

[ People and Projects ]



Ron Bergeron at his 300-acre Broward County industrial park

## COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

# Industrial Strength

Starting with just a few dollars and a used tractor, south Florida native Ron Bergeron launched Bergeron Properties & Investment in 1963. After purchasing agricultural parcels through the 1970s, he won zoning for a new industrial park in Pembroke Pines in the far southwest of Broward County.

Today, the 300-acre Bergeron Park of Commerce is one of the only sites left in Broward with zoning for outdoor storage and heavy industrial uses. About two-thirds of the park is occupied.

In many Florida communities, industrial real estate is the least glamorous type of development. Developers prefer office, retail or residential projects because they command higher rents or sale prices. In

fact, Bergeron himself sold off 160 acres of industrial land for residential uses during the boom years of the early 2000s.

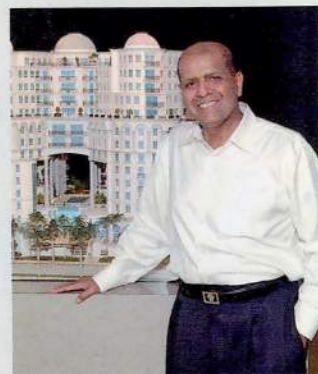
But a growing population needs things like waste disposal facilities and truck and maintenance repair and storage. "Industrial land creates job opportunities and economic growth within our communities," says Bergeron, 63. "And unlike other uses, it doesn't lend itself to redevelopment."

The story is similar around the state, where local governments are increasingly hesitant to allow new industrial uses even as demand keeps growing for warehouses, manufacturing and distribution centers.

Vacancy rates in most major markets are in the 4% to 6% range, according to real estate services firm CB Richard Ellis. Overall, Florida's major industrial real estate markets are commanding some of the highest rents in the country. According to a second-quarter survey by Colliers International, West Palm Beach ranked third among major U.S. markets, and Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Orlando and Tampa were above the national average.

## PROJECTS

» London-based **International Property Awards** recently named **Enchantment Beachfront Residences** in Clearwater Beach "best high-rise development for Florida." The project was designed by Tampa's Collman & Karsky Architects for Lele



Enchantment developer Uday Lele

Development. » Developer **Lance Ponton** has launched **Cordoba Ranch**, a north Tampa custom-home community on 1,065 acres, featuring an equestrian facility, hiking and biking trails and 600-plus acres of natural habitats.

» **Laramar Group**, a Chicago investment and management company, recently acquired **Bay Park at Clearwater Apartments**. The 228-unit property was a condo-conversion project. » **Jordan Development Group** recently announced **Victoria Pointe** on I-4 near Orange City in Volusia County. The project will include more than 700,000 square feet of retail, hotel and office space with construction expected to begin in summer 2008.



» Fort Lauderdale's Brenner Real Estate Group has named **Allen Lindow** vice president of its new

corporate services division, which will provide tenant representation, site selection and sublease services for office and industrial companies seeking space in Florida. » Aventura-based International

Sales Group selected **Rose Marie Van Blommestein** to lead its new resales division. » **Gregg Fous** opened a franchise branch office of German real estate broker Engel & Volkers in downtown Fort

Myers. » Developer **Jorge Perez**, CEO of The Related Group in Miami, received CNBC's international property award for **Icon Brickell**, a project designed by Philippe Starck and Arquitectonica. 



Van Blommestein