

Charlotte Business Journal - March 10, 2010  
[/charlotte/stories/2010/03/08/daily26.html](#)

## CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Wednesday, March 10, 2010, 6:20pm EST | Modified: Thursday, March 11, 2010, 12:30pm

# Siemens project to bring \$170 million investment, 825 jobs

Charlotte Business Journal - by [Susan Stabley](#) Staff Writer

**Siemens Energy** will invest at least \$170 million to expand a gas turbine manufacturing facility that will create 825 new jobs in Charlotte in the next five years.

The expansion will total 450,000 square feet, including a 380,000-square-foot plant that will house North American operations for producing and repairing gas turbines. Those operations are being consolidated from existing Siemens Energy plants in Hamilton, Ontario, and Orlando, Fla. About 70,000 square feet of office space will also be part of the new complex at 5101 Westinghouse Blvd., where the company owns 292 acres. That will give the company about 1 million square feet at the site.

The company will initially add 660 workers. It will eventually have a total of 1,800 employees in southwest Charlotte after completing hiring.

Gov. Bev Perdue announced the development at Siemens' plant here after North Carolina's economic investment committee approved more than \$22 million in incentives for the expansion Thursday morning. It wasn't clear at press time if the company would also receive a grant from the governor's One North Carolina Fund.

Charlotte was one of many cities recruiting the project. The Charlotte Chamber had been working on the deal, code named Project Cardinal, for months.

Of the new jobs, 440 will be hourly manufacturing positions; the remainder are administrative and other salaried jobs. The hourly positions will pay an average of \$25.50; salaried workers will average \$70,000 annually.

Michael Süess, chief executive of the Fossil Power Generation Division of Siemens Energy, thanked Perdue for her hands-on participation in the recruitment process. He said Charlotte's strong work force and base of financial institutions were attractive to the company.

Siemens' expansion is largest industrial project in Charlotte since IBM Corp. located a plant here in 1978, Charlotte Chamber President Bob Morgan said. And after the expansion, the company will be Mecklenburg County's largest manufacturer.

It's the second expansion in Charlotte in less than a year for Siemens Energy, an arm of Germany-based **Siemens AG**.

Siemens Energy develops and builds steam-turbine and generator components at the Westinghouse Boulevard site. The industrial area is named for a Westinghouse Electric Co. plant built in 1960s, which Siemens acquired in 1997.

Siemens will finance the massive expansion in large part through a tax-exempt bond program created through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Local and state officials have been working on awarding more than \$131 million in Recovery Zone stimulus bonds for the development.

Funds are also expected to be given to create a training program at Central Piedmont Community College.

Members of the N.C. Department of Transportation board have also approved up to \$150,000 to finance construction costs for tracks that connect to rail lines. According to N.C. DOT, the Siemens expansion requires added access for additional carloads of freight.

Siemens Energy has already received local incentives to bring more jobs here. Last summer, the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners and Charlotte City Council signed off on a \$1.4 million grant for Siemens, part of a \$5 million package.

That money helped secure a commitment from the energy company to centralize its engineering functions here instead of Orlando, Fla.

In return, Siemens had pledged to add 226 employees to its existing 740-member work force over the course of five years, according to county documents. Those new jobs would pay an average of \$65,000 a year.

The company broke ground in October on a \$12 million, 75,000-square-foot addition to its Westinghouse facility that will house about \$40 million in equipment.

The United States is one of Siemens' largest markets. The company says Siemens-built power plants supply one-third of North America's electricity.

Süess said one quarter of its total 70,000 work force is in the United States. This step shows Siemens' commitment to the United States and especially Charlotte, he said.

*All contents of this site © American City Business Journals Inc. All rights reserved.*