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The transaction of 85± acres at Palm Parkway and Daryl Carter Parkway was handled by Daryl M. Carter of Maury L. Carter & Associates, Inc. and the property was owned by Maury L. Carter & Associates, Inc. investors.

ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

Unicorp's Chuck Whittall queues up work on \$140M in I-Drive projects, additions

Unicorp National Developments Inc.'s [Chuck Whittall](#) isn't letting up on the gas pedal after the success he's seen doing business in the tourism corridor.

Rather, he's investing \$140 million more into getting another big piece of the International Drive business pie, adding to Unicorp's existing entertainment and dining centers: the \$200 million I-Drive 360 and the \$40 million Vue at 360.

Unicorp's latest big projects include the \$10 million Starflyer ride and a \$30 million Element-branded hotel at the Vue at 360; plus nearly \$100 million in I-Drive 360 additions.

"We are getting close and making deals," Whittall told *Orlando Business Journal*. "We'll have another ride we will announce in the next couple of weeks."

Each of the new additions will further boost the appeal of the tourist corridor. I-Drive welcomes more than 12.5 million visitors each year. And the latest additions help attract even more.

The ongoing investment on the corridor will help draw the interest of more potential investors and keep the corridor fresh with multiple new offerings each year — in turn, bringing more visitors back to the area.

It also provides a big shot in the arm to Orlando's overall \$60 billion tourism industry, which attracts 68 million visitors annually.

Here's a closer look at Unicorp's projects now in the works:

Starflyer

This more than 400-foot-tall swing-like attraction will be the first of Unicorp's projects to be completed this year. Starflyer, which has been under construction at the Vue at 360 since last year, will welcome its first riders by April, Whittall told *OBJ*. Along with the ride, the attraction will have a 3,500-square-foot building at its base that will house the ride's admission and information booth, a cafe/bar, a Westgate Resorts timeshare marketing kiosk and a co-branded Haagen-Dazs/Wetzel's Pretzels shop. The Starflyer is a short walk from I-



JIM CARCHIDI



Drive 360 and part of what was formerly known as the Gooding's Plaza. Vue at 360 now is anchored by Kings Orlando bowling alley, Charley's Steakhouse and Sleuth's Mystery Dinner Show, and features several other tenants.

Element hotel

Construction is expected to start in a couple of months on Unicorp's Element hotel project at the Vue at 360, with an opening set for summer 2019. [Welbro Building Corp.](#) is the project general contractor and should begin seeking subcontractor bids by next month.

Other additions

Whittall declined to disclose details on the ride his team is close to finalizing. But last April, word got out that Unicorp was working on new attractions at the complex.

Upgrades to I-Drive — like Unicorp's projects — also positively impact retail growth in the area, said [Cindy Schooler](#), senior vice president and market leader of Orlando retail real estate brokerage SRS Real Estate Partners.

The South I-Drive market still is attracting big projects, but there also is growing interest from investors looking farther south past State Road 528 — which many consider the cut-off point. "The preference [by interested retailers] is to be on south side," said Schooler, who works on many deals in the tourism corridor. "But we are now seeing more people going farther down to Central Florida Parkway and other connectors."

That activity prompted Unicorp to plan for a [\\$1 billion mixed-use waterfront mega project called O-Town](#) near Walt Disney World. That will give Unicorp major centers bookending a big Orlando tourism corridor.

Whittall envisions the 85-acre site, at Palm and Daryl Carter parkways, to include a 100,000-square-foot grocery-anchored retail center, 1,500 upscale apartment units in multiple towers and 150 homes together in an area called Village at O-Town. Along with that will be an area called [The Boardwalk at O-Town West](#), a tourist-centric complex with a mix of restaurants, shops and a 600-space parking garage.

Stock watch

[The Walt Disney Co.](#) — parent to Orlando's Walt Disney World Resort — [reported first-quarter earnings](#) after the market closed on Feb. 6.

Closing price: \$106.17 (as of Feb. 6)

52-week range: \$96.20-\$116.10

Volume: 2.21 million

Market cap: 156.39 billion

Earnings per share: \$5.69

Source: Yahoo! Finance



Save the date

March 23

What: Legoland Florida plans to debut its newest roller coaster, The Great Lego Race. The Winter Haven theme park calls the new ride “the world’s first virtual-reality roller coaster adventure built for kids.” The ride is a retrofit of the park’s Project X roller coaster.

Where: 1 Legoland Way, Winter Haven 33884

Cost: \$93.99 for a one-day adult ticket at the gate, \$88.99 for children or senior citizens (discounted prices available online)

More: legoland.com/florida

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