

## Daytona gives blessing to huge condo hotel project

By [Eileen Zaffiro-Kean](#)

STAFF WRITER

Published: Thursday, March 21, 2013 at 5:30 a.m.

DAYTONA BEACH — A massive \$150 million condo hotel project, the biggest beachside development in the city's history, is ready to race toward its groundbreaking date in August and opening in the fall of 2015.

With unanimous votes Wednesday night from city commissioners to rezone the project's 4.5-acre property south of Seabreeze Boulevard and have the city help cover costs of the 1.22-million-square-foot complex, the developers can now turn their attention to wrapping up design plans, securing permits and hiring a construction company.

"Every now and then a project comes along that makes you say, 'Wow.' This is one of them," Dan Francati, president of the Daytona Beach Kennel Club & Poker Room, told city commissioners.

"We truly believe this is going to be the thing that turns the corner for us in Daytona," the developer's attorney, Rob Merrell, told commissioners.

With the condo hotel site on the oceanfront and a five-minute walk away from the Ocean Center, hopes are running high for what the new independent four-star facility could do for pulling in large conventions and spurring new restaurants and shops to open nearby.

"It's going to provide us an opportunity to move ahead much quicker," said Jeff Hentz, president and CEO of the Daytona Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We're blessed to have a project like this, and how much they believe in our destination. It's nothing but a positive for our community."

The force behind the project is a Russian company led by a father and two sons who live part of the year in Palm Coast and the other part in Russia. That company, Protogroup, owns a chain of six supermarkets in Russia as well as a hotel in Montenegro and four hotels in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Now Protogroup plans to add Daytona Beach to its list of investments, building two 300-foot-plus towers on the oceanfront at the eastern tip of Oakridge Boulevard.

The company's vision is to create a 29-story condo building with 105 rooms, a 26-story hotel with 500 rooms and street-level shops fronting State Road A1A. The property could include 15,100 square feet of meeting space, 14,000 square feet of retail space, indoor and outdoor pools, a spa, a fitness room, a ballroom, a roof garden, penthouses and a state-of-the-art automated parking structure.

"I'm very excited," Alexey Lysich, vice president of Protogroup, said after the meeting.



Artist rendering

The groundbreaking on this planned \$150 million condo hotel in Daytona Beach is planned in August.



After first checking into building something similar in Miami, Lysich said his company chose Daytona Beach because it's "very calm, beautiful and the weather is good."

Protogroup will shoulder the vast majority of its \$150 million expense, but the city will give the company some help. An agreement Protogroup and the city negotiated over the past few months will allow Protogroup to be reimbursed some of its impact fees and receive some city money because part of the site is located in a redevelopment area.

The enormity of the project will require upsizing the water and sewer lines running from State Road A1A to Peninsula Drive. Protogroup has agreed to increase the size of the pipes beyond what it needed for the project so the entire area has capacity for further development in the future. When that work is completed, the city will reimburse Protogroup for its costs using impact fees the company paid.

The project site straddles a beach approach that will be improved and remain open to the public. The estimated cost to install decorative lights, pavers, landscaping, signage, a small fountain and stormwater infrastructure is about \$450,000, according to a recent memo from Deputy City Manager Paul McKitrick. The city will reimburse Protogroup about \$90,000 per year over five years for that work, McKitrick said in his memo.

Lysich said he hopes to choose a general contractor by the end of April. His company will also need to secure a string of permits from the city and agencies including the state Department of Environmental Protection, state Department of Transportation and St. Johns River Water Management District.

In addition to the construction jobs the project will create, Protogroup also estimates 400 permanent jobs will be created.

Mayor Derrick Henry said at Wednesday's meeting that he hasn't received a single negative comment about the project, something he doesn't ever recall happening in his years as a city commissioner and mayor.

"I can't tell you how odd that is," Henry said.

The Protogroup project comes as a group of Canadian investors is working to build a \$100 million-plus condo hotel project of its own on a 10-acre site south of International Speedway Boulevard, also on the oceanfront.

That project isn't as far along, but construction could begin on it at the end of this year, according to local attorney Glenn Storch, who's working with the Canadian investors.

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## Hard Rock hotel, cafe coming to Daytona Beach in 2016

**Music-inspired chain expects 2016 opening in synch with Daytona 500**

By [Eileen Zaffiro-Kean](#)  
STAFF WRITER

Published: Friday, May 3, 2013 at 5:30 a.m.

DAYTONA BEACH— Get ready to rock, Daytona Beach.

A Hard Rock hotel and café are coming to the oceanfront, due to open in 2016 on a sandy 10-acre expanse on State Road A1A just south of SunSplash Park.

Plans call for a 375,000-square-foot development that will include 250 hotel rooms, two rock star suites, 100 condo units, 28,000 square feet of ballroom and banquet space, a spa, a shop filled with Hard Rock merchandise and a studio where guests will be able to jam on Fender guitars and record music they can take home.

Locating on a stretch of A1A that's long been home to mom and pop motels and small retail shops, local leaders see a new day coming for the city, which has been battling shuttered hotels, storefront vacancies and blight on the beachside for years.

"It's really changed the game, the whole playing field," said City Manager Jim Chisholm. "It's like going from junior high to a major league team."

Chisholm and other city leaders see the new Hard Rock hotel, which will be the fourth in Florida, as a bookend to a Russian developer's condo hotel project planning to break ground this summer on the north end of A1A. There are high hopes that together the two mega-developments can pull in a host of new business ventures and make the Ocean Center a player for large conventions.

"I think it'll have a significant impact on everything from Silver Beach to Seabreeze," said Deputy City Manager Paul McKittrick.

If all goes as hoped, construction will start on the \$100 million-plus project by the end of the year and the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach will welcome its first guest in early 2016, timed to the Daytona 500.

Jeff Hentz, the Daytona Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau's president and chief executive officer, was bursting with excitement when he was told the Hard Rock was moving into the Daytona Beach neighborhood.

"You're kidding me? Oh, my God. This is great," Hentz said. "This is tremendous to bring a major brand to our destination. I am thrilled. Wow."

The hotel and restaurant complex will give Daytona Beach a much-needed year-round draw that will help put the city on the tourism map — in the United States and abroad.

"You couldn't ask for a better partner," Hentz said. "We'll leverage it to the hilt."



*Hard Rock International*

Although a final design has not been announced, the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach will include several of the same attractions as the Hard Rock Hotel, Orlando, top photo, including a Hard Rock Café with live music and rock star suites.

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FISHER INVESTMENTS

Hard Rock International's decision to locate one of its hotel and restaurant complexes on the World's Most Famous Beach now puts Daytona Beach in the company of Chicago, Las Vegas, Bali, Cancun, Singapore and other internationally known cities that are among the chosen spots for the hotels and restaurants known for their authentic rock star memorabilia placed around the properties.

The announcement is the culmination of four years of hotel shopping by Toronto-based developer/investor Bayshore Capital Inc. After the Canadian company bought the beachside land in 2009, its top officials considered various hotel chains and even worked with NASCAR on an idea to create a NASCAR brand hotel that didn't come to fruition.

Hard Rock turned out to be the best fit, said Henry Wolfond, Bayshore's chairman and CEO.

"The gorgeous beach, hot cars, bikes, great hospitality and the sound of rock 'n' roll music together will celebrate Daytona Beach's resurgence," Wolfond said. "We feel privileged to be a part of this development and look forward to its opening around the 2016 Daytona 500."

Speaking from Europe in a phone interview Thursday evening, Wolfond said the project is in the early stages and the company will be able to share more details in a few weeks.

A site plan has not been submitted yet to city officials, and city commissioners will be asked to consider rezoning the property to a planned unit development that will free Bayshore and Hard Rock to be creative with their plans.

The city and county will also be partnering with Bayshore by providing community redevelopment area dollars — possibly around \$3 million — as well as utility fund contributions to expand the water and sewer pipe system on the site, put power lines underground, improve the beach approach on the property and build expanded sidewalks.

Bayshore has also purchased a thin strip of commercial property on the west side of A1A across from the hotel site, but there are no immediate plans for that property.

The project will most likely have a second phase in the future that would include more hotel rooms. While Hard Rock does have casinos at some of its locations, including in Tampa and Hollywood, Wolfond said there are no plans to do that with his company's property.

There will be live music in the Hard Rock café on site, but Wolfond said he still needs to talk to city officials to determine if they would allow live music in an outdoor area of the property overlooking the ocean.

It hasn't been determined yet if there will be a Hard Rock Live concert building on site like the one in Orlando near the Hard Rock hotel there, he said.

Bayshore will retain ownership of the land and Hard Rock will manage it, he said.

Hard Rock International has 179 venues in 57 countries, including 141 cafes, 18 hotels and eight casinos. HRI's parent company is the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which purchased the company in late 2006.

"It has awesome potential," Wolfond said. "I've seen pictures of the area from the 30s and 40s and saw what it once was."

Chisholm said the city's resurgence is picking up serious steam. A "very upscale" hotel chain is checking out the city, and a total of nine Daytona beachside hotels are in the process of being built, re-flagged and reconditioned, he said.

"We're building a real backbone for the tourism industry on the beach," he said.

George Mirabal, the interim president of the Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce and a longtime local business community leader, said he sees the biggest things happening on the beachside since the Ocean Walk Shoppes were built in the 1990s.

"It's because a lot of people here just don't give up," Mirabal said.

Local leaders say Daytona Beach appears to be in the beginning of a renaissance with the Russian investors planning to build their condo hotel near the Ocean Center, the Speedway hoping to tackle a \$250-million-plus overhaul of its grandstands and surrounding property, Joe's Crab Shack locating on the Daytona Beach Pier, and Cici and Hyatt Brown donating about \$15 million to fund a new art museum that will have a world-renowned collection of Florida paintings.

Almost \$1 billion in new investment is headed toward Daytona, Chisholm said.

"We have developed such significant momentum with Daytona Beach," said City Commissioner Carl Lentz. "I think this is a time we'll all look back on and say we were there. I think this is the turning point for the city."

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## Hard Rock project leaders tell Daytona residents about beachside hotel plan

By [Eileen Zaffiro-Kean](#)

STAFF WRITER

Published: Monday, May 20, 2013 at 9:55 p.m.

DAYTONA BEACH — A few weeks after Hard Rock International went public with its plans to open one of its signature cafes and a condo hotel on the oceanfront, about 70 people who live near the site got an hour to tell the project leaders what they have to say about the proposal.



*Rendering provided by developer Bayshore Capital I*

Hard Rock International hopes to open a new Hard Rock Hotel and Hard Rock Café on the oceanfront just south of SunSplash Park by early 2016. The rendering above shows what the hotel and condo tower could look like, along with the restaurant and a parking garage. Plans for the project still need city government approval.

Their questions Monday night came in rapid fire, with residents wanting to know what will become of their ocean view, breezes and access, and if they'll have to put up with construction noise.

But most seemed to leave the meeting at the Peninsula Club relieved to know most of their worries had been for naught and excited to learn a long-vacant piece of the beach was going to be filled by a business that promises to generate new tax dollars and draw more new development.

"I could not be happier to see this project coming," said John Green, who lives near the 10-acre-plus site just south of SunSplash Park. "I remember what was there. It was one of the ugliest hotels and half of the site was parking."

"I think it's a great idea," agreed Green's wife, Diane, who's also been a Daytona resident since the mid-1970s. "This area really needs to be rehabilitated. It's been a long time coming."

If all goes well with a coming series of necessary approvals at City Hall, the sandy State Road A1A lot that's been vacant since the 2004 hurricanes will soon create hundreds of new jobs and spur supporting businesses.

Canadian developer and investor Bayshore Capital Inc. hopes to start construction by the end of the year and open in time for the 2016 Daytona 500.

"We think the Hard Rock brand and the Daytona Beach brand were made for each other," Bayshore Chairman and CEO Henry Wolfond told residents Monday night. "We wouldn't be here if we didn't believe it."

Plans call for a 30- to 33-story tower that will include 250 hotel rooms, two rock star suites, 100 condo units, 28,000 square feet of ballroom and banquet space, a spa and a shop filled with Hard Rock merchandise.

Adjoining the contemporary style tower that will offer ocean views from all hotel rooms and condo units will be a lounge and lobby area. The Hard Rock Café will be just north of the tower, and include about 250 seats, a stage for live music and possibly a retractable wall that could open to the ocean.

A six-story parking garage would be just north of the café and a new beach approach would be just north of the garage.

Plans also call for putting power lines underground, building new wider sidewalks, adding brick pavers in that stretch of A1A and putting in a new traffic light if the state Department of Transportation approves it to allow safer pedestrian crossing.

The southern portion of the site would be left vacant for now, landscaped and possibly turned into an open-air live music and event site, said Daytona Beach attorney Glenn Storch, who's working with Bayshore on the project.

In about five to 10 years, the southern stretch of the site would probably become phase two and would add more hotel and condo units as well as a restaurant, Storch said. When both phases one and two are complete, Storch said plans call for a total of about 950 hotel and condo units.

The first phase will probably require about a \$100 million investment from Bayshore, but Storch and Wolfond didn't say what the second phase could cost.

The city and Volusia County will be asked to partner on some costs by providing community redevelopment area dollars, possibly a few million dollars. Whatever the city and county provide, it would be given as a reimbursement after Bayshore covers all costs up front, Wolfond said.

"I'm 100 percent confident the financing is there," Wolfond said Monday.

Bayshore is proposing some of the extra property tax dollars its property would generate be used for reimbursements over about 15 years.

Bayshore also owns most of the properties directly west of the Hard Rock site, and Wolfond said he envisions boutiques and higher-end coffee shops locating there. No specific retailers are in talks yet, he said.

Bayshore will retain ownership of the land with the hotel and restaurants and Hard Rock will manage it, he said.

Longtime beachside residents such as Warren Trager are happy to see the area — which has long been home to mom and pop motels, small retail shops, blight and vacancies — come alive again.

"I think it'll be a heck of a good start for Daytona," Trager said. "I hope it'll start this place spurring. We need it after all the things that were torn down."

Hard Rock International's decision to locate one of its hotel and restaurant complexes on the World's Most Famous Beach now puts Daytona Beach in the company of Chicago, Las Vegas, Bali, Cancun, Singapore and other internationally known cities that are among the chosen spots for the hotels and restaurants known for their authentic rock star memorabilia placed around the properties.

Hard Rock International has 179 venues in 57 countries, including 141 cafes, 18 hotels and eight casinos. HRI's parent company is the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which purchased the company in late 2006.

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A NEWS-JOURNAL EXCLUSIVE

## READY TO ROCK

### Hard Rock kicks off condominium sales with VIP gala

By EILEEN ZAFFIRO-KEAN

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There's no lack of condos claiming sandy spots up and down the World's Most Famous Beach, but a new condo development that's about to come to life in Daytona Beach is going to offer a unique place for a highrise home overlooking the waves.

Bayshore Capital Inc., the Canadian development company bringing a Hard Rock Hotel and Cafe to a vacant 10-acre stretch of the beach in 2016, will formally announce tonight during a VIP gala at Daytona International Speedway that it's ready to sell more than 100 condos that will be stacked on top of the Hard Rock and provide luxury oceanfront living in a league with larger cities, the investors say.

"It's not a cookie cutter product," said Henry Wolfond, CEO of Bayshore Capital Inc. "Each property has its own identity in keeping with the character and history of its environment. Daytona Beach — with its renowned heritage of surf, sand and speed — is a rich palette on which to create unique experiences while setting new standards for luxury and style." The condos — which will range in price from about \$231,000 to more than \$2 million — will offer 24/7 room service, daily maid service, top-of-the-line finishes and

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Henry Wolfond, CEO of Bayshore Capital Inc., stands with some of the rock and roll collectibles Tuesday in the Hard Rock Hotel tent located in the infield at Daytona International Speedway.

News-Journal/ **JIM TILLER**



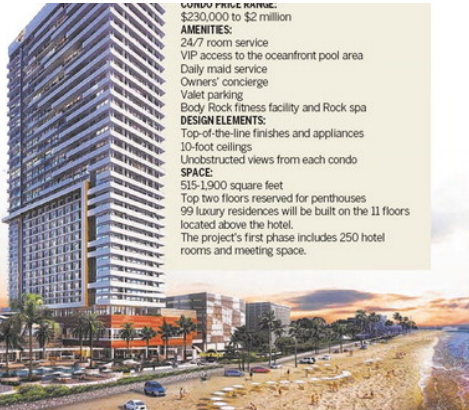
Hard Rock  
living in  
investors



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**UNIT PRICE RANGE:**  
\$230,000 to \$2 million

**AMENITIES:**  
24/7 room service  
VIP access to the oceanfront pool area  
Daily maid service  
Owners' concierge  
Valet parking

Body Rock fitness facility and Rock spa  
**DESIGN ELEMENTS:**  
Top-of-the-line finishes and appliances  
10-foot ceilings  
Unobstructed views from each condo

**SPACE:**  
515-1,900 square feet  
Top two floors reserved for penthouses  
99 luxury residences will be built on the 11 floors located above the hotel.  
The project's first phase includes 250 hotel rooms and meeting space.

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### ROCK

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appliances, 10-foot ceilings, an owners' concierge, valet parking and VIP access to the oceanfront pool area, Body Rock fitness facility and Rock Spa.

If all goes as planned, Hard Rock residents will also have access to a helicopter shuttle that will take off and land on the beach and take people to local attractions.

"We are excited to be working with Bayshore Capital," said Nelson Parker, head of development for The

Americas for Hard Rock Hotels & Casinos. "Daytona Beach is a perfect fit for the global energy lifestyle of the Hard Rock brand." Mayor Derrick Henry said it's one more piece of good news for Daytona Beach at a time the city is experiencing a rebirth, with plans for another large hotel project up the beach and the Speedway's \$400 million overhaul combined with a 180-acre complex of homes and businesses across from the track.

"It just puts us one step closer to fruition of what will be one of the biggest projects in Daytona," Henry said, noting "people just light up" at the mention of the Hard Rock. "It's a monumental step forward." Tonight's announcement of the Residences at the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach will be made in a 3,000-squarefoot tent in the infield midway of the Speedway, which is gearing up for this weekend's Rolex 24 At Daytona race. The tent will take on a lounge atmosphere, complete with a velvet rope at the entrance, pinkish-purple up-lighting, an open bar, carving station and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

The 200-plus guests at the invitation-only launch party will also be able to get within inches of Hard Rock memorabilia from nine musicians who lived in Florida at one time. They'll get a close look at the black leather jacket that belonged to Doors frontman Jim Morrison, who lived in Melbourne; a Fender Telecaster guitar used by Duane Allman in the years after he left Daytona Beach; a custom-tailored jacket worn on stage in the mid-90s by former Gainesville resident Tom Petty; a shirt worn on stage in 2009 by Marilyn Manson of Fort Lauderdale and the vintage Gibson Thunderbird guitar used by Leon Wilkeson, a former Jacksonville resident who played bass with Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Also on display will be one-time Orlando resident Justin Timberlake's suede jacket; a Harley-Davidson owned by the E Street Band's Clarence Clemons, who lived in West Palm Beach; a dress worn on stage by Gloria Estefan and a Fender guitar used by Hughie Thomasson of the Outlaws.

Some of the memorabilia may wind up in the Daytona Hard Rock, Wolfond said. He said he's also hoping to get Elvis' Harley-Davidson for the lobby.

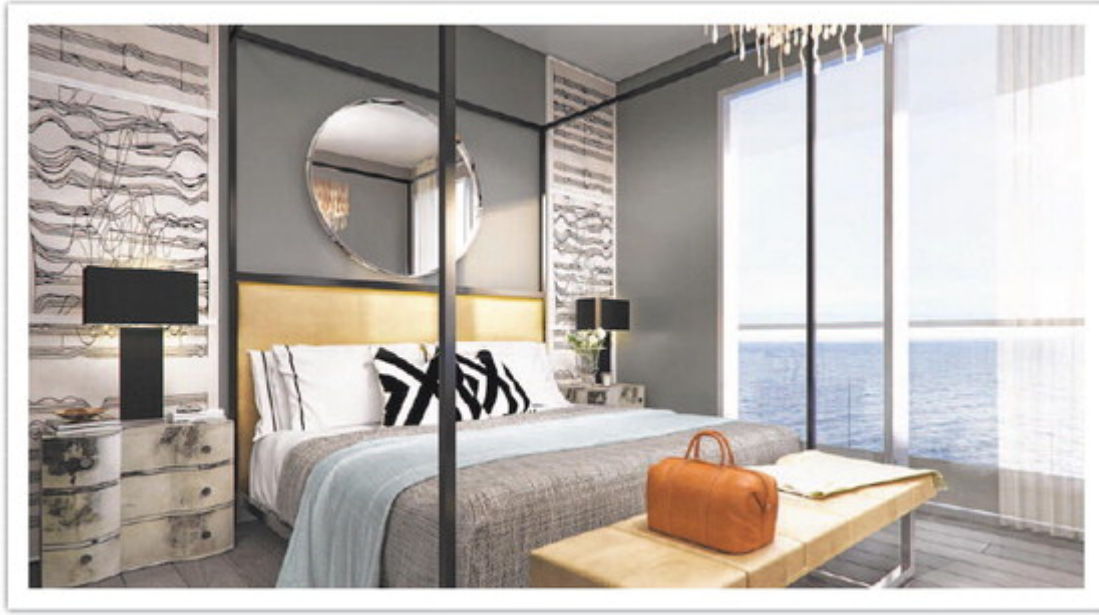
Speedway officials say they're happy to host the unveiling party.

"The amount of recent interest and commercial investment in our community is very promising," said International Speedway Corp. CEO Lesa France Kennedy. "We're supportive of the Hard Rock project and believe it, combined with our own Daytona Rising and One Daytona projects, as well as the other significant development efforts underway in Daytona Beach, position our hometown for a very bright future." Wolfond said his company's "objective is to pave the way for a new Daytona Beach lifestyle and experience in concert with International Speedway Corp." and "with other people of vision in the area." The condos are being built as part of the first phase of the Hard Rock development, located less than a mile south of the Daytona Beach Pier. The \$100-million-plus first phase, scheduled to be under construction later this year, will include 250 hotel rooms, 36,000 square feet of meeting space, a gift shop and a parking garage.

Phase I plans call for 99 luxury residences to be built on the 11 floors located above the hotel, with the condo area's ground floor beginning at 176 feet. There will be nine one-, two- and three-bedroom residences per floor ranging from 515 square feet to 1,900 square feet that will all have unobstructed ocean views.

Above those 11 condo floors will be two more levels reserved for penthouses. Wolfond said he already has four committed buyers.

"There's an excitement in Daytona Beach we haven't seen in years," said City Commissioner Carl Lentz. "The interest this courts with outside investors has increased exponentially."





Renderings provided by Bayshore Capital Inc.

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## Hard Rock condos shown off at gala

### Speedway event features Florida rock 'n' roll memorabilia

By EILEEN ZAFFIRO-KEAN

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**DAYTONA BEACH** — Rock 'n' roll, smiles and pictures of Daytona Beach's future filled a huge tent at Daytona International Speedway on Wednesday night as the head of the company planning to build a Hard Rock Hotel on the oceanfront announced he's starting to sell condos for the new development that has the city buzzing.

"This is a real celebration for us," Henry Wolfond, CEO of Canada-based Bayshore Capital Inc., told the 200 people packed inside a 3,000-square-foot tent that captured the Hard Rock spirit with glass cases holding guitars used by Duane Allman, Leon Wilkeson and Hughie Thomasson, and jackets worn by Jim Morrison, Tom Petty and Justin Timberlake.

"You guys are the people who realize Daytona has so much potential," Wolfond told the by-invite-only assembly of local VIPs. "We're going to be a part of it, and you're all going to be a part of it." The condos are being built as part of the first phase of the Hard Rock development, located less than a mile south of the Daytona Beach Pier. The \$100-million-plus first phase, scheduled to be under construction later this year, will include 250 hotel rooms, 36,000 square feet of meeting space, a gift shop and a parking garage.

Phase I plans call for 99 luxury

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Guests check out a 5-foot-tall model of the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona at Wednesday night's VIP event.

News-Journal/ **DAVID MASSEY**

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## CONDOS

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residences to be built on the 11 floors above the hotel, with the condo area beginning around the 16th floor, 176 feet above the sand. There will be nine one-, two- and three-bedroom residences per floor ranging from 515 square feet to 4,000 square feet that will all have unobstructed ocean views.

Orlando-based Balfour Beatty Construction, which built the News-Journal Center and more than 20,000 Orlando hotel rooms, has been chosen as the general contractor.

Above the 11 condo floors will be two more levels reserved for penthouses. Wolfond said he already has eight interested buyers who have put down deposits for the Hard Rock condos, which range in price from \$230,000 to more than \$2 million.

One of those buyers is former Mayor Glenn Ritchey, who said he might have been the first to commit to one of the units that will offer 24/7 room service, daily maid service and valet parking.

"Anything I can do to show support for the community," Ritchey said at Wednesday's gala that included an open bar and uniformed waiters and waitresses circling the room with trays to offer guests sushi and other hors d'oeuvres.

"This will be a great linchpin," Ritchey said.

Former County Chair Frank Bruno, also at the event, recalled how he and Ritchey first met with Wolfond a few years ago to nurture the project's beginnings.

"This is exciting for the community," Bruno said. "This is something Volusia County desperately needs. Hopefully it'll be the catalyst for other projects." Tim Davis, vice president of investment sales for Coldwell Banker Commercial in Ormond Beach, said local residents who have been disappointed in the past by promised projects that never happened are eager to see construction begin.

"We really need a project to go vertical," Davis said at Wednesday night's party.

Davis said some people interested in investing in Daytona have been checking with him over the past year to see how high-profile projects, including a planned hotel with condos near Oakridge Boulevard, are progressing. Those potential investors want to plan their developments around the anchor projects, Davis said.

Brian Leary is managing director for Atlanta-based Jacoby Development, whose company is heading up International Speedway Corp.'s \$289 million One Daytona, a planned complex of businesses and homes across from Daytona International Speedway. Leary, who was at Wednesday's event, said he thinks the Hard Rock project will be "very complimentary" to both One Daytona and the \$400 million overhaul in progress of the Speedway's frontstretch grandstands.

Hard Rock "is one of the most iconic brands on the planet that's pretty picky about where it goes," Leary said. "Very few close so it's not done lightly and not short-term. That's a great sign where things are going with Daytona Beach and Volusia County." Wolfond said he chose to make his announcement during the Rolex 24 At Daytona race week because the event attracts affluent people from around the world who he suspects will be interested in top-notch and top-dollar condos.

"We're going to make this happen folks," said Wolfond, whose company was founded in 1956 and has developed and purchased residential and commercial property in Canada and the United States. "I only have one question for Daytona Beach. Daytona, are you ready to rock?"

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## Hard Rock reports brisk condo sales; construction may begin in late 2014

By EILEEN ZAFFIRO-KEAN

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**DAYTONA BEACH** — A month after beginning a sales blitz for the condos at the Hard Rock Hotel and Cafe planned for the oceanfront, more than half of the units have been snatched up by buyers.

“We’re targeting to be sold out by June,” said Henry Wolfond, CEO of Canada-based Bayshore Capital Inc., the developer of the Hard Rock complex that will be located on a 10-acre site about one mile south of the Daytona Beach Pier.

Going into the Daytona 500 race weekend, Wolfond said he had 49 reservations for the 99 condos. After courting potential buyers in a rented suite at the Speedway for four days, that tally is sailing past 70, Wolfond said Monday afternoon.

With construction planned to start by November or December, Wolfond hopes a new condo sales office opening this week on Beach Street and a partnership with a sports car racing team will help him hit his goal of selling every condo space in less than four months.

The sales gallery will be open seven days a week at 226B S. Beach St., a storefront located between International Speedway Boulevard and Orange Ave. The space will be staffed with salespeople and include an architectural model and renderings of the \$100 million-plus project.

The Hard Rock Daytona condos will have unobstructed ocean views and be located on the 11 floors on top of the hotel, starting 176 feet above the sand.

SEE **HARD ROCK**, PAGE **6A**



A rendering shows the Hard Rock Hotel and Cafe planned for the oceanfront in Daytona Beach.

Rendering provided by Bayshore Capital Inc.

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## HARD ROCK

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The two floors above the condos are reserved for penthouses. The condos will range in price from \$231,000 to more than \$2 million.

The partnership is with The Racers Group-Aston Martin Racing. TRG-AMR is a 20-year-old, California-based motorsports company that exclusively operates the Aston Martin sports car racing program in North America.

Wolfond has struck a sponsorship deal with TRG-AMR to advertise the condos, which will be called the Residences at the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach, on two of the racing team's Aston Martins. The Hard Rock Daytona name and logos will be spread across the hood and all sides of the cars. One of the automobiles, the \$550,000 No. 007 Aston Martin V12 Vantage GT3 race car, will be used in races over the next month, and another will be used only for displays.

The month-long deal with Wolfond calls for TRG-AMR to promote the luxury condos throughout March at various events, including a charity auction in Naples, a wine dinner for corporate executives in Orlando and a race in Sebring. Wolfond is "not after the casual fan in the stands," TRG-AMR founder and CEO Kevin Buckler said Monday.

"The prestige and sophistication of the Aston Martin Racing brand is a perfect, natural fit for the luxury of the Residences at the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach," said Buckler, who lives in California and was in Daytona for Sunday's race. "We have all seen the growth at Daytona Beach over the last 20 years, and this is the perfect project at the perfect time." Wolfond said "the melding of these brands and their customers will create an attractive platform through which we can identify ownership opportunities for residences that will set the new standard for luxury and style that Daytona is ready for."



A rendering shows what an Aston Martin will look like once it has advertising for Hard Rock Daytona condos attached.

Courtesy of TRG-AMR

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ECONOMIC GROWTH

## **New projects could attract national firms to Daytona**

By **JEFFREY CASSADY**

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**DAYTONA BEACH** — Development projects that took major steps forward last week and others unveiled over the past 18 months could help put Daytona Beach on the national radar, not just as a tourist destination or NASCAR mecca, but as a place to do business.

"You have to go back to prior to the recession to find this kind of energy," said local consultant Phil Ehlinger, who served as Volusia County's economic development director from 2009 to 2011.

The situation here mirrors activity elsewhere in a state poised to be a national leader in job growth this year, observers say.

Volusia County officials revealed on Wednesday that national upscale grocery store chain Trader Joe's wants to build a massive distribution center in Daytona Beach that could bring more than 450 jobs.

The announcement was followed by votes by both the Daytona Beach City Commission and Volusia County Council to commit \$40 million in public funds to help defray the cost of building infrastructure for One Daytona, a \$289 million mixed-use development that promises to plant 75 new stores and restaurants across the street from Daytona International Speedway.

The County Council vote was preliminary, with a final vote on the funding next month.

These projects join the \$400 million "Daytona Rising" Speedway renovation that is underway and a pair

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## **PROJECTS**

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of large hotel-and-condominium complexes, including a Hard Rock Hotel, planned for the beachside.

The new distribution center will help raise Daytona Beach's national profile, said Keith Norden, president and CEO of Team Volusia Economic Development Corp., a public-private organization that works to attract new businesses to Volusia County.

"That will mean much for our area because (Trader Joe's) is a national name," Norden said. "We will work ... to bring other projects of that type to the area." At first blush, Daytona Beach, with its access to Interstate 95 and Interstate 4, might seem like an ideal place to put a distribution center, and Ehlinger said he always wondered when he led the county's economic development department why companies never put one here.

Being an hour from Port Canaveral and an hour and 15 minutes from the Port of Jacksonville, the two closest seaports, hurt Daytona Beach's chances in the past, Norden said.

"It was partly the economy and partly from people not viewing us as the greatest distribution (point)," Norden said. "But (the Trader Joe's center) will be feeding the Southeast and will help do away with the notion that we aren't a great place for distribution." The distribution center also raises the likelihood that a Trader Joe's store will open in the area, said J'Amy Owens, a Seattle-based national retail consultant and owner of The J'Amy Owens Group.

"The odds are good there will be (Trader Joe) stores in the area," Owens said. "I wouldn't open a distribution center in Florida unless I were going to open a lot more stores in Florida." Trader Joe's is building stores in Tampa, Boca Raton and Orange County. The chain already has stores in Gainesville, Miami, Naples, Sarasota and Tallahassee.

Though the announced projects brighten the local economic outlook, they don't make Daytona Beach a unique hotbed of economic activity, especially in a state Moody's Analytics projects to be No. 5 in the nation in job growth this year.

"It fits with the overall view of the state," said University of Florida economist Dave Denslow, of Daytona Beach's developments. "The state seems to be recovering pretty broadly. The farther south you go and the more toward the Atlantic you go, the faster it is." The announced Daytona Beach projects are also in industries that are leading the state's hiring push.

"What's leading the recovery is hospitality and leisure," Denslow said. "That has pluses and minuses. It creates jobs, but a lot of the jobs created tend to be low-wage.

"But better low-wage jobs than none," he said.

Still, Daytona Beach hasn't seen this many projects in the pipeline in a long time, said George Mirabal, a local consultant who served as president of the Daytona Regional Chamber of Commerce from 1987 to early 2007.

"All the stars are in alignment right now," he said. "I suspect this kind of activity will never again exist."