

## Tax incentives could help Amazon create 2,000 jobs in Central Ohio

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Central Ohio stands to gain 2,217 jobs from projects that received approval for state tax incentives on Monday, including 2,000 jobs that Amazon expects to add.

The [Amazon venture is the single biggest project in terms of the number of jobs](#) to be approved for incentives by the Ohio Tax Credit Authority in at least the 10 years that the agency has been keeping records.

Amazon plans to build distribution centers in Obetz and Licking County, but exact locations haven't been determined.

The authority approved 14 projects for across the state that are expected to create 3,977 jobs, also the most at one meeting in that period, according to the state. The projects would retain 935 jobs statewide.

The projects are expected to result in more than \$136 million in new payroll a year and generate nearly \$300 million in investment.

Besides Amazon, European finance company Barclays received approval for a project that could add 1,500 jobs in southwestern Ohio.

"This is a banner day," said David Goodman, the authority's chairman.

Amazon's project entails the construction of distribution centers of 800,000 square feet to 1 million square feet with a total investment of \$200 million in Obetz and in Etna Township.

The size of the centers that Amazon is considering is about twice the size of what would be considered a large distribution center in the region, said Mike Simpson, president of NAI Ohio Equities. They will be big enough to hold about 20 football fields.

"They would be on a short list of occupants taking up that much space," he said.

Simpson said Amazon might be considering two centers as opposed to a single giant one mainly because of the challenge of finding employees to staff both.

A distribution center in Obetz would draw workers from as far away as southern Ohio, while one in Licking County figures to pull from locations east of there, he said.

"That's going to be a tough bill to fill," he said. "The tough part of that job is going to be filling those jobs."

Most of the 2,000 jobs would be filling orders at the sites. Total payroll would be \$60 million a year. Amazon did not return a message on Monday seeking comment.

The tax credits approved for Amazon have an estimated value of \$17.5 million.

Amazon already is making a big investment in central Ohio. The company has committed \$1.1 billion to build three data centers in the region. The data centers are expected to employ about 120 workers.

Other central Ohio projects that received approval for incentives included:

- Data analytics company Saama Technologies, which is [planning an expansion project in Worthington](#) that will add 90 jobs with an annual payroll of \$7.2 million.

The expansion is being driven by the company's rapid growth. The tax credits have an estimated value of \$698,000.

- Japanese truck company Hino Motors Manufacturing, which is considering Gahanna for a warehouse project that could create 50 jobs with an annual payroll of \$1.8 million.

Hino, owned by Toyota, also will use the site for distribution and some assembly. The tax credits have an estimated value of \$109,000.

- Custom T-shirt company Air Waves, which is adding 30 jobs with an annual payroll of \$725,000 as part of an expansion in Delaware County.

The project also retains 76 jobs with an annual payroll of \$2.6 million. The tax credits have an estimated value of \$24,000.

- Columbus distillery Middle West Spirits, which plans to add 25 jobs with an annual payroll of \$950,000 as part of an expansion project designed to meet [growing demand for its products](#).

The 25 new jobs, including production, warehouse, sales, marketing and support staff, will be added over the next three years. Hiring for some positions will begin immediately.

The tax credits have an estimated value of \$51,000.

- Recruiting software company MBA Focus, which will add 22 jobs with an annual payroll of \$1.1 million in Dublin.

The expansion comes following a [merger between MBA and Austin, Texas-based CSO Research](#).

Founded in 2003, MBA Focus provides software and services that connect more than 2,000 companies — including Google, Amazon, Bank of America and JPMorgan Chase — with MBA students and alumni at 75 top-ranked graduate business schools, including Harvard, Columbia and, in Ohio, Case Western Reserve University and Kent State University.

The tax credits have an estimated value of \$53,000; the company will make a \$200,000 investment for the project.

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