

Beat: Entertainment

Dubai plans pedestrian city featuring world's largest mall, theme park

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USPA News - An enormous project to construct a temperature-controlled city, featuring the world's largest mall and the world's largest indoor theme park, was presented in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Saturday. The complex hopes to attract up to 180 million visitors annually.

The "Mall of the World" - covering a total area of 48 million square feet (4.45 million square meters) - will be constructed by Dubai Holding, a global investment holding company owned by UAE Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The company did not say when it expects to finish the project. "The project will be completed in a phased approach," said company spokeswoman Charlotte Connerton. "The first phase of the development will be the one located on Sheikh Zayed Road opposite to Mall of the Emirates. More details will be communicated in due course." The company said the Mall of the World will feature a range of attractions, including an extended retail street network covering approximately 8 million square feet (473,224 meters), which would make it the world's largest shopping mall by floor space. The mall - spreading over 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) - will be connected to 100 hotels and serviced apartment buildings. "We announced recently that we plan to transform Dubai into a cultural, tourist and economic hub for the two billion people living in the region around us, and we are determined to achieve our vision," Sheikh Mohammed said. "We are confident of our economy's strength, optimistic about our country's future and we continue to broaden our vision." Dubai Holding presented the project as the world's first temperature-controlled pedestrian city, as it will be covered by a glass dome during the hot summer months, though open during the more pleasant winter months. There will be no roads for cars but visitors will be able to get onto trams throughout the complex. In addition to the mall, the complex will also include the largest indoor family theme park in the world, though details about the theme park have not yet been released. Another part of the Mall of the World is a Wellness District covering 3 million square feet (278,709 square meters) to provide wellness and rejuvenation services. "It will offer a holistic experience to medical tourists and their families, ensuring access to quality healthcare, specialized surgical procedures and cosmetic treatments, wellness facilities and high-end hospitality options," the company said. The project's cultural district will host venues to mirror locations such as New York's Broadway and London's West End. It will also include a range of conference, wedding and celebration halls with a capacity to host more than 15,000 people. The district's "Celebration Walk" will resemble Ramblas Street in Barcelona, connecting the cultural district to the rest of the complex. "Mall of the World presents an innovative concept in the international hospitality sector, further strengthening Dubai's appeal as a tourism hub with a wide range of options," Dubai Holding Chairman Mohammed Abdullah Al Gergawai said. "This project is a product of extensive research studying international and regional tourists' requirements and preferences. The objective is to create an integrated city with a plethora of best-in-class options within pleasant environments." The cost of the project is unknown, but Dubai Holding CEO Ahmad Bin Byat said the company will follow green and environmentally friendly guidelines to construct the complex. "It will be built using state-of-the-art technology to reduce energy consumption and carbon footprint, ensuring high levels of environmental sustainability and operational efficiency," he said. Dubai Holding hopes the complex will attract up to 180 million visitors each year once it is completed.

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