

Cities compete for FedEx Ground hub

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By Gerald Witt
Staff Writer
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A FedEx plane departs at Piedmont Triad International Airport.

Credit: File photo / News & Record GREENSBORO - Incentives aren't the only deal maker in whether FedEx Ground would locate a package hub here, according to a company spokesman.

"It's a contributing factor, but it is not the lone factor," David Westridge, a FedEx spokesman, said Friday as it became clear who else is competing against Guilford County for the \$100 million Southeast facility.

Greenville, S.C., and Murfreesboro, Tenn., are in the running for the hub, which is expected to generate up to 259 new jobs.

The \$952,500 incentive package from Guilford County is the smallest offered of the three, said Dan Lynch, president of the Greensboro Economic Development Alliance.

He said that a \$2.5 million, 10-year incentive package came from Murfreesboro, a town 35 miles southeast of Nashville.

"I don't know what's coming out of South Carolina, but the state is being rather aggressive," Lynch said.

Lynch and Westridge agreed that the money a government offers a company is down on the list of what influences a decision.

"Most important among the criteria is access to highways," Westridge said, listing other factors.

"And we want to be in an area with enough population to provide staff, and we want to be in close proximity to local customers."

All three regions are laced with interstates.

Murfreesboro sits on Interstate 24, about 40 minutes from Interstate 40.

Greenville is along Interstate 85.

And I-40 and I-85 connect in the Triad, along with the new I-73.

In Guilford County, FedEx Ground is considering a site along the western edge of the county.

Economic developers in Greenville and Murfreesboro didn't return phone calls Friday to discuss their incentive packages.

In the game of economic development, that's the nature of deal making, Lynch said.

"It's like playing poker," he said, adding that an out-of-town reporter recently called to ask what might be done to sweeten the pot for FedEx.

"You don't share anything," Lynch said. "These negotiations are pretty much confidential."

The FedEx Ground hub would be unrelated to the \$300 million sorting facility hub FedEx is scheduled to open next year at Piedmont Triad International Airport. FedEx Ground expects to pick a site for its hub this fall.

Contact Gerald Witt at 373-7008 or gerald.witt@news-record.com