

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

Expansion on a Grand scale

Lakeview proceeds with three major hotel projects

By: Murray McNeill

Posted: 01/4/2012 1:00 AM | Comments: 0 (including replies)g


[Enlarge Image](#)

A crew works at the future site of the new Grand Winnipeg Airport Hotel across from the Richardson International Airport Tuesday afternoon.


[Enlarge Image](#)

An artist's rendering of the Grand hotel at the airport . The future office tower is to the right of the hotel. The current Four Points by Sheraton Hotel is at the far right of the development. (ARTIST RENDERING BY

It's shaping up to be a busy year for Winnipeg's Lakeview Management Inc., with two new hotels in the works for downtown Winnipeg and construction activity ramping up on its new luxury hotel at the airport.

Lakeview officials said Tuesday the company is proceeding with its plans to build two new hotels on a property it owns immediately west of the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

Work on the first -- a four-storey, 85-room Lakeview Signature Hotel -- will get underway in spring and will take about a year to complete, vice-president Wayne Bollman said.

Bollman said if everything goes according to plan, that \$9-million facility will open about the same time -- the summer of 2013 -- as Lakeview's \$20-million, six-storey, 80-room Grand Winnipeg Airport Hotel that's under construction across the road from the new Richardson International Airport terminal.

Lakeview CEO Jack Levit said work on the second downtown hotel -- a \$19-million, 12-storey, 150-room Lakeview Inn -- will begin shortly after the WCC begins work on its proposed \$180-million expansion.

"If we know that is being built for sure, we'll probably start work on our second hotel before the first one is finished," Levit said. "We want to finish it (the second one) at the same time the convention centre expansion (is completed)."

WCC president and CEO Klaus Lahr said last fall the centre hopes to select a winning development proposal early in the new year so the expansion can be completed by early 2015.

Lakeview has been talking for more than a year about wanting to build one or two new hotels on the parking lot it owns on the

RAYMOND S C WAN ARCHITECT)

west side of Edmonton Street between St. Mary and York Avenues. But it was never clear when the projects might begin.

Bollman and Levit said the waiting is almost over for the first project.

"Phase I is very certain," Bollman said. "We're already getting going with that."

Levit reaffirmed Lakeview's intention to tie the second hotel into the downtown skywalk system. That would close the final gap in the system, which snakes through the downtown from Winnipeg Square to the Bay store.

Levit said Lakeview is building two new downtown hotels because it anticipates a growing demand for rooms once the WCC expansion is finished and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights opens, possibly in 2014.

"We think the human rights museum will be a feeder for the hotels."

He said they didn't want to wait for the WCC expansion to get the final go-ahead before getting started. So they decided to proceed with a smaller hotel now and build a bigger one once the WCC project is approved and underway.

The company's airport hotel was delayed for nearly three years before work finally got underway in the fall. The foundation and foundation piles are in place and Levit said the steel framing for the walls will start going up this week.

The Grand hotel will feature many of the attributes found in a five-star facility, including extra-large rooms, high-end finishings and 7.6-metre-high ceilings in the main lobby.

It will also have a 70-seat restaurant/lounge and a fifth-floor observation lounge overlooking the new airport terminal. The top floor will be developed as office space -- about 15,000 square feet in total.

The company also still plans to proceed with the construction of a \$12-million, five-storey, 40,000 square-foot office building to link the Grand hotel with its nearby Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, which is across from the old airport terminal.

Levit said the office-building project will get underway as soon as the company signs an anchor tenant. He said negotiations are ongoing with several interested parties.

Winnipeg Airports Authority spokeswoman Christine Alongi said WAA officials are pleased work is underway on the Grand hotel. "We've heard (the Four Points hotel) is one of the busiest in the city. So for people looking for hotel rooms near the airport, it will be another alternative."

murray.mcneill@freepress.mb.ca;

Find this article at:

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/expansion-on-a-grand-scale-136645558.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.