



SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Michael Heller on Sacramento

Favorite Thing

There are incredible opportunities here.

Least Favorite Thing

The lack of culture.

Favorite Architectural Landmark

State Capitol building.

(Left) Michael Heller and Nick Bagatelos share a laugh in the living room of their new flat. The tempered glass bathroom under the sleeping loft contains a commercial steam shower as well as more standard-issue bathroom fixtures.

(Right) On the outside wall of the bathroom, projected slides illustrate city-scapes. In the kitchen, a friend makes good use of the Viking appliances.

Shady politics, oppressive heat, and cheap real estate have for years cast a negative light on Sacramento. But lately, though the politics are still questionable, the warm climate and affordable housing are making the city a little more attractive.

Of course, Sacramento is not a new discovery to everyone, particularly not to locals Michael Heller and Nick Bagatelos, good friends since high school and co-owners, developers, and designers of a new downtown loft building. "Sacramento is awesome," says Heller, owner of Sacramento-based Heller Pacific Incorporated.

For years, Heller had been thinking about what it would take to give Sacramento the lively downtown it deserves ("walking streets and downtown housing"), so when Bagatelos came across a one-story brick building six blocks from Capital Park downtown, Heller saw an opportunity to make his dream a reality. "Everyone has been talking about lofts here for years. We decided it was time to stop talking and do something about it."

After convincing the owner to sell the property, they mapped out the plans themselves.

"We wanted a place where at least two people could stay comfortably," Heller says. "The whole space is open, there's no privacy—I've known Nick too long to worry about privacy." In the kitchen they constructed Corian countertops and went with all Viking appliances, topping it off with glass cabinetry designed and constructed by Bagatelos. After shopping trips to LIMN Sacramento and Living Space Interiors in Vancouver, the unit was decked out with Ligne Roset everything, from the couch to the "overly nice" dining room chairs.

But is Sacramento ready to step out of the backwater and into the sophisticated high life? Heller and Bagatelos certainly think so. "People are excited. People want to live downtown," says Heller. "This is a dynamic place to be and it is only going to get better."

—ANDREW WAGNER

PROJECT: 13TH & S LOFT BUILDING, DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPERS: HELLER PACIFIC, INC.