

Amylin expansion gives West Chester multi-million dollar boost

WEST CHESTER TWP. — A pharmaceutical firm has given West Chester Twp. its latest financial shot in the arm.

Amylin Pharmaceuticals late Wednesday afternoon announced plans to add a packaging plant to its biomedical production facility that could bring a \$400 million to \$600 million investment and hundreds of high-paying jobs to the area.

The expansion — located on 17 acres on Trade Port Drive — will be the largest corporate investment in the area's history, according to sources close to the deal.

"This is the largest economic packet in the history of Butler County that I can recall," said West Chester Twp. Trustee Lee Wong.

Amylin, which produces the diabetes medications Symlin and Byetta, will invest up to \$600 million in the new facility, said Butler County commissioner Michael Fox. Beyond the initial investment, Fox said the facility will create 500 to 600 jobs with average annual salaries of \$50,000.

"It's a major, major victory for Butler County," he said.

According to West Chester Twp. Trustee George Lang, a \$117 million incentive package developed by state and local governments helped the township win out over two other locations courting the company.

"We've probably been working on this project with Amylin for the better part of a year now," said Lang. He noted that Lt. Gov. Lee Fisher was involved in the negotiations.

The state-run Third Frontier Commission has committed a \$1.5 million TIA Program Grant to Amylin Ohio LLC, should it choose to expand its West Chester Twp. facility. And West Chester Twp. has offered Amylin a 15-year, 100 percent tax abatement.

Lang said the company agreed in turn to make a pilot payment to keep the Lakota Local School District financially whole, and that the company will allow the creation of a joint economic development district on its property to compensate the township for the tax break.

"To the best of my knowledge, that's the first time it's been done," said Lang of the property-specific JEDD.

Fox cited the area's location — close to major universities and vocational training networks — as a key factor in the deal. He also noted that the expansion could have further repercussions on the area's economic landscape.

"When you get the major presence of one of the biotech or pharmaceutical companies, it's like an anchor store that tends to attract others," he said. "This is the type of industry that any community or state would be fortunate to have."

Amylin officials said they anticipate the new facility will be complete by the end of 2008.

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