



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community to Receive \$175,000 in Grant Funding for Trail

Battle Lake, MN, February 23, 2009 – Last week our community received notification from the Minnesota Department of Transportation that our Bike and Pedestrian Trail application was approved for \$175,000 of grant funding.

Each year, the federal government provides funding for local transportation enhancements across the United States. Qualified and approved projects in the Federal Transportation Enhancement Program may receive up to 80% grant funding, with the remainder to be matched with local dollars.

Nearly a year ago, a diverse group of community members, government officials and engineers developed a two-part trail concept that would connect the existing trail in Battle Lake to Glendalough State Park, and eventually contemplate a trail loop within Glendalough State Park. The entire concept was presented to a state evaluation committee, with a specific grant request to fund Phase 1 – the Battle Lake to Glendalough Interconnection Trail. The application passed through several detailed assessment committees, and was approved on February 18th by MN DOT District 4 Transportation officials.

Keven Anderson from MN DOT and the Area Transportation Partnership offered these remarks in his letter, "It is my pleasure to inform you that your Battle Lake to Glendalough Interconnection trail project submitted for District 4 Transportation Enhancement funds was approved. The project will be entered into the 2010 – 2013 State Transportation Plan in the year 2013. ATP4 has agreed to provide \$175,000 with Transportation Enhancement Funds."

We have learned that numerous applications were submitted from across the nine counties in District 4, and amounted to more than \$2.5 million dollars in requests for the \$600,000 that was available for distribution. The lakes area request was one of two applications approved, and the only one that was fully funded.

Considerable research was completed on both phases of the trail prior to submitting the application. The application was strengthened by the broad support shown by the Otter Tail County Board resolution as the sponsoring entity, resolutions passed by the City of Battle Lake and Everts Townships as subordinate sponsors, resolutions of support by the Glendalough Park Partners, and letters of support from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Parks Division), School District 542, and Lakes Area Development.

We are optimistic the \$175,000 will lead to an excellent community asset and will enable significant recreational, academic and economic benefits for the area. Because our trail is

uniquely adjacent to a state park, it may experience the well-documented benefits experienced by other similar communities in the state.

We now have ample time to proceed with the important work of the trail, which includes community meetings to discuss engineering considerations, establishing a cooperative government approach to manage the trail project, and raising the local matching funds from additional grants and philanthropy. The fund raising work is well underway. It is the objective of the planning team to commence the project in 2013 with little or no tax impact or obligations for future maintenance. These are very achievable outcomes.

About Lakes Area Development Association

Lakes Area Development Association enables economic development in the lakes area with business expansion services, new investments, and community enhancements while preserving a superb quality of life. The association's address is P.O. Box 895, Battle Lake, MN 56515.

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