A crossroads for 21st century telecommunications

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MiBizStraight Talk
Jim Hettinger, President & CEO
Battle Creek Unlimited

It is never appropriate to start a column with the word, "unfortunately," and so I will not. Economic development has been described as a "fad ridden" profession. It seems as though a wave of activity comes along every 15 years, and states and communities ev
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Battle Creek has the additional task of setting the stage so that the niche can be found. The emergence of global communications and subsequent location indifference for business has mandated the installation of advanced telecommunications as part of a community's infrastructure. Some would argue that an advanced telecom-munications infrastructure is as important as modern municipal water and sewer.

The city of Battle Creek has been working to manage the transition from a last century traditional manufacturing center to the economy of the 21st century. As the home to Kelloggs, Post, and Ralcorp, Battle Creek has earned the moniker "Cereal City," producing a large share of the

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Battle Creek. Additionally, Battle Creek is located on I-94, a busy east-west interstate highway between Detroit and Chicago. North-south interstates are on either side of Battle Creek, I-69 and U.S. 131. And like the railroads, interstate highways serve as "fiber highways," as several other fiber optic routes follow the interstate highways routes.

Metropolitan fiber network

In order to provide "off-ramps" from these numerous fiber optic routes, the city of Battle Creek and Battle Creek Unlimited partnered with local service provider CTS Telecom. A 35-mile fiber optic backbone was constructed through the city and Fort Custer Industrial Park to provide redundant, advanced communications services.
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James Hettinger is president and CEO of Battle Creek Unlimited Inc.

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Is downtown Battle Creek real estate picking up?

Posted by B Candace Beeke February 21 2008 07 00AM

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Battle Creek commercial real estate may be gaining momentum Realtors say especially in downtown retail

While overall retail in the city hovers at about 10 1 percent vacancy according to Grubb & Ellis|Paramount Commerce downtown retail seems to be going strong Hinman Co s Anmar Atchu said

"I don't see any change to this (strength) in 2008 " said Atchu vice president of marketing and leasing at the Kalamazoo-based development company which owns properties in downtown Battle Creek

"I would think that the storefront retail is at about 90

Photo by Hannah Reel

Heritage Tower in downtown Battle Creek

is not such a

that sector downtown at the end of 2007 cantly higher with the 22-story Heritage

n steady growth from 2006 to 2007 in ent but a new gain in occupancy " he said ccupancy increase in its downtown portfolio Third Bank building is 92 percent occupied

"With Battle Creek Unlimited's foresight to install a fiber ring downtown, we're technologically postured to handle today's business demand with high speed," he said. "This has been an important tool, from a marketing standpoint, to attract new business as well as retain existing business."