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San Jose Redevelopment Agency Approves Lease of Site for Future Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Center *Agreement reached with Almaden Hills United Methodist Church*

San José --- The Hoffman/Via Monte neighborhood in Almaden Valley can look forward to its new neighborhood center with yesterday's approval by the San Jose Redevelopment Agency (SJRA) Board of an agreement to lease property for this purpose. The site to be leased is located on 1200 Blossom Hill Road and is owned by the Almaden Hills United Methodist Church.

Residents of the Hoffman/Via Monte community identified the construction of the new neighborhood center as their top priority through the San José Strong Neighborhoods Initiative. The center will offer children and youth recreation classes and activities, after-school recreation programs, as well as other community related programs.

"Our partnership with residents and community organizations, such as the Almaden Hills Church, will result in better neighborhoods for San José children and families," said Mayor Ron Gonzales. "This is another example of the excellent solutions we can achieve when we work together."

This lease secures the site of a facility owned by the Almaden Hills United Methodist Church, known as the ARK, as the location for the neighborhood center. The deteriorated ARK, which had been used for various San José after-school services, will be demolished to make way for the new neighborhood center.

"This is a great day for the Hoffman/Via Monte Neighborhood Action Community (NAC). For the past 4 years I've worked closely with the neighbors to make the Community Center a reality," said Vice Mayor Dando. "The new center is long overdue. The dedication, commitment, and perseverance of the Hoffman/Via Monte group is commendable."

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Under the agreement, the Redevelopment Agency will pay the church a lump sum amount of \$321,000 for the initial 20-year term of the lease, with two five-year options to renew. The goal is to complete construction in the Summer 2005.

“We are pleased and excited with the agreement reached with the Redevelopment Agency and more importantly with the opportunity to expand our role and representation within Hoffman/Via Monte neighborhood,” said Annette Wright, Board of Trustee member and community center liaison with the City and the Neighborhood Action Committee. “This is a long-awaited milestone for both the neighborhood and Almaden Hills United Methodist Church.”

Design and construction of the 2,400-square-foot facility is currently estimated to cost approximately \$845,000. The San José Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services will operate and maintain the new center.

The San Jose Redevelopment Agency is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all who live and work in San José. Governed by the City Council, the SJRA facilitates and oversees comprehensive programs for development to revitalize the City’s Downtown, neighborhoods, and industrial areas.

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