

# THE JOURNAL RECORD

## Developers plan extensive makeover of Skirvin

By: [Kathryn McNutt](#) The Journal Record December 19, 2022



Local investors who purchased the 111-year-old Skirvin Hilton in downtown Oklahoma City plan a \$15 million renovation. (Courtesy photo)

OKLAHOMA CITY – Investors and architects will begin meeting this week to develop a design plan for a \$15 million renovation of downtown’s stately 111-year-old Skirvin Hilton now that it has changed ownership.

Developer Mark Beffort said great care will be taken to make the building current while keeping its historic look and feel.

Planning will take six or seven months and the extensive makeover should begin in the third quarter of 2023, Beffort said.

Ortus Hotel Investments of Oklahoma City – led by real estate entrepreneurs Beffort, Andy Burnett and Matthew Benjamin – and Sovereign Properties Holdco, a business entity of the Chickasaw Nation, announced Friday they had purchased the downtown Oklahoma City landmark in conjunction with Paul Self, lead investor of the Colcord Hotel, and other local investors.

Milwaukee-based Marcus Hotels and Resorts, which restored and reopened the hotel in 2007, announced it sold the property for \$36.75 million. Additional terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

In 2020, Beffort’s team of local investors began purchasing hotels, including Oklahoma City’s Colcord and New York City’s historic Martinque Hotel.

Last month Beffort said they were about to purchase their eighth hotel.

“It’s a doozy, isn’t it?” he said Monday. “All of our investors are excited to have the opportunity to be trusted with one of Oklahoma City’s greatest assets. We want to continue to make sure downtown Oklahoma City is thriving.”

The Skirvin will remain open throughout the renovation, with one floor or half a floor remodeled at a time, Beffort said.

He credited the previous owners for being “great stewards” of the property.

"The Skirvin Hilton is one of Oklahoma City's most beloved historic places as many residents and visitors know its storied past and have followed its revitalization and reopening in 2007. We believe our investment fits hand-in-glove with our OKANA project just east of downtown," Bill Anoatubby, governor of the Chickasaw Nation, said in a news release. "We appreciate the opportunity to partner on this project with Mark Beffort, who is well-respected in this arena and has a proven record of sound investments in historic and commercial properties."

The Skirvin Hotel was first opened in 1911. After closing in 1988, it remained shuttered for nearly 20 years.

"In 2003, a public-private partnership was formed to create a restoration plan and financing package to redevelop the then-vacant Skirvin Hotel," said Kenton Tsoodle, president of the Alliance for Economic Development of Oklahoma City. "By all measures, this partnership has been a success – for the city, for members of the partnership, and most importantly, the citizens and guests of Oklahoma City. The Skirvin is an important cultural centerpiece of our city, and we look forward to seeing it flourish in this next phase of its history."

The 225-room Skirvin – the oldest hotel in the state of Oklahoma – has more than 18,000 square feet of meeting space. All event spaces, common areas and the restaurant will be renovated along with rooms. It will continue to be managed by the Hilton Domestic Operating Co. Inc.