

Italian furniture company opens in city

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HIGH POINT — High-end Italian furniture company Arper has opened a manufacturing facility in High Point.

The company bought a 100,000-square-foot building at 660 Southwest St., where it began making chairs, sofas and lounge seating earlier this year, according to Claudio Feltrin, chairman of the board for Arper, a family-owned company based Treviso, Italy.

The company bought the property last year for \$2.7 million, according to Guilford County tax records.

The plant represents a total capital investment of \$3 million by Arper.

"We invested in state-of-the-art machinery and specifically engineered the plant to be flexible and adapt to customer needs, with the ability to produce a wide range of collections," Feltrin said.

The plant has 24 employees who work in manufacturing, logistics, accounting, supply chain management and customer service.

Arper has 12 showrooms at various locations around the world, but the High Point facility is its first manufacturing center

outside of its headquarters.

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"High Point is the ideal base for Arper's stateside manufacturing, as we have found extremely high potential in the expertise and professionalism of local talent," Feltrin said. "High Point has the talent pool we were looking for to maintain Arper's high-quality standards. By expanding to High Point, a city with an impressive history of furniture-making, we're investing in a long line of skilled craftspeople. This level of expertise is what has drawn us to High Point."

Arper decided to make High Point its U.S. headquarters because of its proximity to domestic markets, including New York and Los Angeles, where it opened a new showroom this month.

Having its manufacturing closer to the point of delivery enables Arper to reduce inventory and create a faster turnaround time that meets shifting customer expectations in the age of e-commerce and "fast furniture," Feltrin said.

"We see incredible potential in the U.S. as one of the fastest-growing



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Employees at the Arper furniture manufacturing plant in High Point, which recently opened at 660 Southwest St., look over upholstered fabric used in the company's production of conference chairs, lounge seating and sofas.



Above left: A worker at the new Arper furniture plant in High Point attaches upholstered fabric to the base of a chair at the company's new manufacturing facility. **Above right:** Italian furniture company Arper bought this facility in southwest High Point and installed state-of-the-art technology and other equipment in a total capital investment of \$3 million.

and most relevant markets

for design worldwide," he said. "By the end of 2018, our aim is to produce 300 upholstered pieces out of High Point per week for delivery in North America. These range from task and conference chairs to lounge

seating, sofas and modular systems across many collections. It's an evolving assortment of lounge and conference chairs, armchairs, sofas and tables."

Feltrin said he expects Arper will add to its local workforce in the com-

ing years, as the company works toward its goal of having all of its upholstered collections made in High Point.

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