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Wayne County helps retain 2,000 auto jobs

WAYNE – With the help of Wayne County, Ford Motor Co. will convert its Michigan Assembly Plant in Wayne from manufacturing Expeditions and Navigator to a smaller, more fuel efficient Focus.

The change will retain at least 2,000 jobs, including skilled trades, production workers and salaried positions. The number of jobs could exceed 4,000, depending on market conditions.

“This is a vital development and positive news in the current economic climate,” Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano said Wednesday. “Working with various stakeholders, Ford will secure direct manufacturing jobs as well as indirect supplier and other retail and service jobs in the area surrounding the plant.”

Ford is investing more than \$550 million in the plant, formerly known as the Michigan Truck Plant at 38303 Michigan Ave in Wayne.

Production at the plant, which is currently idle, is expected to begin in late 2010 or early 2011.

Officials with Wayne County in partnership with the city of Wayne fast-tracked approval of a Brownfield plan, which will allow Ford to request tax credits for its investment and reimbursement of approximately \$14 million for planned demolition and site preparation costs.

The state of Michigan on May 5 approved a \$160 million Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) tax credit for the project.

“I am very happy to see Ford Motor Company make their new adventure in the city of Wayne,” said Wayne Mayor Al Haidous. “I’m happy to see the positive results from working together with Ford, the state and the county.”

The production plan includes integrated stampings, which would mean investment at the Wayne Stamping Plant, located at 37625 Michigan Ave.

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