

## Trump: Corning considering major investment in the Southeast

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President Donald Trump hints at another job-creating project targeting the Southeast. And it's in the life sciences arena - which could be good news for the pharma-rich Triangle.



At a White House event Thursday, Trump said Corning Inc. is investing \$500 million alongside pharma firms Merck and Pfizer to manufacture a new, more resilient kind of glass for injectable drug vials.

The move means nearly 1,000 jobs at facilities in New York and New Jersey, as well as at a yet-to-be-determined site in the Southeast, Trump said.

According to Reuters, Trump said the deal could mean \$4 billion in investment and about 4,000 new jobs.

John Boyd, principal at New Jersey site selection consultant the Boyd Company, predicts North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia are all on the short list.

“Any diligent, competent site selection search looking to be in a pro-business, pro-manufacturing environment will consider North Carolina because of the industrial parks, right to work status, low operating costs and a governor that’s taking economic development and the needs of job creators seriously,” he says. “HB2 is but a memory.”

And Trump, he notes, has “made it his mission to make manufacturing come back here to America.”

“Corning is an example of made in America,” he says.

Corning, which manufactures specialty glass and ceramics, already has history of making investments in North Carolina.

In February, the company’s fiber manufacturing subsidiary, Corning Optical Communications, announced it was adding more than 400 jobs to operations in Catawba and Cabarrus counties. In September of 2016, Corning said it would be launching a 205-job expansion in Catawba and Forsyth counties. And, in 2015, Corning Optical Communications announced the subsidiary would be creating 150 jobs in Mecklenburg County as part of a new corporate headquarters.

A Corning spokeswoman declined to say whether North Carolina was on its list Thursday, saying only “more information to come in the coming months.”

Corning’s expansion is just the latest project Trump has teased. He had economic developers scrambling earlier this year when he said the state of Wisconsin may expect a surprise- rumored to be thousands of jobs at a new Foxconn Technology Group operation. North Carolina, reportedly, was initially under consideration for that project too, though interest is now rumored to be squarely on the Midwest.

“Just being under consideration for Foxconn increases the likelihood of a supplier or second site being in your state,” Boyd says, adding that Foxconn’s plans to create tens of thousands of jobs in the United States likely mean additional sites, even after the impending announcement.

*Lauren Ohnesorge covers technology and entrepreneurship.*