2014 ALL-STAR COMMUNITY AWARD APPLICATION

City: Spirit Lake  Population: 4,840

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Title of Project: Memorial Park Renovation & Lake Street Reconstruction

In a few sentences, give a summary of the project and why it was needed.

Memorial Park had been largely unimproved since the 1970's when the City received a grant from the National Park Service to make improvements and build a shelter house. Since then, this park has deteriorated and become obsolete. It had horseshoe pits, old playground equipment, gravel parking, and dilapidated restrooms. Park visitors were few due to the poor conditions. Realizing the potential of improving this park, located 3 blocks east of the downtown with 750 lineal feet of East Okoboji Lake shoreline, the City decided five years ago to make improvements. This set the course for a new shelter house with modern restrooms, new playground equipment, and a new splash pad. A walking path and paved parking were constructed, a rain garden to control run-off was installed, and brush cleared to improve the view of the lake. This project turned Memorial Park from one of the least used parks in Spirit Lake to one of the premier municipal attractions for northwest Iowa. Since Memorial Park would essentially be closed down during construction, the City Council expedited the planned reconstruction of adjoining Lake Street minimizing the disruption to the neighborhood. At completion in 2013, the residents could enjoy the newly constructed 5 block section of Lake Street that passes Memorial Park and also connects the downtown to US Highway 71/IA 9. The new street has wide sidewalks, decorative lighting, and improved infrastructure.

The renovated Memorial Park is a culmination of a partnership with the Spirit Lake Noon Kiwanis that donated $160,000 to help cover the cost for the new splash pad. The Kiwanis and the City coordinated a community-wide volunteer effort to construct the playground equipment at the site. In addition, a commemorative plaque and flag pole was installed so the park now pays tribute to the Veterans of Dickinson County. The Dickinson County Clean Water Alliance also contributed funds for rain gardens that drain and infiltrate the storm runoff from the new parking lot.

Project Funding and Execution:

Total Cost/Projected Cost of Project: $2,084,800  or  ☐ no cost

List where funding came from (grants, donations, city funds, etc.)
Grants and numerous private donations covered approximately 20% of the Memorial Park costs. City funding from TIF funds and the sale of general obligation bonds covered the remainder of the project.

Total time project took/projected to take for completion:
(to qualify project must be operating or completed between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013)

May 22, 2012  July 27, 2013  or  ☐ Project is ongoing

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continued on next page
Explain the specific role of your city in this project.
In 2006, the Spirit Lake Parks Committee developed a comprehensive plan for the City's six parks that would form the vision of the city park system. The study involved public input, and considered demographics, development trends, and issues and priorities facing outdoor recreation. In part, the completed report addressed the need for additional improvements in Memorial Park. In 2008, the City sought additional public input for what the residents would like to see added to Memorial Park, then hired a firm to develop a master plan that included the top 10 amenities determined from public input. Shortly after, Kiwanis Club approached the City with a plan to raise funds for a splash pad. This proposal fit with plans to upgrade the park. The Council set the combined project as a high priority and provided most of the funding. The City procured design and construction services, and coordinated volunteer efforts.

In a few sentences, what future impact will this project have on your community?

The Memorial Park Improvements project will serve as a source of pride for this community for years to come. Numerous volunteers participated from beginning to end. It symbolizes that the City is interested in what the City residents need and want and that public/private partnerships to accomplish mutual goals are possible and successful. Because of the regional attraction of the Iowa Great Lakes, the park and its splash pad will continue to be a draw for the people in Northwest Iowa. We have regularly seen over 200 people a day enjoying the renovated park. It has attracted residents and visitors and made Spirit Lake even more of a family-friendly community.

The Lakes Street Reconstruction project serves as an extension of the downtown and connection to the Memorial Park. Neighboring property owners in the surrounding area and along Lake Street have responded by making improvements to their property. Prior to the Park and road project, this area of town appeared neglected. To date, we have seen more than a half dozen homes get "facelifts" greatly improving the value to the property and area of town. This will hopefully continue into the future and serve as impetus for other nearby property owners to do the same.

Resources
Please list Web sites judges may reference if they seek additional information. Do NOT include supplemental paper information. Only information on this form or the sites listed will be used in the judging process.

www.cityofspiritlake.org

See the link on the main page for All Star Memorial Park Project to download self running Power Point Presentation (90 second presentation).

Signatures: (Must be signed to be eligible. Most members print to sign)

[Signatures]

Return this form by Monday, April 7, 2014.

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