

Chapter 10

Economic Development

Mauldin has developed a strong and reasonably diversified economy, with services, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade providing the greatest number of jobs. The city's ten largest employers are listed in Table 10-1.

One of the city's largest employers, BiLo's corporate headquarters, relocated to Jacksonville, FL, following a merger with Winn Dixie. However, expanding employment at Samsung and the announcement of a new eSurance regional office has effectively replaced the BiLo job losses.

Mauldin's economic vitality is reflected in business recruitment and expansion successes:

- **Samsung Networks America** opened a technical support center in the Centerpointe Business Park in May 2009 on Holland Road; the initial 300 employees has expanded to 700 in just five years.
- **eSurance** announced a regional claims and sales office at Brookfield Corporate Center and began operations in August 2014. More than 450 employees are expected to work at this location.
- **Siemens Industries** selected a space at Brookfield South for a painting and assembly operation for hydraulic pumps.

Economic Development Tools

Mauldin continues to collaborate with Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC) and the SC Department of Commerce to offer incentives to new businesses, including the South Carolina Textiles Communities Revitalization Act, fee in lieu of taxes (FILOT), and Utility Tax Credits.

Mauldin has adopted local economic development incentives as well. Companies that invest in public infrastructure improvements may be eligible for rebates of up to half of the cost of these infrastructure improvements in future city property tax bills. Business license fees may be phased in over 3 years for new companies in the advanced materials, aerospace, automotive, life sciences and medical devices industries. City Council has focused on improving the business climate by providing more flexibility in development ordinances covering landscaping and signs, and will continue to improve development ordinances for business.

Mauldin has worked with an adjacent property owner to annex a 35 acre industrial site on Old Stage Road and has funded engineering studies to obtain "South Carolina Certified Industrial Site" designation from the SC Department of Commerce, which

assures visiting industrial prospects that the site is “shovel ready” for private industrial development. Staff continues to work with GADC to market and show this site to prospective industries.

Table 10-1 Major Employers in the City of Mauldin		
Employer	Industry Sector	Employees
Verizon	Communications Services	1,250
C&S Wholesale	Transportation, Distribution, Logistics	1,125
Samsung Networks America	Communications Services	700
Charter Communications	Communications Services	613
Jacobs Engineering	Engineering Services	596
Met Life	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	530
Ford Motor Credit	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	468
eSurance [1]	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	450
Compx	Manufacturing	293
Morgan AMT	Manufacturing/Advanced Materials	277
Lockheed Martin	Aerospace Services	185
C.F. Sauer	Manufacturing	152
Total		6,339

[1] Announced, opening date late 2014

Regional Economic Development Strategies

The ten-county Upstate region has cooperated through the Upstate Alliance to begin forming a collaborative regional economic development partnership. Upstate Alliance focuses on recruitment of new business to the region and marketing the Upstate region.

Mauldin has been an active participant in Ten at the Top, a regional group focused on fostering regional collaboration and cooperation on a variety of economic development and quality of life initiatives.

GADC has identified four industry clusters to target, building on existing industries and market advantages. The four targeted clusters are

- automotive,
- advanced materials,
- aviation,

- life sciences, with a focus on
 - medical devices,
 - agricultural biotechnology
 - research and testing labs
 - pharmaceuticals.

Mauldin’s proximity to Donaldson Center and to Clemson University’s International Center for Automotive Research create strategic opportunities to attract automotive and aviation engineering firms and suppliers.

Challenges and Opportunities

Within Mauldin, little space remains available in Class A business parks. Two sites remain available in Brookfield Corporate Center. Several sites remain available at Centerpointe Business Park at I-385 and Bridges Road. City staff has developed relationships with owners and property managers in these parks to help encourage development of these properties.

Smaller “infill” sites are important for both office and residential development in Mauldin. Bringing a larger daytime and resident population to key areas -- especially the city center area – will create a stronger market for restaurant and retail development. A market analysis revealed that the under-supply of quality restaurant and retail options results in \$28 million in annual retail and restaurant sales “leaking” out of the Mauldin market to adjacent markets in Simpsonville and Greenville.

It remains essential to improve the “sense of place” and the image of the City of Mauldin to improve the city’s economic competitiveness. To this end, the city funded a Downtown Master Plan that envisions redevelopment of a 12 acre area between the railroad and Main Street, about 6 acres of which is city-owned. Staff continues to seek funding to implement this plan.

Quality of life factors are often a “tie breaker” in business location decisions. The intangible value of an active downtown area with diverse dining and entertainment options plays an important role in creating a positive community image. Creating a stronger community identity and sense of place will improve quality of life in Mauldin and play an important role in larger economic development efforts.

Mauldin’s Economic Development Strategy

Based on Mauldin’s location, existing business, and established goals, the City’s economic development efforts remains focused on four areas, outlined below.

Retail and Hospitality Industry Development

Mauldin has a multitude of fast-food restaurants, but few quality sit-down restaurants.

Discussions with site selection consultants for quality sit-down restaurants reveal that these businesses tend to cluster in groups of several restaurants, need to be near large retail or employment centers, and also benefit if cultural and entertainment amenities are nearby.

Implementation of the Main Street Plan has begun to create a stronger environment for retail and restaurant business, as extensive landscaping was completed in the spring of 2012. Investment in the Mauldin Cultural Center, with the renovation of the auditorium and development of a quality outdoor amphitheater, is beginning to have an impact as well.

The City lacks a quality hotel within the city limits. Staff has actively worked on recruitment with local hotel developers in attempt to address these issues. With few exceptions, quality hotels now locate only on sites that are adjacent to an Interstate interchange, very close to a large convention center or sports arena, or in a thriving downtown area. Currently, the only realistically feasible hotel sites in Mauldin are at I-385 interchanges.

Another key strategy for recruitment of high-quality retail and hospitality is to create the kind of urban, pedestrian-friendly environment where these businesses can thrive. To a large extent, Mauldin future success in the retail and hospitality industries will hinge on the city's commitment to investing in redevelopment of the city center area.

Consulting Engineers, Architects, and Business Consultants

Mauldin's locational advantage creates opportunities to recruit local and regional engineering offices and other business consultants. Proximity to I-CAR is an advantage for automotive engineering consulting firms, as well as information technology and other business services. These business increasingly rely on their ability to recruit "creative class" employees, whose decisions about where to work are tremendously influenced by quality of life factors.

Advanced Materials Research, Development and Manufacturing

Innegrity is the region's newest advanced materials manufacturer, producing a fiber that has broad applications in automotive, sporting goods, and military applications. Morgan AMT, one of Mauldin's largest employers, can also be classed in this sector. Alternative energy research and development is a subset of this cluster that has strong potential for future development, and is associated with existing automotive research in the region.

General Office and Medical Office Development

The Bon Secours - Saint Francis Hospital satellite campus planned on Mauldin's northern boundary at Millenium Campus will create demands for additional medical office, lab and research space. Very little quality office space is available in the City

Center area in particular, and recently-developed office space in the City Center area such as Renaissance Park on Alexander Drive has been very successful.

Corporate Headquarters and Regional Offices

Mauldin is home to headquarters and regional offices for Bi-Lo, Jacobs Engineering, Met Life, Samsung Networks America, Verizon, Ford Motor Credit, and others. While market dynamics will cause some changes to these offices over time, the City's location and quality of life should continue to support corporate offices.

Implementation Strategies

The City's economic development efforts in the next several years should focus on the following implementation strategies:

- Continue to coordinate with GADC to develop and market existing sites and buildings.
- Continue to use all available tools to recruit manufacturers, with emphasis on automotive, aviation and advanced materials sectors
- Pursue opportunities to develop additional Class A office space and to recruit regional and national headquarters offices.
- Work to provide adequate infrastructure for development between Mauldin and the Southern Connector
- Invest in the infrastructure needed for redevelopment in the city center
- Explore public-private partnerships to redevelop the city center
- Continue to develop the Mauldin Cultural Center as a focus of leisure and recreation activities, to provide important amenities to attract new development to the surrounding area.
- Explore development of an small, linear urban parks where possible, with a view to connect Mauldin to the Swamp Rabbit Trail.
- Continue to work with Greenlink to ensure good public transit service.

Annexation Strategy

Mauldin has two options for expansion of the city's population and tax base: infill development within the existing city boundaries, or expand the city limits through annexation. Both options should be pursued.

The City's Annexation strategy has evolved over the past few years and will continue to evolve and adapt as the environment changes. The key factors in the annexation strategy adopted by Mauldin City Council are:

- Promote orderly growth
- Support economic development

- Control the type, quality, and location of development
- Establish and maintain positive community identity
- Ward off encroachment from other cities
- Ensure future growth

Progress on Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Promote Mauldin’s excellent business climate to industry and retail businesses.

Objective 1.1: Develop and disseminate information to prospective businesses about Mauldin’s strong market data, quality work force, low cost of living and high quality of life.

Implementation Strategies:

- a. Develop and distribute marketing brochures through Greenville Area Development Corporation (GADC), Upstate Alliance, Greater Mauldin Area Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations. – *Brochures completed and distributed.*
- b. Proactively contact businesses in targeted market segments to provide information about Mauldin as a good location for business. – *on-going efforts coordinated with GADC.*

Goal 2: Collaborate with GADC and Upstate Alliance to recruit new businesses to Mauldin.

Objective 1/Implementation Strategy: Work with GADC to maintain an up-to-date inventory of available commercial and industrial buildings and sites within the City – *on going.*

Objective 2/Implementation Strategy: Work with GADC and Upstate Alliance to recruit high quality firms that fit Mauldin’s specific economic development strategy – *on going.*

Objective 3/Implementation Strategy: Work with GADC to provide appropriate incentives to prospective industries, evaluating incentives on a case-by-case basis. – *on-going. The City has also adopted an Economic Development Incentive ordinance and amended the Business License Ordinance to provide reduced rates for targeted industries in the first three years of operations in Mauldin.*

Goal 3: Assist existing businesses to expand and grow in Mauldin

Objective 1/Implementation Strategy: Create an industrial Plant Managers Council to assist with recruitment and expansion of existing industries. Not created. *Direct contacts with large industrial plant managers have been established.*