

Gov. Nikki Haley, right, attends an announcement Monday that Bosch Rexroth Corp. will invest $80 million to expand its Fountain Inn operations, creating up to 160 jobs. HEIDI HEILBRUNN/STAFF

Bosch Rexroth now hiring as it expands Greenville operations

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Bosch Rexroth is investing $80 million to create a manufacturing campus at its Fountain Inn facility, its largest such investment in the Americas and one expected to create at least 160 new jobs within five years.

The investment includes the purchase of a warehousing facility, which has been under lease, as well as the purchase of the 260,000 square-foot facility formerly used by GlaxoSmithKline. That building will be renovated into a manufacturing location.

In addition, Rexroth has purchased 65 acres of land around the buildings to be used for growth, said Berend Bracht, Rexroth's regional president, Americas Bosch Rexroth Corp.

The addition will more than double Rexroth's existing footprint in Fountain Inn to three buildings and more than 500,000 square feet of production space, he said.

"After 23 years on this location and four major expansions, we are announcing the biggest expansion in Bosch Rexroth's history," he said.

"With this investment, our expanded manufacturing campus here will become Bosch Rexroth's primary facility for mobile hydraulics and the business' largest manufacturing facility in the Americas."

The facility makes hydraulic pumps and motors used in construction, agriculture, mining, material handling and oil and gas exploration. The new building will allow higher production volumes.

A bridge will connect the sites, now separated by a ravine.

"It says a lot about a community when a respected international company such as Bosch Rexroth decides to make yet another major investment here," said Butch Kirven, chairman of the Greenville County Council.

Completion of the upgrade is expected by July, but hiring is now underway, said Mike McCormick, plant manager. "We have been hiring almost nonstop all year," he said. "We are blessed with a strong business right now."

The move will allow Rexroth to take "swift action to meet the demands of our marketplace," Bracht said.

Rexroth, a leading specialist in the field of drive and control technologies, selected Fountain Inn as the site for the expansion for several reasons, he said.

"We have a significant footprint in South Carolina," he said, naming facilities in Anderson and Charleston as well as in Fountain Inn. Currently the company has about 3,500 employees in the state.

Also, "We have a very good work force that we can develop," he said. Currently the Fountain Inn facility has 572 workers plus temporary employees.

The county "provides the skilled work force, business-friendly environment and all other necessary attributes to support Bosch's advanced manufacturing initiatives," Kirven said.

Gov. Nikki Haley praised the company's decision, saying that any time an existing company decides to expand in the state, "It is a testament to South Carolina."