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Estridge seeks \$400,000 for industrial park

By Jenny Hartley-Senior Reporter

Kershaw's industrial park isn't attracting a lot of interest from prospective tenants.

The park is more of a site, consisting of a tree farm right now, said Lancaster County Economic Development Corp. President Keith Tunnell.

But he sees great potential for the 120-acre site, with its access to U.S. 601, a heavy truck route, and Interstate 20 in nearby Camden.

"The more sites you've got, the better" for attracting companies, Tunnell said. "And a park is better than a site. It would give us two prospects in the southern part of the county."

County Council may vote to spend \$400,000 on building roads, erecting signs and clearing a couple of lots to make the park more attractive to prospective companies.

County Councilman Jack Estridge asked council members to hold a vote on the funding at council's next meeting, Aug. 11.

"We need to step up and do all we can to get jobs to the county," Estridge said.

Councilman Bryan Vaughn also said the county needs to move forward with funding the park.

The \$400,000 in improvements were originally included in a bond proposal that voters will decide in November.

The referendum also includes funding for a new county courthouse.

But council members have said over the last few weeks that including the industrial park, a project much smaller in scope, could hurt the referendum's chances of being approved by voters.

Tunnell said he'd like to set up covenants similar to those at the Heath Springs Industrial Park. Council approved funds to finish infrastructure in that park last year.

Tunnell said the town of Kershaw, which owns the industrial site, could offer free land to employers willing to locate in Lancaster County and create 20 or more jobs.

The park could attract suppliers for the work now going on at Haile Gold Mine, which is across from the industrial park site, he said.

Estridge said Kershaw is in need of a boost.

He pointed out that four or five store fronts along Hampton Street in the town of Kershaw are now empty, and many people have been forced to make longer commutes to jobs out of town.

"People need their jobs as close to home as they can get it," Estridge said.

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