



DUBUQUE COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Dubuque County Conservation Board approved an Updated Comprehensive Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Plan at its September 24, 2026 meeting. The Plan was prepared by RDG Planning & Design based on input from public engagement sessions held throughout Dubuque County with input from Dubuque County Residents. The Updated Comprehensive Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Plan includes over 50 million dollars of identified capital projects for Dubuque County.

The Dubuque County Conservation Board was established in 1957 and manages twenty-five recreation and conservation areas in Dubuque County including eight campgrounds, fifty miles of trails including the twenty nine mile long Heritage Trail, three marinas, hunting and fishing habitat, and the Fillmore Golf Course.

In conjunction with the approval of the updated plan, the Dubuque County Conservation Board has identified a list of \$4.5 Million dollars of projects to be funded over the next five years in the event the Dubuque County Conservation Bond is approved by voters this November (see attached detail list) Or for the full master plan click the link: [here](#)). Headlining the first five years of capital projects are the build out of amenities at the recently acquired Locher Lake Recreation Area property in Cascade, numerous upgrades to the Heritage Pond recreation area north of Dubuque, improvements to the Balltown overlook, several trail bridge replacements and upgrades throughout Dubuque County and numerous Dubuque County Water Quality Initiatives.

The Dubuque County Conservation Board has also been informed by its financial advisors of a calculation revision of the Dubuque County Conservation Bond maximum tax impact. The original financial advisor highest cost estimate for the proposed Dubuque County Conservation Bond has been revised from \$4.88 per \$100,000 of residential home assessed value to \$9.58 per \$100,000 of residential home assessed value. The financial advisor estimate assumes the entire 18M bond would be issued up front with interest on the entire amount paid over twenty years. The Dubuque County Conservation Board intends to issue bonds in four or five increments over the twenty years to reduce bond interest costs. By issuing the Conservation Bonds in increments the Conservation Board believes the taxpayer cost of the bonds can be reduced to approximately \$6.50 per \$100,000 of residential home assessed value.

Dubuque County Conservation Board
Dubuque County Conservation Bond
Five Year Capital Improvement Project List

<u>Park</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Water Quality & Land Protection:		
McCarthy Wildlife Area	Wetland design and permitting for 5.5 acre wetland	185,000
Locher Lake Recreation Area	Stream shoreline restoration North Fork of the Little Maquoketa River	300,000
Heritage Pond	Shoreline restoration and erosion control along south side of pond	86,000
Finley's Landing Park	Ecological Restoration	60,000
Swiss Valley Preserve	Stream Shoreline restoration Catfish Creek	319,000
Heritage Trail	Streambank restoration & water trail access: Durango, Twin Springs, Budd Rd	<u>400,000</u>
	Sub Total Water Quality & Land Improvements	1,350,000
Park Improvements:		
Heritage Pond	Expand and renovate existing parking lot	455,000
Locher Lake Recreation Area	Entrance road, boat ramp, parking lot development + pit latrine near boat launch	1,336,000
Bankston Park	Retire old picnic area; maintain access to pump area	5,000
Little Maquoketa River Mounds	Refurbish educational signage on history of mounds and cultural significance	<u>4,000</u>
	Sub Total Park Improvements	1,800,000
Trails & Outdoor Recreation		
Heritage Pond	Add pedestrian pathway along south and west side / reroute trail around parking lot	210,000
Swiss Valley Preserve	Replace pedestrian bridges in the preserve	450,000
Balltown Overlook	Engineering analysis, replace barrier railing, accessible route, pedestrian barrier	239,000
Bankston Park	Pedestrian Bridge over Middle Fork of the Little Maquoketa River	225,000
Finley's Landing	Add primitive trails + ADA Route to the beach	216,000
Miller McGrawth Wildlife Area	Evaluate trail connection to Heritage Trail	<u>10,000</u>
	Sub Total Trails & Outdoor Recreation	1,350,000
	Total	4,500,000