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High-tech car wash to open

04/30/05

By Keith Lawrence Messenger-Inquirer

Add a new car wash to the growing number of businesses locating near the new Wal-Mart Supercenter on Kentucky 54.

And maybe a fast-food franchise that Owensboro doesn't already have.

Louisville-based CCF CarWash Systems LLC recently paid \$450,000 for 1.5 acres at 3233 Mount Moriah Ave. That's near Fairview Drive in front of Wal-Mart.

It's not just any old car wash, though.

Don Fusting, one of the owners, said Thursday that he and his partner, Tim Clark, will spend \$1.5 million -- counting the land -- to get the "laser" car wash open.

The laser part refers to a high-tech way of ensuring that the water is sprayed from the same distance regardless of the size of the vehicle.

Fusting said the 24/7 Touch-Free CarWash "is like nothing else in Owensboro. We use a hot-water rinse that virtually eliminates water spots."

Wash options range from \$6 to \$9. And the computer equipment can change a \$20 bill or accept credit cards, he said.

Groundbreaking is slated for next week and Fusting hopes to open for business in early August.

But the car wash won't be the only business locating on the property.

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Half of the 1.5 acres is available for a fast-food franchise, Fusting said.

"We're negotiating with a company that doesn't have an Owensboro presence now," he said. "If it comes in, it'll generate its own traffic."

He said he hopes for a decision sometime in May.

Fusting said he heard of the Kentucky 54 business boom from a friend, Detective Bill Thompson of the Daviess County Sheriff's Department.

"He was telling me what all was going on down there, so I came to investigate," Fusting said.

Wal-Mart has predicted that its new store, scheduled to open May 25, will draw 7,359 vehicles a day.

That would raise the traffic count on that section of Kentucky 54 to 36,500 vehicles a day, the Owensboro Metropolitan Planning Commission was told last year.

But that was before several other developments were announced.

"What I'm being told is that the traffic count will be at 50,000 a day before long," Fusting said.

He said his location is near one picked out by Bob Evans Restaurants.

Five other restaurants have also announced plans for Kentucky 54. The list includes Casa Martinez, Mancino's Pizza & Grinders, Oscar's Place, Real Hacienda and Ritzy's.

And White Castle has said it is looking for a location in that area.

Fusting said a bank branch is also scheduled to be built near his car wash. He couldn't remember which bank -- "It's one we don't have in Louisville."

BB&T and Republic Bank are building new branches in Woodlands Plaza nearby.

Fusting said he and Clark are looking for another Owensboro location for a second 24/7 Touch-Free CarWash.

"If anyone has a good location, tell them to get in touch," he said.

