

# The Ithaca JOURNAL

## Lansing company looks to double capacity

Advanced Design Consulting seeks larger facility, 12 jobs in five years

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Chris Spencer of Brooktondale cleans a plate to be used in equipment for mounting specimens for observation in an x-ray beam Monday at Advanced Design Consulting in Lansing. ADC is planning to build a 20,000 square foot, 25 feet tall building expansion so it can take on larger contracts. The plate, seen here in a computer numerically controlled vertical milling machine, is a part of equipment for use at the Wilson Synchrotron at Cornell University. / SIMON WHEELER/Staff Photo

Advanced Design Consulting, the homegrown custom-engineering company that makes scientific instruments and equipment on Ridge Road in Lansing, plans to nearly double its manufacturing and office space to help it keep growing.

The company has a request before the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency for its standard tax-abatement program of reduced property and sales taxes. It's an incentive package offered through the IDA for [businesses](#) relocating or expanding in the county that meet certain requirements and expect

to hire people. The IDA board voted last week to move it to the next step, which is a public hearing.

ADC expects to hire 12 people in three to five years, including mechanical, electrical and [software](#) engineers, and technicians, though that is a conservative estimate, founder and owner Alex Deyhim said. It now employs 21.

The abatements package reduces county, town and school taxes on the increase in value of the property, starting at 90 percent of the liability in the first year and increasing taxes each of the seven years until there is no abatement. The total value is estimated at \$169,922 over the period, with new taxes paid of \$174,014 that time, according to the company's application. The standard incentive package also reduces sales tax on construction materials. ADC estimates the whole project will [cost](#) about \$2 million.

"You need a little bit of a push to get over that hump," Deyhim said.

ADC is an example of economic-development officials' dreams: A company started locally, growing, turning research into commercial products, and [hiring](#) both well-paid engineers and locally trained technicians, and staying because of quality of life.



Alex Deyhim, of Ithaca, is the founder and owner of Advanced Design Consulting, in Lansing. The company is planning at 20,000 square foot expansion behind their current building, left. / SIMON WHEELER/Staff Photo

It is also the rare applicant for the incentive program from a manufacturing company, especially after the 2008 recession, noted Heather Filberto, vice

president and director of economic development services at Tompkins County Area Development.

“I think this really speaks to more of what we’re seeing — more confidence in companies that we’re coming out of sort of a downturn in the economy,” she said.

IDA board vice chairman Larry Baum said the expansion could benefit the community beyond new hires. “The company buys goods and services primarily locally from all kinds of vendors and it really has a positive effect on the economy,” Baum said.

Deyhim said ADC turned down lucrative incentives to relocate to Oak Ridge, Tenn., several years ago because of Tompkins County’s mix of recreation, easy commuting, good schools and cultural amenities, and for proximity to reasonably priced nano-fabrication facilities at Cornell University.

The expansion is needed because ADC’s business is growing and it has missed out on contracts because of its limited size, Deyhim said in an interview Monday. Potential customers may tour the facility and believe it’s too small, Deyhim said.

“If you’re going to be close to your capabilities they might not have the confidence to award you the contract. We do the same thing with our suppliers,” Deyhim said. “And from our point of view we need to space to spread the work. You need the space to work in a safe environment.”

ADC makes scientific instruments for research, mainly in physics, and usually on a custom basis. One recent project was making equipment for studying protein crystals using X-rays, licensing a technique developed in the lab of Cornell professor Sol Gruner. Another was equipment for NASA to test antennas. ADC also built a small angle neutron scattering for Australian physicists. It was a 73 feet long by 7 feet in diameter, and had to be shipped in pieces.

Revenues are at about \$3 million annually and projected to go to \$4.5 million in three years, according the company’s incentive-package application.

While research physicists is a niche market, it’s been growing, Deyhim said. Many are outfitting synchrotrons — particle accelerators such as the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source, or CHESS in Ithaca, which is a customer.

“It’s not an industry that you’re going to get involved then you’re going to go to IPO (initial public offering) tomorrow. Having said that, it’s a very healthy niche,” Deyhim said. “They are building synchrotrons all over the world, brand-new facilities.”