



NEWS RELEASE

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Bi-State Economic Development Strategy Launched for Logistics Industry

New Web site supports strategic direction for logistics and transportation

The Centralina Economic Development Commission (CEDC) creates and supports strategies in the greater Charlotte region that focus on growth and prosperity in key industry clusters. The Commission, supported by the Board of County Commissioners in nine North Carolina counties, and by the Cities of Charlotte, Concord, Gastonia, and the Town of Mooresville, has identified the logistics industry as a key regional economic driver. In response to the mounting challenges facing this industry, the Logistics Alliance of the Carolinas (LAC) was created to ensure that logistics companies find the resources that they need to remain competitive in the region. The LAC membership is comprised of public and private sector partners in both North and South Carolina.

Laura Mundell, director for Centralina's Community & Economic Development, states "We've been developing key partnerships in the logistics industry for over a year now, and have built great momentum and participation from both the public and private sectors. One of the reasons for our initial success is the fact that there is great interest in keeping the logistics industry competitive in our region and addressing key issues facing stakeholders, especially given the current state of the economy and its many challenges."

The LAC's members have identified three primary goals including:

- Promote the efficacy and growth of the logistics/transportation industry in the southeast;
- Provide a real-time virtual forum to enhance collaboration among sector stakeholders; and
- Encourage discussion of innovative products to ensure security in the industry.

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The LAC's efforts include a virtual resource network tailored for the logistics industry to strengthen the linkages between public and private entities. "Part of our strategy in looking at future trends and creating solutions for this industry is engaging the many companies, workforce, economic and educational partners," said Professor Gary Teng, director of the Systems Engineering & Engineering Management Program & Center for Lean Logistics & Engineered Systems .

To address this need for collaboration, LAC has designed a new Web site at www.LogisticsAllianceOfCarolinas.com. "The new site that will serve as a virtual communication tool for our bi-state stakeholders to weigh-in on the logistics industry's key challenges and solutions," said CEO John Nofsinger, Material Handling Industry of America.

The site boosts a comprehensive event and resource section where members can share information, tools and ideas. "We want the new site to be a valuable tool that all of our members can use to remain competitive," said Bill Smith, marketing manager of Globe Express Services.

The LAC is planning an initial online launch event for the logistics industry on January 26, 2009 from 1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m EST. The Webcast, *Strategies for Changing Times*, will unveil the rich features of the Web site and provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss the top challenges facing the logistics industry in 2009. Host of the Webcast, CEDC's Chairman Bill Thunberg said, "We hope that this is the first of many Webcasts for our members to engage in bi-state, cost-effective strategies to keep our region competitive. Our new technology allows us to communicate 24/7 and makes it extremely easy for participation in our Alliance."

The Centralina Council of Governments is a sponsor of this effort. Log on to www.LogisticsAllianceOfCarolinas.com for more information about the Webcast and the available online resources.

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