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Heller reveals vision for redeveloping Crystal Ice plant in midtown

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Developer [Mike Heller](#) of Heller Pacific pulled back the curtain Thursday on future plans for one of midtown Sacramento most visible – and visibly underused – properties.

The former Crystal Ice plant — three separate parcels on either side of R St. between 16th and 18th streets — will have some residential, retail and office components. Heller discussed the plans Thursday to participants in the NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association’s “Development 2015” event at the Crest Theatre.

“I’m very determined to preserve each and every aspect of these old buildings that I can,” Heller said. He said the project wouldn’t be possible without the help of partner [Mark Friedman](#) who, like Heller, is known for adaptive re-use of older properties.

Ice Blocks I, the building on the southeast intersection of R and 16th, would become a three-story mixed-use building with large first-floor retail spaces, including outdoor patios. Two floors above would be office space, Heller said, adding, “I’d call it MARRS on steroids.”

Block 2, in the building to the east of Ice Blocks 1, would become a mixed-use project with 150 residential units across two buildings. If it pencils out, Heller said, there’s the possibility of a pool deck on an upper floor in the second block, as well as an outdoor area in the middle of the project.

The last block would be on the property directly north of the Block 2, across R Street and backing up to the Regional Transit light-rail line. Called The Orchard after the chemical company that once operated out of the site, the building would have a preserved façade and a cluster of businesses in smaller spaces.

In all, the project would have 60,000 square feet of retail space, Heller said.

Ben van der Meer covers real estate, development, local and regional planning, construction, transportation, agriculture and water for the Sacramento Business Journal.

