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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two Rivers Awarded \$500,000 Grant for Harbor Infrastructure

The State of Wisconsin Department of Administration has announced the award of a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to the City of Two Rivers.

The grant will help fund replacement of a failing harbor seawall on the East Twin River at Harbor Park and a 105 year-old water main that runs beneath the harbor at that location. Harbor Park is located along East Street, just upstream of the U.S. Coast Guard station.

With this funding in place, the City now plans to proceed in early 2014 with a nearly \$2 million project. This includes rebuilding 400 feet of seawall for \$1.5 million and replacing the 700 foot water main segment for \$300,000.

The seawall in question consists of a poured concrete cap atop wooden pilings that date to the 1920's. Various sections of the wall have breached in recent years, causing the adjacent park areas to collapse. Those minor failures have required numerous temporary repairs and backfilling along the wall.

A 2010 underwater inspection of the wall revealed unstable and unsafe conditions. Engineers noted significant potential for major structural failure. Such a major failure would cause the park area to collapse into the river, and also threaten the adjacent street and the utilities beneath it.

The Department of Administration approved the \$500,000 grant under its "Urgent Need" category of CDBG grants for public infrastructure, given the imminent risk of a catastrophic failure of this piece of harbor infrastructure.

The City has previously secured \$930,300 in other State and Federal funding for the project that includes money for design engineering from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (\$53,690) and the Department of Natural Resources' Recreational Boating Fund (\$67,919), and \$808,691 for project construction from the Recreational Boating Fund.

Based on current cost estimates, local funding required for the project is \$545,310.

In addition to installing a safe, sound new seawall and replacing a century-old water main, the project will enhance docking opportunities for recreational boaters. It will also upgrade Two Rivers' status as a "harbor of refuge" for boaters on Lake Michigan.

It will also upgrade shoreline fishing access along Harbor Park, a favorite spot for anglers at the Wisconsin Carp Fishing Championship each Spring, and during Fall salmon runs.

The City of Two Rivers has invested aggressively in its waterfront infrastructure in recent years. This seawall/water main project, together with the 2013 harbor dredging project and just-dedicated 17th Street lift bridge, represent a total investment of \$18 million in the immediate downtown harbor area. That has included \$4.5 million in local funds and \$13.5 in State and Federal funding.

All of this work is consistent with the City's Harbor Master Plan, adopted by City Council in January of 2013, as an appendix to Two Rivers' 2010 Comprehensive Plan. Both of those plans can be viewed online at www.two-rivers.org.

The Harbor Master Plan was developed with planning grants from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the State's CDBG Program, both administered by the Department of Administration.

The City has been assisted in its seawall project funding applications and in project design by Foth Infrastructure and Environment of Green Bay and Madison. That firm paired with Smith Group/JJR of Madison in producing the City's Harbor Master Plan.

The City Council and City Manager see waterfront redevelopment as important to Two Rivers' economic future, as the community continues to recover from the 2011-12 closure of its largest employer, the Hamilton lab work stations subsidiary of Thermo Fisher Scientific.

Thermo Fisher is pursuing plans to clear the 12.5 acre downtown plant site. City officials are eager to make plans for successful redevelopment of that land, which extends for three blocks along the harbor.

Commenting on the Block Grant award, City Manager Greg Buckley expressed appreciation for the State's funding support:

"Two Rivers is in a transition period, and in the process is turning back to the great water resources that were this community's original reason for being. With good planning, and smart use of available local, state and federal resources for infrastructure upgrades, we are laying the foundation for future private investment and revitalization of a waterfront area that will be the centerpiece of Two Rivers for decades to come."

"We also appreciate the work of State Senator Frank Lasee and State Representative Andre Jacque and their staffs in supporting the City's efforts to secure this important infrastructure funding."