
June 11, 2009

Miami Condos Filling Fast, Arlington Next?

Aggressive price cutting and an international real estate market is driving sales of downtown Miami condos.

Often pointed to as the most overbuilt condo market, the very speculative Miami condo market mirrors relative inhabited success in the overbuilt Arlington/Alexandria condo market.

In Miami, renters are filling the empties creating demand for street level businesses which was the original city goal—to create sidewalk streetscape:

[Miami Herald:](#)

While some may point to the rental trend as evidence developers overshot their estimates of demand and put up far too many buildings, Alyce Robertson, executive director of the development authority, said it makes little difference from an economic development standpoint.

Whether people rent or own, they need and demand more shops, banks, bars and restaurants in the area.

Robertson said the Downtown Development Authority, a quasi-governmental agency that promotes the area, will soon sell the area to prospective retailers based on the results of the occupancy report.

Downtown Miami was an also-ran to beach areas in condo development until the recent housing boom.

There are local reasons why each market had a housing boom. In Miami it was scarcity of land as the city is hemmed in by the Everglades and Biscayne Bay. Also a strong trend is a South American do-over of the city. In Latin American cities, the wealthy live downtown with squatters on the outskirts.

Arlington and Alexandria have played second fiddle to DC's core neighborhoods in condo development.

Condo booms there were influenced by a cultural/restaurant boom in DC's downtown and by numerous empty nesters and highly paid but time pressed work-a-holics in DC.

NoVa's traffic calming efforts resulted in at least some metro riding professionals. Ironic.

Metro's arrival in Arlington created a booming restaurant and emerging retail street scape centered on Clarendon. The DC condo market is very influenced by international money.

Alexandria's garden apartments to condo conversions were late to the boom and have mostly filled with renters as units reverted completely back to rental complexes or individual investor rentals.

Rental buildings that were never refurbished are suffering higher vacancies and declining rents as tenants moved into better deals in luxury buildings.

Back in Arlington, developers are still throwing up several condo buildings.'