

DECISION DOCUMENT

**U.S. EPA Region 7 Brownfields Cleanup Grant
Blum East Site
501 East 15th Street
City of Dubuque, Iowa**

Cooperative Agreement No. BF-97756201

March 25, 2020

PREPARED FOR:



PREPARED BY:



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Dubuque (City) received a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Hazardous Substances Cleanup Grant in 2016 to fund the remediation of the East Blum site generally identified as 501 East 15th Street in Dubuque, Iowa (site). The City entered into a cooperative agreement with the EPA to evaluate, design, and implement a permanent cleanup remedy for contaminated soils at the site. Conducting the referenced activities enable the City to 1) make a sound decision regarding the future use of the site and 2) meet the primary objective of the cleanup remedy. The work will ultimately mitigate potential human exposure risks while protecting the environment.

The purpose of this report is to document results of the public comment period and public meetings to include comments received and selection of the final cleanup remedy.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Site Location

The site contains two adjoining parcels generally identified as 501 East 15th Street in Dubuque, Iowa (refer to Appendix A). It is further located by the latitude 42.5089° North and longitude -90.6631° West. Information contained in Table 1 further describes the East Blum site.

Table 1

| PIN | Address | Acres | Brief Legal Description |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------|--|
| 1024284007 | 501 E 15 th Street | 0.15 | S 15'-255 & LOT 256 EAST DUBUQUE NO. 2 501-509 E 15TH ST |
| 1024284006 | E 15 th Street | 0.08 | N 35'- LOT 255 EAST DUBUQUE NO. 2 |

2.2 Site History

Table 2 outlines previous uses of the site according to available historical records.

Table 2

| Date(s) | Source(s) | Property Use(s) |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1884-1958 | Historical city directories and Sanborn maps | <p>Residential and commercial development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1884: The western portion of the site is a two-story grocery store and saloon while the eastern portion of the site is vacant with an outbuilding• 1891 and 1909: The western portion of the site is a two-story grocery store and saloon while the eastern portion contains multiple two-story dwellings• 1950: The western portion of the site is a two-story flat while the eastern portion contains multiple dwellings <p>City directories identified the site as 501-511 East 15th Street and listed it as multiple residences in 1954 and 1958.</p> |
| 1963-present | Historical aerial photographs and city directories, Dubuque County Assessor's Office website, and the site reconnaissance | <p>Industrial development</p> <p>Historical Sanborn map displayed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1970: The site is depicted as "steel storage" with two two-story buildings and one one-story building <p>City directories identified the site as 501-509 East 15th Street and listed it as "Blum Co Storage" in 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, and 1988 while it remained unlisted in 1992, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2008, and 2013.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | Observations made during the site reconnaissance identified an incinerator, staining on the ground and stored material, and hydraulic equipment on the site. The site operated as a scrap yard/recycling business. |
|--|--|--|

2.3 Nature of Threat to Human Health and Environment

HR Green, Inc. prepared a Phase I ESA on the site in conformance with the scope and limitations of ASTM Practice E 1527-13 on behalf of the City as part of an EPA Brownfields Petroleum Assessment Grant. The report, dated December 1, 2015, recommended further investigation after identifying on- and off-site recognized environmental concerns (RECs).

HR Green, Inc. prepared a Phase II ESA on the site in conformance with the scope and limitations of ASTM Practice E 1903-11 on behalf of the City as part of the same EPA Brownfields Petroleum Assessment Grant. The report, dated December 4, 2015, identified the following impact in shallow soil:

- **Range 1 Soil:** Sample results identified eleven (11) polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) compounds above laboratory reporting limits. Only benzo[a]pyrene at location SB5 was identified at a level *above* Statewide Standards (SWS). Sample results identified up to six (6) RCRA metals above laboratory reporting limits. Lead and arsenic at locations SB1, SB2 and SB5 were identified at levels *above* SWS.

The concentrations detected present an *unacceptable* cancer and non-cancer risk for a site resident, site worker, and construction worker.

The benzo[a]pyrene concentration detected during this study was above a former SWS of 0.31 mg/kg; however, when compared to the current SWS of 2.3 mg/kg the finding no longer exceeded the threshold. Additional screening for PAHs observed no exceedances. As such, benzo[a]pyrene is not a contaminant of concern on the site.

The Phase II ESA also assessed groundwater, vapor intrusion, and PCB contamination. The result from the vapor intrusion assessment and PCB testing did not identify an unacceptable risk to the site. While groundwater impact was identified, the City has an ordinance (Section No. 16-11-20) preventing the installation of private wells unless public water is unavailable. This action requires permit approval by the County's Health Department. Further, no wells may be installed within 500 feet of a LUST site. The County's Health Department prevents the installation of new wells on the site or adjacent properties. This action severs the groundwater ingestion pathway.

Ultimately, the results of the study indicated the site was not suitable for future residential, commercial, or industrial purposes without remediation of shallow soil. Further, surface material and asbestos abatement will require mitigation prior to building demolition.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD SUMMARY

Public participation is an important component to selecting an appropriate cleanup remedy. The City made a concerted effort to involve the community by disseminating information concerning options related to the removal of contaminated soil and engaging the public in meaningful dialog about redevelopment activities from September 14 to

December 15, 2017. Table 3 summarizes the duration and outcome of each outreach activity.

Table 3

| Activity | Date | Outcome |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Project website | October 20, 2017-December 15, 2017 | 439 online forms completed |
| Presentation at City Expo | September 14, 2017 | 86 participants in the dot survey |
| Paper ballots | Continuous | 66 forms completed |

3.1 Project Website

The City created a webpage for the site that launched in late August 2017 (<https://www.cityofdubuque.org/1821/Flood-Mitigation-Maint-Facility>). The tool provided a repository of project documents such as the Community Relations Plan, ABCA, Phase I ESA, Phase II ESA, Asbestos Survey, and Smelter Asbestos Report; an overview on the City's plans to redevelop the site along the restored Bee Branch Creek and the related Brownfields cleanup process; and a summary of environmental benefits of the cleanup/redevelopment and how it supported the City's sustainability goals. It also offered citizens a chance to comment on specific re-use options for the site via an online form.

3.2 Presentation

Staff presented the project at the annual City Expo hosted on September 14, 2017. The event allows Dubuque residents to learn about City services and programs and features booths, displays, and equipment from City departments and divisions. Participants were encouraged to place a dot on their favorite re-use options for the site.

3.3 Paper Ballots

The City made paper ballots available at publicly owned facilities such as city hall to capture additional feedback re-use options. Staff received 66 completed forms in the process.

3.4 Results

Through a combination of public events, paper ballots, and online forms, the City received almost 600 responses focused on the types of activities and equipment that residents thought would best serve the community on the site (refer to Appendix A for a summary). The public voted for their three favorite concepts from the following list of twelve options and/or submit their ideas.

- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Universal access to the water
- Climbing opportunities
- Natural playscape
- Bike playground
- Outdoor gathering space
- Multi-sport court
- Large sand area
- Small park pavilion
- Unique turf playscape
- Traffic garden
- Community room

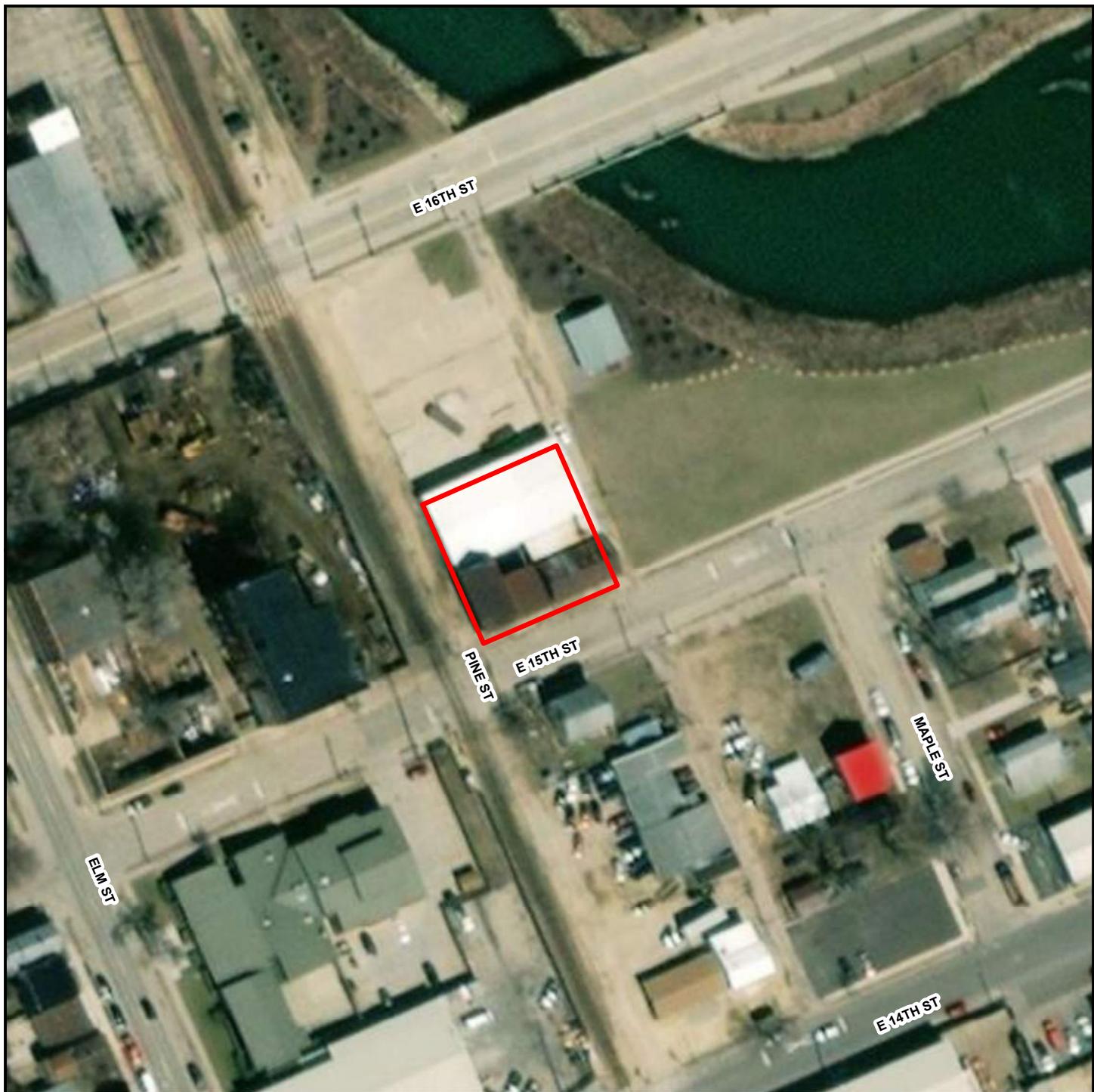
Preferred concepts included the natural playscape, climbing opportunities, a bike and scooter playground, access to the water, and outdoor fitness equipment. The proposed use of the site as recreational activity space was critical to informing and guiding the future cleanup process.

4.0 SELECTION OF FINAL CLEANUP REMEDY

Redevelopment plans for the site focus on recreational uses based on feedback gathered during the community outreach campaign. As such, remediation efforts must reduce exposure risks for future users of the new facility.

The City has already enrolled the site into the Iowa Land Recycling Program (LRP) to address the shallow soil impact in order to receive a No Further Action (NFA) certificate. The Iowa LRP specifies cumulative human health risk criteria that the project must comply with in order to acquire the certification. The removal of lead, arsenic, PAHs, and other contaminants at the Blum site will assist Dubuque in decreasing risks posed to human health. Proposed cleanup activities include the removal of impacted soil.

APPENDIX A
Site Location Map



Legend

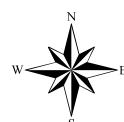


Subject Property

Figure 1
Site Location Map

East Blum Property
501 East 15th Street

City of Dubuque
Dubuque County, Iowa



0 50 100
1 inch = 100 feet



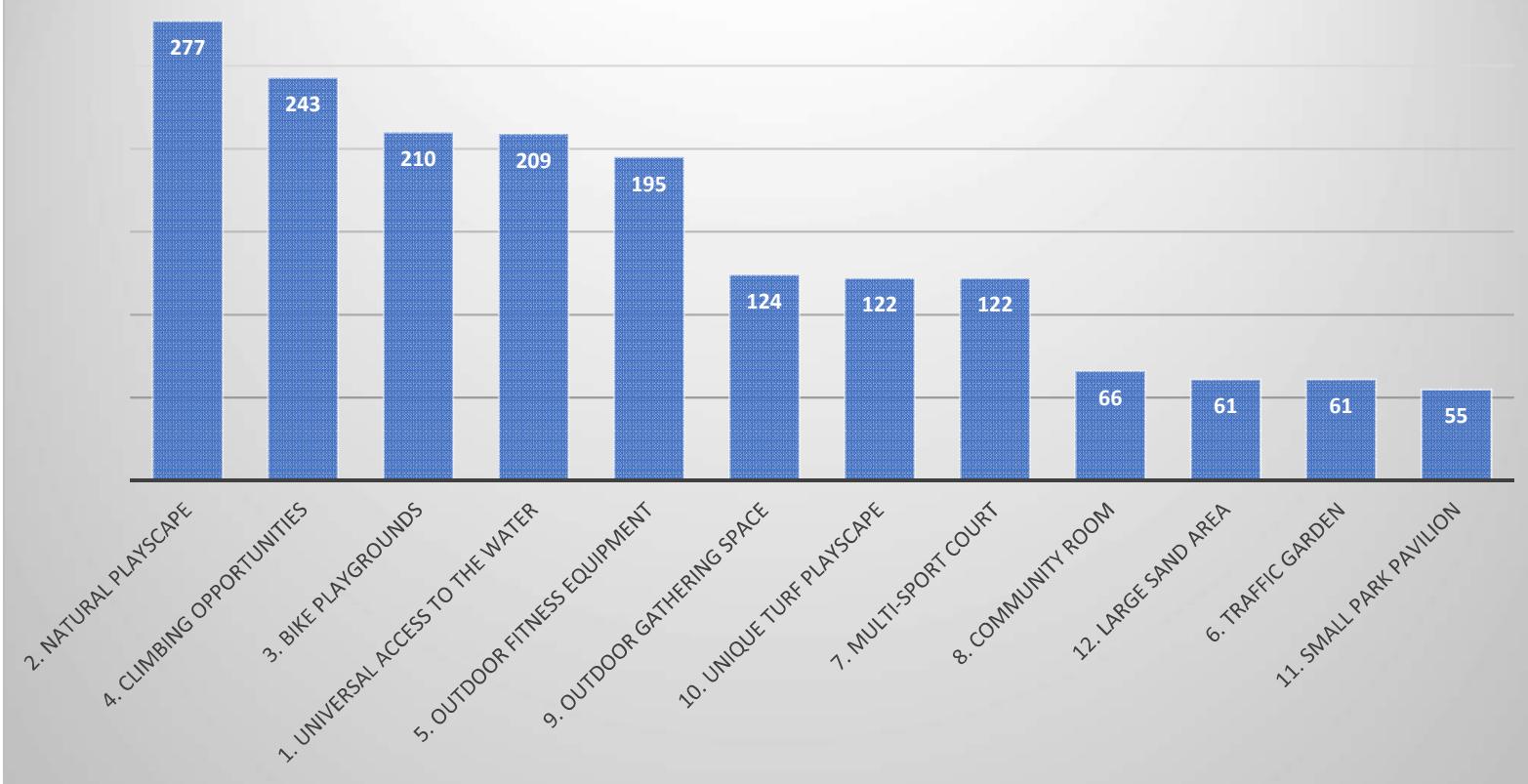
APPENDIX B

Public Feedback

Total Counts & Ranking

| Options | Total | Online Favorite 1 | Online Favorite 2 | Online Favorite 3 | Paper Ballots | City Expo |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------|
| 2. Natural Playscape | 277 | 102 | 68 | 46 | 17 | 44 |
| 4. Climbing Opportunities | 243 | 41 | 77 | 50 | 18 | 57 |
| 3. Bike Playgrounds | 210 | 82 | 48 | 53 | 14 | 13 |
| 1. Universal Access to the Water | 209 | 81 | 41 | 39 | 27 | 21 |
| 5. Outdoor Fitness Equipment | 195 | 36 | 39 | 28 | 28 | 64 |
| 9. Outdoor Gathering Space | 124 | 22 | 35 | 54 | 13 | NA |
| 10. Unique Turf Playscape | 122 | 24 | 34 | 55 | 9 | NA |
| 7. Multi-sport Court | 122 | 24 | 29 | 25 | 12 | 32 |
| 8. Community Room | 66 | 6 | 25 | 25 | 2 | 8 |
| 12. Large Sand Area | 61 | 12 | 14 | 25 | 10 | NA |
| 6. Traffic Garden | 61 | 5 | 18 | 9 | 6 | 23 |
| 11. Small Park Pavilion | 55 | 4 | 11 | 30 | 10 | NA |
| | 1745 | | | | | |

Total Counts & Ranking



Other Ideas and Comments

I miss having a place to ice skate in the winter with a warming house. Comiskey Park was my first job as a monitor!

I love the idea of having a park for children in that area, however there are a number of sex offenders living across the street from that property at the Elm St Correctional Facility, and many more within a reasonable walking distance. That might be completely irrelevant, but it's the first thing that came to mind.

Water features. Spouting fountains that kids can play in.

Budget for additional city workers or contracted property management workers to clean up the graffiti, litter, and drug paraphernalia that will accumulate on a daily basis. Include security lighting and extra police patrols in the budget as well.

Ideas 3, 6, 7, 8 10, 11 and 12 are VERY subject to abuse, and, along with 5 and 4 are subject to limited use in the summer. #4 also contains considerable risk whether or not liability is involved.

#2 could be made usable in the winter, especially since these kinds of elements are ALREADY subjected to the winter anyway. Some sandy areas, as in #12, could be easily incorporated, as should some greenery like shrubs.

#1 needs to be expanded to include the possibility of using the waterway down through the Bee Branch for tubing or kayaking or even, if larger enough and when water is sufficient, some whitewater activity. And making the retention basin at the bottom of the waterway for small boating on sheltered water is a GREAT idea, especially for novice kayakers like my spouse!

#9 gives some good gathering space for the upper end of the city, like several other parks farther south (like Washington Park) give there.

My OWN personal preference, in addition to green space, is redevelopment of SOME structure in that area into a grocery store, perhaps with a business Whichever idea is chosen, it would be advantageous to have the final product be ADA compliant/ inclusive to individuals with all kinds of abilities!!

Splashpad/playground

Play fountains or splash pad.

Garden paths with changing themes/stories or holiday decor/lighting or areas to reflect Dubuque's history.

How about a large ferris wheel.....?

Add a racket ball/ handball court to option #7.

Splash pad

Splash Pad

I like all of these ideas, I think the sand box idea though would be a maintenance headache for the city though.

The only Idea I have for this space would be a downtown mini arboretum or botanical gardens. I've always thought having the river and the city as backdrops for an arboretum would be a huge addition to the city and to low income residents and to the mill work district as well.

I also love the #3 bike/scooter playground

Another idea would be a splash pad

Splash pad

Splash pad

Some kind of indoor baby gym

Splashpad

An all inclusive playground <http://www.thegazette.com/subject/news/government/work-begins-on-first-all-inclusive-playground-in-cedar-rapids->

Dog park with a dock jump

Wheel chair accessible park!

Something with water would be fun or a unique mini putt park.

Please, please, please make a special effort to reach out to the nearby residents who would be the most likely users of this space. When I travel through that neighborhood I always see a fair amount of kids outside and I personally believe they could benefit most from this project by getting a nice place to play, not in the street. They deserve some green space where they can expend energy. Lots of good ideas on this to vote on! I really like the idea of a sport court. Again, thanks for putting this out. Please take care to publicize the vote to folks in the area who probably aren't watching the city website or Please ensure SAFETY for any choice!

a large multi level play area that would be destination playground. Something like the Lake Minnetonka Regional Park's Play Area,

Not really, just wanted to say that this is really cool that the city is freely accepting these ideas and asking the community for input!

Water pad

Splash pad!!!!

Splash pad

No fishing in the water, just kayaking/canoeing.

Turn it into a small park or other structure to replenish the ecosystem.

It would be AMAZING to have something similar to the Milwaukee Public Market, in Milwaukee, WI. It could be called, Dubuque Public Market. Other states, across the country, have also built similar markets. I strongly believe this would attract out-of-town visitors, especially from Wisconsin and Illinois. It would create a wonderful gathering space! Meetings, classes, community events, shopping (from many various local and non-local vendors...they don't all have to be food), and eating areas are held there. Online shopping would also be available. The building should be cohesive with its downtown

A dog park with agility obstacles. Dubuque is limited on where dogs get to go, a place for them to play at this end of town would be great.

How about making a traffic bridge over the railroad tracks at this location ? It is very upsetting how often there are stopped trains blocking the grade crossings at 14-15-16th streets. .

If there is not enough space between Elm Street and the tracks for the street to incline high enough to go over the railroad tracks, then please consider an "S" shaped curve, using the old scrapyard property for the street to run north (or south) in order to have sufficient rise over run for the street to clear the railroad tracks.

Alternatively, perhaps a "cars only" bridge over the railroad tracks.

While traveling this summer, we went to this playground which was so inclusive. It was the best park we've ever visited.

<http://mandanparks.com/parks-shelters/shelter-rentals/universal-playground/>

The playground includes a variety of tactile, visual and auditory experiences, including the following elements:

The playground was designed considering peoples physical, sensory, social, communication and cognitive abilities.
shouldn't put a playground over a hazardous waste site

Cut your losses. This land is toxic and will remain that way no matter what you spend to clean it. Keep the lot vacant so the taxpayers don't have to pay to build and maintain a park in an unsafe area where non-taxpayers will ultimately destroy whatever is built. Taxpayers need to benefit from their tax dollars. We don;t need another park. You could leave it toxic and call it the Roy Buol park I guess...

Hopefully there is a plan for parking for these too

#8 also!

Please no nasty turf or pavement projects. We have plenty or pavement already (also negatively affects drainage/run off) and turf is unsafe as a play

More parks to bring dogs with/without leashes

Consider some skate ramps for the kids.

As long as my dog is welcome, I don't really have an opinion

I feel as though a lot of these could be intertwined. Maybe have a community room/gathering space in a park like area with outdoor fitness equipment along the trail? Would be great for concerts, private parties (bridal showers, birthdays, retirement) and have fitness opportunities all right there. I also think that having some sort of indoor space is necessary with the varying temperature changes in the area.

Certified Monarch Waystations and or Pollinator Gardens can be incorporated in each of these, satisfying a number of the 12 Sustainability Principles: Resource Management, Community Knowledge And Native Plants & Animals

a dog friendly space; or at least partially dog friendly. Dubuque is behind the times relative to pet friendly options and alternatives. according to the APPA, approximately 44% of all households in the United States have a dog, and 35% have a cat. (Source: American Pet Products Association 2015-2016
Open air play water fountains. Splash pad.

A pet-friendly space... There is really a lack of pet-friendly areas for a City with such a large pet-owner population.

I like the long fishing pier and water access along with a sandy beach area together. There is currently no sandy beach area at this time in Dubuque.

Dubuque needs a beach. If not there, then take a hard look at Maus Park for a beach area

As a former member of the Gentlemen of Dubuque Rugby Football club, it was difficult to lose our fields to Mystique ice arena. It was around this time that our club participation began to wane and ultimately has led to the folding of the G.O.D. Our club was engaged in numerous civic and volunteer activities and our lack of a playing surface has been challenging. The lack of open, flat, green space in Dubuque has made it difficult to recruit players or Splash pad!

I would like to see an indoor walking area and play place for children. But not just any indoor walking area. The path should be unique with hills and curves. The outside walls should be windows so when you are walking you can feel like you are outside. The play place for children would be so adults could walk and the children could play. It could possibly be a pet friendly walk area, but not necessarily all the time. I am an avid outdoor walker and when the weather doesn't cooperate I am always looking for a place that feels like outdoors and not a round circle to walk in. An outdoor atmosphere Another great use for the space would be to put in a learning center. But not just any Learning Center a Learning Center specifically for the traffic impaired people who work for the city that decided it would be a great idea to put a stop light at every intersection in the city. They could go there and play with models of the cars and roads until they understand that slowing down traffic just pisses everyone off.

The large sand area idea is terrible, that would be a gigantic litter box....and there are already enough indoor community spaces.

shrubs. Transportation is important to get to jobs. A nice bus stop with roof protection would help. An outdoor exercise court and fitness equipment could benefit all, not only kids. If certain ideas do not work out, things can be taken out. Maybe try a few things at a time to see if they work. Also there could be surveys of the neighbors for constructive ideas.

Community Center including part of the center being used as a Senior Center. This should not exclude the ideas for outdoor fitness equipment for adults This is city owned property and since it can not be used, by law, for an area for children, I suggest a police sub-station such as was planned when the previous building was purchased for three times its value and then the building torn down. This would give the North End a much needed police Wouldn't let my child play in an area too contaminated for other purposes and in the vicinity of the halfway house.

Anything BUT an area where children and families would gather. Right across from the half way house and in an area that is contaminated with hazardous material??!?! You better believe me and my children would NEVER visit this area.

Most of these ideas are all child, child/parent focused...not bad ideas, however, there are many adults that would appreciate adult outdoor oriented uses as well for time away from the kiddos or for adults without children such as our family.

What about community gardening space? There is a severe lack of that in the surrounding neighborhood and the Washington St. Garden is in danger of losing their gardening space to the owner's development plans...fresh air, education and entertaining activities, and healthy food production rolled into casinos, markets, etc. An inspiration for this project is Railroad Park in Birmingham, AL--a space that was revived and is now an amazing area for friends/families/community to gather! <http://www.railroadpark.org>

please include shade and seats in whatever you develop. Dubuque has lots of great parks with nowhere for us to sit or be out of the sun while the kids Dog park.

Dog Park, or dog friendly park space

A dog park would be nice since the entire city of Dubuque only has a single, quite small, dog park and most in town parks currently disallow dogs. It would be nice to have more places where the entire family is welcome to be and play together. Ideally it would be a bit of an agility park.

I know everyone like to be outdoors--but how about something for indoors. For example a climbing wall. How about a partial indoor concert area to hold our Jazz festivals. How about a vendor area whether it would be food vendors or craft vendors. These would be portable vendor set ups. How about a place to show outdoor movies?? Actually all the ideas are great. Good luck in picking the right one.

Pet park

Bike paths all over that connect (like the one in hwy 20 and nw arterial).

Rent a kayak/canoe/paddle boat/bike. A way that someone could go and enjoy and not have to own each. But if they owned they could also use.

A splash pad for kids would be great.

If the new Y does not include an indoor rock climbing gym then this would be a great opportunity to put some indoor or outdoor bouldering opportunities. Municipal-owned climbing facilities include: <http://www.metroparks.net/parks-and-trails/scioto-audubon/> and <https://www.sioux-city.org/government/departments-g-p/parks-recreation-department/long-lines-family-rec-center/climbing-wall-info>

More bikes activities!

Splash pad!

Splash pad

A pump track for Bikes would be fantastic, I have seen the get a lot of use in other communities!

Mini golf, or a small cafe with coffee and lemonade and chicken tenders, serving as a place to hangout and it were next to a park with trees sidewalks etc for people to enjoy the area, or next to a bike route or a small bike shop for rentals.

Radio Controlled track

Special needs park

I think the more natural play space the better. Our youth spend entirely too much time glued to screens and every flashy colorful new toy or play equipment. We need to let our children have free play, let them climb, jump and fall in love with nature again... Please bring nature back into our play. Very good ideas and all are needed in Dubuque. Very difficult to choose only 3.

Parking lot

Dog park

All of these ideas are great!

Restroom

Pet park

Dubuque needs more campgrounds

Open area green space since Buol is the expert green mayor

Keep Miller Park camping. Thank you.