

TFP Marketplace

Jobs | Homes | Cars | Other Classifieds | Place An Ad

tfp ONLINE.com

An Online Division of the Chattanooga Times Free Press


**Mem
Bookr**

Access to the Electronic Edition

 Log-in — Email Address:

 Password:

**Enhanced
Edition**
**Standard
Edition**

 Forgot Your Password?

Hilton To Open Downtown Hotel

By Mike Pare Staff Writer

The renaissance of downtown Chattanooga continues to build with plans to construct the third hotel near the riverfront in the past four years. A Hilton Garden Inn, an \$8.5 million, 94-room hotel that will include a restaurant, is to go up on Chestnut Street next to the Creative Discovery Museum, its developer said Friday. "This is the area where all the growth is occurring. We wanted to be in the mix," said Mitch Patel, executive vice president of Vision Hospitality Group of Chattanooga. The six-story hotel will be the third to open downtown since 1995. Before the Residence Inn by Marriott opened in 1996, it had been more than a decade since a new hotel was built in the central city. The downtown area's approximately 2,100 hotel and motel rooms have a "reasonably good" annualized occupancy rate of 65 to 70 percent, said Michael Wilds, president of the Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau. When the Hilton and a Courtyard by Marriott are finished by early 2001, nearly 300 rooms will have been added to downtown's riverfront district. Pem Guerry, who heads the downtown development group RiverValley Partners, said the hotels create "a critical mass" of rooms for riverfront visitors. Mr. Guerry continues to lead RiverValley, although he announced last week he'll leave the organization when a successor is named, opening the way for him to launch a venture capital firm. Mr. Guerry said the Hilton, the Chattanooga Lookouts' BellSouth Park, and new housing and retail at First and Market streets are the riverfront's second wave of development since the Tennessee Aquarium opened in May 1992. Proposed development cited in RiverValley's new retail and entertainment plan will be the third wave, Mr. Guerry said. Mr. Patel said the proximity of his Hilton to one of the new plan's key projects, an urban retail center, is a reason why he likes the downtown site. "We've been looking at downtown for a while and monitoring its growth. I think the city is committed to the success of downtown," Mr. Patel said. While downtown's promoters like to see the new development, the construction of the hotel and ballpark raises questions about parking in the area. Mr. Guerry said studies are under way on the possibility of building a parking garage behind the planned Hilton. While there's already some surface parking there, 30 to 40 more spaces will be needed for the hotel, he said. Mr. Patel said Hilton's Garden Inn brand was started about three years ago. Forty are open and another 100 are in the pipeline in the United States, he said. "It's not a complete full-service hotel and it's not limited. It's in-between," said the developer. Its light dinner restaurant puts it between limited motels without eateries and large hotels with

Weather
Stock Market Update
National Business News
National News
International News
Sports
National Sports Report
NHL Update
NBA Update
NFL Update
NCAA Update
Baseball Update
Golf Update
Tennis Report
Soccer Report
Motor Sports Update
Entertainment
Hollywood Update
Music News
TFP Site Services
Contact Us
Subscribe
Media Kits
User Account
FAQ
Feedback

comprehensive dining operations. Next door to the Hilton is the Residence Inn, which its general manager said offers a little different product because it has kitchenettes in its rooms. "The Courtyard and the Hilton will be direct competitors," said Misty Murray of the Residence Inn. She said the Residence Inn sees occupancy run "really strong" during the tourist season and then slow in the winter months. After both the Courtyard and Hilton open, "we'll find a balance in the market," said Ms. Murray. Henry Schulson, executive director of the Creative Discovery Museum, said his facility's new neighbor will be "a positive factor for the museum. "It will bring, hopefully, more people to stay downtown," he said. Mr. Schulson said he doesn't think the building of the hotel will cramp any possible future expansion. Mr. Patel said the site for the hotel, which will have 12 suites, is tight at just over one-half acre in size. Suites are rooms with a sitting area. "It's presented interesting challenges," said the developer, whose company has built Homewood Suites near Hamilton Place as well as hotels in Nashville and Knoxville. Pedestrians will see the main entrance to the new hotel on Chestnut while motorists will enter from the rear, he said. The hotel, which will have about 1,400 square feet of meeting space, is being designed by Charles King Architects & Associates Inc. The Courtyard is to open at Second and Chestnut, a block away and on the other side of Chestnut from the new Hilton Garden Inn.

This story was published Sunday, November 28, 1999

[Top of page](#) |

Copyright © , Chattanooga Times Free Press, Inc. All rights reserved.

This document may not be reprinted without the express written permission of Chattanooga Times Free Press, Inc.

Material from the Associated Press is Copyright © , Associated Press and may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed. Associated Press text, photo, graphic, audio and/or video material shall not be published, broadcast, rewritten for broadcast or publication or redistributed directly or indirectly in any medium. Neither these AP materials nor any portion thereof may be stored in a computer except for personal and noncommercial use. The AP will not be held liable for any delays, inaccuracies, errors or omissions therefrom or in the transmission or delivery of all or any part thereof or for any damages arising from any of the foregoing. All rights reserved.