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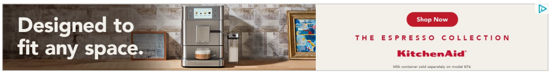

BUSINESS > **ECONOMY** • News

Bishop Ranch in San Ramon seeks transformation into new neighborhood

Bishop Ranch aims to make suburbs fun, may have 25,000 residents

(George Avalos/Bay Area News Group)
Jeff Dodd(L), Sunset Development Co. senior vice president of retail; and Alex Mehran Jr.(R), Sunset Development chief executive officer, stand in the plaza at City Center Bishop Ranch, Feb. 26, 2024.

By **GEORGE AVALOS** | gavalos@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group
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SAN RAMON — Bishop Ranch in San Ramon has launched a dramatic transformation from a San Ramon office park into a lively East Bay neighborhood and downtown hub.

That was a major takeaway from a presentation on Wednesday by Sunset Development, the principal owner and developer of Bishop Ranch, regarding the future of the commercial and residential hub, sketched out by the real estate firm's top executive.

For decades, Bishop Ranch has been a successful suburban office park near the interchange of Interstate 680 and Bollinger Canyon Road in San Ramon.

Companies such as energy giant Chevron established their headquarters at Bishop Ranch and numerous others such as AT&T placed major regional office hubs in the business park.

The onset of the coronavirus and its economic side effects such as business lockdowns chased workers away from their offices. A return to the office has been uneven at best throughout the Bay Area.

The fast-changing circumstances prompted executives with Sunset Development to craft a fresh approach to Bishop Ranch to help the business hub navigate a brutal office market in

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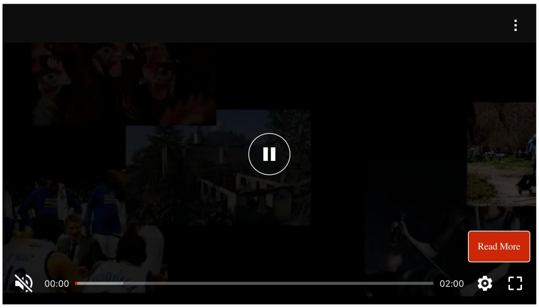

The evolution, if successful, could enable Bishop Ranch to evolve into a true mixed-use neighborhood with office spaces, shops, restaurants, a hotel — and now, a burst of housing development.

The changes at the 585-acre Bishop Ranch have enabled the business hub, which contains 5 million square of offices, to add retail, dining and housing. These enhancements have transformed the business hub into San Ramon's downtown.

"We're trying to make the suburbs fun," Mehran Jr. said.

The changes are poised to be dramatic enough that once the housing is complete, Bishop Ranch could accommodate 25,000 to 30,000 residents within its boundaries, Mehran Jr. estimated.

The first residential development in Bishop Ranch has achieved about 130 home sales, deals that have brought hundreds of people into the park.

Even more residences are being planned, potentially 8,000 homes at Bishop Ranch.

One of the most striking examples of the transformation occurred when Chevron agreed to sell its vast headquarters campus to Sunset Development. A Sunset Development affiliate paid $174.5 million to buy the 92-acre property.

The deal also symbolized how Chevron has gone through a complete corporate life cycle while at Bishop Ranch.

Chevron arrived at Bishop Ranch in 1984 after purchasing the 92-acre site that would become the legendary company's suburban outpost while it kept its headquarters in San Francisco. In 2003, Chevron moved its headquarters to its San Ramon campus at Bishop Ranch. Then came the sales deal in 2022, whereby Chevron agreed to shift its head offices a few blocks away at a leased site in Bishop Ranch. But in 2024, Chevron announced it would move its headquarters to Texas.

The deal Sunset Development struck for the Chevron campus marked just the start of what would become yet another transformation, this time of the Chevron property itself.

In December 2024, Sunset Development formally proposed a project on the south side of Bollinger Canyon Road jiust east of Interstate 680.

The new neighborhood, which is called Orchards, would consist of 2,510 residences, and include restaurants, shops and commercial sites, according to Sunset Development.

The other major evolution occurred with the opening and increasing popularity of City Center Bishop Ranch, a hub of shops, restaurants, night spots and anchors such as THE LOT Cinema movie theater and Equinox fitness center.

City Center Bishop Ranch, which totals 291,000 square feet, has managed not only to survive but thrive in the wake of the coronavirus.

"We are stabilized now," said Jeff Dodd, senior vice president of retail with Sunset Development. Dodd estimated that City Center is now about 93% occupied.

The next major steps for Bishop Ranch will focus on adding more housing as the evolution into a new neighborhood — a walkable neighborhood — continues.

"As hard as we always try to make the offices better, now we have the homes, the retail, the restaurants, and a lot of open space," Mehran Jr. said in an interview with this news organization. "This new framework allows Bishop Ranch to become an energy machine for vibrancy. We're starting to see that and it's exciting."

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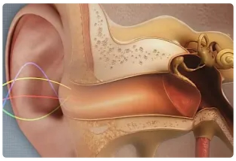

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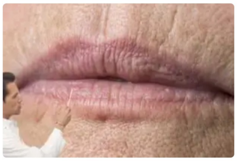

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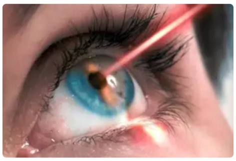

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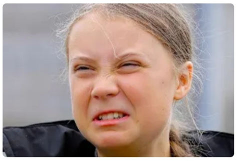

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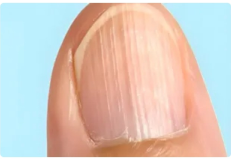

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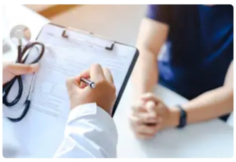
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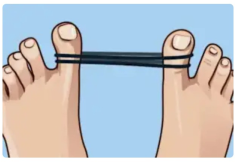
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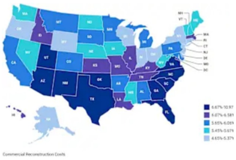
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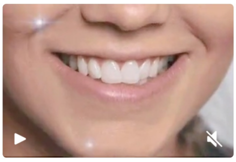
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