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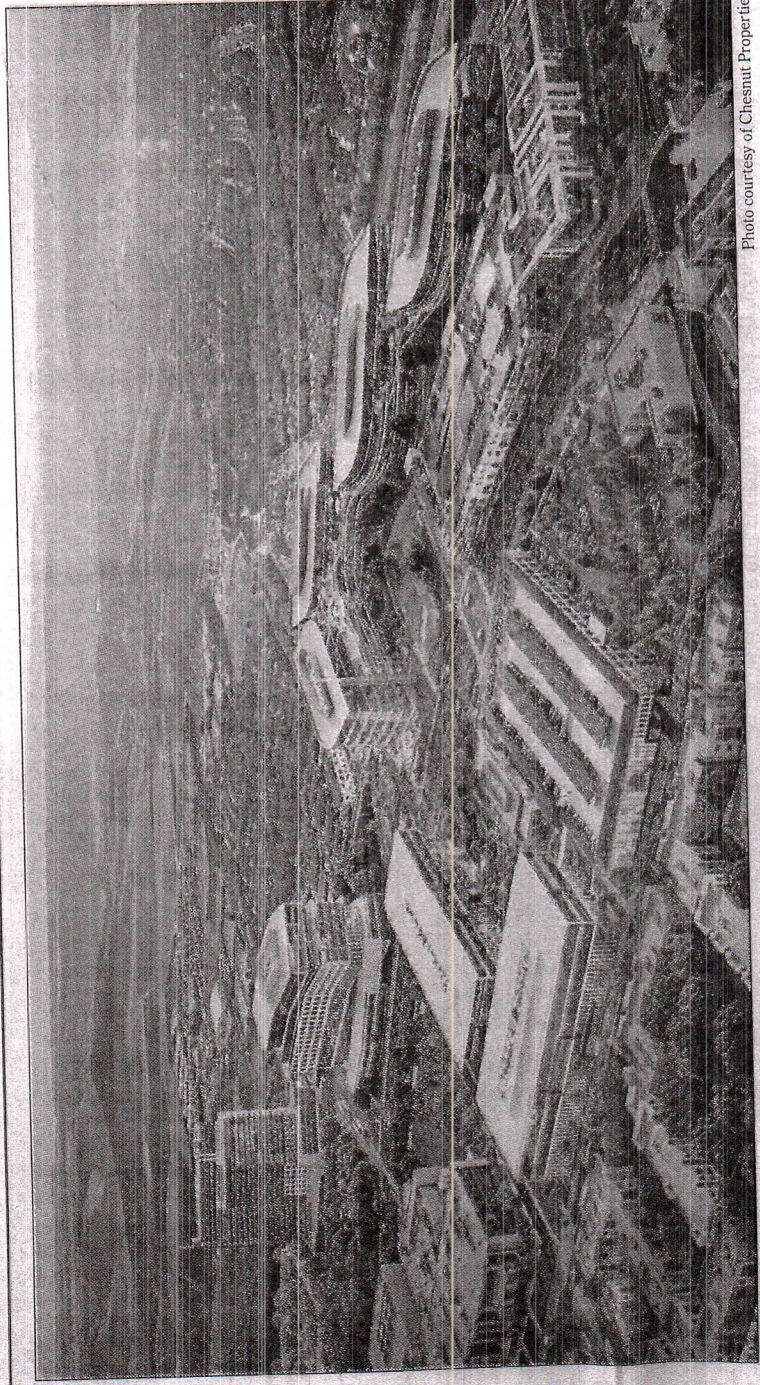


Photo courtesy of Chesnut Properties

A rendering of Chesnut Properties' Invent development in the Millenia master planned community in Chula Vista. Invent, which will feature 1 million square feet of space at buildout, could serve as part of Amazon's second headquarters.

Otay Mesa, Chula Vista vying for new Amazon HQ

By Thor Kamban Biberman
Daily Transcript Staff Writer

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Local bid proposals for Amazon's planned 8 million-square-foot second headquarters were heard during a closed-door session of the South County Economic Development Council on Tuesday.

South County EDC chief executive Cindy Gompper-Graves said she and her members have been "scouring all of South County's valuable sites" in Otay Mesa and Chula Vista to determine which areas might be most

suitable for the e-retailer's massive development.

Dozens of metropolitan areas in the United States and Canada are hoping to land the facility, which promises to bring countless jobs and a huge economic impact to the region it eventually lands.

A few locations were floated at the South County EDC meeting.

One, in Otay Mesa, would combine at least three properties, while the other sites could include land Chesnut Properties is developing in the Millenia master plan project in Ch-

ula Vista, and some property in Otay Ranch.

If Otay Mesa were selected, Murphy Development Co.'s Brown Field Technology Park would be a major component of the Amazon facility.

Brown Field Technology Park is a 50-acre master planned corporate industrial development.

Murphy Development initially plans to develop 1 million square feet of Class A industrial buildings in the park. Current building designs range from 80,000 square feet to

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Amazon

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350,000 square feet and are designed for manufacturing and distribution tenants.

The overall Brown Field Technology Park is entitled for more than 3.2 million square feet of state-of-the-art buildings, which could be key to landing Amazon. Lot grading on the northern portion of the property has been completed since the fourth quarter of 2014.

At the Britannia Boulevard interchange and the State Route 905 freeway, Brown Field Technology Park will feature shell buildings that can be completed within 12 months of a lease signing.

Nearby, the new cross-border terminal, which gives passengers easy access to Tijuana's Rodriguez Field and its international flights, is another factor that could boost Otay Mesa's chances - assuming Amazon doesn't

mind two headquarters on the West Coast.

With Amazon's 8 million-square-foot requirement, it's clear that Brown Field Technology Park couldn't satisfy the huge online retailer's demands by itself.

Fortunately for Otay Mesa, a 331-acre development located just south of Brown Field Technology Park could be used for a potential Amazon facility, according to Gompper-Graves.

Known as the Metropolitan Airpark, the development is being planned to feature 1.3 million square feet of industrial and commercial space, with hotels, restaurants, a heliport, and a 6-8 megawatt solar field.

At full build-out, Metropolitan Airpark is expected to provide 4,000 permanent jobs, 8,000 long-term construction jobs, and is anticipated to bring \$500 million in annual revenue to the region. Brown Field Municipal Airport operates within the Metropolitan Airpark footprint.

The massive mixed-use development had been tied up in environmental litigation for years based on the project's possible impacts on burrowing owls, vernal pools and greenhouse gas emissions.

In a settlement reached last January, the developer agreed to fund a burrowing owl adaptive management program, created seasonal vernal pools, and established a revolving trust fund for the installation of solar arrays.

The developer also will construct offsite infrastructure improvements to facilitate better traffic circulation in Otay Mesa.

Gompper-Graves said easy access to the Rodriguez Field and Brown Field airports, and a roughly 20 minute drive to San Diego International Airport gives Otay Mesa a trifecta in terms of access to area airports.

What Otay Mesa doesn't have that Amazon might want is ready access to a major cargo airport, although San Diego International is not far.

In 2003, Pardee Homes and area residents teamed up to defeat a proposed plan that would have allowed the conversion of Brown Field

into a major cargo facility. With hundreds, if not thousands, of residents already there, and thousands more expected, Pardee wanted to make sure their residents didn't experience the noise of large aircraft lumbering overhead.

Gompper-Graves said a third potential site for Amazon in Otay Mesa is another 35 acres along the 7000 block of Otay Mesa Road.

Much of Chula Vista's application would be attributable to developments that Chesnut Properties is proposing in the Millenia project adjacent to Otay Ranch. The developer has proposed as much as 3 million square feet of office space in its multiple Millenia projects.

Perhaps another 35 acres has also been identified adjacent to the Otay Ranch university site where the city would like to see a university developed if education funds become available.

"More than 1 million square feet could be developed next to the university site," Gompper-Graves added.

A decision on the Amazon location is expected on 19.

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