

Formula One pledges to make race 'least intrusive possible'

By CATHERINE LACKNER



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Miami's Downtown Development Authority was the latest stop last week on a pitching tour by Formula One representatives. The company is interested in bringing the race to Miami, and representatives have met with city and county officials, among others.

"It's an extraordinary property," said Sean R.H. Bratches, Formula One managing director of commercial operations, in that it has more than 500 million fans worldwide. "It's one of only three really global sports events," the other two being the World Cup and the Olympic Games, which aren't held every year.

"It's a very unique event at its core and there is no better event city than Miami," he continued, adding that the only other US city to host the race is Austin, TX, where it generated \$1.8 billion in economic impact in 2017.

Formula One would ask only for the city and county to pick up permitting fees and foot the bill for police, fire, security and sanitation, Mr. Bratches said, and would make the race "the least intrusive possible" for downtown businesses and residents.

No permanent changes would be made to the race course, most of which lies along Biscayne Boulevard and through the Port of Miami. The race was also to include Parcel B behind the American Airlines Arena, but Audrey Edmonson, county commissioner whose district includes the property, nixed that idea.

Though the race and qualifying events would only last from Friday through Sunday (a weekend in the latter part of October 2019 is being contemplated, Mr. Bratches said), set-up and break-down would take about three weeks in total. The worldwide exposure Miami would receive would offset any

inconvenience, he added.

"This has become a big thing in Austin," said authority board member Nitin Motwani, managing director of Miami Worldcenter Group. "I was Bahrain after the race there, and it was the talk of the Gulf. This gets us great views from the right audience."

"There are a lot of enticements," said Neisen Kasdin, authority vice chair and office-managing partner of Akerman LLP. "There are also a lot of issues that impact downtown. We've got to drill down on this and develop a series of recommendations."

He suggested several of the authority's committees meet to formulate a strategy for the race and possibly for future events. "They might provide recommendations for any number of events downtown." And, while the city encourages the right kinds of events, "There can't be a free-for-all."



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