



News Clip

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Developers to be offered land by airport

By *Blanca Venegas*

After years of discussions, the future of the 8.5 raw acres beside Miami International Airport remains undetermined. However, a request for proposals may just be the step to get closer to a definite answer.

Miami Today reported earlier this year that, despite hazy plans on what would be built on the land, a convention center had been considered as a possible project for that site, which once was to be part of the Miami Intermodal Center. But that's not the case now, as more talks on what the land will be used for arise, ranging from retail to a hotel, or even to a medical complex.

Ric Katz, Miami Intermodal Center public affairs manager, said plans for the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority to request proposals are in the works and will actually stipulate some parameters on what will be built on the site.

"It will have more to do with the return of investment than to specify what has to be done there," Mr. Katz said.

"Various developers around the world will look at that acreage and say 'we can do something really grand there' because that site is connected to this wonderful transportation core," he said.

Mr. Katz said that, because the site is near the Miami Central Station and has a direct link to the airport, the site could be considered a "prized piece of property."

"It can be a full range of things," Mr. Katz said. "It can be something really creative that we haven't even thought of."

A number of years ago, he said, the land went through a similar process but the results didn't turn out as expected because of bad economic times.

"The economy wasn't right," he said. "There were still a lot of unknowns from the view of the developer."

"Now, a piece of raw property that was in no man's land is suddenly a piece of property that is linked to all of the county's transportation," Mr. Katz said.

Mr. Katz also said several developers might take the entire acreage or the land might be broken into pieces.

"I suspect that it'll end up being a master developer for the entire acreage, but we won't know that until the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority issues the RFP [request for proposals] and we will not know until the responses come in," he said.

No date has been determined for the request for proposals, he said.

"The time is right now," Mr. Katz said. "I think they'll get some really nice proposals."