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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **City Seeking Community Input on Future Recreational Space Along Bee Branch Creek**

DUBUQUE, Iowa – As part of the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project, the City of Dubuque plans to redevelop the former Blum Co. properties located at 411 and 501 E. 15<sup>th</sup> St. into a flood mitigation maintenance facility that includes space for public use and an outdoor recreational space abutting the reconstructed Bee Branch Creek.

The site operated as a scrap yard and recycling facility for over 50 years and is currently contaminated with hazardous substances which make it unsuitable for redevelopment without environmental remediation. The City secured \$200,000 in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants in 2016 and 2017 through the EPA's Brownfields program to clean up the site.

Cleanup activities will begin with removal of asbestos and other contaminated building materials from the current structures before deconstruction or redevelopment. Soil samples will be tested and analyzed in order to create a full remediation plan which may include the removal of contaminated soil or the encapsulation of contaminated soils in an on-site berm. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and a professional environmental consulting firm will oversee the cleanup.

As part of the grant, the City is currently seeking feedback from residents on what types of activities and equipment in the future recreational area they think will best serve the community. Possible concepts could include a community center, climbing equipment, a natural playscape, a bike and scooter playground, an open gathering space, multi-sport court, and outdoor exercise equipment.

The public is invited to vote for their three favorite concepts and/or submit their ideas for the space at [www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranchrecspace](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranchrecspace). Residents can also view the concepts and vote on the first floor of City Hall located at 50 W. 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The City will gather this initial feedback through December 15, 2017. A second phase of community engagement will be conducted in 2018 which will expand on the results of the data gathered this year.

The estimated completion of the Brownfield cleanup process is 2020. The flood mitigation maintenance facility and recreational space is scheduled to be completed in 2023. To learn more about the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project and the Brownfield cleanup process, visit [www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranchbrownfieldcleanup](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranchbrownfieldcleanup).

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