

New Loft Community Gets Smart

Los Angeles-based builder Lee Homes Inc. and institutional urban development investor CityView announced the grand opening of TLofts, a new ultramodern sustainable loft community in the heart of West Los Angeles. The opening of TLofts coincided with last month's news from the S&P/Case-Shiller index report that showed home sales climbing in June for the third month in a row, indicating a rise in homebuyer confidence. Thirteen lofts have sold at the TLofts development even before the grand opening, and an interest list of more than 800 names promises to keep sales moving along at a rapid pace.

Branded as a "smart growth development," and certified as a Green community by California Green Builder, TLofts consists of 84 one- and two-story lofts. Combining eco-friendly living with work/live spaces, high-quality design and a desirable location walkable to jobs and retail, the community adapts to today's different lifestyles. It is the only large community in Los Angeles to offer charging stations for electric cars. Prices start at \$415,000.

"CityView's mission is to provide 'Smart Capital for Smart Growth,'" says Sean Burton, CityView president and COO. "Smart capital means applying institutional capital to make equity or structured debt investments in innovative urban projects in order to achieve superior risk-adjusted returns for our institutional partners. Smart growth refers to urban land, housing, mixed-use, commercial and infrastructure projects which promote efficient land use, urban redevelopment, neighborhood revitalization, sustainability and metropolitan economic opportunity."

"Sustainability and Green development is an issue of extreme importance, not only to our potential buyers but to our community as a whole. Clearly, the sustainable nature of TLofts is partially responsible for the unprecedented sales we have seen since its opening in August," adds Burton. [Apartment Market Stalls, While Condos Show Movement](#)

While some sectors of the housing industry are showing signs of rebounding, the apartment sector is on a slower trajectory for recovery, according to data released today by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) in its Multifamily Market Index.

NAHB's Multifamily Market Indexes for the second quarter of 2009 continued a downward movement across all rental sectors. The index value for market-rate apartment starts was at 16.7—roughly the same level as the past three quarters and less than half the level shown last year at this time. The lower-rent apartment index fell to 21.3—a dozen points lower than last year's second-quarter level. Lower-rent apartment starts expectations for the next six months showed some improvement by rising from 33.3 in the second quarter of 2008 to 38.2 in the second quarter of 2009.

The Condo Index, which came in at a record low index value of 10 last year at this time, is now at about 15. The expectation index for condo starts six months into the future rose modestly to a level of 27.1, up from 21.0 in the second quarter of 2008.

Just over half of builders report that they've dropped their condo prices, and the average reduction is 17 percent. Other top marketing incentives include optional items at no cost, paying for closing costs or fees, and absorbing financing points.