



Chinese investors are shaping the look of Downtown

"They're going to have to reshoot the postcard picture of downtown LA"

By [Jeff Wattenhofer](#) Aug 26, 2016, 3:55pm PDT



Fig Central, one of many Chinese megadevelopments coming to Downtown LA

The Downtown Los Angeles skyline has never really been a point of pride for locals. With its lack of density or distinguishing high rise architecture, it barely squeaks by Omaha in a head-to-head battle for most photogenic. That might change very soon, thanks in part to the recent influx of Chinese investment in LA real estate. Billions of overseas dollars are transforming acre upon acre of land in Downtown into sleek, sometimes gargantuan, new developments.



According to the [Los Angeles Times](#), since 2014, Chinese developers have been behind at least seven of the last 18 land deals Downtown in excess of \$19 million. In that same time period, the four highest prices paid per square foot for land in Downtown were by Chinese investors.

Perhaps the scale of development is best encapsulated by Mark Tarczynski of Colliers International, who tells the *Times*, "when all these megaprojects are finished, they're going to have to reshoot the postcard picture of downtown L.A."

Among the half a dozen Chinese real estate projects coming to Downtown are several large scale projects that will add multiple towers the skyline.



Metropolis *Courtesy of Greenland USA*

↑ There's Greenland company's billion dollar [Metropolis](#), soon to become the biggest mixed-use development on the West Coast. Metropolis will bring three towers worth of condos, hotel rooms, and 70,000 square feet of retail space to a lot adjacent to the 110 Freeway. Condos in the development are priced between \$500,000 and \$6.9 million.



Fig Central

↑ Oceanwide Holdings plans to turn a 4.6 acre site across from the Staple Center into a trio of towers called [Oceanwide Plaza](#) (previously known as Fig Central). The billion dollar development is under construction now and will feature a luxury hotel, two towers worth of condos, 170,000 square feet of retail space, and a massive LED screen wrapped around the western side of the development.



Shenzhen Hazens megaproject



↑ [Shenzhen Hazens](#) is building a \$700 million megaproject on a 2.5 acre lot also across the street from the Staples Center. The site's current occupant, the Luxe City Center Hotel, would be demolished in favor of two condo towers, and a W Hotel on the site.

The land prices paid for those three projects respectively: \$150 million, \$174.8 million, and \$104 million.

For all the momentum these projects have generated, there are concerns about the rapid influx of Chinese money and its influence in the LA real estate market. One big question is whether the new buildings will live up to their potential to transform their surrounding neighborhoods into vibrant, bustling communities.

Some question whether they'll just become [ghost town safe deposit boxes](#) for their investors. Concerns have also been raised that some Chinese homebuyers plan to purchase units in these new developments merely as an overseas investment with no intention of calling them home. A 2015 survey by the National Association of Realtors found that just 39 percent of Chinese homebuyers planned on using their US property as a primary residence.

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