

# City of Brillion receives Nelson family grant

By David Nordby  
The Brillion News

BRILLION – The City of Brillion was one of 25 nonprofits throughout Northeast Wisconsin who received part of a \$2.79 million grant package from the David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region.

The \$150,000 that the city will receive is for the redevelopment of the former Brillion Iron Works, specifically the new park space.

The grant will help open the Spring and Mills creeks that flow under the original foundry building. The creeks will be opened and flow through the park.

The park project received multiple parts of approval from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The city has received grants totaling \$750,000 from the DNR, but the partnership between the City of Brillion and Brillion Works LLC must match that number. The Nelson Family Fund grant will help do that.

The creek restoration will be a focal point of the new park. A \$500,000 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield grant to help support the

cleanup of those creeks was previously granted. Work is scheduled to begin later this year.

The site had previously received grants from the Wisconsin Economic Development Idle Site that helped the demolition of the site, allowing the re-development phase.

The new park on the Brillion Work site is separate from any changes to the existing Horn Park. The timeline for the new park is the next 24-30 months.

David and Rita Nelson lived in De Pere until they died in 2017. She was a teacher and he was the chief financial officer for the Post-Crescent in Appleton and the Green Bay Press-Gazette until the family newspapers were sold and he invested in radio stations. The pair left more than \$100 million from their estate to their family fund at the Community Foundation. The gift was by far the largest ever received by the Community Foundation and one of the largest charitable gifts in the state's history.

The David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund within the Community Foundation is a permanent, donor-advised endowment that generates millions of dollars in grants annually throughout the Fox Cities and Green Bay areas.



The Spring and Mills creeks will flow through the redeveloped BIW site. The grant the city recently received will help make that happen.. (Ayres Associates photo)