The idea for the park was conceived in 1907 when Charles M. Robinson, a noted eastern park specialist, visited Dubuque. After touring scenic locations in the city, Robinson made this comment to his hosts: “I have never seen a place where the Almighty has done more, and mankind less, than Dubuque.” Most of his listeners were hurt by the remark, but one person decided to do something about it. He was Judge Oliver Shiras, one of Dubuque’s leading citizens.

A citizen committee was formed in April of 1908, and Judge Shiras was elected chairperson. In June of 1908, with aid from the Civic Division of the Dubuque Women’s Club, 100 acres were purchased from A.L. Rhomberg. The property was then deeded to the City and became Eagle Point Park. Since the original purchase, 18 parcels have been purchased or donated, which brings the park to its present size.

Streetcar traffic began to serve the park in 1912. Union Electric Company constructed the track, turnaround and waiting station in the area at the park entrance where the eagle statue and flower beds are located. In 1920, a bathing beach was constructed, but closed when the lock and dam was built in December, 1933.

The park took on a new look in the 1930s when the City hired Park Superintendent Alfred Caldwell. A $200,000 Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) grant was received, and the gifted landscape architect began work. His love of Frank Lloyd Wright prairie architecture is very recognizable in the buildings and gardens. Caldwell’s exceptional use of native construction materials, craftsmanship, and unique designs make the park one of the most beautiful in the Midwest.
The PARK ENTRANCE road extends from the toll booth for a quarter of a mile. A turnaround was constructed in 1912 as streetcars brought citizens from downtown. On that spot today a large eagle statue and circular flower bed welcome you to Eagle Point Park.

The SPRAY FOUNTAIN is open during park hours, weather permitting, for children 10 and younger.

The TERRACE ROOM, VERANDA ROOMS, INDIAN ROOM and BRIDGE COMPLEX were built in the 1930s as a W.P.A. project during the Great Depression. (Promenade Bridge overpass clearance for buses is 12’6”.)

RIVERFRONT PAVILION, built in 1910, is the oldest pavilion in the park. The Riverview walk was constructed in 1950 and quickly became the most popular area in the park. Viewing towers are available to the public, showcasing the panoramic view of Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Mississippi River Lock & Dam #11. The SHIRAS MEMORIAL PAVILION is located at the walkway’s end and was built in 1921, in honor of Judge Oliver Shiras, the person most responsible for the park’s creation.

The LOG CABIN PAVILION was constructed in 1939 with funds from the National Youth Administration. It overlooks Dubuque’s Point area and downtown.

The ROCK GARDEN and FISH POND were also built as part of the W.P.A. project, and are made of limestone. A handicap accessible walk extends north from the riverfront pavilion to the fish pond, avoiding the steep rock steps along the way.