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Amazon investing in Region

Delivery stations to bring hundreds of jobs to M'ville, Valpo

CHAS REILLY
Times Correspondent

Two new Amazon delivery stations are coming to the Region, bringing hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in investments to Northwest Indiana.

Amazon on Wednesday announced the facilities will open at Georgia Street in the AmeriPlex at the Crossroads business park in

Merrillville and at 2200 Memorial Parkway in the Lakes of Valparaiso Business Park in Valparaiso. Both facilities are scheduled to open this year.

One delivery station opened in February in South Bend, and Amazon plans to also open stations in Indianapolis and Greenfield this year.

"We're excited to continue to invest in the state of Indiana with five new delivery stations that will provide efficient delivery for customers, and create hundreds of job opportunities for the state's talented workforce," Am-

azon Spokesperson Jessica Pawl said. "These new delivery stations represent Amazon's unwavering commitment to safety, technological innovations and skilled teams who are obsessed with delivering for our customers."

Merrillville Town Manager Patrick Reardon said Amazon will invest more than \$30 million in land, building and equipment for the 141,000-square-foot delivery station that will be located on a 35-acre parcel in AmeriPlex. He said the project will create 300 permanent positions and 100 temporary construction jobs.

According to Amazon, permanent jobs at its new delivery stations will start at \$15 per hour and offer a variety of benefits.

"The addition of the Amazon facility to the (AmeriPlex business park) is the crown jewel for the town of Merrillville from an economic development standpoint," Town Councilman Shawn Pettit said. "To have a Fortune 100 company located in Merrillville will enhance the park and draw in other firms to the park, which will benefit the town for decades to come."

The addition of the Amazon

facility in Valparaiso is the result of collaboration between multiple city officials and organizations.

"We're very pleased to welcome Amazon to Valparaiso. As a global leader, Amazon will be an excellent addition to our community," Mayor Matt Murphy said. "It's very gratifying to have the facility, workforce and excellent quality of life to offer companies like Amazon."

The Valparaiso facility will be in an 80,000-square-foot building created from efforts by the

Please see AMAZON, Page A8

Amazon

From A1

Redevelopment Commission and Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation, said city attorney Patrick Lyp.

"From a city perspective, not only does this add value for the residents who order things from Amazon to have faster delivery, but also for residents who are looking for a job," Lyp said.

Lyp said the facility will add more than 100 jobs for Amazon and additional positions will be open for delivery drivers.

Merrillville Engineering Administrator Steve King said construction for the town's project started about two months ago.

Merrillville panels earlier this year approved the devel-

opment, but town leaders were unable to disclose the company behind the initiative at that time because of confidentiality.

Merrillville Building and Planning Director Sheila Shine said Amazon and the town worked well together to advance the project.

"The collaboration and communication between the Amazon developmental team and the planning and building department allowed staff to provide information that streamlined the application process," Shine said.

Reardon said there has been a surge in economic growth in the AmeriPlex business park and other areas of Merrillville, and the new Amazon facility will generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in new tax rev-

enue each year.

"We look forward to hosting this amazing company and embrace all of the potential that they will bring to Merrillville," Town Council President Rick Bella said.

He said packages from Amazon fulfillment and sortation centers are sent to delivery stations for the last portion of the company's order fulfillment process.

"Each of Amazon's new delivery stations will be designed to meet the needs of our electric delivery vehicles," Amazon said in a statement. "Ranging from the physical layout to the electrical design, we are optimizing these spaces to offer flexibility and scale as we move closer toward putting 10,000 electric delivery vehicles on the road in 2022."