

Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Expanding Operations in Paducah

Coca-Cola and the Greater Paducah Economic Development Council announce that Coca-Cola Bottling Co. will be expanding in Paducah. The company serves as a distributor of a variety of Coca-Cola products throughout western Kentucky and Southern Illinois and will add a minimum of 25 new jobs to their workforce of 80 and move to the speculative building that was constructed in the Industrial Park West off Olivet Church Rd.

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John Norman, local Coca-Cola Bottling Co. executive said, "We recently celebrated 100 years in Paducah and look forward to another 100 years serving our customers in West Kentucky. The spec building in the Industrial Park West is an excellent facility for us and I am very happy Coca-Cola will be the first tenant in the park."

Mayor Bill Paxton said, "When Coca-Cola began planning an expansion, we knew we wanted that expansion to be here in Paducah. The area has over 100 years of history with Coke and we are pleased that will continue. It is appropriate and an honor they have chosen to continue this relationship for many years to come."

McCracken Judge Executive Danny Orazine added, "25 new jobs and the first tenant at the Industrial Park West – we couldn't be happier that such a long-standing community presence fit the bill. Coca-Cola is one of the most well known and respected companies in the world."

Sandra Wilson, chair of Paducah-McCracken Industrial Development Authority, said, "This is wonderful news. Coca-Cola is the ideal anchor tenant in the Industrial Park West. This park was made possible by the tremendous cooperation and support of the city of Paducah, McCracken County, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and federal government."

Ken Wheeler, chairman of the GPEDC board said, "The addition of at least 25 new jobs to the 80 that Coca-Cola already has here will certainly impact the economy. As we have said, economic development in the region will come in small steps and not giant leaps. This is a great example of what we mean."

GPEDC worked with the company for many months and was instrumental in securing incentives to entice Coca-Cola to stay and expand in the area. The spec building and site that will house Coca-Cola is valued at around \$1.3 million. Coca-Cola's entire investment, including the purchase of the site should exceed in at \$3.5 million. The McCracken County Fiscal Court and the Paducah City Commission each approved a \$140,000 incentive to help offset costs for Coca-Cola.

Coca-Cola will be the first tenant in the Industrial park and it is expected that their commitment will spur other development. The park was developed as a joint city and county project six years ago. In the last year, utilities, roads and other infrastructure were completed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The park, owned by the Paducah/McCracken County Industrial Development Authority, has direct access to Olivet Church Rd. and Cairo Rd. Thanks to improvements to both thoroughfares, access to Interstate 24 has been dramatically improved making the park an easier sell to potential buyers. In addition, the 56,000-plus square foot speculative building means that Coca-Cola can move in much quicker than if they had to build a facility from scratch.

Coca-Cola has long been an important part of the region's business community and this move is the latest in a long history of growth for the company. In March of 1903, John Carson and his brother invested \$2,700 in a Coca-Cola franchise that covered a 65-mile radius of Paducah. The brothers then opened their first plant on South 3rd Street and began bottling and selling Coca-Cola in area.

In April of 1904 the company moved to 5th and Jackson Streets and expanded. The expansion included the new building as well as the purchase of a franchise in Evansville that John Carson managed. The history of expansion continued a few years later, when in 1907, the plant moved to a larger facility at 6th and Jackson Streets.

In 1939, Carson built the now landmark bottling plant at 3141 Broadway. The plant has long served as a monument to both Coca-Cola and Carson. The buildings art deco style and unique rotunda with a Coca-Cola chandelier and logo inlaid in the marble lobby was a testament to the commitment of Coca-Cola to the area.

In 1959, Luther Carson retired and his nephew, Bill Carson, took the reins as president of the plant. Coca-Cola Enterprises took ownership of the Coca-Cola bottling plant in 1986 after the Carson family sold the business that included the plant and interests in 17 other plants serving four states.

Coca-Cola Enterprises stopped bottling at the plant in 1987 and began using it as a distribution center for not only Coca-Cola but also other Coca-Cola products including bottled water, tea, sports drinks, juices and other sodas.