



AdvantageSite

Alabama Development
Office

Alagasco

Alabama Power Company

Economic Development
Partnership of Alabama

North Alabama Industrial
Development Association

PowerSouth Energy
Cooperative

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Jackson County Industrial Park becomes first “AdvantageSite”

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., May 28 – The Jackson County Industrial Park has become the first site in the AdvantageSite pilot program to receive the AdvantageSite designation.

AdvantageSite, a voluntary industrial site preparedness program, was created in order to make the state more competitive for companies considering a location in Alabama.

It is jointly sponsored by the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA) and the Alabama Development Office (ADO) and the following statewide and regional economic development allies - Alabama Gas Corporation, Alabama Power Company, PowerSouth Energy Cooperative and the North Alabama Industrial Development Association.

The pilot program was launched in Dec. 2007, with pilot sites selected from an initial pool of more than 40 pre-applications.

The Jackson County Industrial Park is the first of those applicants to successfully complete the program.

The AdvantageSite program requires that community economic development organizations provide documentation specific to a proposed industrial site, including a set of standard data related to ownership/control, environmental and geotechnical conditions, as well as infrastructure status.

Sites must also meet size, zoning and accessibility requirements.

“Site selection has changed drastically over the past few years,” said Greg Knighton, director of Business Information for EDPA. “Companies are looking at shorter and shorter deadlines for the site selection process, which makes it imperative that local economic development organizations have complete and reliable data on their prospective industrial sites.”

“This program has the benefit of not only creating a ready supply of information for companies and consultants involved in the site selection process, but also helping state and regional economic developers become more familiar with prospective industrial sites,” said David Hutchison, director of recruitment for the Alabama Development Office. “It also helps us to avoid unwanted ‘surprises,’ which can derail the state’s chance of winning a project.”

Local developers are finding that it gives them the tools needed to know their properties better as well.

“It was a good exercise for us,” said Dus Rogers, president, Jackson County Economic Development Authority. “At the local level we try our best to have all of our documentation in order. But having a set process and checklist to go by, as well as the feedback of the AdvantageSite team, has been immensely helpful. We feel we are better prepared for the next prospect that considers this site.”

A pool of pre-applications submitted in Dec. 2007 has been accepted into the first round of the program.

For more information on the AdvantageSite program, please visit www.advantagealabama.com/bsc/advantagesitepublic.asp

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