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## City's economic plan helps company expand

Santa Clarita's economic development team put its recent 21-point stimulus plan to work keeping a local biomedical company in Valencia for the expansion of its global headquarters.

Advanced Bionics is planning to move into a five-story building on Westinghouse Place by September, said Jason Crawford, the city's economic development director.

The company, which produces cochlear ear implants for the hearing impaired, has a number of employees who work at an office in Mann Biomedical Park.

Those employees are relocating to the new building; offices outside the Santa Clarita Valley are being shuttered and those employees will work at the Westinghouse Place location, Crawford said.

He said the company plans to employ 300 to 500 people in the 144,000-square-foot Summit Oaks building, which has been unoccupied since it was completed in 2008.

Advanced Bionics representatives did not return calls from The Signal on Friday.

The research-and-development company was founded in 1993 by billionaire Alfred E. Mann.

Cochlear implants are devices containing electrodes that are positioned in the inner ear to activate auditory nerve fibers, allowing for transmission of sound signals to the brain.

"These are exactly the kind of jobs that we need here," Crawford said. "When we heard that Advanced Bionics was looking to expand, it was very important for us to make sure that space was here in Santa Clarita."

Several components of the city's \$5 million economic plan helped keep the company local, Crawford said.

The city is covering the first \$10,000 worth of any building permits Advanced Bionics will have. He said it is unclear at this point how much their permits will total.

Additionally, the company's planning process is being expedited so the building

can be occupied by September.

Advanced Bionics will also be able to take advantage of the economic plan's use-tax rebate program.

The component allows businesses that make large purchases - such as equipment - to have half of any tax payments of more than \$20,000 be used for permit fees or a rebate.

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