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Businesses Decide DeKalb, Generate \$440 Million in Capital Investments in 2016

Development Authority Works to Attract, Expand Businesses in DeKalb

[Decatur, Georgia] Decide DeKalb Development Authority continues to help businesses thrive in DeKalb County. In 2016, the Authority worked to attract and retain approximately \$440 million in announced capital investments and 4,800 jobs.

“Success for Decide DeKalb is measured by outcomes,” said Decide DeKalb’s President Ray Gilley. “Over the course of 2016, the Authority successfully closed and landed 17 exciting projects that are bringing resources and jobs to DeKalb.”

Decide DeKalb not only works to attract new businesses to the county but also helps to retain and expand existing ones. “We look forward to working with our local and state leaders as well as the international business community in promoting DeKalb as a vibrant, prosperous and ideal location for business development,” Gilley said.

Ongoing collaboration with community stakeholders helped launch the DeKalb Thrives initiative, which focuses on implementing economic development recommendations for: tourism, transportation, entrepreneurship, marketing and real estate development. “DeKalb Thrives serves as a roadmap to enhance the business climate and landscape in our county,” Decide DeKalb Board Chairman Tyrone Rachal said.

In 2016, the Development Authority launched the DeKalb Film, Music and Digital Entertainment Commission to help support Georgia’s booming production industry. “The boom in Georgia's entertainment industries is phenomenal, and DeKalb is uniquely positioned to benefit from them,” Andrew Greenberg, Commission Chair and Decide DeKalb Board Member said.



Over the course of 2016, Decide DeKalb helped to facilitate business development for both large and small companies as well as nonprofit organizations. The Task Force for Global Health, which is the second largest nonprofit in the country, purchased a larger building in Decatur, to expand its headquarters. This new purchase will enable the international organization to create 85 new jobs. Additionally, one of the region's leading medical facilities, Children's Health Care of Atlanta, announced a \$126 million expansion project that will enhance patient's access and services while creating an estimated 143 new jobs.

"DeKalb County is an ideal location for businesses to relocate and expand because of our highly skilled workforce, unrivaled access to major highways, proximity to the world's busiest airport and incomparable access to world-class entertainment," Gilley said.

South DeKalb was also home to major economic development activity in 2016. Home Chef, a meal kit delivery service, invested in a 140,000-square-foot assembling, packaging and distribution center in Lithonia. The new Home Chef location is expected to create 1,200 new jobs by 2020.

"We're undergoing tremendous growth and are excited to expand our distribution footprint," said Pat Vihtelic, Home Chef founder and CEO. "The culture of collaboration makes Georgia the ideal location for us today and tomorrow. We're confident that DeKalb has the skilled workforce necessary for us to achieve our ambitious growth goals."

In 2017, Decide DeKalb seeks to build upon ongoing initiatives such as the WE DeKalb (Workforce Enhancement) housing incentive program and Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund program. "Over the course of this past year, we have made tremendous strides and achieved great success," said Gilley. "Decide DeKalb looks forward to another year of attracting and expanding businesses to every corner of our great county."

For more information or to contact Decide DeKalb, please call 404-687-2730.

About Decide DeKalb

Decide DeKalb serves as the primary economic development driving force to attract, expand and retain businesses in DeKalb County, Georgia. Established in 1974 as the Development Authority of DeKalb County, Decide DeKalb works with partners, stakeholders and the business community to spur capital investments, encourage job growth and business sustainability. For more information, visit www.decidedekalb.com.

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