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NEWS RELEASE

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Rain Gardens Provide Sustainable Landscaping

DUBUQUE, Iowa – Spring has finally arrived, a time when many people start planning landscape and garden projects. If you're looking for a landscape element that combines beauty with efficiency, consider a rain garden.

A rain garden is a specially designed, infiltration-based garden with a man-made depression that collects and infiltrates stormwater runoff. When stormwater from a rain event runs across streets and other impervious surfaces such as roofs or driveways, it picks up particles of gas, oil, and other pollutants and carries them directly into streams and rivers through the City's storm sewer system.

Rain gardens are usually planted with native flowers, plants, or grasses. The deep root structures of the plants manage the stormwater on site by allowing the water and runoff to infiltrate back into the ground, rather than run off carrying pollutants like lawn fertilizers and pet droppings. Rain garden designs vary depending on the site condition and the owner's preferences.

The City of Dubuque offers a material assistance program to help property owners, schools, churches, and other nonprofit organizations defray the costs of building a rain garden. Material assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis, is dependent on available funds, and is not to exceed half of the total project cost. Assistance is for materials only and does not cover labor costs and other expenses such as hauling materials to the site. Material assistance is also available for stream bank stabilization for property owners who have a deteriorating stream or drainage way passing through their property. To receive an application, please contact Dean Mattoon with the City of Dubuque Engineering Department at 563-589-4202 or by email at dmattoon@cityofdubuque.org.

For more information on rain gardens, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/raingardens.