

MORRIS DAILY HERALD

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Construction kicks off for new Morris hotel

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Work has begun on a major addition to the hospitality scene in Morris.

Representatives from Janko Hospitality and Peak Construction held the groundbreaking for the Holiday Inn Express at 11 a.m. Friday.

A portion of the existing Holiday Inn was demolished to make room for the Holiday Inn Express, which will have 92 rooms and suites.

"On Feb. 1 we will have a ribbon cutting for the new Holiday Inn Express," said Ed Croom, president of Janko Hospitality. "We are excited about being able to bring this to Morris."

This will be the 15th hotel Janko will operate in Illinois and Indiana, many along the Interstate 80 corridor. The Holiday Inn Express is owned by the Morris Hotel Group.

Peak Construction is the general contractor for the project.

"Holiday Inn has been in Morris for 35 years and that will continue," Croom said. "We signed a 10-year agreement with Holiday Inn."

Plans call for the existing Holiday Inn, now with 59 rooms, to remain open but it will operate under a different name.

The current Holiday Inn opened in June of 1972 with 120 rooms, a restaurant, banquet rooms and a swimming pool.



Local officials joined business representatives on Friday to celebrate the groundbreaking of what will be a new Holiday Inn Express in Morris. (Herald photo/Michael Farrel)

In October 2006, Janko and Peak Construction presented the initial plans for the Holiday Inn Express to the city's Development Review Committee.

Those plans, which included an L-shaped three-story building with a great room and swimming pool, were approved by the committee in February.

The city also approved a split in the existing lot, to create a lot for the Holiday Inn Express.