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NEWS RELEASE

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EPA Awards Dubuque \$200,000 for Brownfield Cleanup

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded the City of Dubuque a \$200,000 grant through the agency's Brownfields Program.

Dubuque was one of six cities or groups in Iowa and Missouri to be selected for the program to fund environmental assessments or cleanups of vacant or abandoned properties so they can be returned to new and productive uses. The City will use the funds to assist in the cleanup of the former Blum Company property, a former scrap yard and recycling facility located at 501 E. 15th St. in Dubuque.

The .23-acre property was acquired by the City in December 2015 as part of the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project. The City used EPA Brownfield funds from a previous grant to conduct an initial assessment of the property which indicated possible soil contamination. A second assessment found numerous hazardous materials (mercury, lead, arsenic, asbestos, tetrachloroethene, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) in the soil and groundwater at levels above limits and standards. Some of the materials are volatile and toxic. Based on the findings, the property is not suitable for future residential, commercial, or industrial purposes without remediation.

The City will enroll the property into the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) Land Recycling Program. A qualified environmental professional will oversee the cleanup in conjunction with IDNR. Following deconstruction of the structures on the property and excavation and offsite disposal of the contaminated material, the City plans to construct a bike trail, bike pavilion, playground equipment, and public bathroom to serve the adjoining Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project. The trail will provide important connectivity to the national Mississippi River Trail. In addition to the \$200,000 Brownfield grant, the City estimates the cleanup efforts will cost an additional \$62,500.

The EPA reports there are an estimated 450,000 abandoned and contaminated waste sites in America. Since the inception of the EPA's Brownfields Program in 1995,

cumulative brownfields program investments have leveraged more than \$20 billion from a variety of public and private sources for cleanup and redevelopment activities. This equates to an average of \$17.79 leveraged per EPA brownfields dollar expended. These investments have resulted in approximately 108,924 jobs nationwide. EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields sites. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/brownfields.

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