



FORWARD

What's next for the Upstate, and how we'll get there



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The sky's the limit

GSP helps keep Upstate economic development flying high

COLLABORATION IS ESSENTIAL to success in business today. And make no mistake, collaboration also underpins Greenville County's economic development strategies, and is central to helping this community realize its unlimited potential for an even brighter future with more and better jobs.

As the economic development arm of Greenville County, the Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC) understands that growing existing companies and attracting new jobs and investment here demands collaboration. Whether we are encouraging organizations to relocate here or helping existing businesses grow, the GADC works closely with allies in government, education and the private sector to present a unified answer to the question: "Why should we bring our jobs and investment to Greenville County?"

From the beginning, Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport (GSP) has been an essential partner and integral contributor to Greenville County's economic development success. Without GSP and its record of continuously improving facilities, services and carrier mix, there might never have been such cornerstone accomplishments as Michelin's North American headquarters, Clemson-ICAR's campus, or Hubbell Lighting's headquarters—much less BMW's Greer manufacturing facility.

Like many major companies, Michelin has significant travel requirements. Thus GSP's continuing efforts to attract and grow low-fare carriers, including Southwest Airlines, have been helpful to its business. BMW cited its proximity to GSP as one of the contributing factors to its decision to locate manufacturing operations here.



Since the Upstate, and in particular Greenville and Spartanburg counties, has a higher penetration of international firms operating here on a per capita basis than anywhere else in the United States, air travel is a huge consideration. More than 200 foreign-owned organizations have growing presences here, and "enjoy one-stop access to hundreds of national and international destinations when flying out of GSP," notes Rosylin Weston, a spokeswoman for GSP. "We are truly a gateway to the world."

More than 40 Fortune 500 and 75 Fortune 1000 companies have a presence in Greenville or Spartanburg counties today, and the region's pro-business mindset, high-quality workforce and low cost of business and living make it attractive to many other businesses.

For these organizations, as well as for the thousands of residents who enjoy direct or one-stop access to hundreds of cities, states and countries when flying through GSP, Greenville-Spartanburg International

Airport truly is a gateway. While it may not be the optimal transportation solution for every single company – Sealed Air noted lack of direct international flights as one of multiple criteria it weighed in deciding to locate its corporate headquarters in Charlotte rather than Greenville recently – GSP is highly appealing and attractive to most.

The appeal of GSP is becoming even more pronounced and marketable with the significant improvements being made currently to the facility:

The terminal is moving along rapidly with a dynamic \$125 million expansion and improvements, with completion planned by early 2016.

GSP was recently ranked No. 1 nationally for the largest decreases in airfare by the U.S. Bureau of Transportation among top 100 US airports.

Between 2000 and 2014, average domestic airfares out of GSP have fallen by an average of 44 percent.

The total economic impact of

Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport including the effects of ongoing airport operations and visitor spending supports a total of 9,528 local jobs.

Every job at GSP supports an additional nine jobs in the local economy.

GSP operations in their entirety have an \$817 million impact on the local economy.

Cargo traffic continues to grow rapidly, and GSP's runway infrastructure is fully capable of accommodating any aircraft flying today, meaning that the sky is the limit for cargo operations growth.

One of GSP's greatest assets is its user-friendliness, a striking contrast to the metropolitan behemoths to our north and south. Business leaders and prospective corporate customers who visit Greenville frequently mention the attractiveness of the airport, its easy-to-navigate layout, easy access, reasonable parking costs, and proximity to their ultimate destination.

Across South Carolina and around the world, economic development is an intensely competitive, high-stakes business. It's a business where winners earn quality jobs, a diversified economy and continuing investment, awareness of and pride in community, and a brighter future with enhanced opportunity and prosperity.

It's a business that forward-thinking communities dare not fail at. Thanks to partners like GSP, it's an arena in which Greenville County excels.

Working together, Upstate economic developers and GSP are focused on the future – the better to retain our competitive advantage, to achieve our full potential, and to keep our community flying high.