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Russell to create 50 new jobs

BY MIKE QUALLS

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Officials with Russell Brands of Alexander City have announced the company will open a distribution center in Monroeville in the former Vanity Fair cutting center building on South Alabama Avenue. Darlene Thompson, executive director of the Monroe County Economic Development Authority, said company officials shared the announcement with her Tuesday. The venture is expected to create 50 jobs. "Considering that the labor market here is tight, they're probably going to start hiring immediately," she stated. "It's a great thing for the city and the county."

During recent public hearings held by the City of Monroeville and the Monroe County Commission, Russell Brands requested sales tax breaks and a reimbursement of up to \$15,000 for costs incurred to transfer its distribution center to Monroeville were approved. Thompson said the state has also approved relocation incentives for the company.

In exchange for the creation of 50 new jobs and \$650,000 capital investment, the city and county agreed to waive the sales taxes that the company would pay for equipment and modifications to the existing building.

Most recently, Vanity Fair, a sister company of Russell Brands, moved out of the cutting center building.

"This is about opportunity for the city to recruit business to a business friendly environment," said Monroeville Mayor, Charles Andrews. "As I have said, Monroeville is a city of opportunity and Russell Brands is an example of a business recognizing that we have something to offer. We appreciate their interest in Monroeville and look forward to a positive outcome. The city appreciates the efforts of the Economic Development Authority on recruiting this industry, as well as the cooperation of the Monroe County Commission to bring this project to fruition."

The public benefits to the city and its citizens include: "promoting, improving and expanding economic and industrial development within the city; increasing the number and diversity of industrial jobs and related employment opportunities within the city; enabling the city to better retain, attract and locate therein other industrial enterprises; expanding the overall tax base of the city; and enhancing the overall quality of life for the citizens of Monroeville."