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From aircraft and advanced technology to furniture and pharmaceuticals, Greensboro and High Point are drawing new investment to one of North Carolina's established manufacturing regions.

In Greensboro, Honda Aircraft Company builds business jets just a short distance from where JetZero plans to manufacture its next generation of commercial aircraft. Across Guilford County in High Point, thousands of buyers and exhibitors arrive twice a year for one of the world's largest home furnishings markets. Elsewhere in the county, companies are producing pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and specialized industrial equipment.

It's a remarkable range of industries for a region once best known for textiles, tobacco, and furniture. But manufacturing has been part of the local economy for generations, and that experience continues to attract companies looking for places to expand or establish new operations.

Approximately 31,400 people work in manufacturing across Guilford County. Greensboro, North Carolina's third-largest city, and neighboring High Point anchor an economy with major international companies, research institutions, transportation infrastructure, and a growing network of advanced manufacturers.









Manufacturing takes new forms

Lenovo has manufactured technology products in Whitsett for nearly two decades. In 2026, the company expanded its North Carolina Smart Campus to increase production of servers and high-performance computing equipment, adding hundreds of jobs.

Lumentum is bringing another type of technology manufacturing to Greensboro. The company selected a 240,000-square-foot facility to produce optical components and lasers used in artificial intelligence data centers. Its plans include hundreds of millions of dollars in investment and more than 400 retained and new jobs.

For Marvin J. Price, Executive Vice President of Economic Development at the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, the variety of industries reflects how much the region's economy has changed.

"A hundred years ago, we were furniture, textiles, and tobacco; now we are doing aviation, corporate headquarters, and logistics," Price says.

High Point is seeing changes of its own. The city recorded $97 million in new capital investment and 422 new full-time jobs in 2025. Among its recent announcements is Swamp Rider, a Canadian manufacturer that selected High Point for its first U.S. production facility. The company makes amphibious vehicles used in energy, mining, emergency response, and other industries.

Yet furniture remains central to High Point's economy and international identity. Twice a year, High Point Market attracts approximately 75,000 attendees and 2,000 exhibitors to more than 11.5 million square feet of showroom space. Its estimated annual economic impact is $6.73 billion.

Peter Bishop, who leads economic development for the City of High Point, says the local furniture industry has adapted to changes in global manufacturing.

"We still manufacture a lot of furniture, home furnishings, office and institutional products," Bishop says. Much of the production that remains is custom, high-value work, supported by the area's long experience in design and manufacturing.

High Point's international reach extends beyond furniture. More than 80 internationally headquartered companies maintain year-round facilities in the city. Piedmont Centre, a business park covering more than 1,100 acres, is home to over 170 companies and approximately 11,000 employees.

An aerospace industry built over time

Aviation has become one of Greensboro's most recognizable industrial strengths, although its development has taken decades.

Honda Aircraft celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2026. The company designs, engineers, and manufactures the HondaJet at its global headquarters at Piedmont Triad International Airport and is developing the larger HondaJet Echelon.

The airport also supports a substantial aircraft maintenance and engineering industry. AAR acquired HAECO Americas in 2025, adding Greensboro's established aircraft maintenance operations to its network. The company expanded its local engineering capabilities through another acquisition in 2026.

Then came JetZero.

In 2025, the California-based aircraft manufacturer selected Piedmont Triad International Airport for its first commercial aircraft production facility. Its plans call for more than $4.7 billion in investment and more than 14,500 jobs, the largest economic development project in North Carolina history based on job commitments.

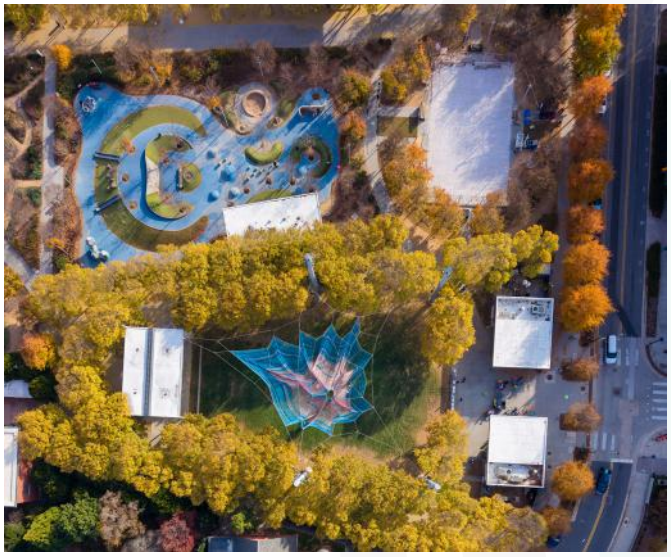


The announcement followed years of investment in airport infrastructure and industrial property. Approximately 1,000 acres have been prepared for additional aerospace development, giving companies access to the airport and the region's existing aviation operations.

For JetZero and other aviation employers, workforce training is another important part of the picture. Guilford Technical Community College's Aviation Campus offers programs in aircraft structures, aerospace machining, aviation electronics, maintenance, and other specialized fields.







A broader manufacturing base

While aerospace has generated some of the region's largest announcements, Guilford County is also expanding its presence in life sciences and medical technology.

In High Point, Cambrex completed a $38 million expansion of its pharmaceutical manufacturing operation, adding laboratory space and doubling production capacity. The city also welcomed Torvan Medical, a Canadian medical equipment manufacturer establishing its first U.S. facility.

Greensboro is home to Gilero, a Sanner Group company that opened a new manufacturing facility in 2025. The operation produces components for medical devices and pharmaceutical packaging.

The region's universities contribute through research and partnerships with industry. Gateway Research Park, a collaboration between North Carolina A&T State University and UNC Greensboro, is home to the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering. Its laboratories and specialized equipment support research with applications in advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and technology.

For companies developing new products, those resources offer opportunities to work with university researchers and access specialized equipment close to their manufacturing operations.





A countywide approach to economic development

Greensboro and High Point have distinct economic identities, but they work together when recruiting companies and supporting business expansion.

Through the Guilford County Economic Development Alliance, the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, High Point Economic Development, and Guilford County coordinate their economic development efforts. The partnership helps companies evaluate available sites, connect with workforce and education resources, and navigate the process of establishing or expanding operations.

The region's location is another advantage. Five major interstate routes run through or around Greensboro, four port cities are within 285 miles, and Piedmont Triad International Airport provides passenger, cargo, and industrial aviation capabilities.

For manufacturers, those connections provide access to suppliers and customers throughout the Southeast and beyond.

As the region attracts larger projects, the work doesn't end with an announcement. Companies need employees, infrastructure, and support as they move toward production.

That challenge is especially significant with JetZero's planned hiring and the continued growth of other advanced manufacturers. Local employers, colleges, universities, and workforce organizations are working to expand training programs and introduce more students to careers in these industries.

Guilford County's manufacturing history helped establish the workforce, business relationships, and infrastructure that companies rely on today. With billions of dollars in planned investment and thousands of jobs on the horizon, Greensboro and High Point are preparing for a much larger manufacturing economy than the one they inherited. ■







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