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2 companies moving to Fairfield, bringing 80 jobs

Western States Machine Company leaving older facility in Hamilton.

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By Eric Robinette

FAIRFIELD — Two companies will move to Fairfield during the next year, bringing with them more than 80 jobs.

The Western States Machine Company, which manufactures equipment for sugar refining, will build a 76,000-square-foot facility on Commerce Center Drive. The company is leaving an older facility in Hamilton that it has outgrown, Fairfield City Councilman Jeffrey Holtegel said.

Western States, which dates back to 1917, will relocate 67 jobs to Fairfield and add at least 24 new jobs within the next three years, he said.

Doug Buckner, the president of Western States, said the machines are “sold overseas, so it’s not just good for the community, it’s good for the country.”

The agreement with the city would provide an eight-year, 75 percent property tax incentive on the new facility. In addition, Western States has agreed to compensate the Fairfield City School District \$23,000 per year and Butler Tech \$700 per year for the eight-year term of the agreement. Construction on the new facility is slated to be finished by the end of 2013.

The existing payroll for Western States is \$4.1 million. The payroll for the new employees will be \$1.6 million, according to city records.

Jody Gunderson, Hamilton’s economic development director regrets Western States’ decision but conceded that “they understand their business at a much more micro level than we do, and they wanted a location closer to I-275.”

Western States, which is located at 530 N. Third St. in Hamilton, has been in the city for more than 70 years, he said.

Also moving to Fairfield is Intellitrak Inc., which manufactures overhead conveyor systems. That company is moving into a facility formerly occupied by Deveroes, which was purchased by another organization, Holtegel said.

Intellitrak will relocate 15 employees from a facility it has outgrown in Forest Park to the Fairfield facility at 8660 Seward Road. The 25 jobs have an annual payroll of \$1.1 million.

In 2004, the city made an agreement with a company named Larohn, Inc. AKA Deveroes. This agreement offered a 10-year 50 percent property tax incentive for the construction of a new 30,000-square-foot manufacturing facility at 8660 Seward Road. The agreement has two years remaining. Earlier this year, Deveroes was purchased by another company, and the propriety was vacated, according to city records.

Intellitrak will purchase that property under the existing agreement. In addition, Intellitrak has agreed to make annual payments of \$2,300 to the Fairfield City School District.

Tom Robertson, the president of Intellitrak, is a 1985 Fairfield High School graduate.

"I'm very fond of Fairfield. It's always been home," he said.

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