

# First look: Largest new housing development opens in South San Francisco

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For years, a vacant car dealership sat along Cypress Avenue in downtown South San Francisco just a block away from the city's main drag, Grant Avenue.

The site, easily visible from Highway 101, is now home to Cadence, a 260-unit apartment complex. Developed by [Sares Regis Group](#) of Northern California, Cadence is the largest new housing development to spring up in downtown South San Francisco as part of a planned revamp of the area.



BLANCA TORRES/SFBT

Within two months of leasing, renters have grabbed about 20 percent — or 50 homes — in the complex and have started moving in.

Cadence “is really fulfilling the vision of bringing people close to their jobs,” said [Ken Busch](#), senior vice president for residential development with San Mateo-based Sares Regis.

The project, designed by TCA Architects, consists of two buildings each with separate lobbies and courtyards that are separated by Miller Avenue.

Rents in Cadence start at \$3,100 per month for a studio, \$3,470 for one bedroom, \$4,250 for two bedrooms and \$5,400 for three bedrooms. Amenities include

outdoor courtyards, various lounges, a clubroom, gym, pet-washing station and a “maker” workshop.

Close to 1,200 homes are now under construction or approved in South San Francisco — a boom that is a result of years of planning and zoning changes that ushered in a slew of new housing proposals.

South San Francisco, a city of about 67,500 people, is one of the best examples of a Peninsula city making strides in adding much-needed new housing, said Rosanne Foust, head of the San Mateo County Economic Development Agency.

Peninsula cities are notorious as a difficult place to build new housing and for a high jobs-housing imbalance, Foust said. San Bruno recently rejected a 425-unit project even though it complied with city codes.

The Cadence project “is not impacting an existing neighborhood and is making housing available on a transportation corridor,” she said.

South San Francisco is also in the process of moving the Caltrain station from a site that was hard to find under Highway 101 to one that will be easy to access from downtown.

Cadence sits just a few blocks from the new station, a location that helps the project attract commuters as well as people who work in South San Francisco’s thriving biotech and life sciences hub, which is about a mile from downtown and employs more than 20,000 people across 200-plus companies.

Most of the renter interest comes from people currently living in South San Francisco, San Francisco and San Jose, said Nathan Wise, the property manager for the project. Some renters are couples who work in separate places and want central location.

“To get people off the freeway, you need to provide an option and make transit easier for them,” Busch said. Sares Regis is working on a pipeline of a few thousand homes on transit-oriented development sites up and down the Peninsula and Silicon Valley that cater to people who want to cut down or eliminate the need for a car.

“People in our communities self-select, that’s how they want to live,” Busch said.

Sares Regis entitled another 195-unit phase of Cadence across the street from the newly completed buildings. The developer expects to start construction next year and deliver those homes in 2022.

Down the street from Cadence, the 69-unit Pinefino apartments at 211 Airport Blvd. opened last year as the first of the new downtown projects. The \$30 million project was developed by Los Angeles-based Pinewave Development Group.

Across the street from that building, 157 units at 150 Airport Blvd. from DNA Design and Architecture have been approved.

The influx of new residents “will help the downtown and make the city an 18-hour city, which is great for the whole city,” Busch said. “We have a lot of confidence in this market.”