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# Retail, Residential Planned Near Miami's Ludlam Trail

## Nearly 1,000 Apartments in the Works for Proposed Park

Three real estate firms are planning a retail and residential project in northwest Miami-Dade County at Ludlam Trail, a proposed six-mile linear park along unused rail tracks once operated by a company with ties to industrialist Henry Flagler.

The trail will run from Miami International Airport to the Dadeland Station shopping center, giving residents access to recreational activities and public transportation to the north and south. Developers in metropolitan Miami and across the country are looking to build near transit hubs to help commuters reduce their dependence on cars.

ZOM Living, Scout Capital Partners and Mattoni Group have formed a joint venture to build 950 apartments and as much as 35,000 square feet of shops and restaurants where the trail intersects with Bird Road.

The buyers paid \$36 million for the 11.3-acre site. The seller was Florida East Coast Industries, the successor to a company started by Flagler, whose railroad led to the development of Florida's east coast.

Construction is expected to start in the fourth quarter of this year. The first phase will take about two years to build, and the entire project should be completed in five or six years, said Greg West, chief executive officer of ZOM Living.

"People love to use trails, and they're highly activated," West said in an interview. "Everybody will love having experiential opportunities along the trail."

Another developer, the Altman Cos. of Boca Raton, Florida, is planning a 300-unit apartment near ZOM's still-unnamed project at Bird Road. West said he's not aware of other development plans but expects more to pop up as the trail is completed.

Miami-Dade officials are converting the land in the northwestern part of the county to public space between 67th and 72nd avenues from Perimeter Road to the north and U.S. Route 1 to the south. Design and construction are slated to begin in 2021, though it's unclear when the project might be completed, according to a county official.

Miami-Dade Commissioner Rebeca Sosa has long supported Ludlam Trail, working with community officials, civic groups and others to create an appropriate vision for the project. Sosa, who did not return a phone call for comment, has touted the project on her Facebook page, saying it will connect neighborhoods with schools and shopping, in addition to the transit. It



The Ludlam Trail development could take five or six years to build.

*Illustration: ZOM Living, Scout Capital Partners, Mattoni Group*

also will be a key part of the Miami Loop, a network of trails.

"The Ludlam Trail will impact Miami in the same manner that the Atlanta Beltline has transformed Midtown Atlanta and the Katy Trail has influenced Dallas," Scout Capital founder Vincent Signorello said in a statement.

Still, while so-called transit-oriented developments are a good marketing tool, many consumers aren't likely to decide to live in one simply because they can take public transportation to work, said Ken Johnson, an economist and real estate professor at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

"There are other places they go to daily where they need their cars," he said. "People aren't giving up their cars. Not in South Florida."

The retail and residential project will be built at 6900 and 6950 Bird Road, 7050 SW 44th St. and 7004 SW 45th St. The apartments will range from six to eight stories, and the retail will include a brewery. Rental rates have not been determined.

The Miami-based MSA firm is the project architect, while Lake Flato of San Antonio, Texas, is the design architect. The developers have not selected a general contractor.

Orlando, Florida-based ZOM Living is building other projects in Miami-Dade County, including a 43-story apartment tower at the \$4 billion Miami Worldcenter in downtown Miami.

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