

## Hines tower gains tenant

Financial-services firm William Blair & Co. has agreed to lease about 350,000 square feet, or roughly a third of the \$400 million 50-story tower that Hines Interests LP plans to build at 200 N. Riverside Plaza overlooking the Chicago River. The Houston-based developer's partner in the project is hometown food-service entrepreneur Larry Levy.

Gregory Van Schaack, Hines' senior vice president in charge of development, declined to comment Thursday. Previously he said that landing William Blair as an anchor tenant at a rent of \$45 to \$50 a square foot would mean that construction could begin early in 2009 and be completed in mid-2011.

The timing is ideal for William Blair, whose lease at 222 W. Adams St. expires

in July 2011, according to CoStar Realty Information, Inc., a research firm.

A spokesman for Blair declined to comment.

"It's one of the biggest space requirements in the market and makes sense they'd wind up in a to-be-constructed building," said Michael Bishop, managing principal at the real estate brokerage Cresa Partners LLC, which represents tenants. "It's efficient space with few, if any, interior columns and customized technology."

Steve Stratton and Rob Schmidt of Staubach Inc. were the brokers on the transaction.

Hines is confident that its equity sources for the building are secure. The developer

works with pension fund-backed partners who are able to finance the project with little or no debt, Van Schaack said last month.

Adjoining the curved glass and metal clad tower designed by Pickard Chilton Architects Inc. of New Haven, Conn., will be a 200-room hotel.

The complex will occupy a triangular site bordered by the river and Canal and Lake Streets and will feature a 51,000-square-foot public plaza.

Hines is building another office tower at 300 N. LaSalle St. that is about 75 percent leased. Last year, it sold a tower it developed at 1 South Dearborn St. for \$422 a square foot, a record price for the city