



**It's Better
in Becker**

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Administration

January 16, 2025



Community
Center

Via: Electronic Filing



Community
Development

Mr. Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 250
St. Paul, MN 55101



Finance



Parks and
Recreation

RE: DOCKET NO. 24-435
LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR AMAZON DATA SERVICES' PETITION FOR AN
EXEMPTION FROM THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED REQUIREMENTS FOR
EMERGENCY BACKUP GENERATORS AT BECKER, MINNESOTA



Pebble Creek
Golf Club

Mr. Seuffert,



Police
Department

On behalf of the Becker City Council, I write in support of Amazon Data Services' (ADS) petition for an Exemption from Certificate of Need (CN) requirements for the emergency backup generators for their planned data center project in Becker. Amazon makes a thorough and compelling argument that the CN requirements are not applicable for these generators, and the city urges swift approval of the exemption.



Public Works

The MN Public Utilities Commission has been at the center the planned retirement process of the Sherco Generating units, and as such, the city has appreciated the PUC's concern for the impact that these closures will have on the City of Becker and Sherburne County. The PUC allowed for the sale of this land in 2023 for the purpose of constructing a data center, as well as approving the construction of a long duration energy storage facility and the H2 clean hydrogen pilot project for Xcel's natural gas innovation project. All of these decisions will help mitigate the impacts of the retirement of the Sherco facility.

Soon after the retirement was announced, the city secured a state bond appropriation for the purpose of extending city utilities to serve approximately 1,000 acres of Xcel-owned land around the plant for the purpose of developing the property to replace lost jobs and lost tax base due to the plant's closure. That infrastructure project was completed in 2024, and Xcel has sold two of their larger parcels for the purpose of data center construction.

In addition to these data centers being critical to Becker's future, data center projects hold significant state-wide impact, and the project developers need certainty about the development requirements on the front end. The CN was only recently raised at meetings that have been held at the state and local level about the development requirements. ADS has told us that if the CN is required, it greatly impacts their decision as to the timing and scope of the ultimate build out, and could push any development out two years. This uncertainty of the CN issue has already led to their suspension of any site preparation work, which needs to be done during the winter.

The City of Becker has worked closely with Xcel Energy and ADS on this project. The potential of this project, not to mention other similar projects being considered throughout the state, is significant to the city and state in terms of construction jobs, new jobs, and replacing lost tax base.

The Becker City Council recommends that the PUC grant ADS's petition for a CN exemption as it relates to their proposed project in Becker.

Sincerely,



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