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Sirloin Stockade moves its herd to Taylor

More restaurants eyed now that HQ is here

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Nick Simonite

Monte Ford, director of operations and co-owner of Sirloin Stockade, wants to add more restaurants in the Austin area soon.

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When Tom Ford wanted to move to Taylor from Hutchinson, Kan., it made sense that his company's headquarters would come with him.

Stockade Companies LLC and Ford, its CEO, have grown together with him washing dishes in the first Sirloin Stockade restaurant the day it opened in 1966. After earning an accounting degree and becoming a franchisee, he bought the company with an ownership group in 2004.

Today, he's ready to grow the company from new roots.

The move to 113 E. Third St. in Taylor -- involving 15 corporate employees -- took place over several months and was completed in May, Ford says. Only an accounting partner will remain in a satellite office in Kansas.

Now that the company is in Central Texas, it plans to expand its steak restaurant concepts, adding three Sirloin Stockades and four Montana Mike's in the Austin area over the next five years, says Terry Harstad, chief operating officer of Stockade Companies.

While Austin's growth factored into moving the company's headquarters, Ford says it also happened largely because of his desire to live in the area.

"One of the unique things about being in a small town is that we've got the best of both worlds," Harstad says. "We've got access to the greater Austin metro area and access to the amenities of a first-class city."

Then we get the added benefit of being minutes away from a rural or ranching community for our people to live."

With the move, Harstad and Ford say they plan to use a new Montana Mike's opened in Georgetown last week and a Sirloin Stockade in Taylor as training restaurants for franchisees and management.

The company operates 28 restaurants from the Taylor headquarters and franchises 74 restaurants, Ford says. It has 32 Sirloin Stockades in the U.S. and 24 in Mexico, with plans to open another five Sirloin Stockades in Mexico this year. It also operates 27 Montana Mike's Steakhouses, nine Coyote Canyon restaurants and 10 Sonics.

Taylor Economic Development Corporation President and CEO Jason Ford -- no relation to the Stockade Companies CEO -- says even a small corporate headquarters can have a large economic impact on an area. Company accountants and vendors, for instance, tend to become more locally based after corporations move to a new location, translating to more local investment.

Jason Ford says Stockade Companies didn't request incentives from Taylor for its move.

"We believe that companies like this send a strong signal to other companies that we have community assets and have a pro-business climate for national headquarters and companies to do business in Central Texas," Jason Ford says.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin