



L-R: H.G. "Butch" Kirven (Chairman, Greenville County Council); Jerry Howard (President/CEO, GADC); Joe Kernell (Greenville County Administrator)

# 2010 Ending Strongly for County Economic Development

BY JERRY HOWARD | PHOTOGRAPH BY COMMERCIAL IMAGING

In a year that was anything but predictable, Greenville County stayed the course in economic development strategy and focus. As a result, 2010 was another banner year characterized by big wins (Proterra's 1000+ jobs), significant announcements (Southwest announces service to the Upstate), a tumultuous economy (high unemployment) and mid-term elections.

With 18 wins announced through October 2010 that will generate over 2,000 new jobs and nearly \$225,000,000 in capital investment, Greenville County remained a national leader in terms of jobs created, enhancing the local tax base and return on investment.

Since its founding nearly 10 years ago, the Greenville Area Development Corporation has helped over 170 businesses expand operations or relocate new facilities here. In total, over 12,000 new jobs have been created and capital investment has exceeded \$2.3 billion dollars. From a business and investment perspective, the county's financial contribution to GADC has resulted in more than \$6 in taxes paid to Greenville County for every dollar invested in GADC initiatives.

Now there's a return on investment. It's all about delivering service after the sale and deploying sustainable strategies. While quality new corporate citizens are aggressively pursued, half of the 2010 announcements are expansions by existing businesses, indicative of a community with economic soil conditions essential for long term success. Since 2001, 65% of the GADC's job and investment announcements have come from existing companies... proof positive that the GADC mission of improving quality of life for every Greenville County citizen by facilitating investment and job growth from new and existing companies is rigorously adhered to.

When Greenville County Council created the GADC as the official

organization tasked with promoting and enhancing the economic growth and development of Greenville County in mid-2001, they strongly advocated collaboration. Under the leadership of today's County Council, that same vision is at the forefront of everything we do. The GADC has forged productive working relationships with the SC Department of Commerce, Upstate Alliance, SC-TAC, CU-ICAR, Workforce Investment Board, Greenville Works, chambers, municipalities, utilities and private sector.

The result? Greenville County's investment in the GADC is paying big dividends.

GADC efforts support organizations both large and small, including R&D organizations, entrepreneurs, service companies, office and headquarters, and knowledge-based manufacturing that embrace innovation and continuous improvement.

This unique combination of strategic focus and collaboration has allowed Greenville to weather the nation's economic downturn. The 18 projects announced in 2010 bring economic diversification, quality jobs, good salaries and significant investment here. Research-driven enterprises like Proterra and Saati Americas, along with global brands like Bosch Rexroth and GE Aviation, demonstrate that Greenville County can compete with any community.

Underpinning Greenville's near-decade of economic development success has been commitment and investment by the County and more than 120 private sector investors – all supporting a GADC team that is recognized as a successful model for other economic development organizations — diverse, talented, led by a committed board of directors and County Council, and able to provide creative and innovative solutions.

And momentum builds as we enter 2011. Even now, GADC staff continues to meet with record numbers of prospects interested in relocation to or expansion here – leads attributable to years of focused marketing and outreach.

Many are in target segments of Advanced Materials, Automotive, Aerospace, Health Sciences, and HQ/R&D. Targeting offers the dual benefit of focusing marketing resources while attracting companies with jobs whose salaries average over \$46,000 annually — significantly exceeding average state and local wages and per capita income.

Continued support for Greenville Works will be a major focus for the coming year, as the collaborative of 12 public and private sector non-profits formed to stimulate economic success and per capita income growth works to implement next-generation workforce development strategies.

Watch for the re-launch of the GADC website, redesigned to meet the needs of audiences including site selection consultants, plus aggressive marketing to consultants and corporate decision-makers ... involvement in key marketing events and conferences... increasing communications with key audiences ... expansion of the GADC Investor base to enhance marketing ... and ongoing collaboration with other economic development organizations.

Nearly a decade after its founding, the GADC is well positioned to help Greenville County be successful in today's global economy. The future is bright. Thanks to all who support our efforts with your time, talents and financial assistance. ■

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