



Expanding Opportunities in the Heart of North Carolina



JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



FY21

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Chairman's Message – Todd Schwarz

The past twelve months have been anything but normal, but COVID has not slowed the efforts of our economic development team here in Randolph County. In fact, in the past twelve months we have responded to more existing industry inquiries, submitted more new business requests for information, completed more site due diligence, and developed more marketing material than in any normal twelve-month period. Not only are our investments in these areas beginning to pay dividends, but they should also continue to yield growth for years to come.

When times are challenging, our support for the county's established industry base becomes even more critical. As of this writing staff has had over 160 direct interactions with industry providing assistance with everything from COVID vaccination information to business referrals. This year, the EDC has also helped facilitate grants and incentives for two expanding companies – Starpet, Inc. in Asheboro and Lancaster Custom Crafted Upholstery in Archdale. Total investment between these two projects will exceed \$20 million and at least thirty-one new jobs will be created between the two companies. A third industry with a local facility has also acquired land for future expansion which is likely to commence within the next year.

The EDC also saw an uptick in inquiries from outside businesses seeking suitable sites and/or buildings for expansion or relocation. Four new manufacturing businesses chose Randolph County as their new home over the past year – Ariston Hospitality in High Point, Jackson Furniture in Asheboro, MG Art Products in Trinity, and Sedia Systems in Asheboro. The EDC was able to directly assist three of these companies and influence their location decisions. Collectively, these companies will invest more than \$7.7 million and create 251 new jobs in the community.

Finally, we have been pressing hard this year to improve our industrial sites (see product development overview on the next page) and to develop marketing collateral and messaging that accurately – and professionally – presents our county.

The Randolph County Economic Development Corporation has a strong team of both staff and Board members that is getting things done. As this year's Board Chairman, it has been a privilege to serve an organization that is both focused on the tasks at hand and aligning itself for future success.



2020-2021 A Year in Review

Total New Jobs	262
Investment	\$25,104,618
Grants Awarded	\$390,000
Site & Building Requests	86
Website Pageviews	25,309

Prioritizing Product Development

Product Development (preparation of sites and buildings) is a key to successful economic development, whether to support the expansion needs of the established industry base or for the attraction of new industry to the community. The need for ready-to-go sites and buildings should be self-evident, but site selection consultant Jay Garner has boiled it down to a succinct phrase in his recent book, *Economic Development Is Not for Amateurs!*: “No product, No project.” Our goal in Randolph County is to say, “We have product, bring us your project!” so our team at the EDC has been focused on improving the readiness and marketability of sites, thereby eliminating uncertainty and reducing the development timeline for a client.

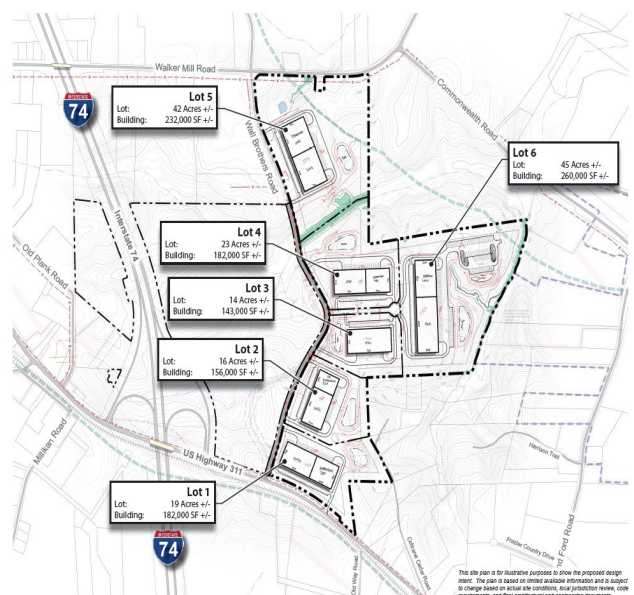
Site due diligence is a critical component of understanding the developability of a site. Over the past year, the EDC has coordinated with private property owners to conduct due diligence on six sites across the county. Our efforts have included determining whether a site has environmental contamination, locating streams and wetland areas that limit development or may require mitigation, understanding soil composition, and determining whether any protected flora or fauna are on the site. On a seventh site – EDC-owned land at the West Randleman Business Park – the EDC hired a civil engineering firm to develop a grading plan along with cost estimates. Our internal budget covered these expenses along with the support of Randolph Electric Membership Corporation which provided grants for due diligence conducted on sites in their service district.

Infrastructure planning is integral for the preparation of sites which are not currently served with water and sewer. This year, the EDC partnered financially with the Town of Liberty and the City of Randleman to conduct engineering feasibility studies to serve two large sites with water and sewer. The studies provided us with information about system capacities, optimal routes for infrastructure extensions, and line design with cost estimates. This information equips us to more effectively market sites to appropriate end users and gives us hard costs to present to local governments and other funding partners so we can move toward putting pipe in the ground.

Zoning is another piece of the product development puzzle that cannot be overlooked. Rezoning requests must be initiated and supported by the property owner, but the EDC can serve as a guide and advocate. Over the past year, three properties in Archdale were rezoned to an industrial designation with the support of our office.

Partnerships with developers are critical and we have been striving to both broaden and deepen those relationships. As a result, we now have a thirty-five-acre site in Archdale and two emerging industrial parks, in Asheboro and Randleman, with strong developer partnerships. Of the two emerging parks, the Wall property in Randleman is further along in the development process. The 173-acre site is ideally situated on I-74 at US Hwy 311 and is currently being evaluated under the Duke Energy Site Readiness Program. Site due diligence and a water/sewer engineering study are also both currently under way. Our developer partner for this site is committed to speculative building development once the site evaluation is complete and infrastructure is on site.

A successful product development program will yield benefit to the community in the form of new investment, which grows the tax base, and job creation, enhancing buying power for our residents. Randolph County is preparing to win projects and generate opportunities for our residents.



New and Expanding Industries



Tennessee-based **Jackson Furniture** has expanded its manufacturing footprint by establishing its newest plant in Randolph County. The company manufactures upholstered residential furniture and prides itself on producing quality, American-made product. Jackson Furniture occupied an existing 300,000 square foot building and has established a thriving presence in Asheboro.

- 200 Jobs
- Asheboro, NC (**New**)



California-based **Ariston Hospitality** acquired two adjoining properties to establish an East Coast presence for its expanding hospitality furniture business. The company manufactures high quality custom casegoods and seating for the hospitality industry.

- 15 Jobs over the next two years
- \$2,374,600 investment
- \$90,000 NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant
- High Point, Randolph/Guilford County, NC (**New**)



Indorama Ventures, parent company of StarPet Inc. in Asheboro, is adding recycled PET to the company's product lines. The expansion includes investment in upfits, new M&E, and new construction. StarPet manufactures PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate) which is primarily used as raw material in the manufacture of bottles, sheets, films, fiber, filaments, and other specialty products.

- 11 Jobs
- \$17.4 million investment
- \$100,000 NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant
- Asheboro, NC (**Expansion**)



MG Art Products, a startup manufacturer of paints, frames, and other miscellaneous art supplies, has selected a 40,000 square foot building in Trinity to house its production lines. The company is renovating the facility and hopes to be in production this summer.

- 22 Jobs over the next five years
- \$2,248,000 investment
- \$100,000 NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant
- Trinity, NC (**New**)



Sedia Systems, a leading global manufacturer of auditorium and lecture hall seating, selected Asheboro as its new home. The newly-acquired and renovated 60,000 square foot plant and adjacent 2,800 square foot office building will allow the company to consolidate existing local production. Headquarters operations in Chicago will also be transitioning to Asheboro. Sedia Systems is now operational in the new space and hiring employees.

- 14 Jobs
- \$3,082,018 Investment
- \$100,000 NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant
- Asheboro, NC (**New**)



Partnership

The Randolph County Partnership is the private sector funding arm of the Randolph County EDC, and the support provided by our private sector partners helps cover expenses such as program activity for our existing industry, product development (see p. 3) and the marketing initiatives highlighted in the article below. One might think that private sector funding would decline during the past year due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, but our Partnership revenue has actually increased by 18% over the past year due both to new members joining, and established members increasing their level of support. Here's what our Partnership members have to say.

"Over the years Brisco Apparel has grown in our North Carolina plant and having the resources provided by Kevin Franklin and the Randolph County EDC has been very helpful. Knowing we all have a group of dedicated professionals plugged into the local business community is a great asset for us! We are glad to be a part of the growing economic force in the county as well." – Scott Gartner, President/CEO

"Milestone Computer Solutions became a member of the RCEDC because we've seen the growth and opportunity it brings, and we directly benefit from new and existing business growth in Randolph County. RCEDC newsletters help us stay informed about new and expanding businesses, and those businesses are often in the market for the services we offer." – Andrew Rutter

"The EDC immediately demonstrated its proactive support to Sedia Systems by assisting with the grant process and introducing our company to regional resources. We became a Partnership member to contribute to this organization focused on facilitating business growth and job creation." – Wilson Troup, President

"We are thankful to have such strong partners in the Randolph County Economic Development Council. Klausner Home Furnishing's business is so strong these days and our need for strong business relationships such as we have with RCEDC are critical." – Terry McNew, President

Marketing

Marketing in the world of economic development typically includes participation in trade shows, visits with site selection consultants, building relationships with real estate brokers, and other forms of direct, person-to-person interaction. Due to the pandemic, travel and events came to a halt so we redirected our marketing budget to focus on refining our messaging and developing professionally-designed marketing collateral. As a result, we are better equipped to promote Randolph County as a great place to work effectively and live fully. Over the past year we:

- Contracted with a marketing firm to assist with messaging; create a series of marketing collateral promoting the county and our four targeted industry sectors (automotive & aerospace, food & beverage, metals, plastics); and provide high quality photography of local industry and sites.

- Designed and added fresh content for our website which continues to be a primary marketing tool. As a result, our page views are up 25% over the previous year.

- Created a 30-second video to help stakeholders understand who the Randolph County EDC is and the range of services our office provides.

- Contracted with a production firm to develop specialized video content highlighting Randolph County, our workforce, and available industrial product. Production will begin this summer.

- Worked to utilize social media more strategically to share both economic development successes and community information.



Strategic Planning

The mission of the Randolph County EDC is to support a growing healthy economy so that local residents have diverse quality job opportunities through the attraction of new businesses to the area and the retention and expansion of existing business and industry. This year, we formalized a roadmap for how we accomplish that mission in our Strategic Action Plan which was approved last June by our Board of Directors. The pandemic hampered some of our plans, but we are now a year into implementation, and the plan is bearing fruit. Here is a snapshot of some of our activity.

Retention and Expansion of Existing Industry

- We facilitated offers of grants for two industrial businesses pursuing expansion in Randolph County.
- We hosted a Randolph County Industry Appreciation Day in October, offering a free breakfast and lunch to our industry leaders. In anticipation of a less restricted environment moving forward, we plan to host additional appreciation events this year to recognize the contributions of our county's manufacturers.
- We recognized Milestone Achievement Award winners by presenting certificates to companies that have operated in Randolph County in five-year increments.
- We hosted quarterly meetings of the Randolph Industrial Council which brings industry leaders together to network and hear presentations about topics of interest.
- We engaged in over 250 direct interactions with Randolph County industry leaders resulting in multiple opportunities to provide support and service referrals.

Attraction of Diversified Industry Base

- We facilitated funding support to successfully encourage three new companies to locate in Randolph County.
- We participated in virtual trade shows and in-person visits with site selection consultants and real estate brokers to promote Randolph County as a prime location for companies seeking to grow or relocate their operations.
- We developed professionally designed marketing collateral promoting Randolph County.
- We invested in due diligence to enhance the readiness and marketability of available sites across the county.
- We grew our social media presence with increased postings and creation of an organizational LinkedIn page.
- We established and deepened relationships with developers interested in speculatively developing and jointly marketing property.

Future Workforce-Apprenticeship Randolph

Apprenticeship Randolph was established in November 2016 with support from a number of partners and participation of an initial group of ten local manufacturing companies. This summer, eight students from the initial cohort of apprentices will complete the program with an associate degree in manufacturing technology, a journeyworker certificate, four years of work experience and wages, and zero college debt.

Today, the program has grown to include nineteen companies, career tracks in advanced manufacturing and information technology, and 72 students currently enrolled in the program. Through Apprenticeship Randolph, companies are growing their own workforce by developing the talents of local young people with a desire to become the next generation of manufacturing workers in Randolph County.



Randolph County Partnership

Stakeholders 2020-2021

Diamond

Duke Energy
J L Darr & Son, Inc.
Klaussner Home Furnishings
North Carolina Railroad Company
Sedia Systems, Inc.*
Technimark

Platinum

Ace/Avant Concrete Construction Co. Inc.
Fibertex Personal Care Corporation
J. P. Thomas & Co., Inc.
Post Consumer Brands
Randolph Electric Membership
Schwarz Properties
StarPet/Indorama Ventures

Gold

Crumley Commercial
First Bank
Samet Corporation

Silver

Aeolus Filter Corporation*
BB&T
Brisco Apparel Company, Inc.*
Chandler Concrete Corporation
ECS Southeast, LLP
Fidelity Bank
Fourth Elm Construction
Hubbell Industrial Controls
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MAS Acme
Metals, USA
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Pallet Express Inc.
Piedmont Federal Savings Bank*
Pinnacle Financial Partners

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Randolph Communications
RE/MAX Central Realty
Rheem Sales Company
RubberMill, Inc.
S&ME, Inc.
Sapona Plastics, LLC
The Timken Company
Triad Design Group
UltraCraft
Uwharrie Builders
Weaver Cooke/Kirkland

Bronze

Advisors Financial Center, LLP
Allen Tate Relocation
ARC-Markham Metals, Inc.
Asheboro City Schools
Asheboro/Randolph Chamber
of Commerce
AVS Catering, Inc.
Bank OZK
Beck and Associates
Bobbitt Construction*
Braxton Culler, Inc.
Brookline Furniture
Brubaker & Associates, Inc.
Burge Flower Shop
Commonwealth Hosiery Mills, Inc.
Costa Sanders
Covanta Environmental Solutions
Datamark Graphics
Davis-Martin-Powell & Associates, Inc.
Deep River Fabricators, Inc.
Draper Aden Associates
DS Smith Packaging Asheboro
Elastic Therapy, Inc./DJO Global
Elite Displays & Design Inc.
Engineered Steel Products, LLC
Express Employment Professionals
Euliss Propane Company
First Horizon Bank
Four Saints Brewing Company

Four Seasons Furniture
Gavin & Cox
James River Equipment
Line Drive Graphics
Manhattan American Terrazzo Strip Co.
McKenzie Properties & Investments
Milestone Computer Solutions*
NC Zoological Society
North Carolina Zoo
North State
PEMMCO Manufacturing
Powder Works, Inc.
PrintLogic, LLC
Pugh Funeral Home
Ralph's Frame Shop
Randolph County School System
Randolph Land Development
Randolph Packing Co., Inc.
Ready Telecom/Community Web
Ridge Funeral Home & Cremation
Service, LLC
Sam's Marine International
Shelco, Inc.
Summey Engineering Associates, PLLC
T & L Construction Company, Inc.*
The Wooten Company
Tower Components, Inc.
Triad Heating & Cooling Inc.
Trinity Furniture, Inc.
Trotters Sewing Company
United Brass Works
UNITS Moving & Portable Storage
Village Printing
Wayne Industries, Inc.
Wayne Thomas Chevrolet-Cadillac
Wells Fargo Bank

* Denotes new members in 2020-21

EDC Board of Directors - 2020-2021

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Schwarz Properties

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J L Darr & Son, Inc.

Fred Smith, Secretary/Treasurer
Randolph Electric Membership

Darrell Frye, Member at Large
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UNITS Moving and Portable
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Shelley Greene
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Bert Lance-Stone
Mayor, City of Archdale

Dr. Aaron Woody
Superintendent, Asheboro City
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Filmore York
Mayor, Town of Liberty

Local Government Partners

Randolph County	Ramseur
Archdale	Randleman
Asheboro	Seagrove
Franklinville	Staley
Liberty	Trinity

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