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Investor bringing back '60s feel at south-side motel in Tucson | Business News

Gabriela Rico



New beams are being put in at the former Silverball Inn. “The inspiration is all Tucson,” owner Steve Coggins says of the renovations.

A south-side motel with a checkered past is undergoing a major renovation with the goal of attracting more proper clientele.

Located on Silverlake Road, just west of Interstate 10, the Silverbell

Inn fell into disarray in recent years and became a hot spot for criminal activity.

When Bryan Coggins found the motel on a Google search, he said he knew he had to have it.

He bought it for \$900,000 and is investing about \$2.5 million to renovate, upgrade and rebrand.

“I’ve been looking for mid-century modern properties,” Coggins said. “I think Tucson and Palm Springs are the meccas for that construction.”

The Southern California investor spent a lot of time in Tucson, as his father did sabbaticals at the University of Arizona.

“I prefer to renovate versus building new,” Coggins said. “It’s single story and has good bones.”

The 28,000-square-foot hotel has 93 rooms, averaging 280 square feet. The property’s new name will be Hotel McCoy — a nod to the McCoy Mountains near the Arizona-California border.

Coggins said the hotel will have four different room types, including some with bunk beds.

The hotel’s reputation didn’t deter him.

“I’ve had two or three people come up to me and say they stayed in the hotel when it first opened in the 1970s,” Coggins said. “All I want to do is bring a Tucson gem back to life.”

And, everything from the artwork to the furniture and food and beverages will be local.

Arizona wineries and breweries will stock the bar and Anita Street Market will deliver breakfast burros every morning to guests.

“The inspiration is all Tucson,” Coggins said.

The hotel’s architecture was designed in 1966 and he is shopping for a 1966 Cadillac to park at the hotel’s A-shaped entrance to represent “A” Mountain in the background.

Surrounding businesses and even police officers have stopped by to thank him for fixing up the hotel.

“I’ve seen the plans and I think it’s really nice,” said Chris Trujillo, manager of E-Z 8 Self Storage, next door at 702 W. Silverlake Road. He said the location and volume of traffic will help the hotel succeed.

“And, I think because of how they’re redoing it, it will push out the guests that shouldn’t be there,” Trujillo said.

Deputy Tucson Police Chief Chad Kasmar said the department celebrates when these sorts of properties get fixed up.

“It’s important revitalization to attract good people to the area,” he said. “That has a much larger impact on that entire area.”

He said a cleaned-up facility with good lighting and security will deter the criminal element.

“It’s not just exciting for the Police Department,” Kasmar said, “but for everyone around that community.”

The hotel’s location right off the freeway makes it convenient for travelers and Coggins plans to keep room rates under \$100 per night.

“We want families, we want kids, we want young people,” he said.

“We’re going to be a great deal.”

If everything stays on schedule, the new hotel is expected to open

in the spring.

Visit hotelmccoy.com for more information.

Contact reporter Gabriela Rico at grico@tucson.com.