



## Convention Hotel Developer Selection & Solicitation

*Evansville, Indiana*

The City of Evansville and the Evansville Redevelopment Commission engaged HSP to help them study and then develop a convention and sports headquarters full-service hotel with meeting and ballroom space to help create a key downtown convention and conference hotel package. This redevelopment package included the 11,000-seat Ford Center arena and a 242-room hotel adjacent to the existing Evansville Auditorium and Convention Center.

HSP's study recommended a 240-room convention headquarters hotel to help the convention center attract events that had been bypassing the city for many years. Hunden Strategic Partners was then retained again by the Evansville Redevelopment Commission (ERC) to manage the developer selection process for the hotel. Due to HSP's extensive knowledge of how to conduct successful developer selection processes and financial structures, the team was able to provide expert guidance to the ERC. In its role, HSP attracted large, qualified development teams to Evansville, evaluated the proposals submitted, conducted interviews and assisted in negotiations with the selected developer, HCW of Branson, Missouri.

The 242-room Doubletree Hotel project was approved in October of 2013 and opened in January of 2017 with a large ballroom and meeting rooms and is attached to both the arena and convention center by overhead connectors. A second hotel is underway nearby as convention business has taken off. The approved financing includes a \$20 million public bond, \$12 million in local corporate contributions and more than \$40 million in private funding.

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**Client:** City of Evansville

**Time Period:** 2011 - 2014