

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: October 3, 2019

For the Community Development Committee meeting of October 7, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 23, 2019

Subject: Future Reimbursement Consideration for Carver County, Highway 5 Regional Trail

MPOSC District: B – Robert Moeller

Council District: 3 – Christopher Ferguson

Policy/Legal Reference: Minn. Stat. § 473.315; *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Finance Strategy 6*

Staff Prepared/Presented: Jessica Lee, Senior Parks Planner (651-602-1621)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$1,000,000 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs for the development of a two-mile segment of the Highway 5 Regional Trail located between Lake Minnewashta Parkway and Century Boulevard in Chanhassen; and
2. Inform Carver County that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that it will reimburse the County and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Background

The 8.9-mile Highway 5 Regional Trail serves as a linking trail, providing a safe, off-road travel alternative along Highway 5. Beginning at the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail near Victoria, the planned trail travels east to the city of Chanhassen where it ends near the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (Exhibit 1). When completed, the trail will also provide a key connection between Carver Park Reserve and the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

Carver County plans to begin construction this fall on the 2-mile segment of the trail that has no existing sidewalk or path. Through an agreement with the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, this segment will pass through the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, providing a scenic experience for trail users.

The County is requesting future reimbursement consideration for up to \$1,000,000 of expenses related to the construction of two miles of trail between Lake Minnewashta Parkway and Century Boulevard and an underpass at Highway 41. It is the last segment along Highway 5 in need of an off-street alternative for pedestrians and bicyclists between the City of Victoria and the City of Eden Prairie. The underpass at Highway 41 was identified during the community engagement process as a high priority safety need. A copy of the County's request is attached to this item (Exhibit 2).

Rationale

Minn. Stat. § 473.315 authorizes the Council with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to make grants from any funds available for

recreation open space purposes to cover any portion of the cost of developing regional recreation open space in accordance with the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (Policy Plan).

The Policy Plan authorizes the Council to consider reimbursing an implementing agency for costs incurred in an eligible project if:

- *The project is consistent in timing, scale, type and cost with a Council approved master plan.* The master plan for the Highway 5 Regional Trail was approved by the Council on June 27, 2018 ([Business Item 2018-136](#)).
- *All information required for the development grant is submitted to the Council prior to the implementing agency undertaking the project.* The project will commence during the fall of 2019 and Carver County has submitted all of the required information.
- *The Council approves the project.*

Thrive Lens Analysis

This action supports the Livability outcome in *Thrive MSP 2040* by increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, thereby enhancing the region's quality of life.

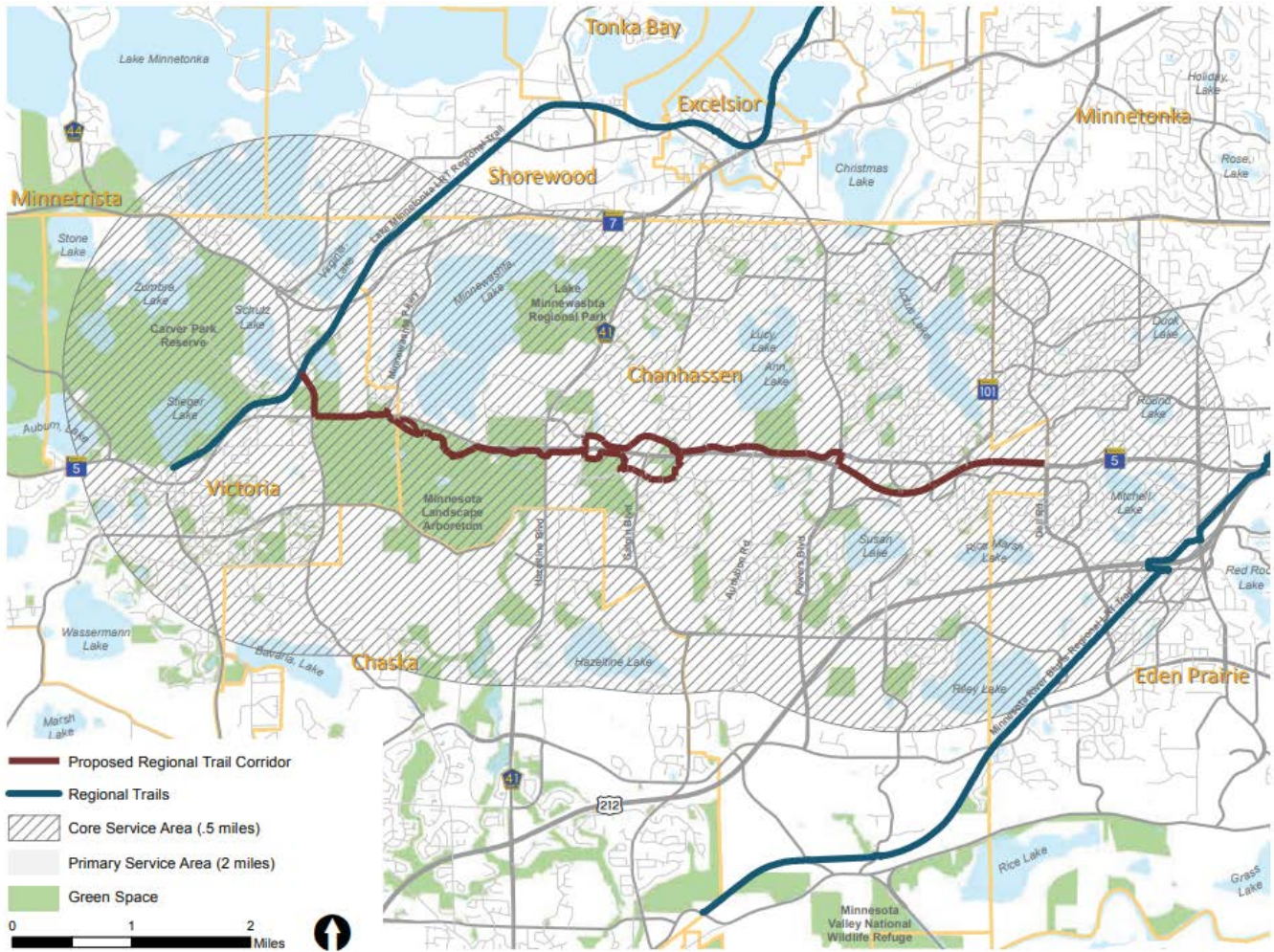
Funding

There is no funding impact until and unless Carver County requests reimbursement out of future Regional Parks Bonding, the County submits documentation of eligible costs, and the Council approves that future request. A request for "future reimbursement consideration" is the first step in a process Agencies may request repayment of their costs in a future bonding cycle. Because the Council issues bonds to match every \$3 of state bonding with \$2 of Council bonds for a given state bonding cycle, such reimbursements are limited. The Council is under no obligation to reimburse this amount.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.

Exhibit 1: Map of Highway 5 Regional Trail, as proposed in the approved master plan



Attachment 2: Carver County Future Reimbursement Consideration Request Letter



CARVER COUNTY PARKS

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Cologne, MN 55322-8017
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Division of Public Works

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September 10, 2019

Mr. Emmett Mullin
Parks Manager
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Mr. Mullin:

Carver County intends to move forward with the construction of an approximate 2-mile segment of the TH 5 Regional Trail located between Lake Minnewashta Parkway and Century Boulevard in Chanhassen. This project provides key connections to other regional destinations such as Carver Park Reserve, the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, and the MN Landscape Arboretum. Further, the trail segment connects local trail systems and is the last segment along TH 5 to have an off-street alternative for pedestrians and bicyclists between City of Eden Prairie and the City of Victoria.

A safety feature of the trail is the planned construction of underpass at TH 41. The underpass extends from the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum on the west, under TH 41 just south of the TH 5 intersection, connecting to MNDOT right-of-way on the east side of TH 41. The daily traffic count on TH 41 at the underpass location is 13,700, of which 620 are heavy trucks.

The MN Landscape Arboretum has graciously allowed for the construction of the trail on their property out of and away from the TH 5 right-of-way. The alignment through the arboretum will add scenic qualities and experiences for user enjoyment as the trail passes through the historic apple research grounds, along wetlands, deciduous forest, and pine plantation.

Construction activity for the TH 5 Regional Trail project is planned to be underway late fall of this year and is to be substantially complete late summer of 2020.

Due to the significant expense of constructing the underpass and trail, Carver County is requesting eligibility in a future CIP of the Metropolitan Council of up to \$1,000,000 to deliver this project for the Regional Parks and Trail System.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Parks and Recreation Director

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