

Improvement districts take next steps in creating brand for areas

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SNELLVILLE — It's all about rebirth. With three community improvement districts hoping to draw people inside their borders, the three revitalization groups have all taken to branding the areas in an effort to show that they're new again.

From monuments announcing the entrance to Gwinnett Place to a color scheme for new construction at U.S. Highway 78 to people who say they work in the Village, the executive directors of the CIDs say branding is an important part of their strategy to project the changes that are happening in their areas.

"Everybody knows Gwinnett Place," the CID's executive director, Joe Allen, said. "Our goal is to play off that. You're going to start seeing banners and gateway monuments. You have Buckhead, you have Midtown. We're at the very beginning stages of that."

At Gwinnett Place, the branding focus is a new star burst logo that will be found on banners and way-finding signs. Entrance monuments will help set the character for the area and help create a new sense of excitement, Allen said.

The other two CIDs are in earlier stages when it comes to their efforts to define

themselves. At a presentation to the Highway 78 CID board Wednesday, members of a consulting firm explained how they would use a sense of nostalgia to reshape perceptions about the area.

The eventual branding campaign will paint the Highway 78 CID as safe, vibrant and successful, things Executive Director Brett Harrell said it already is, but that people's perceptions say otherwise.

Chuck Warbington, the Gwinnett Village director, said his group is still brainstorming the best way to brand the district. But already, he said, the idea seems to be working.



The Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District has erected monuments announcing the entrance to the area complete with banner

Residents and businesspeople have been talking about going to the Village, he said, which means that the message that things are changing has been getting out.

"We're trying to create it from scratch," he said. "We're trying to keep a sense of place. It's slowly catching on."