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New hotel plan emerges for the David building

By [Daniel Duggan](#)

A new downtown hotel is planned as part of a mixed-use development for the historic David Whitney building. The 19-story building will be split between apartments and hotel rooms.

It was purchased in March by **Whitney Partners LLC**, an evenly-split joint venture between **Roxbury Group** and Farmington Hills-based hotel investment firm **Trans Inns Management**.

Trans Inns executives say that despite the negative image of Detroit hotels, there is demand. "In the first quarter, the revenue performance is up 25 percent in the city," said Mike Danahy, chief acquisitions for Trans Inns. "A unique offering, aimed at Gen-X, Gen-Y people in a true, high-end way."

He said that hotels that are recent historic renovations, such as the **Westin Book Cadillac** and **Shelby**, have been doing well financially. The David Whitney hotel would be modeled after these properties.

There are negotiations with "a couple" national hotel operators for the 108-room hotel, said Mike Danahy. Trans Inns, which operates a portfolio of 21 hotels in 13 states, most of which are owned by the company.

"We have a couple brands that are excited and want to be there," Danahy said.

Making this hotel different would be the fact that it will be in a historically renovated building. He said it will not have a modern-looking interior like the Book Cadillac, but instead

“Unlike a lot of the buildings in Detroit, this one hasn’t been destroyed inside,” Vosotas said to keep it preserved. So, we’ll be able to keep a lot of the original marble.”

The building was purchased in March for \$3.3 million, said James Van Dyke, Roxbury’s vice president.

He said the project still needs to be fully financed before construction would start. If construction of the 100-room project would be complete by 2013.

“We hope to get this financed by the end of the year,” Van Dyke said.

The building, located at 1553 Woodward Ave., is across the street from the Broderick Tower, which is being renovated to become an apartment building.

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