

Governor Sonny Perdue Announces OneGeorgia Awards

MOULTRIE, GA - Governor Sonny Perdue announced today over \$9 million in grant and loan awards from the OneGeorgia Authority to spur economic development in Georgia's most economically distressed communities. These funds will assist with a variety of economic development projects in rural Georgia aimed at creating new jobs and private investment, the retention of existing jobs, capacity building projects, and also centralized dispatch Regional E-911 systems.

"These awards will help create over 3,000 job new jobs in rural communities across our state," said Governor Sonny Perdue. "Expanding opportunity and investment throughout Georgia is a top priority of my administration."

The Equity awards, Round 3 of FY 2004 funding, are designed to assist communities and regions build the necessary infrastructure to support economic development. The program's flexibility provides financial assistance to enhance publicly-owned tourism initiatives, workforce development opportunities, and downtown revitalization projects. In addition, loan funds are available through the Equity Revolving Loan Fund to assist small business owners with business growth and expansion opportunities. Project awards are given through three competitive rounds annually and are capped at \$500,000. Tier 1 and 2 communities, and in some cases Tier 3 communities, are eligible for Authority Assistance. The next Equity application deadline is September 21, 2004.

Equity awards totaling \$2,876,384 included grants totaling \$1,896,925 and loans totaling \$979,459. These awards include:

Development Authority of Long County

A grant to assist with the acquisition and infrastructure improvements to a 49.6 acre site which was ranked as the #1 site following a feasibility study due to its proximity to Hwy 84, rail, water and sewer.

- \$468,167 Grant
- \$954,119 Total Project Cost

Development Authority of Macon County

A loan to purchase new equipment to support the expansion of Integrated Composite Technologies, a manufacturer of wood and plastic composite products made completely from recycled waste materials. The new hi-tech extruder production equipment will enable the company to more aggressively compete in the global marketplace. The company began as a start-up in 2001 and has invested \$11.5 million at the Macon County facility and employs 61 people. Expansion plans include the creation of 60 new jobs and an additional private investment of \$4.5MM.

- \$335,621 Loan
- \$5,442,628 Total Project Cost

Meriwether County Industrial Development Authority

A grant of \$500,000 to assist with road improvements along a one-mile section of Old Woodbury Road and Georgia Hwy 85 West to provide truck access to the new manufacturing facility of Sims Bark Company. The company, with three plants and headquartered in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, manufactures landscape materials and produces mulch for sale at retail outlets such as Lowe's, Pike's Nursery and Home Depot. The company, expected to be operational early next year, is expected to invest \$10 million at the 101-acre facility just outside Woodbury and hire 70 employees over the next three to five years.

- \$500,000 Grant
- \$11,037,899 Total Project Cost

Development Authority of Richmond County

A grant of \$310,392 for water and sewer extensions and road improvements on a 50-acre tract of publicly owned land located at the intersection of Doug Bernard Parkway and Dixon Airline Road. The infrastructure improvements are needed to support the new location of Augusta Auto Auction, including the construction of a 40,000 square foot building at an estimated cost exceeding \$7 million and 140 new jobs. The company's goals include becoming the number one destination for franchise and independent dealers to buy or sell used vehicle inventory within a 150-mile radius of Augusta and to become the leading remarketing facility for banks and other financial institutions in the area.

- \$310,392 Grant

- \$7,732,432 Total Project Cost

Stephens County Development Authority

A grant of \$121,060 to assist with the construction of a rail spur in the Meadowbrook Industrial Park . The publicly-owned rail spur is expected to increase the marketability of the park as well as support the retention of Gem Industries, Inc. With the addition of a rail spur to support the high volume of raw material, finished good shipments and the penetration of new markets, the company plans to create 22 new jobs above the 124 existing jobs and make an additional private investment of \$6.45 million. The rails spur and company expansions are both viewed as important opportunities to further diversify an economy that has historically been textile-dependent.

- \$121,060 Grant
- \$6,833,935 Total Project Cost

Turner County Development Authority

A loan of \$500,000 for the construction of a 50,000 SF speculative building on five acres in the new 120-acre Ashburn-Turner County North Industrial Park , strategically located near I-75. The authority intends to aggressively market the facility to light manufacturing and/or distribution in an effort to diversify their economy and combat the above-average unemployment rates that have plagued the area. The Authority seeks to utilize the marketing assistance of Georgia DED, Georgia Power, MEAG, GEMC and others.

- \$500,000 Loan
- \$534,000 Total Project Cost

City of West Point

A grant of \$500,000 to assist with construction of public infrastructure improvements to an additional 60 acres at the West Point Technology Park along I-85. The economy of the area has struggled with the closure of textile manufacturing facilities along with a slow recovery in the high-tech sector. The development of the 60-acre tract is an important strategy to support further diversification of the area's economy. The applicant indicates that less than 7 acres with infrastructure is available in the original industrial park development that can be marketed to prospects.

- \$500,000 Grant
- \$1,313,599 Total Project Cost

Governor Perdue recognized seven EDGE awards made since the last OneGeorgia Authority Board meeting in May 2004. The purpose of the EDGE Fund is to provide financial assistance to eligible applicants that are being considered as a relocation or expansion site and are competing with another state for location of a project. EDGE fund projects are generally time-sensitive in nature and are accepted on a first-come-first-serve basis. The awards include:

Lincoln County Development Authority

\$200,000 to partially fund the renovation to a 35,000 SF vacated industrial building (Ascot Building) for use as a production facility by a company relocating to Lincoln County from Louisiana . The building, formerly used as a textile-production facility, is situated on a 15-acre tract of land. Top Grill Imports, LLC (d/b/a Iron Works), a small manufacturer of commercial grills and grill amenities, will lease the building from the Development Authority for a period of seven years. This project is expected to create 20 new jobs with private investment of \$361,350 in existing machinery and equipment.

Joint Development Authority of Franklin , Hart and Stephens Counties

\$650,000 to assist with site preparation for a new industry on a 22-acre site in the 150-acre Gateway Hi-Tech Industrial Park. TI Automotive (TI), a leading supplier of fuel-storage and fluid-carrying systems to automakers, will be the first tenant in the park, which is co-located in both Franklin and Hart Counties near Interstate 85. TI Automotive intends to establish a 145,000 SF manufacturing plant to support its contract for the production of blow-molded gas tanks for the BMW plant in Spartanburg , South Carolina . TI is a privately held, United Kingdom based limited company with regional headquarters in Oxford , England , and Warren Michigan. The company is the only manufacturer of fully integrated fuel-storage and delivery systems for cars and trucks. According to TI, approximately half of the 57 million cars built every year rely on TI brake, fuel, and/or power-train technology. TI employs over 20,000 persons at 100 sites in 26 countries worldwide. This project is expected to create 130 new jobs within two years.

Griffin-Spalding Development Authority

\$400,000 to purchase machinery and equipment for Perkins Shibaura Engines, LLC (PSE), a new joint venture that has been created to assemble engines in Griffin. PSE is a joint venture between Perkins Engines (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Caterpillar) and Ishikawajima Shibaura Machinery Ltd. (one of Japan's leading suppliers of small engines and tractors). Perkins Engines purchased an existing 55,000 SF building from Caterpillar and will maintain ownership of the building. The equipment that will be purchased with EDGE funds will be leased to PSE from the Development Authority for a period of ten years. The PSE plant in one of Griffin's industrial parks will be the first Perkins facility in North America and the second plant for the joint venture. PSE will assemble and distribute Perkins' 400-series engines. The plant will eventually produce up to 60,000 engines annually. This project will create 100 new jobs. As of August 20, 2004, the company had over 60 employees.

Camden County Joint Development Authority

\$994,000 to assist with leasehold improvements to an Authority-owned building for Express Scripts, Inc. (ESI). ESI is a publicly-traded, Fortune 500 company that provides pharmacy-benefit management services with more than 50 million members in the US and Canada. The company was formed in 1986 and is based in Maryland Heights, Missouri. Clients include managed-care organizations, health insurers, employers, third-party administrators and government-sponsored programs. The Camden County facility will be an in-bound call center located in a 90,000 SF former Wal Mart building. ESI has over 8,200 full and part-time employees in the United States in 27 locations within 12 states. The company is expected to create 654 new jobs by the end of the first year of operations.

Grady County Joint Development Authority

\$750,000 to assist in the construction of a new 112,000 SF manufacturing facility located on a 43-acre site in Milestone Industrial Park for Higdon Furniture Company (HFC). HFC, founded in 1953, is a third-generation furniture manufacturer located in Quincy, Florida. The Florida facility contains 200,000 SF and employs approximately 200 workers and is producing at maximum capacity. HFC seeks to increase manufacturing facilities to support continued growth opportunities. The company markets to distributors, independent stores and to chains with more than 1,000 outlets. This project represents Phase I of a three-phase expansion and will create 100 new jobs within 24 months.

Adel Industrial Development Authority

\$1,000,000 to acquire 125 acres of land for the location of the feed mill and hatchery for Sanderson Farms, Inc. Sanderson Farms stated in 1947 as a feed and seed store, and it evolved over the next few years into a poultry producer. Today, the company has over 8,100 employees and is one of the seven largest poultry producers in the United States. The Company is vertically integrated with five hatcheries, four feed mills and six processing plants located in Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. The new Georgia operation will locate the feed mill and hatchery in Adel with the processing facility in Moultrie, while an estimated 100 contract growers will be in the surrounding region. The hatchery building will house approximately 50 hatchers and incubators capable of processing, incubating and hatching approximately 1.5 million eggs and 1.3 million chicks per week. The feed mill will be capable of producing 7,000 tons of finished poultry feed per week. The Company's Adel facilities will create 160 jobs (115 jobs at the hatchery and 45 at the feed mill).

Moultrie-Colquitt County Development Authority

\$2,275,000 to assist in the acquisition of 1,033 acres of land to be used for a land-application spray field (LAS) that is needed to support the waste-water treatment for Sanderson Farms, Inc., a large, national poultry processor. Sanderson Farms is the nation's sixth leading supplier of chicken products to consumers and restaurant businesses. It is a major regional supplier in the South and distributes to Winn-Dixie, Albertson's, Piggly Wiggly, IGA and Safeway plus several national restaurant chains. The Company is vertically integrated with five hatcheries, four feed mills and six processing plants located in Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. The Company's goal is to establish a fully integrated poultry operation including a processing plant, feed mill, hatchery, and relationships with regional contract growers. The new Georgia operation will have the feed mill and hatchery in Adel with the processing facility in Moultrie, while an estimated 100 contract growers will be in the surrounding region. The processing plant will be capable of processing approximately 1.2 million chickens per week. The Company's Moultrie facility will create 1,400 jobs.

Governor Perdue also recognized the two most recent awards from the OneGeorgia Regional E-911 Fund.

Long County, McIntosh County and Tattnall County Board of Commissioners

The Wiregrass Trail Regional E-911 Center will cover Long, McIntosh and Tattnall Counties. Long and McIntosh presently do not have E-911 service. Tattnall County will expand its E-911 center, built in 2000, to include these two counties. The Tattnall County E-911 Center currently serves 22,385 residents. The

Wiregrass Trail Regional E-911 Center will add 10,548 Long County residents and 11,085 in McIntosh County for a total of \$44,018 people served, or an increase of 97%.

- Amount Awarded \$491,526

Candler County (regional: Bulloch County and Evans County Board of Commissioners)

Candler County will use the one-time start up costs to establish E-911 service. The service will be provided by Bulloch County through an Intergovernmental Agreement which establishes a regional system that includes Bulloch County , Evans County and Candler County . The E-911 funds would be used to assist in the purchase of equipment as well as mapping and addressing costs to serve the 9,577 residents of Candler County . E-911 calls from Candler County will be received at the Bulloch County Emergency Answering Center in Statesboro and then dispatched to the various emergency and law enforcement agencies in Candler County . Total cost of this project is \$1,218,117.

- Amount Awarded \$226,711

The OneGeorgia Authority was created utilizing one-third of the state's tobacco settlement to assist the state's most economically challenged areas. It is expected to receive about \$1.6 billion over the 25-year term of the settlement. Since the authority was created in October 2000, nearly \$117 million has been awarded in grants and loans. These projects support the creation and/or retention of over 21,500 jobs in 105 of Georgia's most economically depressed counties. For additional information, please refer to the authority's website: www.onegeorgia.org.