

# NEWS

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## **Opening Events Planned for Lancaster County Convention Center and Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square**

**LANCASTER, Pa. (June 12, 2009)** – The Lancaster County Convention Center Authority and Penn Square Partners are pleased to announce:

1. A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will take place Thursday, June 18, at 10 a.m. to celebrate the opening of The Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square and Lancaster County Convention Center facility and honor project stakeholders. The brief ceremony, to be held at the lobby entrance on Penn Square, is open to the public.
2. Additionally, an Open House is scheduled for Sunday, June 21, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; members of the public are encouraged to attend this event. There will be an opportunity for members of the public to tour the facility.

The integrated facility is scheduled to open for business on June 19. The first large-scale use of the facility will be the Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities 110th Annual Convention, which will bring more than 500 people to Lancaster beginning June 22. The convention is scheduled for June 24-26.

The landmark \$174-million integrated facility, located on historic Penn Square in downtown Lancaster, Pa., is considered by many to be one of the most important regional economic development initiatives in decades.

“These celebratory events represent an exciting milestone in the launch of a facility that will welcome visitors to Lancaster and provide an incomparable gathering place with ties to our community’s treasured past at this landmark setting,” said Nevin Cooley, president of Penn Square Partners.

Kevin R. Molloy, executive director of the Lancaster County Convention Center Authority, owner of the convention center, added, “We are ready to open this world-class integrated facility with its unparalleled amenities, surrounded by a friendly historic urban downtown that offers a sophistication that is Lancaster, Pa.”

### **About the facility**

Anchoring Downtown Lancaster and boldly incorporating the 110-year-old *Beaux Arts* façade of the historic former Watt & Shand department store, the integrated convention center and 300-room hotel will offer a combined 90,000 square feet of meeting space and the latest technology for conventions,

events, and trade shows. Appealing as a unique world-class facility set in a smaller, less expensive urban destination, the facility is centrally located to the metropolitan areas of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and New York. The new venue offers space for groups up to 5,000 and includes a convention and exhibition hall, two grand ballrooms, and several finely appointed meeting and board rooms.

Interiors are distinctive and exude a warm cosmopolitan feel including fresh colors and rich mahogany accents. Expansive windows offer an infusion of natural light and remarkable views onto the Downtown. The facility's new construction incorporates the iconic façade of the former Watt & Shand Department Store, as well as other important historic structures and features.

In the 300-room hotel portion of this integrated facility, meeting attendees will find all the amenities commanded by the Marriott name, including 37-inch LCD high-def screens, smart plug-and-play system for connecting laptops to TVs, and luxurious pillow-top bedding.

### **Restaurant and lounge**

The facility's signature Penn Square Grille and Rendezvous Lounge serves contemporary American cuisine with regional highlights. Taking its position among a growing roster of fresh and refined dining options in Lancaster, the Penn Square Grille and Rendezvous Lounge by design is a place and an experience that affords the celebration of connections — to a region through its offering of fresh local bounty, to a city via remarkable presence on Penn Square, and to a treasured past with the reemergence of this landmark gathering place. The menu emphasizes the grill and incorporates local bounty served with exceptional service. The extensive, hand-selected wine list is abundantly inclusive of California wines. Including 30 wines offered by the glass, the list represents a diversity of selection and price points for every taste and occasion. Seating includes 92 seats in the dining room, 12 seats in private dining, and 54 seats in the Rendezvous Lounge.

### **Unique historical context**

The venue offers significant historical and cultural context. Paying remarkable homage to regional and American history, the facility incorporates historic structures and narratives within and around its own architecture. Eventually the overall project, which from inception held a vision of incorporating the unique historical fabric of Lancaster, will offer a 20,000-square-foot, \$20-million interactive museum, the Stevens & Smith Historic Site (see [www.stevensandsmith.org](http://www.stevensandsmith.org) for additional compelling background).

Under the leadership of the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County (HPT), a water-collection cistern was unearthed and preserved during construction that had once been part of the Kleiss Tavern owned by influential Congressman and abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens. In the Vine Street entrance area to the facility, guests will behold a view of the preserved cistern, believed by scholars and archeologists – because of the manner in which it was modified after the property had already been connected to the public water system – to have been a hiding place used by Stevens and business partner Lydia Hamilton Smith to assist Americans escaping slavery along the Underground Railroad.

### **Booking information**

To book an event at the integrated facility, call Josh Nowak at 866-503-3786 or 717-239-1601. For more information, visit [www.lancasterconventioncenter.com](http://www.lancasterconventioncenter.com) and [www.marriottlancaster.com](http://www.marriottlancaster.com).

### **About ownership of the integrated facility**

The Lancaster County Convention Center is a publicly owned entity under the direction of the Lancaster County Convention Center Authority; Kevin Molloy, executive director. The Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square is owned by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Lancaster and leased to Penn Square Partners, the private company that holds the Marriott franchise.

### **About Lancaster County Convention Center Authority**

The Lancaster County Convention Center Authority is established under the Municipal Authority Act of 1945 and the Third-Class County Convention Center Authority Act. The Convention Center Authority is run by a seven-member volunteer board, which is appointed by city and county officials. The LCCCA board was charged with developing a unique and inviting convention/ exhibition venue with an intergraded privately owned first-class lodging facility. In addition the LCCCA is working with Historical Preservation Trust to preserve and promote the Stevens, Kleiss & Smith historical buildings.

### **About Penn Square Partners**

Penn Square Partners consists of general partner Penn Square General LP, a High Real Estate Group LLC affiliate, and limited partner Penn Square Ltd., LLC, an affiliate of Lancaster Newspapers, Inc.

### **About Interstate Hotels & Resorts**

Interstate Hotels & Resorts, which operates The Lancaster County Convention Center and Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square, is the nation's largest independent hotel management company. For more information about Interstate Hotels & Resorts, visit the company's Web site at [www.ihrco.com](http://www.ihrco.com).

### **About High Real Estate Group**

High Real Estate Group LLC, based in Lancaster, Pa., is a full-service developer/owner of office, industrial, retail, hotel, and multi-family properties. Through its affiliates — High Associates Ltd., High Construction Company, Greenfield Architects Ltd., High Hotels Ltd., and High Investors Ltd. — the firm also provides architecture, construction services, sales and leasing services, property management, corporate real estate services, strategic planning and consultation, appraisals, hospitality services, and investments. With offices and properties throughout the eastern United States, the company owns and manages a portfolio of more than 9 million square feet of assets. For more information about High Real Estate Group, call (800) 638-4414 or visit [www.HighRealEstateGroup.com](http://www.HighRealEstateGroup.com).