

### Narrative Response/Attachment 3

#### **1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OVERVIEW**

The project consists of 3,000 linear feet of riverfront trail intended to create connections to the existing downtown and regional trail system as well as the downtown mix of retail, employers and recreation. North 9th Street (one block east) is planned as a pedestrian and bicycle conduit for north-south traffic. This will be in step with an anticipated transition from the current 1-way paired streets of North 10th and North 8th Streets to 2-way streets and the rerouting of state highways and truck routes (in coordination with WisDOT). The trail system is part of a larger redevelopment of the peninsula which will include streets, utilities, lighting and streetscape investments of over \$10M. It is estimated that the installation of the public improvements will lead to a mix of private investments ranging from residential condos and apartments to commercial and mixed use buildings with a value of \$150M. While enhancing the redevelopment of the peninsula, the proposed trail network also nearly doubles public pedestrian access to the Manitowoc River. Furthermore, incorporated within the trail network are three key nodes intended to serve as overlooks, trailheads and river access points to enhance connection to the river and the natural environment. The overall site redevelopment is over 20 acres and offers the unique distinction of being located immediately adjacent to the existing downtown core furthering the potential economic impact of the project. City support for the project includes acquisition of the property in 2019, infrastructure design that is currently underway, brownfield assessment and cleanup, establishment of a new TIF District and site preparation. In addition to the installation of the typical path section, a grant award will allow the City to include key connections to the existing riverwalk and future extensions along the river. Once connected to the existing riverwalk, this section will become a key part of the larger regional Mariners Trail network offering a safe and beautiful recreational and fitness amenity. The site of the trail network and redevelopment is located on what was once one of the key economic drivers within the community that has fallen into blight and remained largely vacant since the 1980's.

## **2. PROJECT PLANNING & PREPARATION & LOCAL SUPPORT**

The redevelopment of the former industrial peninsula has been part of the vision for the City for well over 20 years. More recently, the site was shown for redevelopment from Industrial (Map 4) to Planned Mixed Use (Map 5) in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the Plan showed the extension of the bike/pedestrian facility around the peninsula (Map 6, 7A and 7B). Also in 2009, the City adopted the Port of Manitowoc, Downtown & River Corridor Master Plan. Within that plan, the bike/pedestrian facility extension was shown (page 10) and the peninsula was shown as a redevelopment site (page 13). The specific recommendation read: *Redevelop the CN peninsula site with a mix of uses. Dependent upon market demands, uses could include a downtown corporate office, grocery store, support retail and river view residential.* A third plan related to the path extension was adopted in 2009, Manitowoc Riverwalk Master Plan and Design Guidelines. The importance of the peninsula portion of the riverwalk was covered extensively in the document (pages 37-40). The Comprehensive Outdoor Park and Recreation Plan, adopted in 2011 and currently being updated, refers back to the Comprehensive and Corridor Master Plans to support the project as well (page 1). Most recently, in 2019 the City adopted a Downtown Master Plan. Within the Plan, the peninsula redevelopment was identified as one of four catalyst sites for redevelopment (pages 55-56) and the expansion of the riverwalk is discussed in detail as well (pages 41-42). The City Council approved moving forward with design and construction documents for the necessary infrastructure to redevelop the peninsula, including the riverwalk, in 2019. Documents are expected to be completed in summer of 2020 allowing bidding/construction as soon as fall of 2020.

## **3. HISTORY OF SPONSOR SUCCESS, DELIVERABILITY AND COMMITMENT TO MULTIMODAL**

The redevelopment of the peninsula is the top redevelopment priority of the Mayor and City Council, as shown through the acquisition of the property in spring of 2019, decision to move forward with

infrastructure design in fall of 2019, and the expectation that the project be ready for bidding and construction in late 2020 or early 2021. To facilitate redevelopment, the City is proposing to install infrastructure upfront, similar to an industrial park, versus waiting for development to occur. As a result, the timeframe for completion of the proposed project is more aggressive than other redevelopment projects. This allows the City to commit to having the project completed within the grant guidelines. To help support the cost of the project, the City is also working to establish a new TIF District. The City has consistently been successful in utilizing grant funding from a variety of sources. Some of the more recent examples include EPA Site Assessment grants (site specific and community wide), participation in the Harbor Assistance Program, Community Development Block Grants, WDNR WAM Program, and the WEDC Community Development Investment program. In the past, the City was unable to successfully complete the use of awarded SRTS funds. However, that was driven by the supporting school project not coming to fruition. This project does not rely on outside developers allowing greater control by the City to ensure completion in a timely and efficient manner. Manitowoc has a history of valuing multimodal design and made the commitment to complete streets with a Council Resolution in March of 2012. The referenced plans all include complete streets language and recent redevelopments in the City have included those concepts.

#### **4. PROJECT UTILITY & CONNECTIVITY**

In addition to the recreational aspects provided by the planned bike/pedestrian facility extension, the facility allows for an increased connection between the existing downtown core and the proposed peninsula redevelopment. The redevelopment is proposed to contain a mixture of residential, commercial, and service uses. The path network will allow the residents within the development to safely and effectively access the new development as well as the existing downtown where it will connect to the existing riverwalk and Mariners Trail. Furthermore the paths will serve as a connection to a new

watercraft launch, bus stop and more than double the linear footage of public pedestrian access to the river.

**5. PROJECT BENEFIT– ENVIRONMENTAL, LIVABILITY, ECONOMIC JUSTICE, PUBLIC HEALTH, HISTORICAL PRESERVATION, & SAFETY**

Two key benefits will be realized through the construction of this project. This project offers a unique opportunity to increase public access and connection to the natural environment. Due to the City's long history of seeing the Manitowoc River as a "working" river, there has not been a concerted effort to embrace it as a natural resource. This project takes a former industrial site and opens it up to public access through the establishment of the new path extension and riverbank enhancements. As previously stated, the project more than doubles the current linear footage of public pedestrian access to the river as well as adding a new watercraft launch facility. Furthermore, this path extension serves as a key connection between the existing urban riverwalk and future extensions along the more naturalized riverside bluff portion of the river. While access to the natural environment is a large part of this project, access is not necessary if there are not the people living, working and visiting the downtown area to take advantage of the amenity. The path extension is part of the larger redevelopment of the peninsula that will bring additional residential options, new commercial, new services, and new public infrastructure into the City and the downtown. As many cities struggle to attract and retain talent, projects that offer a variety of residential options and access to amenities are key. The scale of this redevelopment, at over 20 acres, offers an unprecedented opportunity to change the environment of downtown Manitowoc and the entire community.

**6. PROJECT CAPITALIZES ON, SUPPLEMENTS OR AUGMENTS AN EXISTING ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

The Peninsula Multi-Modal Path is only one part of a larger infrastructure project planned for the peninsula. 0.91 miles of new road will connect over 3 acres of new commercial development, 1.3 acres of mixed-use multi-story residential, 2.75 acres of multi-story residential, nearly an acre of townhomes, and 1.5 acres of port land use on the western tip of the peninsula. The new road will connect the peninsula to \$7M in recent riverfront development investment within the downtown and working harbor. An expansion of the Public Transit system into the CN Peninsula will also occur with at least 1 new bus stop. The estimated overall value of this infrastructure investment is \$10M.

4,650 linear feet of new sidewalk will connect an estimated 80-100 multi-story residential dwelling units and 7-10 single family townhomes. This represents the potential for over \$100M of new residential construction and 250–400 new residents, both immediately adjacent to our downtown. This will be the largest residential development adjacent to existing downtown services that the downtown has experienced since the 1920's. Estimated commerce impact of \$300,000 per person in the downtown area is reasonably expected. The estimated value of this infrastructure investment is \$1M.

The funding requested to support the 3,000 linear feet of riverfront trail will create connections to the existing trail system, a future trail extension north along the eastern edge of the river, as well as the downtown mix of retail, employers, and recreation. Execution of the trail connectivity plan and the pedestrian and bike conduit, as well as enhanced safety for pedestrian and bike travel by removal of the 1-way pairs will serve as an unprecedented shift in offering accessible and safe bicycle and pedestrian route alternatives that have never existed here. The estimated value of this infrastructure investment is \$904,000.

Manitowoc currently has approximately 4,500 linear feet of riverfront pedestrian access. Construction of a new watercraft public launch on the south side of the peninsula will provide an opportunity for both residential and commercial craft docking. Improvements along the river will nearly double the current

direct pedestrian riverfront access. Furthermore, 1,200 linear feet of sea wall will be erected to enable the watercraft access and soft water edge improvements (stairways, railings, boardwalk, and dock) to secure trail access to the river. The estimated value of this infrastructure investment is \$4M.