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Theme park operator plans
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Pat Bosch uses architecture as a powerful tool to transform communities and leave an indelible mark in South Florida and around the world.

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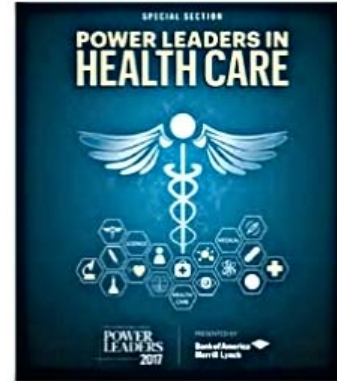
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

South Florida bids for Amazon HQ2

TRI-COUNTY AGENCIES TEAM UP TO LURE AMAZON TO REGION

To best position South Florida to lure Amazon.com Inc.'s first corporate headquarters outside Seattle, local economic development agencies will submit a joint bid, rather than competing against each other.

The Miami-Dade Beacon Council, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance and the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County will work to highlight the region's assets in a collaborative project – their first ever – in response to Amazon's request for proposals, issued this month.

The stakes are high: The headquarters could bring as many as 50,000 high-paying jobs to South Florida, a region whose economy has long been propped up by low-wage, seasonal jobs.

"They've blown the doors wide open on this, and there's going to be some ridiculous stuff thrown at them, and we're



JOCK FISTICK

An Amazon employee fills customer order at its Wynwood hub.

prepared for that," Alliance President Bob Swindell said. "We know we stand a much better chance by being united."

The proposal, due to Amazon by Oct. 19, will point to a variety of advantages offered

by the 6 million-plus metro area, including:

- ▶ More than a dozen universities, several boasting robust tech and engineering programs. Collectively, the universities have more than 300,000 students in the pipeline.
- ▶ A vast airport network, including some of the nation's largest international hubs and multiple executive airports.
- ▶ High quality of life.

The agencies will work alongside Enterprise Florida, the state's public-private economic development engine, to put together the best possible incentive deal.

In its RFP, Amazon said it prefers a North American metropolitan area with a population of at least 1 million people with a stable, business-friendly environment, favorable tax structure and accessible mass-transit options.

While mass transit stands as a deficit to South Florida, Swindell points to the Miami-to-Orlando Brightline train as a "huge competitive advantage," and said the region checks just about every other box.

Amazon expects to select and announce the site in 2018.

CONSULTANT: NOT CONSIDERING S. FLA. FOR AMAZON HQ WOULD BE 'CORPORATE MALFEASANCE'



John Boyd

There are several reasons why Amazon should consider picking South Florida for its second corporate headquarters, said site selector John Boyd Jr., principal of Princeton, New Jersey firm The Boyd Co.

The *Business Journal* caught up with Boyd to learn more about what the tri-county region, from the perspective of an outsider, can offer the e-commerce behemoth in its search for a new corporate outpost.

▶ First off: Why does Amazon need an additional HQ outside of Seattle?

Few companies in the history of business have grown at the rate Amazon has.

New headquarters will give it a new center of gravity to attract new talent that maybe doesn't wish to live in the Pacific headquarters.

▶ What elements is Amazon prioritizing in its site selection process?

Their RFP was straightforward, but I think No. 1 is access to talent and proximity to major research universities to feed that talent.

▶ Overall, why would South Florida make sense as the home of HQ2?

Amazon is all about transportation – getting trucks moving faster and in a more environmentally friendly way and encouraging employees to use public transportation.

Today, the most exciting mass-transit project in the U.S. is Brightline. That opens up so many possibilities.

▶ What specific characteristics about South Florida might entice Amazon?

No state tax. A unique labor market with multilingual skills. Proximity to the fast-growing Latin American marketplace. An impressive roster of nonstop flights to major global markets out of MIA and Fort Lauderdale.

Not to mention congressional clout: With Florida, Amazon would be gaining the influence of 27 members of Congress.

It would basically be corporate malfeasance for Amazon not to consider South Florida.



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