

‘Micro units’ near UWT will offer innovative furnishings, no additional parking

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A rendering of the proposed South 17th and Market street development, which will feature 104 apartments between 250 and 400 square feet.

Kōz Development

By summer 2018, apartments nearly the size of two standard parking spaces could be for rent in Tacoma’s downtown.

Koz Development of Snohomish began demolition this week of a lot on the northwest corner of South 17th and Market streets. In its place will rise an eight-story building with 104 apartments ranging in size from 250 to 400 square feet. The smallest micro apartment city code allows is 250 square feet.

Koz president and chief executive Cathy Reines said the rents will average around \$850 to \$900 per month. The cost includes utilities, and each unit will come fully furnished. Apartments with views or balconies will cost more than those without.

Each unit will include a Murphy bed, which folds into the wall to save space when not in use. Other furnishings will do double-duty as well, Reines said.

“The table itself is convertible from a desk to a dining room table,” Reines said Wednesday. “We are looking at very creative ways of making that 250-square-foot apartment feel like a 400-square-foot apartment.”

Because the development is in Tacoma’s downtown commercial core, parking is not required as part of the building, nor will the developer build any. The building will include secure bicycle storage for residents, Reines said.

Facing Market Street will be one floor of ground-level retail with around 1,500 to 2,000 square feet. Reines said Koz is working to bring a tenant that is “very complementary of the downtown and the university district.”

Such a tenant might include a trendy market or convenience store with a deli, she said. Tacoma City Grocer IGA used to serve downtown residents and was a few blocks away on Pacific Avenue, but it closed in early 2014.

Geared toward the professional or academic millennial, the entire building will be wired for Wi-Fi, she said. Each unit also will have a full kitchen with two stove-top burners and a separate bathroom, as city code requires.

Tacoma principal planner Shirley Schultz said the developer was able to secure an additional story to the height because the company bought development rights from the city.