

Albert Lea, MN—Today, Congressman Walz saw first-hand the jobs created by Recovery Act funds received by the City of Albert Lea.

He toured the construction site of the new runway being built at the Albert Lea Municipal Airport and heard from Albert Lea Mayor Mike Murtaugh about the jobs being created through other projects funded by the Recovery Act. To date, funding to the City of Albert Lea from the Recovery Act has created 11 jobs, while contributing to many more in industries that support the construction.

“The construction on this runway in Albert Lea is exactly the kind of project the Recovery Act was intended to fund,” said Walz. “Regional airports in southern Minnesota are a vital economic development tool and this project has not only created jobs, but it has also generated the beginnings of what will be prolonged economic opportunity fostered by a better airport. Infrastructure is a community’s lifeline to the outside world and without adequate roads, airports, or commercial land for expansion, new business will bypass good cities like Albert Lea.”

Walz continued, “This construction also creates jobs in our communities in businesses that supply materials for these projects and others that provide goods and services to southern Minnesotans who are employed by these projects. A few construction workers eating at the local diner, buying groceries at the supermarket, filling up with gas at the location station – all these things help save jobs. ”

“We were pleased to host Congressman Walz today to demonstrate Recovery Act funding at work in the city's airport runway expansion project,” said Mayor Mike Murtaugh. “This was a project that readily met the definition of "shovel ready" and so was among the early projects across the country to receive funding and construction is well underway. We thank the Congressman and his staff for work on securing funding for this and other area projects. Looking to the future, we also want to recognize his work along with Representative James Oberstar on drafting the new Surface Transportation Bill currently being written by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, of which Rep. Walz is a member, and Rep. Oberstar is the chairman.”

The City of Albert Lea, Minnesota received \$4,000,574 for three projects including \$709,670 to create access to the I-35 / I-90 Business Park; \$2,853,619 to Construct a new Runway at the Albert Lea Airport; and \$437,285 to Rehabilitate the Old Runway at the Airport.