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**STILL BUILDING - 30**  
John Protopappas, like other developers, has found paths to work.

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## Five projects closest to reality in the East Bay

### Jack London Square, Oakland

Different pieces of this \$350 million development, a decade in the making, are beginning to materialize. A 100,000-square-foot office building is built and ready for its first tenants. The 72,000-square-foot Jack London Market is slated to open in April with room for about two dozen vendors and four restaurants. Leasing the office and market spaces has been difficult, but developers Ellis Partners and Transbay Partners knew such a massive project would hit some bumps along the way.

### Creekside Plaza, San Leandro

Developers are close to wrapping up a third, 83,000-square-foot office building on a 7.5-acre site. The project began construction in April after one of the developers on the project, David Imer, secured a loan. The building will house the Regional Center of the East Bay in a 67,500-square-foot office, a 25,000-square-foot Creekside Bistro and smaller office tenants. Imer said the project's proximity to BART, AC Transit and freeways make it an attractive option in San Leandro.

### 700 University Ave., Berkeley

Palo Alto-based Essex Property Trust is working on a 171-unit apartment building at the corner of Fourth Street and University Avenue near Interstate 80. The site is close to an AC Transit hub and an Amtrak station as well as one of the city's major retail strips along Fourth Street. John Eudy, executive vice president of Essex, said now was a good time to be building because Berkeley has demand for housing and construction costs have declined.

### Central Station, Oakland

Bridge Housing will add 99 units to the Central Station development in West Oakland, where developers such as Rick Holliday and Pulte Homes have built projects. Affordable developers like Bridge have to put together complicated financing schemes that often include dozens of funding sources for one project. Sources include local, state and federal grants and subsidies, as well as conventional construction loans and mortgages from banks. Bridge has stayed busy during the downturn and kept projects afloat even as funding sources have dried up.

### AgeSong Bayside Park, Emeryville

AgeSong, a developer and operator of senior communities, will debut its fifth project with the opening of Bayside Park. The project is a five-story, 116,366-square-foot building containing 125 studio and one-bedroom units. The firm's approach to senior living is "holistic," offering living services, as well as activities. The Bay Area has a fast-growing senior population, giving AgeSong a huge market to serve.

—Blanca Torres ■



PAOLO VESCI

Swinerton has casino, healthcare and solar projects, says President Jeffrey Hoopes.

# Projects ready to go

## Signs of life appear for developers

BY J.K. DINEEN  
San Francisco Business Times

**C**ommercial development is dead. New retail construction is not even on the horizon. And San Francisco may not see dirt move on another new hotel for five years. But for all the grim news, the Bay Area construction industry is starting to see cause for hope.

For the first time in two years, several housing developers are pushing to break ground on major new projects. The Martin Building Co., armed with federal financing and equity from the AFI-CIO Housing Investment Trust, is set to start construc-

tion on two apartment buildings: the 179-unit 2235 Third St. and the 94-unit 178 Townsend St. The Emerald Fund could start work in late 2010 on 308 units at 333 Harrison St. Lennar Urban is starting vertical construction in Hunters Point. In Mission Bay, Bosa Development is pushing to start on 170 condos while in the Mid-Market area, Trinity Properties expects to go forward with 440 new apartments.

"We have a few little projects here and there, and there is a possibility that the housing market will return first in San Francisco," said Michael Theriault, sec-

## Five S.F., Peninsula projects move forward

**The Radiance, phase two:** By summer Bosa Development is hoping to start construction on the next phase of the Radiance housing development in Mission Bay. The size of the next building has been scaled back from 318 to 170 units and will take two years to build. Bosa is currently getting a new round of construction cost estimates and will take those numbers to its lenders, Scotiabank and Bank of America.

### Bay Meadows, San Mateo

Wilson Meany Sullivan has started infrastructure work on the redevelopment of the former horse race track property at Bay Meadows. This year, WMS will be grading the entire site and building all new infrastructure — everything from roads to utilities to street trees to lamps. The 83-acre development, which was put on hold for about six months during the worst of the economic meltdown, will include 1,200 housing units and 800,000 square feet of office space. WMS will start selling finished "pads" to other housing developers in early 2011. WMS Partner

### Hunters Point Shipyard

Lennar Urban started work this month on the first 88 Hunters Point Shipyard homes and is already looking ahead to the next 159 units, which the company plans to break ground on during the second half of 2010. Lennar Vice President of Development Jack Robertson said after investing \$90 million on infrastructure work on the steep hilltop military site, the firm is eager to start pouring foundations and selling units. The first 88 units (blocks 50 and 51 on the master plan) will cost about \$28 million, and the next 159 homes (blocks 53 and 54) will cost about \$40 million in hard construction costs.

### Chinatown City College

Bovis Lend Lease has finished excavation on the new 14-story City College campus to serve the North Beach and Chinatown neighborhoods. The \$137 million tower, which was held up for years by lawsuits, will include classroom space, laboratories for science and computers, a library/learning resource center, conference rooms, faculty work areas and admissions, counseling, and financial aid offices.

### Trinity Place, phase two

Developer Trinity Properties started moving residents in January into its newly completed, 440-unit apartment building, a \$130 million 24-story tower that represents the first phase in a 1,900-unit Mid-Market complex. Trinity developer Angelo Sangiacomo has shifted attention to the next building: another 440-unit tower just to the south of the first building on Mission Street. Sangiacomo self-financed the first phase of development and said he expects to do the same for the next building.

SEE TEDD UP, 26

—J.K. Dineen ■

## TEED UP: Public sector behind many currently active jobs

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retary-treasurer of the San Francisco Building Trades Council. "Anything would be a better year than last year, but it won't keep a lot of people from starving."

On the public sector side, Webcor has two major San Francisco projects in the early stages of construction. The contractor broke ground last fall on a \$188 million Public Utilities Commission building at 450 Golden Gate Ave. and has started on the \$887.4 million rebuilding of San Francisco General Hospital.

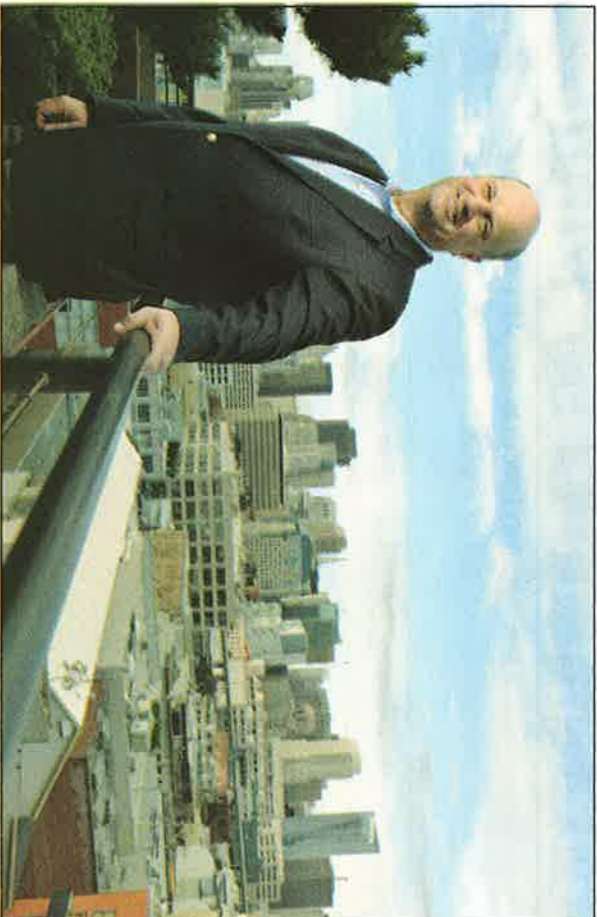
Still, business is awful for construction industry workers. Overall construction trades unemployment is off 26.9 percent. For allied trades — brick layers, marble masons, stone masons — work is down 60 percent.

Construction companies are making due by broadening into sectors they never focused on previously. Webcor has replaced its luxury condo development pipeline with a roster of massive public projects. Swinerton has scoped up an increasing number of healthcare jobs as well as Indian casinos and solar power jobs, according to president Jeffrey Hoopes. Swinerton is doing a \$115 million utility plant for Washington Hospital in Fremont and is in the early stages of a new patient tower.

More than \$2 billion in medical facilities are under construction.

"Medical is really interesting market right now," said Hoopes.

As far as Indian gaming, Swinerton is working on a 250,000-square-foot casino and hotel in Sierra foothills town of Jackson. It is also working on pre-con-



"Things are somewhat optimistic," says Hoopes. "It's not as bleak as it felt last year."

struction for a \$200 million expansion of Cache Creek Casino in Sonoma County.

And it is working on three other potential casino projects north of San Francisco that have not yet been made public.

Meanwhile, Swinerton was hired to do \$100 million in solar facility construction in the past two weeks, including a utility-grade 15 megawatt plant in southern Oregon.

"Revenues are down 25 to 35 percent (from 2008) for just about everybody, but the solar and wind markets represent new work for us, and that is replacing some of the reduced revenues," said Hoopes.

"Things are somewhat optimistic. We'll bottom out this year, and we'll see some more opportunities in the third and fourth

quarters. It's not as bleak as it felt last year."

Also tenant improvement dollars could start flowing again as lenders foreclose on some office towers and others sell at much-reduced rates. In addition, cheap office rents have prompted tenants like Del Monte, Twitter, Levis, and Nektar to ink significant leases. Hoopes said he expects tenant improvement work to rise from 25 percent to 40 percent of total revenue this year.

"We are already beginning to see some nice large Class A opportunities where the new owners have adjusted the rents," said Hoopes.

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## Builders look to LEED for 634 projects

The U.S. Green Building Council's Bay Area list has grown to 634 projects that have obtained or registered interest in getting a LEED rating. That represents 21 percent of the total number of LEED projects listed throughout California, according to new data from the council.

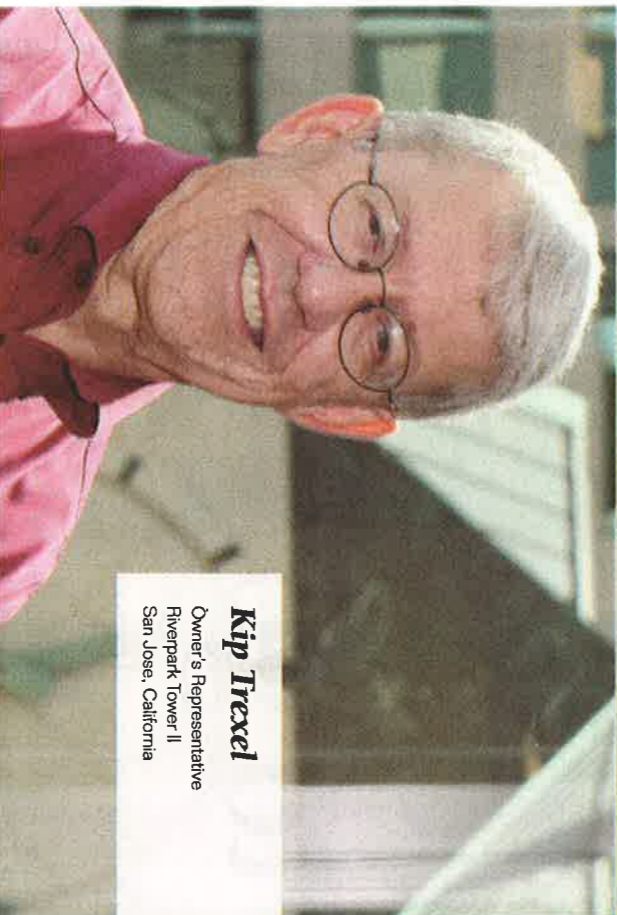
The council has certified 13 Bay Area projects as "platinum," the organization's most stringent rating. That's nearly a third of the total number of platinum projects statewide. Platinum projects range from a state Department of Education building in Sacramento to a county waste management office in Oakland to the Center for Community Forestry in Beverly Hills to the California Academy of Sciences building in Golden Gate Park. Nearly 2,400 of the projects listed by the U.S. Green Building Council in California — 474 in the Bay Area or 20 percent of the total — have registered saying they're interested in obtaining LEED certification, but have not yet been certified as green.

The entire list of nearly 3,000 projects statewide is available through the San Francisco Business Times' web site. The list can be searched by going to [tinyurl.com/sf0t-LEED](http://tinyurl.com/sf0t-LEED).

— Business Times staff ■



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**Kip Trexel**  
Owner's Representative  
Riverpark Tower II  
San Jose, California

"For future projects, Swinerton Builders would absolutely be at the top of the list. The Swinerton Project Team on Riverpark II maintained schedule, paid attention to detail and quality, went above and beyond excellence in their Green efforts to achieve LEED Gold certification, and had information readily available at all times — overall, they were great."

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\* Source: MLS data (\$ volume of properties listed & sold)



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