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Midtown to get Intercontinental

Atlanta Business Chronicle - by [Douglas Sams](#) Staff Writer

InterContinental Hotels Group Plc will put a new hotel in the planned 1400 Peachtree project at Peachtree and 17th streets, giving momentum to what its developers call the northern Gateway to Midtown.

Atlanta-based land investor **Shailendra Group LLC** and real estate investment firm **Jamestown** just hired world-renowned architectural firm **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP** to design 1400 Peachtree.

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's designs have reshaped skylines from the East Coast to the Middle East, including Chicago's Sears Tower, the tallest building in North America (see related story below).

Shailendra and Jamestown want 1400 Peachtree to be an architectural gem among Midtown's signature buildings that already include Hines' 1180 Peachtree and One Atlantic Center.

Shailendra and Jamestown teamed up in 2006 to announce 1400 Peachtree, a blend of class A offices, condos, upscale stores and a 225-room hotel.

Landing the InterContinental and picking Skidmore Owings & Merrill mark the first big news at 1400 Peachtree.

InterContinental, an elite player in luxury hospitality, should help city boosters create the proposed Midtown Mile, several blocks of upscale arts and shopping they hope one day rivals Chicago's North Michigan Avenue.

"This is a chance for a high-end hotel group to take its brand even higher," said Shailendra Group's John Robbins, who oversees the development. "This is a big step because InterContinental is already a major player in the market."

Atlanta-based InterContinental Hotels Group owns the InterContinental Buckhead, one of only three hotels in Atlanta that hold Five Diamond ratings. The others are Midtown's Four Seasons Hotel Atlanta, The Ritz-Carlton Buckhead and The Ritz-Carlton Atlanta.

The InterContinental, rumored for months to be considering Midtown, would join one of Atlanta's ritziest hotel markets. Its only rival is Buckhead, the city's financial center.

For years, Midtown was only served by the Four Seasons Hotel Atlanta, but its luxury hotel market has blossomed.

W Atlanta Midtown opened this spring. Hotel Palomar Atlanta will open in 2009 and the Loews Atlanta Hotel in 2010.

The Mandarin Oriental Hotel, which could be a step up the luxury scale, is eyeing a site at 1138 Peachtree St. Atlanta Business Chronicle reported in April 2007 that **Tivoli Properties Inc.** is expected to develop the Mandarin.

Trump Towers has also considered adding a hotel to its project.

In landing InterContinental, Shailendra and Jamestown can now assemble the other essential pieces for its high-end mixed-use development: large corporate office tenants, upscale retail chains and boutiques and wealthy residents.

The progression of 1400 Peachtree is central to the development of Midtown, the city's arts and entertainment district and home to its largest and most prestigious law firms.

Despite the economic slowdown and strict lending standards, Shailendra and Jamestown are expected to have the financial power to pull off the project. Jamestown invests German money in U.S. real estate and is a major player in New York. The developers may not break ground on 1400 Peachtree before 2010. They want to wrap up an initial concept for the project within 90 days.

At least two options are on the table: one tower that combines all facets of the development, including the hotel; and another design would call for two towers.

"At this point, we can only say that the design phase is under way," Robbins said. "The phasing of the project is a long way from being determined."

Reach Sams at dsams@bizjournals.com.

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