

LOCAL

Reich LLC plans \$10.9M investment into its Arden plant with 15 new jobs



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ARDEN — Reich LLC, a precision vehicle parts manufacturer, plans to invest \$10.9 million into its facility, adding 15 new jobs to its workforce in the process.

The company, a subsidiary of Reich USA GmbH, said Wednesday the investment pays for new technology, machinery and equipment at its plant at 140 Vista Blvd. in Arden, off Brevard Road. New jobs push the plant's workforce to more than 160 jobs. All new positions are expected to pay an average of about 40 percent above Buncombe County's average job wage, currently at \$41,856 annually, said Clark Duncan, senior vice president of economic development at the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce.

Matthias Goetz, the plant's manager, said the decision to expand operations in the county "fulfills our long-term commitment to serving our North American customers." It opened in Arden in 2011 after its parent company, Reich GmbH of Mellrichstadt, Germany, announced intentions the previous year to expand operations in the U.S.

Reich is a 'leading employer'

To date, the company has invested \$28 million and created 140 "highly skilled machinist and production jobs" in the county, Reich LLC said Wednesday.

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"We continue to build on a great workforce, culture, and community that support advanced manufacturing jobs in Western North Carolina," Goetz said in a news release. "The Asheville area's metalworking legacy and the strong skill set of its manufacturing workforce continue to be the foundation of our success."

Brownie Newman, chairman of the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners, added that while Reich LLC is "relatively new" to the area, it has grown to be "a leading employer in Buncombe County, and we applaud their continued investment in technology, innovation, and people."

"The expansion will not only mean high-quality jobs for our citizens but also positions our state and community as a leader in the automotive industry," Newman said.

\$1.8 million in labor income expected from expansion

Expanded production capacity from the company is projected to sustain \$1.8 million in annual labor income from "new direct, indirect and induced jobs," according to a joint news release by the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Coalition for Asheville-Buncombe County.

The organizations said the investment also will support \$650,000 in new annual federal, state and local taxes.

Reich LLC with Reich GmbH primarily manufactures turned parts, ball bearings, components for fuel injection systems in addition to other automotive parts and equipment for the food industry, its website shows. The company is owned by Nina and André Reich.

