

buildings

TALL BUILDINGS

Dubai Towers Is Centerpiece of \$18-Billion Development

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By Heather Hatfield

The schematic design for Dubai Towers, a four-building complex planned for the central business district of an \$18-billion project in Dubai called "The Lagoons," was unveiled Jan. 8. The towers range from 54 to 97 stories and emulate four candle flames swaying in the wind.

"The design represents the enlightenment of the region," says Behr Champana, vice president in charge of the project for TVS International, a design firm with offices in Atlanta and Dubai. In addition to designing Dubai Towers, TVS was also the master planner for the entire project.



Four towers ranging from 54 to 97 stories will be the centerpiece of a new Dubai development.

The Lagoons is a 70-million-sq-ft development by Sama Dubai, the real estate and investment division of Dubai Holding, one of many organizations transforming **Dubai from a Middle Eastern desert town to urban center**. The Lagoons is to be made up of seven man-made islands in Dubai Creek. The development will include residential, retail, office and cultural facilities. The Lagoons is located next to the Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary where thousands of flamingos gather. The team is following international standards for environmentally sensitive design across all phases of the project, Champana says. The job includes opening the creek to the Persian Gulf to improve water flow.

Construction of the islands started in April 2006. The entire project, including Dubai Towers, is estimated to be completed by 2010. TVS expects to proceed through design and construction on all four towers simultaneously, Champana says. He has more than 50 designers working full time on the project. "Most of the central business district island will be built at the same time," Champana says. Sama Dubai will develop about half of the central business district and will sell the remainder to other developers.

Contracts for other members of the design team are in final stages, Champana says. "We are working with two of the world's best structural engineers," he says. But he declines to divulge their names until contracts are finalized. Sama Dubai did not respond by press time.