



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 7/13/2021

Public Hearings

Department: Economic Development

Presenter(s): Timothy Love, Alex Matisse

Contact(s): Timothy Love

Subject: East Fork Pottery Economic Development Agreement

Brief Summary:

On June 17, 2021, East Fork Pottery, LLC announced its plans to expand at its existing facility in Asheville, North Carolina. East Fork Pottery is a manufacturer and distributor of ceramic dishware. East Fork plans to invest \$2.38M in capital expenditures and create 50 new jobs averaging \$22.46 per hour.

Prior to the 2021 expansion announcement, East Fork requested, and the County agreed, subject to formal approval by the Board of Commissioners at a Public Hearing, to provide economic development incentives to induce the Company to make capital investments and create jobs in Buncombe County. These incentives will be utilized as the required local government match for the State of North Carolina's Building Reuse Program. Per the Buncombe County Economic Development Policy, East Fork is eligible for a one-time incentive of \$40,000.00 based on capital investment and job creation targets. Additionally, a portion of the grant may only be earned if East Fork demonstrates its ability to hire from a disadvantaged population as defined in the Buncombe County Economic Development Policy (e.g., STEP Program, justice-involved individuals).

The Building Reuse Program, with the State Department of Commerce, has approved this project for \$300,000 in grants. This State program requires a local government host to apply for such a grant and act as guarantor for completion of projects and distribution of grant funds. In this case, the documents will be drafted in such a manner that no County funds will be at risk. The County, as program host, will not request any draw of Building Reuse Program grant funds for the East Fork project unless all relevant State program requirements have been met.

Our staff have analyzed the economic impact of the expansion project, drafted an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) between East Fork and Buncombe County, and are requesting your formal approval for the incentive grant.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Conduct Public Hearing and approve the following:

1. Resolution authorizing Buncombe County to pay economic development incentives and to sign the economic development agreement.
2. Resolution authorizing Buncombe County to Cooperate with East Fork Pottery, LLC and participate in the NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant Program

County Manager's comments and Recommendation:

Approve as presented.