



ASHE COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

June 2013
Newsletter



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ASHE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

Recognizing the importance of implementing and maintaining a distinctive web presence in today's increasingly electronic world, Ashe County Economic Development partnered with Raleigh-based firm Liaison Design Group in order to design and develop a new website centered on showcasing the County to



prospective companies looking to relocate or expand. Cultivating a positive online presence is vital to ensuring success in the modern economic development landscape. Websites serve as the go-to source of information for companies looking at potential locations, and not having one, or having an outdated one, means that a

location is missing out on opportunities to attract jobs and investment before it even has the chance to showcase all it has to offer. The new Ashe County Economic Development website will remedy this current deficiency, and will hopefully encourage companies to further explore relocating to the County.

More than just a recruitment tool for large firms, however, the site is also geared towards providing resources to small businesses in the County as well as to those in the agriculture sector. In the coming months these resources will grow and develop in response to the needs expressed by businesses in the community. We encourage viewers of the website to visit often as the site is not intended to remain static, but instead change as needed to do an ever better job of recruiting companies and helping those already here. **5/21/2013**



ASHE COUNTY & WEST JEFFERSON APPROVE INCENTIVE PACKAGE FOR POTENTIAL GE AVIATION EXPANSION

In a joint session held at West Jefferson Town Hall, the Ashe County Board of Commissioners and West Jefferson Board of Alderman approved a \$1.2 million local government incentive package to assist GE Aviation in expanding its local manufacturing facility. If finalized by the company, the expansion will result in at least \$56 million in taxable investment over the next five years and the creation of 105 new jobs.

Dr. Pat Mitchell, County Manager and economic developer, and Brantley Price, West Jefferson Town Manager, presented the proposal to their respective boards at the June 3 meeting. The 9-year incentive package is based on both investment and job creation, with the company meeting and maintaining certain benchmarks through 2021. The local government incentives would be paid out between 2014 and 2020. All of the company's investment and job creation would occur by the end of 2017, per the incentive agreement.

The incentive package ensures that both the town and the county would have a positive revenue flow at the conclusion of the agreement. It also includes provisions to further protect the local government investment in the event that the full investment dollars or jobs were not met in the specified time period. The total incentives offered by Ashe County would be \$585,000, while West Jefferson will be offering \$615,000.

According to Dr. Mitchell, the approval of the incentive package is the next step in the efforts to expand the West Jefferson facility. Company officials will be making a final decision on the project in the next few weeks.

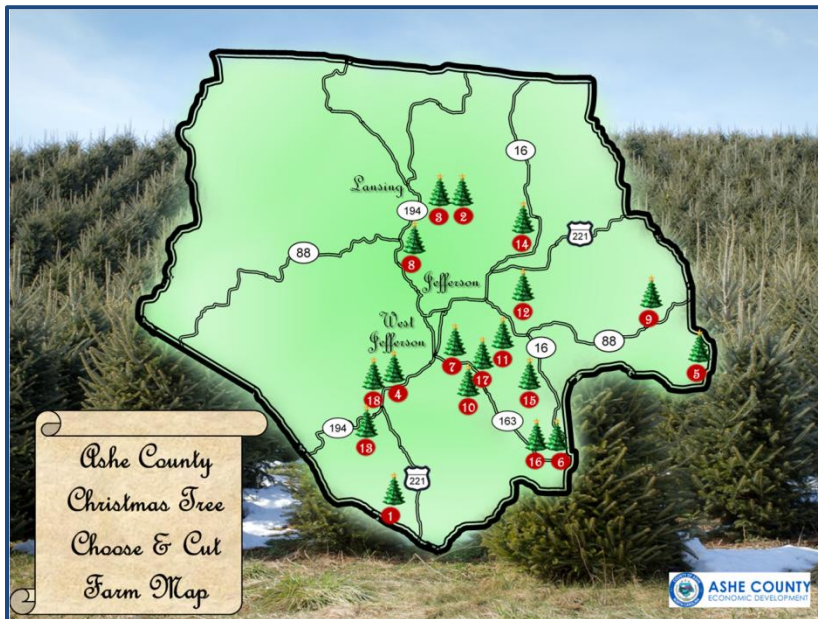
"We have been working with GE Aviation for nearly six months," Mitchell said. "We have found them to be very positive about our community and the local workforce, along with being appreciative of the County and Town's efforts to move this project forward. GE is the type of company we are very interested in growing in Ashe County because of the strength of their market, the salaries and benefits offered employees, and their role as good corporate citizens in the community. We feel it's an ideal match and believe that the incentive package is a necessary and positive step in helping the company reach a decision to expand here in West Jefferson."

Both boards approved the proposal at the conclusion of a joint public hearing on the matter, during which the public had the opportunity to comment on the proposal. The next step will be providing the detailed agreement to the company. An announcement on GE's final decision is expected within the next four weeks. **6/3/2013**



ASHE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAUNCHES NEW CHOOSE & CUT TREE FARM MAP AND DIRECTORY

Ashe County Economic Development has launched a new Choose & Cut Christmas Tree Farm Map and Directory in order to showcase the growing industry to residents and tourists to the region. As the largest producer of Christmas Trees on the East Coast, Ashe County is home to a number of highly-regarded farms, including one that provided the White House Christmas Tree in 2012. The map



shows the location of farms offering Choose & Cut in Ashe County with numbers that correspond to farm hours and contact information on the attached directory. Farmers wishing to put their Choose & Cut location on the map and directory can do so at no cost by filling out a form on the website . Please click on the links below to check it out!

6/6/2013

Choose & Cut Map and Directory:

<http://www.ashencedc.com/agriculture/choose-cut-christmas-trees>

Choose & Cut Farmer Request Form:

<http://www.ashencedc.com/agriculture/choose-cut-christmas-tree-farm-listing-form>

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