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# Press Release

## St. Charles opens new park & ride lot!

**St. Charles, MN, July 9, 2010.** The City of St. Charles opened a new multi-purpose parking lot on the site of the old Brookwood mobile home park that was severely damaged by the flood of 2007. The parking area was purchased with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and DNR (Department of Natural Resources) funding as a result of flood mitigation.

The new 92-stall parking lot will be utilized as a Park & Ride location for commuters to the Rochester area. In addition, the lot will serve a local park that is projected to become a trail head for the future Whitewater Country Loop bicycle/walking trail.

“This will serve as a central location for our commuters,” explained Mayor Bill Spitzer. “This will now free up our other municipal lots for downtown customers and free the neighborhoods of commuter parking.”

A ribbon cutting was held this morning just before 6 am and commuters were welcomed by city officials. They were also served coffee provided by Cabin Coffee and served homemade St. Charles Bakery muffins.

St. Charles encourages residents to utilize the Park & Ride service provided by Rochester City Lines. More information is located on the Rochester City Lines website and will soon be linked to the community website.

[http://www.rochestercitylines.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=259&Itemid=72](http://www.rochestercitylines.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=259&Itemid=72)

In 2004 three existing trail advocacy groups working independently decided to work collaboratively on a trail system that will connect all three trails creating a 50 mile State Trail

loop. This loop connects the cities of Rochester, Eyota, Dover , St.Charles, Elba, Plainview , Elgin and Viola with the Whitewater and Carley State Parks and Olmsted County's Chester Woods Park . The original three groups are: Great River Ridge, Chester Woods and Whitewater/St.Charles Trail Committees. Each had made some progress but with the larger plan we were able to promote it to a larger audience and we have been able to gain from the experience and knowledge of each other. Since we began working together an additional 8 miles of trail on the Great River Ridge has been paved and 5 miles of trail will be built between Rochester and Olmsted's Chester Woods County Park in 2010. We anticipate having another 11 miles of trail purchased in 2010 on the Chester Woods Trail and the St.Charles/Whitewater Trail. We are also working on funding for a bridge that would cross State Hwy 14 connecting the Great River Ridge Trail and the Chester Woods Trail.

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