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By Blanca Torres

Making Jack London Square home

Sungevity doubles space in Jack London Square



After years of struggling to gain traction, the redevelopment of Jack London Square has attracted a major tenant: Sungevity — a firm that’s on track to become one of Oakland’s largest employers.

The solar panel leasing company signed a lease to double its space in Jack London Square to occupy 68,000 square feet in two buildings. The new lease includes taking the 36,500 square feet of Class A space on the third floor of 55 Harrison, known as the Jack London Market building, and 31,500 square feet in 66 Franklin, where the firm currently has its headquarters. The development is owned by Jack London Square Ventures, a partnership between majority owner [Divco West](#) and [Ellis Partners](#), which manages the project.

Sungevity first moved to Jack London Square in early 2010 and took about 20,000 square feet in 66 Franklin with about 50 employees. Executives expect to reach 400 employees by the end of this year.

“We think the company can continue to grow rapidly for many years ahead,” said **Andrew Birch**, Sungevity CEO.

The firm leases solar panel installations using a specialized software program that makes it cost-effective. Sungevity had done business in California, Colorado and Arizona until this year when it expanded to New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and Massachusetts.

Birch said that compared with other solar companies, Sungevity has lower costs and can expand faster with less money.

Staying in Jack London Square is also a factor in the company's success.

"Sungevity aims to be the leading solar business in customer experience so building a team that can deliver is the key to success," Birch said. "The location here allows us to get the best people."

The waterfront location offers a scenic environment, proximity to amenities and access to a variety of transportation options, said **Susan Hollingshead**, the company's vice president for human resources.

Blanca Torres covers East Bay real estate.