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**CITY OF RACINE SUBMITS WATER DIVERSION APPLICATION TO
SERVE VILLAGE OF MOUNT PLEASANT**

Diversion will serve job-generating development along I-94 corridor without the need to increase permitted City withdrawal from Lake Michigan

Racine, Wis. – The City of Racine today submitted a straddling community water diversion application for Great Lakes water to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on behalf of the Village of Mount Pleasant (the Village), a long-time customer of the City of Racine’s Water Utility. The application is to extend water service to the portion of Mount Pleasant that is located in the Mississippi River basin, including the future site of the manufacturing facility being constructed by Foxconn Technology Group (Foxconn). The DNR has review authority and will offer opportunities for public comment.

“While Foxconn will be a user of the water, this application will benefit the entire region,” said Jenny Trick, Executive Director of Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) and spokesperson for the local Foxconn project team. “If approved, the diversion will support broader I-94 corridor development, creating even more Racine County jobs, patrons and residents, while protecting our area’s greatest natural resource.”

For years, the Village has sought to develop its southwest corner, including obtaining Great Lakes water as a clean, abundant water supply. If approved, the diversion of Great Lakes water within this area will provide a safe drinking water supply to an approximately 2.3 square mile area of Mount Pleasant, including for the anticipated thousands of Wisconsin workers who would be employed by companies located within the area.

“Expanding water access has been of longstanding interest to the Village of Mount Pleasant,” said Claude Lois, Project Director for the Village of Mount Pleasant. “If this application is approved, it will help us better serve current and future residents, workers and visitors to our Village.”

ABOUT THE APPLICATION

In August 2017, the City of Racine approved plans to request a diversion for the Village of Mount Pleasant.

The application is to divert an average of up to 7.0 million gallons per day (MGD). In 2016, Racine pumped just under an average of 17 million gallons per day (MGD) – less than a third of its authorized capacity. Additionally, since 1997, Racine has seen a 47 percent decline in its industrial water use. As a result, Racine can meet the projected diversion while remaining well within its existing approved capacity.

ADD ONE / RACINE WATER DIVERSION

“This is a straddling community diversion request, not a request for approval to withdraw more water from Lake Michigan,” said Keith Haas, General Manager of the City of Racine Water Utility. “If approved, the diversion will have little if any impact on Lake Michigan water volume or quality. The water utility already has the approved withdrawal capacity and the existing treatment infrastructure to support it.”

The Great Lakes Compact requires that all water that is provided must return back to Lake Michigan, less an allowance for consumptive use (e.g. water evaporated through industrial processes or water incorporated into manufactured products). This application complies with this requirement.

According to Haas, the application will benefit local ratepayers by increasing utilization of existing infrastructure. It should be noted that the utility has an excellent track record of managing water and wastewater. Return flow to Lake Michigan will be treated by the Racine Wastewater Utility, which has the capacity to handle the anticipated flow.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The application is submitted for approval to extend water service to the area of the Village of Mount Pleasant that lies outside the Great Lakes basin. Racine Water Utility, as the utility serving the Village of Mount Pleasant, is the eligible applicant for a diversion of Great Lakes water under Wisconsin law.

The request is being made under the requirements of the Great Lakes Compact, which was approved by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by the President in 2008. Unlike the recent diversion application for the City of Waukesha, a community in a straddling *county*, Racine’s application is for a straddling *community*, where the requested diversion volume can be provided from Racine’s existing approved capacity.

The Racine application only requires approval of the DNR, and does not require review by other Great Lakes states and provinces. Racine’s diversion application meets all of the criteria for a straddling community diversion application identified in the compact and Wisconsin implementing legislation.

CONSERVATION PLAN

The application also includes a comprehensive plan to improve water efficiency, which is estimated to be able to save over 100,000 gallons on an average day in 2019, increasing to over 600,000 gallons per average day in 2050. The plan includes efforts to:

- Educate customers on the benefits of conservation;
- Partner with municipalities to re-evaluate landscaping requirements;
- Appoint a Water Conservation Coordinator to lead and monitor water conservation efforts and identify new opportunities for cost-effective water conservation measures; and
- Continue to reduce leaks from water infrastructure.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The DNR will schedule a public hearing to kick start the public comment period for the application. More information on the DNR’s review and outreach process will be available at:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WaterUse/Racine/>.

ABOUT THE RACINE WATER UTILITY

The City of Racine (Racine) is a historically industrial city located on the western shore of Lake Michigan in southeastern Wisconsin. Racine owns the Racine Water Utility (RWU). RWU is a public water utility that uses Lake Michigan for its water supply. Currently, Racine provides Lake Michigan water to residents in the City of Racine, the Village of Elmwood Park, the Village of North Bay, the Village of Sturtevant, the Village of Caledonia, the Village of Wind Point, the Village of Somers, and portions of the Village of Mount Pleasant (Mount Pleasant). Racine serves 34,037 customer accounts, comprising an estimated population of 98,423 in its existing service area.

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