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Google preps beer garden, outdoor dining in downtown San Jose village

Tech titan plans several strategies to make area more lively



57 Barack Obama Boulevard in downtown San Jose, former site of the century-old Kearney Pattern Works and Foundry, seen in Sept. 2023. (George Avalos/Bay Area News Group)

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SAN JOSE — Google will launch a wide-ranging strategy to activate a [key section of downtown San Jose](#), including beer and dining sites, in the footprint of the search giant's proposed transit-oriented neighborhood.

The tech titan has teamed up with Jamestown, Google's development and real estate ally, to craft ways to create a more lively street scene near the Diridon train station and SAP Center.

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This is part of Google's effort that began a year ago to institute a series of what [the company calls Creekside Socials](#) to encourage people to gather in the area where the company has proposed a transit-oriented neighborhood of offices, homes, restaurants and shops.

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"We look forward to introducing vibrant new experiences and businesses as part of our larger placemaking program at the site," said Google senior director of development Alexa Arena. "This is an exciting evolution, and one we're honored to help deliver in partnership with the community."

Google instituted the Creekside Socials in the wake of the company's decision to reevaluate the precise timeline for the construction start of the transit village, which is known as Downtown West.

"We have entered into a multi-year lease with Jamestown to expand the Creekside program by transforming sections of Barack Obama Boulevard and South Montgomery Street into a vibrant area with retail experiences," Google stated in comments the company emailed to this news organization.

Mountain View-based Google seeks to improve the overall look and feel of the area near the transit hub and the SAP Center.

"In early 2025, we plan to add a series of new food & beverage, health & wellness, and retail concepts along Barack Obama Boulevard and South Montgomery Street," said Jamestown president Michael Phillips. "We look forward to continuing to activate the site and bring the community together."

Google said it seeks to create a lively street scene in the near term ahead of the company's long-term goals to begin what would be a massive development in downtown San Jose that could dramatically change the city's urban core.

"We're making downtown San Jose the safest and cleanest urban center in the Bay so that partners like Google will continue investing," San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan said. "Community events, small businesses, recreational activities, and restaurants are the foundation for downtown's future growth as a social center."

Over the last year, Jamestown and Google have hosted more than 60 community events through the Creekside Socials program, which brought food vendors, artists and nonprofits to that section of downtown San Jose. The events have attracted an estimated 3,500 visitors.

"The Creekside Socials community event series was our first step in a broader placemaking program," Phillips said. "We're excited to continue that work and introduce new experiences to the area."

Jamestown is known for its efforts to bring heightened vibrancy to Fourth Street in Berkeley and Ghiradelli Square in San Francisco.

In New York City's Manhattan borough, Jamestown works with Google on the Chelsea Market and Pier 57 sites, both major tourist attractions.

The search giant's efforts to create a more lively scene in this part of downtown San Jose arrive on the heels of disclosures that Google has begun discussions with city officials regarding the development of affordable housing in Downtown West.

Google is eyeing an affordable housing site — potentially becoming the vanguard of development for the proposed mixed-use neighborhood that would dramatically reshape a huge swath of the downtown.

The affordable housing could sprout on a portion of the old Orchard Supply Hardware store. One of the buildings in that long-shuttered retail center was demolished earlier this year.

Following this year's bulldozing of the building at 720 West San Carlos Street, Google is evaluating its affordable housing development options at the site, according to a Google spokesperson.

In downtown San Jose, the former Kearney Pattern Works and Foundry site at 57 Barack

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Obama Boulevard could be a prime location for a beer garden and dining spots.

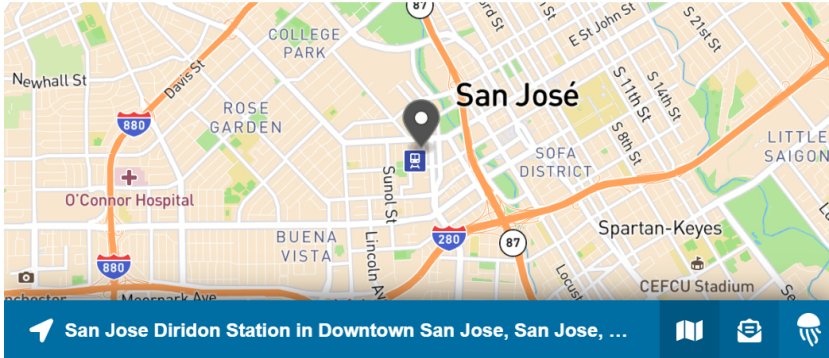
"From the very beginning, the community and neighborhoods surrounding Diridon Station have been asking for the activation of this area," said Bob Staedler, a principal executive with Silicon Valley Synergy, a land-use consultancy. "This is a great first step."

The century-old foundry complex closed its doors in 2018. The interior is spacious and fronts on both Barack Obama Boulevard and South Montgomery Street.

"Having this area activated will make the future development more successful and thriving as it evolves," Staedler said. "It's crucial to invest in a genuine social network and a place where other developers will invest alongside Google."

Google officials didn't specify where the beer garden and dining spots might be.

"This is an exciting evolution, Arena said. Arena added that Google and Jamestown hope to help deliver the transformation "in partnership with the community."



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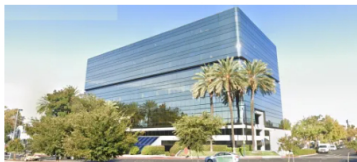


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