

## High-rise living additions

Two towers planned for east, west sides of downtown target more moderate incomes

By Shonda Novak  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

More high-rise living is coming downtown, including a 22-story condominium project that signals a revival of the Rainey

Street neighborhood at downtown's eastern edge.

The other project is a 40-story condominium tower on the west side of downtown.

Both are aimed at people who want the downtown lifestyle but can't afford to live in most of the existing projects, where units average \$500,000.

Atlanta-based Novare Group Holdings LLC and its local partner, Andrews Urban LLC, plan to build a 40-story, \$85 million condominium tower at 300

Nueces St. Plans call for work to start early next year, with the first occupants moving in by fall 2007, said John Long, Novare's chief investment officer.

The other project will include 17 floors of residences over five parking levels at Davis and Red River streets, bordered on the south by the hike-and-bike trail. The developers also are in negotiations for a possible hotel project on the site.

High Street Residential Inc., a

subsidiary of Dallas-based Trammell Crow Co., plans about 200 units with prices starting at \$140,000, said Jamil Alam, a principal with Trammell Crow. Developers plan to start construction in the third quarter of 2006.

Thirteen apartment or condominium projects are in the pipeline for downtown, with most of them at 17 stories or higher. Developers say building

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# LIVING: One project will price condos starting at \$140,000

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more floors, and more units. allows them to bring prices down.

One bedroom units at the Novare-Andrews Urban project will start at less than \$200,000.

Alam said the catalyst for the High Street project was the city's decision last year to rezone the Rainey Street neighborhood to allow the same density of development allowed elsewhere downtown.

The 30-acre neighborhood is filled with turn-of-the-century bungalows, but many had fallen into disrepair, and residents said they were being squeezed by rising property taxes. Many had pushed the city to change the zoning so they could sell their property and move on.

The new zoning allows high-rise development but also includes provisions designed to assure that the area won't become a characterless forest of tall buildings.

Alam said property owners are now calling the area, on a bend in Town Lake, the Waterfront District to reflect its changing image.

"Had the area not been rezoned, we wouldn't be doing this," he said.

The first new project in the area, Millago, a 14-story condominium project at the foot of Rainey Street, is under construction and nearly sold out.

Perry Lorenz, a downtown developer who also owns land nearby, said the area is poised for a major transformation, with more residential development and shops not far behind.

"We are talking to multiple qualified buyers about several sites in the whole Waterfront area," he said. "Austin will soon realize, if it doesn't already, that the recent zoning change has had a tremendous impact on the redevelopment of the area."

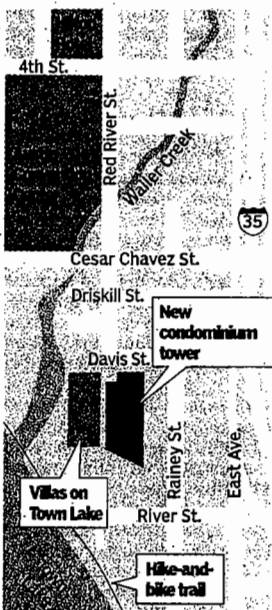
With skeptics saying the central city is at risk of becoming overbuilt, Novare Group already is looking for more sites.

"The demand for Class A high-rise residential developments continues to be strong in Austin," Long said.

The company is developing similar projects in Atlanta, Nashville, Tenn., Charlotte, N.C., and Tampa, Fla., all aimed at people ages 25 to 40 who enjoy the downtown lifestyle.

Taylor Andrews, principal of Andrews Urban, found the land — 1.3 acres where Intel Corp. once planned a parking garage for a later-abandoned design center — and them teamed up with Novare Group.

Their project will have 420 units, with shops at street level and seven or eight levels of parking. One-bedrooms would



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## WORLD & NATION



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### Gathering at the cross

Abraham Fischer, a Benedictine monk, gets a good look at an aluminum cross that will be the center of a tent camp in Dusseldorf, Germany, during next week's Catholic World Youth Day 2005 in Cologne.

start at less than \$200,000, and two-bedrooms at less than \$250,000.

With 10 percent down and a 30-year-fixed mortgage, those units would be affordable to people earning about \$60,000 to \$120,000 a year, said Joe Brown, a senior partner with Milestone Mortgage in Austin.

The project will have amenities such as 24-hour concierge services, a pool and fitness center. It's within easy walking distance of the Austin Music Hall and La Zona Rosa.

Long said Novare will spruce up adjacent Shoal Creek, which he's convinced "will become a jewel in the city."