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Trump in a Denver state of mind

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Donald Trump isn't giving up on Denver.

Though he's out of the running to be the developer of Denver's historic Union Station, the New York real-estate tycoon has another project planned locally, an associate said Thursday.

Trump is teaming with Bayrock Group LLC and Barry Group Investments to build a luxury high-rise condominium project in the metro area, said Jody Kriss, senior vice president at Bayrock.

Though he provided few details, Kriss insisted the project is real and that the group has a site under contract.

"We've been pursuing a property which we are very much hoping the seller can deliver to us on the terms we have agreed to," he said. "Our desire is to build a five-star, mixed-use property with residential, hotel and retail components."

He declined to disclose the site's location, the square footage, the number of units planned or the cost to develop. But whatever the group does, it's likely to be similar to Trump International Hotel & Tower on Central Park West in Manhattan, Kriss said. The 52-story tower features 167 luxury hotel accommodations on floors three through 17.

"We prefer tall buildings and also are very sensitive to community concerns," Kriss said.

Trump's project would be the third tower proposed for Denver of at least 50 stories. Toronto-based Great Gulf Group is planning a 55-story condominium building, and Hotel Teatro developers Michael Brenneman and Jeff Selby are planning a 50-story Four Seasons hotel and condominium tower. Both projects are at the intersection of 14th and Lawrence streets.

But Great Gulf isn't concerned about Trump's proposal. The company already has closed on its property and has zoning in place, said Gary Switzer, executive vice president. Great Gulf plans to open a sales center this fall.

"Demographics show that more and more people want to live downtown," he said. "Denver is doing well. That's why we've heard all these announcements. As a developer, we can't worry about everybody else."

Even if a Trump tower were to be built, the work likely would be done by a local developer, Brenneman said.

"Donald Trump is really more licensing his name today than he is actively involved in developments," Brenneman said. "If you can license your name for millions of dollars rather than building a project, why not do it? He's created a brand out of personality."

In addition to the Four Seasons and Trump projects, a third luxury hotel-condo combination is reportedly a possibility for Denver.

Hotelier Charlie Biederman, developer of the JW Marriott Denver at Cherry Creek, is reported to be considering a number of options - including a Ritz-Carlton - for the 367-room Embassy Suites Hotel he purchased in September.

Biederman declined to discuss whether he's moving forward with the project, saying he would decide "soon."

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