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BY DESIGN

Watertown Wastewater Treatment Facility Receives National Award from EPA

 The City of Watertown, Minnesota, was honored recently by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with the Region 5 first place award for small cities with advanced wastewater treatment facilities. The city was one of ten in the region to receive recognition for excellence in wastewater treatment system operations. Region 5 includes the states of Minnesota, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

Having won a first place regional award, Watertown was nominated for, and won, one of 3 national awards that will be presented at the Water Environment Federation Conference in October.

David Stoltenberg, regional awards coordinator for the EPA, said in his July 16 presentation, "The award is strong evidence of the good that one facility can do in the protection of our fragile environment. The Watertown facility is living proof that excellence in operation and maintenance can be achieved through diligent effort. You have set high standards for yourselves, and you have achieved them. It is gratifying to recognize the exceptional performance of Wastewater Manager Doug Kammerer and his staff."

Kammerer takes pride in both the short-term results and the potential long-term effects of the City's commitment, "The people of this community have made a significant investment in the future of our region. Before the new facility was



Doug Kammerer, Wastewater Manager (right), accepts the Region 5 Award from David Stoltenberg of the Environmental Protection Agency.

constructed, water returning to the Crow River had a biodegradable oxygen demand (BOD) count of 30; now it's often as low as 1.3 or 1.4 and we're still improving through operational fine-tuning. Other communities, as well as the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, have taken notice; I believe that all the cities on the river will eventually have to come down to these limits because we've proven it's possible. It's exciting to know that the fish and wildlife population will benefit, and that recreational use of the area is on the increase."

Bolton & Menk, Inc. worked closely with William Engelhardt & Associates, Inc., City Engineer, in providing the design and construction management services for the wastewater treatment facility. The facility has been in operation since 1994.

BMI Chairman Bill Sayre Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Congratulations to Bill Sayre, who was awarded the *Tom Roche Lifetime Achievement Award* on June 4. The award was presented by the Consulting Engineers Council of Minnesota. The award reads, in part: *"To Bill Sayre...who by example, persistence, knowledge of human nature, and organizing ability... has been a positive influence in raising the professional and economic standards of all consulting engineers."*



Bill Sayre, right, accepts his award from Cam Kruse, the 1997 Tom Roache Award winner.

Bill Sayre joined the firm in 1960. He managed the Fairmont office, and became President of the company in 1986. In 1995, he stepped down as President and was named Chairman of the Board. He has since returned to the Fairmont office to continue his engineering work. Bill has been very active in ACEC and was the 1994-95 President of the Minnesota chapter. Bill and his wife, Clarann, live in Blue Earth and love to travel, ski, spend time at their cabin and with their grandchildren.



Windom Celebrates Opening

The City of Windom, Minnesota celebrated the completion of its new water treatment plant on July 31, 1998 with an open house and tours of the facility. BMI provided design and construction engineering services for the project.

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Recreational Trail Development

A Relatively Small Investment in Recreational Trails Can Reap Huge Rewards for a Community

Throughout the Midwest, use of off-street trail systems has emerged as a popular form of recreation in recent years. Trails provide simple, affordable recreational opportunities for people who enjoy walking, biking and rollerblading. They offer unique perspectives on the natural beauty of a region, opportunities for environmental exploration, and access to areas that may have been underutilized before the trails existed.

Economic Growth

Recreational benefits aside, trail systems almost universally bring economic growth to the regions they touch. Trails energize local economies with the addition of services for trail users. They increase public knowledge of a community's qualities and attractions. And often, they attract new residents who are interested in a community with the quality of life trails help to create.

Neighborhoods & Community

Ron Roetzel, P.E., who has served as project manager for several BMI trail projects, believes that trails can play an important role in the creation of neighborhoods and communities.

"In our experience, trails enhance the interaction of residents within a community. They provide a gateway to the adjacent woodlands, wetlands, and open spaces. In addition, trail development is a very people-oriented process. The more resident and environmental agency involvement which can be achieved in the early stages, the better chance of achieving community acceptance and approval of the final layout."

Begin with an Open Gathering

Establishment of a trail does not need to be difficult, expensive, or prolonged. Communities that are interested in trail construction often begin the process with an open house or public hearing on trail planning. This gathering promotes the idea, explains the process, and gives trail proponents an opportunity to gauge public support for the concept. It is extremely important at this point to understand the priorities of constituents. It is also a prime time to find out whether or not support extends to other municipalities or counties in the region and to determine right-of-way needs and issues.

Create a Comprehensive Plan

When approved, the idea leads to completion of a comprehensive plan for trail development. Working with a city planner, decisions are made concerning location of trails, usage patterns, and projected growth within the community. This thorough planning process enables the community to look ahead with confidence, prioritize projected investments, and proceed with plans that will enhance the community's quality of life, step by step.

Funding is Available

With a comprehensive plan completed, the process of funding begins. The plan itself becomes a primary tool in this process. Local funding from individuals or groups within a community is important, but may often be inadequate. It becomes necessary, therefore, to seek additional funds from private foundations or government agencies. These groups pay special attention to cooperation, local initiative, and sound comprehensive planning as they prioritize spending.

The City of Red Wing, Minnesota has begun work on a trail project with BMI that will extend the popular Cannon Valley Trail. The project will utilize funding from two governmental agencies. Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds were awarded by the federal government, and Minnesota's Department of Natural Resources granted funds as well.

Brian Peterson, Red Wing's City Planner, handled funding for the project, "The challenge for me was to coordinate the requirements of various funding sources and to obtain the necessary matching funds. Our experience with the Cannon Valley Trail helped; that joint powers project included a comprehensive plan that had already established the character of the trail. We simply brought it into the city limits."

Environmental Precautions

While not necessarily expensive, trail projects can become increasingly so when environmental concerns arise. An environmental review is a standard step in the construction process; the review lays the groundwork for safe long-term passage of the trail through wetlands and other sensitive areas, and addresses the handling of project-specific issues such as the presence of



Considering a trail for your region?

HERE'S HOW:

- 1** Invite the public to an open house or public hearing with information about trail planning.
- 2** Secure funding for the project.
- 3** Allocate funds and secure right-of-way, if needed.
- 4** Conduct field topography for the trail area.
- 5** Do an environmental and permit review of the trail area.
- 6** Design the trail in cooperation with an engineer.
- 7** Invite the public to a second open house, where the design can be viewed and commented upon.
- 8** Finalize the design.
- 9** Construct trail system.

*Trails,
continued on page 4*

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hazardous waste dumps on the trail route. The service of a local DNR Wetlands Coordinator helps at this point in the process. Projects completed with federal ISTEA funds require submission of an environmental assessment sheet. Minnesota State-funded projects proceed only if they meet State planning and design guidelines, which include attention to environmental and safety issues. Projects funded solely with local money are not required to meet all state or federal funding guidelines. However, these guidelines should be considered, particularly if the "local" trail will one day be part of a regional trail system. All projects must conform to wetland permitting and other pertinent regulations.

Project Length

Trail planning and construction normally spans a one- to two-year period. The pace of a project is most often related to issues of funding, environment, and land acquisition. If controversial issues do not exist, an entire trail project can be completed in less than two years including planning and funding acquisition.

Planning for Maintenance

When complete, trails require minimal maintenance attention. Managers need to make decisions concerning plowing; trails may be cleared and sanded for winter walking or left snow-covered for cross-country skiing. A regular schedule of surface maintenance is also important.

BMI assisted the City of Hastings with completion of a trail last year, in conjunction with the Dakota County Road 42 project. Park Superintendent, Lee Erickson, is involved in maintenance of the trail, "As an employee responsible for the appearance and maintenance of parks, I sometimes hate to spend time there," laughs Erickson, "I always see something that needs to be done. Since construction of this last trail, however, I hear positive comments whenever I'm out. The trail is busy, because it's made a beautiful perspective of the river available to people."

Erickson says spending a little more money at the time of construction can save trail maintenance dollars later. He also cites the importance of design that takes practical maintenance concerns into consideration.



"We've tried to be consistent with regular maintenance tasks, and to plan well for ongoing maintenance projects. Research of seal-coating and overlay methods has been important for us, and we're creating a plan that involves work of this sort approximately every five years."

"In Hastings, we haven't added staff to take care of this trail, but we have replaced a truck and added a snowplow. The trail has caused us to reprioritize some maintenance tasks, but it's definitely worthwhile."

For more information about trail planning and design, contact Bolton & Menk, Inc.