



## Development Authority Quarterly Newsletter

*May, 2016*

**Welcome** to the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority's quarterly newsletter! We will share our newsletters via email with the objective to reach out to stakeholders, site consultants and economic development partners to keep them up to date on our most recent announcements, the progress of our existing projects, and community news.

## Dublin-Laurens County Economy Firing on All Cylinders



**2016** will be a record setting year in economic development for Dublin-Laurens County. Multiple new industrial projects have announced an expansion or location in the past twelve months. A May announcement of an Israeli project marks the sixth international company that has located in the community. Additional sectors of the local economy are also experiencing strong growth. Retail growth continues to outpace expectations with new hotels under construction along with new restaurants and commercial establishments coming online.

Dublin is now the home of three colleges and universities. In 2015, Georgia Military College (GMC) opened its doors in Downtown Dublin in a restored 102-year-old seven story bank building redeveloped with the help of a Georgia investor and the support of the Downtown Development Authority. Middle Georgia State University Dublin campus and Oconee Fall Line Technical College continue to thrive here with multiple graduates and numerous program offerings.

The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, Laurens County's largest employer, is adding over 50 new physicians and is currently reviewing proposals for a new housing project, and will break ground on a new mental health facility on July 11, 2016.

YKK AP, one of the area's flagship manufacturers, celebrated 25 years in Dublin in May of 2016. Japanese-owned YKK AP, a global leader architectural aluminum products, currently has 380 employees and has expanded multiple times since locating in Dublin in 1992.

Southeast Paper, one of the area's largest employers, was bought in 2015 by WestRock, a global leader in the wood products industry representing a merger of MeadWestvaco Corporation and Rock Tenn. The new company has significant resources and is dedicated to the Laurens County facility and its long-term growth.

Georgia was voted the best state in the U.S. for business two years in a row by *Site Selection Magazine*.

**Dublin-Laurens County is the business Heart of Georgia, and it is beating strong!**

## **Valmiera Glass Announces 425 Job, \$90 million Expansion**



**Valmiera Glass Group**, a Latvian-based fiberglass manufacturer, announced a \$90 million expansion in Dublin-Laurens County on **January 25, 2016**. The announced capital investment is one of the largest in the history of the community. Valmiera Glass Group, with headquarters in Valmiera, Latvia, is a global partner to industry sectors such as aerospace, oil and gas, automotive and a variety of others. The manufacturer offers a range of industry services including the production, processing and coating of textile fiberglass structures. The Group companies are located on two continents in three countries: in Latvia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Valmiera Glass Group has over 80 years of experience in glass fibre

production. "Over 400 families will be directly impacted by this decision," said Dr. Fred Williams, Chairman, Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority. "We are so thankful to the company and all of our local, state, and federal partners for helping us secure these new jobs. This announcement is a wonderful way to kick start 2016 and a great example of the fruit that comes from a commitment to support aggressive economic development in Middle Georgia."

To ensure their large workforce needs are met head on, the Dublin-based Oconee Fall Line Technical College will collaborate with Valmiera Glass Group to house a training center for future employees. The board of directors at the Heart of Georgia College and Career Academy, located on the technical college campus, will provide a customized training space for the ongoing needs of the company. In turn, the company will make a significant investment in the facility which will be used year-round for advanced manufacturing training.

Development Authority staff worked in close partnership with the state of Georgia's Department of Economic Development along with the site selection team represented by Aventis Atlantic Partners and consultants from Rödl Langford de Kock LLP.



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## **Community and Weyerhaeuser Celebrate First Dual-Certified McCallum Sweeney Consulting Mega Site/Super Park in Georgia**



**Dublin-Laurens County is Home to one of the Premier Mega Sites in the  
U.S.**



Community leaders, economic development partners, site consultants and stakeholders joined the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority board and staff on **May 9, 2016** for a celebration of Georgia's first and only certified McCallum Sweeney Consulting Mega Site/Super Park and GRAD certified site. The event was held at Dublin's Oconee Fall Line Technical College and included close to 100 stakeholders. State Rep. Matt Hatchett, Charlie Gatlin (GDEcD), Lindsey Meyers (McCallum Sweeney), Jim Kilberg (Weyerhaeuser), Emory Lake (Laurens County Commissioners), and Dr. Fred Williams (DLCDA) spoke about the site's economic development potential at the event. Gray Swoope, former Secretary of Commerce for the state of Florida and previously Mississippi also spoke about the statewide impact the site will make on Georgia.

The Heart of Georgia Mega Site, developed as a partnership between Weyerhaeuser and the Dublin-Laurens County community, has almost 2,000 acres with interstate frontage, 5,000 ft of onsite JD Power & Associates award winning Genesee and Wyoming rail service, with a proximity of only 110 miles from the deep water port of Savannah. The dual certifications by the Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) and by McCallum Sweeney Consulting, a nationally recognized expert in site selection, mean the location was rigorously analyzed for several factors to ensure the land is "shovel-ready."

"This is a big, big deal for our economic development program and for Middle Georgia, " said Brad Lofton, President of the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority. "These state and national designations add credibility and third party validation for our Mega Site, which we are so proud of. In the end, it will lead to what is most important for our region-jobs, jobs, jobs!"

For potential prospects, the Heart of Georgia Mega Site is one of the largest available tracts in the state of Georgia and includes major amenities plus an available workforce that will support successful economic development growth. For more information, please contact Brad Lofton at 478-272-3118, or by email at [blofton@dlcda.com](mailto:blofton@dlcda.com).

The site is also listed with CB Richard Ellis out of Atlanta, GA. Contact Todd Barton at [Todd.Barton@cbre.com](mailto:Todd.Barton@cbre.com) or Greg Haynes at [Greg.Haynes@cbre.com](mailto:Greg.Haynes@cbre.com).



**View more pictures from the event!**

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## **Global Logistics Company Selects Dublin-Laurens County**

On **May 19, 2016**, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal announced the new Southeast U.S. location of Polymer Logistics, a retail packaging company providing eco-friendly containers to major retailers like Walmart, Kroger, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Carrefour and more. Polymer Logistics currently operates two service centers in California with an additional center in Texas. Polymer's decision to locate a new state-of-the-art 73,500 sf processing center in Laurens County will generate a capital investment of \$4.7 million plus 110 new jobs. Centrally located between the world's busiest airport and the fastest growing deep water port in America-Savannah, GA, Dublin is now the home of Best Buy's Southeast U.S. Regional Distribution Center, Fred's Southeast

U.S. Regional Distribution Center, Farmers Home Furniture's Southeast Regional Distribution Center and headquarters and now Polymer Logistics. According to Brad Lofton, President of the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority, "Dublin-Laurens County has become an emerging leader in Georgia when it comes to transportation and logistics. A number of



**Polymer Logistics**

advanced manufacturing companies and logistics groups have located here due to our interstate proximity and location to global intermodal assets."

In addition to Dublin's location advantages, Polymer noted the region's workforce advantages, pro-business leadership and quality of life as successful ingredients in the company's site selection process. In addition to building an impressive cluster of logistics industries, Polymer represents the sixth international company that has located here and the first Israeli project. DLCDA staff worked directly with a team from the Georgia Department of Economic Development as well as the site selection team of Chad Chancellor and Alex Metzger of The Next Move Group out of New Orleans, LA and St. Louis, MO.

### **About Polymer Logistics**

Polymer Logistics' extensive range of returnable transport, storage, and display products includes collapsible bins, folding, nesting and stackable crates, together with reusable dollies and pallets. These offer substantial costs benefits, are more environmentally friendly than traditional one-way transit packaging, and are robust enough to withstand the rigorous demands of retail supply chain logistics for many years. Polymer Logistics' most recent innovation is the wood grain RPC, which brings an upscale look to stores and drives sales and shopper engagement. More information is available at [www.polymerlogistics.com](http://www.polymerlogistics.com).

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## **TriStar Aerials Locates in Downtown Dublin**



On **May 17, 2016**, TriStar Aerial Lift and Equipment Sales, Inc., an authorized equipment dealer to various manufacturers announced a new location in Downtown Dublin, Georgia. The family owned business with over 33 years of experience in the equipment industry will create over 30 jobs in the community and will invest \$1 million in their Dublin facility that will include signage, equipment servicing, refurbish/reconditioning equipment, painting booth, and a rental center. TriStar Aerial will locate in a former agri-business building in Downtown Dublin after the Dublin City Council approved the rezoning of the 1.839 acres from B-1 (central business district) to M-1 (warehousing and light industry) zone in order to allow TriStar's expansion into the community.

"I want to be a part of Dublin!" said TriStar Aerial President Tim Sexton. "TriStar Aerial Lift and Equipment Sales, Inc. is elated to join the Dublin family. We thank the Dublin town officials and the staff of the Development Authority, and we are grateful for their support, hard work and dedication. The spirit of the community is encouraging, and we look forward to opening for business soon."

Currently, 90% of the company's business is done outside of the state of Georgia, but their location in Dublin will allow them to increase their services and business within the state.

"Our team at the Georgia Department of Economic Development is excited about TriStar Aerial's expansion," said Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner Chris Carr. "We have great economic development partners in the Dublin-Laurens County area, and we believe TriStar Aerial's expansion will simply add to a growing and highly successful business-friendly community."

Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) Assistant Director of Entrepreneur & Small Business Development and Project Manager Ryan Waldrep assisted the company on behalf of Georgia in partnership with the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority.



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## DLCDA Board Member to Lead Georgia Ports Authority



On **May 23, 2016**, the Board of Directors of the Georgia Ports Authority elected James L. Allgood as chairman. Mr. Allgood is a past Chairman of the Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority and is a long-serving and key member of the board. During his tenure on the



Dublin-Laurens County Development Authority board, he has assisted with the location of over 1,592 new jobs with a cumulative capital investment of \$280 million. Mr. Allgood has over 40 years of experience as a business leader on the state and local level and has lived in Dublin his entire life. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a BBA in Economics and started his own pest control business, Allgood Pest Solutions, in 1974. He and his wife Kathy have three children and two grandchildren. "I'm excited to have this new opportunity to serve the

state," Allgood said. "With our harbor deepening under way, the infrastructure investments we're making on terminal, and the improvements to road and rail connections we're building in Georgia, there is a wealth of opportunity ahead of us."

Georgia's deepwater ports and inland barge terminals support more than 369,000 jobs throughout the state annually and contribute \$20.4 billion in income, \$84.1 billion in revenue and \$2.3 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy. The Port of Savannah handled 8.2 percent of the U.S. containerized cargo volume and 10.3 percent of all U.S. containerized exports in CY2015.

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Economic Development news in  
Dublin-Laurens County

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