

Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.: Sheboygan, Manitowoc regions earn national recognition for economic development

Posted on Thursday, Mar 8, 2018

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

CONTACTS:

For Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation:
Dane Checolinski, 920.452.2479
Checolinski@SheboyganCountyEDC.com

For Progress Lakeshore:
Peter A. Wills, 920-482-0540
Peter@progresslakeshore.org

MADISON, WI. March 7, 2018 – Two regions of Wisconsin – Sheboygan and Manitowoc – have received national recognition for their economic development successes in Site Selection magazine’s annual ranking of top metro areas in the U.S. for corporate facility investment projects in 2017.

The Sheboygan area, which had 11 projects last year, is ranked No. 6 nationally among metro areas with populations of less than 200,000, a dramatic jump from its No. 31 ranking in 2016. Manitowoc, which had eight corporate investment projects in 2017, was tied for seventh place in the magazine’s 2017 ranking of the top micropolitan areas in the U.S. A micropolitan statistical area is one or more adjacent counties that have at least one urban core area of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population.

“I congratulate the economic development and community leaders of the Sheboygan/Manitowoc area, as well as the companies that have made the commitment to establish or expand operations in the region,” said Mark R. Hogan, secretary and CEO of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the state’s lead economic development agency. “The state of Wisconsin had a record year for economic development in 2017, and one of the reasons for that success is the growth that has taken place in the region.”

Included among the Sheboygan area’s major projects in 2017 were the expansion of the MilliporeSigma facility in Sheboygan Falls, a \$64 million project expected to create 175 jobs; the \$61 million expansion of Masters Gallery Foods Inc. in Oostburg, expected to create 150 jobs; and Johnsonville’s corporate headquarters expansion, a \$16 million project expected to add about 100 jobs. The MilliporeSigma expansion was the 10th largest economic development project in Wisconsin last year.

“We are excited to have the I-43 corridor to be recognized as a leader for corporate facility projects by a national publication,” said Dane Checolinski, director of the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corporation. “Sheboygan County has experienced large employer expansions, and now the area seeks housing developments to complement our growing employment base.”

The top projects in Manitowoc County included Forefront Dermatology’s expansion of its Manitowoc offices, a \$1.1 million project expected to create 241 jobs; DOWCO Inc.’s \$2.5 million expansion in Manitowoc, which is expected to create 37 jobs; and a \$3 million expansion by Color Craft Graphic Arts Inc. in Manitowoc, which should result in the hiring of 15 people.

“The recognition from Site Selection magazine highlights the ongoing trend in the I-43 corridor of Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties,” said Peter Wills, executive director of Progress Lakeshore, the economic development organization for the Manitowoc area. “The area has seen a resurgence in business expansion and attraction for businesses and people due to a highly skilled workforce, high quality of life, quality education and low cost of living. “

To determine the rankings, Site Selection focuses on corporate facility projects with significant impact to the state, such as corporate headquarters, manufacturing plants, R&D operations and logistics sites. These new business facilities and expansions are chosen based on specific criteria, which include capital investment,

job creation and square footage.

Site Selection magazine publishes information for expansion planning decision-makers — CEOs, corporate real estate executives and facility planners, human resource managers and consultants to corporations. It has awarded the Governor's Cup annually since 1988, based on new and expanded corporate facilities as tracked by the proprietary Conway Projects Database.

Overall, Wisconsin had a record year for economic development in 2017, as WEDC supported 59 companies that agreed to locate or expand Wisconsin last year. Those projects are expected to create or retain nearly 30,000 jobs and result in more than \$11.6 billion in capital investment.