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**Monroe-Union County
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**Did You Know?
Union County Achievements**

#10 county for incoming investment
in North Carolina in 2019

#1 aerospace cluster in North Carolina

Top 5 Boeing supplier site in Southeast

Top 5 in aerospace recruitment, nationwide

Top 10 aerospace cluster in the Southeast

Top 3 county for agri-business in North Carolina

Top 10 “No-Brainer” location for
manufacturing

Top 3 best workforces in North Carolina
(small market)

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A Private Entity for the Enhancement of
the Economic Development Activities in
Union County, North Carolina

The Union County Economic Development Growth Enterprise’s mission is to support and enhance economic development in Union County, North Carolina by creating opportunities for citizens, businesses and organizations to engage in the process of growing commerce by utilizing multiple mechanisms and strategies designed to continuously improve the economic balance and quality of life in our community.



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Demand spurs two new industrial parks

MONROE'S INDUSTRIAL PARKS HAVE ATTRACTED \$750M IN INVESTMENTS AND 2,000 JOBS

A new highway and ongoing demand for advanced manufacturing space in Union County has spurred the development of two new industrial parks.

The City of Monroe has begun work on its third industrial park after the first two, the Monroe Corporate Center and AeroPointe Industrial Centre, are nearly fully consumed.

In August 2018, the Monroe City Council voted to purchase 155 acres for \$4.7 million off North Carolina Highway 200. The site is about 10 miles southeast of I-485 in Charlotte and just over 1 mile from the new Monroe Expressway toll road, which opened in November.

The location has inspired the park's proposed name, Expressway Commerce Park at Monroe, which will target manufacturing, office and logistics-focused businesses seeking the improved roadway accessibility to more efficiently move their products.

"In seeking a new park, the City only targeted land close to the new Expressway to take advantage of that access. This new park provides a completely different product than what Monroe has been able to offer before," says Chris Platé, executive director of Monroe-Union County Economic Development. "This new park allows the community to target companies that have a strong logistics component of their business."

Expressway Commerce Park at Monroe will be available for new corporate residents by the end of 2019 or the beginning of 2020.

Meanwhile, Union County Industrial Park is in the beginning stages of a new 330-acre industrial development near the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. This industrial complex will be focused on precision manufacturers who have traditionally sought a location in Union County.

The county closed on the property in early 2019 and already has a 124-acre parcel under contract by a potential tenant. Site planning and infrastructure development are currently being designed. The county's park should be available for new tenants sometime in 2021.

Mr. Platé and his team at Monroe-Union County Economic Development are responsible for developing both industrial parks.

Like many other communities, the City of Monroe began developing the type of industrial parks that would provide opportunities to recruit high-tech manufacturing. In 1995, the City's first industrial park, the Monroe Corporate Center, was started and now just over 100 acres remain within the 500-acre park. Its second park, the 80-acres AeroPointe Industrial Centre, was built to support the community's aerospace cluster. This park has sold in its entirety to ATI, one of the world's leaders in aerospace super-alloy development and production.

Since the city began developing its



Most prospective industrial tenants are in the areas of precision manufacturing, metalworking and plastics that require a high level of precision in the final product.

own industrial parks, it has attracted \$750 million in investment from companies that have created over 2,000 jobs, says Platé. These industries develop products to serve a wide variety of business sectors, including aerospace, medical device, pharmaceutical, life safety, commercial automotive and construction materials.

Platé says the prospective companies being recruited to Union County are seeking property, specifically parks with covenants to construct facilities ranging from 50,000 to 150,000 square foot with room to expand and safeguard themselves for future growth needs.

He says most prospective industrial tenants that are a good match for Union County, develop out of the precision manufacturing, metalworking and plastics business sectors that require a high level of accuracy in the final product.

To attract modern manufacturing companies, the new parks will have to adapt to serve the changing demands on companies by a younger workforce. Outdoor amenities, such as a disc golf courses, walking and biking trails are useful in drawing a young skilled workforce.

As the work begins of these industrial developments, the focus of the effort lies solely in the fact these new parks will allow the economic development team to continue to provide a diverse mix of career opportunities for Union County residents.



Union County adds arts, culture and entertainment

SOON-TO-BE COMPLETED PROJECTS WILL BRING NEW LIFE TO DOWNTOWN MONROE

Downtown Monroe will soon have something new for everyone after city leaders complete significant investments in a new downtown historic theater renovation and the creation of a children's science center, further strengthening the area's quality of life.

By early 2020, residents will once again be able to gather at the "Dowd" Center Theater, an art modern-style theater built in the 1930s that has sat vacant for nearly three decades. In 2013, the City of Monroe purchased the theater and an adjacent building and is renovating it to return it to use as a location for performing arts, speakers, dance and movies. The theater seats about 570 people.

"We believe the theater is going to be a fantastic

economic catalyst for downtown and hopefully bring additional retail and maybe residential and corporate uses to downtown," says Pete Hovanec, communications and tourism officer for the City of Monroe. "It's very nostalgic. So many people have memories of the theater and are constantly peeking in the windows to see our progress."

The new Dowd Center Theater on Main Street will be city-owned and operated. The city also purchased the building next door to create a pre-function area for events.

"We could have built something newer and cheaper but the city felt this was a great investment because of the theater's historic value," Hovanec says. "It's creating

a lot of buzz. This is a project the city has wanted to do for many years."

At the same time Monroe's Dowd Center Theater opens, city leaders expect to open the Children's Science Center, a hands-on children's

learning facility near the downtown public library. The city owns the 20,000-square-foot building and plans to complete construction by early 2020.

The center will focus on a STEM curriculum, teaching science and technology to children of all ages, but with an emphasis on children from pre-Kindergarten to 6th grade.

Along with providing hours of entertainment for Union County families near to home, Hovanec says the project will likely spur business activity downtown as families come to the city for a visit and stay to eat at restaurants and shop nearby.

The museum will feature an actual cargo transport plane outside the building where children can learn about history and the science of flight. Inside the center, focus areas will be aerospace, agriculture, manufacturing and medical fields.

Beyond Downtown Monroe, Union County is known for family fun, as evidenced by the 12th annual Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show coming up in November. A feature of the show is a restored C-46 Commando owned by the City of Monroe, the only C-46 currently flying in the United States, says Hovanec.

"We've got tens of thousands of people coming from up and down the East Coast and International folks who are just big fans of classic airplanes," he says.

The festival at the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport includes 40 or more planes and military reenactments, wing-walkers, paratroopers, and a variety of traditional fair food options. The event has grown to become one of the largest

tourism events in the Charlotte area with the average attendance around 85,000 over the two-days.

West of Monroe in Mineral Springs is the site of one of the Charlotte region's top six sporting events. Next April will be the 25th anniversary of the Queen's Cup Steeplechase, which combines horse racing with fancy hats and bow ties. The event draws nearly 20,000 people each spring to enjoy warm weather, Jack Russell terrier races and the splendor of charging Thoroughbreds.

Just west of Mineral Springs is Waxhaw, a small town with year-round fun.

Waxhaw's historic downtown includes 20 eating and drinking establishments, including a local brewery and a wine shop in less than a half-square-mile. Included are another 80 businesses, including antique shops and other forms of retail.

"We want to be a hub for enjoying dining and social activity, along with arts and culture," says Curt White, downtown development manager for the Town of Waxhaw. Their vision seems to be working with high demand for their available storefronts. "We've got zero commercial vacancy right now," said White.

As the town adds hospitality businesses, it's adding new residential development. The town's first apartments opened in 2017 in a historic cotton mill. Another 200 new apartments are under construction now.

In 2018 the American Planning Association recognized Waxhaw as a Great Main Street, one of only two towns recognized in North Carolina.

"We have had a lot of success," White says. "Every day, Waxhaw is becoming a preferred destination for people within the Charlotte Region and beyond."

Monroe-Union County Economic Development believes that a high quality of life not only attracts investment to the county, but persuades companies to stay once they are here.

"We talk to companies outside of the area or internationally and one of the questions they always ask is 'what is it like to live in Union County?'" says Ron Mahle, assistant director of economic development. "What companies have found when they move to the county is a high quality school system, affordable housing, and quality jobs, all of which are really important decision factors to companies looking to relocate."



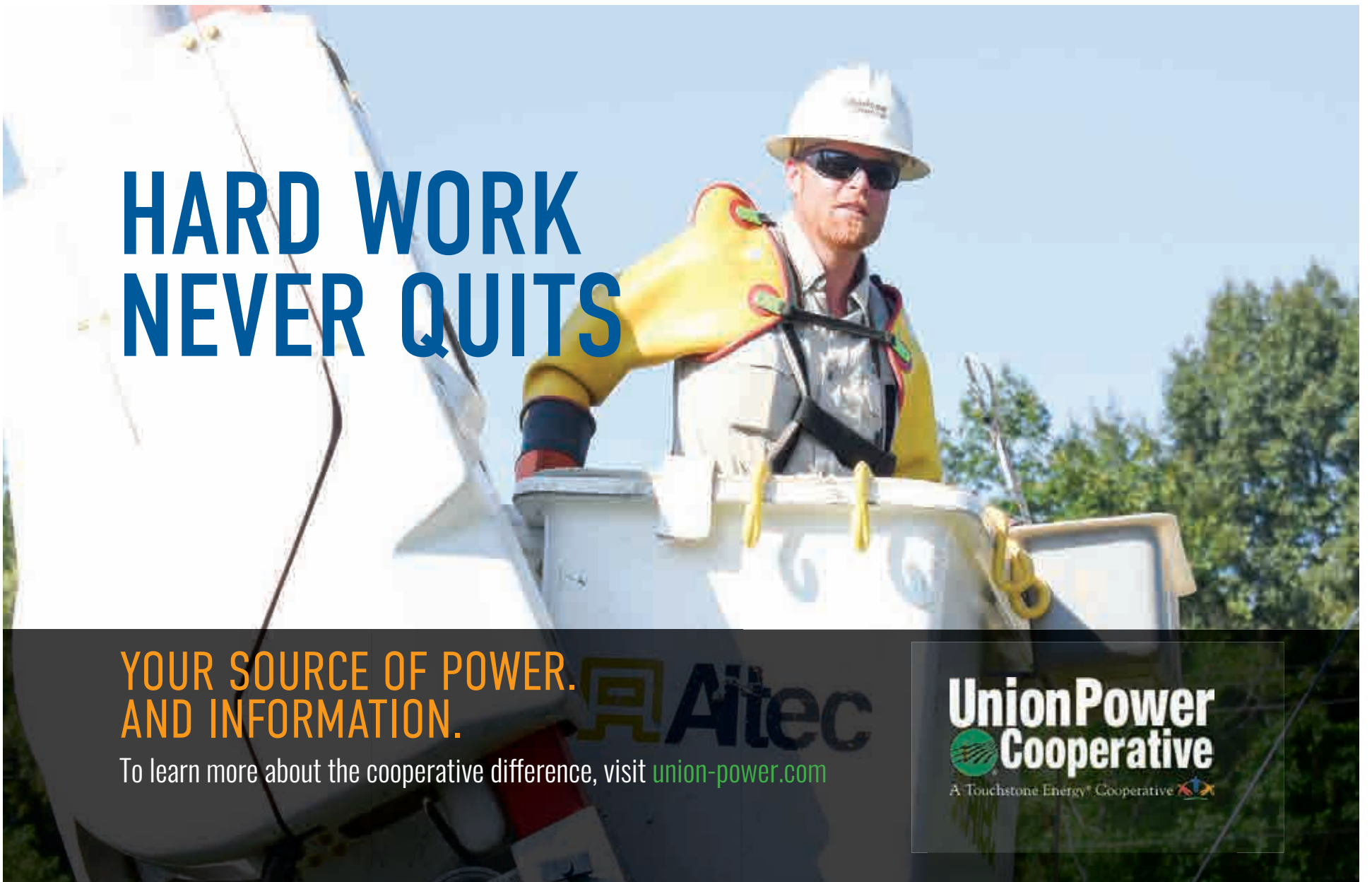


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Union County Wage Study reveals competitive hiring environment

\$628m
annual manufacturing wages in Union County

22%

of the available jobs in Union County are manufacturing

WAGES GOING DIRECTLY INTO RESIDENTS' POCKETS MULTIPLIES IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Wages are rising among Union County's manufacturers, strengthening the desirability of the workplaces and boosting the local economy.

The Monroe-Union County Economic Development's fourth annual wage survey conducted in the fall of 2018 reveals that the average hourly workforce wage rate is \$21.57, an almost \$3 per hour increase over 2017. The average hourly wage is calculated by averaging skilled and unskilled wage rates among participating companies in Union County. Wages nationally rose during the same period.

"That's an indication of the demand for our labor market," says Ron Mahle, assistant director of economic development for Monroe-Union County Economic Development. "We are encouraged when we see the wage rate increase because those dollars are going directly into Union County residents' pockets. These monies then multiply in the local economy when these residents purchase a vehicle, buy a home or even visit a local restaurant or store."

The annual wage survey is a combined effort between the staff of the Monroe Union County Economic Development office and local industry. Existing companies voluntarily provide data about wages, benefits, employee training needs, employee turnover and other data to provide a snapshot of labor trends that is specific to the local community.

"It provides our Union County industries specific wage information for Union County only," Mahle says. "There are several sources you can obtain data, but these sources are regional or national and less accurate for the micro economic. But we believe with our 45 to 50 respondents, including all of the major manufacturing employers in the county, the quality of the data is very strong and very instructive for the companies. It even dives in deeper to include specific wage rates by job type. There are few resources available with that kind of in-depth data."

The survey asks companies to provide wage information by job classification, creating an accurate look at the going rate for a skilled machinist or welder.

"A company can look at the data to see how they compare with their competitors," Mahle says. "This helps them go to their corporate headquarters and make the argument that in order to compete they need to raise the entry-level wage or the wage rate on some of the higher skilled positions."

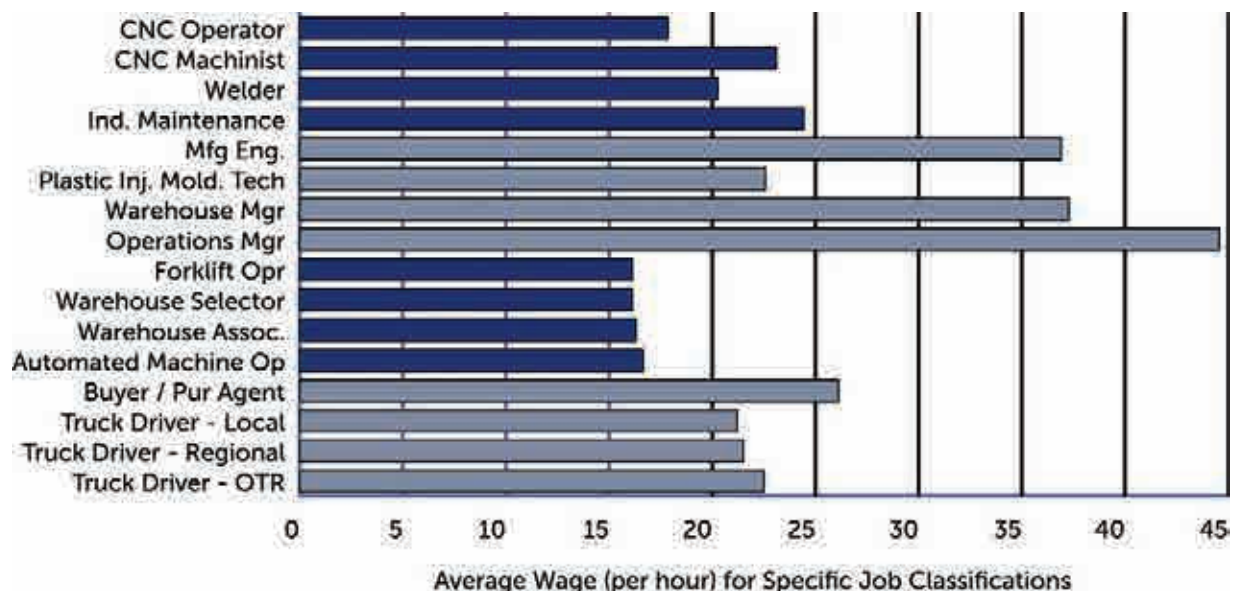
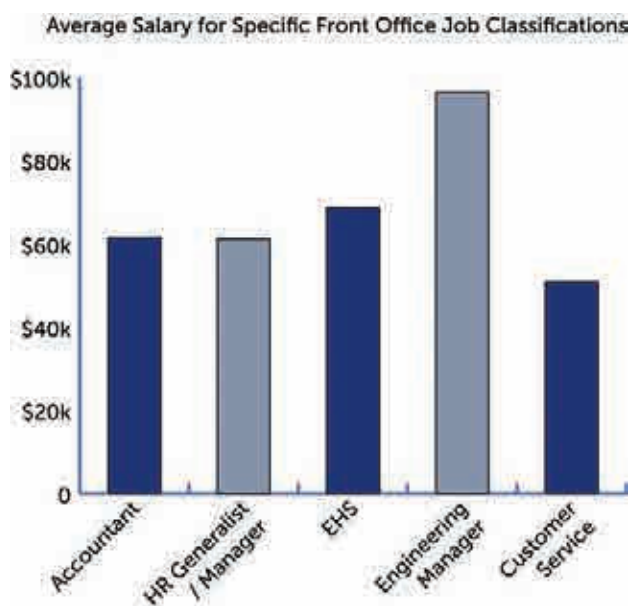
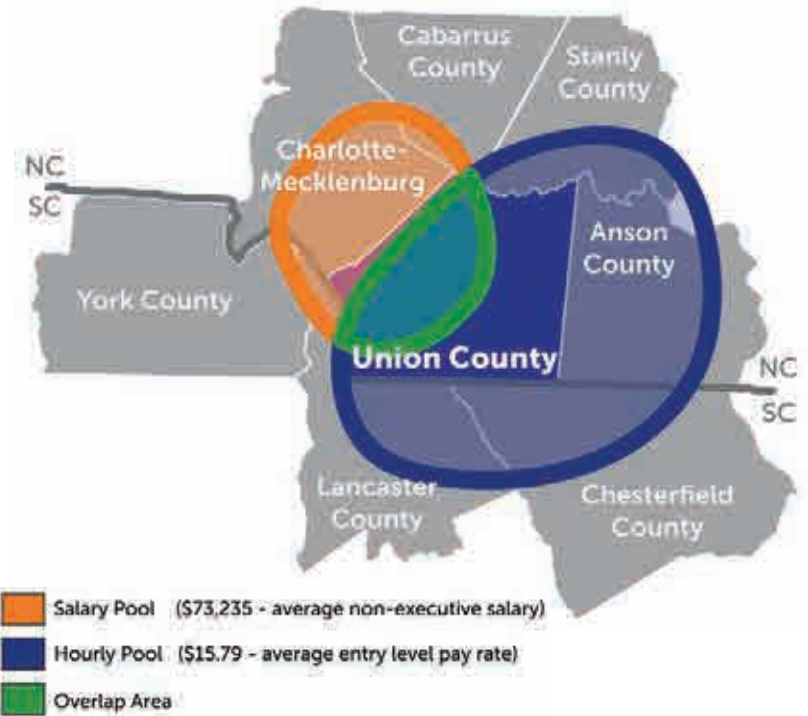
Mahle says Union County has seen strong wage growth over the past two decades, a result of targeting and successfully recruiting advanced manufacturing to the community bringing higher paying wages for more skilled workers.

Approximately 14,000 people are employed in manufacturing in Union County, which is about 22% of the county's jobs. The majority of those manufacturing jobs are in the City of Monroe. The average non-executive salary is \$73,235 and the average entry-level pay rate is \$15.79. Employees earning the highest wages are in operations management, warehouse management, manufacturing engineering and buyers and purchasing agents.

Along with salaries, the survey shows Union County employees are offering generous benefits to attract and retain employees. A full 89% of Union County's manufacturers offer benefits including 401K and health insurance. More than 80% offer life insurance, dental benefits, and vision insurance. Approximately 40% offer wellness benefits.

Union County's workforce has grown by nearly 2,100 new people since January of this year, an indication of the overall growth in the county. Meanwhile, Union County's unemployment rate was at 3.6% in March. The county's unemployment rate has been among the lowest in the Charlotte region for 20 years.

Monroe-Union County Economic Development is in the early stages of their 2019 wage survey.



Aerospace is the leading edge of Union County's economy

In 2002, Monroe began a targeted recruitment strategy focused on aerospace companies; this initiative has developed into the largest geographic cluster of aerospace companies in the Carolinas. In fact, there are 24 aerospace firms in Union County of which 19 are within a mere 7-mile radius. This cluster represents nearly \$1.0 billion in announced investment and nearly 4,500 employees or 26% of Monroe's manufacturing workforce. Today, Union County is seeing companies that were in traditional industries seeking to diversify a portion of their business portfolio into aerospace.

Union County's aerospace cluster continues to be recognized annually as a national leader in aerospace recruitment. Top 5 in Aerospace Recruitment; Top 10 Aerospace Cluster in the Southeast; and #1 Aerospace Cluster in NC are just a few of the accolades that have come as a result of the community's recruitment efforts. This is due to Union County's strategic location on the east coast and the fact that the companies located in Monroe already provide products and services to airframers and engine builders like Boeing, Airbus, Embraer, Bombardier, Rolls Royce, GE and others across the globe.

The cornerstone of the cluster is ATI

Specialty Materials. This company started in Monroe in 1957 and has had a continual stream of investments and innovation to become an international giant in the aerospace world. ATI superalloys, which contain titanium and nickel and other exotics, can be found in virtually every aircraft flying in the world. They have now expanded into the powder production of the nickel-based superalloys and last year announced \$20 million in investments at their Monroe facilities. In 2019, the company is considering another large expansion that could require the addition of another 124 acres of land.

Union County's aerospace firms are among the world's most competitive and successful in the sector. They accomplish this by continually exploring and adopting innovative technologies and embracing partnerships in order to capitalize on new market opportunities. From making fuselage ribs for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner to being a hub for maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) activities, these companies best represent the capabilities of Union County's labor force.

Monroe-Union County Economic Development continues to seek additional aerospace firms in an attempt to round-out their industrial mix from this sector. "Our goal is to grow in new

areas of aerospace manufacturing that will further diversify our community's economy," stated Chris Platé, executive director of economic development for Union County. "Aerospace manufacturing is continually growing and finding new materials and innovative manufacturing techniques. We need to make sure we are at the forefront of this innovation to capture the growth of these companies." Platé and his team join the State of North Carolina at the Paris Air Show seeking out new prospects to add to the county's aerospace cluster.

The Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport and its International Customs service has added additional capabilities within the community to lure the eye of international suppliers and help keep the local firms accessible to their customers.

The aerospace sector in Union County is truly diverse and dynamic. The community's companies thrive as they serve their customers and they are always looking to identify the next profitable technologies. Whether it be additive manufacturing, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), or commercial space exploration, you can rest assured Union County's aerospace cluster will be at the forefront of these business opportunities, ensuring this key segment of the economy has a strong tailwind.

UNION COUNTY'S AEROSPACE CLUSTER CONTINUES TO BE RECOGNIZED ANNUALLY AS A NATIONAL LEADER IN AEROSPACE RECRUITMENT.



NC's Top Aerospace Cluster



UNION COUNTY, NC

Population: 235,000+

Industry Assets:

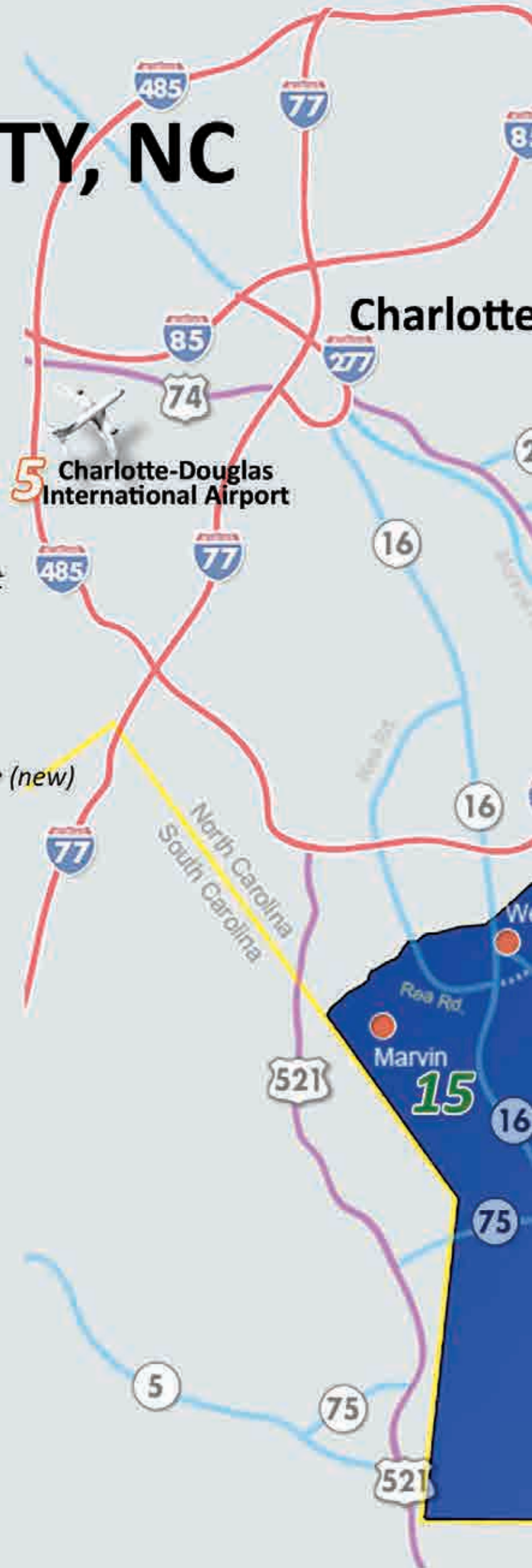
- 1a) *South Piedmont Community College*
- 1b) *SPCC Tyson Center for Technology*
- 2) *Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport*
- 3) *Wingate University*
- 4) *Union County Ag Center*
- 5) *Charlotte-Douglas International Airport*

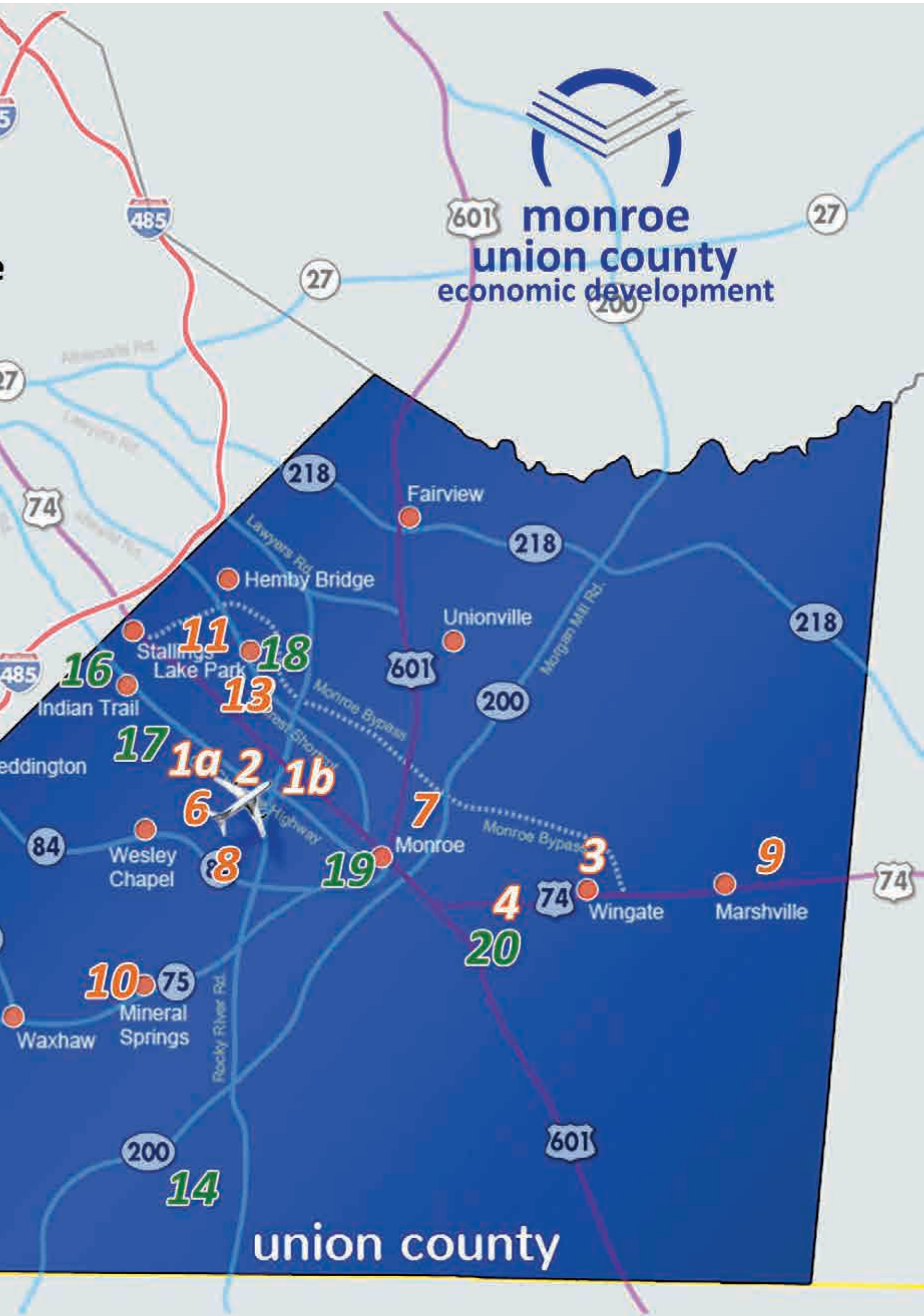
Industrial Parks / Areas:

- 6) *Monroe Corporate Center*
- 7) *Expressway Commerce Park @ Monroe (new)*
- 8) *Union County Industrial Park (new)*
- 9) *Sutton Park*
- 10) *Marshville Rail Site*
- 11) *Shannon Farm Site*
- 12) *Old Hickory Park*
- 13) *Industrial Ventures I & II*

Parks:

- 14) *Cane Creek Park*
- 15) *Efird Park*
- 16) *Stallings Park*
- 17) *Chestnut Square Park*
- 18) *Crooked Creek Park*
- 19) *Monroe Aquatics & Fitness Center*
- 20) *Jesse Helms Park*





Agri-business is all green for Union County

VARIETY OF AGRICULTURE EMPLOYERS PUT UNION COUNTY ON TOP OF STATE PRODUCTION NUMBERS

Agriculture is a half-billion dollar industry in Union County. With ample farmland, a skilled workforce and a rapidly improving road system for distribution means food processed from Union County farms is reaching the customers' tables at a more rapid rate.

Crops and the poultry industry accounted for \$492 million in economic activity in 2017, the last year for which measures are available. With Tyson Foods and Pilgrim's as the county's largest agriculture employers, 65 million chickens were processed in Union County and put out to market that same year, says Ron Mahle, assistant director of economic development for Monroe-Union County Economic Development.

"We are consistently the number one producer in the state in wheat and egg layers, and we are number two in the state in broilers and rank 4th in turkey production," Mahle says. "We have some significant employers in agriculture."

Tyson Foods employs 1,850 people and Pilgrim's has just over 800 local employees. Circle-S-Ranch is a state leader in the production of turkeys. Other employers in the agricultural sector include H&H Farm Machine Co., which makes sprayers for fertilizer and feeding, and Latham's

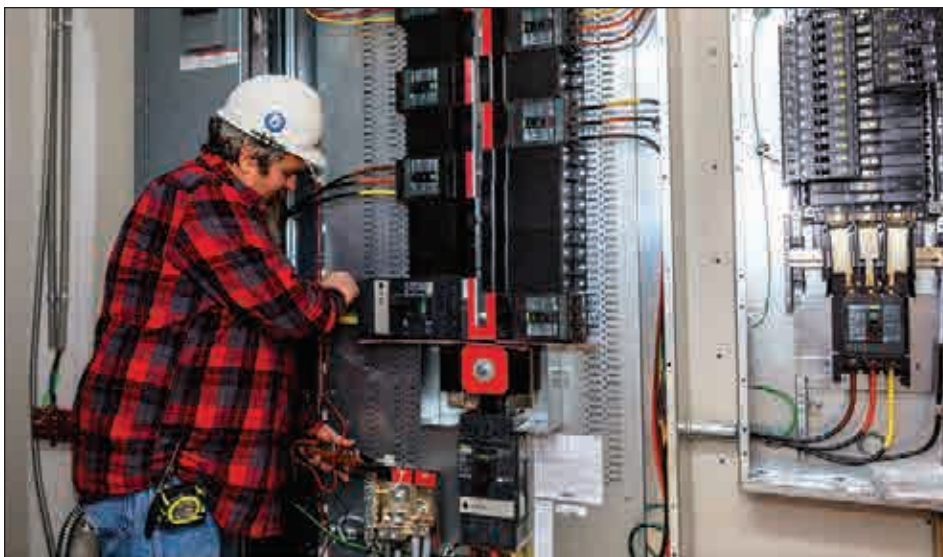
Nursery Inc., a large wholesale greenhouse with 90 acres of container production of various ornamental landscape plants.

Union County's reputation as a great place to do business recently attracted Easley, SC-based Duke Foods who announced that it would develop a third production facility in Monroe. Duke manufactures branded and private label chicken salad, pimento cheese, and fresh salads.

Duke Foods will invest more than \$5 million dollars into a new facility and expect to create 50 jobs upon opening and as many as 300 jobs over the next five years. The Monroe facility will initially produce products for the company's growing pimento cheese business and soon thereafter start offering a variety of spreads, snack dips, and fresh salads to the Charlotte market. Renovation activities are ongoing and they plan to be fully operational by November.

Realizing the value of the agricultural sector to Union County's economy, Monroe-Union County Economic Development has embraced agriculture as one of its four areas of focus in its current work plan.

"We want to do everything we can to support our agriculture related industries, which in turn helps all our



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local farmers”, states Chris Platé, executive director of economic development, “we are working closely with our community partners at South Piedmont Community College, the Union County Public Schools, and Wingate University to develop a comprehensive strategy that enables us to retain our enviable current ag makeup, but also capitalize on all opportunities to grow this sector.”

Agri-Business is typically thought of as product that is grown for consumption by humans or animals, but there is also another large crop, timber. Edwards Wood Products and Carolina Wood Products process timber for pallets, furniture grade hardwoods, construction mats and several other products. These companies provide tremendous career opportunities and focus on sustainable practices that will maintain the plentiful “timber basket” that exists within Union County.

Diversity is the key to any business sectors success. Union County’s agri-business segment is extremely diverse and robust, being a leader in the State of North Carolina with row crops, livestock, food processing and timber. From the established farms to the growing factories, agriculture and agri-business will have a long-term presence in this county.

Union County Agri-Business

Cattle
NC Ranking (out of 100 Counties)

#6 Beef Cattle **#7 Beef Cattle**
No. of Farms *No. of Cattle Raised*

#10 All Cattle
No. of Cattle Raised

Union County Agri-Business

Crops
NC Ranking (out of 100 Counties)

#1 Soybeans **#1 Wheat**
No. of Bushels Produced *No. of Bushels Produced*

#10 Corn
No. of Bushels Produced

Union County Agri-Business

Poultry
NC Ranking (out of 100 Counties)

#1 Egg Layers **#2 Broilers**
No. of Farms *No. of Birds Produced*

#4 Turkeys
All of Birds Raised

Union County Agri-Business

Cash Receipts
NC Ranking (out of 100 Counties)

#3 overall **Top 10**
Annual Cash Receipts from Farming *In almost every livestock and livestock category in the State*

\$200 million
Annual Cash Receipts from Farming



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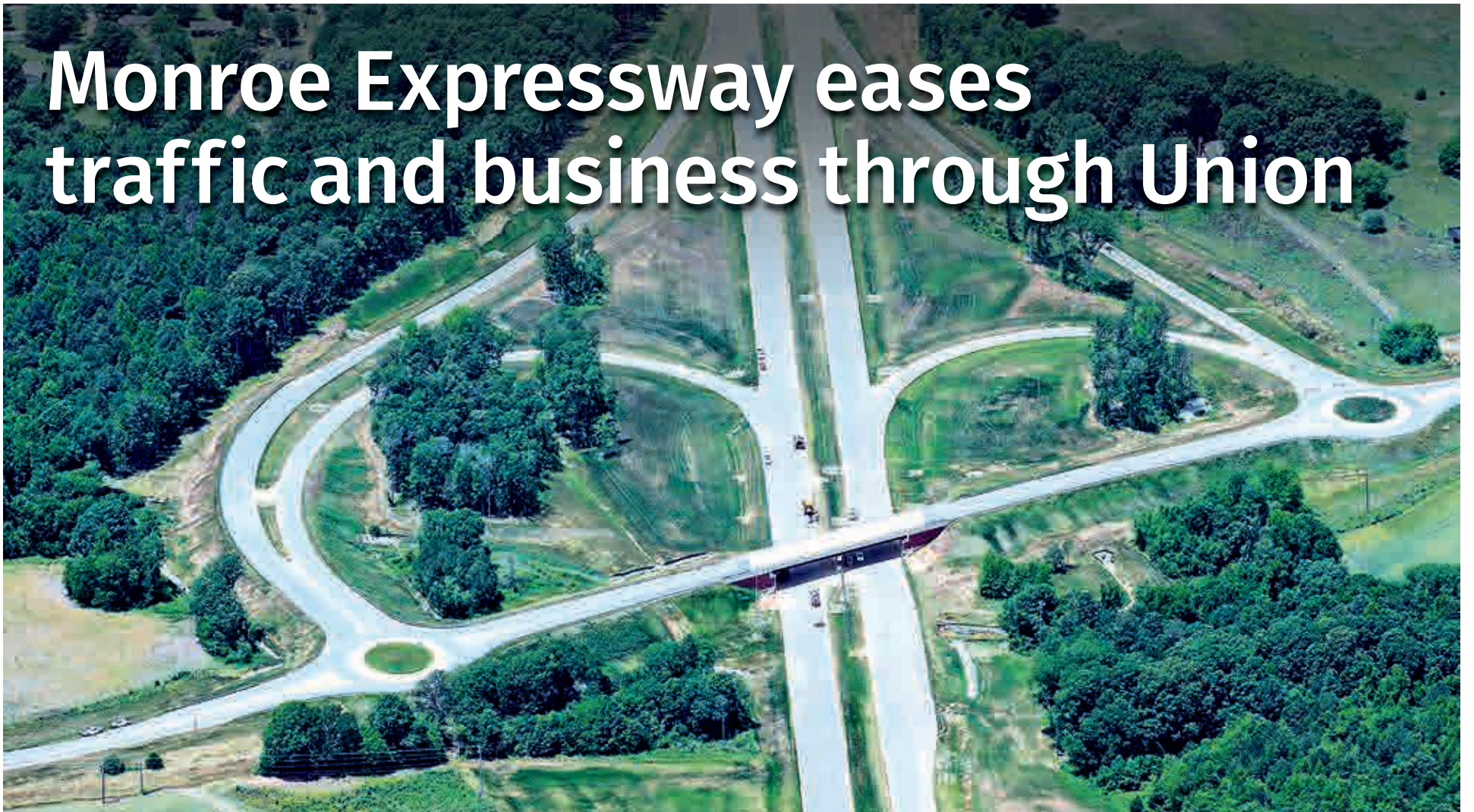
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Monroe Expressway eases traffic and business through Union



TOLL ROAD CUTS DRIVE BY UP TO 20 MINUTES, BYPASSING 27 MAJOR INTERSECTIONS



Five months after opening, the Monroe Expressway registered its 10 millionth transaction.

The quick adoption of a new and faster route through Union County demonstrates the impact of the 18-mile stretch of asphalt, which promises to make commutes quicker for residents and shortens the time it takes product to reach market.

The Monroe Expressway opened in November 2018, delivering the Charlotte Region's first toll road and the second of three toll roads in North Carolina. The \$731 million road bypassing the commercial route through Monroe has been more than 20 years in the making. A series of hiccups along the way slowed its approval, but residents, beach goers, and local industry have awaited the road's completion for years.

The toll road cuts the drive from Marshville to Charlotte by up to 20 minutes by circumventing 27 major intersections on U.S. 74, most of which have stoplights.

"It has been a tremendous benefit to the area's labor force, particularly those who reside in other counties adjacent to us who can now move more freely," says Monroe-Union County Economic Development executive director Chris Platé. "For residents traveling throughout our county, it's saving them up to 20 minutes each way to work every day and improving their quality of life."

Platé says one company is using the Monroe Expressway for its entire truck fleet. While the company is paying tolls, it is saving thousands of dollars in overall transportation costs, including gas, drivers and wear and tear on vehicles. Even smaller companies are paying for their carriers to use the toll road to shorten

delivery times which lowers costs.

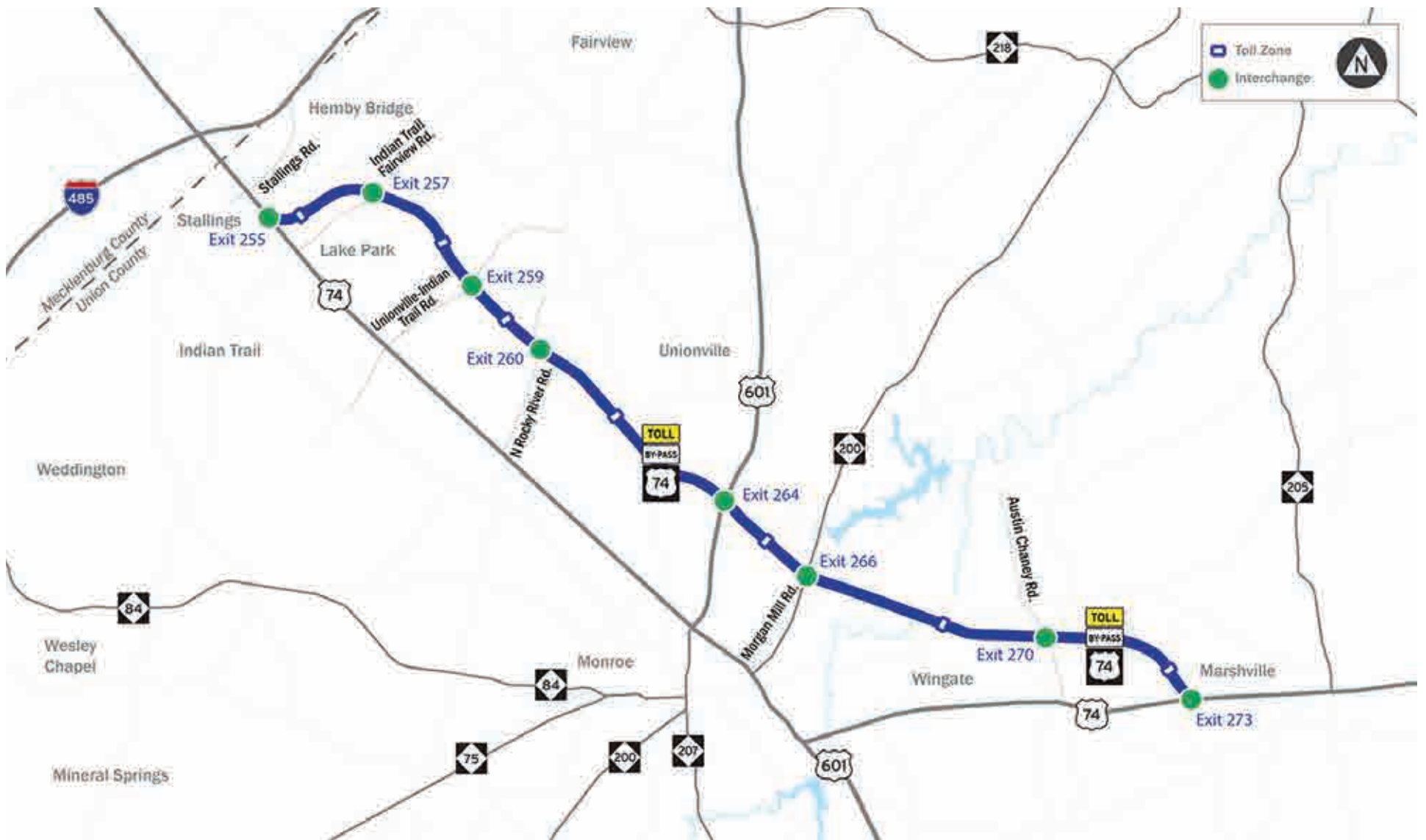

The Monroe Expressway is about 18 miles in length and runs from Marshville to Stallings. There are six interchanges along the road and two partial interchanges at each end. Tolls are collected electronically, and there are no stop and go tollbooths on the roadway.

By moving some traffic to the toll road and relieving congestion, U.S. 74 will once again operate as a commercial corridor for shoppers and other local traffic, says Platé. He believes the bypass also will open up more of eastern Union County for development to ease the imbalance between residential, commercial and industrial properties.

Platé hopes to attract logistics companies along the Expressway. With the road allowing the county's quickest access to the Charlotte Region and beyond, major freight carriers will find the Expressway as a convenient location for warehousing before shipping cargo through the ports on the coast.

Platé also foresees the interchanges undergoing major development in the coming years as gas stations, fast food, and residential developments look to take advantage of the new thoroughfare. He believes the Expressway's interchanges will develop in a similar fashion to the exits along major interstates.

Even education realizes the benefit that the Expressway brings. Wingate University president Dr. Rhett Brown has said the university purchased 100 acres near the expressway, convinced that enrollment will grow more quickly as prospective students have easier access to the campus. Fans traveling to a football game on campus will also appreciate the convenience.

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Atrium Health plans western Union hospital

HOSPITAL WILL PROVIDE SERVICES WHERE POPULATION GROWTH HAS BEEN STRONGEST



Growth along Union County's western border with Charlotte has led one of the area's leading healthcare providers to propose a new hospital campus there.

Atrium Health is proposing to build a new hospital campus called Atrium Health Union West at the intersection of US Highway 74 and Stallings Road in the Town of Stallings. The hospital will offer emergency, inpatient and outpatient care.

"This new hospital will bring capabilities to the residents and companies in a part of the county that has seen some of the most significant growth," says Chris Platé, executive director of Monroe-Union County Economic Development. "From our viewpoint the hospital's new location adds more competitiveness to Union County as it relates to the improvement of our quality of life. If an unfortunate situation warrants major care, there will be increased hospital services in close proximity. With this new facility, our residents will have accessibility to virtually all levels of care within minutes of their home or place of work."

Just outside the I-485 loop surrounding Charlotte, the western portion of Union County has seen a significant amount of the County's population growth.

Atrium Health filed a Certificate of Need application in October 2018. This application cites the community's growth in its plans. The proposed hospital will be 150,000 square feet with 40 licensed acute care beds, including 30 medical/surgical acute care beds, six labor and delivery rooms and four ICU beds.

The application was recently approved and Atrium anticipates the completion of the hospital by early 2022.

In addition, the hospital would include 10 emergency department bays, two operating rooms, imaging services, including mobile magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), laboratory and pharmacy

The proposed hospital will be 150,000 square feet with 40 licensed acute care beds, including 30 medical/surgical acute care beds, six labor and delivery rooms and four ICU beds.

services.

Atrium Health is also proposing to build a 40,000 square foot medical office building on the same site to house physician practices including cardiology, oncology, obstetrics, pulmonology, surgery, pediatric specialties and internal medicine.

"The need for new office, especially professional services like medical, are in great demand in Union County," says Platé. "We are very hopeful that this new Medical office building will help serve that demand and spur additional office development along this corridor."

The new hospital will provide more capacity for Atrium Health in Union County. Atrium Health Union already serves the population near Monroe with a 157-bed acute care facility offering comprehensive emergency services and specialty care. The campus includes a day surgery center, cancer treatment center, long-term care, behavioral health and a Women's and Children's Center. Atrium also operates a standalone emergency department in the Town of Waxhaw offering 24-hour emergency medical services.



Union County reaching wider audience with new marketing efforts

MONTHLY REDI REPORT VIDEO SERIES HIGHLIGHTS LATEST ECONOMIC NEWS AND CREATES NEW CONTACTS THAT LEAD TO FUTURE BUSINESS

Monroe-Union County Economic Development has new winning strategies to market itself to industries considering locating in the Charlotte Region.

In February, the team launched a new video series called the REDI Report, named for a Report of Economic Development Indicators. The monthly video series provides a quick look at emerging new businesses, expansions, new economic development services and the latest economic data.

"We produce a REDI report each month that is a condensed version of the information we share with our Board of Directors," says Evan Mozingo, marketing coordinator for Monroe-Union County Economic Development, who appears in the videos with executive director Chris Platé. "We share this information within the video series to expand awareness of the good things happening and expand our reach beyond Union County to other parts of the state and country."

With two new industrial parks in development, Mozingo and Platé were able to inform a broader audience about the new land development in the March REDI Report.

Being more visible also helps with the soft-skills side of the business where personal relationships can lead to future business.

"Chris and I were at an event in uptown Charlotte and some of the folks came up to me and said, 'You are in a show!' It is great to know that people are watching and that the videos are reaching our target audience," Mozingo says.

The videos are full of engaging graphics and animations, all of which are created in-house by Platé and Mozingo.

The videos are posted on the office's social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

"Anytime we personally appear in a post online, the engagement is always higher than normal", Mozingo says. "Economic Development is still a very face-to-face business and our target audience clearly responds and engages with more personable content."

To support newer ways of marketing the county, Monroe Union County Economic Development recently established Union County EDGE, a 501(c)(3) marketing entity created to help the organization raise private money to expand marketing efforts.

A non-profit entity gives economic developers more flexibility to use private contributions to market the community, such as holding an event or purchasing equipment or software for video production and editing.

"Most of our economic development counter-parts have a non-profit or some other type of organization to help provide broader support for their economic development efforts," Platé says. "Until now, the private sector has not had a mechanism to help support our efforts, such as hosting a seminar for our existing industries."

In the long term, the non-profit will enable the allies of the county's economic development efforts to provide support to a more comprehensive program, enabling education opportunities, grants, product development, etc. "It's another way for private organizations to see a direct impact of their support and allow the public dollars to be utilized to their fullest for recruitment and retention activities."



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union county north carolina

Located to the southeast of Charlotte and adjacent to I-485, Union County is home to as much diversity in one County as there is in the state of North Carolina. The Gateway region of the County, nearest to Charlotte, is a well-developed area, optimally suited for corporate offices and distribution locations. The central portion of the county has developed a strong base in precision manufacturing, most notably in aerospace, and has the state's highest concentration of aerospace companies - 24 companies in a seven mile radius. Agriculture reigns supreme on the eastern side of the County, where production of soybeans, corn and broiler chickens ranks among the highest in North Carolina. These attributes, along with the County's strong workforce development pipeline from the public schools, South Piedmont Community College and Wingate University, combine to make Union County the ideal location for many businesses to call home.

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