

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Sheboygan County Economic Development board of directors votes to support Kohler golf course project

Proven track record of environmental stewardship cited

Sheboygan County – The Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) voted to support the Kohler Co. proposal to build a golf course in the Town of Wilson. The letter, in part, noted support for ‘all responsible development and job creation in Sheboygan County, and after reviewing the proposed Kohler golf course in the Town of Wilson, [SCEDC] wish[es] to go on record as supporting this project. [SCEDC] believe[s] the Kohler project will establish a fifth world-class golf course and have a significant, positive economic impact in [the] community.’

In discussing the letter of support, SCEDC Director Dane Checolinski noted that “Kohler Co. has a proven track record of environmental stewardship and of operating championship-caliber courses that reflect innovation and a commitment to sustainability. Kohler Co. also has a strong reputation for delivering high quality products and services. All hospitality projects the company has completed have been truly world class.” Acknowledging the pending environmental impact study Checolinski added “I have great confidence in Wisconsin’s Department of Natural Resources making certain the project is done in an environmentally friendly way.”

Beyond environmental responsibility, SCEDC noted the economic impact. Kohler’s proposed golf course will yield impressive results to area businesses, as noted by the study by SB Friedman Company, a consulting firm specializing in analyzing economic impacts of real estate investments. Annualizing the data, the study results become easily discernable. The study indicates the new golf course will average 63 rounds of golf daily. These visitors, 80% from out-of-state, will spend nearly \$18,000 in off-course activities such as lodging, food, beverage and retail goods. Visitors will also occupy 60 hotel rooms nightly, supporting nearly \$3,000 in daily tax collection for local and state coffers. Kohler Co. is expecting to create 106 full-time equivalent jobs, with the ripple economic effects creating 227 jobs within the County. These jobs will provide average salary and benefits of \$39,200 excluding tips and gratuity; compensation well above living wage for most area families.

Overall, the project will have an annual economic impact in Sheboygan County of \$20.6 million. The course itself would employ 168 full- and part-time workers and generate more than \$1.1 million a year in new tax revenue, with most of that coming from people living outside Sheboygan County. The study also showed that visitors coming to our area to play the course will fill about 22,000 hotel room nights annually and spend about \$6.5 million every year on lodging, food, beverages and retail goods. The recently announced modifications sharply reduces the impact to wetlands, significantly decreases the needed easement, and does not impact state property west of the Black River.

Checolinski pointed out “Economies are dynamic. Many of the jobs will provide employment for our neighbors, especially for those who need work the most. Earnings from these new jobs are likely to be spent locally and will help sustain many more jobs. While some believe that the introduction of new, large employers is needed to advance the area’s economy, the reality is that most economic progress comes from the continued growth of local firms that introduce jobs at all pay levels.”

The letter to the Town of Wilson also acknowledges ‘The direct economic benefit of a world-class tourism destination such as this is truly spectacular. Residents of the area, even if they are not golfers who wish to take advantage of this public course, will have access to a great restaurant and be the beneficiaries of this increased, private-sector investment. The proposed golf course holds the promise to attract many from all over the nation and the world.’

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The Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) is a countywide private/public partnership, leading economic development efforts to improve the economic wellbeing and long-term prosperity of the businesses, residents and communities of Sheboygan County, through collaborative retention, expansion and attraction efforts for business and employment development. The SCEDC leverages a variety of tools available to encourage business growth and job creation. Key performance indicators tracked by SCEDC track and measure businesses assisted and resources leveraged. By applying many tools to assist businesses and communities and help them succeed, SCEDC achieves increased economic prosperity for Sheboygan County.