



QC Convention and Visitor Center CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

MARVELS ON THE MISSISSIPPI™

Dear: REAP Committee Members,

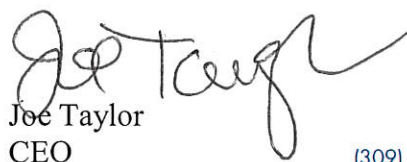
On behalf of the Quad City Convention and Visitor's Bureau, I write to lend my support to the City of Davenport's application for REAP funds to add amenities to the Veterans' Memorial Park on the west side of downtown Davenport.

Davenport has worked diligently in recent years to enhance and share the Davenport experience with updates and improvements to its downtown and riverfront that began with Vision Iowa funds in 2000. Since that time, Davenport has invested more than \$400 million in public and private funds in downtown Davenport with more than \$100 million more in projects in the planning stages. These downtown businesses generated \$14.2 million in food and beverage sales, adding to the local tax base, while continuing to attract visitors from around the region, the country and the world.

Adding the planned amenities to Veteran's Memorial Park will serve an important western anchor to the downtown development, improving Davenport's image as a tourist destination. With the completion of this project, Davenport will offer 9 miles of publicly-owned, unobstructed riverfront parks with access to the Riverfront Trail and river itself. These riverfront parks provide the outdoor amenities, river access,, and greenspace that tourists desire. It enhances the visitor experience by offering a roadway and riverway stopping point to enjoy the natural beauty of eastern Iowa and the Mississippi River valley, learn more about our community and its heritage, and honor and recognize the military veterans who served this country. By working with the Rock Island Arsenal Visitor Center, Davenport Parks and Recreation, Historic Preservation Commission, Davenport Levee Improvement Commission, River Action, and Friends of Veterans Memorial Park (and others), we can jointly promote and produce informative and interesting programming on historical and environmental topics. Veterans Memorial Park will also provide a perfect setting for an outdoor classroom including learning about the flora and fauna indigenous to the area and ways that a city can reclaim a decommissioned landfill and turn it into a beautiful recreational area. It also becomes an area to host a festival or other community gathering. Further, the project will assist in fulfilling our Corridor Management Plan's multi-modal goal by offering diverse transportation opportunities along the river. These all become marketing opportunities when encouraging tours and groups to choose Iowa as the site of an athletic tournament or to host a business meeting.

For these reasons and more, I wholeheartedly endorse the improvements proposed for Veterans Memorial Park as outlined in this application.

Sincerely,



Joe Taylor
CEO

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