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## Luxury condos rise in landmark Oakland skyscraper

By Eve Mitchell  
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Article Last Updated: 09/10/2008 04:24:25 PM PDT

OAKLAND — A little bit of Manhattan's Park Avenue has arrived here in the form of seven luxury, full-floor conc

housed in a landmark flatiron design skyscraper built in 1914.

Or Brooklyn West as project developer Andrew Brog likes to think of Oakland's up and coming Uptown District neighborhood. The area is undergoing a revival, with several new restaurants opening in the last year or two ar

restoration of the nearby Fox Theater almost complete.

"When I get out of the (19th Street) BART station, it's urban. I spent 40 years of my life in New York City. So to comfortable. You walk down the street and it's a little gritty. I understand it. The buildings are beautiful and there and the weather is great and it's a good location. Everything reminded me of Brooklyn," said Brog, who first tho

building luxury condos in San Francisco but changed his mind when he saw Oakland.

The building is a familiar landmark in the city. Over the years, the triangular-shaped structure has been referred

Flatiron Building, a name that derives from the elegant skyscraper resembling the shape of a flat iron.

The Cathedral Building is one of two flatiron design buildings in Oakland. The other one is the First National Ba

short distance away at Broadway and San Pablo Avenue. Several flatiron design skyscrapers were built in Ame

the early part of the 20th century.

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building has also been called the Wedding C  
Building in addition to the Cathedral Building.  
name, the Federal Realty Co. Building just di

While Oakland may share some similarities w  
the Cathedral Building condos are meant to e  
kind of luxurious flats found on Manhattan's F  
And unlike new-from-the-ground-up condo pr  
restored an existing skyscraper that is on the  
Register of Historic Places.

Located on a wedge-shaped parcel of land be  
Broadway and Telegraph Avenue, the spacio  
two or three bedrooms and range from 1,476  
to 2,016 square feet. All have private entranc  
feature luxury finishes that include hardwood  
white walls and huge windows that offer stuni  
They are priced from the high-\$800,000s to \$  
That's far higher than the median sales price  
condos in Oakland. In July 2008, the median  
for new homes, which in Oakland is mostly cc  
\$350,000, or 25.7 percent lower than a year a  
according to DataQuick Information Services.

Brog is not discouraged that he is selling condos at a time when the market is in a slump.

"It's not entry-level stuff ...We're getting people coming in from Montclair and Piedmont," he said in describing w potential buyers live now who have expressed interest.

Two of the condos are under sales contract since Caldecott Properties of Oakland began marketing the propert August.

Three years ago, Brog purchased the 14-story Cathedral Building, the first Gothic Revival skyscraper to be built Mississippi, for \$3 million. He spent about \$7 million to transform the former office building into condos on the t floors and six commercial condos on the lower floors.

Designed by architect Benjamin Geer McDougall, the steel-frame structure was completed in 1914. The buildin eventually renamed the Cathedral Building in 1969 due to its arched windows, mansard roof and pointed spires later it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places under the name of the Federal Realty Co. Buildin

"This building is a one-of-a-kind," said Brog during a tour of the property. "Everything is new except for the bone building. The exterior, the whole structure remains."

The Cathedral Building was among several architecturally significant buildings built in Oakland after the 1906 S earthquake and before the Great Depression. Many are no longer around.

"It is a wonderful building and I'm glad that it has survived," said Dennis Evanosky, an Oakland resident and his co-author of ``East Bay Then and Now." Over the years, he visited the building before it was turned into the mix development it is today.

"It was kind of cool. You would expect Philip Marlowe to come out of one of the doors or here comes Sam Spac hall," said Evanosky, referring to the hard-boiled detective fictional characters created by Raymond Chandler ar Hammett. "It was all very charming. But it wasn't top of the line," he said.

Now it is. While Marlowe and Spade would certainly recognize the building's exterior, the two gumshoes would recognize the interior space of the luxury condos that have replaced the former offices.

The property is indeed unlike the moderately priced condo projects built in downtown Oakland in recent years, Matt Anderson, a partner at Foresight Analytics, an Oakland-based real estate analysis and forecasting firm.

"The other projects are large. In the first place, they've got hundreds of units and they are generally new constr opposed to a renovated building. (The Cathedral Building) is at a different price point. It's also a more unique pr they need is seven committed buyers to make it work," Anderson said.

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