



Someplace Special: Scottsboro Shares EDA Experience

Lori Jhons • Communications Director • ALM

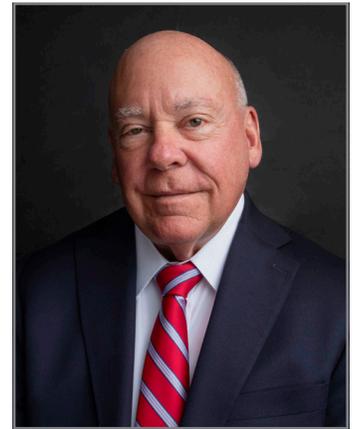
With a tagline of “Someplace Special,” any passersby, tourist or family looking for a new home would be enticed to visit! These two words reflect the warm feeling the citizens of Scottsboro experience as they return home from a long day at work, from an outing on the lake or a hike on the Singing River Trail amidst incredible views. The city of Scottsboro is nestled at the tail end of the Appalachian Mountains, adjacent to over 30 miles of the Tennessee River, in the northeastern part of Alabama. With all the mountains, lakes and rivers surrounding Scottsboro, it is no wonder it adopted the slogan “Where the mountains meet the lakes.”

The city, founded in 1870, serves as the county seat for Jackson County and has more than 15,000 residents. Other draws to the area include the famous Unclaimed Baggage Center, which is the nation’s only retailer of lost luggage; bass fishing on “The Miracle Mile,” a stretch of the Tennessee River in Scottsboro; Goose Pond Colony Resort, a beautiful municipally-owned resort complete with two golf courses, a marina and lodging; Payne’s Sandwich Shop and Soda Fountain, which is believed to be Alabama’s oldest soda fountain (founded in 1869); the Scottsboro Boys Museum, a living memorial commemorating the Scottsboro Nine and part of the Alabama Civil Rights Trail; and the Scottsboro-Jackson Heritage Center.

Scottsboro even hosts a special tradition in their downtown courthouse square called Trade Day for local craftsmen, food vendors and anyone who wants to come sell or trade their items. When it first started in 1902, it was originally called “First Monday” because it was held on the first Monday of the month. Trade Day is now observed on the Saturday before the first Monday of each month and brings in hundreds of visitors to take part in each month’s different theme.

In 2022, Scottsboro was selected for the first class of the Alabama League of Municipalities’ Economic Development Academy (EDA) program.

EDA was developed in conjunction with the Alabama Community College System with the goal to educate and engage



The Shops of Scottsboro features a Publix, Pet Depot and TJ Maxx.



municipal officials on the essential elements and phases of economic development while highlighting their vital role in economic initiatives and projects within their communities.

Scottsboro Mayor Jim McCamy, who was elected in August of 2020, shared why the city applied for the program.

“We had a strong collective desire among our municipal leadership to grow our community by recruiting and supporting businesses and industries that could create good paying jobs and provide a diverse economic base,” Mayor McCamy said. “The academy provided us the opportunity to participate and learn as a group.”

The Scottsboro EDA team consisted of Mayor McCamy, City Council President Richard Bailey, City Councilmember Mike Ashburn, Jackson County Economic Development Authority President Nathan Lee and Scottsboro Industrial Development Board Treasurer Roy Light.

Over the course of a year, the team attended four one-day training sessions and heard from several speakers on a variety of topics ranging from retail, grants, industrial development, creating deals using resources and incentives, and networking with state and federal agencies.

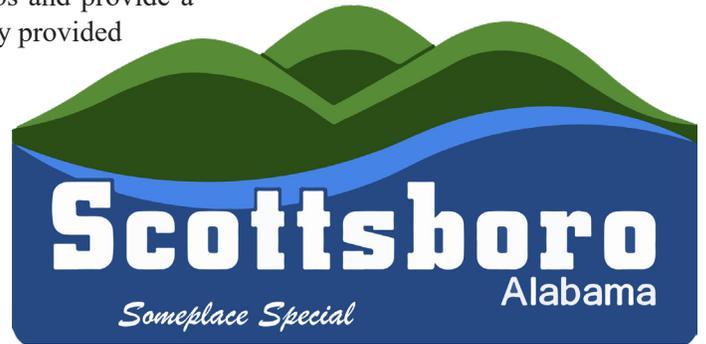
Mayor McCamy shared, “I enjoyed the opportunity to listen and learn from economic development experts and listening to thoughts, ideas, goals and diverse approaches from community leaders from other cities.”

As part of the class, Scottsboro participated in an economic vitality survey. Their survey revealed many positives about their community. They have beautiful mountains and lakes with outstanding recreational opportunities; strong infrastructure with a four-lane U.S. highway and two state highways intersecting in Scottsboro; both rail and water access throughout the city and county; county-wide broadband gigabit service; and solid, expanding municipal general aviation airport facilities.

In addition to these attributes, the city is fortunate to have access to two industrial parks. The Scottsboro Industrial Park, established in 1985, consists of 295 acres. It is considered one of the state’s oldest advantage sites. The second one, Jackson County Industrial Park, is a 311-acre site located in the adjoining town of Hollywood. It opened in 2002 as a joint venture between the Jackson County Commission and the city of Scottsboro.

Like many communities around the state, the city is facing a workforce shortage for various job openings. Scottsboro and Jackson County officials are working together to counter this problem with the recent opening of the Kevin Dukes Career and Innovation Academy for high school skills development and training. This \$31 million institution is located on 30 acres at the Jackson County Industrial Park.

At the time of its opening in October 2023, Jackson County Superintendent Jason Davidson said, “This state-of-the-art facility currently offers 11 career tech programs including welding technology, precision machine technology, electrical



City officials cut the ribbon on Jim Olyniec Scottsboro Pickleball Complex in March 2024. Pictured left to right: Donnie Wood, Councilmember Mike Ashburn, Mayor Jim McCamy, Jim Olyniec, Council President Richard Bailey and Councilmember Donna Fredrick.



Mayor Jim McCamy welcomed Chick-fil-A to Scottsboro at a grand opening ceremony on September 12, 2023.



technology, HVAC-R, diesel technology, collision repair, building construction, masonry, health science, cosmetology and additive/CAD manufacturing. Culinary and cybersecurity are also being added to the list of programs that students can pursue. Many of our CTE programs have dual enrollment opportunities available with our partnerships with local community colleges.”

As this project points out, Scottsboro has access to an excellent community college, Northeast Alabama Community College, which is located nearby in Rainsville. The college also has a few satellite educational spaces in Scottsboro that are focused on skills development for specific local industrial jobs.

On the negative side, the city’s economic vitality survey metrics determined their community lacked affordable housing; had a limited variety of restaurants; needed to attract industries that provide higher paying jobs; and had a shortage of entertainment venues for young people.

These results helped the Scottsboro EDA team to develop a strategic plan focused on improving each of those areas in addition to enhancing their efforts to promote the Singing River Trail, provide more hiking and biking trails and increase wayfinding signage.

Mayor McCamy said, “EDA reinforced the necessity to be more patient and listen fully to what others have to offer and share, the importance of setting meaningful, achievable goals and the importance of attention to details.”

Since graduating from the EDA program in November 2022, the city has had major success attracting a Publix, TJ Maxx, Jersey Mike’s Subs, Tidal Wave Car Wash, Mavis Tires & Brakes, Chick-fil-A, Whataburger, Dunkin Donuts and Five Below.

On the housing front, they have made significant progress. They recently opened 56 apartments on Crawford Road’s Timbers at Galloway. DR Horton is constructing 116 single-family homes on Phillips Drive and Lambert Contracting is currently building 70 single-family homes. Additionally, clearing is scheduled to begin in October for another 150 single-family home development in Stonebridge.

Furthermore, the city was able to make headway on increasing high paying jobs.

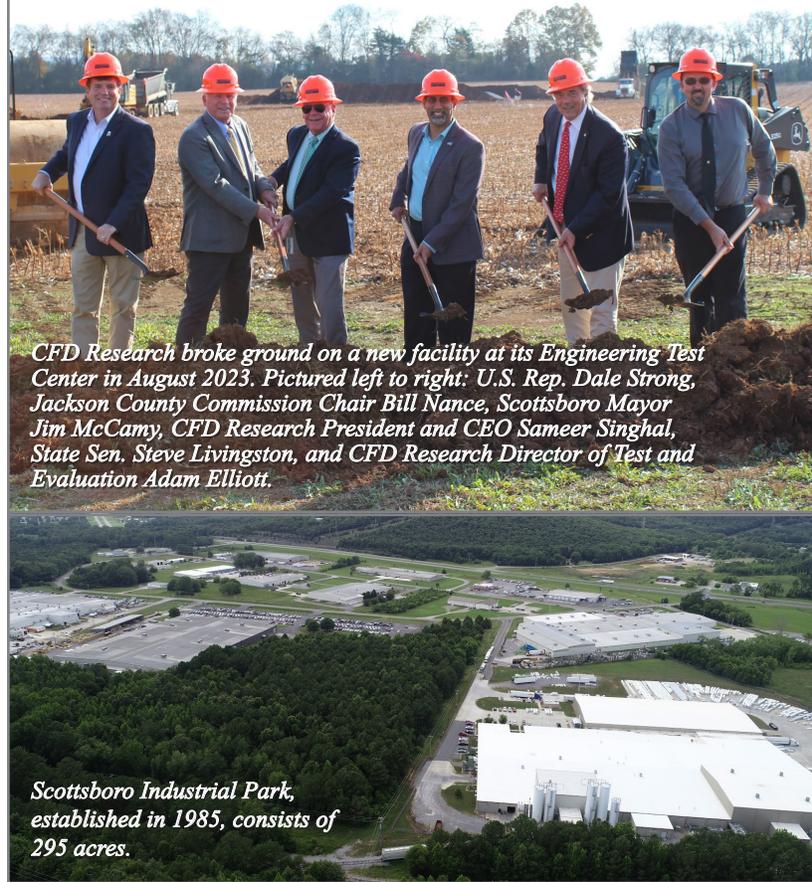
In August 2023, Huntsville-based CFD Research broke ground on a new 19,000-square-foot facility at its Engineering Test Center in the city’s section of Jackson County Industrial Park. This \$5.2 million project is their third expansion in four years. It will expand their capability to provide services; perform technology development; enable increased test capacity; and will provide 32 new, high paying engineering jobs. The ribbon cutting is scheduled for October 28.

At the Scottsboro Industrial Park, they have two more projects in the works. Johns Manville Corporation is conducting a \$21.8 million expansion of new manufacturing and related operations equipment at their existing facility. The Scottsboro Industrial Development Board is also expecting to announce soon a \$61.6 million project that will create 60 new jobs.

In addition, the city is in the process of finalizing an incentive package to secure a nationally recognized craft store.

“As one of our first EDA participants, the League is proud to see the city of Scottsboro excelling in recruiting new businesses, expanding old ones and finding timely solutions to issues within their community,” Bryan Parker, ALM director of governmental affairs and EDA program facilitator, said. “I always enjoy hearing updates from members of the Scottsboro team and providing advice and assistance in our continued partnership.”

Scottsboro’s outlined success is a testament to their commitment to their citizens and their application of EDA knowledge and resources. “Someplace Special” looks even more special! ■



CFD Research broke ground on a new facility at its Engineering Test Center in August 2023. Pictured left to right: U.S. Rep. Dale Strong, Jackson County Commission Chair Bill Nance, Scottsboro Mayor Jim McCamy, CFD Research President and CEO Sameer Singhal, State Sen. Steve Livingston, and CFD Research Director of Test and Evaluation Adam Elliott.

Scottsboro Industrial Park, established in 1985, consists of 295 acres.

**For more information
about the EDA program,
scan this QR code.**

