

FWK Reaffirms Commitment to Downtown Jackson

Forman Watkins & Krutz LLP, today reaffirmed its commitment to the future of downtown Jackson with the announcement that it has leased the top four floors of Regions Plaza, the city's tallest building. The long-term lease is for 55,000 square feet atop the 22-story tower. Highlighting the space is the top floor – where the University Club restaurant had been located – and its floor-to-ceiling windows that offer unparalleled views of the capital city in all directions. Regions Plaza, located at the corner of Amite and Lamar Streets, is owned by Hertz Investment Group, which negotiated the lease with Forman Watkins.

The law firm opened its doors in downtown Jackson in 1986, and since that time has remained headquartered in downtown while growing nationally. "Forman Watkins several months ago began actively evaluating office space that would enable us to best serve our clients and at the same time reflect our values and firm culture," said partner W.G. Watkins. "We certainly had opportunities to move out of downtown, but one of our firm's fundamental principles is a strong and active commitment to downtown Jackson. We believe we have secured the best space in the state with our relocation atop Regions Plaza.

"We started in downtown Jackson, remained in downtown Jackson and plan to be headquartered in downtown Jackson for many years to come," Watkins continued. "We will have the best views of the metro Jackson area from what we anticipate being the premier office space in the city. I can't think of a better way to celebrate our firm's 30th anniversary in 2016 than moving into a building with a strong history and now a very vibrant future."

Forman Watkins selected Wier Boerner Allin Architecture to design its office space. Construction is expected to start in first quarter 2016 with the firm moving in by summer. Jack Allin, Principal, noted, "With sweeping views of the Capital City from the top floors of Regions Plaza, Forman Watkins will be nestled within the crown of the city. While the views out onto the city are impressive, more impressive is the view looking up to Forman Watkins and their intentional decision to create a dynamic, forward-looking office environment in downtown Jackson."

Forman Watkins has more than 130 professionals, including both attorneys and staff. In addition to Jackson, the firm also has offices in Detroit, New Orleans, Houston and Red Bank, New Jersey.

Jim Ingram, chief investment officer for California-based Hertz, said keeping Forman Watkins downtown was a priority. “Forman Watkins is an outstanding firm with a national footprint and reputation for excellence,” said Ingram. “We have quietly been working with Forman Watkins for almost three years to keep them downtown and create an exciting option on the top of Regions Plaza. Their decision is a great one for downtown Jackson, and keeps building on the good news that is taking place in our Central Business District.”

Downtown Jackson in recent years has experienced numerous positives, including the construction of the new federal courthouse and the Jackson Convention Complex, renovation of the historic King Edward Hotel and, earlier this year, completion of the Capital Street Renaissance that reverted traffic patterns and enhanced landscaping. Currently under construction are two museums, the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Museum of Mississippi History, as well as the first Westin hotel in the state.

“Downtown Jackson is the legal center of Mississippi, the economic hub of the state, the center of government, the home to such a great cultural history, alive with a new vibrancy in the arts, not to mention some of the best restaurants anywhere,” said Watkins. “Combine that with a vision and plan for the future development of this area – it was something we wanted to be an integral part of. We are home.”