

Wedlake Industries to Expand in Lewis County

HOHENWALD (January) Wedlake Industries officials announced the company will expand its manufacturing operations in Hohenwald, Tennessee.

Through the project, Wedlake Industries will invest \$10 million and create 46 new jobs in Lewis County.

The company's recent acquisition by GZ North America positions Wedlake Industries in closer proximity to two subsidiaries of GZ North America, Nashville Record Pressing and Memphis Record Pressing, which will directly source vinyl record compound from the Hohenwald facility.

Upon completion, the expansion will transform Wedlake Industries into North America's largest vinyl record compound manufacturer while continuing to support long-term customers in other industries.

Source: TNECD



CG Model Tek LLC to Begin Operations in Coffee County

TULLAHOMA (March) CG Model Tek LLC officials announced that the company will expand its manufacturing operations to Coffee County.

CG Model Tek will invest \$4.5 million and create 32 jobs through the project, which includes purchasing the assets of longtime Tullahoma, Tennessee, company, Micro Craft. CG Model Tek will operate similarly to Micro Craft, serving the aerospace and defense industry.

Source: TNECD



Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Inc. to Expand Headquarters, Manufacturing and Other Major Operations in Rutherford County

MURFREESBORO (March) Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Inc. officials announced that the company will expand in Rutherford County, locating in a new facility at 8808 Manchester Pike.

Barrett plans to invest \$76.4 million and create 183 new jobs through the project. The estimated 250,000-square-foot Barrett Manufacturing & Technology Campus will serve as the company's primary global firearms manufacturing site and will offer employees a cutting-edge campus environment, housing state-of-the-art manufacturing, a corporate office and other major operations. Additionally, the NIOA Group, Barrett's Australian-owned parent company, intends to locate its U.S. headquarters at the facility upon completion.

Founded in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in 1982, Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Inc. is a Tennessee-based firearm and ammunition manufacturer. In 2023, the company was acquired by NIOA, a global firearms, weapons and munitions company headquartered in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

Source: TNECD

TNECD Announces \$1 million in Next Round of Funding Through the Transportation Network Growth Opportunity Initiative

NASHVILLE (April) The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) announced that \$1 million will be awarded to two collaborative teams through the Transportation Network Growth Opportunity (TNGO) initiative. Today's announcement marks the start of the second round of TNGO funding, which will feature eight recipients.

TNGO, which has received a total of \$7.5 million in funding through the Tennessee General Assembly, serves as a tool to diversify the state's economy by leveraging both public and private sector assets to attract mobility research and development (R&D) investment to Tennessee. It also serves as part of the state's efforts to make Tennessee the No. 1 destination in the Southeast for automotive and mobility R&D investment.

"For decades, Tennessee has been leading the nation with our strong manufacturing workforce," said Gov. Bill Lee. "In partnership with the General Assembly, we've made strategic investments to further diversify our business environment and attract research and development projects that will create more high-quality jobs. I congratulate the communities who have demonstrated a commitment to furthering our pro-business climate that can support the entire mobility supply chain."

The selected projects exemplify how Tennessee can lead in industry-driven and collaborative mobility R&D and will serve as catalysts to attract additional industry-related R&D investment to the state.

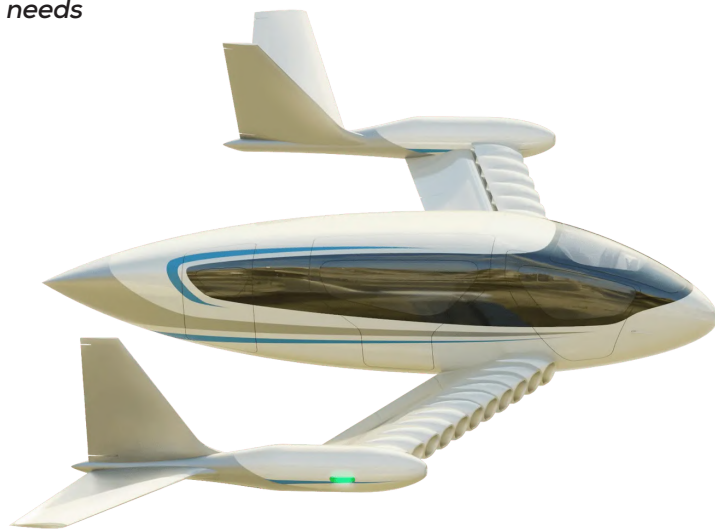
"Research, development and innovation are a top priority in our state, and I'm proud to take part in announcing \$1 million in funding today through TNGO," said TNECD Commissioner Stuart C. McWhorter. "I'm grateful to these two teams who have shown a desire to further innovate Tennessee, and I look forward to seeing all the success they will continue to have throughout the future."

The grant recipients listed below include students and faculty from Tennessee's leading research institutions who will partner with industry, economic

developers and community leaders to bring their plans to fruition.

Tennessee Tech and Whisper Aero, Putnam County - \$500,000

Taking a step toward developing low-cost regional flights from small airports to serve rural Tennessee needs



Through the use of an existing Whisper Aero glider with two eQ250 propulsors for UltraQuiet flight demonstrations, Tennessee Tech faculty and students will be engaged in copper-bird ground testing to ensure the safe integration of engines, batteries and controllers. This project will also kickstart the university's new Crossville Mobility Incubator.

"This project will help position Tennessee's as a leader in mobility innovation and highlights the power of state partnerships in advancing transformative technologies," said Whisper Aero co-found and CEO Mark Moore.

"At Tennessee Tech, one of the ways we put students first is by seeking out hands-on, experiential learning opportunities just like those that will be provided through this TNGO award," said Tennessee Tech President Phil Oldham. "We look forward to using these award dollars to place students in internships working directly with Whisper Aero leaders. By learning from an electric propulsion innovator like Whisper Aero, our

students will gain invaluable perspective and can take what they have learned in the classroom and apply it right here in Tennessee.”

University of Memphis and FedEx, Shelby County \$500,000

Designing and implementing a comprehensive trucking fleet management framework for short, medium and long-haul trucks

This unified fleet maintenance plan will leverage historical data from each depot or agency within the logistics hub to optimize operations based on remaining life (RL) and live telematics data. This project will also underscore the importance of fleet management for longevity, cost efficiency and strategic application.

“The University of Memphis is working to create industry-aligned research that helps to ensure Tennessee companies are competitive nationally,”
University of Memphis executive vice president

for research and innovation Jasbir Dhaliwal said. *“TNGO and the statewide efforts to move Tennessee into a leadership position in the transportation space strengthens Memphis’ established position as a transportation and supply chain hub globally. The opportunity to work closely with FedEx, a highly valued UofM partner, in these efforts is of great benefit to our students, faculty and community.”*

Each proposed project aligns with Tennessee’s key automotive and mobility technology strengths and opportunities outlined in a 2022 mobility assessment report from Guidehouse Consulting, which was supported by Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the University of Tennessee System and Vanderbilt University.

For more information or questions, please reach out to ECD.TNGO@tn.gov.

Source: TNECD

MTSU Journal Spotlights History of TNECD’s Select Tennessee Certification Program

Robertson County Visited May, 2025

The Spring 2025 issue of the *Tennessee Economic Development Journal*

features a comprehensive article tracing the origins and impact of the Select Tennessee Certified Sites program. Developed by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD), this strategic initiative was launched in 2012 to improve the readiness and marketability of industrial properties across the state. The article highlights the program’s creation, its partnership with Austin Consulting, and its success in certifying over 70 sites—contributing to Tennessee’s reputation as a top destination for economic investment. The piece underscores how Select Tennessee became a national model for industrial site development. As part of the Select Tennessee certification process, the Union Road Business Park in White House, Tennessee, was visited by the Austin Consulting team on May 19, 2025.

Read the article, *A Blueprint for Growth*, starting on page 26:

https://berc.mtsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2025/03/JURP_Vol_1_No_2.pdf



Vonda Gates, Robertson County



Aspen Guard, a Troax Group Company, to Relocate U.S. Manufacturing Operations to Robertson County

Wire mesh safety solutions manufacturing company to create 120 new jobs in Portland, Tennessee

PORTLAND (May) Troax Group officials announced the company will establish its first Aspen Guard manufacturing facility in Tennessee, relocating operations from the Greater Chicago area to Portland.

As part of the project, Troax Group will create 120 new jobs and invest nearly \$23 million to support wire mesh panel production operations for its Troax and Folding Guard brands.

Founded in 1955 in Sweden, Troax Group is a global leader in protective mesh panel solutions that safeguard people, property, and processes.

Source: TNECD

Canadian heavy construction equipment manufacturer will create 30 new jobs in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee

LAWRENCEBURG (May) Craig Manufacturing USA, Inc. officials announced that the company will expand its manufacturing operations in Lawrence County.

Craig Manufacturing will create 30 new jobs and invest \$4.4 million at its current Lawrenceburg facility, increasing its manufacturing footprint by 24,000 square feet. Upon completion, the company will employ 110 at its facility on the Team Lawrence Commerce Park, a Select Tennessee Certified Site <https://tnecd.com/certifiedsite/team-lawrence-commerce-park-west/>.

Founded in 1946, Craig Manufacturing produces steel attachments for heavy construction, forestry, mining, energy and utility equipment. Headquartered in New Brunswick, Canada, Craig Manufacturing also has operations in Alberta and Ontario. The company supplies directly to original equipment manufacturers and their regional dealer networks.

Canada is the state's No. 3 partner for foreign direct investment with Canadian companies investing nearly \$1.7 billion and creating approximately 3,800 jobs statewide.

Source: TNECD





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2108 Westwood Avenue
Nashville, TN 37212
P 615-269-5233
E mtida@mtida.org
W www.mtida.org

Robert T. Bibb | *Executive Director*

Kendrick J. Curtis, PhD | *Assistant Executive Director*

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