

MAYOR JAMES K. HAHN'S

# Adaptive Reuse Program



- Creates new housing opportunities
- Revitalizes neighborhoods
- Preserves historic architecture
- Encourages community development
- Stimulates economic investment
- Facilitates mixed-use growth models



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To access the studies, please visit LAHD's web site: <http://www.lacity.org/lahd>

## ABOUT ADAPTIVE REUSE

# Adaptive Reuse is the conversion of existing vacant or underutilized buildings into new residential and live/work spaces

In 1999, the City adopted landmark legislation to encourage the conversion of downtown's mostly historic office buildings into lofts, apartments, condominiums, and hotels. The *Adaptive Reuse Ordinance's* mission was to attract residents and visitors who would bring vitality to the urban core, while addressing the City's housing crisis. Restaurants, stores and nighttime venues would follow, and downtown Los Angeles would once again become a 24-hour central city.

By any measure, **the new ordinance has been a spectacular success.** Media attention has been widespread. Starting with the Old Bank District, a 230-unit project at 4th and Main, over 2,100 units have been completed. Almost 8,000 additional units are either under construction or in the development pipeline. The new residents come from all over the city, attracted by Downtown's unmatched cultural venues, transit and subway access, and business and government centers.



Santee Court



Far East Café

The *Adaptive Reuse Ordinance* works by significantly **reducing the time** required to obtain a building permit. Changing an industrial or a commercial building to a new residential use would normally require compliance with numerous rules and regulations. The ordinance works by cutting through this red tape. The advantage has been significant, enabling the City to leverage an extraordinary amount of private sector investment with a minimum of public subsidy.

Encouraged by the success in downtown, the City expanded the *Adaptive Reuse Ordinance* to cover the historic suburbs of Hollywood, Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, and Wilshire Center business districts. New adaptive reuse projects in these areas are already in the works. Effective on December 1, 2003, the ordinance was expanded citywide, **providing a streamlined process for revitalizing neighborhoods and providing much needed housing throughout the City of Los Angeles.**

## Overview

"Adaptive reuse" means adapting existing, economically obsolete buildings for new, more productive purposes. The changes are substantial, physical alterations that modify the building's original, intended use. For the City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Program, an adaptive reuse project means converting existing buildings to new apartments, condominiums, live/work spaces, or hotel rooms.

### Incentive Areas

The City of Los Angeles has designated the following as adaptive reuse incentive areas:

**Downtown Los Angeles** (Central City community plan area and the Figueroa Corridor economic development strategy area)

**Hollywood redevelopment project area**

**Wilshire Center/Koreatown redevelopment project area** (certain portions only)

**Lincoln Heights and Chinatown**

**Central Avenue** (between Vernon Avenue and the Santa Monica Freeway)

Adaptive reuse projects outside these designated incentive areas may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Department of City Planning.

### Standards

**Apartments, Condominiums and Live/Work Spaces:** The minimum size for each unit is 450 square feet. The minimum average size for all units in a single building (or group of buildings) is 750 square feet.

**Hotel Rooms:** Each hotel room must include a toilet and bathing facilities. There is no required minimum size or minimum average size for hotel rooms.

### Program Incentives

**Density:** Underlying density restrictions are waived. There is no limit on the number of apartments, condos, live/work spaces, or hotel rooms permitted, so long as the project complies with the standards specified above.

**Exceptions:** When an existing building is converted to an adaptive reuse project, non-conforming floor area, setbacks and height are "grandfathered in." A variance is not required.

**Mezzanines:** Loft spaces may be added, so long as they do not exceed one-third the size of the floor below and comply with the program's fire/life safety requirements.

**Loading Space:** Not required.

**Parking:** No new parking spaces are required. However, existing parking spaces must be maintained, but may be used for any on-site or off-site use.

**Fire/Life Safety:** Flexibility is provided in meeting the following requirements: building code, disabled access, electrical code, fire code, mechanical code and seismic upgrade.

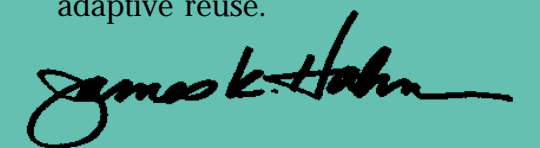


Los Angeles has always been a city of innovation, the place where new ideas get their start. Today, our city is transforming itself again. How? By turning its historic commercial and industrial buildings into beautiful lofts, apartments, condominiums, and even hotels.

The process is called adaptive reuse, a trend taking hold in communities all across the city, from downtown to Hollywood, from San Pedro to the San Fernando Valley.

Adaptive reuse is an important part of my comprehensive plan for building needed housing and revitalizing neighborhoods. This brochure explains my adaptive reuse program, and how it has helped produce thousands of housing units citywide.

By reclaiming the rich cultural legacy of our past, we can create a vibrant future for Los Angeles. Take a look at some of the older buildings around the city, and imagine what they will become in the next few years thanks to adaptive reuse.



JAMES K. HAHN  
Mayor

Flower Street Lofts

Case Study #1  
The Old Bank District Lofts



The San Fernando

The Old Bank District, located just south of City Hall, jump-started the downtown residential boom. Gilmore Associates led the redevelopment of three historic buildings: the San Fernando, the Hellman, and the Continental. For years, these once-empty structures were considered a nuisance. Today, they're the center of a thriving new residential community.

The eight-story San Fernando was the first to be redeveloped. This 1906, Renaissance revival style building was originally six stories. Then, in 1911, two stories were added. At one time, the basement included a café, a billiards room, and even a Turkish bath. Today, the building features 70 lofts, the award-winning Pete's Café, Bank Art Gallery, Victor's Hosiery Store, the Banquette Coffee Shop, and a yoga studio.

The seven-story Hellman, with its perplexing configuration, fronts on Fourth, Main, and Spring streets. The building was constructed over three phases from 1905 to 1914 for Los Angeles's first banker, Isaias W. Hellman. Today, this Beaux-Arts style building houses 104 lofts, a Quizno's, the Old Bank District General Store, and the Warung Indonesian Café.

The thirteen-story Continental was Los Angeles' first skyscraper. This Beaux-Arts style building was designed in 1904 by renowned architect John Parkinson – the same architect that designed City Hall twenty-four years later. Today, the Continental has found a new life as 56 lofts.

The Hellman



The Continental



Case Study #2  
Santee Court



Santee Court

At the beginning of the 20th century, Michael J. Connell developed the first garment manufacturing buildings in an area that became and is known today as downtown's Fashion District. Designed by architects Arthur Angel and Carl Leonard, the Connell, the Bailey Hat, and the Brownstein-Louis buildings were constructed between 1911 and 1912. All three buildings have been locally designated as historic monuments.

MJW Investments converted these buildings into 165 loft-style apartments, completing the first phase of downtown's largest adaptive reuse project, Santee Court. Twenty percent of the lofts are affordable units. Amenities include a rooftop garden, a basketball court, and a swimming pool. There's even a rooftop mini driving range and a hot tub.

The buildings are connected by a landscaped, pedestrian promenade (complete with outdoor tables and chairs) that was originally a service alley. The promenade is anchored by Rite Aid, and also features a Subway eatery. Other retail tenants will include a market and a food court.

Case Study #3  
Flower Street Lofts



The Lee Group spearheaded the Flower Street Lofts, downtown's first for-sale adaptive reuse project. In September, 2003, the United Parcel Service's central operations facility was reborn, with a newly constructed floor, as 91 loft-style condominium homes. At a record pace, the project sold out, proving there's a vibrant condominium market in downtown Los Angeles.

Flower Street Lofts is located in South Park, across the street from the Staples Center, and next to the Palm Restaurant. With the Harbor freeway and the Blue Line close by, transportation access couldn't be more convenient to its homeowners.



The Standard



Case Study #4  
The Standard Hotel



The Superior Oil Company once occupied this historic office building, which now holds 207 of the most artistic hotel rooms in the City. The Columbia Development Group completed the hotel, which provides an ideal option for business travelers and visitors who want to experience the essence of downtown Los Angeles.

Located in the Financial District and famous for its newfangled rooftop bar, where patrons can take in the view of downtown's glittering skyline, the Standard is a popular gathering spot where hotel guests can escape to its stylish lounge and rooftop infinity pool.

