



The Heart of North Carolina's Economic Future

September 2014

## Strategic Infrastructure Planning Forum

The Randolph County EDC hosted more than sixty local government and business leaders on September 10 for an initial strategic infrastructure planning forum. The idea originated at the 2014 EDC Planning Retreat to regularly convene local government officials to discuss shared planning and infrastructure to prepare for future growth. Several major projects will greatly impact Randolph County and its municipalities including the completion of I 73/74, abundant water resources both municipal and county, the potential for one or more megasites in the region, and the proposed regional landfill.

We began with a presentation of the Triad Tomorrow study commissioned by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments that provided a regional and longitudinal look at the Triad economic, demographic, and infrastructure as well as a forward look. Regionally, we are an economy in transition with the loss of 50% of our manufacturing jobs over the last 20 years. Looking forward, the region can anticipate solid population growth, excess water capacity until 2040, and the demand for a more educated workforce.

Locally, Hal Johnson, RC Planning & Zoning Director, said the county, cities, and towns have a legacy of working together and partnering on infrastructure. The county planning policies both promote growth and support environmental sustainability. Will Massie, Asst. County Manager reviewed the 2008 county water plan to connect water systems and extend service into unserved areas. There was much discussion about the potential impact of a megasite and the growth it would bring. John Grey, Chair of the Industrial Product Development Committee shared a map of potential industrial sites and discussed strategies to provide infrastructure to improve site readiness.

The planning forum will meet again in the New Year and invite funding agencies and NC Dept of Transportation to share information about grant programs and planned roadway projects. There is strong interest in an ongoing dialogue and joint planning discussions to prepare for future growth opportunities, to be proactive and not reactive with short and long term planning.

## Workforce Development Summit

Randolph Community College and Davidson Community College were hosts of a workforce development summit on August 28 to bring business, education, community college, and economic development stakeholders together. The NC Community College System leadership is sponsoring the summits across the state to hear directly from businesses about their workforce needs and expectations and to learn about innovative solutions underway at the community college campuses. RCC hosted the meeting at the Continuing Education and Industrial Center.

The summit is focused on three short term initiatives: 1) assist dislocated workers, 2) identify skill sets in demand and 3) analyze data collected. There is a strong push for agency collaboration and partnerships with the K-12 systems. Visit [www.align4ncworks.com](http://www.align4ncworks.com) for more info or to submit your comments.

Common themes heard from the business community are the need for a good work ethic, industrial maintenance skills, engineering specialists, problem solving, computer and math skills, and leadership development for future managers. Success stories were shared by Technimark, Klaussner Furniture and Ingersoll Rand. Ideas generated included rebranding manufacturing and maintenance as "cool jobs", outreach to the future workforce, industry internships and apprenticeships, community college faculty exposed to industry needs and processes during the summer, and closing the interest gap in manufacturing careers. All agreed the time is now, the opportunities are here, and collective action is urgently needed.

## Business Announcements

**PetPro Resources** has completed the purchase of the former Lucks facility in Seagrove to establish a new manufacturing operation to produce animal feed and pet food ingredients using NC grown sweet potatoes and poultry parts. The company plans to hire 38 workers within two years and is partnering with NC agri-business providers and universities as suppliers and technical resources. The project received a building reuse grant that will be used to install a solar system for cost effective power, due to the lack of natural gas at the facility.

**Ambella Home Collection** will locate its first domestic furniture manufacturing operation in Archdale in a vacant 47,700 square foot facility to produce upholstered product. The Dallas based company currently designs, sources, and sells case goods from international suppliers and has a showroom in High Point. The project will create 12 new jobs within two years.

**Blower Engineering** will establish a new manufacturing, assembly and distribution operation in Liberty at a 14,000 square foot industrial facility. The company assembles blower motors and/or pneumatic equipment for flour milling companies and they are relocating from the Northeastern US. The company expects to create five to fifteen new jobs with the project.

**Irema Filter Technologies** has purchased two adjacent buildings in the Archdale Industrial Park to relocate a manufacturing operation. The German company produces air filters used in industrial applications, gas turbines and hospitals. The US operation is Aeolus, a Greek word for wind, and they moved from Greensboro for additional space. The company plans to add media manufacturing to the operation within two years, a process currently done in Germany. They employ four and plan to double their workforce initially with plans to grow to 20-30 jobs in the next two years.

**AEC Narrow Fabrics** has completed the purchase of Narricot Industries, a unit of International Textile Group Inc. Parent company Asheboro Elastics Corporation will relocate the two acquired plant operations to Asheboro along with equipment and inventory. The project will create 60 new jobs within two years and result in \$1.5 million in new investment. AEC Narrow Fabrics is a leading producer of woven narrow fabrics for the military, fire, safety, rescue, automotive, industrial, and apparel use. They are headquartered in Asheboro with operations in El Salvador and Honduras.

**Swatchcraft** has expanded to a vacant facility in the Archdale Industrial Park. The 30-year old company designs, prints and produces quilts, swatches, and fabric labels for a variety of menswear. The company's growing demand required additional space and they could not expand their High Point facility. They employ 55 workers and plan to add 20 new jobs with the expansion.

## EDC News & Announcements

**Consider joining a committee to get more involved in economic development.** The Randolph EDC has three committees seeking interested volunteers. They are the **Membership Committee, Marketing Committee and Industrial Product Committee**. Meeting schedules vary but are typically bi-monthly or project specific. The Marketing Committee is working on a second video featuring workforce and education. The Membership Committee reaches out to prospective partnership members and hosts networking events. The Product Development Committee identifies industrial sites and works with local governments and allies on infrastructure and site readiness. Contact Lisa Bennett at [lbennett@rcedc.com](mailto:lbennett@rcedc.com) or call the office at 336.626.2233 to share your interest.

**Congratulations to Randolph County companies and partnership members in the Triad Fast 50**, the 50 fastest growing private companies in the Triad region by revenue. 2014 winners include:

Ace Avant Concrete Construction Company  
Best Logistics Group, Inc.  
J P Thomas and Co., Inc.

**David Craven** was elected to the EDC Board of Directors for a three year term at the August Board meeting. He will represent the Ramseur area on the EDC Board. Dave serves as Commercial Relationship Manager for the Bank of North Carolina and is a graduate of UNC Charlotte.

**The Randolph County Business Council** is an ad hoc group that is working collaboratively on county wide issues and promoting increased dialogue and cooperation among agencies that work to promote Randolph County. Members include the five Chamber of Commerce Directors, Tourism Development, Economic Development, Randolph Community College and the Small Business Center. The first meeting was held on August 2 and quarterly meetings are planned. We will work in partnership to promote the county and cities, and tackle key issues that impact our county and region.

## Partnership News...

Randolph County Partnership is the member organization of the EDC. Through their dues, our members invest in economic development in Randolph County in marketing, recruitment, existing business and industry services, and industrial product development. Partner members are listed on the EDC website, included in existing business & industry directories, and receive services and referrals from the EDC. **Partnership members are listed below based on their renewal dates.**

Please visit the website, [www.rcedc.com](http://www.rcedc.com) for member information and click on Development Team.

Welcome the new member of the Randolph County Partnership...

→ **Elite Displays & Design Inc.** – Designs and manufactures display racks and systems, primarily in home improvement stores.

Thanks to the following companies that recently renewed their membership with the Randolph County EDC Partnership.

## Gold

Americhem, Inc.

## Silver

Carolina Bank  
Chandler Concrete Company, Inc.  
Klaussner Furniture Industries  
Landmark Builders  
RE/MAX Central Realty  
Randolph Community College  
Randolph Telephone  
RubberMill, Inc.  
Thomas Buses  
United Brass Works, Inc.

## Bronze

Advisors Financial Center, LLP  
AVS Catering, Inc.  
Brubaker & Associates, Inc.  
Commonwealth Hosiery Mills, Inc.  
Deep River Fabricators, Inc.  
Hampton Inn  
Manhattan American Terrazzo Strip  
Ralph's Frame Shop  
Rentenbach Constructors  
Ridge Funeral Home & Cremation Service  
Triad Design Group  
Trinity Furniture, Inc  
Wayne Thomas Chevrolet-Cadillac

**Committee volunteers are welcome. The Industrial Product Development, Marketing and Membership Committees are forming. Email Lisa Bennett at [lbennett@cedc.com](mailto:lbennett@cedc.com) or call the office at 336.626.2233 if you are interested in serving on an EDC Committee this year.**

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