

McCordsville forges its identity

Town works on becoming a destination

Indianapolis Star, The (IN)

January 31, 2008

Author: BILL MCCLEERY BILL.MCCLEERY@INDYSTAR.COM

With development fast changing the landscape of McCordsville, town leaders want to ensure the community maintains a distinct identity despite blending into the city of Lawrence to the west and the town of Fishers to the north. The town also sits in close proximity to the town of Fortville.

Earlier this month, town officials unveiled a new slogan -- "Next Stop McCordsville" -- and a new logo featuring a trolley car. The slogan and logo pay tribute to the town's history as a stop along the interurban rail line and also express town leaders' ambition to make McCordsville a destination -- a "stop" -- rather than just a place commuters pass through.

"We want to let people know we've got a vision and an economic development plan," said Town Manager Tonya Galbraith. "We want people to be able to identify McCordsville."

Part of the process of attracting quality commercial and residential development, said Town Council member Brent Barnes, is achieving an identity through "branding."

"McCordsville is taking the approach of trying to attract economic development that will enhance the quality of life for people living here," Barnes said. "We're being proactive. We want to be diverse and attract a good mixture of industrial, commercial and neighborhood development."

The branding effort cost the town about \$31,000, Galbraith said, as it worked with a consultant and paid various other fees related to printing fliers and other promotional material. Town officials raised about \$17,000 in private donations, she said. Town officials unveiled the new logo and slogan at a special event earlier this year at the Indiana State Museum.

The logo and slogan are just the latest in a series of initiatives to enhance the town's image and market its increasing options for people looking for dining, shopping and entertainment. The Fortville-McCordsville Chamber of Commerce, for example, in 2005 launched the "By Air, By Rail" Festival, which celebrates the town's transportation roots and provides a yearly summer event for residents and visitors.

This year's festival will be July 18-20.

The efforts to bolster the town's identity coincide with a recent surge in the number of businesses opening, including a CVS store, Greenfield Banking Co. branch and an Italian restaurant called Goodfellas. A Meijer store is in the works, expected to open within a year.

The businesses have followed hometops, said Sherry Dwelle, of the Fortville-McCordsville Chamber of Commerce. The town's population has surpassed 4,000, and many housing subdivisions also have sprung up in the unincorporated areas just outside the town's limits.

"Any time you have a growing area, that's good for business," Dwelle said.

On March 26, Dwelle added, Galbraith will speak about recent trends in McCordsville at the Chamber's noon meeting at McCordsville Town Hall, 5759 W. Broadway.

For more information, go to the Chamber's Web site at www.fortvilleMcCordsville.com or call (317) 448-1034.

Call Star reporter Bill McCleery at (317) 444-6083.

Copyright (c) The Indianapolis Star. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of Gannett Co., Inc. by NewsBank, inc.