

# Eagle Point Park named to National Register of Historic Places

BY THOMAS J. BARTON [thomas.barton@thmedia.com](mailto:thomas.barton@thmedia.com)

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Efforts to restore and enhance Dubuque's 164-acre Eagle Point Park have received federal support.

The park at 2601 Shiras Ave. recently was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is now one of 18 districts on the national register in Dubuque, according to a city press release.

Being added to the register will help facilitate planning and implementation of federally assisted projects within the park. It also extends eligibility for federal and state tax credits as well as public and private grants, according to city officials.

"It opens the door to a variety of funding sources to improve the park," said local architect Christian Monk, who is a member of the city's Historic Preservation Commission.

She said the national recognition is "a long time in coming" and provides "a great feather in the city of Dubuque's cap." Fellow Commission Member David Klavitter agreed.

"Dubuque is this city in a garden, and Eagle Point Park is this cool little model that emulates that" and highlights "the unique sense of place that differentiates Dubuque from other communities," Klavitter said. "With the river, the tree line topography and the historic architecture, it's all encapsulated at Eagle Point Park."

The park was conceived in 1907 by noted landscape architect Charles Robison and opened to the public in June 1910.

Streetcar traffic began to serve the park in 1912, and shortly after, the Riverfront Pavilion and Shiras Memorial Pavilion were constructed along the riverfront promenade.

The park took on a new look in the 1930s through a \$200,000 Works Progress Administration grant as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. The city hired landscape architect Alfred Caldwell, whose love of Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie architecture can be seen in the buildings and gardens constructed at the time.

Roosevelt toured the WPA work at Eagle Point during his re-election campaign in 1936, as did first lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

After World War II, the open-air pavilions, a band shell and other park amenities were added. Since 1990, updated play structures, accessible restrooms and landscape features were added.

The city received a \$200,000 grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in October to continue implementation of an environmental restoration management plan for the park.

Being placed on the national register could help the city secure additional public and private funding to aid those efforts, as well as help pay for future projects to survey and restore park structures, said city Assistant Planner David Johnson.

"Eagle Point Park is this unique community gem that is really unparalleled," he said. "There's nothing else quite like it in the state of Iowa or in the Midwest."