

Projected positive outlook for local economy

(Gastonia, NC) – August 2011 -- Responding to the national call to invest in America by supporting local communities, Gastonia Conference Center is committed to supporting and strengthening the city of Gastonia and Gaston County through its popular Gastonia Partnership Program where local businesses can apply for the opportunity to work with the Center's clients, share resources, and further invest in the community.

Small local businesses are the largest employer nationally and provide the most jobs to local residents. Local businesses often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers since they are more invested in the community's future.

The "buy local and partner local" approach allows friends, neighbors, businesses, organizations, and civic groups to benefit from a more vibrant local economy. Independent studies reveal that buying from independent, locally owned businesses generates a premium in enhanced economic impact to the community and the local tax base. ([Click here to see summaries of a variety of economic impact studies .](#))

Gastonia Conference Center has already booked two bridal shows that will showcase local bridal fashions, hotels, limousines, florists, photographers, caterers, printers, designers, and event planners to as many as 300 guests at each show.

Other corporate business already booked at Gastonia Conference Center shows positive revenue generation and economic impact for the area through the Gastonia Partners in hotel rooms, food & beverage, and audio/visual services.

Positive Economic Projection

With the development of Gastonia Conference Center nearing the completion of the construction phase, Tony Swainey, General Manager at the Center, is projecting strong, positive economics of the advanced bookings and how it ties in to the bigger picture of supporting local business and strengthening the local economy: out build, and out educate.

A boost for local jobsSwainey reports that since the groundbreaking ceremony in October 2010, the project has created 175 non-construction job opportunities including local caterers, rental companies, staffing companies, florists, photographers, etc. General contractor, BEAM Construction Co., of Cherryville, NC reports a team of 31 subcontractors, many of which are based in Gaston County, including Robinson Sawyer, surveyors; John E. Jenkins, grading, curb and cutter subcontractor; J&G Fencework, fences; Dixie Glass Co, glass subcontractor; Jourdan Acoustical, acoustical ceiling subcontractor; Gastonia Plumbing & Heating; and Dallas Electric. This represents a tremendous financial boost to the city of Gastonia.

Other North Carolina subcontractors include brick masons, electricians, audio/visual companies, concrete, steel, and drywall suppliers, fire and security systems, music systems, site developers, advertisers, marketing and public relations firms, technology specialists, furniture

manufacturers, and many others from the region.

Swainey, with more than 35 years of international hospitality experience, reports very strong pre-opening numbers with a mixture of social, corporate, fraternal, charities, religious, and educational bookings with an encouraging number of booking inquiries. To further support local business, many of these bookings represent additional revenue to the city of Gastonia through the Gastonia Conference Center's Partnership Program.

The Gastonia Partnership Program offers local business the opportunity to share resources and demonstrates a commitment to supporting the growth of local businesses and the overall economic development of the Gastonia area.

Positive Environmental Impact

Consistent with the US Green Building Council's LEED certification, Gastonia Conference Center adheres to sustainable site development requirements.

Water Efficiencies are incorporated into the facility where no landscape irrigation is utilized along with a 35% reduction of water usage through the use of water-efficient plumbing fixtures.

Energy Efficiencies

In addition to high-efficient heating and cooling systems which provides a 30% improvement in energy performance, Gastonia Conference Center uses high-performance building materials, energy-efficient lighting and a fully automated lighting control system.

Materials and Resources

Throughout the course of the 13-month construction phase, more than 75% of construction waste was recycled or salvaged.

Indoor Environment

The indoor environment was designed as a completely non-smoking facility and includes electronic monitoring of air delivery and the use of CO2 sensors. An efficient air quality management plan was utilized throughout the construction process and used low-emitting materials for adhesives and sealants, paint and coatings, flooring systems and wood products.

A Grand Opening is scheduled for November.

Hi-resolution renderings of Gastonia Conference Center are available.

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Gastonia Conference Center

As the cornerstone of the downtown revitalization project, Gastonia Conference Center is designed to complement the existing local architecture, classic red brick dominates in the exterior design of the building housing a multi-use 30,000-square-foot conference center with stately columns and a front balcony on its façade, as well as two monumental staircases visible at night through illuminated glass walls. The conference center features a three-story parking deck with 229 spaces including surface area parking. The parking deck includes nine conveniently located electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for hybrids, electric, and other

plug-in vehicles. With 5,000 square feet of flexible space, the ballroom accommodates over 300 people for banquet seating, or over 400 people for auditorium-style seating. The ballroom features cutting-edge technology with traditional furnishings and appointments, and can be divided into four separate rooms. All space is designed with a high level of flexibility and comfort. Gastonia Conference Center is managed by The Wilderman Group of Charleston, SC. <http://thewildermangroup.com> .

The Wilderman Group is a woman-owned hospitality management company that provides focused services both customized and cutting edge with a concentration in the Carolinas and the Southeast. They specialize in civic and community developments and creating effective and productive environments for meetings and conferences. Based in Charleston, South Carolina, TWG is a full-service hospitality management firm with a team of industry experts in all areas of hospitality including operations, sales and marketing management, food and beverage, and environmental programs. They are steadfast in their commitment to environmental stewardship and are proud and active members of the US Green Building Council's Charlotte Chapter, the South Carolina Chapter, the Georgia Chapter, and the International Association of Conference Centers. Visit The Wilderman Group at <http://thewildermangroup.com> .