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UNT System and City of Denton enter negotiations with hotel-convention center developer

DENTON, TEXAS – The University of North Texas System and City of Denton are entering into negotiations with John Q. Hammons for the development of a first-class, full-service hotel with meeting and convention facilities on the site of the former Radisson Hotel. The university-owned property, located at the intersection of I-35E and I-35W, serves as a visual gateway to UNT’s campus and the City of Denton.

“We’re pleased to be working with the City of Denton in this endeavor. An upscale hotel and convention center on UNT’s campus will contribute to our vibrant campus life, especially when it comes to athletic, academic and cultural events and employment opportunities for our students,” says President Gretchen M. Bataille. “Large university-sponsored conferences, which often had to be held elsewhere in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, will be brought to Denton.”

The UNT System issued a request for redevelopment proposals in September 2008, seeking an experienced developer and operator to plan, finance, design, build and operate a hotel and convention facility. John Q. Hammons emerged as the preferred developer for the project. Negotiations leading to a project agreement, which are in the early stages, could take up to six months to complete. The city’s participation in the project would be limited to the convention center component only, creating a public-private development wherein hotel-motel occupancy taxes would supplement private funding. The hotel and convention facility would be operated by John Q. Hammons Hotels & Resorts, which is based in Springfield, Mo., and has more than 80 hotels under management.

“The city is excited to team up with the University of North Texas on a project that could have a significant economic impact on Denton,” says Denton Mayor Mark Burroughs. “Developing a convention center has been a goal of the community for some time now. The city has lost numerous opportunities to host large conferences, conventions and training seminars because we lack facilities large enough to accommodate them. This is an exciting opportunity for Denton.”

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About UNT: *The University of North Texas (www.unt.edu), a student-centered, public research university and the choice of nearly 35,000 students, is one of Texas' largest universities. The comprehensive university offers 99 bachelors, 104 master's and 49 doctoral degree programs, many nationally and internationally recognized. Follow us on Twitter: <http://Twitter.com/untnews>.*

About the City of Denton: *The City of Denton (www.cityofdenton.com), the nation's 10th fastest growing city, is the apex of the Dallas-Fort Worth-Denton metropolitan triangle. The city's population of more than 115,000 residents is served by a public transportation system and is expected to have a passenger rail system connecting the city to Dallas by December 2010.*

About John Q. Hammons Hotels & Resorts: *John Q. Hammons Hotels & Resorts (www.jqhhotels.com) operates four hotels in the Dallas-Fort Worth region, with another under construction. The DFW properties include the Embassy Suites Dallas-Frisco Hotel, Convention Center & Spa in Frisco; Embassy Suites Outdoor World DFW International Airport in Grapevine; Hampton Inn & Suites-Mesquite Convention Center in Mesquite; and, Renaissance Dallas-Richardson Telecom Corridor in Richardson; with the Courtyard by Marriott Dallas-Allen Hotel & Convention Center in Allen is scheduled to open in fall 2009.*

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