

Titusville may get Martian visitors

Company proposes space- and Red planet-themed tourist attraction

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TITUSVILLE — Want to visit Mars? You might not have to go any farther than Titusville.

A New Port Richey company has submitted site plans for a 75-acre plot of land on State Road 407 to build Interspace, a space-themed entertainment and research facility that would include the world's largest simulated Mars surface environment.

The company, NewSpace Center LLC, said it could break ground as early as September and open in August 2012.

Titusville city officials, eager to bring space tourists and jobs to the city, are working with the company to help that happen. Tuesday, city council unanimously voted to waive \$2,100 of costs associated with the project- the latest gesture to secure the company. The city and county have already approved tax breaks for the project and TICO airport has agreed not to charge a leasing fee for the 75-acre site until construction officially begins.

In addition to Interspace, site plans include multiple hotels, a conference center, space-themed restaurants and a college branch campus.

"Certainly the attraction can stand on it's own and be quite profitable, but there's a much broader opportunity," said Newspace manager Joseph Palaia, who envisions eventually partnering with NASA and schools for an education component.

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