

Posted: May 21, 2020

## WestStar Tower Reaches Construction Milestone Downtown's Newest High-Rise "Topped Off"

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**El Paso, Texas – May 21, 2020** – It has been almost two years since the groundbreaking of the WestStar Tower in Downtown El Paso. Today, Hunt and WestStar employees, elected officials, and WestStar Tower owners and tenants, officially "topped off" the building by signing the final beam of steel that was then hoisted into place at the highest point of the structure. The event took place over a several hour period in order to abide by social distancing guidelines.

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While this event was not typical, in light of COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, the topping off is a ceremonial builder's rite which traces its roots to ancient Scandinavia. Though the exact application varies from project to project, it has come to mark significant milestones in construction projects around the world.

"This is an exciting day for all of us as we celebrate this milestone," said Josh Hunt, Executive Vice President and Member of the Board of Directors for Hunt Companies, Inc. "This project is part of a whole revitalization of downtown El Paso and it's great to see the progress that continues to be made, even while we live and work through some difficult times."

Through this investment, Downtown El Paso's skyline is evolving. WestStar Tower at Hunt Plaza, which encompasses the entire city block bordered by Mesa Street, Missouri Avenue, Oregon Street and Wyoming Avenue, is a multi-tenant, multi-level LEED® certified "Green Building". The overall project will include 264,000 rentable square feet of true Class "AA" space, 12,000 square feet of ground level office and retail space, and 850 parking spaces in an integrated garage. Upon its completion in early 2021, it will be the tallest building in El Paso at 313 feet and 6 inches high.

"This day is significant for all of El Paso as we continue the renaissance of downtown," said Rick Francis, Chairman and CEO, WestStar Bank. "This state-of-the-art commercial building will not only change the landscape of El Paso, but also set before us a path to the future for residents, visitors and businesses in the Borderplex region."

WestStar Tower will convey world-class architecture, state-of-the-art office space and beautiful views to commercial tenants in the heart of the city. On the ground level, the outdoor Hunt Plaza will feature a beautifully landscaped green space with outdoor seating and dining in a park-like atmosphere, which will also serve as a venue for community events. The building will offer proximity to area amenities such as Southwest University Park, the Museum District, San Jacinto Plaza, and the new El Paso Streetcar system.

WestStar Tower, which rises to the height of 313 feet, culminates in a unique architectural feature. The shape and color of the “Crest”, were inspired by the natural beauty of the Franklin Mountains and the Southwest desert landscape. The profile of this feature unifies the entire building composition from the lobby sandstone to the very top of the building, providing a memorable addition to the tallest building in the El Paso skyline.

The office building will serve as the corporate headquarters for Hunt, occupying three floors of the building with approximately 175 employees. The Hunt Family Foundation will also be located in the building. It will also serve as the corporate headquarters for WestStar, which will occupy four floors and with a full service branch on the ground floor. WestStar and its affiliates will have approximately 229 employees working in the new location.

Pre-leasing is well underway with Sonny Brown & Associates leading the leasing and sales effort for commercial and retail users. For more information, visit <http://www.weststartower.com/>

The WestStar Tower construction camera has been and will continue to track progress and provide a time-lapse video at [www.weststartower.com](http://www.weststartower.com) or <https://app.oxblue.com/open/Moss/WestStarTower>. Project partners include Duda|Paine (architect), Gensler (design), OJB (landscape architect) and Moss (general contractor).

## **ABOUT HUNT**

Hunt, based in El Paso, Texas, is a diversified, family-owned holding company that invests in operating businesses, real estate assets and infrastructure assets. Since its founding in 1947, Hunt's size and scope have grown substantially while gaining considerable expertise across multiple real asset sectors. Hunt's reputation is built on integrity and performance. Hunt is committed to a culture of transparency for employees, clients, investors, and the communities it serves. Hunt and its affiliates employ more than 3,000 people across the United States and Europe. Learn more at [www.huntcompanies.com](http://www.huntcompanies.com).

## **ABOUT WESTSTAR**

WestStar is a locally owned community bank with assets of more than \$2.2 billion. Servicing the El

Paso, Las Cruces, and northern Mexico area (collectively known as the Borderplex region), it provides businesses and retail consumers local access to a broad array of banking, wealth management, insurance, and title services. Additionally, WestStar team members serve on over 100 boards and committees of nonprofit and civic organizations and participate in a wide range of community betterment efforts and philanthropic causes. For more information, visit the WestStar website at [www.weststarbank.com](http://www.weststarbank.com).

## **ABOUT DUDA|PAINE**

Duda|Paine Architects provides a full complement of design, interior design, architectural, planning, and master planning services to a diverse array of international corporate, academic, health care and cultural arts clients. The firm's enduring success results from an idea-based design process that engages participants and fosters inspiration to achieve visionary built work. The firm's

extensive network of associate architects and expert consultants provides highly specialized and innovative design solutions. To date, Duda|Paine Architects has received 45 design, civic and industry awards and been featured in more than one hundred publications and exhibitions. With over five million square feet of completed projects in the United States and internationally, eighty-five percent of the firm's current work comes from repeat clients – a testament to Duda| Paine's process of engagement and focus on client satisfaction. For additional information, visit [www.dudapaine.com](http://www.dudapaine.com).

## **ABOUT GENSLER**

Gensler is a global interior design firm grounded in the belief that great design optimizes business performance and human potential. Our 4,700 practitioners, networked across 46 offices, use global perspective and local presence to innovate at every scale. Whether we are refreshing a retailer's brand, planning a new urban district, or designing a super tall building, we strive to make the everyday places people occupy more inspiring, more resilient, and more impactful. For more information, go to [www.gensler.com](http://www.gensler.com).

## **ABOUT OJB**

Founded in 1989, OJB Landscape Architecture began with a focus on creating landscapes that provide unique and unforgettable sensory experiences. OJB's recent work has focused on the rejuvenation of American cities through the creation of distinctive public park spaces including ULI Urban Open Space Award winning Klyde Warren Park in Dallas and Myriad Gardens in Oklahoma City. Other notable projects include the artfully planted Sunnylands Center and Gardens in Rancho Mirage, CA, Levy Park in Houston, and LeBauer Park in Greensboro. In 2016, James Burnett, FASLA, founder of OJB Landscape Architecture, received the ASLA Design Medal and in 2015, OJB received the ASLA Firm Award for its portfolio of work. Learn more at [www.ojb.com](http://www.ojb.com).

## **ABOUT MOSS**

Moss, a Hunt affiliate, is a national privately held construction firm providing innovative solutions resulting in award-winning projects. With regional offices across the United States, Moss focuses on construction management at-risk, design-build and public-private partnerships. The company's diverse portfolio encompasses a wide range of sectors, including luxury high-rise residential, landmark mixed-use developments, hospitality, primary and higher education, justice, and solar energy. Moss is ranked by Engineering News-Record as one of the nation's top 75 general contractors. Moss prides itself on a strong entrepreneurial culture that honors safety, quality, client engagement and employee development. Its employees consistently rank Moss as one of the best places to work. For more information, go to [www.mooscm.com](http://www.mooscm.com).