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## Waterloo Hotel Boom Continues with Four Points by Sheraton

WATERLOO — A hotel across from the Conestoga Mall in Waterloo is undergoing a \$3-million renovation to convert it into a Four Points by Sheraton.

Palm Holdings, a Toronto-based company that bought the Destination Inn at 547 King St. N. in Waterloo almost three years ago, is in the process of giving that hotel a major upgrade to rebrand it as a Four Points by Sheraton by November.

Paul Sutton, director of operations for Palm Holdings, said all of the 104 guest rooms, many of which are suites with separate living rooms, are being upgraded to Four Points by Sheraton standards.

All of the public areas, including business meeting rooms and lobby are also being renovated and a full-service restaurant will be added, he said.

The family-owned Toronto company bought both the Destination Inn and the former Best Western in St. Jacobs in 2010 from St. Jacobs Country Inn Inc.

The company recently converted the hotel in St. Jacobs into a Courtyard by Marriott hotel and now it is starting on the project to turn the Destination Inn in Waterloo into a Four Points by Sheraton.

Waterloo Region is currently in the midst of a hotel building boom.

Besides the Palm Holdings developments at Courtyard by Marriott in St. Jacobs and the soon-to-be completed Four Points by Sheraton in Waterloo, several other companies are also busy either renovating or building brand new hotels in the area.

A new Holiday Inn Express & Suites, owned by Woodlawn Hospitality Group has just been built on Benjamin Road in St. Jacobs. The former Delta Hotel in downtown Kitchener owned by Vista Hospitality Group is undergoing extensive renovations to become a Crowne Plaza hotel. Meanwhile, a brand new \$36-million Delta Hotels and Resorts is under construction in the Barrel Yards development in uptown Waterloo, and it is expected to be open by the end of this year or early next year.

Four Points by Sheraton is a globally recognized brand of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc., so it will greatly enhance the region's ability to offer a "modern, upscale hotel environment" to both business and leisure travellers, Sutton said.

"It is a major renovation and we are very excited about it," said Sutton.

Davor Dikmić, the regional general manager for Palm Holdings who is in charge of both the Four Points by Sheraton as well as the Courtyard by Marriott, said the hotel renovation will be "a complete redesign" of the property. .



New Hotel

*Philip Walker, Record Staff*

Regional General Manager Davor Dikmic with the new colour scheme and furniture sample on the all behind him of the new Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, which is expected to open in Waterloo later this year.

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He said the St. Jacobs hotel renovation, which was completed last October, opened to "great reviews" from guests

"I am positive it will be the same for Four Points by Sheraton," said Dikmić, who previously lived in Waterloo Region before moving to Toronto as a hotel manager and is now back in this region again.

The hotel is in a desirable location, right across from the mall and close to the universities and technology companies, Sutton said. But also, Waterloo is central for guests who are drawn to theatre and tourist spots throughout this part of Ontario, Sutton said.

"We are working closely with regional tourism and the airlines in driving more revenues to the region as a whole," Sutton said.

Palm Holdings owns hotels in the United Kingdom and India, as well as in Florida. Sutton said the company is also opening a Holiday Inn Express hotel in Naples, Fla., in October and hopes to be able to market that to Canadian travellers as well.

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