

REAL ESTATE

HOME OF THE WEEK

Small but stylish studios

These 365-square-foot apartments in Santa Monica squeeze in lots of amenities

MARIA HSIN

An affordable rental in a Santa Monica neighborhood where the median home price was \$330,000 last year may seem to be an unlikely find. But a newly built development on Olympic Boulevard has 100 such "studio loft" apartments.

Students, along with freelance artists and small-business owners, are among those who have discovered the Olympic Studios. Residents can walk to a major grocery store, eateries and the Bergamot Station arts complex; and they are a short bus ride away from downtown Santa Monica and Santa Monica College.

The apartments have single-room occupancy zoning, which calls for smaller units but gives developers flexibility in how they build them. In Santa Monica, units had to be 375 square feet or less. The studios have 17-foot ceilings, lots of natural light and stairs that lead to a mezzanine level that serves as the bedroom.

"There's a need for affordable housing in Santa Monica," and Olympic Studios "breaks the mold a bit," said John Arnold, an architect with Killefer Flammang Architects, which designed the project. The firm's work also can be seen in downtown L.A. in the redesign of the historic Rowan Lofts and Eastern Columbia buildings, among others.

"The trick is to make small units that are really efficient or really sexy ... with built-in furniture and a great use of space," Arnold said.

Trendy designs may help change the perception of small, affordable units, which many people seem to think are only for transitional housing, Arnold said.

"We still have a stigma when it comes to smaller units," he said, but they are "OK for all walks of life."

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To submit a candidate for Home of the Week, send high-resolution color photos with caption and credit information on a CD and a detailed description of the house to Lauren Beale, Real Estate, Los Angeles Times, 202 W. 1st St., L.A., CA 90012. Questions may be sent to homeoftheweek@latimes.com.



LIVING AREA: The studios have 17-foot ceilings, hardwood-style laminate flooring, air conditioning, lots of natural light and stairs that lead to a mezzanine level that serves as the bedroom.



EXTERIOR: The development at 2001 Olympic Blvd. is walking distance from a major grocery store and restaurants.



KITCHEN: Its features include a granite countertop, double sink with garbage disposal and stainless-steel appliances.

Photographs by JIM SIMMONS

Olympic Studios

Location: 2001 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica 90404

Qualifications: Preference is given to renters who now live and/or work in Santa Monica. Tenants must meet the city's affordable housing guidelines. For one person, the maximum allowable income is \$53,100 a year. For two people, the maximum combined income is \$60,600. There are no age restrictions.

Rent: \$1,061 or \$1,327 a month, based on income

Size: 365 square feet

Developer: Neil Shekhter of NMS Properties

Availability: About half the units have been leased since the development opened in early January.

Additional features: Air conditioning; hardwood-style laminate flooring; granite countertop in kitchen with a double sink and garbage disposal; stainless-steel microwave, stove, refrigerator and dishwasher.

Around the neighborhood: An online search of Santa Monica rentals shows studios and one-bedroom apartments ranging from \$1,500 to \$4,295 a month, depending on the location, amenities and size.

For more information:
www.olympicstudios.net or
(310) 828-3636

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Home
of the Week

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