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Miramar To Open Cultural Arts Town Center

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MIRAMAR, Fla. -- The stage is set for what will be the crowning jewel of Miramar's Town Center -- a new performing arts center.

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City leaders will meet Tuesday to make sure that when the curtain rises, the new cultural arts center located at Red and Hiatus Roads, would be there to stay.

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"We were just looking at different floor plans and prices," Ashley Arboleya, a future Miramar resident, said.

It's no surprise that future homeowners like Arboleya are drawn to the Miramar Town Center.

"Right behind it will be the botanical garden," Felicia Goubadia, a real estate agent, said. "Our buyers are mostly interested in the lifestyle. They like that they would be able to walk out their door and go see a show."

Most town centers have homes and retail space, but Miramar's center will have a performing arts center, City Hall, Broward Community College campus, Nova Southeastern University campus and a library.

"We have a little of everything," Camasha Ceveix, the cultural arts center manager, said. "We have art galleries along with other things that will make this an exciting destination."

"Strangely enough, it is right in the middle of the city in one of the best geographical areas," Wazir Ishmael, assistant city manager, said. "It has the ability to bring our east and west areas together."

The idea behind the performing arts center is to bring all Miramar residents of different cultures and various classes together, Ishmael said.

"The major focus will be community shows," Mayor Lori Moseley said. "So, therefore, the price level is very different from that of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts."

So unlike downtown Miami's Carnival Center for the Performing Arts, Miramar's Town Center won't just depend on selling tickets to big shows, Moseley said.

The center will be used for early learning programs and other local community projects.

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But taxpayers wonder how much it's all going to cost.

"We're committed to make sure that this has the least amount of impact on the taxpayers," Yvonne Garth, Miramar city commissioner, said.

The total cost is \$19 million, with \$9 million being funded by the parks and recreation impact fee paid by businesses, officials said.

Another \$4 million would come from a community center bond, and the city is proposing a that private businesses cover the final \$13 million through sponsorships and by selling the naming rights.

"We have all the infrastructure and more Fortune 500 companies than any other city in Broward County," Robert Payton, Miramar city manager, said.

And for residents like Arboleya, the Miramar Town Center is adding the missing piece to the puzzle.

"I wish we had more communities, and I think this would give us that sense of community," she said.

The center is set to open in October of 2008.

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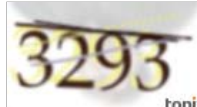
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