apartment complex at Olympic Boulevard and Hill Street. Crews are currently pouring concrete to form a two-level underground parking garage. The project will have seven floors of housing along with 16,000 square feet of street-level retail, said Aram Chahbazian of TCA Architects, which is handling the designs. The ground floor will also hold three live/work units. Move-ins are scheduled for late 2014. Hanover previously developed the nearby luxury apartment tower 717 Olympic. At tcaarchitects.com/olympic-and-hill.

ONNI TOWER: In February, the Vancouver-based Onni Group broke ground on a 32-story apartment tower at 888 S. Olive St. The project is a week ahead of schedule, according to an Onni Group official, and can already be seen rising two floors above the street. The \$100 million structure will create 303 one-, two- and three-bedroom luxury apartments. The developer is targeting an opening in the first quarter of 2015. The project is the first of three developments that Onni has planned for Downtown.

PWC FAMILY HOUSING: The City West project is about 95% complete, and move-ins are expected by late next month, said Takao Suzuki, a project representative. The 45-unit development at 153 N. Glendale Blvd. includes 22 residences for homeless individuals, along with 54 parking spaces and approximately 4,000 square feet of common space. The development is a partnership of the Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Corporation and the Pilipino Worker's Center.

RELATED TOWER: Work continues on Grand Avenue project developer Related's 19-story luxury apartment tower. Crews are pouring concrete that will become the building's third floor, said Bill Witte, president of Related California. The \$120 million edifice is rising on Grand Avenue just south of the under-construction Broad art museum. The tower will consist mostly of luxury units, but 20% of the 271 apartments will be set aside as affordable housing. The structure represents a scaled-down version of what Related received entitlements for in 2007, when it envisioned two buildings of up to 35 stories. Designed by Miami-based Arquitectonica, the project is slated for a late 2014 completion. Related is in negotiations to bring up to two restaurants to the ground floor. The project will also contain a three-level parking structure.

ROSSLYN HOTEL APARTMENTS: SRO Housing Corp. expects to complete the first part of a three-phase renovation of the 264-unit affordable housing complex at Fifth and Main streets by November, said Joseph Corcoran, SRO's director of development. The nonprofit has relocated 60 tenants who volunteered to take relocation benefits. Another 90 building inhabitants were temporarily moved to other apartments within the property. The company, which bought the Historic Core edifice in 2010 with help from the Community Redevelopment Agency, is required to preserve the affordable residences. During the first phase, crews performed lead and asbestos remediation. The work includes the addition of a restroom and kitchenette to all

apartments and a restoration of the lobby, during which a now-covered 1,500-square-foot skylight will be revealed. The project cost, including acquisition of the building, is \$33 million. At srohousing.org.

SARES-REGIS LITTLE TOKYO: Developer Sares-Regis Group recently broke ground on a 240-unit apartment complex in Little Tokyo, according to a representative of project architect TCA Architects. Construction on the development at 232 E. Second St. is expected to take two years. Crews are currently doing excavation work on what was until recently a parking lot. The seven-story building is slated to include 17,000 square feet of retail space, according to the developer's website. At sares-regis.com.

SB OMEGA: Developer Barry Shy is still in the planning stage for a 40-story tower that would rise at 601 S. Main St. The 350-unit development would include 35 residential floors over a five-level, 1,200-space parking facility. Shy is currently preparing a geological report required by the city while an architect works on designs. The building would be Shy's sixth Historic Core apartment project, but his first ground-up development. He plans to break ground on the project within the next 12 months, along with three other Downtown residential buildings.

SINGER SEWING MACHINE BUILDING: Seismic work will begin at the Singer Sewing Machine Building at 806 S. Broadway within the next month, said Steve Needleman, who runs the Downtown property firm Anjac Fashion. Needleman is converting the eight-story commercial edifice into eight apartments, with one residence and three full bathrooms on each floor. Each unit will span 6,000 square feet, with the penthouse stretching to 9,000 square feet. All units will have a patio and the penthouse will offer a rooftop terrace. The building, which rises between the Tower and Rialto theaters just south of Eighth Street, had long been home to garment manufacturers. Occupancy is slated for 2015, Needleman said.

SPRING STREET APARTMENTS/GARAGE: A complete redesign with a team of architects new to the project, Martinez & Cutri Corporation, is underway for Downtown Management's apartment building proposed for the lot on Spring Street between the Spring Arcade Building and the Alexandria Hotel. Vice President Greg Martin said the company headed by Joseph Hellen is now looking to build a 40-story residential structure with six levels of parking and one floor of retail. Downtown Management had been planning a 12-story effort for the site in the heart of the Historic Core, but Hellen was not happy with the way the design was going, Martin said. Downtown Management is in the preliminary stage of getting city officials to sign off on the changes, he said. The project does not yet have a budget or firm timeline.

STAR APARTMENTS: Skid Row Housing Trust's Star Apartments is 90% complete and is expected to receive its certificate of occupancy by early October, said Dana Trujillo, housing development director for SRHT. Construction crews are currently removing exterior scaffolding, preparing to stucco the interior courtyard and are getting ready to paint the interior common spaces. The Michael Maltzan-designed permanent supportive housing complex is comprised of 102 prefabricated housing units stacked above a commercial structure at Sixth and Maple streets. All of the prefabricated residential units are complete with finishes and appliances installed. The development also features an entire floor dedicated to health and wellness activities, including a running track, basketball court, exercise room, community kitchen, library and community gardens. The County Department of Health Services will operate a medical clinic and office in two street-level retail spaces.

THE CHELSEA: Due to permitting issues, plans are being redesigned and construction has been delayed again on the \$5 million project at 216 W. Fifth St. Developer Nick Hadim said construction could now start by October. The redesign will allow the project to meet code requirements and could mean the addition of an extra staircase and a change in the number of units, said Hadim; initial plans had called for 28 apartments. Completion is still expected sometime next year, he said. The structure was built as an annex to the Alexandria Hotel in 1910, but a dispute between two property owners led to it being walled off from the rest of the building in 1934. The seven-story former hotel is nicknamed the Ghost Building.

TITLE INSURANCE BUILDING: According to the most recent information available, Bel-Air based Capital Foresight is planning to convert the Title Insurance Building at 433 S. Spring St. into an as-yet-undetermined number of residential units. The company has yet to finalize its proposal but had expected to submit plans to begin the entitlement process for the 1913 Art Deco structure in the spring. The deal is tied in to the adjacent building at 419 S. Spring St., where an entity called PNK I Group plans to create a hotel. The status of the hotel deal is uncertain.

MIXED USE

BLOSSOM PLAZA: The start of construction on Blossom Plaza has been pushed back until early October at the request of newly elected First District City Councilman Gil Cedillo, said Frank Frallicciardi of developer Forest City Residential West. Frallicciardi said Cedillo wanted to delay the work, which was scheduled to begin in August, until after the Sept. 21 Chinatown Autumn Moon Festival, which brings thousands of people to the neighborhood's Central and West plazas. A ceremonial groundbreaking took place in May for the long-delayed \$95 million project; that event was orchestrated by now termed-out Councilman Ed Reyes. The project, at 900 N. Broadway, will replace the shuttered Little Joe's restaurant with about 240 market rate and affordable rental units, 20,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, a 175-space parking garage and a public plaza that would connect Broadway to the Gold Line station. The construction delay is not expected to push back the 2015 opening, said Frallicciardi.

CITY MARKET: The environmental impact report phase is underway for the 10 acres of mostly unused produce warehouses bounded by Ninth, San Pedro, San Julian and 12th streets, said Sean Rossall, a spokesman for the City Market project. The first scoping meeting has been held and Rossall said a draft EIR is expected to be readied by the end of the year. The project, overseen by City Market owner Peter Fleming, would transform the 1909 produce mart into a \$1 billion hub of housing, office space, hotel rooms and a college campus. It would include 945 residential units, 210 hotel rooms, 225,000 square feet of retail and 295,000 square feet of creative office space. The first phase calls for transforming two existing buildings: One would become 150 housing units, and the other would be an office structure. It could be 20 years before the entire project is complete. At citymarketla.com.

MEDALLION 2.0: The effort to reinvigorate a mixed-use complex in the Historic Core continues. Developer Saeed Farkhondehpour, who opened the \$125 million Medallion on the northeast corner of Fourth and Main streets three years ago, is embarking on a second phase, which would add 300 residential units in three structures facing Main and Third streets. That, he said, could be a year away. Coming sooner is a reinvention of the open area and about 180 empty small retail spaces that will bring dozens of restaurants, a weekly farmers market and potentially a movie theater to the complex that already has 96 apartments. Farkhondehpour is teaming with John Edwards, president of Raw Inspiration Inc. and California Certified Farmers Markets, on the retail revival. So far six restaurants have been announced for Medallion 2.0 including Café Uzes, a 2,000-square-foot eatery by Tara Thomas of Traxx, and Downtown outposts of Bigmista's Barbecue and Bread Bar bakery.

METROPOLIS: IDS Real Estate Group has reached a deal with a Chinese company that plans to invest in the \$1 billion, long-stalled South Park mega-project. Shanghai Greenland Group Co. has agreed to buy a stake in the planned hotel, residential and office complex that is entitled for the 6.5-acre site at Francisco Street, between Eighth and Ninth streets. The deal is not finalized. The site could accommodate up to five buildings and would likely have a mix of office and hotel space. If the deal closes, Greenland and IDS would look to break ground as soon as possible, an IDS official said.

ONE SANTA FE: The \$160 million One Santa Fe continues on schedule. Framing is up and windows are being installed in the Arts District campus, according to a spokesperson for Canyon-Johnson Urban Funds Investments, one of the developers of the project. Roof, plumbing and electrical system installation have also begun. The first move-ins at the 438-unit development are expected in fall 2014 with completion of the project by the end of the year. The massive complex rising east of the Southern California Institute of Architecture will be a six-story building with 78,000 square feet of retail and commercial space. One Santa Fe will include a 15,000-square-foot space slated for a grocery store, a 47,400-square-foot plaza facing Santa Fe Avenue and 802 underground parking spaces. Twenty percent of the units will be reserved for low-income tenants. The development team also includes McGregor Company, Polis Builders, Cowley Real Estate Partners and Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group.

THE GRAND: Grand Avenue project developer Related received an extension in May to start construction in March 2015 on a mixed-use complex at Second Street and Grand Avenue, said Bill Witte, president of Related California. Related plans to build a residential tower near the corner of Grand Avenue and Second Street that would likely be taller than the company's 19-story building rising just south of The Broad museum. Related this month submitted a concept plan to the Grand Avenue Joint Powers Authority, which will review the proposal

and provide feedback, Witte said. The site, which is across the street from Walt Disney Concert Hall, was originally slated to be phase one of the Grand Avenue project and called for a \$2 billion mixed-use complex with hotels, condominiums and retail designed by Frank Gehry. Related has moved on from that proposal and Witte has said that future development will depend on changes in the market.

WILSHIRE GRAND REPLACEMENT: Demolition of the old Wilshire Grand hotel is just about complete, with the building having been razed to ground level in July. Workers are now removing the old parking levels and excavating down to where the new ones will go, said Sean Rossall, a spokesman for the \$1 billion development on the northwest corner of Seventh and Figueroa streets. A groundbreaking on Korean Air's 71-story structure with 900 hotel rooms and 400,000 square feet of office space is slated for December or early 2014. The project, being overseen by AC Martin, would be the first Downtown high-rise to utilize a sloped roof, instead of a flat surface to accommodate a full helipad. The building, slated to be the tallest structure west of the Mississippi, is scheduled to be complete in December 2016 and open the following March.

CIVIC AND NONPROFIT

BROADWAY REVITALIZATION: Phase one of the Broadway Streetscape Master Plan, which calls for widening sidewalks, creating additional sidewalk dining and increasing loading areas to help businesses, is set to be implemented by the end of the year. The effort, dubbed a "dress rehearsal" by the office of 14th District City Councilman José Huizar, will simulate a long-term aim to create more pedestrian space on the street and reduce auto traffic, said Jessica Wethington McLean of Huizar's office. Huizar is more than halfway through his 10-year Bringing Back Broadway initiative. Later this year the recipients of 10 Broadway façade lighting grants on the corridor between Second Street and Olympic Boulevard will be announced. The money will pay for design, permitting and construction of lighting improvements. Meanwhile, work continues on an effort to create a set of guidelines to activate the 1.5 million square feet of vacant space above street level; Wethington McLean said they expect a proposed ordinance this year. Also underway is the effort to help re-create historic signs and encourage neon and vertical "blade" signs on the street. The activity comes as more retail leases have been signed. Urban Outfitters is under construction on a space in the Rialto Theatre at 812 S. Broadway and Swedish firm Acne is preparing a location in the Eastern Columbia Building at Ninth Street and Broadway.

BUDOKAN OF LOS ANGELES: The fundraising effort for the Little Tokyo Service Center's proposed \$22 million recreation center has reached the halfway point, said Scott Ito, the project manager. The most recent contribution came from the city in the form of a \$1.3 million grant awarded through Prop K. Ito said the second half of the campaign will focus on obtaining donations from corporations and foundations. The project would create a 38,000-square-foot facility between Second and Third streets that will include a four-court gymnasium, community space and a rooftop garden with a jogging track. The space would be used for several sports with an emphasis on martial arts tournaments. Groundbreaking is expected in 2015 with completion approximately 16 months later.

FEDERAL COURTHOUSE: A groundbreaking ceremony was held Aug. 8 for a \$400 million federal courthouse. The approximately 600,000-square-foot facility will rise on a 3.6-acre site at the southwest corner of First Street and Broadway. The property in the Civic Center will have 24 courtrooms and 32 judges' chambers and will house district judges, jury assembly facilities, offices for the U.S. Marshals and other services. The city's federal courthouse operations are currently split between the 1938 Spring Street Courthouse and the 1992 Roybal Federal Building. The new courthouse is being designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Architects. Clark Construction is the builder. Completion is expected by 2016.

FIGUEROA CORRIDOR BIKEWAY: The environmental impact report has been completed and planning work continues for the My Figueroa project, which would run from Seventh Street in Downtown to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, with a spur along 11th Street. The project would remake a three-mile section of Figueroa into a more bike- and pedestrian-friendly corridor. Two segments of the northbound path would feature a curb that separates lanes, called "cycle tracks" from vehicular traffic. Sidewalks would be widened, more trees would be planted and improved street lighting would be installed. Prop 1C bond funds, which must be spent by the end of 2014, would fund the \$20 million project, and construction must commence by January to meet the deadline. Some area businesses have voiced opposition to the effort to eliminate lanes for cars. At myfigueroa.com.

FIRST AND BROADWAY GRAFFITI PIT: After sitting derelict for decades behind an iron fence, the nearly

two-acre site across from City Hall is slated to be turned into a park. The city purchased the long-blighted, state-owned parcel in the Civic Center in June for \$7.5 million, using a mix of fees paid to the city by developers, along with funds allotted to the Department of Recreation and Parks for green space investment. The site, known as the graffiti pit because it was routinely tagged, became available after Gov. Jerry Brown ordered state officials to sell surplus property to help shore up budget woes. The timeline for developing a park and its design are uncertain, but officials believe the project will take two to three years. It is still unknown how the park would interface with Grand Park, which is immediately north of the site.

GOOD SAMARITAN EXPANSION: Construction began in mid-August on a 190,000-square-foot medical office building at Wilshire Boulevard and Witmer Street in City West, said George Okita, a project representative. Foundation concrete is now being poured for the \$80 million effort that will create a facility with a pharmacy, an outpatient surgical center and five levels of physicians' offices. Plans call for a December 2014 completion. The City West building will also house the hospital's cardiology, orthopedics and primary care clinics.

HALL OF JUSTICE: The \$234 million renovation of the Hall of Justice is on track for completion by the end of 2014, with an opening in early 2015, said Kerjon Lee, public affairs manager for the County Department of Public Works. Pressure washing of the exterior is about halfway done; it will eradicate the gray grime that has built up over the decades to reveal the building's original white granite exterior. The renovation of the 1925 structure at 211 W. Temple St. includes elevator upgrades, new electrical and mechanical systems and the building of an underground 1,000-car garage. When completed, the first floor will feature a display area with some of the building's historic elements including a cellblock that once held Charles Manson. The edifice was red-tagged after being damaged in the 1994 Northridge Earthquake. The revamped building will house the Sheriff's Department and the District Attorney's office.

LOS ANGELES RIVER: The ongoing effort to revitalize the Los Angeles River took another step forward on May 27, when for the first time in about 80 years a stretch of the waterway was opened to the public for kayaking, walking and fishing. The Pilot Recreational Zone is a 2.5-mile stretch of the river in Elysian Park and is managed by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. The Recreational Zone was open through Sept. 2. Previously, the Environmental Protection Agency had designated the river as "traditional navigable waters," which led to supervised canoe and kayak trips down a 1.5-mile stretch in the San Fernando Valley. Meanwhile, a recently awarded \$2.5 million federal grant will study ways to activate the river in communities such as Atwater Village, Cypress Park and Lincoln Heights. The Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study has been included in President Barack Obama's 2013 budget.

LOS ANGELES STATE HISTORIC PARK: Construction will start in late January on an \$18 million renovation of the 32-acre park on the edge of Chinatown, said Sean Woods, a California State Parks superintendent. The park will be closed for a year as part of the project. The renovation will add a welcome pavilion, a promenade for a farmers market, an amphitheater, wetlands areas and infrastructure improvements such as permanent restrooms. Woods said that keeping part of the park open during the construction process would have made the work take much longer. The park is currently a busy concert venue. Woods said he expects most events to return once the park reopens in 2015.

LOS ANGELES STREETCAR: An application to secure \$52 million from the federal government's Small Starts program will be filed by the end of the year. It is needed to make up the construction difference for the \$125 million circulator; last year, residents within a few blocks of the proposed project approved a plan to tax local property owners (including condominium owners) up to \$85 million to cover a majority of the capital costs. The streetcar would run from L.A. Live to the Civic Center with main spines on Broadway and Hill Street. Streetcar officials hope to open the project by 2016. The City Council in March approved a 30-year plan that would provide up to \$294 million to fund maintenance and operations. The money would come from the Measure R sales tax, but would not kick in until the streetcar is built.

MERCED THEATRE RENOVATION: Work continues on the upgrade of the 1870 Merced Theatre. On Sept. 27, the City Council is expected to approve an agreement with L.A. Opera to operate a public performance space at the theater. According to a motion authored by 14th District Councilman José Huizar, the opera would use the theater space, which is on the second floor, for various events. In April the council approved moving the city's Channel 35 television station from its current Little Tokyo home to the theater at the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. The \$23 million project would require seismic upgrades and an elevator that

could accommodate freight and disabled access. The project is expected to take about three years. The annual savings in lease costs would be \$341,710. Channel 35 airs all City Council meetings and other programs related to city departments and events.

METRO BUS FACILITY: Metro has completed approximately 40% of the Division 13 Bus Maintenance and Operations facility. Excavation for the project on the northeast corner of Vignes Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue is nearly complete, and crews have begun pouring foundations and building columns. The first pouring of decks above ground will occur in approximately two months. The previous budget of \$95 million has risen to \$104 million due to increases in moving utilities. The project is intended to hold 200 buses and will contain a multi-level garage, a fueling depot and areas for washing vehicles. The development is intended to meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Gold standards and will have, among other elements, a green roof, solar panels and a storm water reclamation system. The project will create 397 parking spaces for District 13 employees. Completion is expected by late summer 2014. At metro.net.

PARKER CENTER REPLACEMENT: A long-awaited draft environmental impact report analyzing proposals for what to do with aged Parker Center was released on Sept. 3. The city is looking at options for the former police headquarters at 150 N. Los Angeles St. The outdated and bedraggled edifice essentially became obsolete in 2009 when most of the LAPD moved into the \$440 million Police Administration Building. The three options are rehabbing the 1955 structure, during which the 319,000-square-foot edifice would be updated with improvements including seismic retrofitting and expanding the parking garage; rehabbing some of the building while tearing down the dilapidated Parker Center jail, and then adding a new structure, creating more than 522,000 square feet of usable space; and razing the building and replacing it with either one or two office structures that could stand up to 450 feet tall and have a total of about 750,000 square feet of space. The public is allowed to comment on the draft EIR through Oct. 21.

REGIONAL CONNECTOR: The Metropolitan Transportation Authority continues preliminary construction activities and final design work for the \$1.37 billion Regional Connector. Crews have been relocating utilities along the 1.9-mile underground light-rail route. The agency's next milestone is awarding a design/build contract for the project; that is expected in October. Major construction of the connector is slated to start late this year; it would entail digging an underground tunnel from Little Tokyo to the Financial District via Second Street, then cutting a trench down Flower Street to Wilshire Boulevard. The project calls for three new underground stations at First Street and Central Avenue, Second Street and Broadway and Second and Hope streets. The project is facing a legal challenge from Japanese Village Plaza, Thomas Properties Group and the Westin Bonaventure Hotel, whose operators fear that construction will hamper business. A trial is expected to start in November. The tentative timeline calls for completion in 2019. At metro.net/projects/connector.

SIXTH STREET VIADUCT: The city Bureau of Engineering tapped the firms of Skanska/Stacy and Witbeck to construct the \$400 million replacement for the Sixth Street Viaduct. Downtown-based HNTB Inc. continues to be the lead designer on the development. Constructed in 1932, the concrete in the existing bridge, which connects Downtown with Boyle Heights, has been subject to an internal chemical condition called Alkali Silica Reaction, which has weakened the viaduct. HNTB's design features a "Ribbon of Arches" that amplifies the sweep and style of the 81-year-old bridge's original look. The project will integrate bicycle and pedestrian access, open space and direct connections to the Los Angeles River. Construction will begin in 2014, though work is not expected to be completed before 2018. Prominent L.A. architects Michael Maltzan and the firm AC Martin are part of the design team. At sixthstreetviaductreplacement.com

CULTURAL/ENTERTAINMENT

FARMERS FIELD: There has been little apparent progress on the plan to build an NFL football stadium in Downtown since March, when Tim Leiweke, the president and CEO of developer Anschutz Entertainment Group and the prime driver of the project, left the company. Leiweke is now working in Canada, and although he has been replaced by Dan Beckerman, and company founder Phil Anschutz pledged to propel the project forward, the public push has slowed dramatically on erecting a 68,000-seat football stadium and renovating the aged Convention Center. AEG's \$1.4 billion project would raze the Convention Center's West Hall and place the stadium where it now stands. A replacement for the lost Convention Center building, dubbed the Pico Hall and being designed by the firm Populous, would rise contiguous to the current Convention Center. Architecture firm Gensler is handling designs of the stadium that would feature a "deployable," or removable roof. AEG has

repeatedly said it would not begin construction until a deal to move a team to L.A. is signed. The project would include a \$10 million expansion of the Blue Line's Pico Station as part of AEG's effort to have 25% of game attendees utilize public transit. Though what will happen with football is unknown, the City Council in June approved a plan to transfer management of the Convention Center to AEG.

ITALIAN AMERICAN MUSEUM: A renovation of the Italian Hall is 65% complete and the city has drafted a deal with a nonprofit group to run the \$4.5 million Italian American Museum of Los Angeles, according to officials with El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. Drywall installation is in progress, the ceiling truss has been repaired and next up is roof repair work, which will include the installation of an air conditioning system. Project completion is expected in early 2014 with the museum inside the 1908 structure opening sometime after that. The museum will be on the second floor of the building at 645 N. Main St. It will house a 4,000-square-foot main showroom and multipurpose space and will have exhibits that can be moved to make way for cultural and educational programs and events. At italianhall.org.

REGENT THEATRE: Interior demolition on the project that will create a new concert venue in the Historic Core is complete, said Darius Sabbaghzadeh, a representative of project head Mitchell Frank. The foundation concrete will be poured this month and will be followed by the installation of the electrical system and a kitchen for the theater at 448 S. Main St. The project will include a pizzeria. Frank owns the concert promotion company Spaceland Productions. Completion of the Regent is expected by early 2014.

THE BROAD: Most of the skylights have been installed, and the drywall installation in the curved lobby walls and ceiling of the \$130 million contemporary art museum The Broad is nearing completion. The installation of the veil, the lattice-like exterior of the project being designed by the New York firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro, is expected to begin in spring 2014, said Karen Denne, a spokeswoman for The Broad Foundation. The museum is rising on top of a three-level, 370-car garage. Once completed, the 120,000-square-foot attraction with approximately 50,000 square feet of exhibition space will house philanthropist Eli Broad's 2,000-piece contemporary art collection. The project on Grand Avenue across from the Colburn School and MOCA will also hold a lecture hall that seats 200 people. At broadartfoundation.org.

BUSINESS

351 S. BROADWAY: Major construction is set to begin by the end of this month on a \$7.5 million renovation of the property at 351 S. Broadway, said architect and developer David Gray. The project will turn the edifice into office space for creative use tenants. It will add a sixth floor and a ground-floor bar; work is expected to take up to two years. The building's original façade, which had been covered for about 60 years, has already been unveiled as part of the renovation. A 12-foot ficus tree that has grown out of the wall near the roof is still there but will be removed as part of the project. Gray is looking for a permanent home for the tree.

845 S. FIGUEROA ST./SMART & FINAL: A 24,000-square-foot Smart & Final Extra opened July 18 on the ground floor of the recently renovated 1969 building at 845 S. Figueroa St. The Commerce-based company signed a 20-year lease for the space in the building that was purchased last year by the State Bar of California (which acquired it from parking lot giant L&R Group, which had initiated the renovation). The upper floors will be occupied by some 280 State Bar employees. They are expected to move in by the end of the year, said Laura Ernde, a State bar spokeswoman.

1130 S. HOPE ST.: According to plans filed with the Department of City Planning, development firm BIMHF, LLC plans to create a 10-story, 44-room boutique hotel with a bar, lounge, meeting spaces and a pool deck. The ground-up construction at 1130 S. Hope St. would mean demolishing nearly half of a 76-room, three-story apartment building while preserving the masonry façade. The developer has previously stated that \$25 million in financing is lined up, but neither a budget nor design details have been released for the South Park project.

ACE HOTEL: A November opening is anticipated for the Ace Hotel, said Jessica Wethington McLean, from the office of 14th District City Councilman José Huizar. Construction is ongoing for the project that is transforming the 13-floor United Artists Theatre at 933 S. Broadway into a 180-room hotel. When it opens it will have a 1,600-seat entertainment space in the theater, a pool, restaurant and bar. It will also hold live theater programs. The hotel was built in 1927 by United Artists founders D.W. Griffith, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford. At acehotel.com.

ALAMEDA SQUARE: Landowner Evoq Properties has completed the upgrade of the 777 Alameda building, and VF Corp moved the headquarters for two of its fashion brands, Splendid and Ella Moss, into the top two floors of the property in May, said Christie Ly, a spokeswoman for Evoq. The floors offer 82,000 square feet of creative office space. The 1.4-million-square-foot, four-building industrial complex at Seventh and Alameda streets has long been dominated by tenant American Apparel, which occupies two buildings and 700,000 square feet of space. Evoq is planning upgrades for the last remaining vacant building as part of a plan to turn the complex into an active mixed-use center. The proposal includes upgrading the common outdoor areas between the buildings. The timeline, Ly said, depends on when the company can sign additional tenants. At alamedasquare.com.

CLARK HOTEL: Construction on the 347-room venture at 426 S. Hill St. is complete but a labor dispute has slowed the opening of the hotel just north of Pershing Square. An appeal hearing in front of the City Planning Commission is set for Sept. 24 to determine if the project will receive its final city approvals. The project has garnered opposition from Unite Here Local 11, the politically connected hotel workers union. If approved, the 11-story boutique hotel could open by October. It would include an 11,500-square-foot banquet space.

CLEANTECH MANUFACTURING CENTER: Trammell Crow Company and Principal Real Estate Investors have secured entitlements and grading permits to begin development of the 446,000-square-foot Cleantech Manufacturing Center, said Jason Gremillion, vice president of Trammell Crow. CBRE, the project's listing agent, is marketing the property to clean technology and other tenants seeking state of the art industrial/manufacturing buildings. The 20-acre project is at 2445 E. Washington Blvd. and represents the southern bookend of the four-mile long Cleantech Corridor on the eastern edge of Downtown. The project would consist of three buildings. Gremillion said the project is on track to be complete and ready for occupancy by the second quarter of 2014.

CLIFTON'S CAFETERIA: Andrew Meieran, the owner of Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria, said he expects to open the first part of a multi-phase project in the first quarter of 2014. Clifton's, which occupies the ground floor of the four-story building, will feature an updated cafeteria, though it will hold on to its historic character, and a bar will be added to its mezzanine. The second floor will become a jazz and blues lounge called The Brookdale, and a speakeasy-style bar will operate in the basement. The third floor is slated to become a tiki bar dubbed Pacific Seas. The top level will host a fine dining restaurant, and an existing bakery will be renovated and sell wholesale and retail pastry products. The project at 648 S. Broadway has been repeatedly delayed, largely from the challenges of working in a historic building with outdated systems.

DESMOND BUILDING: Lincoln Property Company is in the midst of processing permits for a renovation of the Desmond Building, a five-story structure in South Park. Working with architecture firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, Lincoln plans to turn the 1917 building at 11th and Hope streets into a luxury creative office and retail complex. The firm is on track to start construction by the end of the year, said Lincoln Vice President Rob Kane. Lincoln plans to spend about \$9 million to convert the building and add a sixth floor. Other work will include updating the mechanical systems and interior finishes and restoring windows. Plans also call for restaurant and retail space on the ground floor. If construction starts this year, occupancy could begin in May 2014, said Kane.

EMBASSY HOTEL AND AUDITORIUM: According to the most recent information available, plans to turn the vacant Embassy Hotel and Trinity Auditorium in South Park into a 183-room hotel remain on hold. The New York-based Chetrit Group had been pursuing a plan to upgrade the approximately 12,000-square-foot theater in the building and turn the historic structure at 849 S. Grand Ave. into the Empire Hotel, with a 7,600-square-foot outdoor garden, an approximately 2,000-square-foot ground-floor restaurant with more than 200 seats, a lobby bar and a lounge.

LA KRETZ INNOVATION CAMPUS/CLEANTECH INCUBATOR: A groundbreaking was held in June for the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator, a 30,000-square-foot clean technology business incubator in the Arts District. Ian Harris, the vice president of partnerships for LACI, said the project at 525 S. Hewitt St. (411 S. Hewitt St. was the incubator's temporary location) is moving into the construction phase. The DWP paid \$11.1 million for the building on the block bounded by Hewitt, Colyton, Fifth and Palmetto streets. The project will have a workforce training component, and the LADWP's Energy Efficiency Group is slated to house its testing and demonstration labs on site. The project also includes converting an asphalt parking lot on the corner of Fifth and Hewitt streets into a public park. At laincubator.org.

L.A. HOTEL RENOVATION: A sign outside the establishment at 333 S. Figueroa St. still bears the name L.A. Hotel and states that it will soon become a Hyatt; officials had previously said the name change would occur in the spring. According to the most recent information available, the \$20 million renovation of the former Los Angeles Downtown Marriott is almost complete. The hotel is now part of the Hyatt chain. The renovation includes upgrades to all the guest rooms, along with improvements to the lobby, the meeting and ballroom areas and the restaurants. The hotel has remained open during the renovation.

LITTLE TOKYO GALLERIA: A \$6 million bowling alley, sports bar and entertainment center called X Lanes opened in May as the centerpiece of an ongoing renovation of the 28-year-old mall at 333 S. Alameda St. The 50,000-square-foot facility with 24 bowling lanes also has a 150-seat restaurant, a 100-game arcade, a nine-table billiards room and a sports bar. The upgrade of the 250,000-square-foot galleria will include three more restaurants, though there is no timeline on when they will open, said Jay Chun, the CEO and director of operations for X Lanes. Property owner Three Alameda Plaza also plans \$300,000 in improvements to the bland, gray exterior. That work could start this year, said Chun.

MARRIOTT TOWER: The topping off for the 23-story Marriott Tower took place over the summer, and all of the concrete for the project has been put in place. The \$172 million project from Seattle-based American Life Inc. and Portland's Williams/Dame & Associates remains on schedule to open in July 2014. The framing and drywall work is 65% complete. The pre-cast exterior elements and windows have been installed up to the roof, and finishes will start to be installed in the next few weeks. The rooftop pool and deck are now being installed. The 373,000-square-foot development will hold a 174-room Courtyard by Marriott and a 218-room Residence Inn in a high-rise just north of the Ritz-Carlton/J.W. Marriott. The project is being built by SODO Builders L.A., LLC, with designs by Portland's GBD Architects.

PICO AND FIGUEROA HOTEL: The city is still in the selection process for the proposal it will bring to council members about the Pico and Figueroa housing complex, said Chief Legislative Analyst Gerry Miller. Last fall, the city launched a public bidding competition, asking developers to offer plans for a 19,000-square-foot city-owned parcel across from the Convention Center. The city hopes to sell the site on the northeast corner of Figueroa and 12th streets to a developer that will erect a four-star or boutique hotel. The winning bidder would have to move the proposal through the city entitlements process. The city has not revealed an asking price for the land, but the adjacent 2.7-acre parcel at 1220 S. Figueroa St. sold last year for \$31 million.

RENAISSANCE HOTEL: In March, a press release announced that Anschutz Entertainment Group and Portland-based developer Williams/Dame & Associates had signed an agreement for AEG to sell a 60,000-square-foot parcel that Williams/Dame would turn into a 450-room Renaissance Hotel. However, according to a Williams/Dame spokesman, the final deal has not yet been signed. The companies, the spokesman said, are in serious discussions for the site on the northeast corner of Olympic Boulevard and Georgia Street. The March release had classified the project as a \$200 million hotel that would break ground in the first quarter of 2014 and open two years later. Williams/Dame is developing the nearby \$172 million Marriott hotels project that will bring 392 Courtyard by Marriott and Residence Inn rooms to Downtown.

SPARKLE FACTORY: Alfonso Campos, who is the husband and business partner of prominent jewelry designer Tarina Tarantino, said a search is underway for designers and artists to sell their wares in the ground-floor store of the building at 908 S. Broadway. The couple are converting the long-vacant 1914 building into their business headquarters, and have dubbed it the Sparkle Factory, after Tarantino's designs. The 26,800-square-foot edifice will house design and production operations as well as a store; Alfonso foresees an inventory of women's and men's accessories such as scarves, wallets and cufflinks. Project completion has been pushed back to spring or summer 2014, he said. Campos said an additional possibility is creating a speakeasy type bar in the basement.

OPENED IN THE PAST FOUR MONTHS

WAL-MART NEIGHBORHOOD MARKET: A 34,000-square-foot Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market at 701 W. Cesar Chavez Ave. opened on Sept. 13. The store fills a long-vacant ground floor space at Grand Plaza, a 302-unit senior complex near Downtown's arts high school. The supermarket employs about 65 people and has a meat section, bread baked on site daily and a range of traditional grocery items. There is also a pharmacy in the same complex across an outdoor corridor. The project includes a 140-space parking lot for customers.

CAMINO NUEVO MIRAMAR CAMPUS: The Camino Nuevo High School Miramar Campus, formerly known as Central Region High School No. 12, opened in August. The 500-seat charter high school in City West is run by Camino Nuevo Charter Academy. The school debuted with ninth and 10th grade students, and will add 11th and 12th grade classes over the next two years. The 55,361-square-foot, three-story institution at 1215 W. Miramar St. houses 19 classrooms with 47 underground parking spaces, administrative offices, a dining area, a library and science labs. The school is just east of the Miguel Contreras Learning Complex athletics fields.

HOPE STREET FAMILY CENTER: The community service center moved into a new \$15.7 million headquarters in August. The four-story, 25,500-square-foot Hope Street Margolis Family Center is at 1600 S. Hope St. The project was a partnership between Abode and California Hospital Medical Center. The building includes an outdoor basketball court and a children's play area. The property is slated to secure LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. The organization offers services to low-income families.

LAPD PARK REPLANTING: The Police Administration Building replanting was completed in early summer, said Tonya Durrell, a spokeswoman for the city Department of Public Works. The landscaping overhaul undertaken by the Bureau of Engineering addressed a slew of maintenance mishaps around the \$440 million LAPD headquarters building that opened just four years ago. The \$400,000 renovation included weed eradication, improvements to the irrigation system and the replacement of dead plants and trees.

METRO CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Classes started on Sept. 3 for a charter elementary school that was launched by a group of South Park parents. Metro Charter Elementary occupies a 12,000-square-foot space at 1401 S. Grand Ave. that formerly housed the Hope Street Family Center. The school opened with about 115 students in kindergarten through second grade, with three kindergarten classes and one each for the upper levels. The school will grow by a grade a year. Plans call for more than 500 students when the school expands to fifth grade in 2016. By then, officials plan on finding a different home that can accommodate a larger school.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM: The final major component of a seven-year, \$135 million transformation of the Natural History Museum opened July 14. *Becoming Los Angeles* is a permanent, 14,000-square-foot exhibition that traces the evolution of the city over 500 years. The full upgrade touched on virtually every aspect of the century-old, Exposition Park attraction. A historic structure known as the 1913 Building underwent a full renovation, including seismic upgrading, and the opening two years ago of the Dinosaur Hall doubled the paleontological display space. The museum also received a new entrance positioned to capitalize off the light rail Expo Line, and the Nature Garden transformed the exterior, creating a 3.5-acre garden with 31,000 plants. The vast majority of the funds came from foundations or the private sector. The county and state governments contributed \$45 million.

NINTH STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Classes began at Ninth Street Elementary School on Aug. 13, following the completion of a \$56 million renovation undertaken by the Los Angeles Unified School District. The project at 820 Towne Ave. on the edge of Skid Row removed the approximately 100 outdated bungalows and replaced them with 78,000 square feet of state-of-the-art educational space. The school now offers 33 classrooms and can hold 855 kindergarten to eighth grade students (405 seats are set aside for a Para Los Niños charter middle school that operates on the campus). The school had closed in 2010 so the renovation could take place. Other additions include a library, playgrounds, athletic facilities and a multipurpose room with a large stage, an electronic scoreboard and basketball hoops that can be raised or lowered.

SPRING STREET PARK: The .7-acre Spring Street Park opened on June 17, with a timeline accelerated so that it could debut before Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa left office. The \$8 million facility (\$5 million in land acquisition costs, with construction priced at \$3 million) on Spring between Fourth and Fifth streets is highlighted by a small grassy oval next to a children's play area, though the grass has been hampered by pet owners who treat it as a doggy toilet. The L-shaped park in the middle of the Historic Core includes a fountain, benches, walking paths and a large plaza. The city Department of Recreation and Parks estimates it will cost approximately \$100,000 a year to maintain the park.

URBAN RADISH: The long-awaited Urban Radish held its soft opening on July 4. The 8,200-square-foot upscale market at 660 Mateo St. in the Arts District filled a former metal warehouse known for its large exterior mural of a chipmunk. The store, just steps from the Biscuit Company and Toy Factory lofts, created 25 jobs and

cost about \$1.7 million. It is owned by Carolyn Paxton and Keri Aivazis. Urban Radish stocks an assortment of grocery staples as well as prepared foods, wines, spices, a meat station and a large cheese area. A grand opening ceremony took place on Aug. 17.

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