

In This Issue

- Comments from the Chairman
- Website Traffic
- I-73 Update
- Recent Announcements
- Board Member Named Economic Development Ambassador
- NESA Office Relocated
- NESA Says Goodbye to Misti Humphries
- NESA Developers Retire

NESA Overview

The North Eastern Strategic Alliance (**NESA**) is a regional economic development organization that serves a nine-county region in the northeast corner of South Carolina.

NESA's primary objective is to significantly enhance the quality of life for residents of the region by creating additional jobs and capital investment within the existing industry base as well as through recruitment of new companies and expansion of tourism related development.

Comments from the Chairman



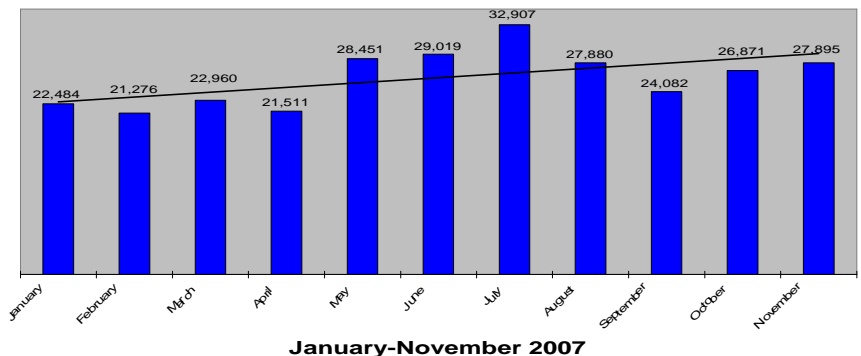
As 2007 draws to a close, it is hard to believe the strides the NESA organization has made towards achieving its goals. In just two years, NESA has grown from a one man operation to a five person professional economic development team. Increased staff and resources will help NESA to accomplish even more for the region in 2008. The outstanding amount of support received from our NESA Board members, county allies, and other economic development allies, has allowed NESA to become the amazing organization and economic development engine that it is today. With continued support, I believe that we will see NESA reach new heights and achieve an unprecedented level of growth and prosperity for the region. We will see unemployment rates continue to fall and per capita investment and income continue to increase because of the impact made by the NESA organization.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year in the NESA Region.

Senator J. Yancey McGill
Chairman, NESA Executive Committee

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Total Hits on SCbusinessCorner.com



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NESA Board Members

(*Executive Committee)

Senator J. Yancey McGill*

Mr. Billy Alford*

Mr. James Alford

Mr. Billy Baldwin

Mr. James E. Brogdon

Mr. Frank Bullard, III

Dr. Fred Carter*

Mr. Loyd Daniel

Dr. Dave DeCenzo*

Mr. Vernie Dove

Mr. Fred DuBard*

Ms. Liz Gilland

Mr. Wayne Gray

Mr. Mike Hagg

Mr. Sel Hemingway

Mr. James "Pat" Howle

Rep. Doug Jennings*

Mr. Floyd Keels

Senator Hugh Leatherman*

Mr. E. LeRoy "Toy" Nettles, Jr.

Mr. Stanley Pasley

Mr. Matthew Rivers

Mr. Jack Shuler

Mr. K.G. "Rusty" Smith, Jr.

Ms. Mindy Taylor

Mr. Doug Wendel*

Mr. Mack Whittle, Jr.

Mr. Frank Willis*

Rep. William Witherspoon*

I-73 Update

The NESA I-73 Committee is pleased with the significant milestones that have been reached this year; the idea of I-73 is rapidly becoming the reality of I-73. Because of the efforts and support of the NESA committee and other partnerships with the SCDOT, the projected construction time of the interstate has been reduced significantly. In fact, right-of-way acquisitions and studies will begin in early 2008, further reducing the amount of time it will take to make I-73 a reality. The environmental impact study, which normally takes around five years for a project of this magnitude, is expected to be completed in less than three years. Innovative funding mechanisms, including private-sector investment and participation in the project are being explored. Some of the most important milestones toward the construction of I-73 that have been reached are:

- State and federal toll legislation passed by to assist in financing the construction of I-73
- Northern and Southern preferred routes selected
- Right of way acquisition approved by SCDOT
- Promotional efforts in support of I-73 pushed the construction of I-73 to the top priority (#1) for the state and #5 on the federal priority list
- I-73 named Corridor of National Significance by USDOT
- Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) signed

According to Coastal Carolina University research economist, Dr. Don Schunk, I-73 will bring an additional 100,000 tourists to the Myrtle Beach area each year, bringing an additional \$600 million per year into the Grand Strand's economy, and creating 950 new jobs. The interstate is expected to cost \$2 billion and take ten years to build.

Recent Announcements

- Chesterfield County—National Choice Bakery has purchased the 40,000 SF Chesterfield County Shell building. The facility will be used as a bagel factory with national distribution. National Choice will invest \$6 million and eventually create up to 140 jobs in the Pageland area.
- Marion County—Tripac, a distribution and packaging company will locate in Mullins, creating 20 new jobs initially and double that in the future.
- Marion County—Stergis Windows & Doors, Inc. will locate in Mullins, creating 30 jobs. The company builds wind resistant doors and windows and has ten locations nationwide.

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Mark Your Calendars

January 4, 2008—Board Meeting in Marion County

February 1, 2008—Executive Committee Meeting at FMU

Upcoming Recruiting Missions

January 2008 – Toronto, Canada

- Toronto Boat Show

February – Orlando, Florida

- RILA Trade Show

March – TBD (Ohio)

- Business Development Mission

April—Detroit, Michigan

- SAE Trade Show

May— New York/New Jersey

- Business Development Mission

June— Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- Business Development Mission

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Board Member Named Economic Development Ambassador



Governor Sanford and Floyd Keels

The NESAs Region is strong because of its good quality of life, leadership and the hard-working people who call it home. Floyd Keels, President and CEO of Santee Electric Cooperative, an economic development advocate, and an active NESAs Board Member, is one of the people who help make the NESAs Region a great place to live and do business.

Keels was recognized by Governor Mark Sanford as Economic Development Ambassador for Williamsburg County as the result of his commitment to the community and his significant contributions to state, regional, and local economic development efforts. Keels also spearheaded a strategic planning initiative for the development of new industrial/commercial sites in Williamsburg County.

Other Economic Development Ambassadors in the NESAs Region are:

- Gary Bulloch—American Stainless & Supply (Chesterfield)
- Mac Josey—Darlington Raceway (Darlington)
- Charlie Vance—First Bank (Dillon)
- Dr. Frank Cox—Roche Carolina (Florence)
- Arthur Lachicotte—Lachicotte Company (Georgetown)
- John Laymon—The Jackson Companies (Horry)
- Wayne Burdick—Beneteau USA (Marion)
- Don Newton—HR Manager, Domtar Paper Mill (Marlboro)

NESAs Office Relocated



Francis Marion University
Education Foundation and Non-Profit Consortium

The NESAs team recently relocated to newly acquired and renovated office facilities in the Francis Marion University Education Foundation and Non-profit Consortium building located on Palmetto Street across from FMU. Phone numbers, shipping and mailing addresses will remain the same.

NESA Team Members

Private Sector:

ArborOne
AT&T
BB&T
Beach First National Bank
Burroughs and Chapin Company
Carolina First
COMBO
DuBard, Inc.
Horry Electric Cooperative
Horry Telephone Company
Landmark Builders
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber
Pee Dee Electric Cooperative
Pepsi-Cola
Progress Energy
Santee Cooper
Santee Electric Cooperative
Strand Capital
Wachovia

Public Sector:

Chesterfield County
Darlington County
Dillon County
Florence County
Georgetown County
Horry County
Marion County
Marlboro County
Williamsburg County

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NESA Says Goodbye to Misti Humphries

Misti Humphries will be leaving the NESA team at the end of the year. Misti and her husband, Dwayne, plan to publish inspirational written works and dedicate themselves and a large portion of their time to international missionary work. The NESA team thanks Misti for the contributions that she made to the organization in 2007 and extends best wishes to Misti and Dwayne as they pursue meaningful work in their lives.

NESA Developers Retire

Dave Bailey, Executive Director of the Darlington County Development Board, and W. Frank Jones, Executive Director of the Marion County Economic Development Commission, have both announced their intention to retire. Both gentlemen will serve in a limited capacity until new executive directors are hired. The NESA team would like to thank Dave and Frank for their contributions to local and regional economic development initiatives and projects over the years. We hope that they will enjoy retirement.



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE NESA TEAM!

NEWS from the CORNER is published regularly by the North Eastern Strategic Alliance. Articles and data contained herein were adapted from information submitted by counties in the region. To submit content for this newsletter, please contact Marianne Langley at mlangley@scbusinesscorner.com or 843-661-4669. Contents © NESA, 2007.