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Promoting the "Motor Mile" in Aurora

Havana Business Improvement District moves to market motor area

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Jim Folkert works to get a car running to so he can deliver it to the paintbooth at Precision Autobody. Precision is located in the Motor Mile, a stretch of Havana in Aurora that contains the most car dealerships and largest vehicle inventory anywhere in the Denver metro area. Photo by Seth A. McConnell, YourHub

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Local business leaders are moving full speed ahead with a marketing and branding effort aimed at promoting Havana Street as a nexus for all things automobile.

The Havana Business Improvement District (BID) is rolling out an advertising campaign touting the "Motor Mile," which refers to the numerous car dealerships, auto service shops and parts stores along

Havana Street in Aurora. A series of 15-second television commercials began airing this week on KUSA Channel 9 and will run through early March, said Gayle Jetchick, executive director of the Havana Business Improvement District.

The air time, however, won't come cheap, Jetchick, said. The ads are expected to cost about \$150,000 to run.

"By far, it's the most we've ever spent on commercials," Jetchick said. "But we feel if we can get our name out there, then hopefully people will start coming and checking it out and we'll get more business."

This is the first flight of advertising this year to help promote the business district, which runs four miles along Havana Street between Sixth Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue. Three more rounds of commercials will air later this year. Those ads will publicize some of the signature events held on the street, such as the Cruzin' Havana Car Show.

The Havana BID, created in 2007 after property and business owners voted in favor of a 4.5 mill levy, is beginning to shift most of its focus to marketing, Jetchick said. Until recently, much of the district's budget

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was tied up in sprucing up the area along Havana, which had become an eyesore after the closure of the Old Buckingham Square Mall.

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Approximately 70 percent of this year's budget will go toward promotion and marketing, she said. Among other things, the ad campaigns will tout the heavy automotive presence in the district, which includes 20 car dealerships that sell news vehicles, 25 used car dealerships and nearly 40 auto service and parts shops.

Paul Suss, owner of Suss Buick GMC at 1301 S. Havana St., helped launch plans for the Motor Mile slogan during his four-year term as BID president, an effort he believes has helped change people's perceptions of Havana.

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