

Media Release



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HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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Town of Bluffton and Don Ryan Center for Innovation Leaders Welcome St. Joseph/Candler's Investment and New Medical Campus to Buckwalter Place Commerce Park

St. Joseph's/Candler announced November 13 its plans to build a four-acre medical campus at the Buckwalter Commerce Park. Paul Hinchey, president and CEO of St. Joseph's/Candler, said the \$22 million capital investment project is expected to create more than 60 jobs.

"This project is exactly the type of business the Town hoped to attract to the Buckwalter Commerce Park," Mayor Lisa Sulka said. "The Town's wish list for prospective businesses included being able to stimulate economic development, attract high-paying, knowledge-based jobs and be civically-active in our community. St. Joseph/Candler's 40,000 square foot facility, in the heart of Bluffton's Commerce Park, is a perfect fit for the Town's vision."

Hinchey said this medical campus will consolidate its services that are currently spread throughout Beaufort County. St. Joseph's/Candler currently has nearly ten facilities which include a primary care practice, imaging center, wound care center and a hyperbaric center. Within a decade, those services will be consolidated in the Buckwalter Commerce Park facility. Construction on the 40,000 square-foot medical campus is scheduled to begin in late 2019. The new facility will also add several medical services including medical oncology, brachytherapy, GYN oncology, radiation oncology and an open MRI unit.

The chairman of the board of directors for the Don Ryan Center for Innovation, Matt Green, said he is thrilled St. Joseph's/Candler is investing in Bluffton.

"This announcement makes perfect business sense for a major medical player such as St. Joseph's/Candler," Green said. "Bluffton is the fastest growing town in the region and one of the fastest-growing in the Southeast. This facility will be centrally located in Beaufort County and is expected to attract patients in several neighboring towns and counties. In addition, the new facility is creating jobs for the area while the region's colleges and technical colleges are also producing job-ready professionals. It's a win for all involved."

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Town Manager Marc Orlando said this private investment is a result of the Town investing in public infrastructure in the Buckwalter Commerce Park.

“Town leaders strategically knew if the Town invested in a commerce park with public infrastructure, eventually, private developers would invest their dollars, too,” Orlando said. “Public-private partnerships are creative alliances which achieve a common purpose and the Town’s pro-business initiatives are producing the desired outcomes. The Town welcomes St. Joseph’s/Candler to the center of Bluffton’s Commerce Park.”

About the Buckwalter Place Commerce Park

Buckwalter Place Commerce Park is multi-county business park designed to expand the economic base of the Town of Bluffton and the region by attracting knowledge-based industries while providing a venue for a vibrant quality of life. It is the nexus of economic, institutional, commercial, governmental, entertainment, residential, social and cultural activity in southern Beaufort County. A streamlined development strategy with customized economic development incentives, advanced technology, urban lifestyle, quality private investment, community leadership, access and connection to a trained workforce and a concentration of knowledge based-employees differentiates Buckwalter Place from other regional sites. Powered by Palmetto Electric Cooperative and Hargray Communications, Buckwalter Place has redundant power and data service with a fiber ring infrastructure providing gigabit service.

About The Don Ryan Center for Innovation

The Don Ryan Center for Innovation (DRCI) was established in mid-2012 as a 501(c)(3) and merged with the Bluffton Public Development Corporation in December 2016 and is now known as the Don Ryan Center for Innovation (DRCI). The organization’s mission is to function as a business incubator to grow Bluffton’s and the region’s economy by helping innovative start-up or early stage companies. The organization has incubated nearly 30 companies and has expanded into partnerships with Beaufort County Schools, USCB, TCL, SCAD and the City of Beaufort to promote and support innovation and entrepreneurship for the purposes of economic development. In addition, the DRCI also acts as the economic development arm and is able to accept, buy, sell, develop, mortgage, and transfer real and personal property including development rights. The focus areas of DRCI foster and promote economic development in six general areas, which are business incubation, co-working offerings (i.e. known as “The Hub”), education & outreach, business attraction, expansion & retention, workforce development and business startup/concierge services.