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# Google re-emerges at Downtown West site, says it's committed to San Jose

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The first "Creekside Socials" block party was hosted on Barack Obama Boulevard near SAP Center on Sept. 9, 2023. Google executives and local leaders made appearances, reaffirming that the Downtown West development is still underway despite reports of doubt.

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By Kevin V. Nguyen – Contributor, Silicon Valley Business Journal  
Sep 11, 2023

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Facing reports that its massive campus project in San Jose has been shelved, Google LLC's parent company Alphabet Inc. sent its chief investment officer, Ruth Porat, to assuage those concerns.

"Here in Downtown West, with input from San Jose residents, businesses and civic leaders, we have created a multi-decade opportunity and development plan," Porat said in a speech during a Google organized block party on Saturday. "We did that because we believe in the people who live here, who work here and are committed to being here in San Jose."

Dubbed the "Creekside Socials," the arts and food gathering was organized by Mountain View-based Google in partnership with real estate firm Jamestown, and was within the footprint of the tech titan's proposed mixed-use transit village near Diridon Station and SAP Center. The party featured multiple food truck vendors, local arts and crafts proprietors, and musicians.

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From left to right: San Jose mayor Matt Mahan, Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-San Jose), Jamestown LP managing director, head of services David Himmel, and chief investment officer at Alphabet Ruth Porat.

TRISHA LEEPER

Located on the street of Barack Obama Blvd., the party marked Google's first public appearance at the Downtown West project site since reports surfaced earlier this year suggesting that [the development was in serious doubt](#). In March, Google's top real estate official, [Jay Bechtel, was laid off](#). On an earnings call with investors a month prior, Porat also said Alphabet was shrinking its real estate footprint in the wake of layoffs. However, [according to a transcript of the call](#), Downtown West or San Jose was not explicitly mentioned.

[CNBC also reported](#) that Lendlease Corp. Ltd., the lead developer on the project, laid off 67 local workers, including numerous development managers.

U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-San Jose) also made a brief appearance and mentioned those concerns.



Artists working on paintings at Google and Jamestown's "Creekside Social" block party on Sept. 9, 2023.

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"The CEO and the executives have promised us that although the development has been slightly delayed, it is not in doubt," Lofgren said. The representative also announced that the philanthropic arm of Google was awarding a \$250,000 grant to local nonprofit People Assisting the Homeless.

San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan also made an appearance adding, "we couldn't ask for a partner that is more innovative, forward-looking, holistic-thinking and community-oriented than Google."

While Saturday's event marked Google's most visible presence since the project was green lit by the City Council in 2021, Porat did not give any material updates to the project's timeline, which the company has kept mum on. Project literature displayed at the party also did not post any new information.





Literature about Google's planned Downtown West development displayed at Saturday's "Creekside Social" event. The timeline did not go beyond project's approval in 2021.

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"We are going to continue to see the development of some really exciting efforts, office development, residential housing, and something I am particularly excited about, acres of public space," Porat added.

Although it has not been announced on any [official channels](#), the Creekside Socials are believed to be a series of events leading up to the actual construction of the Downtown West project.

The Business Journal spoke to several arts and crafts vendors at the event who said that although they only heard of the event as recently as a month ago when it was first announced to the public, that they were happy to have more opportunities like it to engage with the public and activate urban spaces.

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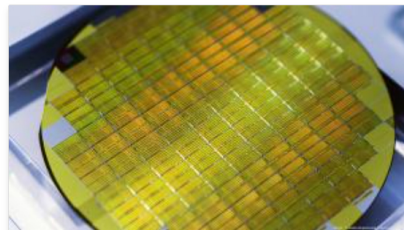
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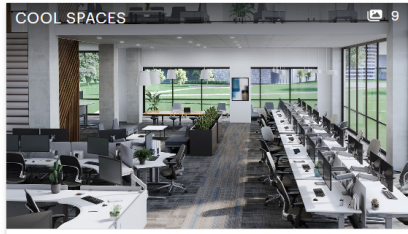
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