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Local firm expanding warehouse

by Ashley Fuller

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A local company is planning the expansion of its headquarters in one of the community's most notable buildings, and adding more jobs to fill it.

BizChair.com plans to build a 149,000-square-foot expansion onto its 327,000-square-foot home on Highway 5 north of Canton in the award-winning former Herman Miller building.



The expansion is needed to make room for more inventory, said CEO Sean Belnick, who founded the furniture distributor.

"We are finding so many more opportunities for our customers. Our business is pretty strong. I think we are over the worst of it," Belnick said of the economy. "We love Cherokee and are glad we can expand here."

The \$5 million project could add 15 to 20 jobs and will start "as soon as we get the permits," said President Gary Glazer, Belnick's stepfather. The company employs about 125 people.

Glazer said he anticipates construction will begin in four to six weeks and take

six months to complete. He said the expansion could result in an additional 15 to 20 jobs.

The company began with selling other manufacturers' office chairs and eventually began importing its own office chairs from China. Today, it sells office chairs, stack chairs, folding chairs and recliners, as well as a range of office, home and medical equipment.

Belnick said the company needs more space to add banquet tables and restaurant chairs to its catalog.

"It will help us compete with everyone else," he said about expanding the product line.

The expansion would create more warehouse space attached to the existing building.

"It is simple construction. It is just a basic storage area," Belnick said. He said the addition will be in the same style of the rest of the building. "We are not going to deviate much."

The modern design by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates Inc. of New York for the 70-acre site was awarded one of 10 2005 General Design Awards of Honor. The landscape design for the building also won an award from the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2005.

The news follows the announcement that Chart Industries would add a line to its Canton plant and hire as many as 50 more workers.

Misti Martin, president of the Cherokee Office of Economic Development, said the BizChair.com and Chart news is good for the county and its future as a home for more businesses.

"Both of these expansions are a testament to the business climate in Cherokee," she said, noting both qualify for the county's existing industry incentive program that allows for the phase-in of property taxes for expansions that create jobs. "Belnick has been here three years, and they have been very successful."

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