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Mixed-use developments: Conduits to quality living

An aerial photograph of a mixed-use development in Singapore. The foreground shows a multi-lane highway with several cars. To the left, a cluster of high-rise residential buildings with red-tiled roofs is situated near a body of water. In the background, a large stadium with a distinctive white, curved roof is visible, surrounded by greenery and other urban structures. The sky is clear and blue.

How **purpose, value and design**
shape Singapore's built environment

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The rarity of waterfront residential assets in Singapore continues to shape demand; most projects will only be completed in 2030 and beyond, with the exception of Aurea in 2029.

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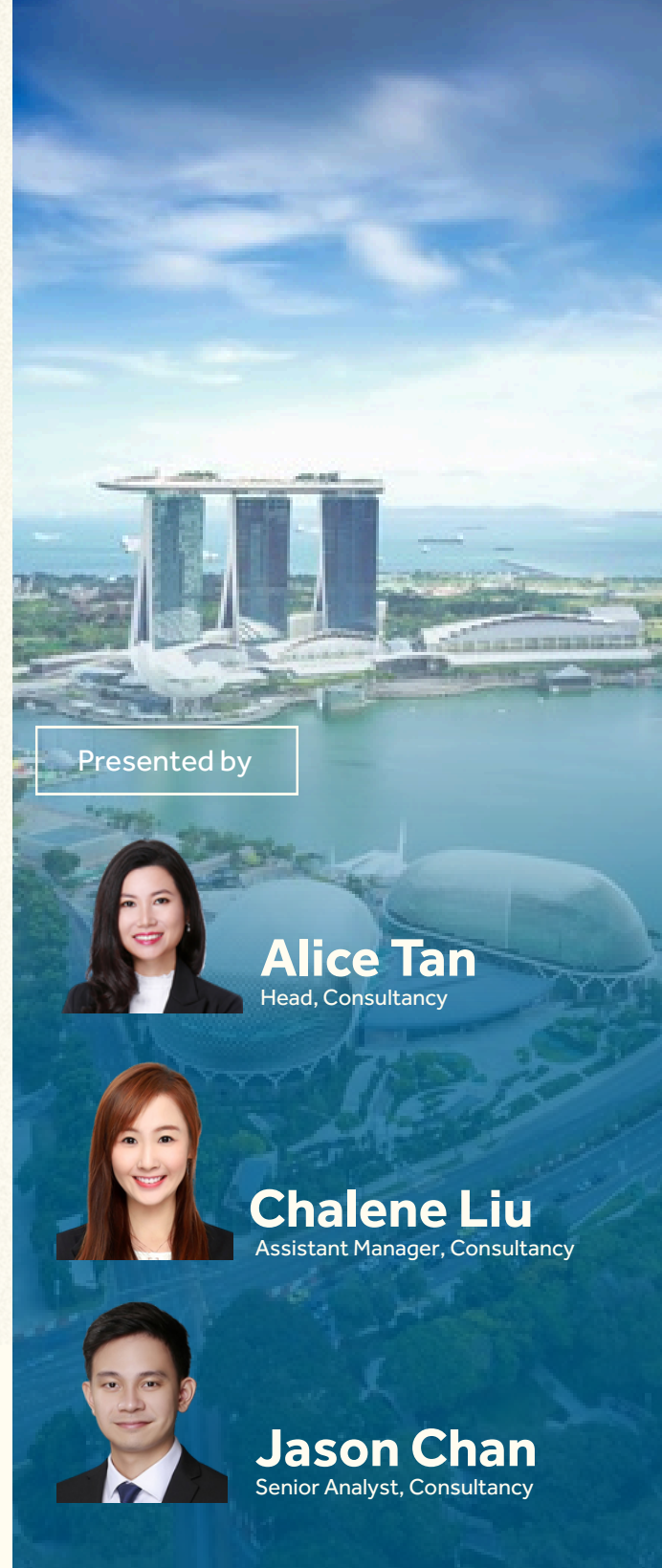
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A summary of this White Paper's key highlights of the mixed-use development landscape



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Quality living needs will evolve

As Singapore matures into its next phase of development, aspirations around housing, work, and lifestyle are shifting. Emotional and physical well-being, community belonging, and access to vibrant, inclusive spaces are increasingly part of the conversation.

Based on data from the Knight Frank–Ipsos Quality of Life report— which polled 1,000 respondents in the sample including citizens, permanent residents, E and S work pass holders across different age groups and other profiles— a large proportion indicated a preference for better access to greenery and nature, and prioritised work-life balance for mental wellbeing over remuneration.

Singapore's built environment has long been the envy of the world — efficient, well-planned, and deeply liveable. While a definite majority are content with housing, work and recreation developed in Singapore, evolving needs are likely to push for further changes in the way homes, offices and community spaces are designed.

43%

aged 25 to 34 are worried they cannot afford a home in the next three to five years

51%

want more large-scale green spaces and parks, with only 24% calling for more vibrant nightlife and entertainment districts

57%

are extremely satisfied with their current living arrangements

44%

prefer a work arrangement featuring a hybrid model with a balanced split between in-office and remote work

Access.

Waterfront living remains a rare privilege in Singapore. Based on proprietary Knight Frank data, out of some 76 non-landed private residential projects launched between 2023 and 2025, only 12 offered waterfront living experiences. Also, not all blocks within each project were water-facing, highlighting the rarity factor.

Enduring appeal is arguably a leading attribute of these homes; in a dense city like Singapore, a residence facing or near calm water often creates a sense of tranquillity and wellness, a welcome sanctuary for urban dwellers. Such homes are coveted, particularly among Chinese buyers and feng shui enthusiasts, for whom water symbolises the flow of wealth and energy (qi) into their living space.

Defining fundamentals such as stunning views, privacy, and accessibility to a place of work or school remain boxes to be checked off. But what has evolved is the variety of options available for different lifestyles.

Today's definition of a "waterfront home" has broadened considerably, with iterations no longer just sea-facing. Water bodies such as lagoons, marinas, reservoirs, and rivers can now be found at residents' doorsteps, so these premium residential assets now span varied districts and price points — lending quiet distinction to postcodes through a successful balance of scenic views and day-to-day liveability.



Access



Lake Grande

For years, “waterfront living” meant one address: Sentosa Cove. Conceived in the 1990s, the luxury residential enclave on Singapore’s resort island set the benchmark for idyllic living, framing bungalows, terrace houses, and condominiums against private yacht berths, marina access, and resort-style living within an exclusive gated community.

Unsurprisingly, caveats lodged show that homeowners have been willing to fork out as much as 5 to 8 per cent more to own these prime-view assets compared to non-waterfront units within the same development.

Prior to this, coastal developments such as **Lagoon View** and **Mandarin Gardens** gave Singapore residents a taste of waterfront living. Such projects introduced sea-facing residences to prospective home buyers as part of a highly selective market segment. In the early 2000s, more developments, such as marina-facing **Caribbean at Keppel Bay**, were launched.



Caribbean at Keppel Bay

Access

Recent launches with stunning sea views include the likes of **One Marina Gardens** and **W Residences at Marina View**, underscoring the Marina Bay precinct's growth as one of Singapore's most iconic waterfront neighbourhoods. The area is home to landmarks such as Southeast Asia's leading garden attraction, Gardens by the Bay, complemented by a growing variety of lifestyle and entertainment options. At One Marina Gardens, homes are typically priced between \$2.5 million and \$3.7 million for a three-bedroom unit measuring 90 to 115 sqm.

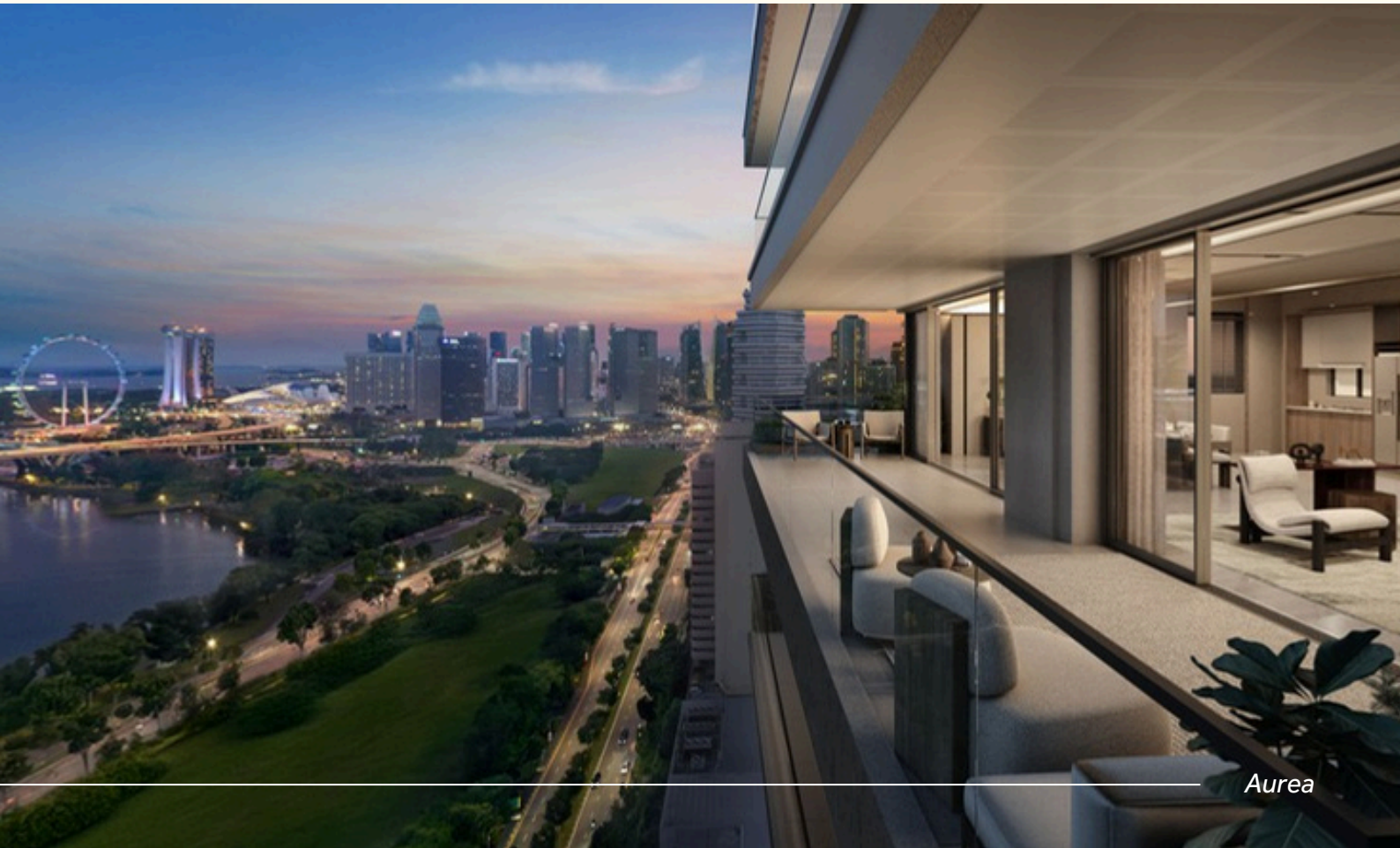
Higher-end properties, **Marina Bay Residences** and **Reflections at Keppel Bay**, represent the pinnacle of exclusivity. However, their locations may be polarising for residents, being potentially far removed from day-to-day amenities such as schools and neighbourhood dining options, or too close to the city centre.



City Gate Residences

Waterfront home options in both downtown Singapore and suburban locations cater to different preferences and varied budget appetites. Notably, Jurong Lake Gardens, Lower Seletar Reservoir, and Bedok Reservoir are popular for their tranquil lake and reservoir views.

A three-bedroom apartment in these areas, measuring about 80 to 100 sqm, could cost around \$2.1 to \$2.3 million for new homes at **Sora** and **The LakeGarden Residences**, and \$1.6 to \$1.9 million for resale units at **Lake Grande** and **Lakeville**. A slightly lower budget could secure an equally attractive waterfront home at **The Estuary** or **Orchid Park Condominium** in the northern part of Singapore. The commute may be longer, but the views are magnificent, bordered by nature well within arm's reach.



In the Beach Road precinct, where residents are just minutes away from recreational activities by the bay, you'll find developments **City Gate Residences** and **Concourse Skyline**. Home prices there typically fall within the range of \$2.7 million to \$3.2 million for a three-bedroom apartment measuring 80 to 100 sqm.

For the most breathtaking sea views, the multiple options along the East Coast and southern coastline, including Keppel Bay, Marina Bay, and Tanjong Rhu, rise to the occasion. These prime precincts also place residents minutes by car from the Central Business District. However, developments in these areas are mostly older, with the only new launches being **Meyer Blue** (TOP 2028) and **Aurea** (TOP Q2 2029).

Looking ahead, long gestation periods are expected, with upcoming waterfront residential projects largely concentrated in the northern and southern regions of Singapore and slated for completion post-2030. Among these, the most highly anticipated precinct is the Greater Southern Waterfront, a long-term large-scale development initiative with projects planned over the next 10 to 15 years.

Yet, the next chapter of waterfront living is already here as part of a rapidly maturing market segment. Developers who achieve the optimal balance of access, connectivity, and long-term liveability will stand out, offering qualities that most residential options simply cannot.

Value.

As borne out by Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) data between 2015 and November 2025, the average size of new residential developments has declined gradually over the years.

Caveats lodged from 2015 to November 2025 (excluding dwelling units of above 200 square metres as these transactions constitute less than 4 per cent of records) reflect how the average strata floor area of new non-landed home transactions measures less than 900 square feet, compared to resale ones which span an average of 1,038 sq ft. This is the likely result of developers grappling with elevated development costs, regulatory tightening and maximising every square metre to retain margins.



Larger units, higher CAGR

Homebuyers have gravitated towards smaller homes. The same URA data shows that smaller units, which are more palatably priced, typically get snapped up first.

Buyers are typically attracted to the lower investment outlay required, which overrides liveability considerations and the prospect of capital growth.

This was demonstrated by the sales performance of the recently launched developments of **River Green** and **Promenade Peak** in the River Valley/Zion Road enclave. Both were made available in the market in August 2025; and being located just a 10-minute walk from each other, they exhibit comparable locational attributes.

The size of a standard two-bedroom unit in River Green starts at 49 sq m and is priced below S\$1.5 million, which can be viewed as a value buy compared to Promenade Peak, which offers bigger units — its two-bedders measure at least 61 sq m and are priced from S\$1.78 million.

As expected, River Green achieved better sales at its launch weekend, with an 88 per cent take-up rate, while Promenade Peak sold 54 per cent of the project at its launch.

Value

From our analysis of unit price data of non-landed private homes across all regions from 2015 to November 2025, the data suggests that shrinking average sizes of new apartments and the proliferation of smaller units might have indirectly contributed to better investment prospects for the larger homes.

Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) and average unit price of sale transactions of private non-landed residential projects in Core Central Region

Sizes (sqm)	New Sale			Across all sale types (New Sale, subsale & resale)		
	CAGR	Average psf		CAGR	Average psf	
	2015 to 2025	2015	2025	2015 to 2025	2015	2025
50 to 70	3.50%	\$2,158	\$3,032	3.10%	\$2,090	\$2,812
70 to 90	3.70%	\$2,126	\$3,040	3.90%	\$1,832	\$2,665
90 to 120	4.20%	\$2,126	\$3,125	4.50%	\$1,711	\$2,641
120 to 150	4.20%	\$2,048	\$3,060	4.00%	\$1,664	\$2,420
Space premium*	-	-3.70%	3.10%	-	-18.10%	-6.10%

*Unit price difference between 90 - 120 sqm and 50 - 70 sqm size range. Transactions in 2025 captures caveats lodged till November 2025.

Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)

Over the same period, we found that the CAGR of bigger units outpaced smaller ones — a trend observed across both primary and secondary market transactions.

For new sale transactions in the Core Central Region (CCR), unit prices of 50 to 70 sqm non-landed homes grew 3.5 per cent per annum, while larger 90 to 120 sqm units had a higher growth rate of 4.2 per cent.





River Green



Did you know?

Back in 2015, average unit prices of bigger units were typically lower than smaller ones, due to the latter's lower investment quantum. But in recent years, this pattern has also shifted for some new launch projects, with larger format non-landed homes being sold at higher unit prices and at a faster pace.

This signals homebuyers' and occupants' preference for more space, possibly attributed in part to the pandemic, which led many to evaluate the role that space plays in quality living.

Price growth trend for new sales

Small units 50 - 70 sqm
RCR: \$2,813 psf (6.3% CAGR)
OCR: \$2,329 psf (6.7% CAGR)

*As of 30 Dec 2025

Large units 90 - 120 sqm
RCR: \$2,785 psf (6.6% CAGR)
OCR: \$2,226 psf (6.9% CAGR)

*Based on new sale, 2025 prices

RCR: Rest of Central Region

OCR: Outside Central Region



The Rest of Central Region (RCR) and Outside Central Region (OCR) had a relatively consistent volume of new launches in recent years, but the CCR experienced a dry spell from 2022 to 2024 before rebounding in 2025. Our analysis of URA caveats data reflects that bigger units fetched higher price growth in most popular districts in Downtown Singapore (see table).

A price appreciation trend was not evidently represented in the Central Business Districts (D1 and D2), but it was broadly observed that the price growth of bigger units was more significant for most districts.



Price growth of new private non-landed homes (by size range across all sale types) in Downtown Singapore*, CAGR from 2015 to November 2025

Size Range (sqm)	D1	D2	D3	D7	D9	D10	D11
50 to 70	-0.50%	1.50%	4.60%	4.60%	3.00%	3.30%	2.50%
70 to 90	0.90%	2.60%	5.50%	2.70%	3.70%	4.70%	3.10%
90 to 120	0.20%	-0.10%	6.80%	4.90%	4.70%	4.80%	4.00%
120 to 150	Insufficient Data		6.50%	5.00%	3.00%	4.70%	4.80%

*Note: Knight Frank defines Downtown Singapore to comprise the Core Central Region and its peripheral districts.

Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)

Value

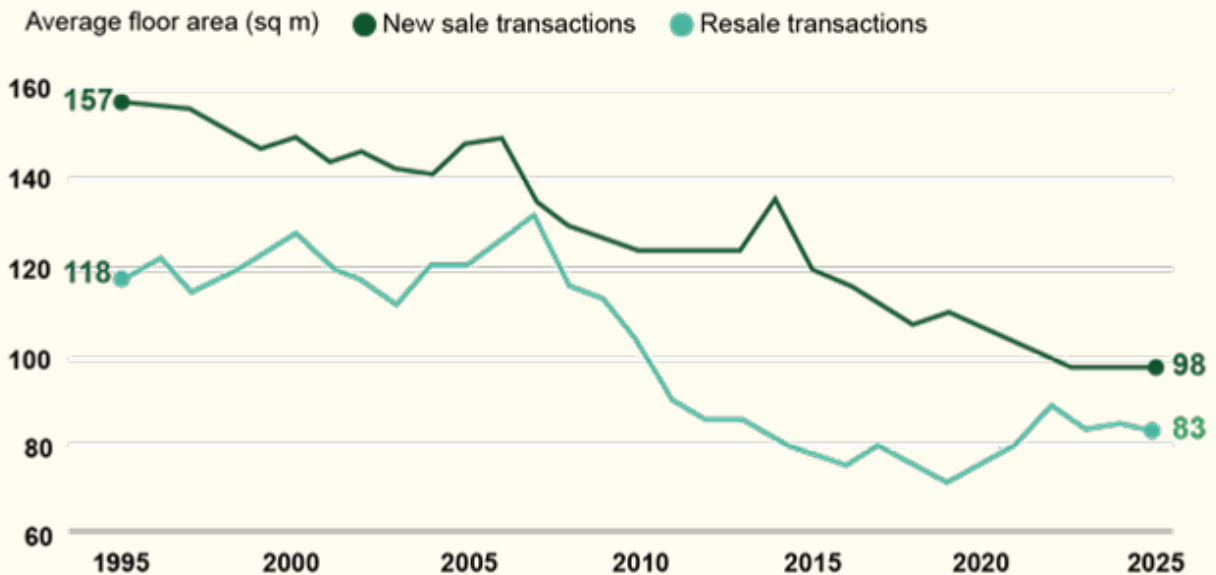
An inevitable trend

Increasingly, residential units have been trending smaller as development costs continue to rise. Intensifying competition for private-sector land stock in Singapore has driven up site acquisition costs, prompting developers to optimise allowable gross floor area (GFA) to protect profit margins. Arguably, affordability considerations among homebuyers further reinforce this strategy. With per square foot (psf) prices remaining elevated, reducing unit sizes allows developers to maintain a palatable

absolute price quantum for their target buyer segments. Compounding this is rising construction, financing and regulatory compliance costs, which leave little margin for inefficiency. On the demand side of demographics, shrinking average household sizes (from 3.5 persons in 2010 to 3.1 in 2024) also gives rise to a gradual acceptance of smaller homes. The cumulative effect is a clear shift towards smaller, more space-efficient homes across the market.

Average floor space of condominium units sold has fallen

Between 1995 and 2025, the average floor area of non-landed private residential properties has fallen by 35 sq m.



*Note: Executive condominiums and subscale caveats are excluded from this analysis.

Chart: Knight Frank Singapore Consultancy Graphics • Source: Urban Redevelopment Authority, REALIS, Knight Frank Singapore

The long-term trend observed in official URA caveats-logged data lends empirical support to our analysis that residential units have become progressively smaller. Since 1995, the average size of non-landed residential transactions — across both new sales and resale markets — have declined markedly. This sustained contraction in dwelling unit sizes reflects structural shifts in the development landscape, rather than short-term market cycles.

Preferences for bigger living environments

Concurrently, buyer sentiment is growing more multi-faceted. According to data from the Knight Frank-Ipsos Quality of Life Report 2025, mined from 1,000 respondents polled, 18% of homebuyers said they prefer an older development with larger living spaces over a newer, compact one. This pragmatic view of value reflects how they prioritise functionality and lifestyle quality over price affordability or convenience, reinforcing our observation that despite structural shifts toward smaller units, a substantial market segment prefer larger, more comfortable homes where supply allows.

Based on our price analysis of different size-bands of private non-landed residential projects from 2015 to 2025, the price growth of larger units outpaced that of the smaller units across CCR, RCR and OCR. This reflects a growing appeal for larger units, as capital upside potential serves as a key consideration among homebuyers. The CAGR of the unit transacted price for the CCR is generally lower than the RCR and OCR, possibly due to higher starting price quantum for CCR properties.

Price growth and unit prices of private residential units, by conventional size range across market segments

Market Segment	Residential Unit Size Range					
	50 - 70 sqm		70 - 90 sqm		90 - 120 sqm	
CCR	2015: \$2,045 psf	2025: \$2,791 psf	2015: \$1,818 psf	2025: \$2,636 psf	2015: \$1,711 psf	2025: \$2,618 psf
	CAGR: 3.2%		CAGR: 3.8%		CAGR: 4.3%	
RCR	2015: \$1,518 psf	2025: \$2,556 psf	2015: \$1,474 psf	2025: \$2,376 psf	2015: \$1,266 psf	2025: \$2,339 psf
	CAGR: 5.3%		CAGR: 4.9%		CAGR: 6.3%	
OCR	2015: \$1,217 psf	2025: \$2,031 psf	2015: \$1,130 psf	2025: \$1,909 psf	2015: \$1,038 psf	2025: \$1,760 psf
	CAGR: 3.2%		CAGR: 3.8%		CAGR: 4.3%	

Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)

Note: Includes new sale, resale and subsale transactions

Average transacted sizes of selected new residential launches in 2025

Smaller vs. larger size quantum islandwide



Market Segment

- CCR
- RCR
- OCR



Aurea

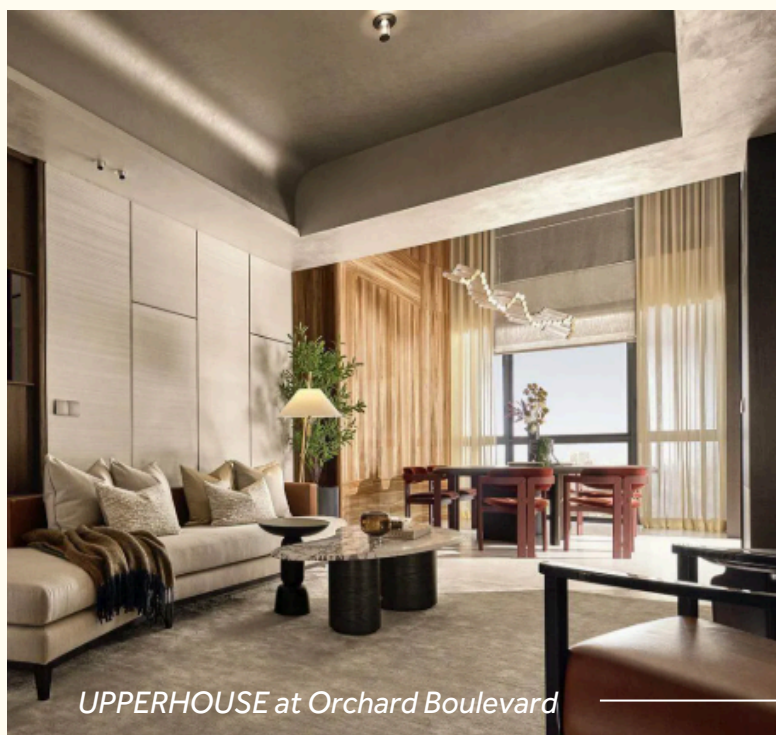
This suggests that both developers and buyers are starting to acknowledge the importance of “space” and pricing a premium for “bonus” square footage. Launches in 2025 with relatively larger and more spacious units in the central districts include Aurea (D7), UPPERHOUSE at Orchard Boulevard (D10) and The Robertson Opus (D9). All three are mixed-use developments with generally bigger unit sizes compared to similar bedroom formats, and close to MRT stations and daily essentials.

These projects offered noticeably larger-sized units than River Green (D9) and Penrith (D3), which were launched in the same year. Two-bedroom apartments in Aurea, Upperhouse and The Robertson Opus span a generous average of 60 sq m and more, an increasing rarity for new launches in prime districts.

With data suggesting that larger residential units within the city centre can offer long-term higher investment returns, it is clear that space remains a strong currency in land-scarce Singapore.



The Robertson Opus



UPPERHOUSE at Orchard Boulevard

Value

The evolving workspace landscape

Decentralisation efforts by the authorities to bring more workplaces closer to residential suburbs have made inroads over the years, and the Central Business District (CBD)'s grip on quality stock is strong. Around half of the nation's office supply is found within the Downtown Core; of this, approximately 70% comprises modern Grade A developments, based on Knight Frank estimates.

This cluster of high-quality office space within a relatively small geographic area has naturally attracted institutional ownership, with prime buildings predominantly held by major developers, listed REITs and investment funds.

This has supported market stability and professionalism, but limited direct ownership opportunities for SMEs, entrepreneurs and family offices looking to own rather than lease. Access to office ownership, particularly within central locations, remains constrained as most assets are traded in large blocks beyond the reach of private buyers.

Participation in Singapore's office market has traditionally been skewed towards leasing rather than ownership; against this backdrop of concentration and institutional control, strata office developments are a rare alternative, enabling occupiers and private investors to directly own a stake in Singapore's tightly-held office landscape.

In the late 1990s to early 2000s, newer-generation strata offices like Sunshine Plaza, Tong Eng Building, and Samsung Hub introduced modern specifications, smaller yet highly functional units, and enhanced management standards. Their added sophistication broadened the buyer profile beyond owner-occupiers to investors and family offices seeking long-term wealth preservation. Among them, Suntec City's office towers, which have enjoyed enhancement work between 2012 and 2019, emerged as a benchmark for the segment. Today, these offices continue to record active and high-value resale transactions exceeding \$3,000 psf.



Value

New strata office supply has become scarce, largely due to stricter planning regulations limiting strata subdivision in key CBD areas and developers' preference for whole-building ownership. Strata office buildings continue to age, defining a niche shaped by limited supply, a captive pool of buyers and a scarcity premium.

The concept of strata office ownership in Singapore was formally introduced with the Land Titles (Strata) Act of 1967, which allowed buildings to be subdivided into individually owned units. Aimed at lowering the capital barrier for entrepreneurs, professional firms and SMEs to acquire office premises without needing to purchase entire buildings, this "bite-sized" ownership model opened the door for smaller businesses to enter a market previously dominated by institutional landlords.

Early strata offices, comprising **People's Park Centre**, **Goldhill Plaza**, and **International Plaza**, set the template, for central locations, excellent transport connectivity, and integration with a mix of retail and residential uses, offering occupiers both convenience and visibility.

Knight Frank data estimates that strata-titled offices account for only about 16% of the country's total office leasable stock, with most concentrated in older developments constructed during earlier phases of Singapore's commercial growth. Many of these now face ageing specifications, smaller and less efficient floor plates, and progressively shortening lease tenures.

Supply will tighten even further. URA March 2022 policy restricting the strata subdivision of commercial units within key CBD areas states that office space in these locations can no longer be subdivided into smaller strata units for sale, closing the door to new strata-titled office stock in Singapore's core commercial precincts. What exists today is largely what the market will have to work with, going forward.



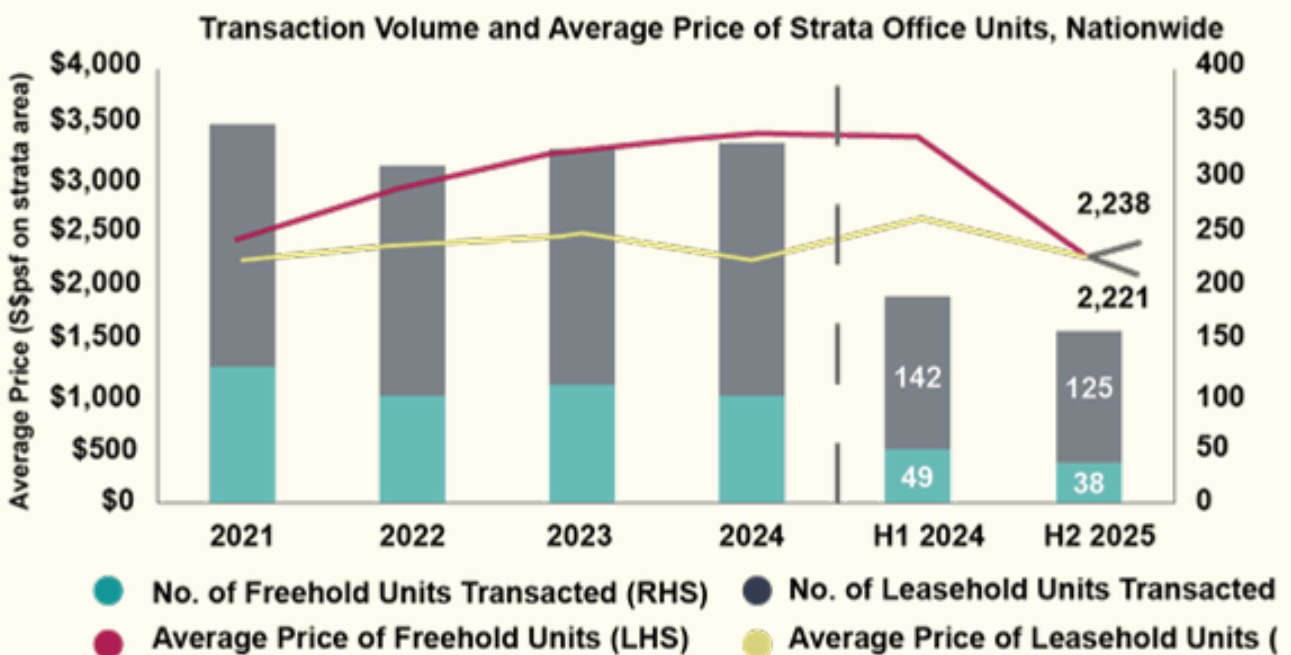
Value

And yet, the strata office segment has continued to demonstrate resilient transaction activity and firm price performance. In 2025, 354 strata office units were transacted for S\$1.1 billion, exceeding the 330 units sold in 2024.

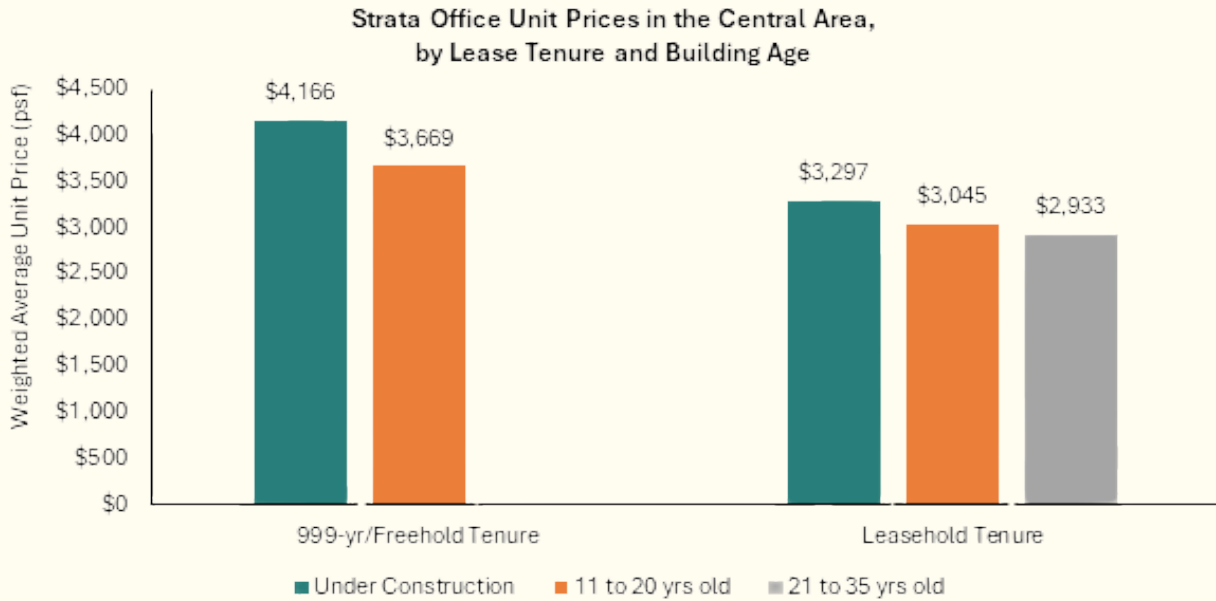
Activity remained concentrated in the CBD and city-fringe markets, with the Central Area accounting for 224 transactions (63% of total deal volume), representing approximately S\$892 million in sales value.

Leasehold strata offices continued to dominate market activity, comprising about 70% of all strata office transactions in 2025. The resilience of this segment, despite shorter tenure profiles, reflects buyers' continued willingness to acquire well-located leasehold assets with sufficient remaining lease life to support a viable investment and exit horizon. A clear market preference of location and building quality is evident, and for well-positioned assets with sufficient remaining lease life, demand has proven durable.

The scarcity premium is visible in newly launched projects too. A notable example is **Solitaire on Cecil**, which came to market in March 2023, was sold out in 16 months. The final three units transacted between S\$4,130 psf and S\$4,200 psf, highlighting robust demand and buyers' willingness to pay a premium for new, well-positioned strata office product within the CBD.

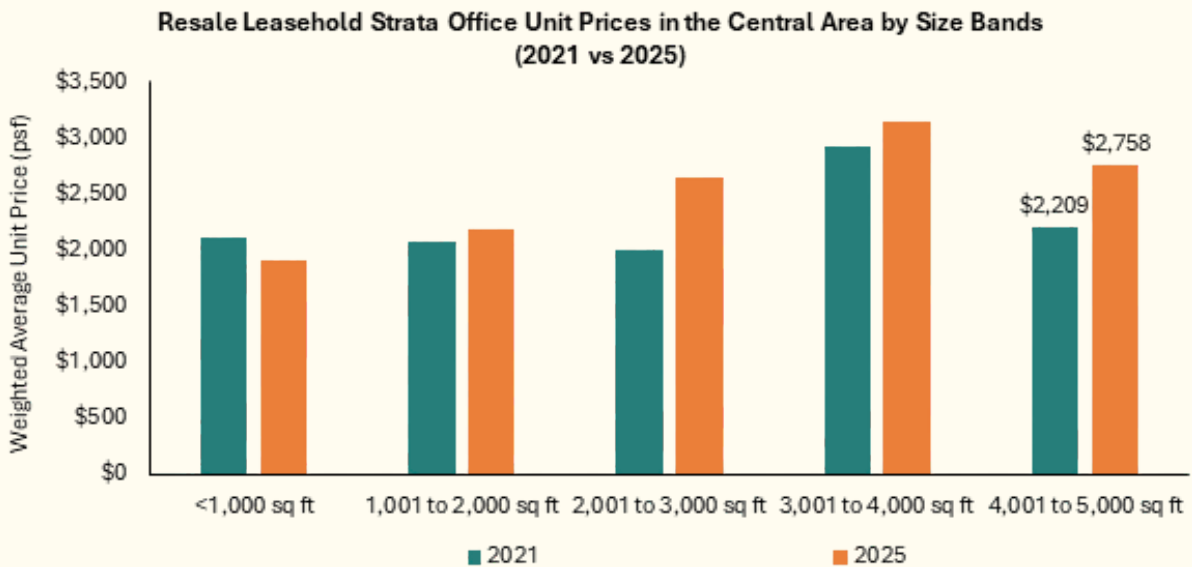


Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)



Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)

In the Central Area, tenure and building age are key factors influencing pricing. **999-year and freehold assets command a premium, with brand new under-construction units averaging \$4,166 psf compared with \$3,297 psf for leasehold offices of similar vintage.** Older or freehold stock carry more value; well-located leasehold offices continue to demonstrate pricing resilience and a more accessible entry point relative to older options.



Source: URA REALIS, Knight Frank Consultancy (as at March 2026)

In terms of leasehold resales, larger units have outperformed since 2021. Comparing weighted average resale prices in 2021 vs 2025, units in the 2,001–3,000 sq ft and 3,001–4,000 sq ft bands rose 32% and 8% respectively, while the 4,001–5,000 sq ft segment grew 25% to \$2,758 psf from \$2,209 psf. In contrast, prices for sub-1,000 sq ft units fell 10% over the same period. **Larger floor plates are scarcer, and owner-occupiers value them for layout efficiency, branding presence and room to grow.**



One Sophia

Looking ahead, the investment case for centrally located strata offices is compelling, even as prices continue to trend upward. These assets offer one of the few routes to direct ownership in prime Singapore locations, and replacement supply is severely limited.

For buyers, this appeal goes beyond smart economics. A CBD or city-centre corporate address carries prestige and conveys permanence, credibility, and brand stature — qualities especially valued among professional firms, family offices, and established SMEs.

Upcoming offerings at **The Golden Mile** and One Sophia reflect how the strata office format is evolving to meet changing occupier preferences.

The Golden Mile's larger, more efficient floor plates and higher ceilings will be anchored by a vibrant retail podium and medical suites that drive footfall. With proximity to the Kallang Alive Masterplan, its positioning is further strengthened for long-term rejuvenation.

Similarly, One Sophia brings a contemporary mixed-use proposition to Dhoby Ghaut, one of Singapore's most connected city-centre nodes. Businesses there will enjoy the connectivity and convenience increasingly expected of modern workplaces.

Together, these newer formats will speak to start-ups graduating out of co-working spaces, firms rationalising their footprint, and mature businesses seeking a permanent Singapore base with greater privacy and control. Family offices, investment firms, law practices, and technology companies form potential occupiers of such assets.

The long-term thesis: in the strata office market, supply does not respond quickly to demand, as scarcity is a result of stringent government regulation. For buyers who secure the right asset early, this imbalance should continue to help businesses support capital preservation of their strata office investment across market cycles.



The Golden Mile

Urban Design.

“

By designing with generosity and human scale, we wanted to create a place that feels open, inclusive and instinctively welcoming, where commercial success follows naturally from strong placemaking.

**Siew Man Kok
MKPL Architects**



One Holland Village

01 Hyphenates/Double Income No Kids (DINKS)

A strong representation of how lifestyle-driven design can enhance comfort, community and engagement, One Holland Village is characterised by familiar proportions of a shophouse reinterpreted through terraced edges, and non-parallel shopfronts that can be personalised via awnings, outdoor seating and layered signage.

Prioritising openness and natural ventilation, One Holland Village's timber railings and greenery are a nod to the area's heritage, while a mix of sheltered walkways and unsheltered paths evoke an alfresco feel.

This outdoor-first approach proved resilient during the pandemic by addressing visitors' comfort and safety. The Village Commons, a curated sky garden with seating and ambient music, complements these installations to encourage lingering and social interaction. Meanwhile, an adjoining office component features textured finishes within flexible and light-filled workspaces. The result? A dynamic streetscape that is contemporary, not formulaic.

The design of One Holland Village emerged from MKPL Architects' winning proposal, following a rigorous competition among local and international firms. Its chairman, Siew Man Kok, describes the project as "a vibrant lifestyle destination that rethinks how people experience urban spaces".

Urban Design

02 Culture advocates

It is important to create resilient and inclusive spaces, according to Teoh Hai Pin, director of multidisciplinary design practice DP Architects. The firm's latest project, Golden Mile Singapore comprising new residential tower Aurea and conserved building The Golden Mile — is a development that sets the tone for modern conservation, aimed at enhancing economic viability, liveability and relevance for a new generation.

Working with conservation specialists Studio Lapis, DP Architects will transform an iconic brutalist creation into a cohesive urban live-work-play landmark integrating heritage and contemporary urban life. Distinct from conventional mixed-use developments, Golden Mile Singapore contributes to a broader shift in how adaptive reuse can contribute towards an urban development that prioritises long-term sustainability and social well-being.

Aurea's take on contemporary urban living addresses today's needs for liveability, sustainability and biophilic integration. Its design rethinks the spatial distribution of living environments — such as a generous balcony for larger units and maximised internal spaces for other unit types — in response to rising expectations of spatial quality and flexibility.

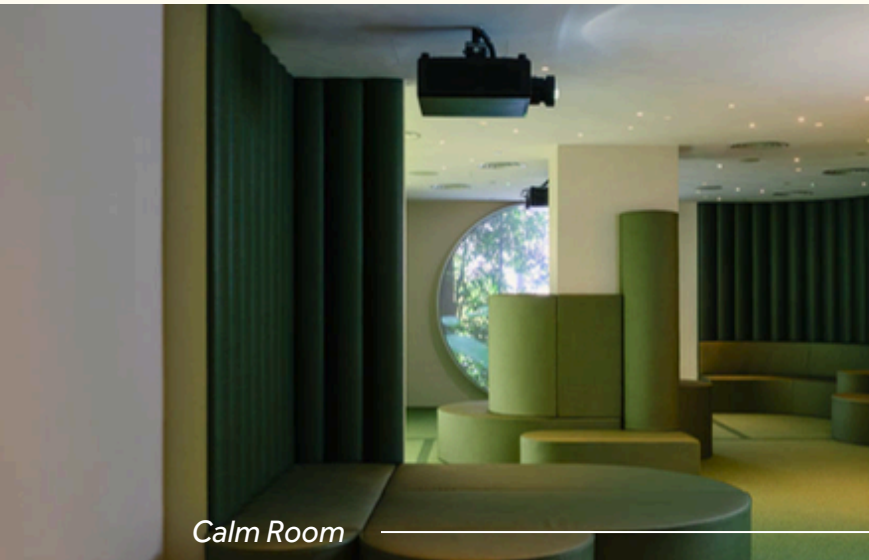
Meanwhile, The Golden Mile's loft mezzanine design is the creative result of merging two floors to offer a unique office typology. Ranging from 136 to 250 sq m (1,464 to 2,691 sq ft) — making them suitable for family and small to medium enterprises — the workspaces also celebrate the building's distinctive stepped façade.



Aurea



The Golden Mile



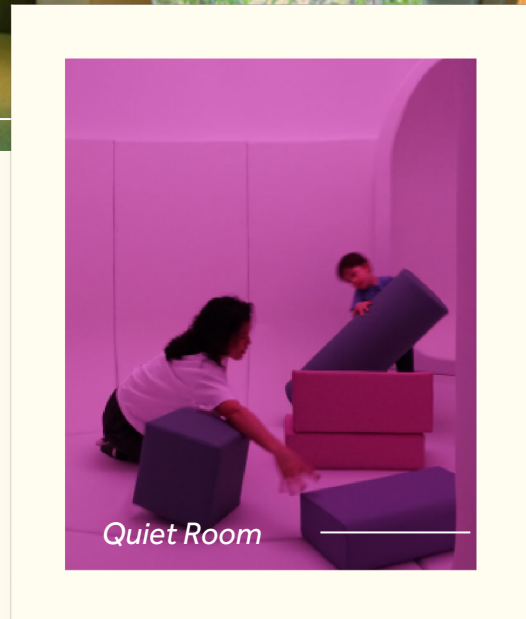
Calm Room

03 Divergent travellers, special needs groups

The face of community spaces is changing to enhance inclusivity and comfort. “When people feel comfortable and supported, meaningful interaction and community life can take root,” states Ong Ker-Shing, co-founder of local architectural firm Lekker Architects.

Her firm’s community space projects include Kindle Garden (Singapore’s first inclusive preschool that incorporates play furniture with physical therapy benefits for students with special needs), the Quiet Room at National Museum Singapore (the Republic’s first sensory space in a museum), and Calm Room, a sensory-friendly space at Changi Airport Terminal 2 for neurodivergent travellers. Prior to this, the firm had been commissioned to design a Quiet Room at the new Garage Museum in Moscow, Russia.

Ong explains: “Calm Room is a project initiated by Changi Airport Group as part of its efforts towards enhancing the travel experience for people with invisible needs. Space highlights include The Nest — a small, padded space with customisable, coloured lighting to encourage sensory calm, and The Forest — a nature-themed space with ‘biophilic windows’: digital projections with looped videos showcasing Singapore’s natural environment.”



Quiet Room



With an increase in community participation and interest-group workshops in recent years, empathetic spaces are being shaped for multiple users, accommodating the diverse ways people choose to inhabit and use them, and allowing room for interpretation.

Ker-Shing Ong
Lekker Architects



Urban Design

04 Metropolitans

The team at Singapore-based practice WOHA Architects believe that greenery is a basic human need rather than a mere aesthetic tool. Its director, Chan Ee Mun, says biophilic design and carefully curated communal spaces play a critical role in enhancing quality of living in high-density environments.

The firm's projects feature plant species curated for resilience and biodiversity to create lush, immersive landscaping that mitigates urban heat while supporting mental wellness.

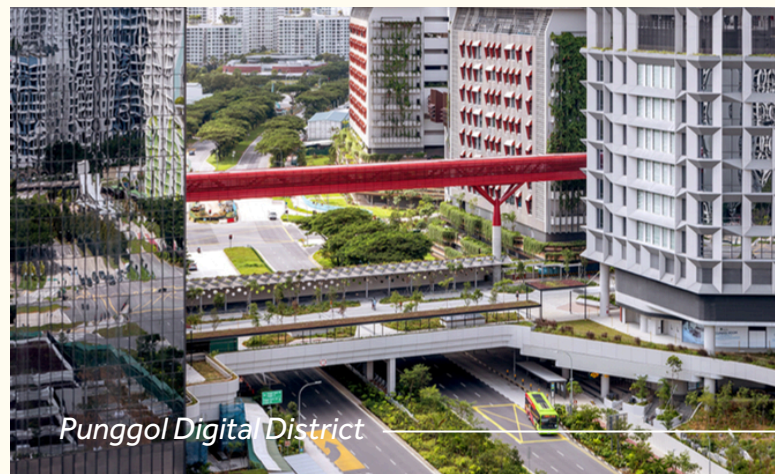
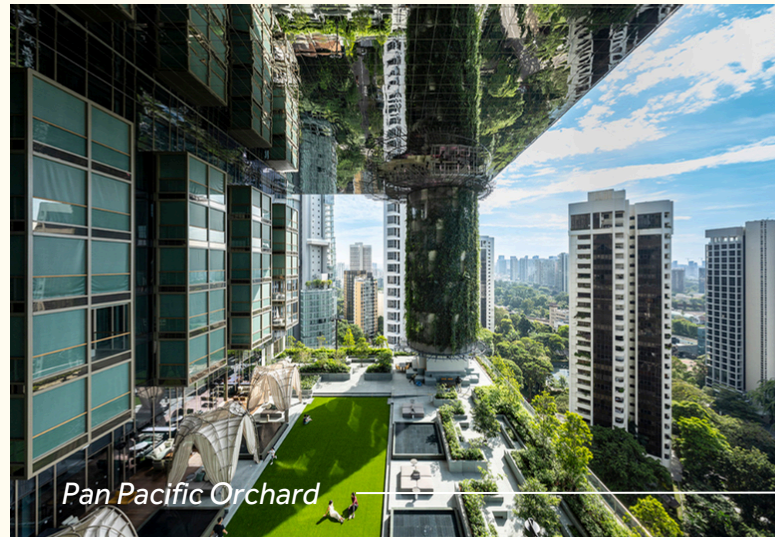
Equally important is the role of communal facilities at projects. At **The Reserve Residences** and **Pan Pacific Orchard**, terraces, landscaped decks and semi-outdoor lounges are designed to support both interaction and retreat, accommodating evolving lifestyles shaped by hybrid work and multigenerational living. These shared spaces counterbalance increasingly compact private units, fostering social connection and a sense of belonging through adaptability and choice.

The firm's approach to any project, be it in the residential sector or any other typology, is anchored by a very urban perspective. With Singapore being a fairly built-up urban environment, his team's interest lies in how they can create living environments for the people that are well-integrated with the city and with nature.



We see our buildings not as isolated developments, but as part of a larger, interconnected network that seamlessly integrates with its surroundings.

Chan Ee Mun
WOHA Architects



Urban Design

Shifting workspace typologies

Over 90% of total office stock in Singapore sits within the Central Region, which includes the CBD, Orchard Road, Rest of Central Area and city-fringe areas such as Queenstown and Toa Payoh.

Within this footprint, workspaces broadly span three major typologies: high-rise office buildings owned by a single landlord, offices owned by multiple owners (for example, strata offices) and low-rise shophouses owned by individuals.

Single-landlord buildings dominate, making up over 83% of nationwide stock. Most of them are gleaming towers in the CBD, where prestigious addresses and transport connectivity remain key drivers of occupier demand, especially among global firms.

On the office front, the market has been driven by occupiers' needs, gradually evolving over the decades in terms of functions and offerings. The first high-rise office building in Singapore — the **Asia Insurance Building** (now Ascott Raffles Place Singapore) — was erected in 1954, and held the title of the city-state's tallest for over a decade until the completion of OUB Centre (now **One Raffles Place Tower 1**) in the 1980s.

Subsequently, the development of several strata-titled buildings revolutionised the concept of office ownership in Singapore — with some of the earliest ones being **International Plaza**, **Shenton House**, **High Street Centre** and **The Plaza**. They introduced a new model that offered individuals the

opportunity to possess and manage office spaces instead of leasing them from landlords. Operational flexibility was an added bonus.

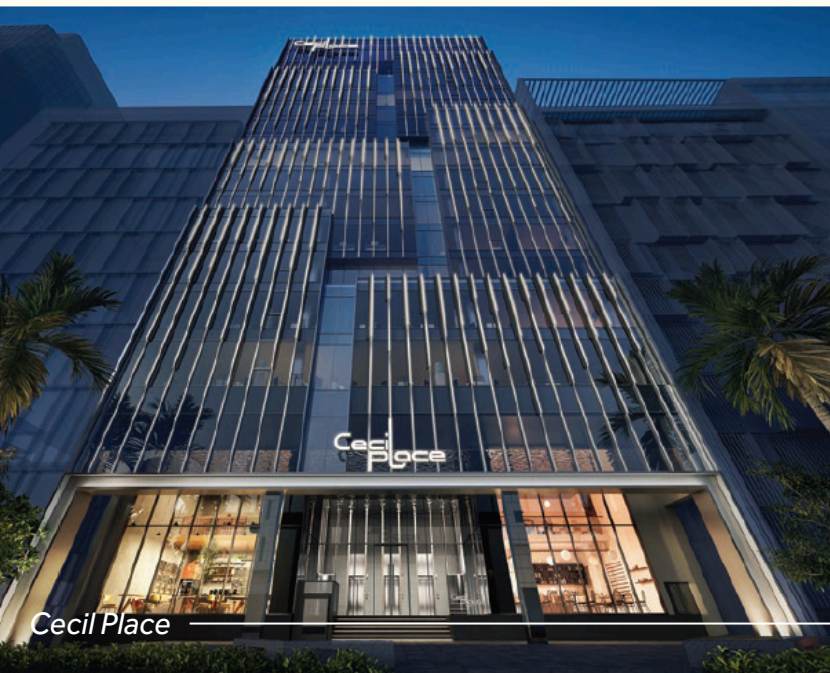
In parallel, the adaptive reuse of shophouses was encouraged; such spaces could be used as offices, offering an alternative ownership model. Often in duplex formats, these became the default choice of studios, design firms and creative agencies — challenging the conventional CBD office model by prioritising character, location and lifestyle.

Maximising net lettable area was once the focus of developers with the advent of single-landlord buildings. Design concepts including a welcome sense of arrival, community spaces or thoughtful wellness amenities were secondary considerations.

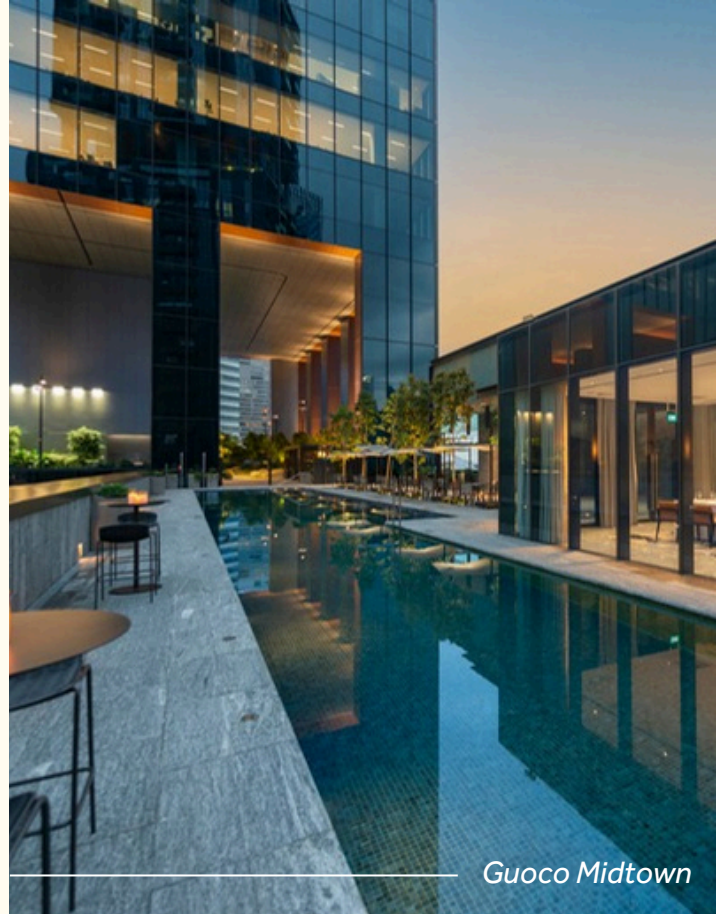
This mindset began to shift from the 1990s with the expansion of the Downtown Core, with **The Gateway** (1990), **Republic Plaza** (1995), **One Raffles Quay** (2007), **Ocean Financial Centre** (2011) and **Marina Bay Financial Centre** (2012) re-drawing the skyline.



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Cecil Place



Guoco Midtown



The Great Room Raffles Arcade

A new wave of typologies aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises and mobile teams followed. Demand kicked in for co-working spaces, coinciding with the rise of the start-up ecosystem and flexibility over long-term leases. Operators such as **The Working Capitol** (2015), **The Executive Centre** and **The Great Room** (2016) and **WeWork** (2018) dominated that landscape, repositioning shophouses, secondary office stock and other niche asset classes as creative and unique community-driven workplaces.

Soon after, post-pandemic office development placed greater emphasis on shared amenities, greenery and experience-led design. Developments like **CapitaSpring**, business park building **Eclipse** (formerly Sandcrawler), **55 Market Street**, **Guoco Midtown**, **IOI Central Boulevard** and the anticipated The Golden Mile reflect a broader shift towards wellness and placemaking, with features ranging from shared workspaces to landscaped sky gardens.

Notably, mixed-use development Guoco Midtown's reimagination of work-meets-wellness has successfully led to the creation of purpose-driven designs to support its market position as "a workplace for tomorrow". Featuring public and retail spaces alongside Grade A offices, its agile workspaces with hotdesking features, large scale MICE rooms and meeting spaces are located within the vibrant Beach Road district.

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Newer strata projects have signalled a progressive transformation of the segment, with recent and upcoming design-led developments unlocking newer typologies. **8 Robinson Road** (2023) and **Cecil Place** (2025) are the latest strata office additions to the Tanjong Pagar precinct, while **One Sophia** — strategically located at the crossroads of the Civic and Cultural District and Orchard Road — offers options for those looking to explore prime strata office investment opportunities.

The newest Grade A office building on the block is **Newport Tower**, part of the iconic 45-storey Newport Plaza mixed-use development on Anson Road slated for completion in 2027. Designed by world-renowned architects Nikken Sekkei in collaboration with ADDP Architects, Newport Tower comprises 9 storeys of office and F&B space with tranquil cascading terraces, that combine greenery with calming water elements. Floor plates range from approximately 18,500 sq ft to 34,500 sq ft, catering to a variety of space planning configurations as well as tenants' requirements.

And come Q3 2029, waterfront mixed-use development **The Golden Mile** will open the doors to its "modern shophouses in the sky" — 76 units that blend traditional shophouses with modern workspaces. The project is an adaptive reuse and refurbishment of the original Golden Mile Complex, a Brutalist icon developed in the 1960s.



Designed with modern comfort and luxury in mind, it is an integration of retail amenities, proximity to green landscaping and communal space, while overlooking the vast waterfront.

Its existing floor slabs on alternate floors were decanted to create double-volume office spaces spanning 136 to 250 sqm, offering a new, modern workplace typology for compact offices while respecting the integrity of the building's stepped façade — a critical marker of its identity. The Golden Mile's approach reflects a real appreciation for being in a building with character.

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The overall concept of loft offices in The Golden Mile was a creative solution to overcome the limitations of the existing structure. The low floor-to-floor height no longer meets modern standards and expectations.

DP Architects
Teoh Hai Pin

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Real-time management software firm PTV Group is one such business. It relocated from co-working space The Great Room to a three-storey shophouse along Duxton Road last year, signing a two-year lease with flexibility to expand. A team of 15 sales, marketing and finance professionals currently occupies two floors, with a view to expand to the third level when the business grows.

The move also reflects its sustainability ethos, since the office space embodies culture and heritage, highlighting the value of repurposing older buildings and aligning with circular economy principles, while being surrounded by some of the city's most distinctive architecture.

The space also offers the right balance of size, affordability, and surrounding amenities of everyday dining options alongside higher-end offerings. In addition, excellent access to Outram, Maxwell and Chinatown MRT stations supports both work and team culture.

Office design has matured to the point where it can respond to different moods and sensibilities.

Technology is better, materials are better, lighting is more thoughtful. This shift is important. Unconventional offices are not without trade-offs; they involve higher costs, maintenance complexity and potential leasing-related issues. Decisions to occupy such spaces are deliberate choices, influenced by how such spaces offer what traditional environments cannot — a stronger sense of inclusivity, identity and connection.

The increasing proliferation of unconventional spaces reflects the maturity of the office market; traditional office towers will remain a core part but may lose their shine as the best workplace for organisations if only space optimisation and landlord-only objectives are prioritised.

As occupier needs shift towards well-being, inclusivity and talent retention, office design must evolve to support these objectives. The next chapter of Singapore's office market will not be defined by typology, but intentionality — defined by how well space is designed to respond to people, culture and long-term value. Unconventional offices are not a passing trend, but a signal of where the market is heading.

TL:DR.



The space premium will continue to define property value

Size is emerging as a strong factor of demand for homebuyers with different investment objectives.

Larger units of new residential launches perform better in terms of the capital appreciation potential

The price growth of larger units has outpaced that of the smaller units islandwide, with buyer sentiment growing more multi-faceted.

Demand for waterfront properties will continue to outpace supply

The rarity of waterfront residential assets in Singapore continues to shape demand; most projects will only be completed in 2030 and beyond, with the exception of Aurea in 2029.

Design for work-live-play spaces is evolving

In alignment with residents' and occupiers' needs for live-work-play integration, private and public spaces will embody more thoughtful design.

Buy or lease office property? Beyond location, the potential to evolve as a Third Place is key

With larger floor plates growing scarcer and increased demands for convenience, new offices with compelling offerings have become more appealing to owner-occupiers.

Strata office design is moving in the right direction

Designers are increasingly creating spaces that address users' experiential and wellness needs. But greater refinement is necessary to sharpen their approach towards inspired design.



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