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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Dubuque Awarded \$9.4 Million for Watershed Project

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The State Revolving Fund (SRF), a joint program of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Finance Authority, has awarded the City of Dubuque \$9.4 million to convert 40 alleys and two parking lots to pervious pavement to improve water quality and augment the city’s stormwater management system and the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project.

“We are very appreciative of this funding from IDNR and IFA,” said Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol. “It is another important step in our Sustainable Dubuque vision and we’ll show the way for Iowa while at the same time improving water quality, preventing future flooding and creating jobs right here in Dubuque.”

The funds were awarded to the City of Dubuque’s Bee Branch Watershed Green Infrastructure Project at a meeting of the Iowa Environmental Protection Commission, which oversees the DNR, last week in Des Moines. Green Infrastructure is an approach to stormwater management that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. Green Infrastructure management utilizes approaches and technologies to infiltrate, evapotranspire, capture and reuse stormwater to maintain or restore natural hydrology.

The funds are part of SRF’s new Water Resource Restoration effort, in which watershed protection projects are supported through interest rate reductions on Clean Water SRF wastewater loans. In Dubuque’s case, interest payments on the City’s SRF wastewater loan to complete the \$64 million Water and Resource Recovery Center project are, in effect, returned to Dubuque to fund a local watershed project. The arrangement is the first under the Water Resource Restoration program and is a "pilot" that DNR and IFA will use to determine how best to structure the program and make it available to communities across the state in the future.

“We are pleased to be able to partner with the SRF to be the first project under this new program,” said Assistant City Manager Teri Goodmann. “This is a very innovative and important program for protecting and restoring Iowa’s water resources. It took quite a bit of work to develop this first project, but SRF staff were very helpful and we feel confident we can be a good ‘pilot’ for the state.”

The funds will allow the City of Dubuque to install permeable interlocking concrete pavement in 40 alleys (2.6 linear miles) and two parking lots (1.13 acres) located in the Bee Branch Watershed, which covers approximately 6.5 square miles from approximately 9th Street north to 32nd Street and from the Mississippi River west to Asbury Road. When constructed, the 42 locations will total approximately 268,000 square feet (6.2 acres) of pervious pavement. The project's estimated total cost is \$9.42 million and will result in approximately 750,000 cubic feet of runoff water and 2,400 pounds of sediment per year going into the ground rather than the Mississippi River. Models predict this project could reduce the solids sent to the river by 67 percent and runoff volume by 50 percent.

The Bee Branch Watershed Green Infrastructure Project is scheduled to be completed over the next three years and will augment Dubuque's stormwater management system, which includes the Carter Road Detention Basin, 32nd Street Detention Basin, and the restoration of the Bee Branch Creek. With this new project, Dubuque will be taking stormwater management a step further by managing it at the site, when rainfall hits the ground. The greatest benefit of pervious pavement is that it allows water to go back into the ground, efficiently removing pollutants from runoff because they are allowed to go back into the ground rather than being conveyed to detention basins which require regular maintenance to remove the collected pollutants.

To date, Dubuque has converted four standard alleys to pervious alleys, just one percent of the alleys in the Bee Branch Watershed. Upon completion, the Green Infrastructure Project will increase that to almost 20 percent.

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