



Growing Gaston

Product Development Report – Part 2

Gaston County continues to be a hotbed for industrial growth. The ongoing development activities led by the public sector and the private development community are catching the attention of key decision makers considering corporate relocation or expansion. In this edition of Growing Gaston, we continue our look at key economic development activities that are underway and those that are gaining momentum in Part 2 of a three-part series called the *“Product Development Report.”*

Speculative Space in Kings Mountain in Western Gaston Co.

In May, Equus Capital Partners, LTD broke ground on the new 300,240 square foot speculative logistics building at 300 Woodlake Parkway in Kings Mountain. Located less than 1 mile from I-85 and accessible by two interchange locations, this facility is 25 miles from Charlotte Douglas International Airport and 219 miles from the Port of Charleston, SC.

This Class A facility will feature 32 foot clear ceilings, 40 dock high doors, two drive-in doors, ESFR fire protection and ample parking for trailers and automobiles. Attractive incentives, access to labor, low property taxes and utility costs make this an ideal location for a manufacturing or distribution company seeking a strategic location along the east coast.



RiverWest Construction Now Underway in Belmont

Charlotte developer, Tribek Properties, has broken ground on a speculative industrial project just north of I-85 in Belmont. “We’ve seen unprecedented demand for industrial product in close proximity to the I-85 corridor and RiverWest was the first of the speculative projects to have a shovel in the ground,” stated Donny Hicks, Gaston County Economic Development Director.

“The project’s close proximity to Charlotte makes it that much more appealing to end users.” The site is 10 minutes from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, and minutes to the I-85 and I-485 interchange. Located on Woodlawn Avenue, RiverWest is a 600,000 square foot development this is comprised of two separate buildings and can accommodate tenants ranging in size from 40,000 square foot to 400,000 square foot.



MAKING HEADLINES

KNOLL America, Inc. Selects Apple Creek Corporate Center for New Facility

On June 15th, the Gaston County Economic Development Commission partnered with the North Carolina Department of Commerce to announce that KNOLL America, Inc. has agreed to purchase approximately 12 acres within the Apple Creek Corporate Center and will construct a new headquarters operation and production facility. The new facility will also include a state-of-the-art training area, showroom, warehouse and distribution center.

KNOLL America announced plans for an initial investment of more than \$7.89 million and the creation of approximately 31 new jobs at this location.



KNOLL America is the U.S. subsidiary for the German-based KNOLL Maschinenbau GmbH. Founded by Walter Knoll in 1970, the company is family-owned and operated by second generation Matthias and Jürgen Knoll and globally employs more than 1,200 people. KNOLL engineers, manufactures, and distributes premier conveying, filter-systems and pumps for chips and cooling lubricants used in the metal processing industry. Their flexible assembly and transport systems complete the KNOLL product portfolio. KNOLL serves customers of all sizes from OEMs to end users to smaller distributors.

At the announcement event, Lothar Bugar, CEO of Knoll America, shared his thoughts on Gaston County. “We felt immediately very welcomed. Gaston County provides an excellent manufacturing environment for our needs. The close proximity to major interstates and airport allows us to service most customers within a day. We can engage with Gaston College in developing young skilled talent for our operation and support their apprenticeship program. The small-town community feeling is like the area where our Germany Headquarters is located. This investment is made possible because our owners Matthias and Jürgen Knoll believe in our local team and the strength of the North American market. This venture is part of their international initiative within the KNOLL Group.”



Pictured Left to Right: Robert Browne, Chairman – Gaston County Economic Development Commission; Representative Kelly Hastings, 110th District; Lothar Bugar, CEO – Knoll America; Secretary Machel Sanders – North Carolina Department of Commerce; Dr. John Hauser, President - Gaston College; Tom Keigher, Chairman – Gaston County Board of Commissioners

Gaston Business Association to Launch Talent Pipeline Initiative

Finding and retaining talent is arguably today's [largest business challenge](#). As part of its [Enhance Workforce Capacity](#) strategic priority, the GBA recently completed the U.S. Chamber Foundation's six-month [Talent Pipeline Management \(TPM\) Academy](#) to address Gaston County's talent supply.



The GBA team will use proven TPM best-practices to create career pathways for students and workers that address local talent needs. Working closely with its public and education sector partners, the GBA will engage employers in the coming weeks to understand and address their industry-specific talent priorities and business needs. This information will be used to launch employer-led talent collaboratives for Gaston County.

As detailed [earlier this year](#), the GBA is receiving support from the US and NC Chamber Foundations for the TPM initiative which will benefit the community through:

- Utilizing an employer-led process
- Generating granular, actionable data on employer demand
- Providing a structured process for collective and collaborative action and decision making
- Engaging a full spectrum of talent sourcing providers
- Creating shared value, competitiveness, and accountability
- Focusing on employer ROI

For more information about TPM, please contact Vincent Ginski, Director of Strategic Initiatives (vincent@gastonbusiness.com).



Courtesy of Gaston Business Association Jamie Banks, Public Relations Director (704) 699-1600, jamie@gastonbusiness.com

Get to Know the EDC Board of Directors: John Lowery



(Photo Courtesy of John Lowery)

Mr. John Lowery spent 35 years as Agency Manager and Principal for Lincoln Financial in Charlotte, NC. On December 31, 2016 John sold WealthPlan Financial Partners and retired from field management. In January 2017, alongside his son Johnathan, a 12-year veteran of the business, John opened Lowery Financial Group in Gastonia to serve business and families throughout the region. John joined Jefferson Pilot Life Insurance in Lincolnton, NC in March of 1978 and was the Southeast Region leading New Agent in 1979 and the company's leading New Agent in 1980. Prior to joining Jefferson Pilot, John worked at Jefferson Pilot broadcasting as a member of the WBTV News department.

Mr. Lowery was appointed as a member of the Gaston County Economic Development Commission in January 2016 and is currently serving in his second term. John has long been active in the community with prior service in board leadership of the Greater Gaston Development Corporation, Habitat for Humanity of Gaston County, the Community Foundation of Gaston County, the NC Zoo as well as serving as the former State President of the NC Jaycees. John was recently presented the Spirit of the Carolinas Awards during the Gaston Business Association Salute to Business & Manufacturing Gala event held June 3, 2021.

John and his wife, noted organizational development expert Dr. Malinda Lowery, co-owner of Multiple Choice, Inc., have two children and three grandchildren. John and Malinda are active members of the First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia.



For more information on available buildings or sites, please visit Gaston.org, or call the Gaston County EDC at (704) 825-4046.