



# GTR GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL AEROSPACE PARK

COLUMBUS, LOWNDES COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

## THE LINK

The Columbus Lowndes Development LINK was founded in 2006 with the merger of the Chamber of Commerce and economic development entities. The LINK's staff of seven consists of two full-time certified economic developers and one part-time certified economic developer, two certified chamber executives, one governmental affairs expert and an administrative assistant. During its six years of existence, the LINK has experienced enormous success in both the economic development and community development arenas. Industrial and retail development has brought over \$3.4 billion in investments and the creation of 4,000± new jobs with top pay grades. A notable accomplishment is the creation of two TVA certified megasites in a two-year time period. Additionally, the Golden Triangle Industrial Park has expanded three-fold during this time. The LINK's economic development staff also manages the Lowndes County Industrial Development Authority, which owns and operates the Golden Triangle Industrial Park and the GTR Global Industrial Aerospace Park. Community development efforts include the creation of The Trust, a five-year capital investment campaign. Local business and industry leaders investing in The Trust are ensuring that the LINK has the tools to compete and succeed nationally and internationally at attracting new and better jobs to this area, while retaining existing jobs.

## GTR GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL AEROSPACE PARK

**Concept:** The GTR Global Industrial Aerospace Park is designed to complement the area's growing aerospace and defense industries that currently consist of composites, maintenance, unmanned aerial systems, helicopters and geospatial technologies. The aerospace industry represents 3-5% of the US GDP, with 10,000,000 existing jobs; and the industry leads the US economy in net exports. The park is a lucrative spot for the design, development, manufacturing and maintenance of aerospace-related products as well as other products. Columbus Air Force Base, a pilot training base and one of the nation's busiest airports, is located in Lowndes County. With Mississippi State University and its aerospace engineering department a short distance away, the synergies are in place for the creation of a world-renowned industrial aerospace park. Workforce training is available at nearby East Mississippi Community College, which has provided training for the existing area aerospace industries.

- **Regional Effort:** The GTR Global Industrial Aerospace Park is centrally located in Lowndes County and surrounded by four Mississippi counties and three Alabama counties. These county governments, along with the major city governments, economic and industrial development entities and educational institutions, have agreed that the GTR Global Industrial Aerospace Park is beneficial to the economic growth and well being of their communities. As a result, a Memorandum of Cooperation and Collaboration has been developed and all entities are in concurrence to the benefits of the park.

**Site:** The site is 2,500 acres, publicly controlled, adjacent to the Golden Triangle Regional Airport (GTRA), Mississippi's third largest commercial airport. Fifty percent of the site is the Crossroads Megasite, a TVA certified megasite.

- **Infrastructure:**

- **Water and Sewer:** The nearby Golden Triangle Industrial Park has 1,000,000 gallons on water storage capacity in elevated storage tanks. Funding has been appropriated to construct a 1,000,000 gallon tank northeast of the aerospace park and run 16" water lines along the western boundary of the aerospace park. The industrial park is in the design stage of expanding its sewer treatment facilities, and construction is expected to begin in Spring of 2010. Funding has also been appropriated for the installation of two pump stations and 35,000 ft. of 12" sewer force main.

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- **Electricity:** Electricity is provided by the Tennessee Valley Authority and distributed by 4-County Electric Power Association. Redundant power is available as both TVA and 4-County have state-of-the art delivery systems adjacent to the site.
- **Natural Gas:** Atmos Energy has lines adjacent to the site that can easily be extended into the site.

- **Transportation:**

- **Air:** The GTRA runway is 6,500 ft. with funds appropriated to expand to 8,000 ft. by 2011. The airport's master plan includes a 5,000 ft. crossing runway that dissects the GTR Global Industrial Aerospace Park. GTRA and CAFB collaborate on many missions and projects, with CAFB providing backup air control for GTRA and GTRA providing runway space to CAFB. An air cargo ramp is in place.
- **Rail:** The Kansas City Southern Railroad bounds the site to the south, providing access to five other railroads in Columbus, which have connections to the east and west coasts, Mexico and Canada.
- **Highway:** Airport Road and Artesia Road connect the site to US Highways 82 and 45, interstate quality highways providing access to Interstates 20, 55, 59 and 22 Corridor.
- **Water:** The Lowndes County Ports (east and west banks) are located on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, America's newest inland waterway. Both ports are operated by stevedoring services and have intermodal loading and unloading capabilities. The west bank port is nine (9) highway miles from the site. The Tenn-Tom Waterway provides water access to all cardinal points

- **Due Diligence:**

- **Environmental:** All environmental studies have been performed and clearances received on the site. The site is also in an air attainment area.
- **Geotechnical:** Geotechnical testing has been performed on the site. The site sits atop Selma Chalk, which carries a 120 dpi, providing a dramatic savings in construction costs.
- **Cultural Resources:** Cultural resources clearances have been completed on the site.

### **Workforce:**

The majority of the workforce for the aerospace park will come from the five Mississippi counties and three Alabama counties signing the Memorandum of Cooperation and Collaboration. The combined population of these counties is 232,377 with a total available workforce of 92,172. Well-trained air force retirees, 6,600 at last count, are also available for employment in the aerospace industry.

### **Education**

- **Mississippi State University:** Located 12 miles from the site, Mississippi State University has an outstanding, world recognized aerospace engineering school. The 75-year old school is ranked 80th among 350 schools in the nation by US News and World Report and ranks 55th among public universities in total research and development expenditures. The university provides employees and solutions to area manufacturers.
- **East Mississippi Community College:** Workforce training at EMCC is second to none, with the college's enrollment continuously growing, and innovative training abounding. The school's Center for Manufacturing Excellence, provides specialized, hands-on training for manufacturers.
- **Mississippi University for Women:** The "W" has been recognized by many publications for its quality education. The College of Professional Studies has expanded its mission to include a number of sought-after degrees and curricula, thus enhancing the attractiveness of the university to business and industry.