

## Bank of America moving out of signature building

Bank expected to consolidate offices at 701 Brickell Ave.

BY RISA POLANSKY

Bank of America is leaving Bank of America Tower at International Place.

The signature tenant in downtown Miami's iconic illuminated building is to vacate its 50,000-square-foot space in early 2010 when its lease expires, says Fairchild Partners Senior Vice President Tony Puente, who handles leasing at the tower.

He said he understands the bank plans to consolidate into its existing space at 701 Brickell Ave.

The bank is the Brickell building's anchor tenant and occupies 80,000 square feet.

Scott Strickland, who leases 701 Brickell as senior vice president and leasing director for Jones Lang LaSalle, did not return calls for comment.

Bank of America spokesman

Nicole Nastacie said the company has not made official where it's headed once it leaves the downtown building, 100 SE Second St.

"Details are still in process," she said.

Ms. Nastacie said the bank's move is not an effort to downsize but to optimize space.

"The bank constantly looks for opportunities to optimize our workspace," she said. "Such optimization activities are standard across our enterprise."

Mr. Puente called the bank's planned departure from the 600,000-square-foot building an opportunity.

The now-95% occupied building will be "in the high 80s" after the bank leaves — a solid number, he said, especially in tough economic times.

He's marketing space in the tower to prospects across the spectrum, from anyone who might need three contiguous floors to a company looking to establish a small office.

Though the bank is on the



Photo by Maxine Usdan

**Bank of America Tower at International Place leasing agent Tony Puente is now marketing three floors covering 50,000 square feet.**

way out, several tenants are committed for the long term, Mr. Puente said — including the building's largest tenant, law firm Carlton Fields, which occupies 90,000 square feet.

Tenant Vector Group, which rents 14,000 square feet, recently renewed and extended

its lease for five years.

It's unclear what the downtown tower, now named after the bank, might be called after this year, Mr. Puente said.

Bank of America Tower at International Place is "the name right now. I can't tell you what the future holds."