

Work to begin on Courtyard by Marriott

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

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Owensboro-based LinGate Hospitality will begin construction soon on a four-story, 109-room Courtyard by Marriott at 3120 Highland Pointe Drive -- near Cheddar's Casual Café.

It will be the first new hotel in Owensboro since Comfort Suites opened on Salem Drive in 2002.

The Executive Inn Rivermont, the city's largest hotel, closed in June 2008.

Ken Correll, LinGate's vice president for development and technology, said the new hotel will include a restaurant serving a full breakfast, an indoor pool and meeting rooms.

It should open 11 months after construction begins, he said.

The hotel will be LinGate's first Courtyard featuring the chain's "exciting new prototype," Correll said.

But the other LinGate Courtyards are being upgraded to the new look, he said.

The advanced-technology lobby will feature an interactive touchscreen GoBoard displaying weather, news headlines, sports scores, mapping and restaurant recommendations, along with computer stations for guests to print airline boarding passes and maps and to check e-mail.

The 23-year-old LinGate Hospitality owns 18 hotels -- including Hilton Garden Inns, Fairfield Inn & Suites, Spring Hill Suites, Hampton Inns and Baymont Inn & Suites -- in Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, New Mexico, Ohio and Georgia.

It built the 100-room Fairfield Inn on Salem Drive in 1997 and sold it to M. Gibson Hotels of Knoxville, Tenn., in 2006.

The Courtyard by Marriott will give the company a new property in its hometown.

"We have different investors for different hotels," Correll said. "Selling the Fairfield didn't have anything to do with the Owensboro market. This is a good hotel market."

Last year, when the hotel was first announced, the cost was pegged at \$10.5 million.

"It's gone up a little since then," Correll said.

Courtyard describes itself as an "upper-scale mid-price hotel brand designed primarily for business travelers."

Its Web site says there are more than 815 locations in more than 28 countries.

Keith Lawrence, 691-7301, klawrence@messenger-inquirer.com