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HighPoint Business Park in Burleson signed its first tenant today.

Chicken E Food Service signed the contract to build an 89,000 square-foot office and distribution space on 26 acres of the park's 160-acre master planned development. The office/distribution complex will serve the Chicken Express restaurant chain in a five-state region (Texas, Arkansas, Georgia, Oklahoma and Louisiana) that includes 190 locations. Burleson's franchise is on Wilshire Boulevard (Hwy. 174).

The HighPoint site will be the headquarters for Chicken E Food Service. The company had outgrown its current space, creating an opportunity to relocate to Burleson. The park's first tenant is expected to break ground in early September 2013 and open the complex in the summer of 2014. The expectation is for the new Class A facility to bring in 60 full-time employees with a capital investment of \$8 million.

"Burleson is a great place for industrial facilities to locate and we are proud that Chicken E Food Service has chosen HighPoint Business Park for their operations and headquarters," Economic Development Director Bradley Ford said. "Our economic development program aims to make our community stronger through new Burleson jobs and new Burleson companies. Chicken E is right in line with those goals."

The City committed to a tax abatement for Chicken E Food Service. That abatement will be finalized at the Sept. 3 council meeting.

The business park is located on the west side of I-35W, between Bethesda Road and FM 917 in the southern part of the city. The City will extend Vantage Drive from Bethesda Road south to Cirrus Drive and connect Cirrus Drive to I-35W. Cirrus Drive is a road that is being added behind the 26-acres. Two lanes of Cirrus Drive will extend from I-35W to Vantage Drive and two lanes of Vantage Drive will connect Cirrus Drive to Bethesda Road. This is a phased project, with the construction of Cirrus Drive and Vantage Drive between Cirrus and HighPoint Parkway occurring first, followed by the extension of Vantage Drive north to Bethesda Road. The roadway is expected to be complete by June 2015.

"This is only the beginning for new industrial development in Burleson," Ford said. "With quality land opportunities, full utilities to the site and the 2015 opening of a north-south road connecting HighPoint Business Park to the Bethesda Road bridge, we expect to welcome more industrial buildings to Burleson in the new future."