

Drugmaker Shire to expand in Lexington, add 680 jobs

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) - British drugmaker [Shire PLC](#) plans to add 680 jobs over the next eight years at a new plant in Lexington that will make treatments for rare diseases.

A Shire unit, Shire Human Genetic Therapies, announced the \$394 million expansion Thursday, after state leaders and Lexington officials wooed the company with tax and other incentives worth about \$48 million. Other states also sought to land the expansion project, but Shire chose Massachusetts, where it already employs 675 people in Cambridge.

The incentives from the state and Lexington "demonstrate an understanding of the intense competition across the country to attract life sciences companies like Shire HGT," Bill Ciambrone, a senior vice president at the company, said in a news release.

Shire said the vibrant life sciences industry centered in Cambridge was a key factor in the decision to expand in Massachusetts.

Shire has recently transferred some of its Cambridge operations to Lexington Technology Park, and the shift to the suburb northwest of Boston will accelerate with construction of the manufacturing plant.

Gov. Deval Patrick and legislative leaders recently pledged to secure \$40.5 million in incentives for Shire, in addition to about \$7.5 million from Lexington. In addition to tax breaks, the incentives include grants to build public infrastructure for the new plant.

Shire's Human Genetic Therapies Unit specializes in developing treatments for genetic and rare disease. The unit's key products are Elaprase, to treat Hunter syndrome, and Replagal, for Fabry disease.