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Winn Marine Announces Major Port Expansion Plans

Proposal Would Make Montgomery County Largest Commercial Port on the Cumberland River

Clarksville, Tenn. — Winn Marine LLC today announced plans for a major expansion of its Clarksville port operations, positioning Montgomery County to become the largest commercial water port on the Cumberland River.

Winn Marine said it will file a request with city and county officials in June to allow for the current port's expansion, involving 210 acres situated along an adjacent 1.1-mile stretch of the Cumberland. The company anticipates capital investment of \$50 million to \$100 million, which will be privately financed.

Winn Marine Vice President and General Manager Chad Swallows said the announcement is the result of more than a year of study by company officials, and aligns with the community's overall economic goals.

"Winn Marine is proud to invest in Clarksville and Montgomery County and participate in what will be a major economic development victory for the entire region," Swallows said. "We believe there is a strong demand for a major general-purpose port to handle the shipping and warehousing needs of local businesses, including the area's major employers such as Hemlock Semiconductor and Fort Campbell."

Following the proposed expansion, the Winn Marine port will be equipped to ship products ranging from sand and gravel to food, wood and lumber, iron, steel, and other metals, liquid products, ores, agricultural equipment as well as manufactured goods.

Clarksville-Montgomery County has targeted continued port development as a longstanding need that will be critical to future job growth and economic success. A 1999 study identified the need for a general-purpose port.

"Conditions are now ripe for Clarksville and Montgomery County to realize the community's full economic potential and become the biggest port along the Cumberland," Swallows said. The 696-mile Cumberland River, flowing through Kentucky and Tennessee, is a major commercial transportation waterway in the Southeast, and joins with the Ohio River to connect to the Midwest.

Cargo would be more efficiently transported into and out of the region by barge rather than rail or truck. This reduces transportation costs to businesses and consumers as well as attracting new businesses to locate in the city and county. Additionally, this would enhance local tax revenues through increased real estate values and higher sales-tax collections.

“A major port expansion will make Clarksville and Montgomery County a major port destination and put us on par with cities such as Cincinnati, Nashville and Louisville in terms of commercial activity,” said James Chavez, president and CEO of the Clarksville-Montgomery County Economic Development Council. “The net effect will be an economic boost that will help us continue our momentum in creating jobs and improving the quality of life for all of our residents.”

Winn expects to begin work on the project upon completion of all necessary approvals.

“We are looking forward to working with our city and county leaders to develop a new economic engine to benefit the region. The port is strategically located to provide a badly needed service for shippers and accommodate future industrial growth while taking large numbers of trucks off of our roads. In addition, it will be situated above the 100 year flood plain and located more than a quarter mile from any residences with a 250 acre green space buffer,” Swallows said.

Clarksville-based Winn Marine and sister company, McIntosh Construction, are wholly-owned subsidiaries of VantaCore, a construction materials and marine terminal company with operations in Tennessee and Louisiana. VantaCore is capitalized with assets in excess of \$100 million and has access to an additional \$100 million of capital for new investments.

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