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## COWFORD CHOPHOUSE PARTNERS ANNOUNCE PROJECT UPDATES

*New logo, restaurant group name, and milestones shared at a press conference*

**April 28, 2015** — Jacksonville, Fla. — Jacques Klempf and Fraser Burns, the business partners behind the Cowford Chophouse, announced new milestones for the upcoming Downtown Jacksonville restaurant during a press conference this morning with city leaders to provide updates about the project.

They were joined by Mayor Alvin Brown; Aundra Wallace, CEO of the Downtown Investment Authority; Oliver Barakat, chairman of the Downtown Investment Authority; and City Council Member Lori Boyer, who serves as the City Council liaison for the Downtown Investment Authority.

Fraser Burns opened the press conference by announcing the formation of Forking Amazing Restaurants, a restaurant group that comprises Ovinté at the St. Johns Town Center, Bistro Aix in San Marco, and the Cowford Chophouse.

“Forking Amazing Restaurants will oversee and provide management support to all our unique restaurant concepts,” said Burns. “We are also committed to ensuring that all our restaurants provide the utmost quality of food and the highest standards of service.”

Next, Jacques Klempf shared that the City of Jacksonville granted a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to begin work on the building exterior and roof. The COA was approved on April 22, 2015; building stabilization is expected to start in May 2015, with exterior renovations beginning soon after. Klempf also called attention to the restaurant’s new logo and the panels that were installed over the iconic jaguar mural by local artist Jim Draper. The weatherproof vinyl panels are protecting the jaguar mural, which will be returned to Draper after it is removed from the exterior windows.

“This building has been part of Downtown Jacksonville’s landscape for over 100 years,” said Klempf. “It is the entryway into our great city, and now it is about to be transformed into one of the greatest chophouses in the entire country.”

Mayor Brown commended Klempf and Burns for their vision and commitment to restoring an iconic landmark – the former bank building at the gateway to the heart of Downtown.

“The restoration of this critical landmark is a pivotal moment for Downtown Jacksonville,” said Mayor Alvin Brown. “The Bostwick Building, sitting at a highly visible entry point to Downtown, was vacant for many years and was in danger of being demolished. We couldn’t let that happen. This project continues the great momentum that’s building Downtown, and breathes new life into a historic landmark. After the City Council denied the previous owners’ request to demolish the historic structure in November 2013, we authorized the filing of a foreclosure lawsuit the next day to force the sale of the Bostwick Building. The action led to the current owners’ purchase of the building and revitalization efforts.”

Mayor Brown signed the Downtown Investment Authority's redevelopment plan, Ordinance 2014-560, into law on February 24, 2015. The Cowford Chophouse will receive a \$500,000 grant through the DIA to help facilitate historic renovations, as well as a \$250,000 loan to be repaid at an interest rate of 1.75 percent.

Aundra Wallace, CEO of the Downtown Investment Authority, expressed his appreciation for Burns and Klempf's commitment to bringing another dining concept to Downtown.

"The redevelopment and transformation of the Bostwick Building into the Cowford Chophouse is the first of many great projects that will enhance the Jacksonville Downtown experience," said Wallace.

Upon completion, the Cowford Chophouse will include two levels of dining space, private event space, a raw bar, and two bars — one inside and one on the roof. The restaurant is expected to open in summer 2016.

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**About Forking Amazing Restaurants:**

Forking Amazing Restaurants is an independent restaurant group based in Jacksonville, Florida, which comprises Ovinté, Bistro Aix, and the Cowford Chophouse (expected to open summer 2016). To learn more about the FAR group, visit [forkingamazingrestaurants.com](http://forkingamazingrestaurants.com).