

# Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant Application

**Please enter your email address to review the grant requirements and questions.**

mware@cityofdubuque.org

## **1. Please provide your contact information**

**First Name**

Marie

**Last Name**

Ware

**Title**

Leisure Services Manager

**Organization Name**

City of Dubuque Leisure Services Department

**Street Address**

2200 Bunker Hill Road

**City**

Dubuque

**State**

Ia

**Zip**

52001-3010

**Email**

mware@cityofdubuque.org

**Phone Number**

563-589-4264

**Organization Website**

www.cityofdubuque.org

## **2. What is the name of the park proposed for this project?**

Bee Branch Creek Parkway

## **3. What is the street address for the project location?**

**Street Address**

1020 E 16th Street

**City**

Dubuque

**State**

Iowa

**Zip**

52001

**4. Describe the current site, including its physical condition, usage and walkability, and the surrounding area.**

Historically the Bee Branch Creek flowed through the city's North End to the Mississippi River but in the early 1900's the creek was buried (in a storm sewer). As Dubuque grew and storm water increased – the storm sewer was overwhelmed. Flooding has occurred along the buried Bee Branch six times in the past twelve years impacting thousands of properties. What was Dubuque to do?

Dubuque could have simply constructed a storm water ditch through its historic neighborhoods. However, in 2002 the City began to collect citizen input and build community consensus around a vision for the future of the Bee Branch Creek. Dubuque citizens embraced the challenge and decided to create more than just a storm water ditch. They chose instead to daylight the Bee Branch Creek; creating an attraction, enhancing neighborhoods, building on our tourism industry and improving our quality of life.

The Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is a multi-phased approach to addressing the severe and frequent flash flooding experienced in the Bee Branch Watershed located within the City of Dubuque. This project is a multi-faceted, holistic approach that includes the following phases:

**Phase Project Description Status**

- 1 Carter Road Detention Basin Completed in 2003
- 2 West 32nd Street Detention Basin Completed in 2009
- 3 Lower Bee Branch Creek Restoration Completed in 2011
- 4 Historic Millwork District Complete Streets Completed in 2012
- 5 Flood Mitigation Gate Replacement Est. Completion - 2017
- 6 Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration Est. Completion - 2017
- 7 22nd Street Storm Sewer Capacity Improvements Est. Completion - 2017
- 8 North End Storm Sewer Capacity Improvements Est. Completion - 2018
- 9 Bee Branch Creek Railroad Culverts Est. Completion - 2019
- 10 Kaufman Ave Storm Sewer Capacity Improvements Est. Completion - 2019
- 11 Flood Mitigation Maintenance Facility Est. Completion - 2020
- 12 Bee Branch Healthy Homes Resiliency Program Est. Completion - 2021
- 13 W Locust St. Storm Sewer Capacity Improvements Est. Completion - 2021
- 14 17th Street Storm Sewer Improvements Est. Completion – 2022
- 15 Municipal Water Plant Flood Protection Est. Completion – 2023
- 16 Impervious Surface Reduction (240 Green Alleys) Est. Completion – 2038

The construction project has been divided between the Lower Bee Branch section and the Upper Bee Branch section. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project is a part of the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project, which covers approximately 6.5 square miles within Dubuque's most developed areas where over 50% of Dubuque residents either live or work. It has been continually hit hard with flash flooding. Homes and businesses in the Bee Branch Watershed have been impacted by flooding six times since 2001 resulting in six presidential declarations. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the impacted properties are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In fact, 57% of the buildings are over 100 years old.

The City has already taken steps to reduce the volume of floodwaters by beginning the process of converting pervious alleys and street systems into pervious pavement systems to convey floodwaters into the ground. Over the course of the project, approximately 240 alleys in the watershed will be converted into green alleys. Approximately 75 have been installed between 2014 and 2016. 31% of the alleys are over soils with permeability rates between 2.0 and 6.0 inches per hour. With the conversion of impervious surfaces to pervious surfaces, and the corresponding reduction in directly connected impervious areas, runoff reductions of up to 80% will be realized within the watershed.

Completed in 2012, the Lower Bee Branch Creek project included enlarging the 16th Street Detention basin to add capacity to the basin, added a hard surfaced trail system, established 4 acres native forbs and grass plantings around the detention basin, planted trees, perennial flowers and shrubs, established 5.5 acres of park lawn and installed lighting along the trail. The basin and creek are about 2500 foot long flood plain area from Kerper Boulevard west and north to the railroad tracks just south of Garfield Avenue, replacing the underground Bee Branch Storm Sewer. In addition to day-lighting and restoring the Bee Branch Creek, this phase included the restoration of the floodplain,

dredging of the 16th Street Detention Basin, relocation of utilities, and reworking the street system with two new bridges through the area. In the future this area will accommodate the new flood mitigation facility and the redevelopment of adjacent private property which will continue for some time.

Currently construction of an overlook is happening right now at the 16th Street detention basin in lower Bee Branch. This overlook can and will serve as an outdoor classroom. This "outdoor classroom" will provide hardscape open space of cut limestone that provides permanent seating where people will be able to gather at the water's edge, relax along the bike/hike trail, or attend a class or educational session overlooking the restored creek and basin. The entire lower Bee Branch will be a natural setting for an outdoor classroom. The outdoor classrooms link to existing neighborhood streets and off-street parking as well as the established trail through the project.

Prior to the Lower Bee Branch, project, the detention basin was surrounded by overgrown trees and weeds and had limited accessibility to residents. Additional properties were purchased to make way for daylighting the creek and enlarging the detention basin. The lower Bee Branch now encompasses 55 acres of which 30 acres is the water basin itself. Prior to the restoration the area was long established commercial and overgrown areas around the basin. The basin or pond as it is becoming known, is home to many fish and bird species. This winter a flock of bald eagle were seen at one time at the basin. It is in the Mississippi River migration flyway and as such attracts an amazing amount of bird species which continues to grow as the basin and surrounding habitat is maturing. The projects in this grant relate to the lower Bee Branch which is now a 55 acre parkway for people to enjoy and explore.

The Lower Bee Branch has been developed in phases as funds have become available for projects. This grant application is just another phase of development that will positively impact the low income neighborhood, continue to improve on what has already been accomplished through green infrastructure by adding additional green infrastructure that serve as continuous examples of sustainability and innovation for not only Dubuque but that can serve as a model for the country, whether components or the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project as a whole.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project directly impacts the Washington, Point and North End Neighborhoods. These three neighborhoods contain the community's oldest housing and are among those least able to recover from flood loss and devaluation after such events. The majority of the residents in these neighborhoods are low to moderate income and have a diverse racial and ethnic mix compared to the city as a whole. This is referenced in more detail in question 11.

The Washington Street, Point and North End Neighborhoods have a strong neighborhood feel and retain a high level of their historic character. They are characterized by older building stock and a mix of densely developed commercial and residential structures built on small lots served by alleys. The neighborhood street corridors are dominated by residential buildings. Residential lots are small lots with the homes taking up much of the lot. These residential neighborhoods are as much as 70% rental versus 30% owner-occupied, which is the opposite of the city as a whole.

The business corridors along major thoroughfares in these neighborhoods are predominantly commercial and mix-use buildings. Also, older neighborhood commercial nodes often are located on corner lots. A mix of single and multi-family housing may be located on separate lots or as upper story apartments. Typically buildings are between two and three stories in height. Commercial storefronts and small residential yards line the street, giving the area a strong pedestrian scale and character.

These neighborhoods are very walkable. The neighborhoods have had a renewed interest from young professionals and young persons starting out on their own. These young people are embracing the walkability being created in the neighborhood with some not owning cars and walking or using public transit or couples owning only one car.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project has started a rejuvenation of businesses along Central Avenue and along E. 16th Street. These businesses are locally owned eateries, first time businesses, a bike coop for borrowing of bicycles and more. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project is located in proximity to business and personal services. The project is within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the following facilities: public transportation, supermarket, public school, licensed child care center, financial institution, medical and dental offices, gas station/convenience store, laundry/dry cleaner, pharmacies, and places of worship.

Despite all of the good things happening, in the last two years violence and specifically gun related incidents have happened at a high rate as they have been across the country. The service area of this project has been especially hard hit with these incidents. The Great Urban Parks: Green Infrastructure in Underserved Communities lays out a blueprint that we have been following with the Bee Branch project. It underscores the long lasting environmental and

social effects. These social effects can help proactive methods of connecting neighbors, connecting children and adults to a welcoming "softer" environment, alleviate stress and anxiety, and improve health and much, much more.

The above description of Lower Bee Branch is one piece of the larger watershed project. Currently construction work is continuing on the Upper Bee Branch. The Lower and Upper Bee Branch sections are separated by an active railroad line. Construction of storm sewers under the railroad tracks is a phase of construction in the near future. When the Lower and Upper Bee Branch sections are completed and the storm sewers are installed under the rail line, over 2 mile stretch of the Bee Branch Creek will be daylighted with acres upon acres of parkway that functions as green stormwater management as well. The Upper Bee Branch will be home of a ribbon of parkway that is on average 200 feet wide and a mile long, daylighted, fully restored creek, hike and bike trail connecting 46 miles of city, county and national trails, benches, plazas, scenic overlooks, decorative bridges, historic street lights, playground areas, picnic and recreational space, an orchard, and an amphitheater for performances and entertainment. The upper Bee Branch construction project underway also includes green sustainable design elements such as permeable pavement, native plantings, the planting of over 500 trees, rain gardens and bio-swales, and low mow turf areas. The upper Bee Branch project is set to open in spring to early summer of 2017.

**5. Provide a narrative summary about the proposed project, including:**

**Description of the project**

**How the project will improve environmental quality, create public access, advance social equity, and engage the community**

**Rationale for selecting the particular site**

Description of the project:

The grant application will enable the construction of components for improved public access to the creek and basin (pond), showcasing new green infrastructure, interpretation and education and active involvement in the entire project area of lower Bee Branch.

**Floating Treatment Wetland (Floating Island):**

A long awaited component of the basin is the floating island. Floating island perform functions of treatment, habitat for fish as well as environmental benefits providing habitat for a variety of birds and insects. They provide enjoyment for bird watchers from the shore as well. No known floating islands exist in Dubuque county or this part of Iowa. There will be great opportunities for interpretation, interpretive signage and modeling a new best practice for this area.

**Permeable Small Craft Boat Ramp and Access:**

This component will assist citizens in accessing the water. There is rip rap around many areas of the detention basin. There are pockets of grass areas but there is no ramp that accesses the water itself. This ramp will allow accessibility for persons of all abilities. It will allow easy access to the water for persons that happen to own canoes or kayaks. This will assist school groups, boy and girl scouts, church youth groups, families and more to have access directly to the basin and other areas of the creek. It will also provide access to the small maintenance boat currently owned by Leisure Services for maintenance of the pond. Currently there is not a ramp anywhere on the 16th Street Detention basin. The ramp and access will be constructed as a permeable access. The basin is for non-motorized craft.

**Fishing Docks and Piers:**

Especially as a child but even as an adult becoming connected to the water starts with a simple pole and fishing line. Many of us remember the day of a cane pole dropped into a small creek or area and that first tug on the line. As they say, you get hooked.... This opportunity to provide docks and piers to easily access this recreational opportunity is about fishing but also is about getting people to the water. When not fishing just taking off your shoes and dangling your feet in the water makes a connection to the environment. That is how many start to look at the water and think about water quality. They consider where it comes from and how they and others are treating it. So the docks really are as much about fishing as connecting with the water and the environment.

**Interpretive Signage:**

The lower Bee Branch already has the daylighted creek, a storm detention basin, native plantings, many trees, trail, and more that can be interpreted and educated through signage in and around the 55 acre area. Helping our citizens understand and embrace green infrastructure as well as becoming educated environmentalist will create a stronger neighborhood community and overall Sustainable Dubuque.

**Rain Garden:**

As the overlook construction continues there is opportunity to construct a rain garden at this facility. The involvement of the neighborhood will help more to understand the benefits of rain gardens and their aesthetic value on any

property.

#### Getting Out on the Water:

Dubuque historically and today is a "river town". The Mississippi River is Dubuque's eastern boundary and a sense of pride for the community. Persons of low socio economics are not afforded the opportunity that many in our community have to get out on the water. A great first experience for young people and adults is human powered small crafts. Kayaks and associated gear would be purchased and then used in programming free of charge so that the neighborhood can get out on the water and learn the health benefits from the physical activity but also the stress reduction of it. Fishing and other activities can be a part of getting on the water. During certain seasons being on the water will allow a little closer look at the birds and other flora and fauna of the basin. This will also allow the opportunity to teach water safety. It is well researched that person of certain races are much more likely to drown. One has to learn respect for the water.

#### "Bee Keepers" Environmental Stewardship Program:

In 2013, the City of Dubuque engaged the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to facilitate a Land Use and Water Quality Workshop through the EPA's Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities program. As described by the EPA, the Building Blocks program represents a collaborative effort among the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment.

The EPA's technical assistance report for the City of Dubuque yielded the idea of "Bee Keepers" as a community involvement tool in the Bee Branch Watershed to promote environmental stewardship. With this grant application, funding would provide for a hiring coordinator whose role would be to establish the Bee Keeper program and its components and build capacity similar to the role of an AmeriCorps VISTA member. The Leisure Services Department is then committed to maintaining the program after the grant funds are expended, which we expect will be established by the end of 2017.

A part of the Coordinator's role, they will use the community engagement model pilot that is being used in another park area in a low income area of the community where violence and guns have been at issue. The City's Recreation Division Manager researched best practices around the country and internationally for safe parks. Based on his findings, the engagement model for Safe Parks starts with outreach into the neighborhood into established community groups, public entities, schools, non-profits, churches and neighborhood leaders. The intent is to listen and understand the neighborhood, and the persons and groups that live there. From there, we begin to put together a community engagement model with one aspect being involvement of youth and building youth leadership in their neighborhood. An approach that uses this pilot and blends it with an engagement into Bee Branch that moves from planning and construction to using, embracing, advocating and protecting the restored Bee Branch Creek. It would focus on the areas of environment, health, and community building. Each of these are benefits of the Lower Bee Branch that can be developed even more. A small amount of the budget would be for supplies related to engagement and programming.

Through the 2013 workshop, the EPA provided Dubuque with additional technical assistance centered around the Bee Branch Creek Watershed. The focus was on:

- seeking help to educate landowners, businesses, and residents about smarter, greener practices for watershed stewardship;
- identifying land use strategies that complement and protect the day-lighted Bee Branch Creek; and
- examining existing codes, ordinances, and other policies that may hinder additional water quality protection.

The workshop helped clarify planning and water resources issues faced by the City of Dubuque throughout the City, with specific focus on Bee Branch Creek Watershed, and helped raise awareness of those issues. It also identified needs and potential strategies for addressing those needs going forward. During the workshop, the technical assistance team presented best practices from other communities that the City of Dubuque may wish to consider for the Bee Branch watershed. The City of Dubuque emphasized the need for comprehensive education and outreach to promote green infrastructure and tying land use to water resources. Key education and outreach strategies identified during the workshop are as follows:

#### Strategies: Stakeholder Education and Involvement

- Develop a Bee Branch Creek watershed outreach and involvement campaign that focuses on youth education and

the "Bee Keeper" community creek protection concept. (We have now broadened this campaign concept.)

- Tie watershed monitoring data into outreach through the creation of watershed report cards that provide annual trend analysis in an easy-to-understand format distributed through local media, web, and creative formats, such as watershed placemats at local restaurants.
- Research existing fertilizer and lawn care outreach programs to determine approaches for limiting fertilizer use and educating homeowners and those doing yard and landscape maintenance (e.g., city staff and commercial landscaping services).
- Identify opportunities for bringing watershed education into the classroom in a manner that also allows community volunteers as guest teachers.

All of these and more would be work of the Coordinator to build capacity in education and involvement.

How the project will improve environmental quality , create public access, advance social equity , and engage the community:

The Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project directly impacts the Washington, Point and North End Neighborhoods, our most economically disadvantaged and culturally diverse residents. These three neighborhoods contain the community's oldest housing and are among those least able to recover from flood loss and devaluation after so many flooding events.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project is improving environmental quality and providing huge social benefits. It will reduce flooding and flood damage, reduce infrastructure and utility maintenance costs, reduce high and low stream flows and minimize erosion by reducing surges of stormwater flows, protect water quality by reducing sediment and nutrient loads, reduce land development and infrastructure costs, improve property values, and improve the quality of life for Bee Branch Watershed residents. The project will also result in a significant reduction of runoff of soils, fertilizers, road surface chemicals, etc. from the waterways. All of these will create positive environmental impacts downstream.

These neighborhoods originally had a 0.2 acre Orange Park and 4 acre Comiskey Park in walking distance. With the small homes and lots throughout all three neighborhoods people had very little park land to take advantage of. Orange Park is a mini park with a playground. Comiskey Park serves the neighborhood with a playground, 1 tennis courts, a small skate park, a basketball court, a ball diamond and a small building for very limited programming. Both parks were well loved and used. To have all the recreational amenities in Comiskey Park in just four acres at time leads to conflicts as too many amenities are in too small of a space. Both parks are very well used and at times loved to death because of their size. No natural space existing and for sure no wide open spaces. Trees in the neighborhood are much more limited as yard sizes and the public planting lawn are too narrow to plant trees. Emerald Ash Borer is having a negative effect on this neighborhood as one in four trees is an ash tree and many are stressed and must be removed versus treated because they exist in too small of a planting lawn and their health is declining. This will mean even less trees in the neighborhood.

The addition of 55 acres in the lower Bee Branch plus an area that is approximately 200 feet wide by one mile long for the upper Bee Branch when construction is complete in 2017 will change the face of the three neighborhoods. People love water. Kids really love water and creeks. An almost 2 mile parkway and creek will exist where only hardscape used to exist. It will change the face of the neighborhoods that it traverses.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project will create and improve public access to water, parks and open space. The Washington Street, Point and North End Neighborhoods, which are directly impacted by the project, have a strong neighborhood feel and want to retain a high level of their historic character. These are walkable neighborhoods. Although traffic patterns are being altered, the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project will preserve connections to the pedestrian grid in these neighborhoods via vehicular and pedestrian bridges, to link the project to nearby public spaces, like Audubon Elementary School, Dubuque County Heritage Trail and Comiskey and Orange Park. Other schools in the Washington, North End and Point Neighborhoods are: Prescott, Fulton, and Marshall Elementary Schools and Jefferson Middle School.

The landscaped bike/hike trail along the restored Bee Branch Creek will replace the on-street bike route, making the streetscape safer and more inviting for walkers and bicyclists while encouraging alternative transportation choices to the automobile. This encourages healthy behaviors for both walking and bicycling. The project also will enhance the trail connection through these neighborhoods to the City and County trail systems, serving as a community attraction

to visitors and an accessible recreational amenity for residents of these neighborhoods.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project will advance social equity. It will restore economic activity to these older yet declining neighborhoods, improve recreational opportunity for diverse low/moderate income households with an open waterway and related amenities, reduce the risk of flood damage to public infrastructure and private properties in these neighborhoods, and provide ready access to significant community attractions for underserved communities of color. In addition, the project positively impacts the quality of life for residents of these neighborhoods with the resurrection of natural habitat and improved water quality of the Bee Branch Creek. The Bee Branch Creek flows directly into the Mississippi River.

Engagement is discussed at length in Question #10.

Rationale for selecting the particular site:

Dubuque has engaged in a unique and decided effort to promote a livable, sustainable community through historic preservation, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, park and plaza improvements, landscaped gateways, riverfront amenities, bike/hike trails, restoration of wetlands and prairies, and sustainable storm water management and green improvements.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project strengthens and advances this commitment. The project has re-introduced the Bee Branch Creek, once confined in a storm sewer, to daylight. This project replaced and is replacing the underground piping with an open waterway, reducing the risk of flood damage to 1,373 properties and improving water quality. The landscaped creek includes and will include walking paths, lighting, benches, attractive bridges and overlooks. By alleviating the reoccurring flooding problem with the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, property owners will be able to reinvest in their homes and businesses with confidence, preventing the neighborhood from deteriorating into substandard housing, as has steadily, increasingly been the case, and alleviating the need to build elsewhere.

The project is protecting environmental resources as described above. Positive environmental effects will be improved water quality in the Bee Branch and Mississippi River as well as reduction of the human health and safety hazard posed by the current and past situation. The project will not impact any wetlands, 100-year floodplain, or threatened or endangered species. The project will not have affect parklands, preserves, other public lands or areas of recognized scenic, recreational, archaeological, or historic value.

It will allow for recreational, environmental and educational use by children. The Creek Restoration project will highlight environmental sustainability efforts for which Dubuque is well-known.

**6. What is the amount being requested?**

555,100

**7. What is the total project budget?**

82,249,321

**8. What are the existing and potential sources of funding for the project? Be sure to indicate any funding that is already secured and committed to the project.**

Existing, Secured, and Committed:

Iowa State Flood Mitigation Program \$22,723,799

EPA Clean Water State Revolving Loan Funds \$40,296,822

City of Dubuque Stormwater Utility Fees \$ 9,580,818

I-Jobs II Grant \$ 3,965,500

River Enhancement Community Attraction & Tourism Grant \$ 2,250,000

Economic Development Administration Disaster Relief Grant \$ 1,227,138

National Scenic Byways Grant \$ 1,000,000

Dubuque Area Metro Transportation Study \$ 940,000

Private Donations \$ 165,244

State Recreational Trail Grant \$ 100,000

Total Existing, Secured, Committed and Available: \$82,249,321

\*Should SRT funding be unavailable, the Iowa State Flood Mitigation Grant will be used to fund the remaining \$646,880 of the trail portion of the project.

## **9. How have or will planners be involved in the project?**

Planners with the City of Dubuque, Dubuque County and/or the regional planning agency, East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA), have been and continue to be involved in the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in the following ways:

**Stormwater Management.** City Planning staff served in a support role to City Engineering staff during both creation and updating of the 2001 Drainage Basin Master Plan and the plan's 2013 update for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project. The improvements associated with the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project are consistent with the improvements outlined in the Drainage Basin Master Plan which was adopted by the City Council in 2001 and updated in 2013.

**Floodplain Management.** City Planning coordinates an interdepartmental review process that includes engineering, fire, water, building, and zoning codes and standards. Within the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, this review has focused primarily on administration of the City's floodplain ordinance, review and updates of the Digital Flood Insurance Rate maps, and the Floodwall/Levee Certification.

**Sustainability.** The City has a Sustainability Coordinator that works hand in hand with City Planners, Engineers, and Leisure Services. Additionally the Coordinator's work involves numerous community groups and individuals working on sustainable landscapes, community gardens, improved air and water quality and much more. Sustainable Dubuque is the City's trademark and has become renowned world-wide for the three pillars – economic prosperity, environmental/ecological integrity and social/cultural vibrancy. <http://www.cityofdubuque.org/606/Sustainable-Dubuque>

**Hazard Mitigation.** ECIA, County and City Planners collaborated on the 2013 Dubuque County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes Dubuque County and all of its incorporated cities, including the City of Dubuque. The improvements associated with the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project are part of and in conformance with the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Transportation Planning.** ECIA, County and City Planners and Engineers coordinate on transportation planning for federal, state, county, and city surface transportation projects, as well as the City's public transit service and the regional bicycle/pedestrian network in the project area.

**Bike/Hike Trail Plans.** City Planning staff coordinates with City Engineering and Leisure Services staff on implementation and updates of the City's bike/hike trail plan in conjunction with the circulation changes due to the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project. City Planning staff coordinates with City Engineering and Leisure Services staff on design and installation of interpretive and wayfinding signs for trails in, through, and connecting to the project.

**Grant Writing.** ECIA and City Planners and other City staff coordinate in preparation and administration of grants for bike/hike trails, flood mitigation, brownfield redevelopment, transportation, transit, and other projects associated with the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project.

**Historic Preservation.** City Planning staff coordinates with City Engineering staff during the Section 106 consultation process for surveys, evaluations, registrations, and mitigation related to potential impacts to historic, architectural, and archeological resources within the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project's area of potential effect. City Planners coordinate the Section 106 consultation for housing rehabilitation projects in the three neighborhoods impacted by the project.

**Community Development.** City Planning staff coordinates with City Housing and Community Development staff in analysis of demographics, land use, housing tenure, preservation planning, zoning, and public input in support of specific studies and for neighborhood plans in the project area.

**Economic Development.** City Planners and other City staff coordinate with the Long Range Planning Advisory Commission on the establishment and amendment of Urban Renewal Plans and Urban Revitalization Plans in the three neighborhoods impacted by the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project.

## **10. Please describe the method for engaging the existing community in the project, including the level of community leadership in project design and implementation.**

In the late 1990s, the City began to do its homework to make sure the entire Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project accomplished its goals in ways that met necessary engineering criteria, took into account community values, and worked within economic constraints.

The City Council adopted the Drainage Basin Master Plan in 2001. This study identified the flood risk to homes and businesses and recommended millions of dollars in capital improvement projects throughout the watershed to mitigate the flooding.

In 2002, meetings with neighborhood groups began, with opposition noted. Stories abound of heated meetings with residents of the neighborhood affected by continued flooding in their basements. The City of Dubuque implemented a public involvement strategy as part of this project to accommodate public input and consider social and economic concerns of those residents being impacted. A thirty member citizen advisory committee was formed to determine how to fund the improvements, the committee that recommended establishing a stormwater utility to fund the improvements but also recommended that the City continue to seek other outside funding sources to offset the cost to Dubuque citizens.

In 2004 the City Council established the Bee Branch Citizen Advisory Committee to provide a forum for these groups. The committee was comprised of 16 citizens meant to represent a cross section of residents that would be affected by the project. They made the final recommendation as to properties the City must acquire for the project. They also provided feedback as to the watershed-wide approach to mitigating the flooding. The Bee Branch Creek Alignment Study was completed.

The pulse of residents in the impacted neighborhoods and others in the community was continually monitored. The Bee Branch Citizen Advisory Committee held five public meetings in 2003 and 2004 with City officials and consultants in attendance. Plans were discussed and alternatives were welcomed. Citizens were asked to state both their fears and their preferences. Cost comparisons and lifestyle impacts were considered. Surveys were taken. As opinions changed and new ideas came forward, information was shared. Over the course of the project planning, citizens indicated their desire for benches and tables, bike/hike trails, and aesthetically-pleasing bridges.

As part of the design process, the City hosted a series of workshops to help gather citizen input. A press release was issued before each workshop and over 2,000 postcards were sent to targeted neighborhoods. At the first workshop held in October of 2008, citizens were asked to identify their hopes and fears for the project. In addition, they were asked to provide input on the various potential landscape features, bridges and secondary uses. At the second workshop in November of 2008, and again in January of 2009, the design team presented conceptual drawings that began to address the citizen's hopes and fears, as well as their landscape preferences. And finally, at the third workshop in February of 2009, the creek restoration design concept, based on citizen direction, was presented to the public for comment. The design team worked with the City and residents to come up with final restoration plans and, in particular to gather and utilize citizen input for final landscaping and design.

Another citizen committee – the Bee Branch Landscape Design Advisory Committee – was formed and put to work. Subsequent meetings confirmed interest and eventually brought agreement from citizenry to modified plans. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project was the outcome.

Dubuque residents as well as the City of Dubuque and the consultants have worked hard to come up with solutions throughout the Bee Branch Watershed to address the flooding problems and to make the project acceptable to the community and in particular those most impacted but least able to rebound.

The City also worked hard to serve the people displaced by the project. Paying strict adherence to the Federal Uniform Relocation Act, the City has been able to acquire over 100 properties for the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project without ever completing condemnation.

Currently there are five different committees that are made up of city staff, businesses and residents. The city has a Facebook presence just for Bee Branch. It direct mails newsletters to residents of the three neighborhoods. It puts information in utility bills. You Tube updates are done each month relating to construction progress via the City of Dubuque's website and community access TV channel. Neighborhood meetings are attended with regular updates being given. Leisure Services just began having environmental programs in the Bee Branch this spring with Waterfowl Watching and a Cache In and Trash Out event. More are planned for this upcoming summer. The City has placed a major emphasis on a variety of communication methods related to construction. That is why the next phase is to start moving even more into education and usage of the areas especially as more are getting completed. See

[www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranch](http://www.cityofdubuque.org/beebranch) for more details and information.

**11. Please provide demographic information about the community or population involved in and served by the project.**

Community Demographics:

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the city of Dubuque's demographics include the following:

Total Population = 57,637

Female Population = 51.6%

Male Population = 48.4%

Average Household Size = 2.28

Family Households = 59.1%

Non-Family Households = 40.9%

Average Family Size = 2.92

Median Age = 38

Race: White = 91.7%, Black or African American = 4.0%, Hispanic or Latino = 2.4%, Asian = 1.1%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander = 0.5%, and American Indian and Alaska Native = 0.3%.

Total Housing Units = 25,029

Housing Occupancy = 93.9% (65.7% Owner-occupied, 34.3% renter-occupied)

Target Area Demographics:

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the target area (a one kilometer buffer surrounding the former Dubuque Packing Company site on 16th Street which is the lower Bee Branch) is comprised of just three Census Tracts. Tracts 1, 3 and 5 comprise the target area and more broadly the general area. The socio-demographic information for the greater target area is as follows:

- Population within the greater target area for whom poverty status is determined: 8,229
- Population within greater target area living at 185% of poverty level: 4,231
- Percentage of population in greater target area living at 185% of poverty level: 51.4%
- Minority population in greater target area: 1,710
- Percentage of minority population in greater target area: 20.8%
- Hispanic population in greater target area: 473
- Percentage of Hispanic population in greater target area: 5.7%

Source: 2010 - 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Involvement is outlined in Question #10.

**12. Outline your plans to monitor and evaluate the work to achieve the three objectives and indicate the metrics to be used to track results.**

1. Improved environmental quality and increased hazard mitigation by reducing flooding, improving the site's ability to hold and retain stormwater, improving water quality, improving wildlife habitat, and increasing biodiversity  
As one can see from the attachments to this grant application the water quality is improving with each project in the Bee Branch watershed. Measuring the effectiveness of just one green infrastructure improvement is difficult to do when improvements in the watershed change on a daily basis. The Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is a multi-phased program to implement the watershed wide approach to mitigate the repeated flood damages. The combined phases of the project continue to reduce the volume of floodwaters, slow the rate the floodwaters flow through the upper watershed, increase the safe conveyance of floodwaters through the flood-prone area, improve water quality, improve wildlife habitat, and increase biodiversity.

The floating water treatment will be monitored for bird species that use the floating island. This will be monitored at various times throughout the year including the migration timeframes. Bird species will be documented and widely shared through education programs. The documentation could be done by Bee Keepers, a new birding group and/or an established birders group like Audubon Society whom has been involved already at Bee Branch.

2. A community engaged in improving environmental quality through green infrastructure solutions to stormwater management

Using the community engagement model proposed there would be at least 15 organizations, churches, schools, businesses or others involved in the community engagement around green infrastructure being installed and currently in the Bee Branch Parkway. Additional metrics will be meetings and increasing individuals that become involved in the Bee Keepers, programming, and education. Emphasis will be given to documenting those that live in the three census tract (neighborhoods) described in this grant.

3. Increased public access to project sites thereby improving recreational opportunity and access to nature

As the permeable small craft boat ramp and access are completed as well as the fishing docks and piers the access to the water will be improved for the persons from land and the water. This increases public access in several ways. Currently we know that usage by canoes and kayaks has been very limited as it is not inviting to launch crafts into the basin. Measurement metrics for drop by recreation is limited to logging what you see. The metrics proposed to use would be the measurement of programs offered as well as the number of program participants. The purchase of kayaks will allow for the access never afforded to person not having means to purchase one. The metrics will be monitored for where people live when possible. Not every program but a variety of programs will implement a before and after evaluation issued to participants to gauge their gained knowledge and respect for the environment, flora and fauna and green infrastructure.

As the trail gets connected to the upper Bee Branch trail counters can be added to track usage. Currently trail counters could be added to have a baseline from an unconnected trail to connected at a later date.

In all of these areas the city is currently beginning work on results based accountability and the quick deadline for this grant did not allow time to use that process for establishing well thought metrics for this project. A training is actually being held on this grant deadline day. One of the roles of the Coordinator would be to engage the community and organization in the results based accountability modeling to establish the short and long term metrics. There is much to be said for longitudinal study of this area. This could relate to gauging the health of the persons that live in this neighborhood and any changes.

**13. Who will maintain the recreational amenities at the park and how will this responsibility be assigned/agreed upon?**

The City of Dubuque Leisure Services Department Parks Division will maintain any additional recreational amenities of the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project that would happen as a part of the grant proposal. The Division maintains the current recreational amenities and the general day-to-day maintenance of the Bee Branch. The Leisure Services Department currently has a small boat that will be used to maintain the floating treatment wetland (floating island), docks and piers and the shoreline of the detention basin (Bee Branch Pond). The Department currently maintains a marina and works with Public Works Department on the boat ramps in several locations in the city thus has expertise to add the maintenance of the amenities of this grant project. The Department currently has interpretive signage in various locations around the city and have all signs on a replacement schedule to be replaced at the end of their life cycle. The Parks Division additionally works with the Recreation Division on educational environmental programming in the Bee Branch that just began this spring.

**14. Who will maintain the green stormwater infrastructure facility and function, and how will this responsibility be assigned/agreed upon?**

Currently the Leisure Services Parks Division staff maintains green stormwater infrastructure in a variety of locations in the city including the current green infrastructure currently developed at Bee Branch. They work cooperatively with the Engineering Department to insure proper maintenance of the stormwater infrastructure while at the same time providing recreational and educational opportunities at a variety of locations. The additional green infrastructure proposed of the floating treatment wetland (floating island) and permeable surfacing of the small craft boat ramp in addition to trees and more are all in the areas of expertise of the current staff. A full time staff member is assigned to the Bee Branch in addition to several seasonal employees. The Park Division staffing is funded by a storm water management utility fee paid for by the citizens and businesses of the Dubuque community.

**15. Will local residents be employed in the project development and implementation?**

Yes

**16. Describe how local resident employment is incorporated into the project.**

Leisure Services had a total review and update of hiring practices and methods for seasonal employment. The maintenance of this area has a seasonal component and the efforts will continue to recruit from neighborhoods closest to the areas that are to be maintained or programmed for activities such as summer playground programs. The recruitment of the coordinator position will focus a great deal on the neighborhood and local residents. The contractors that have done the majority of the contracts for the construction in the Bee Branch are local contractors. The Multicultural Family Center has also recently become involved in trying to connect people with job locally. Employment begins with recruitment efforts.

**17. What other investments, if any, are being made in the immediate area around the project site?**

The proposed improvements that would be funded by this grant would be an integral piece to a Bee Branch Creek day-lighting effort and other phases of the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project aimed at reducing flooding, improving water quality, educating residents about stormwater management practices, and providing a mile-long linear park for residents. The entire Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project will cost an estimated \$210,000,000, and the City of Dubuque is lucky to have many partners that helped make this project become a reality. Investments that have been made directly for the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project to date:

Iowa State Flood Mitigation Program \$98,494,178  
EPA Clean Water State Revolving Loan Funds \$49,021,000  
HUD National Disaster Resiliency Project \$31,500,000  
City of Dubuque Stormwater Utility Fees (paid by residents and businesses) \$25,394,096  
Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Grant \$ 5,600,000  
I-Jobs II Grant \$ 3,965,500  
River Enhancement Community Attraction & Tourism Grant \$ 1,919,900  
Economic Development Administration Disaster Relief Grant \$ 1,227,138  
National Scenic Byways Grant \$ 1,000,000  
Private Donations \$ 165,244  
State Recreational Trail Grant \$ 100,000

Private investments in the area of this project have been abundant since the City of Dubuque announced the construction of the linear park and daylighting of the Creek would begin in 2010. Those investments continue to be seen along the corridor of project, but also in other areas of the Bee Branch Watershed that will be affected by the reduction of flooding in the area due to the project. Private investments along the project corridor include:

Gronen Restoration & tenant Modifications, Caradco Building \$33,000,000  
Novelty Iron Works Renovation \$20,760,000  
Private Residential Improvements (various building permits) \$ 5,465,000  
Rainbo Oil (New restaurants (2), and gas station) \$ 5,000,000  
Morrison Brothers \$ 4,300,000  
Walgreens (New location) \$ 1,004,390  
Gronen Restoration, Betty Building \$ 1,000,000  
Davis Place Apartments \$ 232,440  
Dubuque Furniture & Flooring \$ 100,000  
Rusk Building Improvements \$ 16,500  
Total of Private Investment Known to Date: \$70,878,330

Further private investment is expected along the project area, to include the development of the River View Plaza which is 39.8 acres along East 16th street where the Dubuque Packing Company used to reside.

**18. Describe your organization's experience in completing similar projects and provide examples if applicable.**

The City of Dubuque has the necessary capacities in project and contract management, quality assurance, financial management and procurement, and internal control to quickly launch and implement the improvements outlined in the project. The City of Dubuque has implemented multimillion dollar construction projects to small-scale drainage improvements. In 2009 the City completed construction of the W. 32nd Street Detention Basin, a \$4.2 million detention facility that created over 15 acres of riparian landscape. This spring a controlled burn is planned in support of establishing the native prairie grasses. And the City has already completed the first leg of the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, a \$21.3 million undertaking that day-lighted over 2,000 feet of a creek buried for over a century. It included the restoration of native prairie grasses and the establishment of aquatic habit and a hike/bike path adjacent to the day-lighted creek. Within the past couple of years, the City has re-constructed over 70 alleys with pervious pavement systems. These "green alleys," widely lauded by the residents they serve, are designed to soak up floodwaters and clean it as it filters through the soils below. The upstream phase of the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project is under construction.

**19. Provide an itemized project budget identifying how the requested grant funds will be spent. List and briefly describe the expense in the left column. Indicate the amount for this item in the right column. Maximum twenty lines. Ensure the total listed in the budget matches the total grant being requested.**

## Grant Budget

## Total

555,100

**Briefly describe additional funding that will be required to complete the proposed project. List each need (including dollar amount) beyond that which will be paid through the grant.**

No additional funds will be required to complete the project proposed as a part of this grant as matching funds are already secured.

**20. Upload photos of the current site.**

[Lower Bee Branch Creek, Trail, and Pond.jpg](#)  
[Lower Bee Branch Aerial.jpg](#)  
[Bee Branch Pond Migratory Bird Use.jpg](#)  
[Lower Bee Branch, Fishing.jpg](#)  
[upper bee branch, under construction.jpg](#)

**21. Upload renderings or planning documents, if applicable.**

## Project Area Map & Renderings.pdf

**22. Upload letter(s) of support.**

[Mayor Buol Letter of Support.pdf](#)

[CCHC letter of support.pdf](#)

[CFGD letter of support.pdf](#)

[MFC Letter of Support.pdf](#)

[P & R Commission letter of support.pdf](#)

**23. Upload a project timeline, including:**

Community input

Design

Engineering

Permitting

Installation

Completion

Initial maintenance schedule

[Bee Branch Watershed Project Timeline - Grant Copy.pdf](#)

**24. You have reached the end of the application. When you are ready to submit your application, click the SUBMIT button below. If you wish to save your progress and submit the application later, click the SAVE AND CONTINUE LATER button at the top. Your application will not be submitted until you click the submit button.**







# Map of Bee Branch Creek & Surrounding Areas



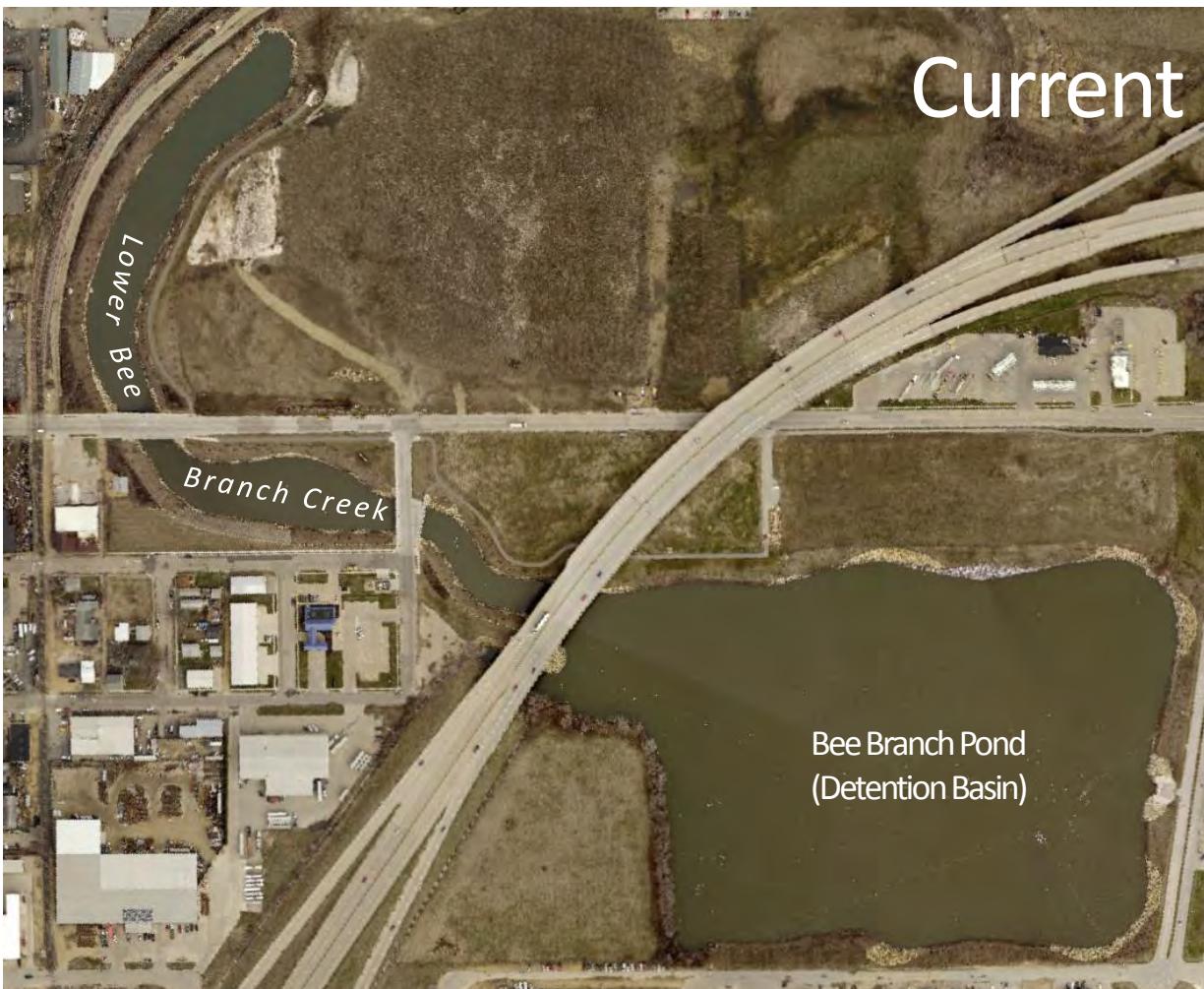
DISCLAIMER: This information was compiled using the Dubuque Area Geographic Information System (DAGIS), which includes data created by both the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County. It is understood that, while the City of Dubuque and participating agencies utilized the most current and accurate information available, DAGIS and its suppliers do not warrant the accuracy or currency of the information contained in DAGIS. The City of Dubuque and participating agencies shall not be held liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, punitive, or special damages, whether foreseeable or unforeseeable, arising out of the authorized or unauthorized use of this data or the inability to use this data or out of any breach of warranty whatsoever.

1 inch = 800 feet

400 200 0 400 800 Feet



Map Prepared by  
City of Dubuque  
Engineering Division  
50 West 13th Street  
Dubuque, Iowa 52201  
Phone: (563) 589-4270  
Fax: (563) 589-4205



# Proposed Access & Recreational Use Improvements

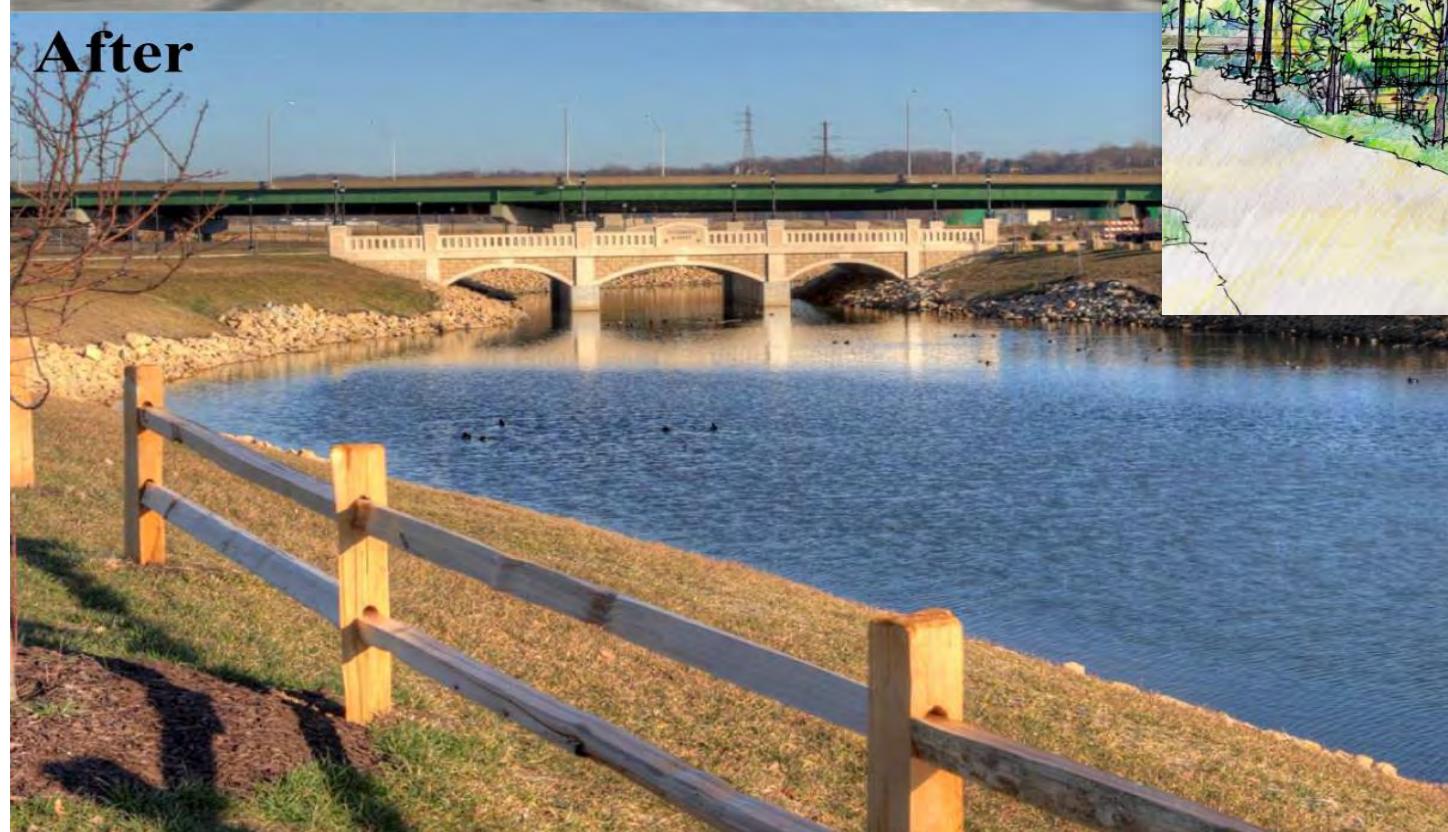


# Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Before



After



Proposed



Lower Bee Branch

Before



# Bee Branch Creek Restoration

After



Proposed



Lower Bee Branch



# Bee Branch Creek Restoration



**Lower Bee Branch**



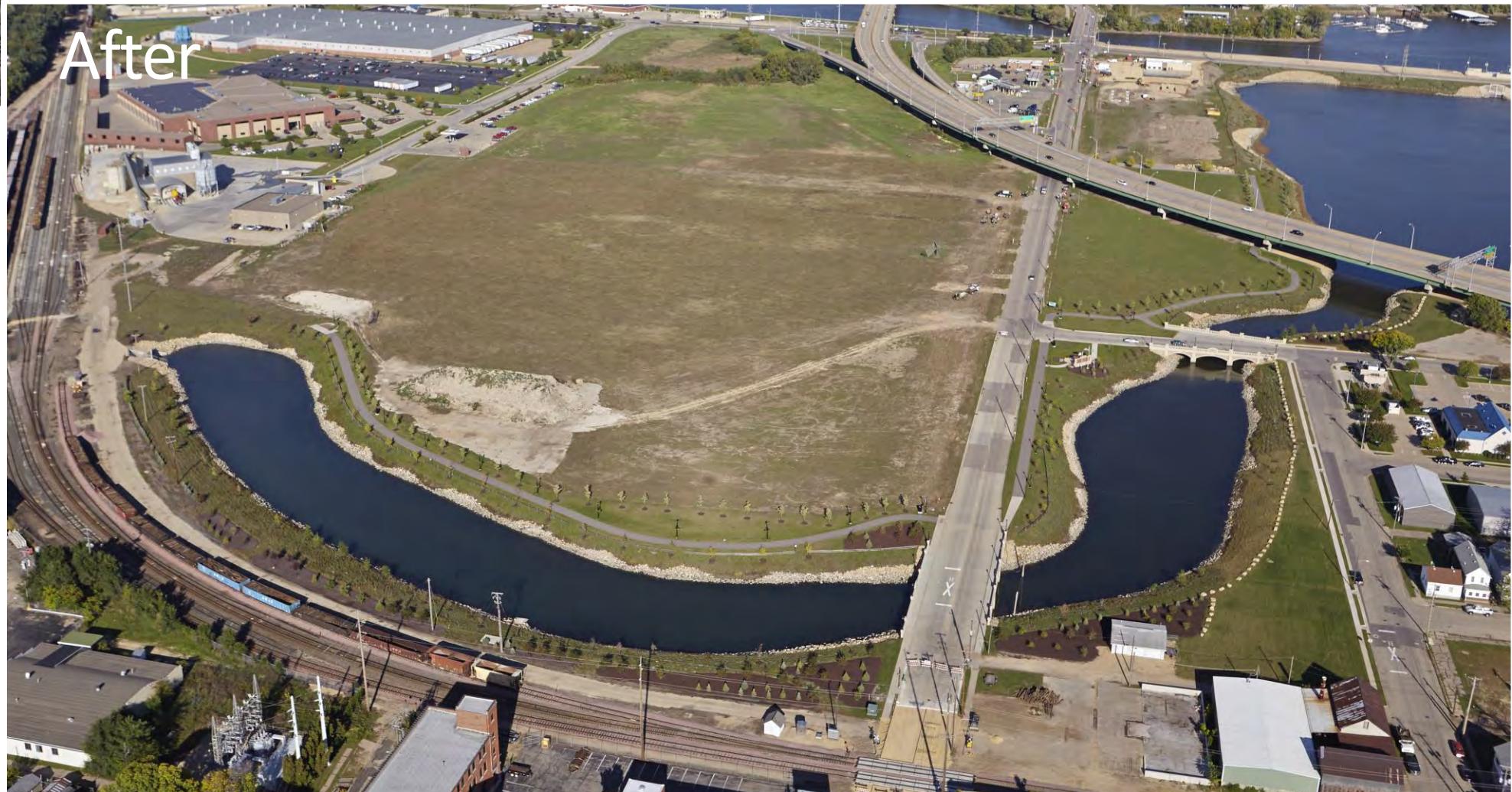
Before

# Bee Branch Creek Restoration

## Lower Bee Branch



After

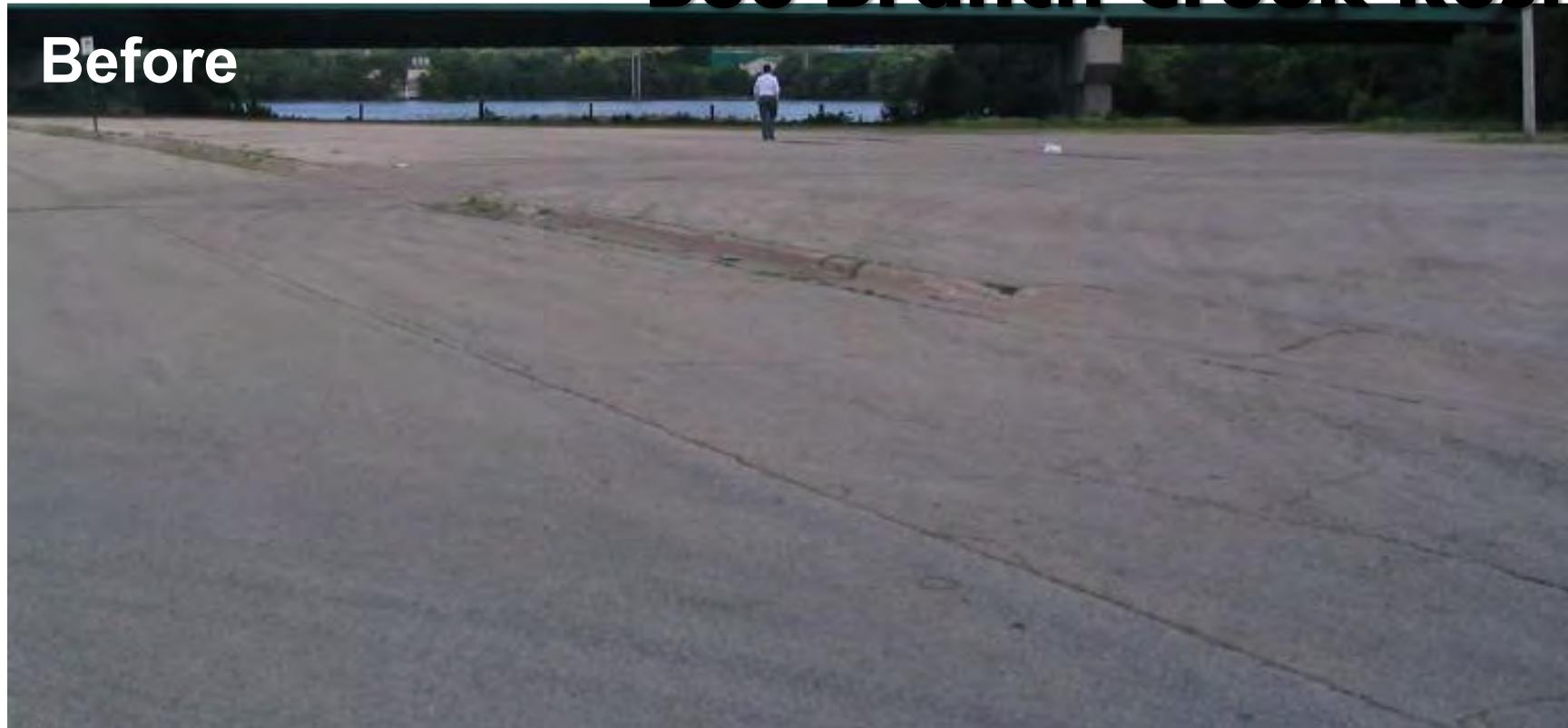


# Bee Branch Creek Restoration



# Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Before



After



# Bee Branch Creek Restoration



# Upper Bee Branch Creek



# Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Proposed



Today



# Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Proposed



Today



# Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Proposed



Today



# Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration

Proposed



Today



# Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration





April 26, 2016

TO: National Recreation and Park Association  
RE: Great Urban Parks Grant Application – Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, Dubuque IA

Please accept this letter of support from the Crescent Community Health Center for the Great Urban Parks Grant Application for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in the City of Dubuque, Iowa.

Crescent Community Health Center is a local federally qualified health center which provides medical and dental clinic providing basic (primary) medical and oral health care. The cost of our services for uninsured patients are figured on a sliding fee scale and discounted based upon the household income and size. Patients from any area are welcomed to our practice. We serve individuals and families who are uninsured, underinsured, and those with various types of insurance. Crescent Community Health Center is conveniently located in the beautifully restored Washington Court Building within walking distance of the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project.

One of Crescent's most important functions is to assist our patients in learning to lead healthier lives. This involves nutrition education, a free community gardening program and increased activity. This project will definitely add to the choices for our patients to increase activity levels year round.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project directly impacts the people we serve in the surrounding neighborhoods, the city of Dubuque, and the larger regional community. The project will expand green space, parkland, trails, recreational amenities, and similar park/open space uses easily accessible to low and moderate income residents at neighborhood level. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project provides opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices for our clients and other underserved populations through walking, biking, and water-based recreational amenities such as kayaking.

We urge the National Recreation and Park Association to support this Great Urban Parks Grant Application for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in the City of Dubuque, Iowa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Woodyard".

Julie Woodyard  
Executive Director and CEO

April 26, 2016

TO: National Recreation and Park Association

RE: Great Urban Parks Grant Application – Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, Dubuque IA

Please accept this letter of support from the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque for the Great Urban Parks Grant Application for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in the City of Dubuque, Iowa.

The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque is a tax-exempt public charity that provides community leadership and nonprofit support. It was incorporated in October 2002 and went public in October 2003. In 2015 the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque was ranked in the top 100 of 750 foundations nationwide in all three categories of The Foundation Center's annual community foundation benchmarking report.

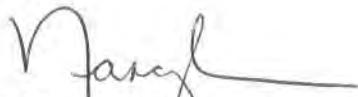
Thanks to our generous donors and dedicated nonprofits and community members, Northeast Iowa is strong, thriving and vibrant. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project will compliment many of our ongoing initiatives that impact low income, underserved communities.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project directly impacts three historic neighborhoods that contain the community's oldest housing and a diverse population. The majority of the residents in these neighborhoods are low to moderate income. Many have experienced periodic basement flooding due to storm sewer capacity problems with the Bee Branch sewer system.

We believe that the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project will directly benefit residents of these neighborhoods. Residents and visitors alike will be able to enjoy the recreational amenities of the project and benefit from this new community attraction.

We urge the National Recreation and Park Association to support this Great Urban Parks Grant Application for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in the City of Dubuque, Iowa.

Sincerely,



Nancy Van Milligen  
President and CEO



Office of the Mayor  
City Hall  
50 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Dubuque, IA 52001-4864  
[www.cityofdubuque.org](http://www.cityofdubuque.org)

April 26, 2016

**TO: National Recreation and Park Association**

**RE: Great Urban Parks Grant Application – Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project, Dubuque IA**

Please accept this letter of support from the City of Dubuque for the Great Urban Parks Grant Application for the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project in Dubuque, Iowa.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project involves the reconstruction, resurrection and restoration of over 4,500 feet of buried creek – a project that replaces underground storm sewer with an open waterway to mitigate flood damage to 1,3730 properties and improve water quality of the Bee Branch Creek. It is in and of itself an ultimately green infrastructure project.

In addition, the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project remakes three historic, culturally diverse, yet declining neighborhoods that have suffered frequent flood damage, turning them into an area that encourages small business development and housing rehabilitation. The restored creek will improve quality of life for neighborhood residents while creating a tourist attraction.

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project has three primary goals:

- *Avoid future floods and related loss of property and prosperity in the area.* All too often heavy rains inundate our aging storm sewers. At times, flooding has been exacerbated by the Mississippi River itself, when it is so high that water cannot flow into it.
- *Add value to the area.* Re-creating the natural, open creek which once existed furthers economic opportunity, heritage tourism and quality of life for residents and visitors.
- Implement Dubuque's community vision for sustainability in the area. By supporting sustainable development in these neighborhoods, we connect underserved people to water through recreation facilities, environmental restoration, and education.

We hope you agree that the Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project is a replicable model that hits all three key objectives of the Great Urban Parks Campaign:

- 1) Increased public access to recreational opportunities and access to nature via parks in underserved low-income communities and communities of color;
- 2) Improved environmental quality and increased hazard mitigation by reducing flooding, improving the site's ability to hold and retain stormwater, improving water quality, improving wildlife habitat, and increasing biodiversity; and
- 3) A community engaged in improving environmental quality through green infrastructure solutions to stormwater management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy D. Buol". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Roy" on the left and "D. Buol" on the right.

Roy D. Buol, Mayor



April 29, 2016

Greetings NRPA Great Urban Parks Campaign Review Panel,

I am thrilled to share a letter of support for the City of Dubuque Leisure Services Great Urban Parks Campaign grant. The Multicultural Family Center is located within walking distance of the lower Bee Branch project area. Many of our patrons and program participants live and work in these neighborhoods.

Our mission is to empower all families and community members of Dubuque to reach their potential and build unity out of diversity. We pursue our mission by providing programs that promote long-term learning, events that showcase Dubuque's diversity, celebrations of culturally significant days, and programs that teach culturally-distinct content. A sampling of programs include teen nights, road to success teen employment program, John Deere career teen night, youth tutoring, movies and music in the park, Juneteenth, Marshallese Constitution Day, Flavors of Africa, Saudi National Day, India Independence Day, LGBT & Youth Network, and more.

Future Talk is our signature program for young teens. It is an eight-week summer program for teens with an emphasis on environmental education, employment and financial literacy as well as community service. The teens perform service in various city, county and state parks in Dubuque and Dubuque County and for that are paid a stipend and learn about saving money through a money savings match. Many of the teen participants in Future Talk live in the census tracts described in this application.

We have active relationships with NAACP, Dubuque Black Men Coalition, Dubuque for Refugee Children, Circles Initiative, Getting Ahead and LULAC (League of Latin American Citizens). All these connections allow us to continue building relationships that establish a foundation for social and cultural vibrancy in our Dubuque community.

As I review the grant I am excited to see the emphasis placed on impacting low income, underserved communities to parks and the environment as a whole. I see the opportunity to partner with city parks and recreation as well as explore opportunities with the groups we have relationships with to connect even more youth beyond Future Talk and families to the environment.

We look forward to building on our past partnerships to empower all families and community members.

Sincerely,

Dr. Farris Muhammad  
Director

*The Multicultural Family Center (MFC) empowers all families and community members of Dubuque to reach their potential and build unity out of diversity.*



Leisure Services Department  
2200 Bunker Hill Road  
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-3010  
Office (563) 589-4263  
Fax (563) 589-4391  
TTY (563) 690-6678  
parkrec@cityofdubuque.org  
www.cityofdubuque.org

April 29, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant Support

The Parks & Recreation Commission was excited to learn about the grant application for the Great Urban Parks Campaign in relation to the Lower Bee Branch Watershed efforts in our town. We have been engaged in the planning process and are updated regularly on the project.

The green infrastructure installed to date is viewed not only as beneficial for flood and storm water management, but also as a valuable, new, natural area to both residents and the local ecosystem.

Our Recreation Division has begun a pilot project to engage the community in a nearby park area where crime and gun violence have become an issue. It is encouraging to know that the Lower Bee Branch area could serve as a natural backdrop for such projects in the future, where local residents can engage in sustainable and community efforts, all from in their own backyard green space.

The sustainable infrastructure will become a beneficial community resource in many ways. The trails and open outdoor space will create a variety of recreational opportunities, such as biking, hiking, running and yoga, all of which promote both physical and mental health. The infrastructure will also serve as a gathering space for friends and neighbors of all ages to meet, where relationships can bloom. In addition, features of the Lower Bee Branch, such as a naturally-constructed amphitheater, will provide a venue for live performances, thus nurturing arts and culture in the area.

We were also thrilled to learn of the plans to incorporate as many native plants and natural features as possible, which will cut down on long-term maintenance needs, and reduce dependency on chemical pesticides. These green initiatives will not just improve air and water quality, but also provide a healthy urban habitat for fish, birds, insects and more. Citizens may, as a result, have additional opportunities to connect through new hobbies like bird watching, fishing, kayaking and just enjoying the water. With so many ways to enjoy the space, it's likely that nearby residents will develop a deeper appreciation for the environment, as well as increased pride in their community neighborhood.

As a Commission, we wholeheartedly support the projects proposed as a part of this grant. The green infrastructure, partnered with a stewardship program, are an important next step in introducing the public with this new, natural space for education, enjoyment, and a variety of recreation.

Sincerely,

Kate Larson, Chair  
Park and Recreation Commission

KL:et

## Bee Branch Creek Restoration Project Schedule