

# DAILY CHRONICLE

## Borek: Facebook heads 2020 lineup of record-breaking development



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DeKalb County attracted \$975 million of capital investment during 2020.

This volume more than doubled the previous record of over \$404 million investment during 2009. This investment will result in the construction, acquisition or leasing of more than 3 million square feet of space.

These projects are expected to employ more than 800 workers. This development and job creation will certainly jump-start the county's recovery from the global pandemic which pushed the average annual unemployment rate to nearly 9%.

Most of this development has taken shape at the ChicagoWest Business Center along I-88 south of the Peace Road interchange, extending west to Route 23.

2020 began with the Ferrara Candy's announcement of the nearly 1.7 million square feet of development on 106 acres in the ChicagoWest Business Center north of Gurler Road.

This development included a 1.2-million-square-foot distribution center and a 468,000-square-foot packaging center. Capital investment exceeded \$120 million for these two facilities. Job creation is projected to be 500 for the two operations.

On June 30, Facebook announced the development of a 907,000-square-foot data center on an expansive 505-acre site south of Gurler Road. Capital investment in this data center campus is \$800 million.

The DeKalb Data Center will be among the most advanced, energy- and water-efficient data center facilities in the world, supporting an estimated 100 operational jobs and hundreds of construction jobs.

According to Facebook, DeKalb was chosen as the site for its newest data center due to its access to renewable energy, a strong talent pool, higher education institutions, community partners and strong infrastructure.

The leadership, collaboration and expedited actions of the City of DeKalb development team led by City Manager Bill Nicklas was key to these developments. This included municipal utilities, public utilities and numerous governmental bodies whose affirmative votes approved the public actions required to attract Ferrara Candy and Facebook.

The ChicagoWest Business Center team, led by Krusinski Construction Co., worked with the City of DeKalb, Kishwaukee Water Reclamation District, Ferrara Candy and Facebook on the construction of infrastructure required to serve these developments. This included nearly 3 miles of water lines, 1.5 miles of sewer extension and repaving local roads.

Also, in June, Syngenta announced development of a Seed Research & Development, Innovation and Customer Experience Center at an 88-acre site on Route 38 in Malta. The facility will showcase leading seed and digital technologies and spotlight Syngenta's product development through on-farm collaboration with growers.

The 87,000-square-foot multi-building complex will include offices, labs, greenhouses, an auditorium and warehouse and field test plots. Capital investment is projected to be \$24 million. The operation is projected to generate 80 to 120 jobs. According to Syngenta, the site was selected for its location, soil type and accessibility.

Conserv FS announced plans for a significant expansion to its Waterman service center. The company proposes to construct a new dry fertilizer facility, a new liquid storage facility, crop protection building and blending system.

The project is contingent on the addition of 4 acres of land to the DeKalb County Enterprise Zone, approved by DeKalb County and municipal partners, and under review by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. Future elements include: a dry fertilizer bagging facility, a new maintenance shop and larger office to accommodate the increased business volume.

Wehrli Custom Fabrication will begin construction of a new headquarters, manufacturing and distribution facility on a 10-acre site on the north side of Harvestore Drive at Enterprise Drive. Wehrli designs, fabricates and distributes performance equipment for street and racing pick-up trucks.

K & M Tire, an Ohio-based distributor of passenger, light truck, commercial truck and farm tires, has begun operation at the 2600 Wirsing Parkway building.

BC Logistics leased the remaining 48,000 square feet of space in the 711 Fairview Drive building in Park 88 to distribute food products for a client.

The Suter Co. completed expansion of its Bethany Road facility in the Sycamore Prairie business park with a new two-story office addition.

Ignatius Press completed a 56,525 square-foot expansion of its media production and distribution facility in the Sycamore Prairie Business Park.

Innovative Growers has expanded to occupy 250,000 square feet of space in the Sycamore Industrial Park. The company designs, engineers and manufactures greenhouse benches and display racks serving commercial growers and garden center retailers.

Nicor Gas Co. is constructing a new 21,000-square-foot service center in the Krpan Thanks America industrial subdivision in Sycamore.

We congratulate all community, business, institutional and nonprofit partners on the extraordinary success of 2020!

• *Paul Borek is executive director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp.*