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FEATURED

## MC marks opening of Haskell Building

By JON GARD Staff Writer (219) 326-3887 [jgard@heraldargus.com](mailto:jgard@heraldargus.com) 2/28/2018



Photo by Jon GardDonald Babcock, president of the Michigan City Redevelopment Commission, leads dignitaries in a ribbon-cutting ceremony Tuesday inside the new Haskell Building as Mayor Ron Meer, left, and Mike Micka, vice president of development with Holladay Properties, handle the scissors. The hangar-sized facility is available for lease, in sections as small as 8,000 square feet, for office, warehouse and light-manufacturing use.

MICHIGAN CITY — Officials cut a large red ribbon using an oversized pair of scissors Tuesday to mark the opening of the cavernous Haskell Building on Cleveland Avenue.

“Hopefully, this will be contagious,” Mayor Ron Meer said about the potential for development along the corridor between U.S. 20 and CR-400N.

With 24-foot ceilings and 64,000 square feet of space, the hangar-like “spec building” dwarfed the

dozens of elected officials, community leaders and developers who participated in the ribbon-cutting celebration.

The freshly constructed building can be subdivided to fit the needs of tenants in sections as small as 8,000 square feet, with a storefront entrance, loading dock and overhead door available with each unit, according to Michael Micka, vice president of development for South Bend-based Holladay Properties.

“This kind of a facility was not available in Michigan City until now,” Micka said. “We identified a need in the community and worked with our partners to fill it.”

Holladay Properties, in an agreement with the Michigan City Redevelopment Commission, purchased the property and broke ground on the project in May, investing about \$5.5 million in the building, he said.

Space is available to serve office, warehousing and light manufacturing requirements.

Two similar buildings are planned south of the Haskell Building, Micka said, one about 64,000 square feet and another about 100,000 square feet, in an area labeled the Ameriplex Marquette Business Park.

Donald Babcock, president of the city Redevelopment Commission, said this public-private partnership will result in good-paying jobs for the community — the ultimate goal of the commission's \$2.2 million investment in infrastructure along Cleveland Avenue.

Studies show each 1,000 square feet of this kind of space can produce one good-paying job, he said, a model proven effective at Ameriplex at the Port in Portage, another Holladay Properties project.

“We jumped at the potential for that kind of growth here,” Babcock said.

One tenant has already taken up occupancy in the Haskell Building.

KTR Corp., a German-based manufacturer of braking and cooling systems, high-grade power transmission technology, and hydraulic components, outgrew two other facilities in Michigan City and began moving machines into the Haskell Building almost before it was completed, officials said.