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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 21, 2017

REPURPOSED STEPS ADDED TO NO. 1 ALLEY CATCH BASIN

100-year-old sandstone steps came from former jail, saved and repurposed

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Sandstone steps were added to the catch basin along No. 1 Alley between Cedar and Sycamore streets this past week by the Department of Public Works. The



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steps, which were not part of the original plan for the catch basin, were added to allow individuals parking in Lot 4 to cross the catch basin without having to walk through it.

The catch basin was established to gather storm water flowing off the roofs of the businesses onto No. 1 Alley, reducing the risk of erosion and pavement damage by the running water.

“There were supposed to be curb openings that would allow the water into the catch basin but they were not installed,” Randy Howell, Department of Public Works street maintenance supervisor, said. “That is fixed now but the steps were never installed. Now they are.”

Not only were the sandstone steps added to the catch basin, they were surrounded by 4-6 erosion stone to prevent the steps from being dislodged and moved during times of heavy rainfall.

“This is just one example of how we try to repurpose material,” Howell said.

When buildings are taken down or streets torn up, some of that material ends up in the Department of Public Works storage area.

“We even crush the concrete we remove from the streets and repurpose it as the base for streets and alleys,” Howell said. “We have 100-year-old stone that we have stored and have used in different projects. It is giving back to the community at no cost to the community.”

Sometimes Howell will have contractors approach the City of Muscatine in search of material while renovating old homes and businesses.



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“We have been able to stockpile material and allow that material (such as soft bricks) to be used in repairing older homes,” Howell said. “When something is torn down, we just cannot let it all go to the landfill. What we can salvage and repurpose we can.”

The catch basin is on ongoing project with several native plants that will assist in the absorption of storm water to be planted in the near future.

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