

The New Jersey Casino Control Commission granted preliminary approval Wednesday to Robert Griffin to serve as CEO of Trump Entertainment Resorts. Griffin will replace current CEO Mark Juliano on Nov. 10.

Griffin is the outgoing president and CEO of MTR Gaming Group Inc., which owns casinos in West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Trump Entertainment Resorts owns the

Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort, Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino, and Trump Marina Hotel Casino.

Trump Marina remains up for sale, but the company will consider offers for any of its properties, including the flagship Taj Mahal, Griffin said in an interview with The Associated Press Wednesday morning.

It also will seek to expand beyond Atlantic City, Griffin said.

"We believe there are a lot of distressed assets out there beyond Atlantic City," he said. "Atlantic City is the core of the company, but for any one company to put all its eggs in one basket is dangerous."

Trump Entertainment's immediate priority is to operate more profitably and increase its market share, Griffin said.

"We believe we have quality assets in Atlantic City, but we are continuing to struggle to meet industry margins," he said.

Trump Marina, which has been for sale for more than two years and was nearly sold to a New York developer before the deal fell through when the economy crashed, remains up for sale.

Griffin said Trump Plaza could be ripe for a joint venture with a second party, particularly someone interested in capitalizing on a planned entertainment district near The Walk, Atlantic City's shopping district near Trump Plaza.

He even said the company would consider offers for its flagship Taj Mahal, which has been the main cash generator for Trump Entertainment.

"We have no desire to sell the Taj, but we'll never not listen if someone makes us a credible offer," he said.

Griffin praised Juliano, the outgoing CEO who shepherded the company through its third Chapter 11 filing, from which it emerged earlier this year.

"The truth is Mark Juliano and his team did a great job from a customer standpoint," Griffin said. "They built a wonderful culture in how to treat each other and how to take care of customers. That we're not going to change."

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