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Mandarin plans hotel in Midtown

Atlanta Business Chronicle - March 2, 2007 by [Jill Lerner](#) Staff writer

One of the world's most luxurious international hotel chains is planning to open its first Atlanta hotel in Midtown and moving its U.S. development offices to Atlanta.

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group is planning to open a luxury hotel as well as condominiums on Peachtree Street between 1100 Peachtree and the Atlanta Woman's Club on the site of what is now a surface parking lot. The property backs up to Crescent Avenue.

Developers have the land under contract and Atlanta-based Tivoli Properties Inc. is said to be working with Mandarin to open a hotel at the location, according to several sources familiar with the deal. Tivoli is also developing Aqua in Midtown and Mezzo in South Buckhead.

Neither Mandarin Oriental nor Tivoli officials would comment on plans for an Atlanta hotel, but a Mandarin Oriental spokeswoman did confirm the hotel group will move its U.S. development office to Atlanta from New York, in April or May.

The company has leased about 7,000 square feet in 10 10th Street, at 10th and West Peachtree streets.

"I think it speaks well for the market that a hotel brand of that caliber that provides that level of service [believes] the market will support it," said Mark Vaughan, chief sales and marketing officer for the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The downtown, Midtown and Buckhead hotel markets all experienced occupancy increases last year, Vaughan said.

Along with similarly ultra high-end Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, which will operate the hotel portion of The Mansion on Peachtree in Buckhead, the entrance of Mandarin Oriental is "a reflection on how Atlanta has continued to mature as a lodging market," said Mark Woodworth, president of PKF Hospitality Research.

Barry Real Estate Cos. also is developing the super-swank W Atlanta Downtown Hotel & Residences, a 28-story tower with 76 luxury residences and 237 hotel rooms.

Hong Kong-based Mandarin Oriental, known for its fan logo and five-star luxury, is in the midst of a major expansion, with the goal of operating 10,000 rooms in major business centers and key leisure destinations around the world.

As of June 30, Mandarin Oriental operated or had under development nearly 9,000 rooms in 18 countries.

The international hotel investment and management group operates 31 luxury hotels and resorts worldwide, including 11 under development.

In the United States, the brand operates hotels in Miami, New York, San Francisco and Washington, D.C.; with properties under development in Boston, Chicago, Dallas and Las Vegas.

The first Mandarin hotel opened in 1963 in Hong Kong, and in 1974, executives from the property formed a hotel management company.

The company went public in 1987 on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong.

The Mandarin Oriental's luxury condos will join a wave of new high-end offerings in Atlanta including Trump Towers, St. Regis, The Mansion on Peachtree, the W Atlanta Downtown Hotel & Residences and the Sovereign in Buckhead, among others.

Mandarin Oriental has had great success with similar luxury condos recently in Las Vegas.

In February, more than 90 percent of the luxury condos at CityCenter's Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas sold in 14 days, generating more than \$600 million, according to MGM Mirage, which is developing the CityCenter community.

The Residences at the Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas will feature roughly 227 condo units situated on the upper floors of the 400-room hotel tower.

-- *Staff writer Lisa R. Schoolcraft contributed to this story.*

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