

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

# Earnings tax under discussion

By Jennifer Edwards  
Enquirer staff writer

1-1 1/2% rate possible in portion of West Chester Twp.

**WEST CHESTER TWP.** - Thousands of workers in part of this Butler County township might have to fork over an earnings tax by year's end.

People who work in the township's northeast corner could face a 1 percent or 1.5 percent tax to help fund road improvements, including a multimillion-dollar highway interchange in a neighboring community.

West Chester Township

Administrator Judi Boyko confirmed Monday that the township is in preliminary talks with the city of Hamilton and property owners along Cox Road between Tylersville and Hamilton-Mason roads.

Under the plan, a joint economic development district would be established over about 300 acres in that area.

Unlike cities, Ohio townships cannot charge earnings taxes. In fact, some people move to townships in part to

escape city income taxes. But Ohio townships can form such tax districts with nearby cities to collect that city's earnings tax over a portion of their township.

In this case, Hamilton would impose an earnings tax on workers in a geographical area West Chester leaders select and return a yet-to-be-determined amount to West Chester.

Hamilton would keep a portion for its administrative part

in the plan.

Some of West Chester's proceeds would go to help pay for the \$30 million to \$50 million Liberty Interchange project that is expected to start this year just north of West Chester in Liberty Township.

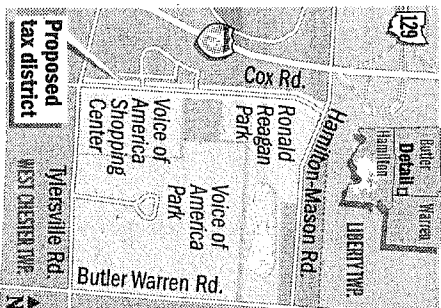
Revenue from the tax district, which has yet to be determined but is anticipated to be millions annually, also would go to widen or otherwise improve Tylersville Road, likely near where a \$200

million hospital is planned to start construction this summer.

"It's all very preliminary and just exploratory," Boyko said. "We wanted to be able to help contribute to the interchange construction and we could not identify a revenue stream to do that."

Trustees likely will tell her to move forward at the next township meeting, Feb. 14.

See **TAX**, Page **B2**



(over)

# Liberty Interchange

From Page B1

Trustees George Lang and Catherine Stoker said Monday they are eager for the interchange to be expanded because it is expected to ease traffic congestion on Tylersville Road and boost economic development.

Trustees said they also want to ensure a quick, safe route into the hospital, Cox Road just north of Tylersville Road.

Legally, all that West Chester and Hamilton leaders need to impose the tax is approval from a majority of the property and business owners involved, not the workers who would pay the tax.

That didn't sit too well Monday with some workers in the tax district area.

"I don't agree with that at all," said Jordan Moore, 19, as she folded clothes at Scrubs & Beyond in the Voice of America shopping center at Cox and Tylersville roads. "I wish I didn't live or work in West Chester. It's growing too fast. They are not going to be able to keep up with it all."

West Chester has about 60,000 residents and a daytime work population of about 50,000 people - most of whom do not live in the township, Boyko said.

*E-mail jedwards@enquirer.com.*

## What it means . . .

**To workers in the 300-acre tax district area along Cox Road between Tylersville and Hamilton-Mason roads:** They would pay an earnings tax of either 1 percent or 1.5 percent, depending on which trustees choose.

**To West Chester Township:** Money generated from the special tax district would go toward the \$30 million to \$50 million Liberty Interchange project in neighboring Liberty Township, a new highway exit off Interstate 75 at an expanded eastward Ohio 129 with ramps at Hamilton-Mason Road.

**To Liberty Township:** It would not enter into the tax district with West Chester but proceeds would go to help pay for the interchange, which is expected to spur business development in residentially heavy Liberty.

**To Hamilton:** The city would likely keep a small portion of the tax district proceeds for collecting the earnings tax. It wasn't clear Monday what the city would spend its share on.

**To West Chester homeowners:** They will not be expected to pay the earnings tax unless they work in the 300-acre, tax district zone along Cox Road between Tylersville and Hamilton-Mason roads.