

Bryan, Effingham industrial projects get state funding

Wayne Hodgin | Thursday, June 25, 2009 at 12:30 am Savannah Morning News



Industrial development projects in Bryan and Effingham counties, as well as others across the state, were approved Wednesday for more than \$16.2 million in state grant and loan awards.

The money is intended to spur economic development in Georgia's most economically distressed communities, and the awards, facilitated by the OneGeorgia Authority, will assist with a variety of projects in rural Georgia.

They're aimed at creating jobs, stimulating new private investment, supporting the retention of existing jobs and enhancing regional competitiveness through capacity-building projects.

The awards were part of the package of incentives promised earlier to help convince many of the companies to move to Georgia.

EFACEC

The [Effingham County](#) Industrial Development Authority received \$2.95 million in EDGE (Economic Development, Growth and Expansion) grants to assist with the location of the new \$68.4 million EFACEC plant.

EFACEC is a power transformer manufacturing company based in Porto, [Portugal](#), and is locating its first U.S.-based plant in Effingham County. The 600,000-square-foot facility is being built on 55.35 acres in the Effingham County Industrial Park between [Rincon](#) and Springfield.

Florida Power has already placed two orders for transformers to be manufactured at the Effingham site, and Georgia Power has inquired about doing business with the company.

The company will employ nearly 300 people by next year and expects to hire nearly 700 by 2017. The local investment is expected to top \$100 million.

John Henry, CEO of the Effingham Industrial Development Authority, said he was pleased the state of Georgia realizes the importance of an investment in the EFACEC project.

"Projects like EFACEC extend beyond local impacts and provide tangible impacts to the entire state. We are very glad the state realizes this is not just an investment in Effingham County but coastal Georgia and the rest of the state as well," Henry said.

He, along with EFACEC representatives, was in Brunswick on Wednesday for the OneGeorgia Authority Board meeting.

Henry touted the combined efforts of the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Community Affairs, as well as OneGeorgia Authority, in helping with EFACEC's job recruitment.

"Given the current economic climate, we are ecstatic this project was made possible for this region with the help of these funds," Henry said. "We believe the creation of 700 new manufacturing jobs is a great thing for the state to be investing in."

Dicon Technologies

The Development Authority of [Bryan County](#) received a \$100,000 EDGE grant and a \$525,000 SILF (Strategic Industries Loan Fund) loan award for site preparation and to buy equipment for the location of Dicon Technologies to the Interstate Centre Industrial Park.

The company manufactures a variety of products in the areas of wound care, cosmetics, diabetic care, foot care and footwear that are in large part based upon Dicon's proprietary foam-related technologies.

Bryan County Commission Chairman Jimmy Burnsed said the grants are based on the project, its total cost and how many jobs it will bring in.

The county received a similar grant for Oracal, a German manufacturer of adhesive film that built a \$50 million plant in the industrial park and employs 150 workers.

"I think one thing that really helped us this time is that we are bringing a company that had been outsourced to China back to America," Burnsed said. "This kind of award recognizes our industrial park statewide, giving the park the sort of credibility that makes other industries want to look into coming here."

Dicon Technologies plans to construct a 30,000-square-foot facility on 5.93 acres for the company's manufacturing, research and development functions, which are currently located in China.

The company's portfolio of customers in the footwear industry include Johnston & Murphy, Kenneth Cole, Foot Joy and Born; and in the cosmetics and skin care industry, Walgreens, CVS, Sears/Kmart, Publix, Mary Kay and Big Lots.

OneGeorgia

The OneGeorgia Authority was created utilizing one-third of the state's settlement from tobacco lawsuits to assist the state's most economically challenged areas.

The OneGeorgia Authority is expected to receive about \$1.6 billion over the 25-year term of the settlement.

Company officials and local leaders associated with the most recent EDGE and SILF awards were recognized at Wednesday's OneGeorgia Board Authority meeting at the College of Coastal Georgia in Brunswick.

The seven EDGE awards, totaling \$14.05 million, are leveraged against about \$712 million in total project costs and are projected to create more than 2,243 jobs within the next three years.

Bryan County Now Editor Jamie Parker contributed to this story.

OneGeorgia Awards

Effingham County Industrial Development Authority/EFACEC Power Transformers Inc.

EDGE grant funds will be used to help with the location of a power transformer manufacturing facility for EFACEC Power Transformers Inc., a Portuguese manufacturer of electrical transformers used in the market of power generation, transmission and distribution.

This will be its first U.S.-based manufacturing plant. Although EFACEC is primarily an energy company, 46 percent of its sales come from energy products and solutions.

-- EDGE award: \$2.95 million / total project cost: \$68.38 million

-- 283 new jobs in two years

Development Authority of Bryan County/

Dicon Technologies LLC

EDGE grant funds will be used to assist with site preparation, and SILF funds will be used to buy equipment in support of the location of Dicon Technologies LLC to Bryan County.

The company manufactures a variety of products in the areas of wound-care, cosmetics, diabetic care, foot care and footwear that are in large part based on Dicon's proprietary foam-related technologies.

Founded in 1980, Dicon has marketable and diverse products, as well as patents and patents-pending.

-- EDGE award: \$100,000; SILF award: \$525,000 / total project cost: \$3.38 million

-- 55 new jobs in two years