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DEED Awards Shovel Ready Certification to Three Cities

~Becker, Pine City and Stewartville Certified~

ST. PAUL – Business park developments in three Minnesota cities have been certified for the Shovel Ready Program by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development’s (DEED) Office of Business Development (OBD). The certifications were awarded to the cities of Becker, Pine City and Stewartville.

Shovel Ready certification means that a city or developer has completed the planning, zoning, environmental studies, title work, public infrastructure and other pre-construction activities that have been completed on a particular site. Shovel Ready sites are more attractive to companies that want to move quickly with plans to start up, relocate or expand their operations.

“The Shovel Ready Program streamlines much of the work that businesses need to get done before beginning an expansion project,” said DEED Commissioner Katie Clark Sieben. “With much of the advance work out of the way, businesses can focus on their plans for growth and job creation.”

John Rhodes, a leading national site-location consultant with Moran, Stahl & Boyer of Lakewood Ranch, Fla., works with OBD on the Shovel Ready Program.

“Shovel Ready certification is becoming popular nationally as well,” said Rhodes. “The tool is successful because it increases the speed in which companies can start up operations after the site decision has been made, and limits their risk for the unknown.”

Since OBD launched the program in 2009, development sites in 15 Minnesota communities have received certification as Shovel Ready.

More details on the program are available [here](#).

Pine City – The 100-plus acre Pine City Technology Park is just 7 miles north of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area, in southern Pine County, on the Interstate 35 Business Loop through town. Officials are hoping to attract new business to the established industrial park, which has streets, fiber optics, water, sewer, and available tax abatements, loan programs and other incentives.

“Pine City is the perfect choice for many businesses,” said Nathan Johnson, city planner for Pine City. “Not only are we midway between the state’s two largest metro areas—the Twin Cities and Twin Ports—we also have a gem of a community complete with picturesque lakes encircling it, a river winding through downtown, a vibrant town square and a superior quality of life.”

The city assets include nationally-recognized, award-winning schools and Pine Technical College, which Community College Week recently named as one of the nation’s fastest-growing two-year colleges.

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