

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



N.C. tops Site Selection rankings again

Gov. Bev Perdue announced Nov. 3 that North Carolina remains the state with the "Top Business Climate," according to Site Selection magazine. It is the fifth year in a row and the eighth time in nine years that the state has taken the top honor in the annual ranking by Site Selection, one of the nation's premier magazines for economic development.

"Business leaders know we are listening to them and working aggressively to meet their needs," Perdue said. "Companies know that in North Carolina they will find top-quality talent, world-class infrastructure, a pro-business environment, and premier education institutions. North Carolina is simply a great place to do business."

Site Selection Editor-in-Chief Mark Arend agreed that North Carolina's winning streak "demonstrates that businesses are finding in the state what they need to succeed." He added, "The synergy between North Carolina's research parks, corporations, communities, and economic developers at the state and local levels is a major factor in this year's top ranking."

Site Selection magazine's annual "Top Business Climate"



(Left-right) Transportation Sec. Gene Conti (in blue shirt), Gov. Bev Perdue, N.C. Rep. Phil Haire and Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll talk to the media following a tour of the I-40 rock slide site. (Photo by N.C. Dept. of Transportation photographer Billy Barrier)

Perdue tours site of rock slide

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 28 signed an emergency declaration to help western North Carolina recover from the major rock slide that occurred early Oct. 25 in Haywood County. The declaration of a State of Emergency is the first step in seeking federal funds to help clear debris and repair the road, as it enables the N.C. Dept. of Transportation to request funding assistance from the Federal Highway Administration.

"Today I saw the rock slide firsthand. Not since 1997 has western North Carolina seen a slide of this magnitude -- longer than a football field and the width of a two-car garage. The cleanup process is underway and it will be a 24/7 operation. I want to reopen I-40 as quickly as possible with public safety our first goal," said Perdue. "Western North Carolina is open for business and the leaf season is spectacular. So use our alternate routes during your visit and enjoy all western North Carolina has to offer".

Perdue said the landslide does not affect traffic coming to the mountains from the south, north or east. Travelers to and from the west are being rerouted along interstates 26 and 81. [Read more.](#) [See more photos](#) on the governor's blog. [Read the statement](#) by Carroll at the press conference. [See a map](#) of detour routes.

[Video from the rock slide press conference](#)

rankings are based on quantitative and qualitative factors that corporate site-seekers - those who help companies expand or relocate - say they consider most important. Fifty percent of the ranking comes from a survey of corporate site selection executives who were asked to rank their top 10 states, and 50 percent is based on four measures of new plant activity as tracked by Site Selection in its "New Plant Database." The magazine describes the ranking process as "a blend of objective, actual new or expansion project announcements, and subjective input from corporate site seekers."

[Read the article.](#)

Israeli foam maker to bring 72 jobs to Louisburg

Gov. Bev Perdue on Nov. 2 announced that Palziv North America, a global leader in the development and manufacturing of thermoplastic cross-linked polyethylene foam, will open a new North American headquarters and manufacturing facility in Franklin County. The company will invest \$7.8 million and create 72 jobs in Louisburg. The announcement was made possible in part by a \$250,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"North Carolina continues to attract manufacturing firms looking for the perfect location to invest and create new jobs," Gov. Perdue said. "Our state's trained workforce, strategic location and superb quality of life are key site selection factors for new and expanding companies."

Palziv North America is wholly owned by Palziv LTD, headquartered in Israel. The company has manufacturing and distribution locations in Israel, Romania, Ohio and Canada. Palziv foam is used for packaging, insulation, toys, prosthetics and other customer applications.

Palziv will utilize a currently empty Louisburg building to create a new North American headquarters and U.S.-based foam manufacturing facility to better serve the company's North American, South American and Canadian markets. Palziv will produce cross-linked foam blocks and rolls from polyethylene pellets for a variety of applications.

The project's 72 new jobs will pay an average annual wage of \$34,167, not including benefits, which is higher than the Franklin County average annual wage of \$33,176. Commerce's Dallas Hardenbrook was the developer on this project. [Read more.](#)

Forum to focus on 'Funding our Rural Future'

[The Rural Center](#) will hold its annual Rural Partners Forum at the North Raleigh Hilton Nov. 5-6. Gov. Bev Perdue is scheduled to speak Nov. 5, and will present her vision for putting the state's economy back on track through initiatives in education, workforce training and jobs development. She will also release an assessment of the flow of national stimulus dollars into North Carolina's rural communities and outline critical opportunities that remain. Other speakers include Brian Dabson, president and CEO of the Rural Policy Research Institute, Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton and Freddie Killough of the N.C. Small Town Economic Prosperity Program.

Fiserv to bring 419 jobs, \$4.9M

(News 13 - Asheville, Oct. 28)

[Governor Bev Perdue declares I-40 rock slide an emergency](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, Oct. 29)



(Left-right) Commerce Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson; Meredith College Dean and Professor of Business Denise Rotondo; Talecris Biotherapeutics International Logistics Specialist Valerie Agnew-Gover; Meredith College Assistant Professor of Marketing Carolyn Nye; Glaxo SmithKline Director of Worldwide Epidemiology Douglas Clark

Global business forum held in Raleigh

Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson participated in the ThiNC Global event held Oct. 28 at the School of Business at Meredith College in Raleigh. The event included a panel discussion with trade experts who had experience conducting business successfully in global markets.

[Read more.](#)

Community Investment Reporting Database released

The Policy, Research & Strategic Planning Division is pleased to announce the release of the redesigned [Community Investment Reporting \(CIR\) Database](#). The CIR database is a comprehensive collection of economic development announcements for capital investment and job creation in North Carolina. Information is also collected for projects associated with infrastructure development. Information for the database is submitted online by a broad range of members of the economic development community, including business owners, local economic developers, regional economic development partnerships, Commerce economic developers and news organizations.

All CIR information is reviewed and verified by both internal and external sources before being accepted into the system. The data are used for Site Selection magazine's competitive business climate awards and state rankings. Additionally, the information is used for Commerce reporting, legislative

investment to Catawba County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Oct. 28 announced that Fiserv Inc., will expand its presence in the state by opening a new location in Catawba County. The company will create 419 jobs and invest \$4.9 million in Hickory during the next three years. The announcement was made possible in part by an \$800,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

Fiserv, a Fortune 500 company headquartered in Wisconsin, is a leading global provider of information management and electronic commerce systems for the financial services industry. The company, with more than 16,000 clients, serves banks, credit unions and lending institutions with online banking, bill pay and presentment, account processing, mobile banking, lending processing, risk and compliance, and source capture technologies. Employees at the new facility will provide customer support and other client services.

Fiserv has more than 20,000 employees in 230 locations worldwide, including the former Carreker Corp., employing more than 100 people in Charlotte. While salaries will vary by job function, the new jobs will pay an average annual wage of \$25,368, not including benefits. Commerce's Ron Leitch was the developer on this project. [Read more.](#)



(Left-right) Langtree at the Lake President Rick Howard, Mooresville- South Iredell Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Russell Rogerson, Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll, Lowe's Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs Brian Peace, Mooresville Mayor Bill Thunberg, and Langtree at the Lake Secretary and General Counsel David Parker

Carroll, Commerce Regional Office work with Mooresville

On Oct. 22, Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll participated in a roundtable discussion with elected officials and business leaders in Mooresville, followed by a tour of business parks including the new Lowe's Corporate Campus. Carroll ended the visit by serving as guest speaker at the annual banquet of the Mooresville-South Iredell Economic Development Corporation.

Groundbreaking set for nanotech school

Groundbreaking for the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering (JSNN), a shared project between UNC-Greensboro and NC A&T University, will take place at the Gateway University Research Park in Greensboro on Nov. 9.

requests, industry analyses and other information requests.

The CIR Database and reporting are managed by Commerce's Policy, Research, and Strategic Planning Division. For inquiries about the new system or CIR information, please call (919) 715 6374 or send an e-mail to cir@nccommerce.com.



William Chu, center, meets with members of the Malaysia-China Chamber of Commerce.

Hong Kong office meets with companies in Malaysia

William Chu, Commerce's Hong Kong-based foreign trade representative responsible for China and Southeast Asia, made visits to several companies and to the Malaysia-China Chamber of Commerce in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Oct. 11-13. The Malaysia-China Chamber of Commerce consists of 1,000 members with enterprises ranging from trade, manufacturing, banking, agriculture, property development, and education and information industry.

B&I Fall Update released

The Division of Business & Industry has released its Fall Update, which is being distributed to site selection consultants. Included in the update is a list of selected economic development announcements, and information on the newly redesigned Certified Sites Program [Download the Fall Update.](#)

ITD participates in globalization conference

Director of Motorsports Development Derek Chen participated in a panel at the N.C. Association of Certified Public Accountants' "Globalization and the Economy" conference Oct. 26 in Greensboro. Chen participated in the session "North Carolina in the Global Economy," where he discussed globalization, international trade and the International Trade Division's services. [Read more.](#)

Raleigh Convention Center

Among the officials expected to attend the groundbreaking ceremony are N.C. Office of Science and Technology Executive Director John Hardin and Assistant Director Sharlini Sankaran, UNC System President Erskine Bowles and N.C. House Speaker Joe Hackney.

Students enrolled at the JSNN can earn Professional Master of Science or PhD degrees. An advisory group of university leaders and faculty members from both campuses has already built curricula for the proposed programs. Programs of study will focus on nanobioscience, which emphasizes biological and chemical aspects of nanoscience; nanotechnology, which emphasizes engineering and technological aspects; and environmental nanoscience, which will address ethical and environmental implications of nanoscience.

[Groundbreaking set for nano school](#) (Business Journal of the Greater Triad, Oct 27)



(Left-right) UNC System President Erskine Bowles, U.S. SBA District Director Lee Cornelison, SBTDC Executive Director Scott Daugherty, Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll

SBTDC celebrates 25 years of growing N.C. companies

On Oct. 29, business owners, elected officials and economic development leaders from across the state gathered in Cary to celebrate the 25-year anniversary of [SBTDC](#) in North Carolina. UNC System President Erskine Bowles delivered the keynote address.

Military textile conference set for Nov. 10

Sec. Keith Crisco will offer keynote remarks at a Commerce-sponsored textiles conference Nov. 10 in Greensboro. "Military/Performance Textiles: A Strong Market for N.C. Companies" will focus on N.C. textile sector opportunities and developments in military and performance-related markets nationally and around the world. The event, which will take place at the Sheraton Greensboro Hotel at Four Seasons, will include speakers from the private sector, academia and the state and federal government offering insights on research, trends, U.S. military purchasing guidelines, foreign military markets, marketing strategy and other topics. Space at the conference, organized by International Market Solutions, is extremely limited. For more information on the event, contact Jim Leonard at (336) 454-3583 or Jorman Fields at (336) 668-7060, or by e-mailing cece454@aol.com. [Read more.](#)

achieves Silver LEED certification

The City of Raleigh has attained Silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification for the new Raleigh Convention Center.

LEED certification distinguishes building projects that have demonstrated a commitment to sustainability by meeting the highest performance standards.

The LEED effort included promoting an energy-efficient design, recycling building materials and designating the building as being smoke-free for visitors and employees. The certification process outlines a number of available points awarded for promoting environmentally friendly building concepts. By identifying and adopting those concepts, the city earned points which qualified the building for the Silver rating. During the design phase, the design team, the contract management team and city staff began identifying cost-effective measures that earned the project the requisite point totals. [Learn more.](#)

RTI to develop biomass fuel

RTI International was awarded a contract from the U.S. Dept. of Energy to develop a biomass "oil" that will serve as an alternative energy source.

As part of the \$3.1 million project, RTI researchers will develop a single-step catalytic biomass pyrolysis process to produce a bio-crude "oil" intermediate that can be used as a direct replacement for petroleum in the existing transportation fuel infrastructure. This technology, once fully commercialized, has the potential to reduce the demand for imported petroleum and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by replacing fossil fuel with domestically-produced biofuels. [Read more.](#)

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the Division of Business and Industry (B&I) that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing-industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - Nov. 2, 2009

New projects assigned:	377
Projects announced:	99

Centennial Campus celebrates 25 years

N.C. State University's [Centennial Campus](#) celebrated its 25th anniversary Oct. 23 with the groundbreaking of the James B. Hunt, Jr. Library.

The 200,000 square-foot Hunt Library, named for the former governor, will help alleviate overcrowded conditions in current university library spaces. The UNC university system standard is to provide study seating for 20 percent of university students. Currently, N.C. State libraries can seat less than 5 percent.

The Hunt Library will also house the Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI), a public-policy "think-and-do" tank that brings together leaders from businesses, non-profit organizations, government and higher education to tackle some of the biggest issues facing North Carolina's future growth and prosperity.

About 400 dignitaries and guests attended the celebratory event, which also featured a video of the research and educational campus.

[NCSU's research park continues to evolve](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh)

Jobs created:	12,092
Capital invested:	\$2.47B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	1,240
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	21,779

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Uphill climb: Pitt economy better positioned than most](#) (The Daily Reflector - Greenville, Nov. 2)
- [JetBlue expands Boston-Charlotte flights](#) (Charlotte Business Journal, Oct. 30)
- [Consultant: Defense technology to grow region](#) (The Fayetteville Observer, Oct. 30)
- [EPA official: N.C. to share \\$200M energy grant](#) (The Associated Press, Oct. 29)
- [Customer-support facility, 400 new jobs for Hickory](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Oct. 28)
- [Official: Future bright for economic development](#) (The Daily Reflector - Greenville, Oct. 26)

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