

Trump Unveils New Mixed-Use Development in Panama City

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By Amanda Marsh, Staff Writer

When Donald Trump held the Miss Universe pageant in Panama City three years ago, he termed the city beautiful and said he would develop there if the right opportunity presented itself. The right opportunity finally did, and in New York City today Trump unveiled the Trump Ocean Club mixed-use project.

Trump's first foray into Latin America, the 2.4 million-square-foot, 65-story waterfront tower is being co-developed by the Trump Organization and Panamanian resort developer K Group. It will include hotel condominium units, condominium units, retail, a casino and a beach club and marina upon its estimated 2009 completion. The tower is being built on a beachfront lot in the Punta Pacifica district, bordering the city's financial center, and will be connected to the rest of the city by the Corredor Sur highway, giving it accessibility to both the city and airport.

"Americans are coming in droves to Panama," said Roger Khafif, president of K Group. He cited reasons such as political stability, a low cost of living, low interest rates and the country's location outside of usual hurricane paths.

"It's great for baby boomers." Trump said, however, that the project would be marketed worldwide. The original development plans called for 1.8 million square feet at a cost of \$220 million. The project has since been expanded to 2.4 million square feet, but Trump would not disclose if the development costs have risen as well. HSBC will be funding the project, and Colombian commercializing company Espacios Urbanos S.A. and construction firm Arias Serna y Saravia S.A are also taking part in the development.

The unveiling of Trump Ocean Club comes on the same day of Panamanian president Martin Torrijos' plan to ask voters for approval of a multibillion-dollar project to expand the Panama Canal in order to accommodate large, modern cargo ships. That would be the canal's

largest modification since its 1914 opening.