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[Celgard eyes grant to add jobs, boost production in Charlotte – Silicon Valley / San Jose Business Journal:](#)

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A Queen City company is seeking federal stimulus cash to expand its production of battery parts so they can be used in electric vehicles. , a subsidiary of , has about 330 employees at its plant in Southpoint Business Park in south Charlotte.

The company declines to disclose the proposed size of the grant, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Energy. It would require Celgard to add “hundreds” of jobs in Charlotte and at a second plant in the Southeast.

Holli Hughes, spokeswoman for Celgard, says the company expects to hear by late July whether it will receive the grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Celgard makes thin separators that are used in rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. They are found in laptop computers, digital cameras and cell phones.

“We’re currently supplying just about all battery makers,” Hughes says. The stimulus money would be used to increase production of the separator materials that are employed in electric-vehicle batteries. The ARRA has allotted \$2 billion to advance the development of those batteries.

Recovery funds could be used for a Gaston County section of the Carolina Thread Trail system. The N.C. Department of Transportation has committed \$850,000 to build a 1.7-mile section along an abandoned Norfolk Southern Corp. line. The work will create an estimated 11 jobs.

The bike and walking trail will connect downtown Gastonia with the Highland Rail-Trail, which is a part of the North Carolina Rail-Trail system.

In Gaston County, the Thread Trail will link Spencer Mountain and Crowders Mountain State Park. The Carolina Thread Trail is a 15-county, two-state greenway network that’s being created through grants funded by private contributions.

The Catawba Lands Conservancy is the lead agency for the project. Other parts of the Thread Trail will be financed by a \$40 million regional private fund-raising campaign. , the , The and have made contributions ranging from \$2 million to \$4.5 million each.

The Amtrak station in Charlotte is on track for a stimulus-funded fixup. The station at 1914 N. Tryon St. would get \$227,000 in ARRA cash for design, guardrails and platform extensions. The Charlotte facility also will get an upgrade in its standby electric power. About \$125,000 of the project will make the concrete platforms compliant with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. For Amtrak, the Charlotte project is a part of larger program that also will include upgrades at two rail depots in Florida.

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