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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP AND ROCHESTER, MN FOOD CO-OP PROPOSE MERGER Food Co-op Boards in La Crosse, WI and Rochester, MN to Propose Connecting Their Memberships While Relocating and Expanding Rochester Facility

The Boards of Directors of the People's Food Co-op and the Rochester Good Food Co-op are announcing today their intention to recommend merger of their co-ops to their memberships. The merger of these two member-owned grocery stores will allow the Rochester facility to expand its operations and enter a lease agreement to serve as an anchor tenant in a new downtown Rochester mixed-use development. Under the proposal, the co-ops would pool their members, and PFC would then assume management responsibilities for the Rochester facility. Members of both co-ops will have opportunities to discuss details of the potential merger this summer with their respective Boards of Directors and General Managers.

"By working together we have the opportunity to make a greater impact on the local food system in the Driftless Region of southwestern Wisconsin and southeastern Minnesota. This endeavor allows us to put the values of cooperation to work in a new and exciting way," said John Knight, Board President of the People's Food Co-op.

The development rights to the site, which formerly housed Minnesota Energy located at the corner of 1st Avenue SW and 6th Street SW in downtown Rochester, were recently awarded by the City of Rochester to the Gerrard Corporation of La Crosse. The co-op would serve as the anchor tenant of the mixed-use development which will also feature 40 housing units on the development's upper floors.

People's Food Cooperative was incorporated in 1978 and currently has 4300 member households. The co-op is a member-owned downtown grocery store that features local and organic products, many come directly from the producer. People's Food Co-op is located at 315 Fifth Avenue S., in La Crosse, WI.

Rochester's Good Food Store Co-op was founded in 1975 and currently has over 1400 member households. The co-op is a member-owned grocery store featuring local and organic products that is located one block off of Civic Center Drive at 1001 6th Street NW in Rochester, MN.

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If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Michelle Schry, People's Food Co-op General Manager, contact Lauri Hoff at 608.784.5798 x215. To schedule an interview with Dan Litwiller, Rochester Good Food Store Co-op Board President, contact Dave Kraemer at 507.289.9061.