

# Amazon to create 400 jobs in Upstate

Spartanburg official sees potential for more at site

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Amazon, the Seattle-based Internet retailer, said Monday it plans to invest \$50 million in its new 1 million-square-foot distribution center underway near John Dodd Road and Interstate 26.

The project is expected to create 400 jobs initially, said David Britt, the Economic Recruitment Committee of Spartanburg County chairman and Economic Futures Group board member.

But Britt believes the company will be a "shining star" like BMW in that "they'll under promise and over deliver."

"I think they'll have a lot of employees there, and I think they'll be greatly successful in Spartanburg," he said.

Amazon's new fulfillment center in Spartanburg will be its second location in South Carolina. The company began operations at its distribution center in Lexington County last year.

That distribution center is expected to create 2,000 jobs by the end of 2013 in order to qualify for a state sales tax exemption, The Associated Press reported.

Amazon leaders could not be reached Monday. But Dave Clark, vice president of Amazon Global Customer Fulfillment, said in a statement that "South Carolina has been a great home for us, and we're excited to create hundreds of additional jobs in this state.

"We had a great first holiday season in Lexing-

ton County, and we look forward to serving our customers from both Lexington and Spartanburg Counties by the fall," Clark said.

Bobby Hitt, state Secretary of Commerce, said South Carolina has "a vibrant and growing distribution and logistics sector, and having a company like Amazon continue to establish new operations here builds on that reputation."

Britt said Amazon entered into discussions with Spartanburg County because "we know who the golden goose is, and that's business and industry.

"We are a pro business county and a pro business government. We deliver on what we promised, and we've got a great track record," he said.

Spartanburg County approved an incentive package for Amazon, which included a 6 percent fee-in-lieu-of-taxes agreement for 30 years, infrastructure improvements primarily on John Dodd Road, and a multicounty industrial park agreement with Cherokee County in December, Britt said.

Site work for the new plant is underway. Britt said Amazon is in the process of selecting a contractor for the building.

The center is expected to begin operating in the fall. It will be similar to the one in Cayce, Britt said, but initially the product coming through Spartanburg will be larger with things like kayaks, lawn mowers, and other big items.

With Amazon, "they build in flexibility so that facility could do almost anything they want," he said.