

NEWS RELEASE

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Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project Awarded \$98.5 Million

Funding award accelerates project timeline and completion, reduces cost to Dubuque citizens

DES MOINES, Iowa – – The Iowa Flood Mitigation Board has awarded the City of Dubuque’s Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project approximately \$98.5 million. The unanimous decision was announced at the board’s meeting today in Des Moines.

Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol attended the meeting in Des Moines today. “This is tremendous news for the entire community and will expedite efforts to address issues that many have dealt with for decades,” said Buol. “We are grateful to the flood mitigation board members for their support of our plan and to the Iowa legislature and Governor Branstad for their vision to create this program to enable communities to proactively address flooding.” The funding represents the largest amount ever awarded to the City of Dubuque and enables the implementation of a comprehensive flood mitigation plan much sooner than anticipated.

Authorized under the Flood Mitigation Bill in 2012, the Flood Mitigation Program is administered by the Iowa Department of Homeland Security on a competitive basis by a citizen board that began accepting applications in November 2013. It is funded by a portion of state sales tax revenues. The program provides funding to cities and counties to implement long-term flood mitigation projects. Specifically, the funds are an annual sales tax increment, or a percentage of the increase in state sales tax revenue generated within the city or county.

Due to the topography of Dubuque’s Bee Branch Watershed, the area is hardest hit with flash flooding during significant rain events. Based on a 2009 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) study, 1,373 homes and businesses in the watershed are prone to flooding, including 70 businesses that, combined, employ over 1,400. Too frequently, properties within the watershed experience flooded basements and inundated water heaters, furnaces, appliances, and even electrical junction boxes. The stormwater rushes down streets from curb to curb – stalling vehicles,

stranding motorists, displacing manhole covers, and damaging pavement, water mains, and storm water and sanitary sewers.

Dubuque's Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is a \$179 million, 20-year, 12-phase project to address severe and frequent flash flooding in the Bee Branch Watershed, a 6.5 square mile area of Dubuque where over 50 percent of the city's residents either live or work. The combined phases of the project will reduce the volume of stormwater, slow the rate of stormwater flow through the watershed, increase the safe passage of stormwater through the flood-prone area, and provide floodwater protection to the City's nearby water treatment plant. The Iowa Flood Mitigation funds allow the City to reduce the project timeline from 50 to 20 years, with the majority of the project to be completed over the next six years.

Several phases of the project are already completed, including two detention basins and a complete streets project in the Millwork District. Future phases include restoration of the Bee Branch Creek, multiple storm sewer capacity improvements, and significant impervious surface reduction through the reconstruction of approximately 240 alleys utilizing pervious paving technology.

Dubuque's application to the Iowa Flood Mitigation Fund was compiled by City Manager Mike Van Milligen, Assistant City Manager Teri Goodmann, City Attorney Barry Lindahl, City Engineer Gus Psihoyos, Civil Engineer Deron Muehring, Budget Director Jennifer Larson, Engineering Financial Clerk Alexis Steger, and Planning Services Manager Laura Carstens, with assistance from Mark Schneider and Nicole Turpin of the East Central Intergovernmental Association.

For additional details on the Bee Branch Stormwater Flood Mitigation Project, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranch.

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