



Hot address: Twenty-five thirty-four

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PUBLISHERS OF THE trendy regional magazine that blankets Denver culture hit on something with their title: 5280, as in mile-high, and rolling off the tongue as "fifty-two eighty."

Developers of the gold-mine tract of land formerly known as Thompson Crossing, at the southeast corner of Interstate 25 and U.S. 34, hope the new name for their project becomes as well-accepted and familiar.

Twenty-five thirty-four -- the numbers stacked in a new logo as 2534 -- was unveiled last week as the name for the next-to-boom quadrant of the hottest crossroads in the region.

Chrisland Cos. of Loveland, a commercial real estate firm headed by former McWhinney Enterprises vice president Nick Christensen, will spend the next 10 years building the retail, residential, office and industrial project.

The Tribune spent a few minutes with Christensen to talk about first steps. Here's part of that conversation.

Tribune: You just returned from Las Vegas, where you shopped the new project to a shopping-center convention. How did that go?

Christensen: It's a long process, like all of these developments are. But we were very well-received, I think. We just came up with the new name, and we're making some good contacts among retailers.

Tribune: How will this project be shaped by what's around it, especially at Centerra with the new Medical Center of the Rockies coming in and the new open-air mall within a half-mile?

Christensen: I think those particular influences will lead to an increase in primary employment.

There will be more people with more dollars to spend. That's why our first focus is retail.

We also anticipate that there will be additional medical-related needs.

Tribune: What kinds of retailers would be interested in 2534?

Christensen: We think we'll be talking to those larger ones that don't quite fit into the "lifestyle" mall format that's across the street. We're looking at electronics, soft goods, furniture and related fixtures, maybe another sporting goods retailer.

Tribune: Circuit City and Bed, Bath and Beyond?

Christensen: I really can't say who we've been talking to, but there really are only a few in each one of those categories.

Tribune: You've enlisted Fort Collins-based EDAW to do the land planning for the project. What do they offer?

Christensen: They do great work. They did the master plan for Centerra, and have done so much good work elsewhere. We selected them after going through a competitive process with some of the top planning firms in the nation.

Tribune: What about residential development at 2534?

Christensen: We have a portion of the property on the southern end that's under contract, and I can't say with whom because I don't have their permission.

But they will be doing some upper-end housing, with homes in the \$400,000 to \$1 million range. It's a parcel that overlooks the Big Thompson River and has mountain views.

Tribune: How many of those will be built?

Christensen: We don't know precisely, but it will be under 200.

Tribune: Is there room for all of the things you plan on doing there?

Christensen: We think the east side of I-25 is going to change a lot over the next few years. We've done some studies on that.

The improvements to County Road 5, and all the traffic that will be coming out of Windsor, will change that whole area.

Tribune: How is it between you and your former employers, Chad and Troy McWhinney, now that you're a commercial development competitor?

Christensen: We're friendly competitors, like a lot of other people in this business.

I hope that they appreciate that we'll be doing quality projects around them. I think that benefits both of us.

-- Tom Hacker