

newsworthy trends

“Big City” Hotels Coming To Small Towns

(NAPSA)—Big things are in store for small towns as a wave of new hotels open in communities of 20,000 to 40,000. The new hotels are designed to accommodate business and leisure travelers who expect more in modern amenities on the road, regardless of where they are.

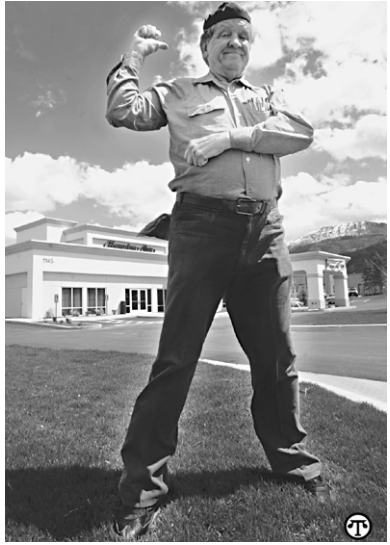
These smaller versions of major hotels are also good for small town entrepreneurs, who may have found it cost-prohibitive in the past to build a well-known hotel.

This year, Hampton Inn, which has more than 1,200 hotels across the U.S., introduced a more compact hotel with less than 60 rooms for small towns, with features such as meeting space, data ports and in-room work space, exercise facilities, swimming pools and a daily free breakfast.

The chain opened its first small town hotel in Cedar City, Utah, nearly three hours from the closest big city, Las Vegas. The area is well known for breathtaking natural scenery, as well as a world-class Shakespeare Festival. The hotel offers 58 rooms, six large suites, an indoor pool, exercise room, a comfortable breakfast area and meeting space. Hampton has another 10 small town hotels underway.

Investors of these hotels are usually entrepreneurs who see an opportunity to provide a unique service to their community. The smaller size makes it easier for them to learn the complexities of operating a hotel, while tapping into the resources larger hotel brands share, such as online and worldwide call-center reservations, guest reward programs and national sales.

In addition, small towns may enjoy the added economic benefit



All the way from small-town “Mayberry” to Utah, George “Goober” himself of the “Andy Griffith” TV series even had a chance to stay at Hampton Inn’s first “small town” hotel.

these new hotels bring to tax and employment bases.

To determine if a town is ripe for a small hotel, Phil Cordell, senior vice president brand management for Hampton Inn, suggests asking: Does the town have multiple reasons for people to visit it, such as tourist attractions, a college or university, and business facilities or manufacturing plants? Are other hotels in town outdated? Would the town benefit from a new hotel? Would a new quality hotel attract other people and businesses to the area?

As more business and leisure travelers are expected to travel by car in the future, many small towns will seek opportunities to make their community an overnight destination, rather than a quick stop on the way to the next city.