



KESSEBÖHMER TO EXPAND IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY

German Based Manufacturer Breaks Ground on New HQ off U.S. Hwy 421

September 12, 2023 (Wilmington, N.C.) Kesseböhmer, a family-

owned metal processor that supplies retail display and kitchen storage solutions to U.S. and international markets, is consolidating and expanding North American operations into a new building in New Hanover County. The company, based in the northern Germany town of Bad Essen, is making a strategic investment in North American markets by basing two operating divisions at a new +\$30 million facility off U.S. Hwy 421.



“Kesseböhmer’s ongoing growth is a testament to our tradition, quality and, most importantly, people,” said Jan Staehler, German based vice president of Kesseböhmer. “Wilmington, N.C. is a strategically located and globally accessible location with a productive workforce, supportive leadership and engaging quality of life. Our experiences there going back 16 years now have all been highly positive.”

Kesseböhmer’s retail display and kitchen storage solutions operate as separate U.S. divisions. The 60-year-old company’s fast-growing Kesseböhmer Retail Merchandising Division supplies customers that include pharmacy retail giant Walgreens and Lidl, the multinational grocery store chain with about 177 U.S. locations. Kesseböhmer’s interior kitchen fittings brand, which does business as Kesseböhmer USA, traces its roots in Wilmington to 2007, when the company opened a sales office here. Founded in 1954, the parent company and its brands reach into 80 countries, and the family-owned firm maintains a worldwide workforce of more than 3,000.

The new Wilmington facility will consolidate the operations of both locally-based divisions under a single roof. Kesseböhmer will occupy about 93,000 sq.-ft of Class A space near Wilmington Trade Center. McKinley Building Corporation will partner as the builder of the facility, which will serve as North American headquarters, as well as a warehouse and distribution hub. Its initial plans include a 30-person workforce at the facility. Kesseböhmer intends ultimately to build state-of-the-art manufacturing operations there as well, paving the way for additional local hiring.

“This move is strategic,” says Andre Klehm, Wilmington-based chief executive officer of Kesseböhmer Retail Merchandising. “It puts our team and our operations all under a single, centrally located roof, which will go far in maximizing our efficiency. Having such a quality

facility, when combined with Wilmington's unbeatable talent pool, the excellent port and the business-oriented local leaders, gives us great confidence that this is where we want to and need to be."

Company executives joined local elected officials and WBD leaders in today's groundbreaking. A host of Kesseböhmer partners, vendors, customers and employees also were on hand.

"New Hanover County is excited to be the backdrop for additional growth at Kesseböhmer," said New Hanover County Board of Commissioners Chair Bill Rivenbark. "Today's groundbreaking is the result of passion and hard work of New Hanover County and the Board of Commissioners who have had the vision over the years to make the U.S. Hwy 421 corridor a go-to industrial destination for the region. The investments in water and sewer infrastructure continue to yield great dividends for our community with new economic growth and employment opportunities."

Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo called the company's expansion further evidence that the region is on the winning side of the global supply-chain economy. "We're a distribution town," Saffo said. "Add to that our efficient manufacturing sector and you've got the recipe for the ideal home for global companies like Kesseböhmer."

Kesseböhmer worked closely with Wilmington Business Development (WBD) and McKinley Building Corporation in assembling a compelling plan to support the company's strategic objectives under "Project Stout." Operating in Southeastern North Carolina since 1992, McKinley Buildings enjoys a stellar reputation for dependable, quality construction of commercial buildings, industrial facilities, warehouses and flex space. It also constructs Class-A office buildings, retail shopping centers and multifamily residential properties. McKinley also provides tenant upfits.

"McKinley Building's differentiator is the relationships we form with clients like Kesseböhmer," said Ken Dull, president of McKinley Building. "Our core values and expertise, coupled with our portfolio along this budding industrial corridor, made us the ideal partner on this project. We look forward to our continued work and partnerships with Kesseböhmer, New Hanover County and Wilmington Business Development."

The announcement is the latest in an impressive run of success for Greater Wilmington's warehouse and distribution sector. Directly across the highway from the new facility is Wilmington Trade Center, the first-ever speculative Class-A industrial developments constructed in New Hanover County that features a Wilmington address. Built in two phases by Edgewater Ventures in partnership with McKinley Building, Wilmington Trade Center has attracted expanding local companies as well as attention from outside businesses seeking to enter the regional market with quality, ready-to-occupy space.

"As North Carolina's gateway to the global economy, Greater Wilmington has long been a destination of choice for warehouse and distribution operations, as well as a conducive home for leading manufacturers," said Scott Satterfield, chief executive officer of Wilmington Business Development. "Our local government partners rely on us to continue building synergies with our allies at the Port and maintain the momentum that began with the infrastructure and product development investments our counties have made. Kesseböhmer's consolidation and growth on Highway 421 helps strengthen activity and attention along the corridor and sets the table for additional investment and job creation for the region's economy."

Founded in 1956, Wilmington Business Development oversees business recruitment and industrial retention for the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County and Pender County. A private, non-profit organization, WBD supports members, partners and allies through an array of technical expertise, leadership resources and value-added business services. For additional information, visit www.wilmingtonbusinessdevelopment.com

