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DSPS Secretary-Designee Crim Attends Foxconn Inspection, Tours Site

MOUNT PLEASANT, Wis. – Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dawn Crim toured the Foxconn campus in Mount Pleasant earlier this week. She joined agency staff on a routine inspection of the fabrication facility, where the company plans to begin manufacturing LCD screens in late 2020 or early 2021. Secretary Crim and an agency inspector walked through the construction site with a representative from Gilbane Building Company, the general contractor.

This is the second Foxconn inspection for Secretary Crim, who visited the fabrication building site in the summer. She has also attended project planning meetings in Milwaukee.

“The Foxconn project is high-profile and under considerable public scrutiny,” Crim says. “I am directly engaged in the agency’s work, and site visits give me first-hand exposure to our team’s role in the construction process. From everything I’ve seen and heard, things are moving along without hassle or delay, and our agency has been accessible and responsive to our customers and partners.”

The Department of Safety and Professional Services is responsible for reviewing and approving all building plans for the approximately 1,000-acre campus. The agency also inspects the buildings—the structures themselves as well as systems, including electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and fire protection—throughout construction. Agency staff visit the site every two to three weeks to monitor progress and ensure building codes and standards are met.

“It has been clear from the beginning that our partners in the project, including Gilbane, are just as committed to quality and safety as we are,” Crim says. “I credit everyone involved—Foxconn, the contractors, and our team—for establishing and maintaining strong, collaborative working relationships that keep this project on track.”

According to a statement issued from Adam Jelen, Sr. Vice President of Gilbane Building Company and Principal for the Foxconn Program, and Deb Pereira, Vice President of Gilbane Building Company and Foxconn Program Director, agency support has been invaluable to the project’s success. “DSPS’s design review and construction inspection processes on the Wisconsin Valley Area 1 projects have consistently been undertaken in a very professional and responsive manner while ensuring compliance with all requirements. The project program is of an unprecedented scale with a very aggressive schedule, which has required seamless interactions amongst and exemplary performance by all public/private stakeholders. Gilbane | Exyte is honored to work with the professionals at DSPS on this historic project.”

Crews broke ground on the fabrication facility, which will have nearly a million square feet of production capacity, last year. Foxconn chose the Wisconsin location after receiving assistance in the form of tax credits and other subsidies from former Governor Scott Walker’s administration. While Secretary Crim is aware of the project’s history, her goal has been to focus on the agency’s role and to maintain a high level of customer service throughout all phases of construction.

“I realize that, to many people, Foxconn is not a typical project. To our agency, though, it is. We are going about our business as we should and as we always do, remembering that we are here to serve our customers and to be smart stewards of our resources in our efforts to promote safety and advance the economy,” Crim says.

“This visit demonstrates to me that we are doing exactly that. There is evident progress since the summer when I observed foundation work on the fabrication building. Everyone is putting their best foot forward, and everyone is working hard to make this a successful project for the region and state. I don’t think I can overstate that point. Everyone benefits—the client, the contractor, and the public—when construction projects go smoothly, and it is a priority for the agency.”

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