

# Browns Creek State Trail Public Open House



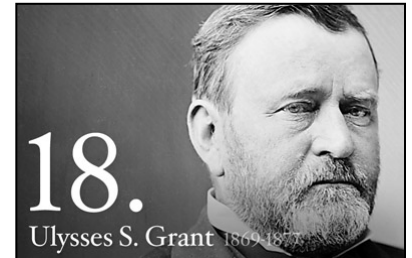
## *Historical and Cultural Resources*

### **Grant Township**

The first farms were established in the eastern part of Grant in 1849 by settlers from New York. The township was organized as Greenfield Township on October 20, 1858. It originally covered today's cities of Grant, Mahtomedi, Willernie, Birchwood, Dellwood and two-thirds of East White Bear Lake. In 1864, the name was changed to Grant to honor Ulysses S. Grant.

According to the St. Croix Valley Press (Jan. 2004), Grant was the place to be in the mid-1800s because of "lush farm country". At that time, Highway 96 was an Indian trail that was used as a horse cart trail for travelers between Stillwater and White Bear Lake. Over the years Grant Township was broken up

into smaller units. The western one-third became Lincoln Township in 1918 and eventually Lincoln was split up into Mahtomedi, Willernie, Birchwood, and Pine Springs. The last community to break off was Dellwood in 1993.



### **Rail History**

The Stillwater & St. Paul Railroad, the first railroad to reach Stillwater, was completed in the fall of 1870 and traversed Grant from White Bear to Stillwater. The years to come brought several additional rail lines to the area. The Minnesota, St. Croix & Wisconsin Railroad was constructed from 1884-1885 from Gloster (near



Maplewood) to Carnelian Junction and on to the St. Croix River. This line was constructed to Chippewa Falls and, though circuitous, gave Grant a connection with Chicago. It is this line that now serves as the Gateway State Trail.

The Minneapolis & St. Croix Railroad pushed through Washington County in 1887, giving rise to Grant Township's only village, Withrow. In 1888, this railroad merged with others to form the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie, or Soo Line. In 1892, the St. Paul & White Bear Lake Railroad Company ran a streetcar line out to Mahtomedi from St. Paul and by 1899, the Minneapolis & St. Paul Suburban Railway

Company began regular streetcar service from Mahtomedi to Stillwater. Stops were at Parent, Masterman, Lies, Elliot and Grant crossings.