

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXPLORING THE BEATEN PATHS.

Grand Rapids, MI (September 3, 2008) – There are many things to explore in the next phase of Kent County’s massive Millennium Park project. Almost 140 years ago the Kalamazoo, Allegan, & Grand Rapids Railroad was completed. It ran as part of the New York Central Railway until abandoned in the mid-1970’s (Berry). Along with West Michigan’s rapidly expanding furniture industry, it serviced Grand Rapids west side gypsum mines and aggregate industry. After years of neglect and abuse, the County has acquired: the railroad right of way, the gravel pits surrounding it, and the abandoned gypsum processing facility. Wolverine Building Inc. has been chosen to help it develop these unique assets into the Meijer Trails system.

In an effort to preserve the original pathway and minimize further disruption to the Grand River’s floodway, Wolverine will rehabilitate the existing railway bed and two of it’s trestle’s into a pedestrian pathway. Many unique features will grace more than four miles of the Meijer Trails as they wind past: ponds, reclaimed gravel pits, wetlands teeming with wildlife, the once thriving gypsum processing area, oil wells, and the mighty Grand River. The route will take you over three new pedestrian bridges, two rehabilitated railroad trestles, and connect to the existing Kent Trails system and Johnson Park. Future phases will connect directly to the main facilities of Millennium Park on Maynard Ave in Walker.

Wolverine’s project manager, Dulane Coval, says “It’s a jungle out there! The terrain and vegetation almost remind me of the swamps of Louisiana. We’re working in an area where the misquotes are as big as sparrows and a heavy rain can shut you down in a matter of an hour. The deer are so thick that we’re going to lose more time to workers dreaming of hunting season than every other distraction combined. In all seriousness, this project is going to throw a lot of obstacles at us, but we have a very strong team and a great design from O’boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, Inc., and their engineers at Byce. & Associates, Inc. It’s one of those oddball projects that’s a logistical nightmare, but it will be a very remarkable project and a great asset to West Michigan when it’s done.”

Wolverine Building, Inc. is a full-service general contractor with more than 68 years of experience providing exceptional construction services to industrial and commercial clients throughout West and Central Michigan.

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Reference:

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