

The Miami Herald, October 31, 1996

A pantheon for suburban shoppers

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Dadeland Station, a five-story shopping center in which Best Buy, Target, Sports Authority, Bed Bath & Beyond and Michaels are piled one on top of another, opens this week.

Located behind the Dadeland North Metrorail Station, the new center is taking a risk with a multi-story design yet to be tested with South Florida shoppers.

But it is tapping into one sure thing: a thriving retail market around Dadeland Mall.

The new stores will join a market in which Circuit City, Barnes & Noble and Computer City — all within blocks of Dadeland — are capitalizing on the same demographics that have favored

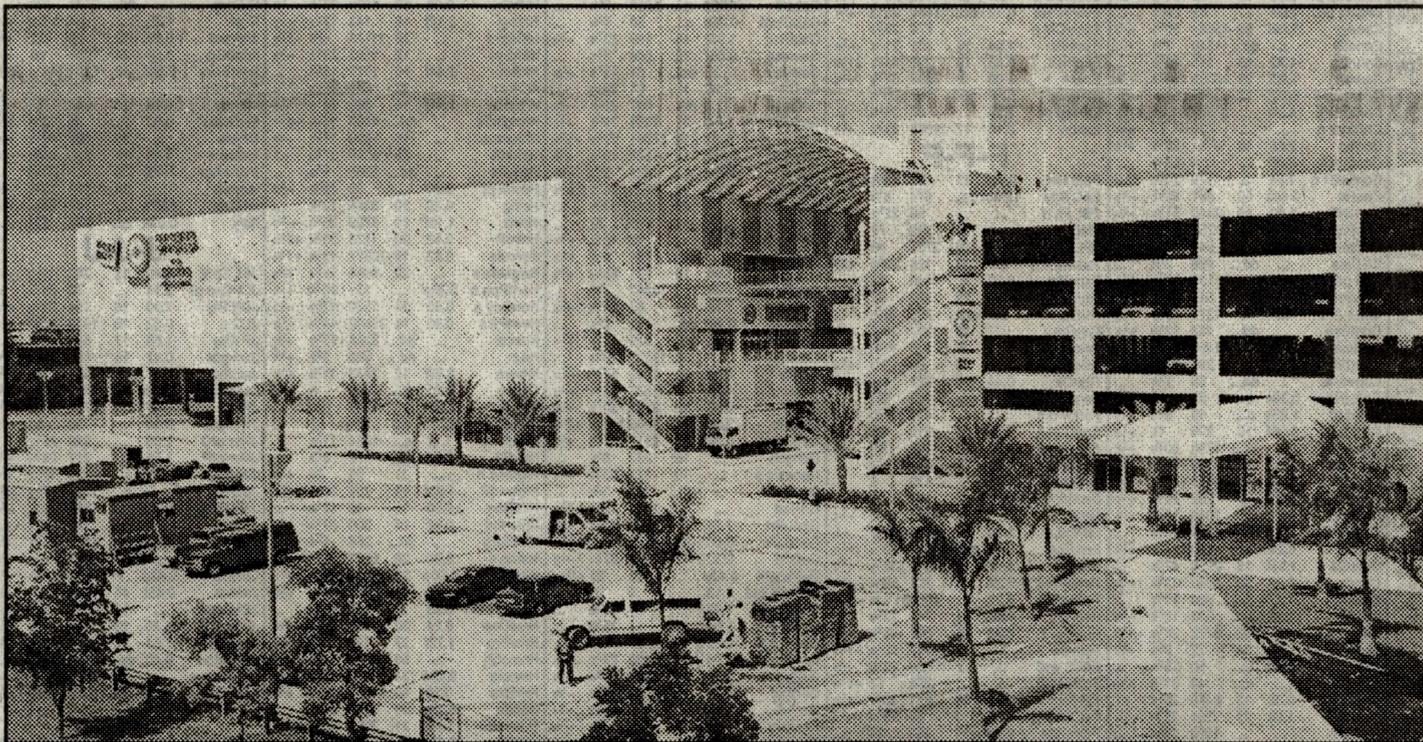
the mall.

“The real issue is to try to be as near to Dadeland Mall as possible,” said Tom Healy, Best Buy’s district manager for South Florida. “And it’s tough to get parcels there.”

Indeed, land scarcity led developer Jeffrey Berkowitz to get creative. Berkowitz leased the seven acres behind the Dadeland North Metrorail station from Dade County, and used the multi-level design to build a center that would have taken 35 acres if it were all on ground level.

In addition to the five anchors, the center will have 9,500 square feet of smaller shops, services and small eateries, catering to

PLEASE SEE STATION, 3C



Photos by **AL DIAZ** / Herald Staff

THE USUAL SUSPECTS: Dadeland Station, behind the Dadeland North Metrorail station, will be a five-story home

for several greatest hits among retail shoppers (see signs, above). It’s scheduled to open this week.

Dadeland's demographically desirable

STATION, FROM 1C

commuters. Metrorail use is expected to increase by 200,000 rides a year, as the center's employees use it to get to work and some shoppers use it.

"We have retailers and developers from all over the country watching this project with tremendous interest," Berkowitz said.

Berkowitz said the center's proximity to Dadeland helped persuade Bed Bath & Beyond to close its nearby 30,000-square-foot store on the east side of U.S. 1, and open one double the size at Dadeland Station.

While Berkowitz and Dadeland have teamed to build a covered walkway from the center to the mall, the jury is still out on whether shoppers will take the walk. Or whether they'll be able

to see the center while driving on U.S. 1.

But observers said new retailers likely will benefit from the same advantages that made Dadeland one of the most profitable malls in the country.

"We're in the heart of a market with very strong demographics, and the amount of people that live in the surrounding area is huge," said Susann Green, vice president of sales for the Green Cos., developer of The Greenery, a shopping center near Dadeland where Barnes & Noble and Circuit City are located.

The Green Cos., which sold the development rights for Dadeland Station to Berkowitz, retained several parcels of land around the project to build a hotel and office buildings.