

Timeline: The new Doubletree by Hilton hotel in Reading

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Years in the making

The new DoubleTree by Hilton hotel in downtown Reading has been almost a decade in the making. Milestones include:

- Jan. 18, 2006: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announces a \$1 million brownfields grant and a \$1.5 million federal loan for a hotel proposed for the 700 block of Penn Street, which is expected to cost \$32 million.
- April 22, 2006: The 200-room hotel will include an 800-space parking garage, Gov. Ed Rendell tells city officials at the GoggleWorks.
- Nov. 17, 2007: The Reading Redevelopment Authority agrees to sell a surface parking lot at Seventh and Penn streets for a hotel and conference center with an 800-space parking garage.
- Aug. 9, 2008: Rendell delivers \$12 million in state funds to kick-start the \$56 million hotel and conference center.
- Jan. 29, 2009: The Reading Parking Authority pays \$176,650 for land on which the hotel parking garage will be built.
- March, 8, 2009: City officials announce the hotel and conference center will be operated as a DoubleTree by Hilton hotel and conference center.
- April 4, 2009: The parking authority announces it will add another floor to the parking garage, bringing the total to 914 spaces from 800.
- Sept. 4, 2009: Construction on the garage begins.
- Jan. 5, 2010: Delivery of concrete slabs for the parking garage ties up traffic.
- Dec. 4, 2012: Retailer Albert R. Boscov, whose nonprofit Our City Reading is a driving force behind the DoubleTree project, says he needs the city to apply for a \$1 million federal loan to keep the \$58 million project on track.
- April 5, 2013: Rendell comes up with another \$3 million to cover project costs.
- Aug. 16, 2013: Developers say they are close to finalizing funding for the now 220-room hotel.

- Dec. 16, 2013: Funding is set. Groundbreaking is scheduled for Dec. 20, with the hotel to open in summer 2015.
- July 25, 2014: Iron Workers Local 420 complains it's been locked out of the hotel project.
- Dec. 14, 2014: Builders report that guest rooms will be complete and the walls and roof will be watertight by mid-January 2015. Guest rooms should be complete and furnished by late August, and the rest of the building by the end of September. Craig E. Poole, hotel general manager, estimates it will take at least another month to train new staff.
- Feb. 28, 2015: The DoubleTree holds a job fair and picks 156 employees out of more than 400 applicants. Eighty percent are within walking distance.
- Dec. 8, 2015: The DoubleTree opens for business.