



Sacramento's Township Nine starts with 180 apartments, light-rail station

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Construction is finally under way for Sacramento's long-planned Township Nine housing project – a live-work-play community planned for 10 square blocks off Richards Boulevard north of downtown.

But amid groundbreaking-day speeches Wednesday, project developers acknowledged that the initial 180 apartments on a former cannery site are the only part of the development with funding in place, other than the initial light-rail station on site.



The money for the rest of the 65-acre project is still being cobbled together.

"It's tough right now," developer Ron Mellon said. "The market has to cooperate."

Despite that economic uncertainty, developers and city officials celebrated what they say is a unique development for Sacramento.

Township Nine will be the first housing, office and retail neighborhood with a light-rail station as a built-in part of its design. The T-9 light-rail station has already opened, offering future residents and current area workers a five-minute ride to and from downtown.

Township Nine also is expected to become downtown's first urban infill project that places high-density housing next to the [American River](#).

If the money can be cobbled together, officials plan a levee-top park with an amphitheater, accessible by car, [bike trail](#) and [light rail](#).

Ultimately, city officials say they hope to see 2,350 apartments and town houses built on the Township Nine site, mixed with offices and retail. Mayor Kevin Johnson said Wednesday he'd love to see a Trader Joe's grocery store there.

Developers say they are in talks to land another major state office building for the site, next to the transit station. The state's new California Highway Patrol and state lottery headquarters are on nearby blocks.

"This is going to be a model for ... the kind of sustainable communities we want to see more of," City Councilman Steve Cohn said.

For now, however, city officials and T-9 developers will say they are pleased to launch the \$40 million Cannery Place Apartments, which will offer housing for below-market renters, most of them people who earn no more than 60 percent of the local median income.

The apartments are funded by Citibank, RBC Capital Markets, but also by state Housing and Community Development Prop. 1-C infrastructure and infill grants, and one of the last state redevelopment grants.

"We got in right under the wire," said La Shelle Dozier, head of the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

Architect Bob Kuchman called the apartment design a "California cinnamon roll," his firm's take on an architectural style called a Texas donut.

The red-brick project consists of five-story apartments encircling a two-story garage hidden in the center. That allows resident parking while leaving the street facades free for offices, retail and town house front stoops.

Township Nine development is being done through a partnership of Nehemiah Corp. of America, UrbanCore-Integral LLC and the John Stewart Co.

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