

Progress on Record-Breaking California Skyscraper Hits Major Milestone

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Plans for a record-breaking tower in Beverly Hills, just outside Los Angeles, have marked a new milestone with the city's approval of the upcoming residential building.

The tower, known as The Millennium Residences, will stand 418 feet and 34 stories high, making it the tallest building in Beverly Hills upon completion, based on the number of stories, the developer told *Newsweek*.

Mario J. Palumbo Jr., managing partner of Millennium Partners, the developer of the tower, told *Newsweek*: “Following the city's approval, Millennium Partners is now moving into the next phase of the development process.” The formal design of the property has begun, aiming to break ground in 2027,

Designed by Handel Architects and Rios, the high-rise, located at 8300 Wilshire Boulevard, aims to deliver 211 new homes, including 32 affordable units, to Beverly Hills, which is surrounded by the cities of Los Angeles and West Hollywood, and centrally located to Culver City and Santa Monica.

The Millennium Residences is envisioned as “an architecturally significant addition to Beverly Hills that enhances the city's eastern gateway while



A rendering of The Millennium Residences at 8300 Wilshire Boulevard. | *The Millennium Residences*

Streamlined Approval Amid California's Housing Crisis

The new building comes amid California's ongoing housing crisis, with the state reported to have higher rates of cost-burdened households than the United States as a whole, according to data from the Public Policy Institute of California.

More than half of the state's renters, as well as four in 10 mortgaged homeowners, are reported to spend 30 percent or more of their household income on housing, the institute says.

The housing crisis has seen the city of Beverly Hills be criticized by the California state government for previously failing to process an application for the approval of a different proposed high-rise apartment tower near Wilshire Boulevard. Beverly Hills officials reportedly said at the time that their actions were procedural rather than an outright rejection of the project.

The Millennium Residences was approved under California's Assembly Bill 2011, which allows qualifying housing developments on commercially zoned sites to receive streamlined ministerial review if they meet certain local standards, including affordable housing. As these approvals are ministerial rather than discretionary, they are not subject to public hearings or review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The developer said The Millennium Residences met the requirements established under the bill, "which was created to streamline the development of much-needed housing on qualifying commercial sites," Palumbo Jr. told *Newsweek*.



Stock image: a view of Wilshire Boulevard in summer in Beverly Hills, California. | Getty

Local Concern Over Demolition of Existing Site

The new building project also requires demolition of the existing mini-mall and businesses on the site. A ground-floor commercial space spanning more than 10,000 square feet is proposed for the site, with plans to lease the space to a couple of restaurants, according to the project's website.

Some residents have expressed concern over the redevelopment of the existing commercial site due to the upcoming tower.

"That mini-mall is crucial to our neighborhood," Amy Amsterdam, a resident of Schumacher Drive in Los Angeles, steps away from the development, told the Beverly Press and Park Labrea News last year. "We have a pharmacy there, and the printer and even the store—all the services there are so crucial and used by our neighborhood, and we need them."

Dan Makos, who also lives on Schumacher Drive near the development, told local press that the loss of the mini-mall would be "devastating" for the community.

Asked how the developer has addressed any concerns from residents, Palumbo Jr. told *Newsweek*: "Throughout the process, the team has met and continues to meet with community members, local property owners, and attend Eastside community meetings."

He added: "Millennium Partners has a long history of creating transformational projects that contribute to the communities they serve, and The Millennium Residences at Beverly Hills is being approached with that same philosophy."

California's Growing Skyline

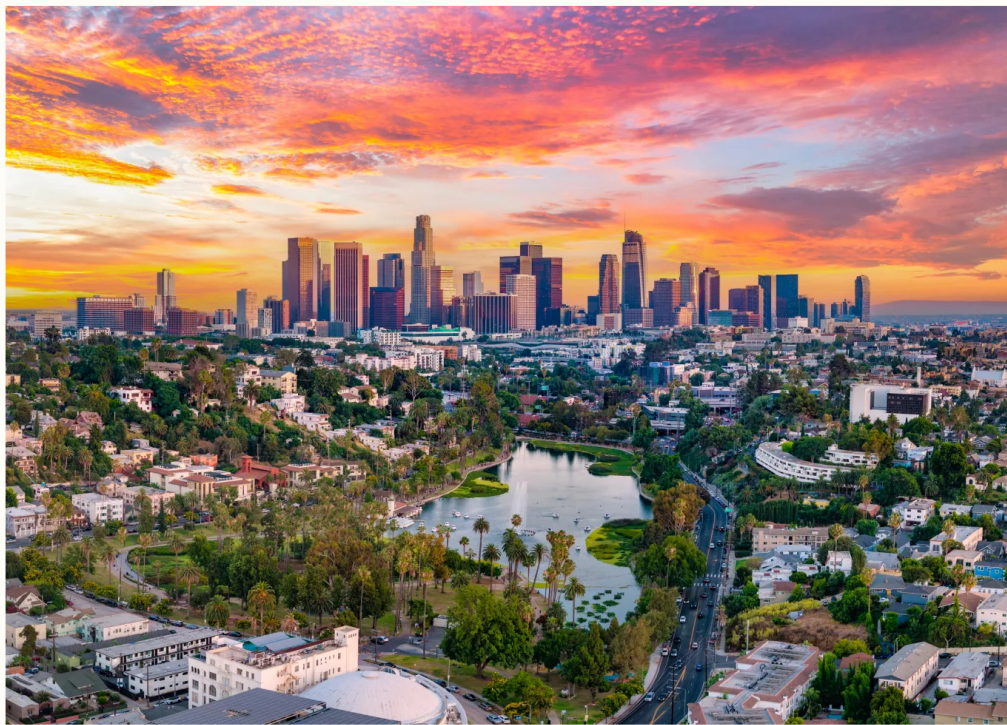
California's skyline is continuing to evolve as developers pursue a new generation of high-rise residential, mixed-use, and office projects in West Coast markets.

A number of major towers are under construction, approved, or moving through the planning pipeline, reflecting continued demand for dense urban development.

In Los Angeles, projects such as One Beverly Hills, a large mixed-use development designed by Foster + Partners, the architectural firm of renowned British architect Norman Foster, are under construction. According to the website of the developer Alagem Capital, the taller of the two towers that form One Beverly Hills will rise to 463 feet, which would exceed the height of The Millennium Residences. However, the Skyscraper Center database of the Council on Vertical Urbanism currently lists the taller tower to be 410 feet high upon completion.

Several proposed residential towers, including 1045 South Olive Street and The BLOC, also aim to add hundreds of homes to the downtown L.A. skyline if built.

Meanwhile, San Francisco has a substantial pipeline of approved high-rises, including 530 Howard Street, a planned 72-story tower, and 10 South Van Ness Avenue, a 67-story development that would rank among the city's tallest buildings.



Stock image: an aerial view of the downtown Los Angeles skyline. | Getty

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