

Development expected to create opportunity

By Rachel Oswald

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On an isolated patch of road Thursday morning, the powerful and the affluent mixed, mingled and threw dirt.

Joint Development Authority officials from Newton, Walton, Jasper and Morgan counties along with Technology Park/Atlanta members, broke ground on Stanton Springs, an anticipated self-contained community at Interstate 20 and U.S. 278.

Stanton Springs will be a 1,600-acre master planned and environmentally sensitive mixed-use development located between Covington and Madison.

The development is expected to be a major employment center, creating thousands of jobs and producing millions of dollars annually for the region attracting new offices, warehouses, retail, restaurants and residences, according to the JDA. Stanton Springs will offer business sites ranging from five to 100-plus acres.

Mark Mallard, a principal in charge of development and construction with Technology/Park Atlanta and the head of the Stanton Springs project, predicted that Stanton Springs would create 20,000 well-paying technical office jobs, as well as a large number of jobs in the service sector to support the business park.

“Stanton Springs offers a serene business environment that eases the pressures of the fast-paced business world with preserved green space and waterways,” said Rees Waite, Vice President of Development for Technology Park/Atlanta. “We designed Stanton Springs to cultivate productivity in both the working and living environments.”

The JDA was formed in 1999 with the intention of attracting high quality jobs and businesses to its region and to create a long-term significant tax base for its four counties: Newton, Walton, Jasper and Morgan.

“It’s a collaborative effort between all four counties and will bring a new tax base for them,” said Waite.

“Today’s the start of more good things to come.”

Technology Park/Atlanta will be responsible for the planning, development, construction, leasing and management of Stanton Springs. The land-use plan is conceptual in nature with specific areas for office, research, light-industrial use, commercial and residential spaces.

According to Technology Park/Atlanta, the environmentally sound office park is being developed to incorporate woodlands, green spaces, creeks and tributaries of the Little River, a watershed for Newton County.

“This project is an outstanding example of both intergovernmental and public-private collaboration,” said Mort Ewing, District 1 Commissioner for Newton County. “We are excited about the businesses this development will attract to help create jobs, drive the economy and help this region thrive.”

Pittman Construction will head construction on the Stanton Springs Parkway, the first road in the development and the entrance into the business park for which construction officially began on Thursday. The company, which has existed since 1884, has had previous experience with Georgia’s Department of Transportation projects.

Construction on the road is expected to be complete in January.

Phase one of construction will cost approximately \$2 million, of which \$500,000 will come

from the state. When construction on the road is complete, it will be two miles long and four lanes wide, with a divided median that will be heavily landscaped. Construction will include improvements to the U.S. 278 entrance, as well as the insulation of water and sewerage lines.

Mallard said that the site is “destined to become the most sought out business development east of Atlanta.

“The JDA is committed to making Stanton Springs the top choice for businesses looking for a home in the Southeast,” said Alan Verner, resident of Morgan County and chairman of the JDA.

Other projects of Technology Park/Atlanta include Technology Park, Lenox Park, Johns Creek and The Bluffs of Technology Park. The company was the first recipient of the Governor’s Award for Quality Economic Development, one award of many that the company and its projects have received.