

**2025 HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**HB 1256**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1256

1/23/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the parks and recreation department for a walking trail recreation grant.

9:01 a.m. Chairman Porter opened meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson, Vice Chairwoman Novak, Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Johnson, Marschall, Olson, M. Ruby, Conmy, Foss

Members absent: Representative Heinert

### **Discussion Topics:**

- Walking trail

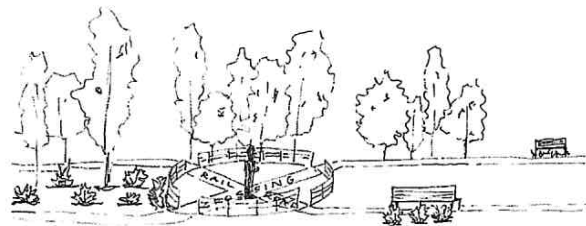
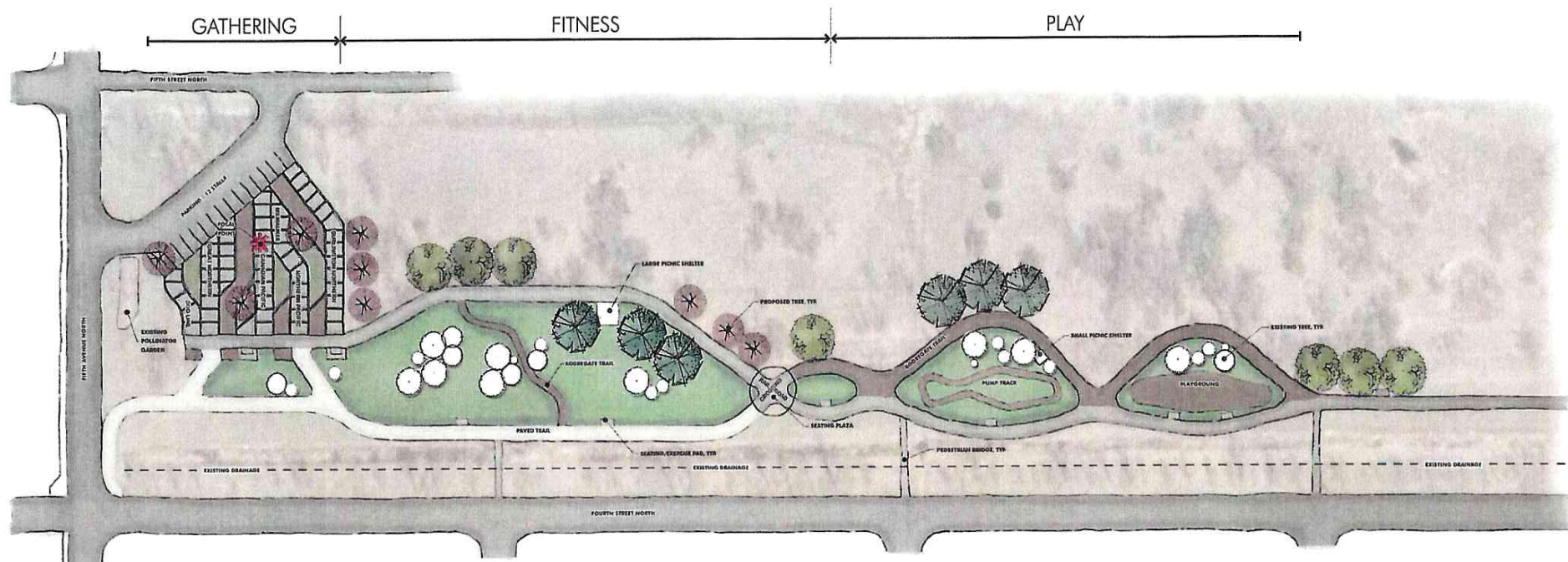
9:02 a.m. Representative Grueneich introduced the bill and submitted testimony #30590.

### **Additional written testimony:**

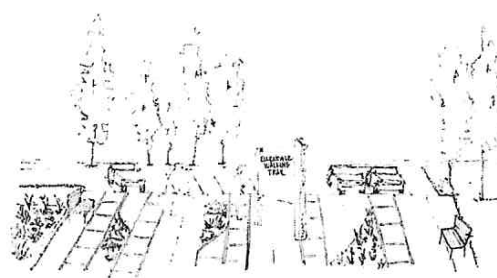
Don Flaherty, Mayor of Ellendale, submitted testimony in favor #30778.

9:08 a.m. Chairman Porter closed the meeting.

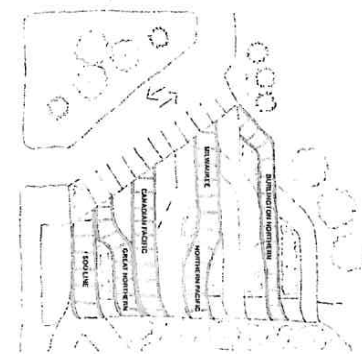
*Janae Pinks, Committee Clerk for Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*



TRAIL CROSSING PERSPECTIVE

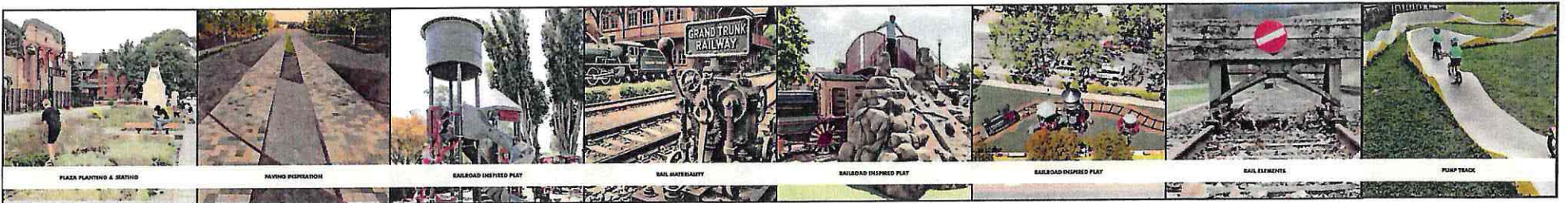


PLAZA PERSPECTIVE



PLAZA PAVING CONCEPT





## ELLENDALE WALKING TRAIL | RAILROAD INSPIRATION

December 2024 | Interstate Engineering Project Number: EC2404128

## OPINION OF PROBABLE COST

Project: Ellendale Walking Trail  
 Phase: Schematic Design  
 Date: December 17, 2024  
 Prepared By: Interstate Engineering



ITEM No.	ITEM	QTY.	UNITS	LOW TOTAL	HIGH TOTAL
1	Main Stem Trail	0.26	MILES	\$ 103,669	\$ 124,403
2	South Loop Trail	0.15	MILES	\$ 59,780	\$ 71,736
3	Gravel Trail	0.14	MILES	\$ 22,360	\$ 26,831
4	Parking Lot	1	Lump	\$ 71,995	\$ 89,994
5	Entry Plaza	1	Lump	\$ 262,006	\$ 327,507
6	Pump Track	1	ALW	\$ 50,000	\$ 150,000
7	Playground - Themed	1	ALW	\$ 300,000	\$ 500,000
8	General Site Furnishings (Signage, Tables, Benches, Trash)	1	Lump	\$ 48,750	\$ 60,938
9	Small Picnic Shelter	1	EA	\$ 42,719	\$ 53,398
10	Large Picnic Shelter	1	EA	\$ 68,020	\$ 85,025
11	Pedestrian Bridges	3	EA	\$ 180,000	\$ 270,000
12	Fitness Stations	7	EA	\$ 53,900	\$ 67,375
13	Public Art	1	EA	\$ 200,000	\$ 250,000
14	Entry Sign / Monument	1	EA	\$ 150,000	\$ 187,500
15	Revegetation & Plantings	1	Lump	\$ 26,023	\$ 31,903
SUBTOTAL				\$ 1,639,220	\$ 2,296,610
General Conditions (Taxes, Bonds, Mobilization, Insurance)		12.5%		\$ 204,902	\$ 287,076
Professional Design & Engineering Services		15%		\$ 245,883	\$ 344,491
Owner's Contingency		25%		\$ 409,805	\$ 574,152
CONSTRUCTION TOTAL				\$ 2,499,810	\$ 3,502,330

Representative Jim Grueneich,

Jan 16, 2025

I am writing this letter, to let you know of an issue in the City of Ellendale. I believe Ellendale is in need of a walking path, to give the citizens a safe and enjoyable way to get through town. In addition to the safety and fitness aspects such a path would provide, it would do a lot to beautify our community as well.

It has been brought to my attention that Measure #8105 could provide much needed funding for such a project. I hope you and the legislature can get this measure across the finish line, to help Ellendale, and other communities, with funds for projects such as this.

Sincerely

Jerry M Goergen

Ellendale ND





APPLIED DIGITAL

**Subject: Letter of Support Measure #8105**

Dear Representative Grueneich,

I am writing to provide my highest level of support for a measure that is focused on assisting with funding for a walking trail in Ellendale, ND. During the last year I have had the pleasure of working alongside the community and understanding where the true needs are. There is a desperate need for more fitness related activities in Ellendale, and I strongly believe that a walking trail would be a milestone to achieving a great first step in the right direction.

- 1.) Encouraging Fitness and Safety:** Providing the residents of Ellendale with a walking trail would be a great resemblance of caring for the community's health and safety. In the status quo, residents are relying on the same roads that vehicles travel on to conduct their walking sessions. This has shown to be dangerous and puts people in the direct line of danger. A walking trail would eliminate those concerns and would bring back the joy of being able to walk in an environment that is safe.
- 2.) Improving Socialization:** This trail will be designed to allow for picnic areas, fitness activities, biking trails, and areas of socialization. All of these features are perfect opportunities for socialization. By improving the level of socialization in the area, you promote a friendlier environment, especially when you bring new people into town, and they need a quick way to meet their community.
- 3.) Funding Obstacles:** I have had the opportunity to meet with Lana, the director of this walking trail project, and it is always an exciting story to hear how committed she has been to getting this trail up and going. There has been years of fundraising, bake sales, soup lunches, donations, etc. Lana and her team are committed to providing Ellendale with a place to walk safely and efficiently, and Applied Digital has helped donate across several events. We can not let funding be the obstacle and appreciate any support that is received to assist with funding.

Applied Digital is in full support of this measure and for the sake of myself and the Ellendale community, we hope that others can see the positive impact this will bring to Ellendale.

Sincerely,

**Martin Vega Jr.**

**Director of Community Operations**



APPLIED DIGITAL

D: 208-316-1076

9685 87<sup>th</sup> Ave SE

Ellendale ND 58436

Hello Rep. Grueneich,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for the development of a walking trail in our community. As a new resident of Ellendale, I believe that a walking trail would bring numerous benefits to our area, enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

Firstly, a walking trail would significantly benefit our community by promoting fitness and health. In today's fast-paced world, it is very nice to have accessible spaces where individuals can engage in physical activities. A walking trail would provide a safe and convenient location for residents of all ages to exercise. Additionally, regular physical activity is known to reduce the risk of chronic diseases, improve mental health, and enhance overall well-being. By encouraging more people to stay active, we can foster a healthier and more vibrant community.

Moreover, the walking trail would serve as a catalyst for social engagement within our community. It would create a common space where neighbors can meet, interact, and build stronger relationships. Social connections are vital for a thriving community, as they promote a sense of belonging and mutual support. The walking trail would offer an inclusive environment where people from diverse backgrounds can come together, share experiences, and develop lasting friendships. This increased social interaction would undoubtedly strengthen the fabric of our community.

Currently, our community faces significant difficulties due to the lack of a safe area for walking and running. Many residents, including myself, find it challenging to engage in regular physical activity because there are no designated spaces that ensure our safety. This often forces us to walk or run on busy streets, which poses a risk to our well-being and discourages many from pursuing an active lifestyle.

I kindly urge you to consider the positive impact that a walking trail would have on our community and support its development. By investing in this project, we can create a healthier, more connected, and vibrant community for all residents to enjoy.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

Gilbert Espinoza  
Critical Facilities Engineer II

**SALUTE** 

T 423.254.5959

E [Gilbert.Espinoza@salutelnc.com](mailto:Gilbert.Espinoza@salutelnc.com)

**Integrated lifecycle services**  
Design





APPLIED DIGITAL

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I kindly urge you to consider the positive impact that a walking trail would have on our community and support its development. By investing in this project, we can create a healthier, more connected, and vibrant community for all residents to enjoy.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

Gilbert Espinoza  
Critical Facilities Engineer II

**SALUTE** 

T 423.254.5959

E [Gilbert.Espinoza@salutelnc.com](mailto:Gilbert.Espinoza@salutelnc.com)

**Integrated lifecycle services**  
Design



# TRINITY

BIBLE COLLEGE & GRADUATE SCHOOL

**Garrett Freier**  
*Vice President of Experiential Learning and  
Student Development*  
gfreier@trinitybiblecollege.edu  
701-349-5439

Representative Jim Grueneich,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the continual development of a community walking trail in Ellendale, North Dakota. This project holds significant potential to enhance the well-being of our residents and the students at Ellendale Public School and Trinity Bible College and Graduate School while fostering a stronger sense of community.

A walking trail would provide a safe and accessible space for people of all ages to engage in physical activity. Regular exercise is essential for maintaining good physical and mental health, and the trail would encourage walking, jogging, and other activities that promote wellness. For our Trinity students, who often balance rigorous academic schedules with social and work commitments, having a nearby place to unwind and exercise could reduce stress and improve focus.

In addition to promoting health, the walking trail would serve as a communal gathering space, encouraging interaction between college students and long-term residents. This shared space could help bridge the gap between Trinity and the wider community, creating opportunities for connection, collaboration, and mutual support while developing an understanding, empathy, and appreciation for each other.

A well-designed walking trail would contribute to the natural beauty of our area, preserving green spaces and promoting environmental stewardship. Including educational signage about local flora, fauna, and history could further enrich the experience, making the trail an asset for recreation and learning. A place that could provide much-needed relaxation while also promoting learning and self-care.

A community walking trail would benefit our small college town by promoting health while strengthening community bonds; I ask you to prioritize this project for the betterment of all who live, work, and study here.

Thank you for considering this vital initiative.

Garrett Freier  
Vice President of Experiential Learning and Student Development  
Trinity Bible College and Graduate School



Greetings from Ellendale!

We have finally acquired abandoned rail bed property (after trying for nearly 20 years to get said property) east of town. It will be a perfect spot for exercise to combat sedentary lifestyles that so many have. We are the only city in our area with no designated, safe place to walk. We have experienced one devastating fatality because people walk in the streets. We cannot have another! Our elderly must be able to maintain good health by walking. Walking lowers blood pressure and improves strength, heart function and weight management. Walking in this mental health oasis combats depression and cognitive decline. This will save some years in nursing homes!

Dickey County Health District recently hosted a meeting of leaders and health care providers to identify what priorities were most important. A safe walking area was number three behind affordable housing and child care.

Any funding you can give will be used to begin site work. The rail bed is overgrown, uneven and not useful now. It needs a lot of work to make it wider and smoother. If there is more money left over we can begin some of the surfacing for the bike paths (aggregate) or for the trail (blacktop). This first step will show progress for the project and spark interest and increase donations. We have engaged a professional grant writer to help secure larger grants. We are pursuing donations from businesses as well.

We have been fundraising for about 20 years. We have sponsored dinners, served snacks at ballgames, sold apples, had bake sales, had rummage sales, written grant applications, sold items online and gotten gifts from retirees and entities (BC/BS, Tatanka Wind Towers and Ellendale Community Foundation and more). We have raised about \$75,000 so far.

There is much enthusiasm for this trail in Ellendale. We not only will walk or run there but also we are planning a separate bike path, playground areas, climbing areas and a picnic shelter. There will be something for all to enjoy as we will start our journey at a pollinator garden and proceed through trees and prairie. We want it to be accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

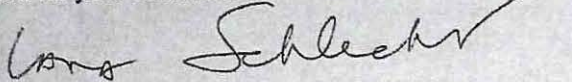
To really appreciate the need for a trail, we have about 450 young men who come in to work each day in a community of about 1,300. They are building a data center, 20 new homes, two wind tower projects and a large power line. Several of these have come to our committee to ask how they can help us. We did not ask them for help but they can see value in healthy activities for their employees and to promote the town.

The trail area will reflect the importance of the railroads in making Ellendale a trading center back in the late 1800's and indeed making the town itself. We will have plaques telling about the railroad history and also have some railroad themed items at the entrance. The concrete entrance will have indentations to simulate railroad tracks. This will help people to know some history of the area.

There are rural people who will come into town to walk if there is a nice place to do so. Visitors to the town who stay overnight may find it enjoyable to get out for a stroll. Economic development related to a walking space is hard to estimate but young people are more interested in escaping city life and coming out to rural areas to raise families. We have several young couples who have moved back after being gone who want that small town quality of life. They may see that walking trails are not just paths. They merge nature and people, they increase vitality...bringing life, health and community together harmoniously.

For more information contact Lana Schlecht, D.D.S. [lkschlecht@icloud.com](mailto:lkschlecht@icloud.com)

Thank you for your consideration!







PO Box 604

Ellendale, ND 58436

January 14, 2025

To Whom This May Concern,

In 1882, our community of Ellendale was established, in large, because of the railroad. In this century we no longer have the railroad, but we still have the bedding that those tracks were laid on. Ellendale's plan by the trail committee is to use this resource and incorporate it into the proposed recreational walking trail. We are a county seat and have a private college in our city. Currently, our population is growing due to the establishment of the new AI firm, Applied Digital, in our community. We are overdue in fulfilling this need for our citizens and future citizens. We can only hope this will aid in attracting more new economic development opportunities for Ellendale. The benefits, as I see them, are environmental, healthful, and beautiful—while bringing forth a new sense of community among our citizens!

Sincerely,

Dee Anne Gall

Citizen of Ellendale, ND

**Re.: HB 1256 (Letter in support of funding for Dakota Prairie Walking Trail in Ellendale)**

Dear Legislator:

My name is Ken Smith and I am the editor of the Dickey County Leader, the official paper of our county. We are the oldest business in the county. We have published continuously, starting in June 1882. During those many decades, the *Leader* has been persistent in urging public support for projects that would benefit the area.

Many of these projects, right back to the earliest years, were public/private ventures. The most significant in that category were new school buildings (1885, 1915, and 1998) and a college campus, which was supported by the state via a 40,000 acre donation of school lands but was built on privately donated land and helped along from the beginning and through its history by the generosity of locals.

Ellendalers built a state-of-the-art flour mill in the 1890s, built a world-class Opera House in 1908, established parks, playing fields and a swimming pool in the 1930s, all the while sacrificing to maintain a good infrastructure of streets, sewers, electric plant, and much more. All of these things helped make Ellendale a good place to live, and did a great deal to attract new residents.

About 20 years ago our friend, retired dentist Lana Schlecht and a group of like-minded residents began talking up and raising money for a community walking trail. That group went defunct for a few years was regrouped as the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail committee, with full 501c3 status.

The project would utilize for part of its length the nearby railbed of the Great Northern, a line which from 1887 to 1982 connected Ellendale to points eastward.

The walking trail would utilize a little over half a mile of that railbed, which connects the town to the lovely cemetery. The railbed property is now in the possession of the city, and that land would be used as well as some other city property. The walking trail would be a hard, durable surface and would include attractive canopies and benches, and historical signage commemorating the historic railroad that helped sustain the town for nearly 100 years. It would be a great asset to people of all ages in the community and would help Ellendale present a positive, progressive image to visitors, which are becoming more and more numerous as employment opportunities here surge.

The efforts of the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail committee have been persistent over the years. The groups has hosted countless rummage sales and has, wherever possible, utilized public events to promote and raise funds for the project. In the last year, the momentum has increased, and the public response has been very positive.

The citizens who began pursuing this venture so long ago probably did not expect the cost of building the trail to be as great as it has turned out to be. This however has not deterred them in wanting to see this vision completed.

I'm gratified that the State of North Dakota, which enjoys considerable public wealth due to its energy and agricultural bounty, has been willing to fund numerous public improvement projects across the state in recent years. I believe this project would be a worthy use of state funds. As legislators consider a grant for the walking trail, they should keep in mind that a tremendous amount of grass-roots effort and fundraising has already gone into securing the project, and we expect that this will continue to be the case.

Thank you for your good work in looking after the needs of the people and communities of our state.

All the best,

Ken Smith

Editor, Dickey County Leader.



Jan 15, 2025

Jeffrey A. Langley  
212 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Southwest  
Ellendale, North Dakota, 58436  
[jeffrey.allen.langley@gmail.com](mailto:jeffrey.allen.langley@gmail.com)  
(701) 710-1314

January 15, 2025

The Honorable Representative Jim Grueneich  
600 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, North Dakota, 58505  
Dear Representative Grueneich,

I am writing to express my strong support for your proposed legislation, HB 1256, to allocate funding for a walking trail in Ellendale, North Dakota. As a long-time resident of Ellendale for more than 20 years, I have witnessed firsthand the need for safe and accessible outdoor spaces that promote physical activity, social connection, and community well-being.

A walking trail in Ellendale would offer numerous benefits to our community. Currently, residents face significant challenges due to the lack of safe, designated areas for walking, jogging, or running. Many are forced to use busy streets or uneven sidewalks, which poses risks to both pedestrians and drivers. This is especially concerning for families with young children, seniors, and individuals with mobility issues who would greatly benefit from a dedicated, safe space for exercise and leisure.

Such a trail would foster improved community health by encouraging regular physical activity among residents of all ages. This initiative aligns with the growing emphasis on preventive healthcare, as increased physical activity is proven to reduce the risk of chronic diseases, enhance mental health, and improve overall quality of life.

Beyond its physical health benefits, a walking trail would also serve as a hub for social engagement, bringing neighbors together and strengthening the bonds that make Ellendale a vibrant and welcoming community. Events like charity walks, fitness classes, or casual gatherings could take place on the trail, further enhancing its value to our town.

Additionally, the allocated funds would supplement the generous donations and funds already raised through community events and contributions, demonstrating the widespread local support for this project.

As Ellendale continues to grow and evolve, investments like this walking trail are critical to enhancing our quality of life and attracting new families and businesses to the area. The walking trail would be a meaningful step forward in making Ellendale a more livable, attractive, and healthy community.

Thank you for your dedication to this important project. I am confident that this initiative will have a lasting, positive impact on our town, and I urge my fellow residents and local businesses to join me in supporting your efforts. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need additional information or further support for this legislation.

Sincerely,

*Jeffrey A Langley*  
Jeffrey A. Langley



Kedish House

509 1<sup>st</sup> Av N. PO Box 322

Ellendale, ND 58436

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Kedish House, the domestic violence and sexual assault program serving the counties of Dickey, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh and Sargent counties, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for the proposed walking trail project in our headquarter city of Ellendale. We firmly believe that the trail will bring numerous benefits to our community, including fostering well-being, safety, and accessibility for survivors of domestic violence/sexual assault and the broader population.

As a program working to empower survivors and promote healing, we understand the critical role that safe and accessible outdoor spaces play in fostering mental and physical health. Survivors often endure significant trauma, and access to natural environments has been shown to reduce stress, improve mental health, and enhance overall well-being. The walking trail would provide a much-needed space for survivors to engage in healing practices, such as mindfulness, exercise, and reconnecting with nature, which are integral parts of recovery.

Additionally, the trail's development will improve safety and accessibility in our rural area. Many individuals in our community, including survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, lack access to safe recreational opportunities close to home. The walking trail could serve as a refuge—a place where survivors can feel secure while building confidence and resilience. Its presence may also encourage a stronger sense of community, reducing isolation and fostering connections that can be crucial for those rebuilding their lives.

The walking trail aligns with our vision for a community that prioritizes the health, safety, and empowerment of all its residents. We urge you to move forward with supporting this project and would welcome the opportunity to partner in any way that might enhance its success. Thank you for your consideration in support of this project.

Sincerely,

Kristi Gilbert, Director



**Waqar H Rizvi**  
**Sr. Critical Facilities Engr. III**  
**Salute Inc.**  
**346-317-6888**  
**1/21/2025**

**Rep. Grueneich**  
**Ellendale, ND**

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed bill to build a walking trail in Ellendale, ND. As a new resident and active member of this community, I have witnessed firsthand the need for safer recreational spaces. I have been in Ellendale for a few months, and during that time, I've seen the positive impact that community-focused projects can have on our well-being.

A dedicated walking trail would significantly improve the quality of life for residents by providing a safe and accessible space for walking and running. Currently, many community members struggle to find safe areas for physical activity, especially for those who prefer outdoor exercise but face challenges due to lack of suitable infrastructure. The addition of a walking trail would help address these concerns and make it easier for everyone to enjoy healthy, active lifestyles.

In addition to the health benefits, the trail would also serve as a catalyst for social engagement. It would be a space where individuals of all ages can connect with each other, foster a stronger sense of community, and participate in group activities that encourage physical fitness and well-being.

I am excited about the potential this project has for the future of our families and community as a whole and I fully support the effort to make this vision a reality. Thank you for your leadership and dedication to improving our community.

Sincerely,  
Waqar H Rizvi  
Sr. Critical Facilities Engr. III  
Salute Inc.  
346-317-6888

Jacob Townsend  
600 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S  
Ellendale, ND 58436  
jacobtown17@gmail.com  
719-922-4346

21JAN25

The Honorable Representative Grueneich  
North Dakota State Legislature  
600 East Boulevard  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

Dear Representative Grueneich,

**Subject: Support for the Proposed Walking Trail in Ellendale, ND**

As a proud veteran and resident of Ellendale for three months, I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed walking trail in our community. The addition of this trail would significantly improve the quality of life for residents, offering a safe, accessible space for physical activity, reflection, and connection.

As a veteran, maintaining both physical and mental health is a priority, and outdoor exercise plays a critical role in achieving that. A walking trail would provide a peaceful and secure environment to engage in activities that promote overall wellness. Walking has been a vital tool for me in staying active, managing stress, and maintaining a clear mind.

Additionally, as a dog owner, I see the walking trail as an incredible resource not just for myself but for my service dogs. Right now, walking my dogs often means navigating busy streets with limited sidewalks or uneven terrain. A dedicated trail would provide a much safer and more enjoyable space for both myself and my dogs to exercise and unwind.

From a broader perspective, the walking trail would also serve as a valuable resource for fellow veterans and community members, promoting fitness and mental well-being. The trail could foster camaraderie among residents, offering a space for social interaction and support. In a town like Ellendale, having a dedicated area where people can come together in a healthy, positive environment is invaluable.

Beyond its health and social benefits, this project could enhance Ellendale's appeal to visitors and new residents alike, boosting local pride and even supporting nearby businesses. It's a forward-thinking initiative that reflects the best interests of our community.

I fully support the development of this walking trail and urge the Legislature to approve the funding necessary to bring this project to life. It would be an investment in the health, safety, and well-being of Ellendale's residents, including its veterans.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for advocating for projects that benefit our community. Please feel free to contact me if additional input is needed.

Sincerely,

Jacob D. Townsend

Petty Officer Second Class

Critical Facilities Engineer

[jacobtown17@gmail.com](mailto:jacobtown17@gmail.com)

719-922-4346

## Letter of Support for Measure Num. 8105

**To:** Rep. Grueneich

**From:** Jackson: Katelyn Marie  
Ellendale, North Dakota

**Re: Measure Num. 810**

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**To whom it may concern,**

I've recently relocated to Ellendale in November of 2024 & have enjoyed the community. I think a walking trail would be extremely beneficial to the town. Aside from seemingly being one of the community's favorite pastimes, it gives the opportunity for people to truly take in the sight of plains from a wholesome town. Providing a safe way to do such a thing for a growing town off a highway, would boost town morale and pride. Increased scenery may also indirectly up the visitors and tourism that comes to Ellendale, overall increasing revenue for the town (especially during farmer's markets in the summer), & promote family/individual health. I think if it can be done, it should – I'd look forward to it.

Thank you for your attention to this Matter.

Sincerely,



**Katelyn Jackson**

**Sr. Critical Facilities Engineer III**

**SALUTE** ➤

**T (256) - 384 - 8982 (CT)**

**W [salutemissioncritical.com](http://salutemissioncritical.com)**





Ellendale Lions Club  
PO Box 461  
Ellendale, ND 58436

January 16, 2025

2025 House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Honorable Representative Todd Porter, Chairman  
North Dakota State Capital

Dear Representative Porter and Members of the House Energy and Resources Committee:

The Ellendale Lions Club is in favor of HB 1256 and in full support of the walking trail proposal being submitted by Dakota Prairie Walking Trail. We believe it is important to provide our community with a safe walking space.

A few years ago, we partnered with the Ellendale Park District to fund and build a dog park in South Park in Ellendale so that community people would have a safe, enclosed place in which to exercise their canine friends. In that same spirit, we look forward to partnering with the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail and the Ellendale Park District to help fund this project. As with the dog park, we feel this will provide a safe recreation environment for people of all ages in the Ellendale area.

Because of the data center that is being built in Ellendale we currently have a large number of temporary work for that project and this walking trail will be another way for those people and the current residents to relax during their downtime.

We are in favor of HB 1256 and would encourage its passage without delay. Please join us and others in making the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail project a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wonada Lematta".

Wonada Lematta  
President  
Ellendale Lions Club

**Donald Flaherty**  
Mayor

**Nicole Kempf**  
Auditor

ellendal@drtel.net



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## City of Ellendale

January 20, 2025

2025 House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Honorable Representative Todd Porter, Chairman  
North Dakota State Capital

Dear Representative Porter and Members of the House Energy and Resources Committee:

The City of Ellendale is in favor of HB 1256 and in full support of the walking trail proposal being submitted by Dakota Prairie Walking Trail. We believe this project will provide our community with a safe walking space.

A little over 20 months ago, our city reached out to Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad to purchase approximately a half a mile of abandoned railroad right of way and 13 months later we were able to complete that purchase. As a result, with the addition of other adjacent property already owned by the city, there is now a little more than three quarters of a mile of land that has been dedicated to this project. As a continuation of our commitment, we look forward to partnering with the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail and the Ellendale Park District to help fund this project and ultimately transfer the property we own to the Ellendale Park District as well. We are committed to the growth of our city and believe this will provide a safe recreation environment for people of all ages in the Ellendale area.

The building of the data center and its future expansion means that there is a large number of temporary workers currently in the area for that project and there will be an increase in our population due to the permanent employees who will be moving into the area. As such, this walking trail will be another way for those people and the current residents to relax during their downtime.

We are in favor of HB 1256 and would encourage its passage without delay. Please join with us and others in making the Dakota Prairie Walking Trail project a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald W. Flaherty". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping loop at the end.

Donald W. Flaherty, Mayor

*"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer"*

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

HB 1256  
2/13/2025

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the parks and recreation department for a walking trail recreation grant.

10:06 a.m. Chairman Porter opened the meeting.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman D. Anderson, Vice Chairwoman Novak, Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Johnson, Marschall, M. Ruby, Conmy, Foss

Members Absent: Representatives Heinert, J. Olson

### Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

10:09 a.m. Representative Dockter moved a Do Not Pass.

10:09 a.m. Representative M. Ruby seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Chairman Todd Porter	Y
Vice Chairman Dick Anderson	Y
Vice Chairwoman Anna Novak	Y
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative Jason Dockter	Y
Representative Austin Foss	Y
Representative Jared Hagert	Y
Representative Craig Headland	Y
Representative Pat Heinert	AB
Representative Jorin Johnson	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Jeremy Olson	AB
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y

10:09 a.m. Motion passed 11-0-2.

10:09 a.m. Representative Novak moved to place on Consent Calendar.

10:09 a.m. Representative M. Ruby seconded the motion.

10:09 a.m. Voice vote motion passed.

10:10 a.m. Representative Johnson will carry the bill.

10:10 a.m. Chairman Porter closed the meeting.

*Janae Pinks, Committee Clerk for Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1256 ([25.0874.01000](#))**

**Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Rep. Porter, Chairman)** recommends **DO NOT PASS** (11 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1256 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.