

## Riverview lands Hyatt hotel backer Wolff

David Woodfill, Tribune

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Mesa Riverview developers scored a major home run Thursday by announcing a deal with the Oakland Athletics' owner and real estate mogul, Lewis Wolff, to bring the city's first Hyatt-brand hotel to the project at Dobson Road and Loop 202.

Representatives of Phoenix-based De Rito Partners said the agreement to build a four-story, 150-room Hyatt Place was reached this week, seven months after it confirmed it was in talks with the hotelier.

Global Hyatt Corp. is in the midst of an expanding its Hyatt Place brand hotels in the Valley. The company currently has locations in Tempe, Scottsdale and Phoenix, with others planned for Gilbert and Avondale.

Marty De Rito, president of De Rito Partners, said the hotel is the linchpin of the mixed-use project. He said the hotel will be critical in serving surrounding office buildings planned at Riverview, as well as visiting corporate executives from the project's Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World.

"It's like having a shopping center without any restaurants," he said. "The hotel really ties it all together."

The hotel may also house the Oakland Athletics baseball team during spring training, De Rito said.

Wolff said the hotel's design features are still in the planning stages, but he said he may integrate a baseball theme.

"It will be a fun place to go to as well as a business hotel," he said.

Wolff said he chose Riverview to build the hotel because he was attracted to the draw the center will have throughout the region.

"And frankly, we like the attitude of the government we encountered in Mesa," he said. "They're very creative and professional."

Wolff said he's confident that any weakness in the local economy won't hinder the hotel's progress once it's operational in about 14 months.

According to the company, Hyatt Place hotels feature guest rooms that are 25 percent larger than typical hotel rooms, walk-in showers, granite counters, wet bars, 42-inch high-definition televisions, sofa-sleepers and high-speed Internet access.