

## FireKeepers Casino is Scheduled to Open Summer 2009

2008-07-29

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The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi today announced that construction of FireKeepers Casino near Battle Creek is making significant progress, with an opening planned for the summer of 2009.

Construction of the \$300 million casino, located on Michigan Avenue near Exit 104 of Interstate 94, began on May 7, 2008, and is moving forward according to schedule.

"The Tribe is very pleased with the progress that we are making in the construction of FireKeepers Casino," said Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Tribal Chairperson, Laura Spurr. "We have waited a long time to bring economic development and jobs to not only tribal members but also to the greater Calhoun County region."

The 236,000 square-foot casino will create approximately 2,200 jobs - 700 construction and 1,500 permanent jobs, in addition to spin off jobs.

When completed, FireKeepers Casino will feature Las Vegas-type gaming: 2,500 slot machines, 90 table games, and 20 poker tables. FireKeepers will have five restaurants, including a 70-seat fine dining signature restaurant, a 300-seat buffet, and a 150-seat 24-hour coffee shop. The casino will have an attached and enclosed 2,078-space parking garage.

"FireKeepers Casino will be an outstanding venue for gaming patrons located halfway between Detroit and Chicago, along the I-94 corridor," said Casino General Manager R. Bruce McKee. McKee, who recently joined the project, brings extensive gaming experience including ten years at Trump Hotels and Casino Resorts, Inc. "We look forward to offering a first class entertainment experience and to bringing new and exciting dining options to the greater Battle Creek region," added McKee.

Construction of FireKeepers is being led by Clark Construction Company. The Skillman Corporation is serving as the Tribe's owner representative during the construction process and the architect is Perez APC.

Despite several summer storms, construction is on track for a summer 2009 opening. Crews have excavated the site, installed site utilities, started work on the concrete foundation work for the parking ramp, and erected 25 percent of the structural steel. The steel structure is scheduled for completion in September. Work will begin soon on the exterior wall framing.

Other activities will include hiring new employees and developing relationships with vendors and suppliers. FireKeepers Casino plans to hire the majority of its permanent casino positions early next year.

"FireKeepers Casino will be seeking to hire employees who are outgoing, friendly and customer service oriented," said McKee. "The casino will also be looking for local vendors to provide food and beverages, meats, produce, bakery goods, and paper products. We will be exploring relationships with businesses."

The general timeline for employment and vendor and supplier opportunities is:

- January 2009: Job fairs and major recruiting for casino jobs
- March/April 2009: Dealer training
- March 2009: Vendor and supplier job fairs

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