

Economic Developers See Strength Ahead for 2014

KI LOGISTICS ANNOUNCES a new North American headquarters and logistics facility at The Matrix Business and Technology Park, adding 149 jobs.

Fitesa Simpsonville plans to expand operations for the global hygiene market, investing upwards of \$50 million.

Internationally renowned dessert maker Sweet Street Desserts will invest millions in its first South Carolina facility, creating 80 positions.

And in December, Materials Sciences Corporation announced it would develop highly advanced materials for military and industrial applications, adding dozens of positions.

With over 1,000 new jobs and \$200 million in investment announced in 2013, this has been another banner year for economic development in Greenville County.

Many announcements represent expansions by existing businesses – indicating that the county is optimizing conditions for business to prosper here. Most are clustered in GADC target business sectors of advanced materials, automotive, aviation/aerospace, biosciences, logistics, data centers and office, producing jobs whose salaries average over \$54,000 annually – helping to raise per capita income.

Underpinning these results has been a strong commitment to collaboration, enthusiastically endorsed by County Council. Economic development is a team sport, and the GADC has forged productive working relationships with our cities, chambers, universities, utilities, airports and nearly 140 private-sector investors to benefit Greenville County.

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And momentum builds entering 2014.

Improving infrastructure is a priority, and as one of a handful of counties nationwide that has earned a coveted triple-A bond rating, Greenville County is well positioned to meet the challenges, notes County Administrator Joe Kernell.

“County Council created the Citizen Roads Advisory Commission to gather public input while generating a list of priority road improvements in Greenville County,” says Kernell. “The county has committed more than \$18 million to community development and planning, with a large portion of that going towards paving or resurfacing more than 30 miles of county-maintained roads.”

Meeting the expanding air travel and air cargo requirements of the Upstate is on the

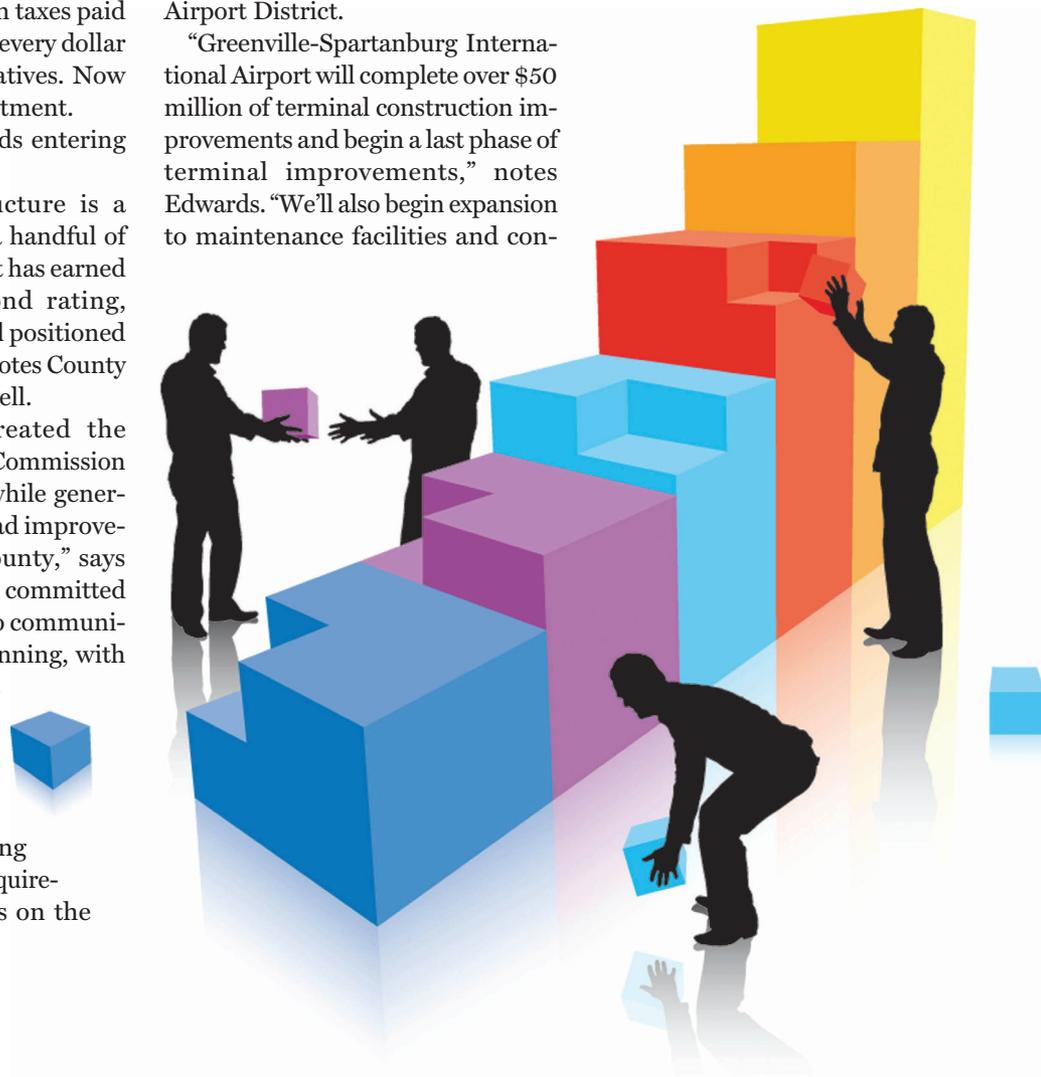
mind of Dave Edwards, president/CEO of the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport District.

“Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport will complete over \$50 million of terminal construction improvements and begin a last phase of terminal improvements,” notes Edwards. “We’ll also begin expansion to maintenance facilities and con-

struction of a new cargo building.” South Carolina Technology and Aviation Center will serve as host site for a wireless charging research project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, utilizing a newly resurfaced test track and testing facility. In addition, the first phase of the S.C. Army Air National Guard’s “Center of Excellence” will become operational, bringing locally based aircraft to SCTAC, adds Jody Bryson, president/CEO of SCTAC.

Workforce development initiatives are another strategic focus.

“CU-ICAR will be building a new facility to accommodate growth, including a graduate student population now over 200,” says Fred Cartwright, executive director >>





By KEVIN LANDMESSER

>> of Clemson University's International Center for Automotive Research. "We are also excited about our partnership with Greenville Technical College in forming the Center for Manufacturing Innovation to help address workforce needs in advanced manufacturing, via vertical integration of education, beginning with K-12 students."

As manufacturing expands, so must cargo management. The South Carolina Ports Authority is moving forward with harbor deepening and construction of a new terminal in Charleston, while at the Upstate's new Inland Port "we expect to move at least 40,000 containers through the Greer Inland Port facility next year," says Jack Ellenberg, senior VP of economic development and projects.

Stu Heishman, Duke Energy's VP of economic development, is cautiously optimistic about 2014, citing

positive signals in automotive and housing. "Still to come are more new greenfield projects," adds Heishman. "But we must adjust to corporate hesitancy to 'pull the trigger' on major capital investments."

Ensuring plentiful, high-quality water is the focus of David Bereskin, CEO of the Greenville Water System. "We will be focusing on our strategic plan to ensure that community infrastructure needs are being maintained and replaced as necessary," he adds.

Renewable Water Resources also predicts a busy 2014, according to executive director Ray Orvin Jr.

"Pump station and line rehab projects will ensure that infrastructure is well maintained, and a new lab and educational facility are in the planning phase," Orvin notes. "We are also working hard to ... ensure water quality improvements."

With such committed partners and

collaborative efforts toward smart development, particularly in infrastructure, Greenville County and the GADC are favorably positioned for recruiting and retaining jobs and investment.

GADC staff continues to meet with steady numbers of prospects interested in relocation to or expansion here - thanks to years of focused marketing and outreach. Those efforts will be enhanced further as a

result of a target industry analysis completed this summer by two national consulting organizations.

Today's global economy is challenging. Yet in Greenville County, our future is bright, and getting brighter.

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