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Developers reveal plans for Holiday Inn Express **(<http://duncanbanner.com/local/x66806972/Developers-reveal-plans-for-Holiday-Inn-Express>)**

Toni Hopper

The Duncan Banner (<http://duncanbanner.com>)

DUNCAN — Driving down North U.S. Highway 81 in Duncan this week, motorists may notice a pile of rubble that once was a building.

It's the first visible step of developing the area for a four-story Holiday Inn Express. Behind the project is Apollo Hospitality Firm in Ardmore, whose administrators include owner Vansant Patel and his son, Mitesh Patel, who oversees behind-the-scenes efforts.

"We've got our architect and the zoning (appears) intact there. We knocked some buildings down, just north of Pizza Hut. Next will be some tree clearing," Mitesh Patel said.

"It will be months before we break ground. Right now we are planning drawings and clearing up the trees."

Apollo Hospitality Firm purchased 8.61 acres and plans include the hotel, roads, residential lots, a pad for future commercial purposes (such as a chain-restaurant), and an outdoor strip mall or other retail venture.

Patel is aware some Duncan residents have concerns regarding the development, but he hopes to alleviate those. "We're not putting in apartments or anything like that. There will be residential lots and real nice homes," he said.

Preliminary plans call for eight to 12 residences, which Patel felt would cost below \$70,000 per house.

"We're not going to put in a \$5 million hotel and then (average) homes," he said. "Everybody's land will increase in value," Patel said.

The developers discovered Duncan to be the target market for economic stability and growth, which came from a feasibility study done on community.

"(Duncan) looks like a good economic, stable market," Patel said. "This hotel, it will be a beautiful property."

According to the current plan, most of the site work won't begin until late fall and Patel expects actual

construction to begin in Spring 2012.

Duncan Chamber of Commerce & Industry President Chris Deal, sees the development as a major economic boost for the city. "This is going to be a premier hotel," he said.

The property is zoned residential, but the front is being re-zoned for commercial purposes. While zoning isn't complete, Deal said it appears everything will move along as planned.

The back third of the property, which joins a property line with Duncan Golf and Tennis Club, will remain residential. Patel said that portion will be developed into high-end homes.

"It's going to have to complement the fact they are spending a great deal," Deal said. "They are professional at what they do. They are developers, and the things they have to do to prepare it show they are professional. They brought in a guy who did a huge study on Duncan."

Deal sees the venture as solid economic development, noting Duncan holds distinctive characteristics which make it unique.

"We've got to start thinking of retail development as economic development. If we're going to go after larger events which are going to attract more people into our community, we need things here for them to stay," he said.

In 2006, Deal said Dream Duncan's Destiny group researched and determined more hotels were needed, with different price points. Having the varied price point hotels attracts different events and individuals.

"When people come in to our community, we need to offer the best customer service level," Deal said. "If we begin to think of retail as economic development and we come together to put incentive type programs and partnerships — and have the hog show or the PRCA Prairie Circuit Rodeo Finals in 2012 — all of these are paving the way to our future."

Deal felt their new hotel will fill in the gap in the city's infrastructure. "We are thankful to the Patels for making the investment to our community," he said.



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The Duncan Banner PO Box 1268 Duncan, OK 73534