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# NEWS RELEASE

**Feb. 23, 2010 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Public Information Meetings Thursday for Riverfront Marina Project**

DUBUQUE, Iowa -- The City of Dubuque will sponsor two public information meetings on the Port of Dubuque Riverfront Marina Project on Thursday, Feb. 25. The first meeting will be held from 2-4 p.m. and the second from 6-8 p.m. Both will be in Meeting Room 1 at the Grand River Center, 500 Bell Street.

These meetings are open to the general public and will provide information and describe the project to citizens and provide an opportunity for public input, feedback and comments.

### **BACKGROUND**

The City of Dubuque, in partnership with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have begun the project development phase for a transient boating marina facility in the Ice Harbor at the Port of Dubuque. It is intended that the proposed transient marina facility will accommodate up to 68 slips for boats 26 feet in length or greater. This facility will provide direct boating access to the numerous attractions and amenities the Port and the City of Dubuque have to offer, opening a new waterfront gateway and providing recreational boaters with a first class, state of the art facility to explore and enjoy the City.

The City has retained the consulting firm, JJR, of Madison, Wisconsin, to provide the professional design services for the Port of Dubuque - Riverfront Marina Project. The hallmark of JJR's professional practice is the design and construction of marinas and harbors. JJR has an extensive portfolio of waterfront planning and award-winning marina design projects throughout the U.S. and internationally, with particular experience and expertise on Midwest river corridors and the Great Lakes region.

The initial concept site for the marina facility was to be located on the main channel of the Mississippi River, immediately downstream of the railroad train bridge. However, it became apparent during this site analysis process due to the river dynamic conditions in which the proposed marina would be exposed to (river velocities, ice flow, variable river stage elevations, and barge wake), a high cost diversion structure and floating wave attenuation system would be required to protect the proposed marina facility and infrastructure.

In early 2009, the City was notified that the former Diamond Jo Casino Boat had been sold and would be vacating the space occupied in the Ice Harbor. This presented the City with an opportunity to evaluate options for locating the transient boating marina facility in the Ice Harbor. With the casino boat no longer located within the Ice Harbor, a large area in the protected harbor would become available for a potential marina facility.

Due to the original main channel river site challenges, the significantly over budget cost projections, and the inability to incorporate and provide the required amenities as stated in the City's BIG (Boating Infrastructure Grant) Tier II grant proposal, the City Council concurred with a staff recommendation that the original main channel river location be considered no longer a viable option and directed City staff to proceed forward with the proposed Ice Harbor as the preferred alternate location for the Port of Dubuque - Riverfront Marina Project.

On November 5, 2009, the City received formal concurrence from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to proceed forward with the Ice Harbor site as the most economically viable, preferred alternate location and approved a minimum net total of 68 transient slips with incorporated amenities as stated in the City's grant proposal for the Port of Dubuque - Riverfront Marina Project.

The major advantage of the preferred alternate location is that the Ice Harbor is located within a controlled floodwall protected harbor and thus would be more economically feasible due to the fact that a cost prohibitive protective diversion structure would not have to be constructed. Upon initial review, it was determined that 68 slips could be located in the Ice Harbor which would comply with grant requirements. In addition, utilities are readily available in the harbor area which would significantly reduce infrastructure improvement costs and would allow for amenities and accommodations such as: dockside bath, shower and laundry facility; full slip utilities including water and electrical connections; fuel dock and sanitary pump-out facilities.

As a component of the preliminary planning phase for the Ice Harbor location, the City is required to complete an environmental review for the proposed project. This will require an

evaluation for potential impacts to threatened and endangered species, wetlands and cultural resources.

Based on any environmental impacts that are identified, the City may be required to mitigate those impacts or alter the scope of the project to minimize environmental impacts.

Once the City receives environmental approval from all the various federal and state regulatory agencies, the City can then begin the preliminary and final design phase and developing construction documents.

Citizens are encouraged to attend a public informational meeting on February 25, 2010. Public input and involvement is an important element to the successful development of the Riverfront Marina Project.

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