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

Merchants Park was constructed in 1949 and the semi-professional baseball team, The Merchants, first played in Carroll there into the early 1950’s. Later the park was the location of the Iowa High School State Baseball Championships from the 1990’s until 2005. The stadium is the location of home baseball games played by local Carroll Community High School and Kuemper Catholic High School.

Since 2015, the stadium has been the home of the Merchants; not a semi-pro team as they had been in the past, but a part of the newly formed Corn Belt Summer Collegiate Baseball League. In 2017, the Merchants became a part of the Pioneer Collegiate Baseball League which provides college players an opportunity to develop their skills so they can potentially enter the Major League Baseball Amateur Draft.

The Carroll Athletic Association realized the stadium needed an upgrade and worked with City Officials as well as local businesses and schools to begin a major renovation of the ball park. Grants played a large part of the funding as well. They soon realized the need to bring the stadium into compliance with today’s building codes. This included ensuring handicap accessibility, which added eight spaces for wheelchairs, and improving the restrooms. A new ticket booth and concession area was also part of the renovation. The audio system was updated and the dugouts were also improved. The concrete risers were refurbished and the concrete columns under the roof were repaired. The walls behind home plate and along the first and third baselines were completely reconstructed as they were starting to crumble.

The historic integrity of the building was always kept in mind as the renovations were completed. The Carroll Historic Preservation Commission worked with the Carroll Athletic Association to bring historical information and photos relating to the park to the stadium. There are six 5x4 signs around the stadium which tell the story of Merchants Park. The signs provide a history of the stadium from the semi-pro ball played there to the current high school teams that call the stadium home.

The stadium has hosted “The King and His Court”, all-star wrestling, bands, Negro League games and barbecues along with much more. The stadium has won two State Diamond of the Year awards which is awarded by the Iowa High School Baseball Coaches Association.

Explain the specific role of your city in this project:

The City not only played a financial role in bringing the refurbishing of Merchants Park to completion but also provided labor hours by many city employees. The Parks Department provided numerous hours of support and the Parks and Recreation Director was involved in planning.
In a few sentences, what future impact will this project have on your community?

The newly renovated Merchants Park will be just one more attraction the City of Carroll has to offer. Drawing fans from miles away impacts the City of Carroll in many positive ways from hotel stays to shopping and eating out. An important part of anyone making the decision on where to live in Iowa is amenities. Having a renovated stadium with an active baseball team is just one more amenity the City of Carroll can offer young families looking for a new place to live. Many local businesses have sponsored games which allows for free or low cost entry into the games. Also, they encourage attendance by having giveaways and fun events during the baseball games. There have been contests between the local mascots of DMACC, Carroll High School and the Carroll Public Library, fun for all!

Total cost of project: $1,108,000.00

List where funding came from. (grants, donations, city funds, etc):

• City Funds: $708,000.00, • Carroll Athletic Association fundraising: $206,234.00, • Vision Iowa Board Grant: $133,766.00, • Union Pacific Grant: $10,000.00, • Carroll Community Board of Supervisors: $10,000.00, • Carroll Community High School & Kuemper

Total time project took/projected to take for completion. Please include start date and end date. (To qualify the project must be operating or completed between January 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017):

Planning for the project began in 2014. In 2015, bids were taken. Unfortunately, the bids were higher than budgeted so the City and the Carroll Athletic Association went back to the drawing board. Some demolition work that was in the original bid was comp

Resources. (Please list Web sites judges may reference if they seek additional information.):