

'Silicon Heartland' coming soon

TOP STORIES

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An aerial photo shows land in Licking County where Intel plans to build two new factories.

Courtesy | Intel Corp.

A rendering shows the plans for two Intel factories in Licking County.

Courtesy | Intel Corp.

NEWARK — The Delaware County line is a little over a quarter mile from “Silicon Heartland” — the new \$20 billion Intel processor factories that will be built in neighboring Licking County, making Central Ohio the next frontier of innovation for generations to come.

Among those welcoming Intel Corporation to the region are the Delaware County commissioners.

“This is a transformative deal, and we salute all the jurisdictions and organizations involved in making this happen, particularly One Columbus, JobsOhio and The New Albany Company,” said Commissioner Barb Lewis, in a press release. “And just as we saw when Honda America built their plant in Marysville, Intel's arrival in central Ohio promises to bring great economic opportunity to the surrounding counties.”

“This plant and its products are a big step toward stabilizing so many other industries within the American economy,” said Commissioner Jeff Benton. “And in Delaware County, we have positioned ourselves to be a part of the opportunities that the future offers, whether it's shovel-ready sites for ancillary businesses or providing the well-educated workforce this industry requires.”

“This is fantastic news for Central Ohio,” said Commissioner Gary Merrell. “Job creation and opportunities will be considerable. It is now up to all of us to manage this growth in a way that benefits everyone today and into the future. Those with the vision that brought Intel to central Ohio should be applauded, but the leadership needed is just beginning.”

This the largest single private-sector investment in Ohio history. The high-tech campus will include two leading-edge Intel fabrication facilities (known as “fabs”) to build chips for the semiconductors that power many everyday products like cars and smart phones. The company announced the campus will employ an estimated 3,000 people earning an average wage of \$135,000.

It has been 40 years since U.S.-based Intel has last announced a new plant, and the corporation considered sites in 40 other states. Intel currently has domestic plants in Arizona, New Mexico and Oregon. From early

May to Christmas Day, Ohio officials made their pitch at hundreds of virtual and in-person meetings, and it worked. It may have helped that 140 suppliers for Intel are already in Ohio. An estimated 25-30 new companies may emerge to support Intel. In addition, 7,000 construction jobs are needed to begin building by the end of the year for production to start in 2025. The site is large enough that a total of eight factories could be built, resulting in a \$100 billion investment on the part of Intel over the next decade.

"The new site will be designed and constructed with green building principles, and the new factories have a goal to be powered by 100% renewable electricity, achieve net positive water use, and achieve zero total waste to landfill," Intel said.

The nearly-1,000-acre site is in northwest Licking County at Miller Road between Beech and Clover Valley roads, currently in Jersey Township, with more than 3,000 acres being annexed into New Albany. The nearest part of Delaware County to the plants would be Harlem Township. The nearest major roads are U.S. Route 62 and state Route 161. The Ohio Department of Transportation has already committed to adding lanes to state Route 161.

The local announcement was made on Friday afternoon at Newark's Midland Theatre, with viewing parties all over the state watching the livestream. Officials from Intel, Ohio politicians, and U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo were on hand for the announcement. Many of these same people were at the White House earlier that morning to announce the project with President Joe Biden in support of passing the CHIPS for America Act, which the Ohio Statehouse notes is "already approved by the U.S. Senate, to make Ohio and the nation globally competitive and accelerate growth in the Ohio project."

"To be able to say, 'made in Ohio,' 'made in America,' we used to always be able to say that 25-, 30 years ago," Biden said earlier at the White House. "That's what this is about. This is just the beginning. I want other cities and states to be able to make announcements like the one being made here today. And that's why I want to see Congress pass this bill right away and get it to my desk."

"Ohio, you were built for this," Raimondo said in Newark. "This is an exciting day for America. It's about making things in the United States. ... this also goes directly to bringing down prices and inflation."

Ohio has the third largest manufacturing GDP of any state and is a one-day drive to 60% of the population of the United States and Canada.

"Intel has chosen Ohio," said Gov. Mike DeWine in Newark. "This is a major win for Ohio. This builds on our history of Ohio being a great manufacturing state. There's no better place than here in Ohio, made by Ohioans. Ohioans are just hard workers. Once again this is Ohio's time in history. We have an opportunity to lead once again. Any company that is growing will have to give us a look."

Intel President and CEO Pat Gelsinger, who is originally from Pennsylvania, presented DeWine with a wafer plaque made from their product.

"We're the company that put the silicon in the Silicon Valley, and today, the Silicon Heartland begins," Gelsinger said. "The world is becoming more digitized than ever, and we want your best and brightest participating with us, restoring U.S. semiconductor research and development and manufacturing, to help build a resilient supply chain."

Intel Sr. VP Keyvan Esfarjani will run the new campus. "Ohio is the perfect spot," Esfarjani said. "We evaluated several hundred criteria over nine months. Building a semiconductor mega-site is like building a small city, and the demand for chips is stronger than ever. Our goal is to start construction as soon as possible. Welcome to the Intel family."

"Ohio was a tough sell before," said Lt. Gov. Jon Husted. "That was then, this is now. Ohio has changed, and Ohio is winning again. Since day one in office, Gov. DeWine and I have made it our mission to make Ohio the most innovative entrepreneurial state in the Midwest. Team Ohio looks forward to continuing to work with Intel. Let's get started."

Ohio State University President Dr. Kristina Johnson is herself an engineer who has made chips. She said at the announcement that Intel has pledged \$100 million in educational partnerships statewide at universities and community colleges.

"This is a great day for Ohio and a great day for our nation," Johnson said. "Semiconductors make almost every facet of modern life possible – from computers and smart phones to cars and appliances – and they played an integral role in the technologies that enabled us to stay connected throughout the pandemic. They will also be integral to a wide range of applications in which Ohio State is actively involved from a research perspective, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, vaccine development and more."

"Ohioans have a great work ethic, and thanks to our world-class institutions, has a highly trained workforce. It's a great match," said U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio).

"Today, we are burying the term 'rust belt,'" said U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio). "We know how to speed up our supply chains, lower prices, and better compete with China."

"We haven't said a lot about the kids, but the kids who live in this region, their lives changed today," said Congressman Troy Balderson (R-Ohio). "We'll get it done."