

Regions Group to Build Russian Disneyland in Moscow's Nagatino

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A ferris wheel at Moscow's Sokolniki Park.

One of Russia's top development firms, Regions Group, will build a "Moscow version of Disneyland," a theme park under the brand of Hollywood's DreamWorks Animation in the south of Moscow, as the first step to setting up three such parks for a total of \$1 billion, Vedomosti reported last week.

A City Hall source said the park would be built in the Nagatino neighborhood, near the industrial zone of the former ZIL car factory, the newspaper reported. Earlier, Regions Group — owned by businessman Zelimkhan Mutsoev, his sons Alikhan and Amiran and brother Amirkhan Mori, as well as another businessman Alexander Karpov — said the other two parks were to be located in St. Petersburg and Yekaterinburg.

Regions Group first announced the project at the start of 2013, with DreamWorks CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg attending the presentation. At first, Regions planned to find a site near

the Moscow Ring Road. Last Friday at a City Hall meeting Mayor Sergei Sobyenin named Nagatino as the most likely location for the theme park.

Deputy Mayor Natalya Seryogina said at the meeting that scenes from popular kids cartoons would be recreated on the territory of 80,000 square meters, Interfax reported.

Also at the meeting Moscow's chief architect Sergei Kuznetsov said the construction was expected to start at the end of 2014 or the beginning of 2015. The whole project is planned to be finished by 2017. The whole territory of Nagatino neighborhood, which is now largely neglected, will be refurbished. Apart from the theme park there will be a regular green park. Kuznetsov expects the theme park to be open all year round and have 4 million visitors annually, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

Kuznetsov added the park would have a skating rink, a big concert hall, a Ferris wheel and a cinema, as well as a special pavilion dedicated to cartoon characters by Russia's oldest animation studio Soyuzmultfilm.

Next to the park, a new metro station Technopark will be built shortly on the green line.

"Moscow as a large city feels a shortage of entertainment venues. That is why this kind of theme park may be very successful," Igor Rodionov, vice president of the Russian Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions said. "The park will not be very big, so it may soon pay off," Rodionov said.

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