BorgWarner expansion now official

BY STEVEN BRADLEY
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COLUMBIA — Gov. Nikki Haley's office made the official announcement Thursday that BorgWarner is expanding its existing manufacturing operations in Oconee.

The $13.3 million investment is expected to create 50 new jobs in Seneca over the next five years at BorgWarner, a global leader in powertrain solutions.

"The fact that BorgWarner has decided to expand its South Carolina operations for the second time in less than two years is a testament to South Carolina's pro-business environment and hardworking workforce," Haley said in a news release. "This $13 million investment and the 50 new jobs it will create will make a real difference in Oconee County, and we look forward to watching this great company continue to grow for many more years."

As reported by The Journal last month, county council finalized an incentive package related to the expansion that gives the company a 6-percent assessment and fixed millage for a term of 30 years in return for the promised investment and jobs.

The average hourly wage associated with those jobs is $19.28.

"It is great to see BorgWarner continue to take advantage of Oconee's strong business infrastructure," Oconee County Council chairman Wayne McCall said. "The company's expansion reflects not only the strength of Oconee's growing manufacturing industry but also our dynamic logistics network."

With its latest expansion, BorgWarner will remain in its existing facility, located at 15545 Wells Highway in Seneca.

Aimed at increasing the facility's transfer case production, the expansion will be achieved with the purchase of new machinery and the expected hiring of 50 new employees, which will bring its total local employment to more than 750.

In addition to the expansion, BorgWarner has also recently reached an agreement with the city of Seneca to lease approximately 100,000 square feet within the Seneca Commerce Center, located at 320 Shiloh Road. The company will use the newly leased facility as warehouse space.

"On behalf of the city of Seneca, it is great to have BorgWarner call our area home and to have them not only conduct another expansion that will create a ripple effect throughout our community but to also have them lease space at the city-owned Seneca Commerce Center, this is quite the winning combination," Seneca mayor Dan Alexander said.

Hiring for the new positions is anticipated to begin in June. Those interested in joining the BorgWarner team may visit the company's careers page online at borgwarner.com.

ITT EXPANSION ALSO OFFICIAL

This represents the second significant economic development announcement in the county in a week's time, as ITT Corporation announced on May 21 it is expanding its manufacturing operations in Oconee County by investing approximately $1 million to build a new test facility.

The investment is part of a total of $2.5 million that the company expects to invest in the facility over the next five years.

"We're always excited to celebrate new investment in South Carolina, but it's special when it's from one of our existing companies," Haley said. "ITT could do business anywhere, but by deciding to invest an additional $2.5 million in their Westminster facility, this great company is proving that our Team South Carolina approach really is working."

As reported by The Journal in February, county council finalized a FILOT package for ITT that includes reduced 6-percent tax assessment and fixed millage for a 30-year term.

Located at 105 Commerce Way in Westminster, the expansion of ITT's operations in Westminster features a new specialized testing facility for natural gas vehicle (NGV) components, which are part of the company's highly engineered Conoflow brand of products. "We have been a member of the Oconee County community for more than 25 years and are pleased to be able to grow our presence here," ITT Corporation Westminster plant manager Rob Hartman said. "This facility expansion will give us enhanced capabilities to test natural gas vehicle components, which are an integral part of the strategic plan for the control technologies business."

For more information on ITT Corporation, visit ITT.com.

sbradley@upstatetoday.com | (864) 973-6685