

A historic name for a new entertainment district: The Forge

Birmingham, AL (January 31, 2008) – Birmingham’s downtown entertainment district will be called The Forge, a name that links the city’s past with its future.

The \$40 million district, which includes clubs, restaurants, and shops, is being developed by Performa Entertainment Real Estate in partnership with the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC). Alabama American Idols Taylor Hicks and Ruben Studdard plan to open clubs in The Forge.

The name was announced by Performa CEO John Elkington and BJCC Executive Director Jack Fields. “We wanted a name with historic associations for Birmingham,” said Elkington, “and that also suggested a new era for entertainment. We think The Forge fits perfectly.”

The Forge recalls the city’s roots as an iron and steelmaking town. Vulcan, the Roman god of the forge, is the city’s symbol. “We want the new entertainment district to be like the statue of Vulcan,” said Fields, “something that brands Birmingham to the public.”

The name also meets the criteria of being short, easy to remember and adaptable to marketing. “Like its namesake, The Forge will generate sparks,” Elkington said. “I can see the ads now – ‘Forge some fun,’ ‘Hot times at The Forge’.”

The clubs with Hicks and Studdard reflect the local flavor that will make the development distinctive. Other tenants who have signed letters of intent or leases include Rhythm & Brews, Iron City Saloon, Bluesboro, Wet Willie’s, Sleep Out Louie’s, Mesquite Chop House and Wow Cafe & Wingery. More than half of the district’s 136,000 square feet of space has been pre-leased.

Elkington and Fields said The Forge is on schedule to bring new entertainment options downtown. “We’re excited at the plans, at the list of prospective tenants, and by the name,” said Fields. “We believe The Forge will help create a new identity for Birmingham as a destination.” For more information, visit forgebirmingham.com.

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About Performa: Performa Entertainment Real Estate, Inc., the developer of Beale Street, is a privately owned real estate development and advisory firm headquartered in Memphis, TN. Performa specializes in mixed-use urban retail/entertainment districts. Current projects include downtown developments in Jackson, MS, and Trenton, NJ, and a regional retail/entertainment/recreational project in Fredericksburg, VA. For more information, visit www.performaentertainment.com.

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