

# GE pact puts township in new territory

By Matt Cunningham Staff Writer

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WEST CHESTER TWP. — Before West Chester Twp. trustees unanimously approved an incentive package likely to bring GE Aviation's engineering division here, township Administrator Judi Boyko said the community is entering new territory.

The township has never before granted a 100 percent tax abatement, she said, explaining that the move occurred only because of the proposed joint economic development district, or JEDD, planned for the GE site on Cincinnati-Dayton Road. "It will reduce the burden on property taxes, hopefully, and will provide a new resource to fund our services," she said.

Boyko said the JEDD would involve finding a partner municipality in Butler, Warren or Hamilton counties to manage taxation of earnings and employee income at the 43-acre site. The taxes could amount to \$1 million a year in revenue, to be split between the township and its partner municipality, she said. Duke Realty Cincinnati Vice President John Berger said the incentive package played a key role in attracting GE.

"For a project of this size and scope there was stiff competition," he said. "For us, this is an important piece for us to be able to put our best foot forward for GE." Though GE manager of facilities Gary Acton said the company's final decision to move would be made after the incentive package moved forward, he said enthusiasm at the company is high.

"I know everyone's worked very hard on this, and we're very excited about this," he said. Trustee George Lang said the agreement still has several steps to take before it is complete. Along with approval of the by the county and state, it hinges on finding a partner to implement the JEDD. "We will negotiate just as aggressively with our municipal partners to realize the greatest benefit for our residents," he said.

Contact this reporter at (513) 755-5127 or [mcunningham@coxohio.com](mailto:mcunningham@coxohio.com).

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