

Trump's N.O. tower on track

By: Christian Moises, News Editor | December 10, 2007 | 0



The Trump International Hotel and Tower in New Orleans will open a 5,000-square-foot sales office soon, according to Cliff Mowe, co-developer with Davie Brannen at Pensacola, Fla.-based Poydras LLC.

The sales center passed its final inspection last week, which Mowe said allows for final Sheetrock work and installation of cabinets and countertops.

"We're looking at completing the center right before Christmas with an official opening at the first of January," Mowe said.

The sales center on the 25th floor in the Pan-American Life Building, 601 Poydras St., will feature a model 700-square-foot furnished condo-hotel unit. A 9-foot steel model of the building will also be displayed.

Mowe was in New York late last month shooting a clip with Donald Trump for a sales DVD to help market the tower nationally by Jan. 1. He envisions a "big" sales launch in January with Trump possibly coming to New Orleans.

Trump's involvement on the \$300-million tower is more than just name recognition.

"He'll help to market the property and serve as a managing partner in the hotel. But as far as actually doing the construction, we're in charge of building and hiring the contractor," Brannen said.

The 72-story tower at 555 Poydras St. between Magazine and Camp streets will have 435 condo-hotel units and 290 residential condominiums.

The tower's first two floors will be reserved for retail while floors three to 15 will provide 715 parking spaces. Floors 18 through 32 will be condotel units and floors 33 through 37 will be residential condos. Floors 58 through 63 will feature penthouse units accessible only through private elevators, Brannen said.

Hank Smith with Metairie-based Harry Baker Smith Architects II said the concrete-framed building will sit on 30-inch-wide steel pilings driven more than 200 feet into the ground.

"The only pre-sales we've taken are from signage and we have about 175 deposits at this point," Mowe said.

Taylor Energy CEO Phyllis Taylor signed a letter of intent and paid a deposit on three units.

"Having a facility in New Orleans that has the nationally recognized name like Trump sends another very positive message about the return and revival of the city of New Orleans," said Taylor.

"Everything is in the most tentative of nature with potential buyers," she said. "But if it happens, that will be my primary residence. Every now and then it's nice to make a change in life. Definitely made

my commitment."

Mowe said only one or two of seven half-floor penthouses are still available. The only full-floor penthouse costs about \$7 million and has nearly 10,000 square feet of living space.

"We've had some interest in it," Mowe said.

Brannen said marketing hasn't even started.

"Once we get the sales center open, we're gonna start marketing and I don't think sales will be a problem," Brannen said. "It's a unique product and there's a lot of international attention on New Orleans right now."

Brannen said Poydras is working with First Bank and Trust under an agreement making it the project's exclusive bank.

Poydras will more than likely work with one of two banks for construction costs — Chicago-based Corus Bank or San Mateo, Calif.-based Capmark Financial Group.

Architects are Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Adache Architects and Harry Baker Smith Architects II. Philadelphia, Miss.-based Yates Construction will lead the build.

New Orleans will join seven other Trump locations worldwide, including New York, Honolulu, Chicago, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Las Vegas, Toronto and Panama.

Work is under way on a 10th tower in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. •