

IHG and Lane Hospitality Open First Crowne Plaza Prototype

2008-03-17

New-build design offers developers a cost-effective alternative to conversions

IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) and Lane Hospitality, a hotel real estate and management company, today announce the official opening of the first Crowne Plaza(R) prototype, the 198-room Crowne Plaza Milwaukee-Wauwatosa.

"We are pleased to open the first of our prototype hotels in Milwaukee-Wauwatosa. Our collaboration with Lane Hospitality has resulted in a brand defining product that will appeal to current and future Crowne Plaza franchisees looking to develop new-build Crowne Plaza hotels," said Gina LaBarre, vice president, Brand Management, Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts. "While conversions will always play a role in our development strategy, this prototype provides a design plan concept for owners to leverage when building new hotels in emerging markets or established urban markets."

In partnership with Lane Hospitality, Crowne Plaza has created a prototype that is operationally efficient and cost-effective for owners, leverages the brand's "The Place To Meet" positioning and showcases modern and efficient design features important to upscale business travelers.

Throughout the prototype's development process the focus remained on keeping the owners' bottom line in mind. Operationally one of the prototype's primary design advantages is that the physical plan provides efficiency from a workflow and functional layout standpoint. The flow of the public spaces provides separation between business settings and recreational/leisure environments. For example, the kitchen is in close proximity to all of the function areas to allow for minimal interference in public areas from the service staff. Simple design executions such as these provide hidden returns in energy and manpower for owners' bottom line.

The physical plan is also scalable and versatile enough to suit to a variety of locations including thriving secondary suburban markets, airports and urban markets where conversion is not an option. There are currently ten additional properties in the Crowne Plaza pipeline that will incorporate elements of this new prototype in cities including Raleigh-Durham, Baltimore and Ft. Lauderdale.

Crowne Plaza also leveraged the prototype as an opportunity to apply "The Place To Meet" positioning to a physical product. Consumer research from professional meeting planners and guests on design and efficiency shed light on innovations important to them. One of the brand's most significant findings uncovered how today's business traveler likes to meet and conduct business on the road. While traditional meetings that occur in designated meeting spaces are critical, guests also desire the flexibility and control to conduct business throughout all areas of the hotel, both formally and informally. This customer insight was utilized to make the public space design modern, efficient and relevant to today's traveler. For example, the lobby area and lounge contain soft seating with adjacent hard surfaces, power sources and Wi-Fi to accommodate smaller, informal meetings and individuals working outside their rooms.

Other meetings focused design elements include: natural light in all rooms, movable partitions/walls to create a variety of flexible function space, multi-zone, controllable lighting, ergonomic chairs, and technology such as backlit projection screens and Wi-Fi access. The physical plan also positions the meeting space apart from busier areas of the hotel, providing a business environment free of distractions.

Through the thoughtful use of space the prototype guestrooms allow the guest to sleep well and work more efficiently. Fixtures, equipment and new modular furniture by Kimball are designed for comfort and function and replicate the residential design found in today's homes. Guestrooms provide business traveler-friendly amenities, including a technically enhanced flat screen television, ergonomic leather-upholstered executive-style desk chair, bedside lighting with adjustable reading light, multiple convenient power sources, and Wi-Fi access.

"As the developer of the first prototype hotel, we have chosen a site that will enable it to become a fixture of the community and an important addition to the lodging choices in the area for the upscale corporate and leisure traveler," said Bill DeForrest, President and CEO of Lane Hospitality. "We enthusiastically look forward to providing an outstanding guest experience, and to the many new business opportunities that this innovative complex will bring to Wauwatosa."

Highlights of the eight-story Crowne Plaza Milwaukee-Wauwatosa complex include: a soaring two-story lobby, more than 7000 sq. ft. of meetings and function space, Innovation, an upscale dining restaurant & lounge, two unique Executive Floors, 24-hour Business Center, fitness center with the latest cardio equipment, indoor swimming pool and whirlpool, sundries shop, valet and laundry service, and complimentary shuttle service within a five-mile radius. The Crowne Plaza Milwaukee-Wauwatosa will also feature the Crowne Plaza Sleep Advantage(R) program and the brand's comprehensive meetings package, which are available at all Crowne Plaza hotels in the Americas.

The Crowne Plaza Milwaukee-Wauwatosa is owned by KL Hotel, LLC and managed by Lane Hospitality, under a license agreement with a company in the InterContinental Hotels Group.

This article comes from Hotel News Resource

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com>

The URL for this story is:

<http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/article31626.html>

© 1998 - 2008 Nevistas and the author.

Brought to you by Hotel News Resource

Distribute your news on our Network

See what all the buzz is about at:

http://www.hotelnewsresource.com/Info-news_account_info.html