



Bee Branch Watershed

Flood Mitigation Project News

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The Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is a multi-faceted approach to address the severe and frequent flash flooding experienced in the Bee Branch Watershed.

Flood disasters have repeatedly impacted residents and employees of businesses within the watershed. Between 1999 and 2011, six Presidential Disaster Declarations were issued with total damage estimates of almost \$70 million.

The project consists of several infrastructure improvements that will reduce the volume of stormwater, slow the rate of stormwater through the upper watershed, and increase the safe conveyance of stormwater through the flood-prone area.

The City has received \$162.6 million in the form of grants, forgivable loans, and other financial savings to help fund the \$232 million project.

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Bee Branch Protecting Dubuque Residents During Record-Setting Rain

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), rainfall in southern and eastern Iowa in May 2019 was 150 to 200 percent above average. In fact, Iowa's 50.73 inches of precipitation from June 2018 to May 2019 set the record for rainfall and snow in a 12-month period since official records began in 1895.

Locally, the average annual rainfall is 36.29 inches but the last two years have been anything but average. According to the National Weather Service, Dubuque received 55.01 inches of precipitation in 2018. This broke the previous record of 47.04 inches set just two years earlier in 2016. Total precipitation through November 2019 is nearly 53 inches — marking the second consecutive year of more than 50 inches of precipitation in Dubuque.

From September to November, Dubuque received 22.35 inches of rain. This is 13.88 inches above normal and the fourth-wettest on record. September alone was the second-wettest on record with 13.31 inches of rain. According to NOAA, if the last 10 years of rainfall data is considered, the trend indicates that annual precipitation totals in Dubuque will increase by 11.5 inches over the next decade, a 31.7 percent increase.

Even though it is not yet completed, the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is functioning as designed and is protecting Dubuque residents and businesses from flash flooding caused by heavy rainfall. The Bee Branch infrastructure improvements are providing incremental benefits. As each phase of construction is completed, Dubuque is seeing greater flash flood protection.

Despite record-setting rainfall, very few properties have experienced flood damage since the completion of the Bee Branch Creek Restoration in 2017. Previously, residents and businesses in the watershed would have experienced devastating flash flooding during the last two record-setting years. The City would have received widespread reports of flooding and hundreds of basements filled with water but, due to improvements made throughout the watershed, there have been only minimal reports of damage.

The Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project is a long-term investment and there is more work to be done but it is working and will continue to do so for generations to come. Over the next 100 years, this \$232 million project is expected to prevent \$582 million in damages.

America's River III



Naming Opportunities

A personalized brick paver is a great way to honor someone. Whether they grew up in the neighborhood or have a special connection to Dubuque, it is a meaningful gift that will stand the test of time.

The gift that grows and grows! Over 1,000 new trees and shrubs have been planted along the greenway. Name a tree in memory or celebration of your loved one and look forward to sitting its shade for years to come.

Several bike racks located along the creek provide cyclists an area to keep their equipment safe while enjoying the park. A personalized plaque at a bike station is a meaningful way to honor biking enthusiasts.

Several limestone benches have been placed along the creek. It's the perfect place to sit, enjoy the water, and watch the ducks. Name a bench for your loved one and create a special spot in the greenway just for them!

Laser-cut decorative benches provide comfortable seating along the Upper Bee Branch Trail. Residents and visitors often sit along the creek taking in the sights and sounds of nature. Bench designs include biking along the Bee Branch or a Great Blue Heron.

Gifts ranging between \$500 - \$5,000 receive a 5.875" x 2" plaque that can be engraved with up to three lines of text, with 30 characters per line which includes all spaces and punctuation marks. The plaque will be displayed at the amenity.

Personalized brick pavers are 7.625" x 3" and can be engraved with up to three lines of text, with 12 characters per line which includes all spaces and punctuation marks. Plaques and pavers will be installed in the spring of 2020.

For more information or to purchase a naming opportunity, call the City of Dubuque at 563.690.6068 or visit www.cityofdubuque.org/ar3.

Committee Members
Joyce Connors
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Construction Project Updates



22nd St. / Kaufmann Ave. Storm Sewer

Phase 2 of the 22nd St./Kaufmann Ave. project was constructed in sections throughout the 2019 construction season. The project included the relocation of underground utilities, a new 10 ft. x 6 ft. concrete storm sewer and high-capacity storm drains to reduce street flooding, as well as total street and sidewalk reconstruction.

Work began in late March between White St. and Central Ave. The intersection of Central Ave. and Kaufmann Ave. was closed for eight weeks from late April until June. Construction continued west up Kaufmann Ave. throughout the summer and fall with each section of the road opening as it was finished. On November 27, Kaufmann Ave. between Central Ave. and N. Main St. opened to traffic. This phase of construction is now finished aside from some landscaping that will be completed in the spring.

Looking to the future, plans include expanding the storm sewer up to Kane St. The project schedule is contingent on funding and has not yet been determined. To receive updates about the project, sign up for Bee Branch Project email and/or text alerts at www.cityofdubuque.org/notifyme.

Flood Mitigation Gate Replacement Project

In April, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the City of Dubuque \$2.5 million for the Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Gate and Pump Station Replacement project. The project includes new and additional flood gates and pumps on the 16th St. detention basin side of the John C. Culver Floodwall adjacent to Kerper Blvd.

Two existing pumps, which are more than 50 years old, will be replaced and two additional pumps and a generator will be installed. The additional pumps will provide the capacity needed to handle heavy rainstorms, such as the 2010, 2011, and July 2017 storm events, and serve as a backup in the event of a pump failure.

The project is estimated to begin in late 2020 with improvements functional by 2021 and construction finished in early 2022. Additional funding for the \$10.3 million project includes Flood Mitigation Program money from the State of Iowa and the local stormwater fee.



Bee Branch Creek Railroad Culverts Project

The railroad culverts project is a critical phase of the larger Bee Branch Watershed Flood Mitigation Project and, once completed, will greatly increase the flood mitigation system's capacity to protect the area from a 75-year rain event to a 500-year rain event.

The project involves using micro-tunneling methods to install six, 8-foot diameter pipes under the Canadian Pacific Railway along Garfield Ave. Each pipe is approximately 200 feet long. Construction began in July and a project kick-off was held on Aug. 8. To date, work has included shoring and constructing the launch and receiving pits for the micro-tunneling equipment.

In early November, 63 sections of pipe were delivered to the construction site. Each pipe weighs approximately 30,000 lbs. They will be stored on site until installation in the spring. Currently, micro-tunneling is expected to begin in mid to late April.

Project plans also include utilizing the two existing Bee Branch box culverts as a hike/bike path under the railroad tracks. This will allow for the direct connection of the trail systems associated with the lower and upper sections of the Bee Branch Creek. The estimated project completion is 2021.

RE-IMAGINE COMISKEY COMMUNITY KICK-OFF JANUARY 9

The City invites you to re-imagine Comiskey Park, located on Jackson St. between E. 24th St. and E. 25th St.

A Re-imagine Comiskey Community Kick-Off will be held on Jan. 9, from 6-8 p.m. at Audubon School. It will be an interactive evening of idea sharing and imagining. What amenities are important to keep and/or upgrade? What new equipment and activities would you like to see? Kids are welcome and complimentary food will be available. Share your ideas at the kick-off and/or through the community survey at www.cityofdubuque.org/comiskey.



On June 26, fourth graders from the St. Mark Youth Enrichment Summer Heroes Academy explored the Bee Branch Creek. They learned why the Bee Branch Creek was built, how watersheds work, ways to prevent stormwater pollution, and about the wildlife that now lives in the daylighted creek. They even sampled the water for invertebrates!

During September, three artists painted storm drain murals in the Bee Branch Watershed. The project is part of the City's education and outreach efforts to help community members understand that storm drains lead directly to our waterways. In the Bee Branch Watershed, storm drains lead to the Bee Branch Creek and then to the Mississippi River. See the murals at the following locations:

- Corner of W. 15th St. and Iowa St.
- White St. between 25th St. and 26th St.
- Lincoln Ave. in front of Audubon Elementary School



On October 9, students from Western Dubuque High School spent their morning cleaning up the banks of the Lower Bee Branch Creek. They collected 369 lbs. of trash. Any school or community group is welcome to volunteer in the Bee Branch Watershed! For more information, contact us at 563.690.6068 or email beebranch@cityofdubuque.org.

