



Shaun Hill wins the job

# GIANTS BLOW IT

Relievers give up lead in 14th on a grand slam; Zito shines again



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## ARE TOWERS A GLIMPSE OF FUTURE?

Three 15-story buildings could be start of S.J. high-density build-out

### Mixed-use development

A \$300 million combination of housing and retail, scheduled to break ground in 2011



2005 aerial photo by Pictometry.com. \*Conceptual model for proposed zoning. Final design to be determined.

### Project mixes housing, retail on transit line

By Denis C. Theriault  
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What would San Jose look like if gleaming high-rises suddenly sprouted all across the city?

A proposal that would place three 15-story towers, plus traditional townhouses and storefronts, on San Carlos Street just west of downtown could provide some early answers.

Shovels are still a few years from hitting the ground. But already, planners say, the Ohlone mixed-use project has become a test case for an evolving effort to spread dense residential development along San Jose's public-transit corridors.

And the development has added to the debate about the future character of a city that's traditionally embraced tract housing, smaller condo projects

See **TOWERS**, Page 7

#### ONLINE EXTRA

**Poll:** Should San Jose encourage high-rise living along its light-rail and bus lines? Vote and comment at <http://forums.mercurynews.com/poll>



### How tall is it?



Source: Green Republic LLP ANDRÉA MASCHIETTO — MERCURY NEWS

### A closer look at the proposal

**The plans** call for three 15-story towers, plus townhouses and storefronts on a site just west of downtown. City permission would be needed to exceed the area's 90-foot height limit.

**The developers** envision shops and restaurants and live/work lofts around the towers.

**The developers** say they will contribute \$1 million toward a new light-rail station

near Auzerais and Sunol streets, in addition to transit passes for new residents.

**The project** will add a four-acre park off Auzerais, plus plazas within the development.

### INTERROGATION FALLOUT

# Tactics dog CIA, prompt probe

At issue: Should agents be punished for carrying out Bush terror policies?

By Josh Meyer and Greg Miller  
*Los Angeles Times*

**WASHINGTON** — Nearly eight years after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the Obama administration took a series of steps Monday that set the country on a course to confront whether actions taken to defend Americans crossed criminal lines.

In simultaneous moves, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder opened an investigation into whether CIA interrogators broke the law, while the administration released a long-secret CIA report that cataloged allegations of agency prisoner abuse.

At the same time, the administration released memos

#### NEW DETAILS

■ Top al-Qaida prisoners were told that their families faced harm, such as sexual abuse or death, if they didn't cooperate.

■ A detainee's carotid artery was pinched until he started to pass out, then he was shaken awake.

■ A mock execution was staged to terrify one detainee.

See **CIA**, Page 8

### CORONER'S REPORT

# Jackson's death ruled a homicide

Powerful sedative, other drugs killed pop star, official says

By Thomas Watkins  
*Associated Press*

**LOS ANGELES** — The Los Angeles County coroner has ruled Michael Jackson's death a homicide and a combination of drugs was the cause.



Jackson

## 3rd suicide on tracks spurs worry of 'cluster'

# Towers

Continued from Page 1

and scattered bungalows.

"It's the first," said Joe Horwedel, San Jose's planning director. While there have been a small number of high-rises outside downtown and other "villages" combining housing and retail, such as Santana Row, no projects besides Ohlone have emerged that offer that mix of diversity and density — and certainly none near a transit line.

"There are things in this project we'll see elsewhere," Horwedel said.

Right now, the site — formerly the Valley Transportation Authority's bus lot — is another mostly empty expanse in a gritty, industrial part of town.

But the local developers pushing the project, Michael Van Every and Barry Swenson, see something else when they survey the 8.25-acre parcel spreading southwest from San Carlos and Sunol streets: a new neighborhood.

All around the towers, they envision shops and restaurants, live/work lofts and hundreds of commuters hustling toward a new light-rail station just across Sunol.

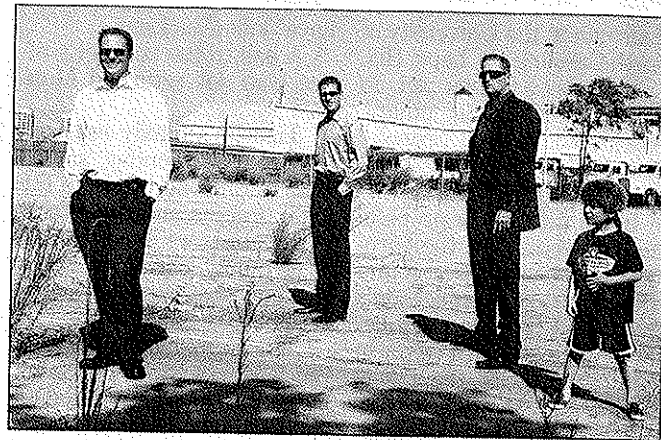
The ambitious, \$300 million development took another step forward Monday when the city's planning department released a preliminary report highlighting its impact on neighbors. Among the concerns — traffic.

Already, because of its size and scope, the development has attracted a fair amount of questions.

"My fear is we're going to have this extremely high-density project with very little commercial space," said Terri Balandra, a nearby resident who has kept close tabs on the project. "It's not that we're against high-density; we want it done really well."

So-called "infill" development, especially tied to bus and train lines, has been increasingly embraced around the Bay Area and nationwide. But it amounts to a dramatic shift for San Jose, which for years encouraged the construction of single-family homes.

Only in the past decade has the city added significant high-rise housing downtown and laid the groundwork for



JOSIE LEPE — MERCURY NEWS

Developers of the proposed Ohlone mixed-use project tour the site west of downtown, from left, Erik Hayden, 30, Todd C. Trezell, 29, and Michael Van Every, 40, with son Jacob.

growth in places like North San Jose.

The Ohlone site is located just west of Highway 87 in Midtown, which has been among the neighborhoods on the vanguard of that change. Home to the Diridon train station and close to The Alameda and a light-rail line, the area has seen hundreds of new low-rise condos and townhomes constructed in recent years. It's also where San Jose hopes to one day erect a baseball stadium.

That growth has left some neighbors, like Balandra, wary. She says many of those developments, notably along San Carlos Street, have brought in plenty of people but not enough of the other amenities that make up a neighborhood.

Van Every, however, said such amenities are precisely his goal — lending a touch of what he called "lifestyle."

The developers say they will contribute \$1 million toward a new light-rail station near Auzerais and Sunol streets and transit passes for new residents. The project will add a four-acre park off Auzerais, plus plazas within the development. And Van Every envisions lively storefronts in new retail space along San Carlos.

"A lot of the concerns are the fear of the unknown," said Van Every, who's met with several neighborhood groups to discuss the project. "What will San Jose look like in 25 years, and will my home still be as nice tomorrow?"

There are plenty of neighbors looking forward to the towers — even to the crush of people they promise to bring.

"Right now, we don't even

have sidewalks in front of that area, much less lighting and landscaping," said Norma Ruiz, a neighborhood activist who lives near the site. "But the biggest thing I'll be advocating for is the light-rail station."

Van Every still has hurdles beyond the environmental report. He and his partners will have to wait out the tough economy; they don't plan to break ground until 2011, with construction on the towers and other units expected in phases.

They also need city permission to exceed Midtown's 90-foot height limit.

Although height hasn't been too much of a lightning rod for the Ohlone project's neighbors — all but a handful of whom live a third of a mile away — it could become an issue for other so-called transit villages. Horwedel said the issue bears close study as planners and city leaders examine which areas to focus on.

Whereas he said an eight-story building might not look out of place near the dense intersection of Capitol Avenue and McKee Road, for instance, one would stick out starkly less than a mile away at Capitol and Mabury Road.

Even as San Jose changes, Horwedel said, the reality is most of the city's housing stock is still made up of bungalows and ranch homes.

"We don't need to go and build 10-story, 20-story buildings everywhere" he said. "We want to be very clear about where the growth is going to happen — and more importantly, where it's not going to happen."

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