




## THE NORTH STAR

The Newsletter of Rockingham County's Business Community

Volume 1, Issue 1

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### FROM THE PARTNERSHIP PRESIDENT UNDERSTANDING KEY SITE SELECTION FACTORS



Understanding what customers want is important for any successful business. It is equally important for successful economic development. We need to know what is important to companies that are planning for new facilities, plant expansions or relocation.

A regular, annual survey by *Area Development* magazine identifies the 10 site selection factors that are most important for corporate decision-makers:

**1. Highway Accessibility.** Most of America's goods move by truck, at least for a part of their journey. This is why the US 220/ NC 68 Connector project is so important for Rockingham County. We need the access to Piedmont Triad International Airport and the FedEx air and ground hubs that this connector will provide. We also need the proposed Eastern segment of the Greensboro Urban Loop to better connect US 29 with I-40 and I-85.

**2. Labor Costs.** Companies like that North Carolina is a right-to-work state. They also find the workforce in our area to be very adaptable to a variety of manufacturing operations. However, our low educational attainment is keeping us from attracting higher wage jobs. We must work to change this.

**3. Energy Availability and Costs.** Duke Energy and Energy United have rates that are very competitive with other areas of the country. This is a real plus for our area. The energy companies are also very helpful partners in economic development.

**4. Availability of Skilled Labor.** Our community college is a very special asset. RCC can provide almost any type of training that a company needs at little or no cost.

**5. Occupancy and Construction Costs.** Construction costs in our area are competitive with other parts of the country. But a surprising number of companies are looking for existing buildings. About 80% of our inquiries are from companies looking for existing buildings. We have had some success in recent years with putting new companies in former textile buildings.

In the next Newsletter, we will comment on the other top-ten site selection factors: Available Land; Corporate Tax Rate; State and Local Incentives; Environmental Regulations, and; Proximity to Major Markets.

Graham Pervier  
President

### HOSPITALITY TRAINING SESSIONS

North Carolina Hospitality Training Especially for Rockingham County Wedding and Special Events Professionals Providing quality service to wedding and special event customers, visitors and guests is more than just being polite! Quality Service is about:

- Professionalism
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Wedding and Special Event Specific Issues
- Business Etiquette
- Knowing About Your Community

We invite you to join us for a three-part series of training that will enhance your business and help us all promote Rockingham County's hospitality!

January 25, 2010

Customer Service for the 21st Century

February 15, 2010

Dealing with Wedding and Special Event Issues

March 15, 2010

Know Your Community: Sharing Resources and Partnering

All training will be held at Chinqua Penn from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Training cost is \$20 for the three part series.

For more information, contact:  
North Carolina Cooperative  
Extension Service  
Brenda Sutton  
336-342-8230

[brenda.sutton@ncsu.edu](mailto:brenda.sutton@ncsu.edu)





## Highway Connector Critical to Rockingham County's Future

The I-73/68 Connector Committee has been working for over a year to push for the US220/NC68 Connector (Future I-73) project. This project is critically important for Rockingham County's future economic health. We must have this highway connection in order to share in the prosperity that will radiate from PTI Airport and the new FedEx air and ground hubs.

The future Interstate 73 will follow this route. Therefore, the County and the western towns have already put water and sewer lines in this corridor to prepare for growth. Several excellent industrial sites are available in the area now.

Garland Rakestraw of Stoneville is the chair of the committee. The other members are Gary Corns, Jack Webster, Sen. Phil Berger, Bill

Goldston, Rep. Bryan Holloway, Homer Wright, John Grogan, Micky Silvers, Dwight Lake, Rex Tuggle, Bobby Stanley, Leon Inman, Graham Pervier, Rep. Nelson Cole, Keith Duncan and Ted Johnson.



Members of the Committee have met with Sen. Richard Burr, Rep. Howard Coble, Rep. Brad Miller and NC Transportation Secretary

Eugene Conti. The Committee has also written to many other federal, state and local officials to ask for their support.

The NC Department of Transportation is preparing a new Transportation

Improvement Plan (TIP). Projects in the first five years of this new plan, called the "deliverable TIP", will have a 95% certainty of funding and construction. The Committee's goal is to be sure that the Connector project is included in the Deliverable TIP.

As of this writing, the US 220/NC68 Connector project has been included in the new "Deliverable TIP". Beginning in 2012, the state is set to increase US220 to four lanes, starting at the NC 68 split south of Greensboro. Construction of the connector from US220 to NC68 near the Airport will begin in 2014. Each project will take two or three years to complete. The State Board of Transportation is expected to finalize the new TIP in the very near future.

## North of the Border: Working with Our Northern Neighbors

Our Virginia neighbors are showing their confidence in the future economy of this region. Both Martinsville/Henry County and Danville/Pittsylvania County are developing large industrial sites just across the border.

The Martinsville/Henry County project is called Commonwealth Crossing Business Center. They have acquired a 770 acre site located on the west side of US 220 at the NC/VA State line. A preliminary development plan was presented to Martinsville and Henry County leaders in May. The proposed entrance to the site will actually be off Spencer Road in Rockingham County.

The "selling points" for Commonwealth Crossing include access to US 220 (and Future I-73), available railroad frontage, and proximity to PTI airport and the new FedEx air and ground hubs.

Partnership President Graham Pervier and County Manager Tom Robinson have met with their Henry County counterparts to begin a discussion about possible North Carolina involvement in this significant project.

The Danville/Pittsylvania County "Mega Site" is an even larger project. The Regional Industrial Authority has assembled over 3,000 acres on Berry Hill Road just above the State line near Eden. The site has rail frontage, a major gas line, and access to the US58 By-pass. Plus, the terrain is particularly well suited for industrial development.

Danville and Pittsylvania County leaders are preparing the Mega Site to "provide an area suitable for a large footprint development". They hope to "entice a 'game changing' company for the region".

Graham Pervier, Tom Robinson, Eden

City Manager Brad Corcoran and Eden Economic Developer Mike Dougherty met with the Danville City Manager and the Pittsylvania County Administrator to explore the possibility of our involvement with the Mega Site project. There has been a follow-up meeting to discuss the feasibility of serving the Mega Site with Eden's water and sewer utilities.

Both of our neighbors to the North are showing real confidence in the economic future of this area with these projects. They do have access to substantial assistance from the Virginia Tobacco Commission and from large community foundations. However, we are hopeful that North Carolina involvement might help to expedite these projects.

After all, companies looking for sites and people looking for jobs don't care where the state line is.



## Gov. Perdue Announces Expansion of SANS Technical Fibers



Earlier this month, Gov. Bev Perdue announced that SANS Technical Fibers LLC, an international manufacturer of synthetic nylon filament and yarn for the high-performance, military, automotive and other markets, will expand its plant in Rockingham County. The company will invest more than \$2.8 million and create 25 jobs in Stoneville. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$60,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund, which is contingent upon local matches.



market and for military vests, packs and parachutes. The 25 new jobs will pay an average annual wage of \$25,669, not including benefits.

“We are extremely pleased to announce this expansion, which will ensure that we maintain our position as the premier supplier to the global nylon 6.6 sewing thread market. Most of the capacity from this cost-effective expansion will be exported into Europe, South America and Asia,” said Zach Zacharias, president and CEO of SANS Technical Fibers.

“North Carolina remains a top choice for successful companies adapting to compete in a global marketplace,” Gov. Perdue said. “Our exceptional quality of life and skilled workforce continue to attract companies looking for the perfect location to expand and prosper.”

SANS Technical Fibers, headquartered in Gastonia, is a wholly owned subsidiary of AECL Limited of South Africa. AECL has consolidated its fiber-producing operations to the Stoneville plant, which currently employs about 100 people.

The SANS Stoneville plant will manufacture nylon industrial fibers for sewing thread, knitting and weaving operations in the automotive

“During these tough economic times, it’s important to make the right investments to create jobs and grow businesses,” said Rep. Nelson Cole. “We welcome these jobs in Stoneville and look forward to working with the Governor to add more jobs to the area.”

Other project partners include: the N.C. Department of Commerce, Rockingham County, Rockingham County Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development, Town of Stoneville and Duke Energy.

For information on company job opportunities, please contact: [hr@sansfibers.com](mailto:hr@sansfibers.com).

## Tourism Update

The Tourism Development Authority has been busy implementing its new three-year marketing plan. The plan is the result of extensive market research that was conducted on the tourism industry from a national, regional and local perspective.

The new plan is a continuation of many of the marketing initiatives and messages that the TDA has been implementing the last six years. The new plan builds upon the outdoor recreation branding that the TDA launched in 2003 with the Rockingham County Rivers Guide and subsequent ads and other marketing materials. One of the TDA’s new tactics in its outdoor recreation branding will be to place more cooperative/partner advertisements with area municipalities. This helps spread the county’s and municipalities’ messages further and allow us to place ads in magazines that none of us could afford alone.

New tactics that the TDA will focus on include promoting venues for social events such as family reunions and weddings, and recruiting more sporting events. Social events like family reunions/weddings are now a leading reason for leisure travel throughout the state and country. In this new marketing plan, the TDA plans to grow this segment of travel in the local area by promoting the special event venues, activities and other small businesses in Rockingham County that serve this market.

It’s no secret that sporting events are a major component to Rockingham County’s tourism industry. These events attract hundreds of out-of-town guests who usually stay in our local hotels for two to three nights. These visitors eat at our restaurants and shop in local shops, thus spreading the economic impact. Sporting events are the “bread and butter” of our local tourism industry. Therefore, the TDA plans to grow this market by promoting local parks, rivers and other outdoor recreation attractions to regional and national sports associations.

The TDA has also jumped on the social networking bandwagon. You can now find us on Facebook as Rockingham County: North Carolina’s North Star. We invite you to become a fan of our page to stay up to date about tourism-related events and news.

Follow us on **facebook**



**The Newsletter of Rockingham County's  
Business Community**

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**Happy Holiday's from  
North Carolina's North Star**

## **Rockingham County Upcoming Events**

### **December 20**

Autumn Creek Vineyards Sunday Blues-  
2:15 pm- 5:15 pm—Live music (Matt Hill  
Blues band) complimentary Cheese &  
Crackers - Open Bar/wine & beer.

### **December 24th & 25th**

**Christmas Holiday** - Governmental Center  
Offices will be closed.

### **December 31**

Autumn Creek Vineyards—New Years Eve  
Party- Music (DJ Henry Wood)  
Complimentary Hors d' oeuvres  
and Champagne at mid-night - Open  
Bar/wine & beer, \$30 per couple/ \$20  
single

### **January 1st**

**New Year's Day** - Governmental Center  
Offices will be closed.

### **January 13**

**Countywide Coffee** sponsored by RCC,  
Hwy 65, Wentworth, (held in the  
Whitcomb Student Center); 8:00 a.m.

### **January 19**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast  
8:00 a.m. Zion Baptist Church in  
Reidsville. Tickets available \$8.00  
Keynote speaker will be Dr. Rodney  
Shotwell, Superintendent, Rockingham  
County Schools

### **January 20**

**Annual Meeting** - The Rockingham County  
Partnership for Economic and Tourism  
Development will hold their Annual  
Meeting on January 20th, 2010 at 5:30  
PM at The Penn House in Reidsville. For  
additional information please contact our  
office at 342-8138.

### **January 25**

North Carolina Hospitality Training -1st  
session. All training will be held at  
Chinqua Penn from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00  
p.m. For more information, contact:  
Brenda Sutton at 336-342-8230.

### **January 24**

Autumn Creek Vineyards Sunday Blues-  
2:00 pm- 5:00 pm—Live music (Matt Hill  
Blues band) complimentary Cheese &  
Crackers - Open Bar/wine & beer.

### **February 15**

Feb 15 North Carolina Hospitality Training -  
2nd session. All training will be held at  
Chinqua Penn from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00  
p.m. For more information, contact:  
Brenda Sutton at 336-342-8230.

### **March 15**

Mar 15 North Carolina Hospitality Training -  
3rd session. All training will be held at  
Chinqua Penn from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00  
p.m. For more information, contact:  
Brenda Sutton at 336-342-8230.

**For more upcoming events please visit  
the Calendar of Events on our web site:  
[www.ncnorthstar.com](http://www.ncnorthstar.com).**

