

Going Green

CARROLL COUNTY'S GREENBELT HOPES TO FOSTER MORE THAN JUST HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

BY CHRISTINE HALL
Contributing Writer

Getting out and about in Carrollton is easier now with the creation of the **Greenbelt**, and as it nears completion next year, there may be some real estate benefits along the corridor as well.

The trail itself is just over 16 miles, said Erica Studdard, executive director of **Friends of Carrollton Greenbelt**. Nearly 12 miles of it is complete, and the mission is to finish in 2016.

What she hasn't seen yet is the commercial revitalization that could occur, however given that the Greenbelt is still new, she hopes to see more of that in the next five or 10 years.

What is evident is more people are using it now, especially since the **Carrollton City Schools** Board of Education recently approved the Safe Routes to School Program, said Laura Richards, founder of Friends of Carrollton Greenbelt.

The program includes 4,500 schools nationwide that allows for opportunities to walk and bicycle to school. Friends of Carrollton Greenbelt has been measuring the progress since school has started, she said.

Another impact has been providing accessibility to the beauty in this part of the world, Richards said. Via the Greenbelt, there is exposure to areas including the Buffalo Creek Shoals and the Little Tallapoosa River, which is the Carrollton city watershed, she added.

As a result of the Greenbelt, the **University of West Georgia's Department of Anthropology**, in partnership with the **Tanner Medical Center** and Friends of Carrollton Greenbelt, is measuring its

► BY THE NUMBERS

CARROLLTON GREENBELT

- 16 miles of trails
- Completion in 2016
- 1.5 miles of the trail goes through Hobbs Farm Park
- 2 bridges connect the trail near Hays Mill Park to help children bike and walk to nearby schools

SOURCE: FRIENDS OF CARROLLTON GREENBELT



JOANN VITELLI

Erica Studdard, executive director of Friends of Carrollton Greenbelt, and Laura Richards, founder of the organization, both hope the recreational trail will foster economic development as well.

usage, who is on the trail and why.

Richards said this is not something that just big cities can do, but small cities can also achieve a linear park network.

"We've seen increased demand for bicycling and pedestrians," Richards said. "Carrollton is leading other communities who are committing to copying the Greenbelt. Two cities have sent people already to see how it has worked here, and its success shows it is doable. Just the fact that there are those visits shows we have something other communities want."

One of the things Dwayne Hicks, a broker with **Metro West Realty**, has enjoyed seeing is the kind of people who are out using the Greenbelt.

"There are all sorts of people, not one particular socioeconomic class of people," he said. "It feels like a community, and there is a sense of connection that hasn't been here before. It's pulled our town in again, and it has been cool."

There is some real estate that touches the Greenbelt, some older homes, and they are selling for a significant amount above what they should be selling Hicks

said. For example, homes he thought would sell in the \$139,000 to \$149,000 range are actually selling for \$159,000 to \$169,000.

That is a big jump, and similar growth is being felt on the retail side as well, he said. To count all of the benefits of the Greenbelt would be like counting the benefits of having a mobile phone – no one knows where the benefits begin or end, Hicks added.

He sees some opportunities for homes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11B

CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Trident adding jobs to Carroll, state

BY DOUG DELOACH
Contributing Writer

At the end of July, executives from Seattle-based **Trident Seafoods**, the largest vertically integrated seafood harvesting and processing company in North America, presided over a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by state and county officials including Sen. Mike Dugan to mark the opening of a \$41 million production and distribution facility in Carrollton. The plant site was chosen in 2013 following a multi-year search during which Trident reviewed nearly 100 different properties in the Southeastern region.

"The simple reason [for choosing the site] was that Carrollton, Carroll County and the state of Georgia opened the door and said, 'Y'all come on in,'" said Joe Bundred, CEO of Trident Seafoods.

The decision to locate Trident's first ever brick-and-mortar operation west of the Mississippi River on an 81-acre site about 50 miles west of Atlanta was also influenced by proximity to the interstate highway system and access to air and sea ports, and other practical benefits, such as the presence of a 104,000-square-foot building designed for food production and refrigerated storage (formerly used by Chiquita Brands), and an on-site wastewater treatment plant.

"The former Chiquita plant and the surrounding property offered us the elbow room we needed to expand the existing plant significantly, and the water-treatment facility was essential to our operation," Bundred said.

The refurbished, updated and expanded Carrollton facility now includes an 88,000-square-foot manufacturing operation, 18,000 square feet of office space, and 20,000 square feet of support area. The distribution center includes



Joe Bundred



SPECIAL/TRIDENT SEAFOODS
Seattle-based Trident Seafoods opened its Carroll County facility in late July.

CLOSER LOOK

One-third of the country's top 100 food processing companies have operations in Georgia including:

- Chicken of the Sea
- Flowers Foods
- Frito-Lay
- General Mills
- Hostess
- Kellogg's USA
- Perdue Farms
- Sanderson Farms
- Trident Seafoods
- Tyson Foods
- Unilever
- Wrigley

67,000 square feet of cold storage space to keep finished products at zero degrees Fahrenheit until shipment. Fifteen climate-sealed truck bays facilitate the off-loading of raw materials and shipment of finished, frozen products.

"The temperature-controlled market has been one of our key strategic marketing targets for several years," said Curtis Foltz, executive director of the

Georgia Ports Authority.

Food processing is the state's largest manufacturing sector. Savannah's Garden City Terminal offers 84 refrigerated container racks and 814 chassis plugs capable of simultaneously powering 2,830 refrigerated boxes. Another 20 racks are scheduled for completion by the end of the year, adding 480 refrigerated container slots to the terminal's overall capacity.

"As the largest export port for this market segment we specifically have targeted new import opportunities to balance supply chain efficiencies," Foltz said. "Trident fit this space perfectly, and when matched with their need to expand into the Southeast, the combination created a win-win solution."

The new Trident plant is designed to streamline production of value-added products made from frozen fish fillets and fillet blocks, such as battered, glazed, breaded, fryer and oven-ready items, and offer significant delivery advantages for supplying major regional markets. When fully operational, the plant will produce 50,000 tons of finished products annually for the U.S. market, and employ 175 full-time workers.

"We're a family-owned business with Southern roots in Tennessee, and Carrollton reflects our own strong family values," Bundred said. "We want to be good neighbors in the communities where we operate, and we like the community, which is small enough to appreciate the impact of bringing 175 jobs into the area."

Founded in 1973 by Bundred's father, Chuck, and two fishermen partners, Trident Seafoods catches and processes wild Alaska salmon, cod, crab, pollock and other sea creatures for delivery to retail and food service customers under brands such as Trident and Louis Kemp.

The company operates a fleet of more than 30 vessels including floating processors, catcher-processors, fishing boats and support vessels.

Trident's onshore operations include processing plants in a dozen coastal communities from Oregon to Alaska. To ensure optimal output at its newest state-of-the-art facility in Carrollton, the company is taking advantage of the state's Quick Start program to train at least 100 Trident plant employees.

"It's one thing to get a new plant full of machines and sophisticated electronic equipment and piping and miles of wiring hooked up properly," Bundred said. "It's another thing to train new people to operate it safely and efficiently."

Representatives from the **Georgia Department of Economic Development** partnered with **Carroll Tomorrow** to assist Trident Seafoods in its quest to expand the company's operations in the Southeast. After an initial exploration session years ago failed to land the Trident deal, the lure presented by the Carrollton brand brought the company back for a second look.

"The interconnectivity we offer, which includes the port and airport access, as well as things like broadband connectivity, is very appealing to this type of operation," said Andy Camp, Carroll Tomorrow's vice president of economic development.

Camp also cited the city's proximity to Atlanta as another advantage.

"The position of Carrollton, which is an hour from Atlanta, means the big city amenities are close enough, but we still have the benefit of a slower pace of life, and a more affordable lifestyle," he said.

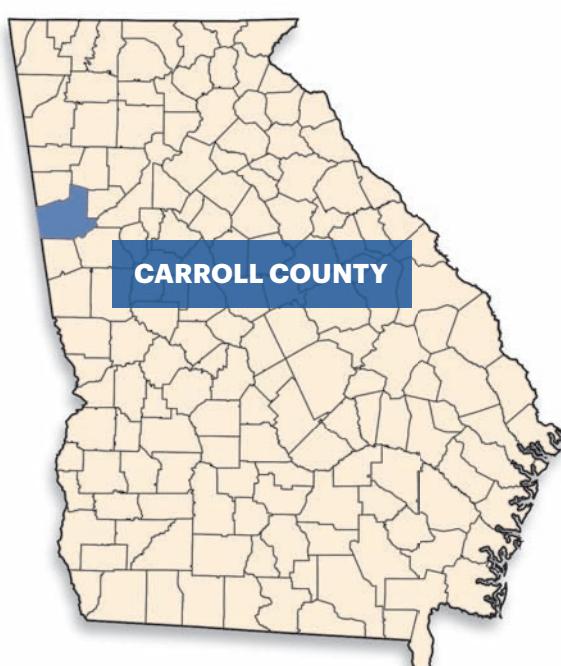
While Alaska is a long way from Carrollton, that's where America's healthiest fisheries are located. The new Trident Seafoods operation brings together two links of the food chain more closely than ever before.

"We're happy to be back in the South," Bundred noted, "and we're happy to be bringing a piece of our dream with us."

SOURCE: QUICKFACTS
DATA ARE DERIVED FROM: POPULATION ESTIMATES, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING, CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY, SMALL AREA HEALTH INSURANCE ESTIMATES, SMALL AREA INCOME AND POVERTY ESTIMATES, STATE AND COUNTY HOUSING UNIT ESTIMATES, COUNTY BUSINESS PATTERNS, NONEMPLOYER STATISTICS, ECONOMIC CENSUS, SURVEY OF BUSINESS OWNERS, BUILDING PERMITS

CARROLL COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

Population estimates, 2014	114,093
Population per square mile, 2010	222
Population, percent change from 2010	3.2%
Foreign born persons, 2013	4.4%
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2013	66.7%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2013	\$118,500
Building permits, 2014	111
Language other than English spoken at home	7.7%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years or older	79.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years or older	18.3%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years or older	28.5%
Median household income (in 2013 dollars)	\$46,147
Persons in poverty	17.9%
Total employer establishments, 2013	1,988
Total employment, 2013	31,002



CARROLL COUNTY



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CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Projects, planning underway in Carroll County's downtowns

BY MARTIN SINDERMAN

Contributing Writer

Several cities in Carroll County, located about 50 miles west of Atlanta, are in various stages of redeveloping their downtowns, a trend marked by new projects recently out of the ground, strategic planning efforts getting ready to start, and general appearance enhancements underway in their central business districts.

Carrollton Courtyard

The latest big news in downtown Carrollton took place in August with the opening of a \$13 million **Marriott Courtyard Carrollton**, located near Adamson Square, adjacent to and physically linked with the **Carrollton Cultural Arts Center**.

Developed by a group comprised of locally based **Linco Development** and designer/general contractor **RA-LIN & Associates Inc.**, as well as Atlanta-based **Paramount Hospitality Group**, the five-story/70,000-square-foot property includes 109 guest rooms, a 3,500-square-foot meeting room, indoor pool, fitness center, bar, lounge, restaurant and guest



JOANN VITELLI

laundry, as well as public areas designed to reflect aspects of Carrollton and surrounding areas.

The property's linkage with the Cultural Arts Center is central to the project, according to Linco Development President Josh Chapman.

"When you pair the hotel with the Cultural Arts Center, you basically create a hotel conference center where larger meetings in the hotel can spill over into the classrooms and auditorium space in the [cultural] center, creating a very dynamic meeting venue for downtown

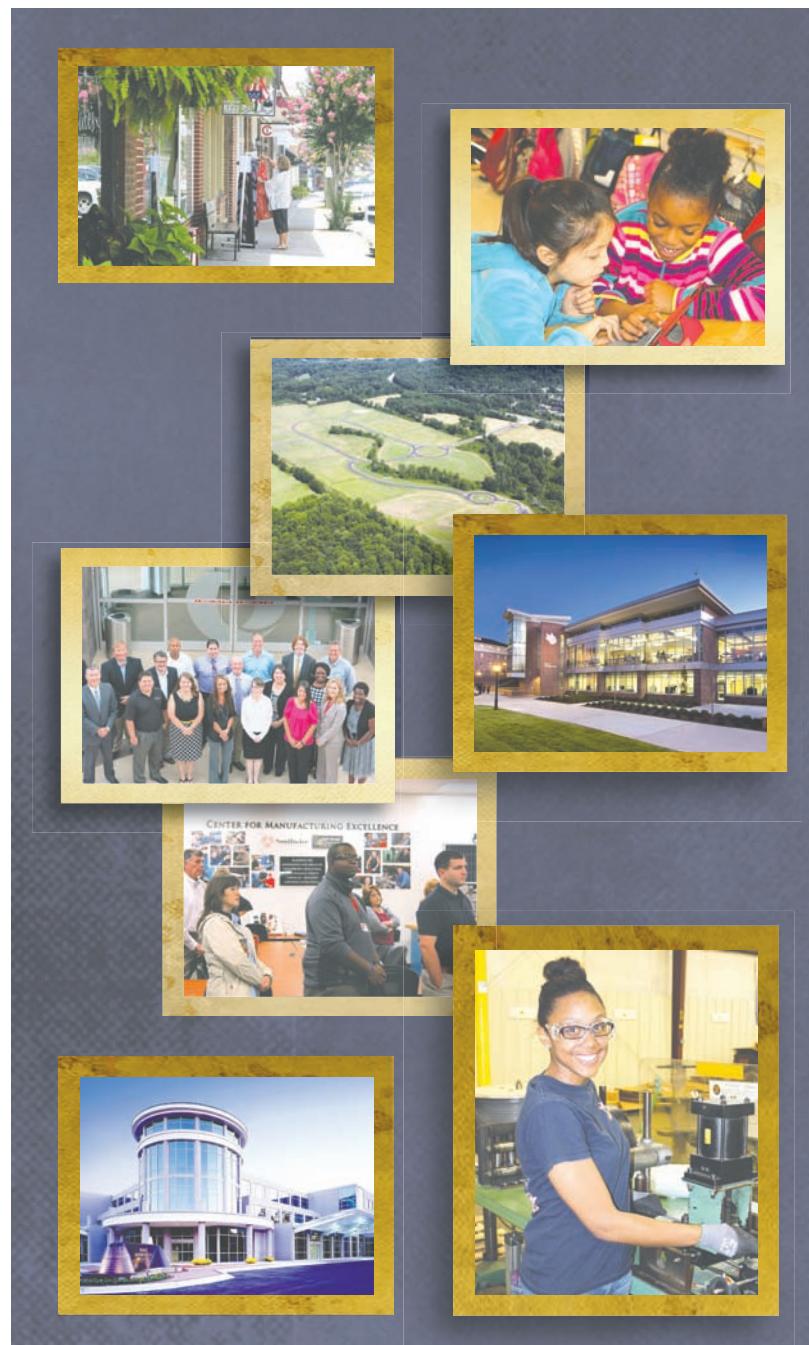
Carrollton," Chapman said.

According to Chapman, he and his partners had long been looking for ways to make a hotel conference center work in downtown Carrollton, which he says had previously not had a hotel since the 1960s. The central business district's resurgence in recent years opened the way for a market-driven project. "There are now so many people and places to shop and eat downtown that a hotel seemed to be a really good fit."

The Courtyard Marriott deal involved a property swap with the **city of Carrollton** to enable its connection with the cultural arts center. Chapman and his group initially approached the city with a proposal about one and a half years ago, said Mayor Wayne Garner. "Agreeing to it was definitely a no-brainer."

The new convention hotel builds upon downtown Carrollton redevelopment activity that began more than a decade ago.

"We began by working on quality of life issues," said Garner, "and from there we focused on what it would take to make people want to come downtown."



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CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Essential elements of the redevelopment have included the Cultural Arts Center; the **Amp at Adamson Square**, an outdoor covered amphitheater venue, opened in 2012, that accommodates crowds of 800 to 1,000 for a variety of movies and regional and local musical acts; implementation of Georgia Main Street program, the comprehensive downtown revitalization process originated by the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**; and various public improvements, city-sponsored façade-preservation grants, and a revolving loan fund to encourage acquisition and renovation of downtown buildings.

The result has been a bustling downtown Carrollton, with more than 15 restaurants featuring a wide range of cuisines in and around Adamson Square, as well as a variety of retailers. In addition to visitors from outside the city, markets served by this array of merchants, according to Garner, include students at **West Georgia University**; several hundred city and county employees; employees of wire-and-cable-manufacturing giant **Southwire Co. LLC**; employees of **Tanner Medical Center**; and students at the Carrollton campus of **West Georgia Technical College**.

Strategic vision

A Main Street program, and series of public improvements, including the 2010 opening of the 1,200-seat **MILL**



Villa Rica is about to begin its downtown master plan.

Amphitheater, helped turn the relatively downtrodden downtown Villa Rica of the 1990s into a central gathering place for the community, as well as destination for west Georgia/east Alabama residents and others looking for small-shop/boutique-style shopping, along with a variety of good restaurant experiences ranging from burgers at the **Chat and Choo** to Louisiana-style eats at **Gabe's Downtown**.

And there's more change on the way. Working with the **Georgia Municipal Association** and the **Carl Vinson Institute of Government** at **The University of Georgia**, the **city of Villa Rica** is set to begin a downtown master planning program called "RSVP" or "Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning Program."

Beginning later this year, the program will bring planners, planning students, and members of the community together for a 14-week project whose end product is a downtown master plan, according to

Villa Rica City Manager David Milliron. There's a need for a plan here, he said.

"Downtown is the city's economic engine," said Milliron, "And it only makes sense to have a strategic vision and plan in place to guide its development."

Bowdon

This Carroll County municipality kicked off its Main Street program last January, said Jan Lloyd, director of the organization.

Activities to date have included the removal of older, incandescent street lights downtown and replacing them with LEDs (light-emitting diodes) for a clearer, cleaner-looking light, according to Lloyd.

A façade grant program has been put in place for downtown Bowdon property owners to improve their storefronts. Participants in the program receive matching funds for their individual



PHTOTOS/SPECIAL

facades from the Main Street program, according to Lloyd, with five, \$1,000 grants currently available.

Other elements of the downtown Bowdon mix include events such as "Bowdon by Candlelight," a Christmas shopping-season kickoff featuring a parade, music, sidewalk vendors, and downtown merchants offering refreshments and staying open late. The Main Street program has also recently commissioned artist James Gibson to create a permanent piece of metal art for Heritage Park, a downtown space used for outdoor events and a May "Sunny Days" concert series.

People come to downtown Bowdon from surrounding areas in east Alabama and west Georgia, according to Lloyd. A major attraction here is the **Southern Lady Restaurant**, a restaurant featuring Southern-style cuisine that has been in business more than 40 years, she said.

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CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Connecting to the courts: PeachCourt changes how cases in Georgia are filed

BY TONYA LAYMAN
Contributing Writer

A new state-of-the-art technology platform is revolutionizing how attorneys file documents in domestic relations and general civil cases in superior and state courts throughout Georgia.

So far, out of 159 circuits, 80 superior courts have adopted PeachCourt, a

system produced by Carrollton-based technology company **GreenCourt Legal Technologies LLC** in partnership with the **Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia**. However, the company is continually rolling it out to new communities and plans to be in over 120 superior court systems by year end. It also plans to be active in about 60 state court systems by the middle of next year, said GreenCourt

CEO Andy Johnson.

Since PeachCourt began serving Georgia's state and superior courts earlier this year, nearly 3,000 Georgia Bar members have registered to e-file.

In 2011, the **State Bar of Georgia**'s Board of Governors adopted a resolution on electronic filing that encouraged all stakeholders – filers, clerks and judges – to work together to develop a unified, statewide e-filing system. In 2014, the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia selected GreenCourt to design, build, implement and support PeachCourt.

At \$5 per filing, attorneys can e-file their cases, and follow-up documents, from an Internet connected computer anywhere. Before, they would either have to drive to the courthouse to hand deliver documents or mail or ship them.

"You can spend a lot of time copying documents and preparing to mail them and then it can cost \$20 or \$30 to send them," Johnson said, adding this system can provide cost savings to the attorney, especially those filing in counties away from their office.

Sam Snider, general counsel of **Greenway Health LLC** and member of GreenCourt's Board of Directors, said most attorneys are looking for the easiest way

possible to making their filings and this system fits that bill.

"It is as easy as anything else you could do on your computer like sending an email," he said. "A trip to the courthouse can be difficult. As the bar expands and geography becomes less relevant in how people chose attorneys, this makes the process easier."

Another benefit for attorneys is they are no longer limited in the hours they can file their cases.

"With our system, an attorney can file the case at midnight and then the clerk will accept it once they return to the office," Johnson said. "And the system is so easy to use. We are getting feedback from attorneys that the system is self explanatory and it auto generates several of the standard forms needed for an initial filing."

For instance, PeachCourt automatically generates the case initiation form, summons and Sheriff's Entry of Service for the filer.

Johnson said funding for PeachCourt does not come from Georgia's taxpayers. Instead it is funded with the \$5 per transaction fee paid by filers. A handful of local business investors in the Carrollton community provided the funds to build out the infrastructure and launch the product. A staff of 18 – with plans to expand to over 100 staffers by the end of 2016

► CLOSER LOOK

- Carrollton-based GreenCourt Legal Technologies LLC connects people with "technology for a better justice system."
- GreenCourt's electronic filing and court document access platform is PeachCourt, a new system being adopted in superior and state courts across Georgia.
- PeachCourt makes it easy for any filer to deliver documents to the court from the convenience of his or her desk.
- PeachCourt also makes it easy for any court by connecting with the existing court case management software, rather than requiring significant, costly changes.

– oversee day-to-day operations.

"Right now, there is no mandate to use PeachCourt. That means there is no free lunch for us," Johnson said. "Our company will succeed because we take care of every filer in every case, in every court, every time. We cannot afford to play the averages and hope that most customers have an average experience. We set out each day to make sure each and every interaction anyone has with us is flawless."

This system actually has the potential to save taxpayer dollars, he said.

"Because the clerk can hit one button and import the case information into their system that saves them the time and manpower it would have taken before to scan or key in that information," Johnson said. "That process goes from the average time to accept a filing of 20 to 25 minutes to down to just two or three minutes."

GreenCourt is also rolling out its newest offering, PeachCourt's court document search and retrieval feature.

"Any U.S. citizen – attorney, private citizen, corporation, media outlet, etc. – can access any filed court document in any case, no matter when or how the document was filed. Court clerk's offices have provided this type of access for many decades. PeachCourt is extending the service to the tens of thousands of people who want to access the information without having to make the trip to the respective courthouse in person," Johnson said.

The fee for this service will be 50 cents per page, comparable to the printing costs in a clerk's office.

"This will be a great feature for judges. In many rural counties, judges often sit for cases in multiple counties and each county has its own case management systems to manage those causes. Our system can serve as a dashboard for these judges to pull their case information up," Johnson said, adding this eAccess system will be free to judges.

As the company grows, they plan for PeachCourt to connect attorneys with additional classes of court beyond state and superior courts.

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CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Business college in business of transforming lives

The Richards College of Business' mission defines who we are and sets the stage for what we do: We are in the business of transforming lives through education, engagement, and experiences. This is an exciting time for the Richards College, with new programs, partners, and even greater possibilities for the future.

We recently celebrated 30 years of business accreditation by AACSB International, a recognition held by fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide, and 15 years of separate AACSB accreditation for our accounting programs, held by fewer than 3 percent worldwide.

"A program we are most proud of is the Southwire Sustainable Business Honors Program. Built as a true collaboration between the Richards College and Southwire Co. The program allows students to earn both their bachelor's degrees and MBAs in only four years."

Accreditation is not our goal – it is the result of excellence in programs, highly qualified and productive faculty, and staff that go above and beyond to make the Richards College outstanding in every way.

A key goal of the Richards College is that every student have the opportunity to graduate with a degree plus an additional experience that can provide added value. We offer a range of opportunities including a selection of majors, minors, and certificate programs; undergraduate and graduate research; in-class, online, and hybrid courses; executive lectures, guest speakers, and business visits; and international experiences including short-term study abroad, semester-long exchange, and a dual degree program with a partner school in Europe.

A program we are most proud of is the Southwire Sustainable Business Honors Program. Built as a true collaboration between the Richards College and Southwire Co., North America's largest manufacturer of wire and cable, the program allows students to earn both their bachelor's degrees and MBAs in only four years.

This one-of-a-kind program was developed by Richards College faculty and Southwire executives, and it is centered around Southwire's five pillars of sustainability: Building Worth (profitable business operations), Growing Green (nurturing the environment), Living Well (caring for employees), Giving Back (supporting the community), and Doing Right

(acting ethically).

Students in the program complete all requirements not only of the Richards College, but also of the Honors College at UWG. The course work is demanding and includes a unique set of courses that led to a certificate in Sustainable Business. Extra-curricular activities include one-on-one mentoring with corporate executives, unique internship opportunities, numerous opportunities for service learning, and hands-on experiences alongside members of the Southwire team throughout the



Faye S. McIntyre is dean and Sewell Chair of Private Enterprise at University of West Georgia's Richards College.

program.

The first students started two years ago and have begun their internships with Southwire's divisional presidents

(yes, presidents!) this fall. The second year students will work on employee wellness and engagement projects this year, and a new group of highly qualified and motivated students started and will contribute to Southwire's Project GIFT (Giving Inspiration for Tomorrow) this fall. We are fortunate to have such forward-thinking business partners as Southwire, and we are proud to offer this innovative program to our students. The Southwire Sustainable Business Honors prepares students like no other program!

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CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Expansion plans focus on easy access

BY NICOLE BRADFORD
Contributing Writer

In the medical community, there's a saying among cardiac specialists: "Time is muscle."

It refers to how quickly a patient suffering from a heart attack gets medical attention, says Dr. William C. Waters, executive vice president for clinical experience and chief medical operations officer for **Tanner Health System**.

"Getting access to care right away is the difference between someone doing really well after a heart attack or doing very poorly," Water said, referring to the recent addition of angioplasty – a non-surgical procedure for heart attacks – to Tanner's Villa Rica location.

"Being able to provide that service at that hospital is tremendous for that community," Waters said, "so it's true that no one dies of a heart attack."

In the past, patients who come into that hospital were transferred to Carrollton or Atlanta for the procedure, losing valuable time.

"If people can't access it, you're not really providing them with a service," Waters said. "What good are fancy services if people can't get to it?"

It's no surprise that heart disease, along with diabetes, cancer and behavioral health issues, are problems common to most Georgia counties, says Tanner Health System President and CEO Loy Howard.

"The big buzz word right now is access to care," Howard said. "If people can't get to a doctor, it's very hard for them to get better or manage a chronic illness."

Managing all-too-common illnesses is one of the goals behind a strategically planned, \$100 million expansion Tanner Health System is undertaking. Among planned projects are a new "medical mall" across the street from its Carrollton hospital, the significant expansion of its Villa Rica complex, a new surgical center at **Higgins General Hospital** in Bremen and the addition of the system's fifth hospital in Wedowee, Ala.

Among Tanner's planned clinical initiatives in the region are a primary stroke center, accredited chest pain center, dedicated unit for joint replacement patients, as well as cardiac services.

"There is a high priority on access to care," Waters said. "We don't try to offer everything, but what we offer, we do it well."

With an estimated completion date in three years, the expansion campaign is the result of much planning and assessments of needs throughout the communities Tanner serves.

"The chronically ill are the people we



Loy
Howard



New projects include a hospital, above, and Tanner Health Pavilion, below.



PHOTOS/SPECIAL

are really focused on right now," Howard said. "Many of them don't have resources to manage it. They may be elderly or don't have a car, or don't have the money for the medicines, or they don't realize how important it is."

A case management system, he said, is vital in ensuring no one – including the patient – is dropping the ball as far as his or her health needs.

"Left unchecked, (chronic illnesses) are very expensive, and they consume a lot of the health care dollar," Howard said. "But honestly, they don't need to. If you can get their blood sugar under control, they can live a healthy life. If not, it creates significant issues and they can end up in the emergency room very sick. With good follow-up and case management and programs where someone is promoting health, it really makes an impact."

At the Villa Rica hospital, an expanded surgical services center will mean more complex surgical procedures, including total joint replacements, can be performed there. With construction expected to begin next summer, the expansion will include the emergency department, maternity center and nursery.

Construction is set to begin next spring on the **Tanner Health Pavilion**, a "medical mall" located across the street from Tanner Medical Center/Carrollton.

Services and facilities are carefully planned in an integrated context, Waters said, so that what is provided is greater than the sum of its parts.

► CLOSER LOOK

EXPANSION PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

► Higgins General Hospital, Bremen

- \$10 million surgical center with three operating suites, special procedures lab, endoscopic suite, recovery unit and Tanner Café.

► Tanner Medical Center/Villa Rica

- \$35 million, 64,000 square-foot expansion of emergency department, surgical services center, maternity center and nursery.

► Tanner Health Pavilion, Carrollton

- \$35 million, 130,000-square-foot medical mall with outpatient diagnostic imaging, pharmacy, gym facility, digital mammography center and breast surgical oncology suite and cardiac rehabilitation center.

► Wedowee, Ala.

- \$20 million, new construction hospital

"You can't force a wellness initiative," Howard said. "You have to work with different groups to begin to impact people and show them the benefit of it."

In short, the coalition works to reach as many people as possible in as many ways as possible to help them live a healthier lifestyle.

"It's bigger than just a disease," said Denise Taylor, senior vice president and chief community health and brand officer of Tanner Health System. "There are so many determinants for health. It could be the environment, not so much living conditions, but maybe they don't have access to fresh fruit and vegetables, or they can't afford it."

Continuing programs that have proven successful in the past include a "Cooking Matters" class, community gardens and "Power of Produce," or POP, sessions at farmer's markets that teach children how to prepare and eat produce and also provide vouchers.

Working across three counties, programs use various channels to reach the public, including community groups, churches, schools and employers.

"We're really going about this in a very collaborative way," she said. "We reach out to other organizations whose missions align with ours. It's too big for any one organization to take on, and it takes a whole community to battle these issues."

Some of the more unique programs, such as the Photo Voice Project, provide introspection for participants and valuable feedback for coordinators.

"You train people to go out and take pictures of what health looks like to them, and then what their barriers are," she said. "One lady took a pretty picture of kale, but she wrote, 'I know I'm supposed to eat healthy, so I buy kale, but I don't know how to cook it.' A lot of things come out when you ask a community what they see, and they become part of the solution."

CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT**VIEWPOINT**

Looking in the crystal ball for Carroll County

Carroll Tomorrow has a new strategic plan for the next five years called Advantage Carroll 2020. Based on that plan and what I know about the legacy of leadership, citizen engagement, pro-business culture, and outstanding quality of life in this community, this is what I see in the "crystal ball" for Carroll County.

- Continued expansion of existing business and industries. Over the past few years, Carroll County has provided a very healthy and stable environment to grow business and as a result, most local businesses and industries have done well. Many of the major announcements the last five years have been expansion projects.

- New retail development. Staff and local leadership have made this a priority. Carrollton was recently selected as a top 10 location in Georgia to start a business. As the community grows and develops, retail will follow and flourish.

- Additional sites will be added to the inventory. This is a priority goal in the Advantage Carroll 2020 strategic plan. CT staff, the four development authorities, and the cities and county government will work together to ensure that we have adequate sites.

- New domestic and international industries will continue to locate in Carroll County. In the last five years, Carroll Tomorrow successfully worked 30 projects that generated over \$686 million cap ex, over \$93 million in new payroll, and almost 4,500 new jobs. With activity in the pipeline and a growing economy, we expect that trend to continue.

- The Burson Center will continue to nurture new businesses and support existing businesses and industries in the West Georgia region. The Burson Center was the first full-service incubator in Georgia owned and operated by a local ED organization and according to the Appalachian Regional Commission, it is one of the Top 10 Rural Incubators in the U.S. The Burson Center has also become a highly utilized business



Daniel Jackson is president and CEO of Carroll Tomorrow and Carroll County Chamber of Commerce.

resource center and conference center.

- Significant growth will continue in the medical services sector with Tanner Medical Center and the surrounding medical community. Tanner has distinguished itself as a Top 15 hospital in the U.S. three of the last four years according to Thompson Reuters. Tanner has earned a stellar reputation locally, regionally, and nationally and will continue to add services and build on that legacy of excellence.

- Quality of Life assets and amenities will continue to develop in all seven municipalities and throughout Carroll County. This is a priority for the leadership in our cities and county government. Our cities and county are providing wonderful amenities for our local citizens and attracting growing numbers of guests participating in recreation, athletics, cultural arts, entertainment, education, conferences, health care, dining, and leisure activities.

- Higher education will continue to grow and expand. University of West Georgia is approaching 13,000 students and has invested millions in facilities and amenities creating a complete campus experience for U.S. and international students. West Georgia Technical College, with almost 7,000 students, continues to grow and expand and has begun preliminary discussions for a new Carroll County campus.

- The state-of-the-art Buffalo Creek Technology Park will begin to build out as clients discover the amenities and



Yachiyo Manufacturing of America is one of Carroll Tomorrow's success stories.

JOANN VITELLI

CARROLL TOMORROW SUCCESSES

30
Projects

\$93 million

New payroll

4,500

New jobs

advantages of locating in that park.

- Carroll County will continue to lead the charge in workforce and education development initiatives by working with state partners (Department of Education, Technical College System of Georgia, Department of Labor, Georgia Department of Economic Development and Department of Community Affairs, and others) and with national partners such as the Harvard Pathways to Prosperity program. Carroll County is focused on educational opportunities for all citizens.

- New home construction will once again return to Carroll County as the economy strengthens, lots and house inventory is absorbed, and the demand increases.

- The communities of West Georgia participate in a seven county Greater

West Georgia Joint Development Authority. The GWGJDA will aggressively market the region as a great place to live, work and play. Evidence suggests that the West Georgia region has enjoyed considerable success in business growth and development and this strategic, coordinated marketing of the region will leverage that momentum.

- The community will continue to identify and equip new talent and leadership. Additional leadership programs are being added for youth and adults with the help of the JW Fanning Institute as part of the GeorgiaLEADS initiative. Carroll County will continue to identify and engage young new talent.

- Elected officials, city and county professional staff, planning professionals, and utility providers will ensure that all infrastructure needs will be available, reliable, and affordable. Thanks to coordinated planning efforts and wise leadership, Carroll County is in great shape to accommodate current and future infrastructure needs.

- Finally, because of a unified economic development strategy with the support of all partners and stakeholders, Carroll County will continue to enjoy success. Realtor.com just recognized Carrollton as one of the Top 10 least expensive college communities to live in the U.S.

Top 20 Carroll County Employers

Company	Employment	Product
1. Southwire	3,500	Wire & cable
2. Tanner Health System	2,800	Health systems
3. Carroll Co. Schools	1,800	Public education
4. Decostar/Magna	1,317	Auto parts
5. University of West Georgia	1,200	Higher education
6. Pilgrim's Pride	730	Poultry processing
7. Greenway Health	730	Software
8. Carroll County Government	650	Government
9. Carrollton City Schools	564	Public education
10. Bremen Bowdon Investment	560	Apparel

11. Printpack	545 F	Flexible packaging
12. Flowers Baking Co.	494	Baked goods
13. Wal-Mart.com	386	E-Commerce fulfillment
14. Sugar Foods	355	Sugar substitutes
15. OFS Brightwave	350	Fiber optic cable
16. City of Carrollton	308	Government
17. Aubrey Silvey	250	Construction
18. Maplehurst	250	Baked goods
19. Die Tech	230	Auto parts
20. Yachiyo Manufacturing of America	230	Auto parts

CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

UWG a major engine for county's growth

BY RANDY SOUTHERLAND
Contributing Writer

After a half century of growth, the **University of West Georgia** has become a major engine for economic development in this region.

"When we work with the community we try to find opportunities that not only our students can benefit from, but that can benefit our business partners as well," said Faye McIntyre, dean and chair of Private Enterprise at the University of West Georgia's **Richards College of Business**.

One such collaboration is between the university's Richards College of Business and **Southwire Co. LLC**, the area's leading employer. The one of a kind Southwire Sustainable Business Honors Program (SSBHP) was launched to meet the growing demand for sustainability savvy managers. It pairs academics focused on sustainable business practices with real world internships throughout Southwire's organization.

"We wanted to develop future leaders for our company and we want to particularly develop leaders who have a broader view of success business success than is always the case," said Southwire CEO Stu Thorn.

Funded by a \$1.1 million grant from the company, the program has 15 students who will earn both bachelor's and master's degrees in four years. Being able to work at a company that is deeply committed to sustainable business practices adds an element to their education that is unique, according to McIntyre.

"We took a lot of time to develop this program so that it was something that our students would be able to have an opportunity second to none," she said. These students have created projects for the company in areas such as employee engagement, health and wellness and Southwire's 12 for Life cooperative education program for at-risk high school students.

"So they're getting a tremendous opportunity and their resumes will be killer when they come out," said McIntyre.

For Southwire the program is the latest of several community-oriented efforts geared to build a better community, while also creating a better educated more capable potential workforce.

"Being a private family-owned company we have a very broad sense of what it takes to be successful because we want to be successful for the next generation and sustain our success long term, not just do well in the next quarterly earnings report," said Thorn.

West Georgia is also home to one of the state's **Small Business Development Center**. The center offers assistance and expertise in helping an average of 200 businesses a year to solve a wide variety of business problems.

"Every client is different in their needs and expertise," said the center's director



University of West Georgia has a partnership that allows students to work as interns at Southwire Co. LLC.



PHOTOS/SPECIAL

Todd Anduze. "Some are just starting and may have anything from secretary of state questions to payroll questions. The more established businesses won't have that. They have their procedures in place. They may have employee issues. A lot of the bigger companies come to me with 'This is what I'm thinking about today.' I have a problem with an employee.' I'm trying to change my culture and I need some employee empowerment.'

The university's **Center for Business and Economic Research** provides help to business seeking to know more about

the region and the potential for their businesses. It issues quarterly reports on the economic state of the West Georgia region.

Along with working with local business, the university has become a major driver for the area's economy with an economic impact last year of \$463 million – up more than \$40 million in just two years.

It's big business. The 645-acre campus with 2.2 million square feet of classrooms, offices and student facilities and residence halls is home to 12,806

► BY THE NUMBERS

THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

- President: Kyle Marrero
- 1601 Maple St., Carrollton, Ga. 30118
- Enrollment: 12,806 (Fall 2015)
- Undergraduate: 10,500 students
- Graduate: 2,300 students
- Academics: 85 programs of study, 4 doctoral, 30 masters
- Other locations: The University of West Georgia - Newnan

students, a record fall enrollment. Some 3,300 live on campus with another 3,200 in apartments within a mile of the university.

"So it has a very traditional feel," said university President Kyle Marrero.

Those numbers will be even bigger when its Newnan campus opens this fall with 700 students. Officials predict there will be more than 3,000 there within four years and the university will be educating more than 15,000 in total.

The university's proximity to Atlanta has allowed it to tap into a large potential student body – particularly those looking for an educational experience outside the busy metro area, according to Marrero.

"Our market capture is becoming greater and greater in the Atlanta area while other institutions in the state are seeing significant decline," he said.

With programs in nursing, teaching education and health sciences, the institution is meeting the needs of local business. In fact, a majority of teachers in the local area received one or all of their degrees from West Georgia.

Much of the university's enrollment growth has occurred during the last few years as it has stepped up marketing to overcome what has long been a notoriously low profile among the state's colleges.

Over the last eight years, it has poured more than \$300 million into expanding and modernizing the 50-year-old campus. Within the next years, officials want to put another \$22 million into constructing a new home for its popular biology department.

West Georgia's student population is expected to grow by 2 percent to 4 percent, but its online learning programs have grown even faster. These programs, popular among older adult students seeking to up their game at work, are up more than 400 percent. The program, which is a partnership with other state colleges, offers five degree programs entirely online. The program has been ranked as high as fourth best in the country by **U.S. News & World Report**.

"The interesting thing is we have this really traditional niche, but we're also considered a leader in delivering online innovative quality curriculums in a flexible way to that adult population," said Marrero.

CARROLL COUNTY MARKET REPORT

Carroll's schools work with businesses

BY LESLIE JOHNSON
Contributing Writer

Business and education opportunities are growing bigger and better together in Carroll County, where new learning facilities will give students the tools they need to land jobs with companies who need skilled workers.

"We believe every student needs work-based experience before they finish high school," said Daniel Jackson, president and CEO of the **Carroll County Chamber of Commerce** and **Carroll Tomorrow**.

A new **College and Career Academy**, which will house 10 career and technical programs and will serve Temple and Villa Rica high schools, is set to open in fall 2016. The successful, current career academy, is full.

Carrollton High School is building an entirely new facility, to be completed in three phases, ending in 2018. Construction will include a new career and technical wing. Though the school is not a college and career academy, it has its eyes on its students' work readiness.

"We want our kids ready to go to college or ready to get a job in this area," said Stacy Lawler, assistant principal, CTAE & STEM director at Carrollton High School.

There is also an increasing need for so-called soft skills, which include problem-solving and collaborative attributes. Regionally, advanced manufacturing and health care are will "very hot areas of employment," Clanton said.

Through a host of initiatives that include a blue ribbon task force of various business leaders that addressed issues around education and work preparedness; opportunities for hands-on work experience for students, such as **Southwire Co. LLC**'s manufacturing facility in Carrollton; and Pathways to Prosperity, a program from the **Harvard Graduate School of Education**, the county's connection between industry and education now has strong roots.

"Our business community always stands ready to be a partner when we know what we are doing and where we are going," said Steve Daniel, president, **West Georgia Technical College**, said via email. "Just look at the partner Southwire Co. has been with 12 for Life, the **Southwire Center for Manufacturing Excellence** and other projects. In the same way,

Tanner Health System has stepped up to help with Villa Rica's new public library, [University of West Georgia's] **School of Nursing** and many other projects. We have a great relationship with our business and industrial

partners, and we know they stand ready to partner with us for the benefit of all our citizens."

"We in the Carroll County educational community are taking a hard look at what our community needs to have the most skilled workforce," Daniel said, citing the school's partnership with University of West Georgia and its president, Kyle Marrero.

"Our shared vision is to support economic development for this region, and by highlighting the strengths of our institutions we can offer more 'early college' experiences for students," Daniel said. "Particularly in the Carrollton/Carroll County Educational Collaborative (CCEC), we are devising strategies to tear down barriers that students face between high school and college. Another part of this examination is a look at infrastructure. We need the right infrastructure in place to increase opportunity for Carroll County students to take advantage of the educational pathways that exist right here. I am excited about the possibilities through the CCEC, as we leverage the collective power of these partners."



values have risen in the area, and says the Greenbelt is one of the contributors.

"It may have a lot to do with the public being better educated about green spaces as well as it being a popular cause," he said. "It does create value as far as real estate property is concerned."

Rett Harmon, a broker with **Century 21 Novus Realty**, is such a supporter of

GROWTH & INVESTMENT IN CARROLL COUNTY

New Capital Investment:
Five-Year Goal = \$175 million

PPTD 2014: \$650.6 million

- 2011: \$119 million
- 2012: \$254 million
- 2013: \$265.6 million
- 2014: \$12 million

SOURCE: ADVANTAGE CARROLL 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

The Workforce Education Task Force has set up several goals to support and meet the needs of the education and business communities as well as government and local leaders:

- **FOCUS** on career development and implementation skills to enable young adults to be high achievers by creating value for themselves and society.
- **MOTIVATE** our youth to use their interest, knowledge, natural talents, and skill sets to develop a sustainable career path.
- **WORK** with all partners and stakeholders to create a suitable and effective model for economic development that results in career/job opportunities that create value for all."

SOURCE: ADVANTAGE CARROLL 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

the next phase in 2016.

"The more organic growth, once you get them here and they grow, that's even the bigger deal," Jackson said.

'Serious about workforce development'

Companies setting up in the county are connecting with students, either through formal programs or circumstance, while they're still in school.

For example, while redesigns were in progress at the Carroll County plant that **Trident Seafoods** bought to be its new seafood processing plant, members of the company's R&D team worked with the College and Career Academy to use its kitchen space and equipment in its work. Students learned about culinary arts opportunities many hadn't considered before.



Cindy Clanton

"When they think of culinary arts they think of Top Chef or these types of shows," said Cindy Clanton CTAE Director, Carroll County Schools. The students got a bit of job shadowing experience, and the school also benefitted from Trident's presence: "Now we have forged a relationship with them," Clanton said.

"I think the business community knows that we are serious about workforce development," Daniel said. "We are serious about removing barriers to educational success because those are the same barriers that prevent career success for individuals and economic success for our region as a whole. We are working together as educational institutions and as businesses and as community partners to increase the power of our community through the development of a skilled workforce."



Rett Harmon

a great community to live, work and invest in, Harmon said.

In addition to easy access to the interstate and airport, one of the biggest aspects overlooked, in his opinion, is how well the government entities work together, something not easily found.

With the addition of a Marriott hotel downtown and other projects being proposed, Harmon hopes there will be future spin-offs of trails from those that lead back to the Greenbelt.

"I'm positive we will see more of that," he added. "The Greenbelt provides a connection with people, and the fact that it is on schedule, even ahead of schedule, is a success story that is helping make properties worth more money."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

to be built along the Greenbelt, and there has been some talk of building a spur into downtown. Some undeveloped land could be attractive to developers, and Hicks has heard a developer was interested in putting a senior living facility nearby.

"You can walk out of your driveway or drive down the street and be on the Greenbelt," Hicks said. "They are also running spurs into other areas, so there are a lot of wins in the area for sure."

It helps that Carroll County is in a good strategic location and has been progressive in initiating green spaces, development and amenities, David Williams, a broker with **Lee & Associates Commercial Real Estate Services**, said.

Carrollton is close to Birmingham, Ala., and can draw from that demographic as well as from Atlanta, he added.

Williams has noticed that property

values have risen in the area, and says the Greenbelt is one of the contributors.

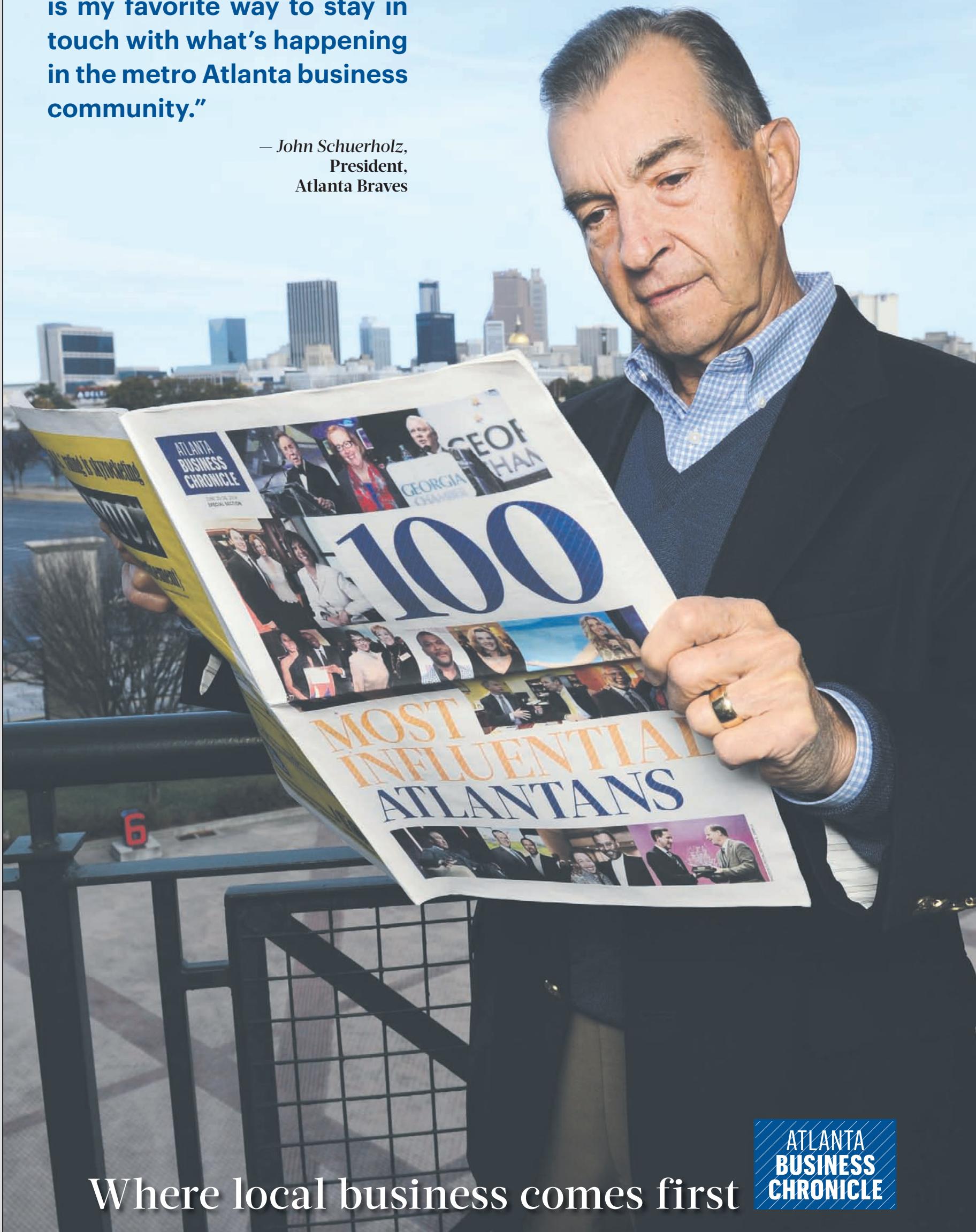
"It may have a lot to do with the public being better educated about green spaces as well as it being a popular cause," he said. "It does create value as far as real estate property is concerned."

Promoting development, not just along the Greenbelt but opportunities in general, can enhance what makes Carrollton

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