

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: April 10, 2018

For the Community Development Committee meeting of April 16, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 25, 2018

**Subject:** Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

**District(s), Member(s):** MPOSC District D, Catherine Fleming

**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statute 473.313; Planning Strategy 1 *2040 Regional Park Policy Plan*

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Jan Youngquist, AICP, Planning Analyst (651-602-1029) / Jake Reilly, Senior Planner (651-602-1822)

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment.

### Background

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* includes a regional trail search corridor that travels through northeast and southeast Minneapolis, known as the Grand Rounds Missing Link. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) approved a master plan for the regional trail in 2008. MPRB submitted the master plan to the Metropolitan Council for review and approval but subsequently withdrew it. The MPRB is now preparing a revised master plan for the Grand Rounds Missing Link Regional Trail and anticipates submitting the master plan to the Council for review and approval later in 2018 or in 2019.

The MPRB has an opportunity to partner with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the City of Minneapolis (City) on a project that will commence in July 2018. MnDOT is making improvements along Interstate 35W (I-35W) from 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE in Minneapolis to County Road C in Roseville and is repaving freeway ramps. The City and MPRB have entered into a cost-sharing agreement with MnDOT, expanding the project to include adding a regional trail segment, replacing the traffic signals at the ramps, and adding sidewalks, which has resulted in significant cost savings.

In order to be eligible for regional parks funding, the regional trail segment must be part of a Council-approved master plan. The I-35W construction project will begin prior to approval of the Grand Rounds Missing Link Regional Trail Master Plan. Since the trail segment travels between Ridgway Parkway and Industrial Boulevard, Council staff recommended that the MPRB amend the master plan for Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail to include the new trail segment. Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail is located between Stinson Parkway and St. Anthony Parkway in northeast Minneapolis. The Council approved the master plan for Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail in 2014.

### Rationale

The Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* including Planning Strategy 1, which outlines the requirements for regional trail master plans.

### **Thrive Lens Analysis**

The master plan amendment advances the Thrive outcome of Livability by enhancing the quality of life in the region through increasing access to outdoor recreation, providing a critical crossing of I-35W at significant cost savings. The partnership between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, City of Minneapolis, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to develop the project described in the master plan amendment is a good example of the Thrive principle of Collaboration as well as the Thrive outcome of Stewardship.

### **Funding**

The overall project costs will be shared by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, City of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The MRPB's share of the project costs totals \$100,000.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board approved the Grand Rounds Missing Link Master Plan, which included the trail extension proposed in this master plan amendment. The MPRB also approved the \$100,000 project costs as part of its 2018 Budget and Capital Improvement Program, which was subject to a public hearing.

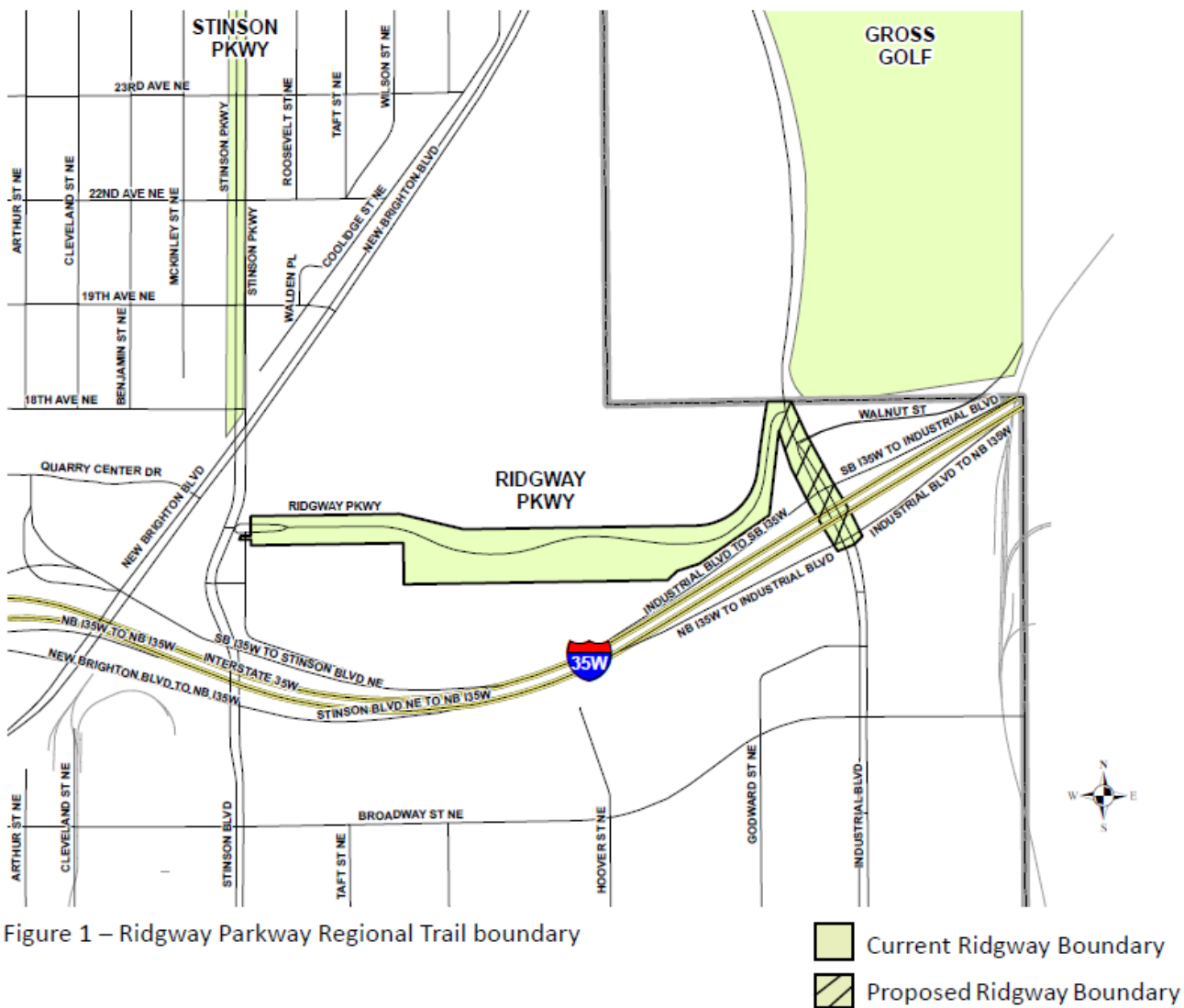
## Analysis

Planning Strategy 1 of the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan requires that master plans for regional linking trails address the nine items listed below.

### Boundaries and Acquisition

Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail currently travels 0.75 miles between Stinson Parkway and Saint Anthony Boulevard. The land associated with the trail corridor is 24 acres and includes greenspace, a parkway, and an overlook with views of downtown Minneapolis. This master plan amendment proposes to extend the trail along St. Anthony Boulevard, under Interstate 35W to Industrial Boulevard, as shown in Figure 1. The trail extension will be located within City of Minneapolis right-of-way; therefore, there are no land acquisition costs associated with this amendment.

Figure 1: Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail Route and Boundary



### **Demand Forecast**

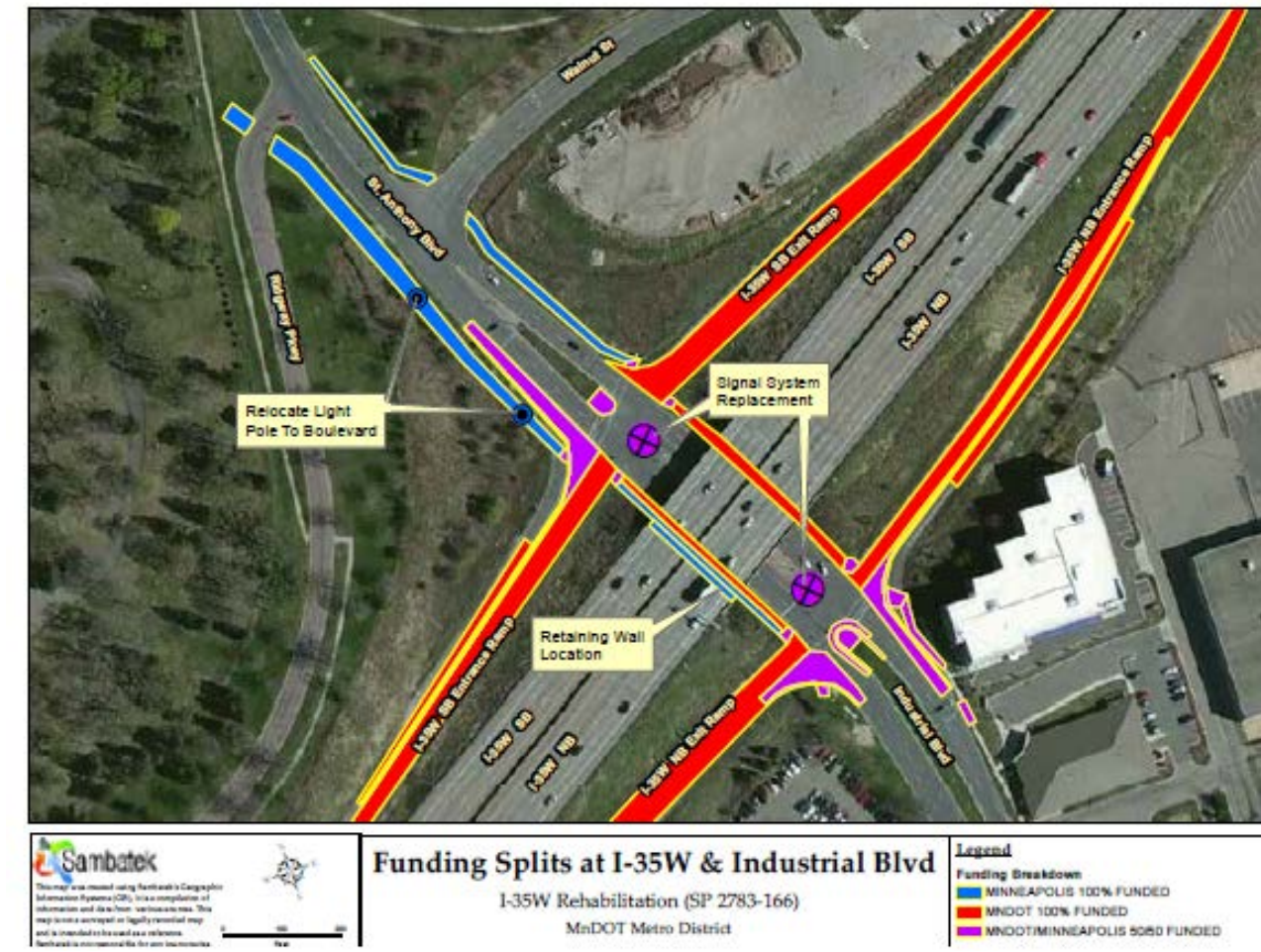
The Council estimated that Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail had 18,500 visits in 2012. The regional trail was rebuilt in 2015-2016, and the Council estimated 24,800 visits to the trail in 2016. The regional trail makes important connections between St. Anthony Parkway Regional Trail, Northeast Diagonal Regional Trail, and trails along Stinson Parkway. The extension proposed in this amendment makes a significant improvement to ease transitions under I-35W. This connection is anticipated to continue to increase visits to the regional trail.

### **Development Concept**

The cooperative project between MnDOT, the City, and the MPRB includes replacing the two signals at the intersections of the freeway ramps at Industrial Boulevard and St. Anthony Parkway, adding a sidewalk between the signals, removing the “free right” islands at the ramps, adding a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the east side of St. Anthony Parkway to Ridgway Parkway, adding the 12-foot wide regional trail on the west side of St. Anthony Parkway to Ridgway Parkway, and widening the west sidewalk under the I-35W bridge including building a retaining wall into the slope paving. Participation by the City and the MPRB provides the ability to add pedestrian and bicycle improvements to MnDOT’s I-35W on/off ramp project. The MPRB portion of the project includes the regional trail and associated new lighting. The development concept and cost sharing approach are depicted in Figure 2.

The estimated project budget for the City’s share is \$565,000, of which MPRB will pay \$100,000. The overall budget for the MnDOT project is \$17.3 million, which includes improvements between 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE in Minneapolis and County Road C in Roseville.

Figure 2: Development Concept and Cost Sharing



### Conflicts

The project proposed in the master plan amendment does not conflict with any existing or projected projects or land uses.

### Public Services

No expansion of utilities will be needed for this master plan amendment. Street and trail lighting will be replaced and enhanced as part of the project.

### Operations

The regional trail will be overseen by MPRB public safety, operations, and maintenance staff. Routine and seasonal maintenance including plowing, mowing, and sweeping will be done as needed. Annual operations expenses for the trail extension are anticipated to be minimal and will be incorporated into the existing portion of Ridgway Parkway. Lighting adjacent to the regional trail will be maintained and

replaced by the MPRB. MnDOT will be responsible for maintenance and replacement of the underpass lighting, which it owns.

### **Public Engagement and Participation**

Public engagement occurred during the planning process for the Grand Rounds Missing Link as well as during development of the Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan. Three public open houses were held for Ridgway Parkway Regional Trail planning. A presentation regarding the proposed trail segment was made at the February 12, 2018 Community Advisory Committee meeting as part of the MPRB's "East of the River" master planning process, which will inform the development of the revised Grand Rounds Missing Link Regional Trail master plan.

### **Public Awareness**

During construction of the project, MnDOT, the City, and the MPRB will notify the public of any trail closures through news releases, signage on site, and the GovDelivery email system. After construction is complete, the press releases and public announcements will occur through the MPRB's website, GovDelivery email system, mailers and newsletters, and contact with the local press and neighborhood groups.

### **Accessibility**

All facilities within the proposed master plan amendment will be developed in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines and requirements. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board does not charge fees to use regional trails.

### *Review by Other Council Divisions*

**Community Development – Environment and Surface Water Management** (Jim Larsen 651-602-1159) – No comments.

**Metro Transit** (Kyle Burrows 612-349-7749) – No concerns from a transit perspective.

**Transportation Planning** (Russ Owen 651-602-1724) – No comments.

**Environmental Services – Sewers** (Roger Janzig 651-602-1119) – No comments.

**Local Planning Assistance** (Michael Larson 651-602-1407) – Completion of this segment is consistent with, and further implements, Thrive Land Use Policies related to Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice. The extension underneath I-35W addresses issues of choice and reliability (or lack thereof) related to recreational and commuter bicycle use in that part of the City. Actions proposed by the parties (MPRB, MnDOT, and City of Minneapolis) are consistent with the planning and implementation roles identified in Thrive. Furthermore, the proposed amendment is consistent with, and further implements, the City of Minneapolis' comprehensive plan, which identifies the "Missing Link" planning area associated with the Grand Rounds in its Open Space and Parks Chapter.