

## Interest in downtown continues as investors pay \$5 million for Travel Inn

By BENJAMIN SPILLMAN  
REVIEW-JOURNAL

Add the Travel Inn to the list of pending reclamation projects in downtown [Las Vegas](#).

Real estate investors who specialize in troubled Las Vegas properties paid \$5 million for the dilapidated, 58-room hotel on Las Vegas Boulevard between Stewart and [Ogden](#) avenues.

The investors include [Stephen Siegel](#), founder of the company that owns Siegel Suites extended stay hotels in Las Vegas, and [John Tippins](#) of Tippins Holding, a commercial real estate company with property in [Nevada](#), [Arizona](#) and [Colorado](#).

Siegel and Tippins said they are considering everything from another Siegel Suites property to a new boutique hotel or a possible partnership with [Gregg Covin](#), the South Florida-based developer who is set to close a \$15 million deal to purchase the [Gold Spike](#), which is adjacent to the Travel Inn.

Siegel said there is demand for a boutique hotel above the price point of off-Strip party hotels and below Southern Nevada's fanciest resorts.

"People who have graduated from the Palms and Hard Rock and aren't ready for the Bellagio, that is our audience," he said.

The new owners have already started clearing the Travel Inn site and would like to reopen it as soon as possible.

The hotel had an empty pool, broken down wall along the south side of the lot and trash strewn about.

"It was really run down," Siegel said. "There were some squatters in there. We secured the property, boarded up the windows."

Longer-term, Siegel said, "Our goal is to probably strike a deal with the Gold Spike guys and do one larger project."

Covin said he spoke informally with Siegel and Tippins but didn't discuss in detail how the Travel Inn property could fit with his plan to renovate the Gold Spike into a boutique hotel.

"Maybe I could do something with them to expand. I'm not sure what they want to do," Covin said.

Michael Crandall, director of business affairs for the Siegel Group, said Siegel's track record in Las Vegas suggests the purchase will be good for the neighborhood. He recalled Siegel's purchase of the rundown Bingo Suites in 2003 for \$6 million, a property he later sold for about \$10 million.

"It was all filled with drug dealers and prostitutes and guns and he came in there and cleaned it up," Crandall said. "We love to clean up not only the building we buy but the neighborhood around it."