



# FEMA

## *Park and Campground Spurs Local Economy in Acquisition Neighborhood*

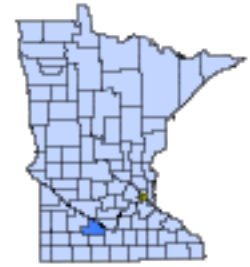
The City of Springfield in southwestern Minnesota has a long history of flooding from the Big Cottonwood River. One flood-prone neighborhood experienced flooding nearly every decade since the 1940s. After the 1993 flood almost surpassed the 1969 flood of record, the City took advantage of federal and state funding to acquire 14 properties in the neighborhood. The acquisitions allowed the City to expand the existing campground into a large, recreational attraction for the surrounding area that has become an economic asset to the City and its residents.

The benefit the City gains from having such a unique and diverse park area has been an economic renovation for the small community of 2,000 residents. Located in an agricultural region, Springfield's Riverside Park and Rothenburg Campground provide camping, swimming, baseball, and other recreational opportunities to an otherwise rural area. City Manager Malcolm Tilberg sums up the distinctive small town by saying "diversity strengthens the economic fabric of the town, making it more than just a retirement community."

With the devastating flood of 1993, the homes became more unstable and unsafe for the families living there. When FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds became available and the State provided the local match, the City of Springfield welcomed the opportunity to acquire those homes and give the families a chance to relocate out of harm's way. The City submitted an application to acquire 14 homes. Two of the homes were across the river from the campground, but the other 12 properties were nicely grouped and provided an ideal location for reuse as a park.

Prior to 1993, Rothenburg Campground, located in the flood-prone neighborhood, was surrounded by residential homes that repeatedly flooded. After the acquisition project, the City enlarged the campground and created an immeasurable community asset. People from neighboring towns come to Springfield to use the campground, ball fields, swimming pool and waterslide, tennis and volleyball courts, canoe landing, and biking paths. The City is earning more income from the campground and park than was earned from property taxes, while saving thousands of dollars each time it floods because the flood liability is so greatly reduced.

This small, rural community is now enjoying an economic gain after acquiring the flood-prone homes and ending their flood fighting every decade. The vast park and recreational features draw visiting groups like Little League teams and attracts families who spend money on a variety of activities in the town. The campground draws visitors who gladly pay their registration fee to camp in such a scenic area with a variety of family-friendly activities. The City's 2,000 residents benefit by living in a town with the best recreational facility per capita than can be found in many surrounding counties.



**Brown County,  
Minnesota**



### **Quick Facts**

- Year: **1993**
- Sector: **Public**
- Cost: **\$197,000.00 (Actual)**
- Primary Activity/Project: **Acquisition/Buyouts**
- Primary Funding: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**