



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Downtown Dallas is filled with hidden gems for both visitors and residents to discover — or rediscover.

‘Take a closer look’ at Dallas

Branding campaign aims to increase tourism, local exploring

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Think you know all of what Dallas and the surrounding area has to offer? You should take a closer look.

That's what the city of Dallas' new marketing and branding campaign will ask outsiders — and even residents — to do. The product of about six months of work, the campaign's official unveiling will be at Summerfest 2015.

City Manager Ron Foggin said when trying to come up with a slogan that describes Dallas, the members of the Economic Development Commission steering committee in charge of campaign development struggled to point to one idea.

The team named several “hidden gems” about Dallas, but didn't seem to come up with one overarching theme.

For example, Dallas is

close to world-class biking trails, award-winning wineries, and one of the most popular birding sites in the state. It has room to accommodate new businesses and that intangible element of “small-town spirit.” But how do you describe all of that in a way people will remember?

Portland-based consultant on the project Barney & Worth took those ideas — and many more expressed in surveys of the community — to create the slogan.

It seemed to fit perfectly with what the team was trying to convey.

“People come here and they just fall in love (with Dallas),” City Manager Ron Foggin said. “Take a closer look” captures that.

The campaign has five focus areas: “Ride Wilderness Trails,” featuring the Black Rock Mountain Bike Trail system; “Schedule Your Next Wine Tasting Adventure,” which lists 12 wineries

close to Dallas; “Join the Flock,” highlighting Basket Slough National Wildlife Refuge; “We Make it Easy,” offering details on available industrial and commercial sites and incentives in Dallas; and “Catch the Spirit,” describing Dallas' quiet, small-town atmosphere.

“Take a closer look” is an outgrowth of Dallas' recently completed Dallas 2030 visioning project, a set of specific objectives the city would like to accomplish by the year 2030.

The marketing campaign focuses on highlights the area currently has, a number of which are growing tourist interests.

In that way, the campaign dovetails nicely with the Polk County Rural Tourism Studio effort, said Suzanne Dufner, Dallas city planner. Bicycling, wine tourism and birding all have potential to bring visitors — and their money — to the area.

But the committee didn't

want to stop at tourism. It branched into the lifestyle and business opportunities the area can offer. Paired with the “things to do” aspect of the campaign, Dallas is hoping entrepreneurs give the area a second look as well.

Materials promoting the campaign will be available at the city's booth at Summerfest on the Polk County Courthouse lawn Thursday through Saturday. The goal is to spread the word that Dallas may be worth exploring more.

“We are really trying to get this out and have people adopt this,” said Jason Locke, Dallas' community development director, adding that includes residents who may think they know all there is to know about Dallas. “We are pretty excited to have this ready to implement. The response was very positive.”

For more information: www.closerlookatdallas.com/.

Summer: Ode to Krazy Dayz all this weekend

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Expect to see Truman and Whittaker's truck along the parade route Saturday.

But before that, Thursday will kick off Summerfest with “An Ode to Krazy Dayz.”

Using the festival's former name as a theme — so many people still call it Krazy Dayz — was something Metcalfe has contemplated for a number of years.

One problem: Metcalfe wasn't sure which way it should be spelled. It appears there was no one official spelling. She combed through old *I-O* stories and festival promotional ads.

“I found at least six different spellings on one page,” she said, laughing.

She picked the one she found most frequently and ran with it.

As far as dressing for the theme, you have as many choices as there are ways to spell Krazy Dayz. Metcalfe is encouraging people to focus on the “style” of the 1980s and 1990s.

That means you can party like its 1999 — or 1989 if you prefer — with lace gloves and neon slap bracelets and put your hair up in banana clips or scrunchies held together with Aqua Net.

“I don't think we had forearms back then, between the multiple Swatch watches — you couldn't just have one — and slap bracelets,” she said, laughing.

Saturday's parade, which will attract many thousands of spectators, will be the day to show off your best retro look.

“I'm hoping people will really get into it,” Metcalfe said. “What better excuse to get a little crazy than Krazy Dayz?”

And there's so much more to enjoy about Krazy Dayz, err Summerfest, this year.

Thursday brings food and craft vendors and the Summerfest main entertainment stage that will stay until Saturday on the Polk County Courthouse lawn. Look for more food trucks and more activities sponsored by the Oregon Army National Guard.

In keeping with the throwback theme, Dallas Fire Department will revive an old tradition: hydrocarts. What's a hydrocart, you ask? Think a go-cart with no motor. These carts are powered by water — from a fire hose. Teams of firefighters will race to see which is the fastest.

People are welcome to watch the Friday night event — and while the competition is aiming to conserve water, there might still be a chance to cool off in a splash zone.

Tony's Bike Night will cap Saturday night with bikes on display, a beer garden and live music by Blue Evolution.

Sunday Summerfest takes on a more leisurely nature with Dallas Rotary's Breakfast in the Park, the Tom Newton Car Show, Art in the Park, and a special Sunday Bounty Market — all in Dallas City Park.

The perfect way to start Sunday is with Dallas Rotarians, who have serving breakfast to more than 2,000 people down to a science — they've been doing it for more than 50 years, after all.

“It's a Dallas tradition,” said Mike Barker, head of the Rotarians breakfast committee.

If you're still wondering what makes Summerfest one of the season's most enjoyable times, check out Section C in this week's *Itemizer*. It has previews have all the events scheduled and will help make Summerfest 2015 a fun romp for all.



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