

# ***The Business Review*** ***of Columbia County, Georgia***

*A publication of the Development Authority of Columbia County (DACC)*

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**Summer 2011**

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS**

**Martinez Cabinets & Millworks Company**, a maker and installer of kitchen cabinetry, is restoring its 15,000 sq. ft. industrial building on Martinez Boulevard that was partially destroyed in a 2008 fire. In addition to installing new cabinetry, the company resurfaces and refinishes existing hardware. According to company spokesman Randall Fowler, the company intends to use a portion of the renovated building as a new showroom for its kitchen cabinetry products. Due to the fire, the company currently leases space in Augusta on Highland Avenue; it has no plans at this time to idle that facility. Martinez Cabinets & Millworks employs approximately 30 people.

**Hydraulics of Augusta**, which distributes and repairs a variety of hydraulic cylinders, has leased an existing 7,500 sq. ft. industrial building on the Riverwatch Parkway section in Columbia County. Billy Franke of **Sherman & Hemstreet** served as leasing broker. The building was previously occupied by **W.A. Bragg Company**, a local plumbing products distributor, which moved to a larger facility in the Columbia Industrial District last year. Hydraulics of Augusta, which also makes hydraulic hose assemblies, employs 10 people, including welders and metal fabricators. For more information on the firm, visit [www.hydraulicsofaugusta.com](http://www.hydraulicsofaugusta.com).

**Kirkland's Flooring**, a wholesaler and retailer of flooring surfaces and products, is constructing a new 12,000 sq. ft. distribution building for its operation on North Belair Road in Evans. A wholesaler to builders, contractors, and store owners, the company began in 1999 as The Carpet Warehouse, and quickly expanded to Evans with the construction of a new showroom/distribution facility. The company employs approximately 15 people. Visit the firm's website at [www.kirklandsflooring.com](http://www.kirklandsflooring.com).

Construction continues on a new five-story office building in Evans, the future home to **TaxSlayer**, the tax preparation and accounting software firm started by local businessman Jimmy Rhodes. According to project contractor, **Pierwood Construction Company**, the new structure in Marshall Square is expected to be completed by late spring of 2012. **Christopher Booker & Associates** is serving as project architect.

## **ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN MARSHALL SQUARE**

Concurrent with construction on the new **TaxSlayer** building in Marshall Square at Evans is the extension of Ronald Reagan Drive. Once completed, the new roadway through Marshall Square will intersect with North Belair Road, opening up additional lots for development. Marshall Square is a 50-acre development located in the center of Evans.

With the sale of two more commercial lots in the privately-held section of Marshall Square, developer Don Lawrence expects increased interest for the remaining parcels. Information on Marshall Square can be found at [www.DCLcommercial.com](http://www.DCLcommercial.com).

## **SPOTLIGHT ON: Augusta Sportswear**

**Augusta Sportswear**, an athletic apparel company that has been in business for more than thirty years, is among the county's larger industries. Located near I-20 at Exit #194, the company – which is headquartered in Columbia County – is a leading manufacturer and retailer for team apparel, offering a line of more than six hundred styles of uniforms, jerseys, and related sports apparel accessories. It currently employs more than 200 people. To learn more about the company, visit [www.augustasportswear.com](http://www.augustasportswear.com).

## **CNN/MONEY MAGAZINE POLLS TOUTS MARTINEZ**

A new 2011 **CNN/Money** survey has listed the Martinez area of Columbia County as one of the nation's best places for affordable housing and housing values. The annual survey, conducted on more than 200 small and large metropolitan areas, is considered one of the leading indicators for measuring a community's "quality of place." To view the other listings around the country, visit [www.money.cnn.com/bestplaces](http://www.money.cnn.com/bestplaces).

## **WORKFORCE PROFILE PREPARED ON COUNTY**

As a companion marketing piece to its "Retail Profile" on the county – which highlights key demographic characteristics of the county and metro area – the Development Authority of Columbia County (DACC) recently developed a "Workforce Profile" to showcase the talent pool that exists in the region. Citing the strengths of the region's medical community, and the county's proximity to U. S. Army's Fort Gordon and the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, the four-page brochure will be used to target IT firms and site consultants that work with companies in advanced manufacturing.

To download a copy of the profile, visit the DACC's website at: [www.ChooseColumbiaCounty.com](http://www.ChooseColumbiaCounty.com).

### **AUGUSTA TECH CAMPUS OPENS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY**

The new Columbia County campus for **Augusta Technical College (ATC)** opened its doors this summer following brief remarks by ATC President Terry Elam. The first building on the new campus, which is located in the Horizon South Business Park on a 30-acre site provided by the Development Authority of Columbia County (DACC), is a 25,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art classroom and conference facility; the new building also features bays for industrial skills training. The new campus – which will also be used as an assessment center for area employers desiring to participate in the state’s **Work Ready** program – will offer core classes, business administration courses, and a welding program. For information on the school’s new campus, visit [www.augustatech.edu](http://www.augustatech.edu).

### **WEST TOWN MARKET AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In August, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners formally approved an urban redevelopment plan for the commercial area known as “West Town Market,” a commercial corridor along Washington Road in Columbia County that was among the first area of the county to experience commercial development in the 1970s. Although the area remains economically viable, the redevelopment plan will pursue the creation of several programs to keep the area economically competitive – including the designation of an Opportunity Zone for the corridor. If approved by the state’s Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Opportunity Zone would provide a state tax credit to any business enterprise – including service and retail sector firms – of up to \$3,500 per job created. For more information on Opportunity Zones, visit the DCA website at: [www.dca.ga.gov](http://www.dca.ga.gov).

### **DACC PARTICIPATES IN AFCEA’S INDUSTRY DAYS**

Touting the county’s new broadband infrastructure project to technology firms and vendors that work with the U.S. Army’s Fort Gordon, the DACC recently participated in an exhibition called “Industry Days” at the Marriott in downtown Augusta sponsored by the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA). The county’s \$18 million broadband project, involving the installation of over 220 miles of fiber optic cable throughout the county, will provide redundancy and data connectivity at high speeds for military contractors that conduct business with the Department of Defense. During the two-day event, the DACC was able to network with other vendors interested in accessing the county’s system once it becomes active in 2012.

Each year, the DACC participates in expos and trade shows, principally around the southeastern U.S., targeting firms in the fields of information technology, communications, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and energy.

## **AVAILABLE PROPERTIES IN COLUMBIA COUNTY**

**RETAIL SPACE.** 18,000 sq. ft. commercial building, next To **Academy Sports & Outdoors** in Evans. Located along Washington Road, which has an average weekday travel count of 32,490 (GA DOT, 2009). *Demographics within five miles of this location:* population of 114,123, median household income of \$70,643, over 42,000 households, and median age of 37. Source: [ESRI](#).

**INDUSTRIAL SPACE.** 58,000 sq. ft. metal industrial building in Columbia Industrial District on 5 acres. Fenced, with 4 truck doors, two of which are drive-in doors. Eave height of 22' – 24.' Available for lease. For additional information, contact Jay Willingham at 706-855-8400.

## **ABOUT COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA**

**Columbia County** is located in eastern Georgia, in a region known as the Central Savannah River area (CSRA). Bordered by the Savannah River and Clark Hill's Lake, one the southeast's largest freshwater bodies of water, the county has a population over 124,000 – and in a metro area of more than 500,000 (the Augusta (GA) – Aiken (SC) metropolitan statistical area).

With an economy based upon a diverse mixture of government, medical, military, professional, and light industrial sectors, it is the home to world-class firms such as **Quad/Graphics**, **Club Car**, and **John Deere**. The county also has one of the area's highest standards of living, a fact frequently noted in nationwide surveys by [Money](#) magazine and [U.S. News & World Report](#). Visit the county's award-winning website at [www.ColumbiaCountyGA.gov](http://www.ColumbiaCountyGA.gov) for more information about living and working in the county.

**THE COLUMBIA COUNTY BUSINESS REVIEW** is published quarterly by the Development Authority of Columbia County (DACC). Please address any comments or questions to Troy Post at 706-312-1371, or electronically via [tpost@ColumbiaCountyGA.gov](mailto:tpost@ColumbiaCountyGA.gov). For those about to rock, we salute you.

A non-profit economic development agency, the DACC provides technical assistance to businesses seeking financial assistance or site selection services. To learn more, visit [www.ChooseColumbiaCounty.com](http://www.ChooseColumbiaCounty.com).

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**The Development Authority of  
Columbia County (DACC)**  
604 Government Center Way, Suite 4  
Evans, Georgia 30809

