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Porsche unveils \$100M Atlanta HQ plans

Atlanta Business Chronicle - by Urvaksh Karkaria, Staff Writer

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Porsche Cars North America Inc. will build a new \$100 million headquarters at Aerotropolis, a 130-acre mixed-use development near Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

The German luxury automaker said Thursday it will move from its Sandy Springs, Ga., headquarters to a 26-acre campus that will include a 150,000-square-foot office tower. Porsche will move about 300 employees from Sandy Springs and add another 100 jobs as it consolidates finance and insurance operations from suburban Chicago.

Porsche announced the relocation at a press conference at 9 a.m. May 12. [Atlanta Business Chronicle first reported on Porsche's interest in Aerotropolis in October 2010.](#)

Porsche Car North America [will receive more than \\$3 million in economic incentives from Atlanta and Georgia to relocate the headquarters.](#)

"The unparalleled nature of the Porsche ownership experience absolutely deserves an equally unique home," said **Detlev von Platen**, president and CEO of Porsche Cars North America. "That is why we are creating a facility and concept that is completely new to the U.S. automotive industry, and one that delivers our brand and product experience to our employees, dealers and customers alike. Our new American headquarters will make us an even stronger organization, and this decision demonstrates our commitment to the state of Georgia and the city of Atlanta to remain a vital part of this vibrant region."

The campus will offer a World of Coke-like marketing attraction, including a classic Porsche restoration shop and a fine dining restaurant. The development will feature a 1.6-mile driving circuit — with off-road and on-road courses — where visitors can fly in for a day of

test driving \$100,000 Porsche 911s.

The relocation site was driven in large part by the need to find a suitable spot for the driving circuit and proximity to the world's busiest airport.

"Porsche's decision to reinforce its roots and grow its next-generation U.S. headquarters here is a testament to the vitality and vibrancy of our city and an exciting addition to the many iconic brands that also call Atlanta home," Atlanta Mayor **Kasim Reed** said in a statement. "The Porsche crest will be a perfect welcome sign to greet the hundreds of thousands of visitors and guests that land each day at the world's busiest airport in Atlanta."

Aerotropolis, being developed by Jacoby Group, is a 6.5-million-square-foot, aviation-intensive business district expected to include 2.1 million square feet of offices, plus hotels and retail on the site of the former Ford Hapeville plant. At full build-out, expected over a decade, the project is estimated to draw more than 10,000 jobs.

Aerotropolis, which is about a year behind schedule thanks to the financial crisis and economic recession, could house Fortune 500 headquarters, accounting and consulting firms logistics-related companies and international firms.

Porsche is a "wonderful calling card" when Jacoby goes looking for Aerotropolis tenants, said **A.J. Robinson**, president of **Central Atlanta Progress**.

"With the [planned] international terminal, there's a whole new opportunity for offices [on the Southside] that we haven't thought about," Robinson said.

The Porsche relocation is a big deal for the future development of Aerotropolis, Georgia Department of Economic Development Commissioner **Chris Cummiskey** told Atlanta Business Chronicle Wednesday.

"You get a corporate name like Porsche, which signifies excellence and top-of-the line quality," Cummiskey said. "I think [Porsche] is a good sales [pitch for Jacoby]."

The Porsche relocation adds "a tremendous amount of credibility" to the still undeveloped Aerotropolis, noted **Gregg Simon**, with the **Atlanta Development Authority**. The ADA offered some incentives for the project.

"No one wants to be the first one in a development in an area that is industrial and hasn't been viewed as an office market," Simon said. "For a tenant of this stature and type of operation at that location, it will make other companies more comfortable locating there."

Construction on the new headquarters is expected to begin later this year, with the relocation completed in summer 2013.