

350 needed for building phase

Fujitsu to open semiconductor plant

by CHRISTY TRUE
Staff writer

Fujitsu Microelectronics will proceed within the next 30 days to begin construction of a major semiconductor fabrication facility at Northeast Glisan Street in Gresham.

Fujitsu officials made the announcement Tuesday morning at a press conference at Gresham City Hall, almost three years after purchasing the 200 acres of property.

The Japanese firm announced it will initiate construction with a \$70 million first phase, which is expected to employ 350 people within two years. Construction of the first phase will begin in September and is expected to be in operation in the fall of 1988.

The plant will be Fujitsu's first wafer manufacturing plant in the U.S. and represents the first major semiconductor investment in the U.S. by any company in the last three years. Fujitsu had announced its intentions to build a Gresham plant almost three years ago, but a severe downturn in the worldwide computer chip market shelved plans for the plant until recently.

Ken Katashiba, a company senior vice president, made the announcement in front of Gresham City Hall to a crowd that included Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, former Gov. Vic Atiyeh, state Sen. Glenn Otto and state Rep. Lonnie Roberts.

"Gresham is an ideal location, close to our customers and Fujitsu headquarters in Santa Clara, Calif.," Katashiba said.

Goldschmidt said that Gresham's perseverance throughout the waiting period helped bring about the decision to begin construction of the plant.

"Gresham never quit proposing, hustling and encouraging and the people of this state never gave up on Fujitsu. And today, all of us in Oregon, and we think the Fujitsu family, are winners," he said.

Katashiba said the decision to build in Gresham signals a reversal of the economic slump that hit the electronics industry in 1985.

"This was a worldwide issue. We at Fujitsu felt the impact in our concerns about global semiconductor overcapacity. These concerns delayed our plans to build here," he said. "The slump has had a significant impact on the state of Oregon as well. But, from here on, we see a definite upturn in the U.S. semicon-

ductor market, and that's very good news for all of us."

The decision is also a sign of the good health of Oregon, Goldschmidt said.

"It also signals a reversal in Oregon's economic downturn. The state has tremendous economic advantages; and by building on our strengths we can compete with any state for economic growth and for quality, family-wage jobs," he said.

In its initial phase, the Gresham facility will concentrate on manufac-

turing the company's application-specific integrated circuit (ASIC) product using two advanced fabrication processes: complimentary metal-oxide silicon (CMOS) and emitter-coupled logic (ECL).

By establishing a manufacturing plant in the U.S., Fujitsu hopes to strengthen support of a growing U.S. customer base, Katashiba said. With the plant being closer to American customers, their demands for a fast design turnaround and early delivery of engineering products can be met,

Katashiba said.

Fujitsu will decide early in 1988 whether to expand to a second phase, said Bob Freischlag, senior vice president and general manager of the integrated circuit division.

"It depends on the condition of the semi-conductor industry," he said.

A site design review plan submitted to the city planning department by Fujitsu two weeks ago outlines plans to build the plant in seven phases, eventually employing 2,800 people.

The Portland area was chosen because of its stable labor force and the availability of relatively low-cost water and electricity, Katashiba said.

Gresham Mayor Larry Deyo said in a written statement that Fujitsu's continued community support during the delays is appreciated. Deyo is in Japan this week with the city's sister city delegation.

Though the time line for construction is very short, the city's planning, building and engineering staff will be

able to do the job quickly and effectively, Deyo said.

Fujitsu Microelectronics, Inc. is a wholly owned U.S. subsidiary of the parent company, Fujitsu Limited of Tokyo. Fujitsu America, Inc., also a subsidiary of the parent company, has a disc drive manufacturing plant operating in Hillsboro.

The company has operated an assembly and test facility in San Diego, Calif. since 1981. It currently employs 700 and is valued at \$25 million.

Fujitsu contributes to growth

by CHRISTY TRUE
Staff writer

Fujitsu Microelectronics' decision to proceed with the construction of a computer chip manufacturing plant in Gresham, will mean more jobs, lower taxes and additional economic development in the area, officials said.

Fujitsu will begin construction of the \$70 million first phase of the project in September. The first phase will employ 350 people and the company hopes to employ 2,800 people by 2005.

Most of the plant's employees will be hired from the U.S. workforce, Fujitsu officials said Tuesday. The plant's employment is expected to generate hundreds of other jobs in East County, further stimulating the area economy.

"It means 350 jobs," said Tom Griffith, Gresham City Council president. "And for every dollar that is generated from payroll, it goes out into the community and rolls around four or five times."

The added Fujitsu workforce will create new income which will be spent on supporting a whole range of services, said Peter Tryon, manager of business research for the state Economic Development Department.

Some of the Fujitsu jobs will be fairly sophisticated and high paying. "I think there will be a cross range of managers, technicians and laborers," Griffith said.

Every property owner in Gresham will be benefited by the development in the form of lower property taxes, said Bob Burrow, director of the East Multnomah County Economic Development Commission.

The \$70 million that the company plans on investing in construction of the first phase will raise the assessed value of the property substantially enough to lower taxes in the rest of the district, Burrow said.

"Property taxes will be impacted downward," Burrow said. "The \$70 million is a significant amount when you look at the entire assessed value of the (Gresham High) school district. It will increase the assessed value in the district by about 5 percent," he said.

If the assessed value of the property reaches \$130 million as Fujitsu officials first predicted, it would mean

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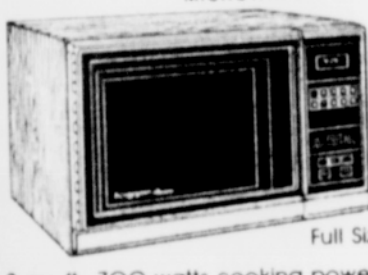
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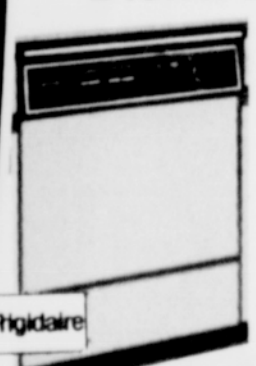
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