

Oct. 20, 2016

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

 Contact: Ann Edelman, Zehnder Communications, aedelman@z-comm.com, (225) 242-9000

**Windsor Aughtry Groundbreaking Ceremony Held For Downtown Courtyard by Marriott**

**BATON ROUGE, La. –**Windsor Aughtry Hotel Group held a groundbreaking ceremony on Thursday, Oct. 20, to mark the start of construction on a new eight-story, 135-room Courtyard by Marriott hotel and Starbucks at 260 Third Street in downtown Baton Rouge.

Those speaking at the ceremony included Baton Rouge Mayor-President Kip Holden, along with Windsor Aughtry Chairman and CEO Paul C. “Bo” Aughtry III and Downtown Development District Director Davis Rhorer.

The Courtyard by Marriott represents a $23.6 million investment. It is expected to open in late 2017 with an anticipated staff of 50 full-time and 10 part-time employees. The hotel will include approximately 80,000 square feet of space with a Starbucks on the ground level.

The Courtyard by Marriott is Windsor Aughtry’s second Baton Rouge hotel development, in addition to the Hampton Inn & Suites on Lafayette Street. Hospitality America Inc. manages both properties.

“Our investment in Baton Rouge is a testament to the city’s job of revitalizing the downtown area and its success in expanding the local tourism industry,” says Bo Aughtry. “It’s a vibrant market, and we’re fortunate to be a part of it.”

Windsor Aughtry purchased the Third Street property, which operated as a parking lot, for $2.25 million in 2016 from Gordon LeBlanc and Moffett LeBlanc Strain, who are local investors in the Courtyard by Marriott project.

The property is the site of the former Istrouma Hotel, which served as the city’s first downtown hotel. Built in 1903, the Istrouma closed in 1961 and was eventually razed in 1969.

The new hotel was designed by Bounds & Gillespie Architects and is being built by Alexandria-based Ratcliff Construction Company.

**About Windsor Aughtry Hotel Group**

Based in Greenville, South Carolina, Windsor Aughtry Hotel Group develops premium hotels in top markets throughout the Southeast. With more than 25 years of experience, Windsor Aughtry is committed to investing in American cities and providing travelers with the best experience. For more information, visit windsoraughtry.com.

**###**

 Additional groundbreaking remarks from Baton Rouge Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden and Downtown Development District Executive Director Davis Rhorer:

“This exciting development puts Baton Rouge at a competitive advantage to attract large hosting and entertainment conferences that require several hotel rooms within walking distance of our River Center.  In the last 15 years, downtown Baton Rouge went from zero hotel rooms to over 1,100, exemplifying the revitalization efforts recognized by downtowns across the country. I sincerely appreciate the Windsor Aughtry Company for their continued investment and commitment to Baton Rouge and for their part in our overall success.” – *Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden*

“The Courtyard Marriott is located in the epicenter of downtown’s historic Third Street Corridor, contributing to the street’s diverse dynamic and attracting continued private investments, residents, and tourists. We thank Windor Aughtry for their second downtown investment and welcome their contribution to Baton Rouge’s economic vitality and stability.”– *Davis Rhorer, DDD Executive Director*

