

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: June 18, 2020

**Subject:** Regional Parks System Additions: Implementing Agency Proposals (Part 2 of 2)

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, Chapter 3: System Plan, Chapter 4: Siting and Acquisition Policy

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks Unit Manager (651-602-1360); Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst (651-602-1361)

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

### Proposed Action

None; information and discussion only.

### Background

Minnesota Statutes 473.147, subd. 1 directs the Metropolitan Council (Council) to plan for the Regional Parks System. The updated *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (RPPP) commits the Council to convene a region-wide discussion about system additions in 2019, which began in October last year. Council staff is in the process of engaging Regional Park Implementing Agencies, the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) and the Community Development Committee (CDC) in this effort.

Council staff provided an update on the system additions project to MPOSC at its meetings in December 2019, March, April and May 2020. In late May, after a four-week system addition application period, 28 regional park system addition proposals were received from eight Regional Park Implementing Agencies.

In June, over the course of two meetings, MPOSC will consider Implementing Agency proposals to add regional recreational resources to the Regional Parks System based on criteria set forth in Chapter 4 of the RPPP. CDC and Land Use Advisory Committee members were informed of this opportunity to learn more about proposed regional park system additions in May.

At the June 11 MPOSC meeting, five implementing agencies summarized 12 system addition proposals for discussion by the Commission. These implementing agencies included Washington County (five proposals), Anoka county (two proposals), the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (one proposal), Ramsey County (one proposal), and Carver County (three proposals). These proposals included five regional trail search corridors, four boundary adjustments, and three propose recognition of regional status. MPOSC Commissioners, as well as other interested participants, were asked to review these proposals and watch a short video produced by each proposing agency prior to the June 11 MPOSC meeting. Those videos were available through a link in the posted MPOSC agenda.

At the June 18 MPOSC meeting, three implementing agencies will summarize 16 system addition proposals for discussion by the Commission. These implementing agencies include Scott County (two proposals), Three Rivers Park District (11 proposals), and the City of Saint Paul (three proposals). These proposals are included in this information item as Attachments 1 through 3 and will include eleven regional trail search corridors, two regional park search areas, two boundary

adjustments, and one special recreation feature search area. Again, MPOSC Commissioners and other interested participants are asked to review these proposals and watch the video prior to the June 18 meeting.

Two implementing agencies did not propose any regional park system additions at this time. These implementing agencies include the City of Bloomington and Dakota County.

Council staff are requesting the Commission provide feedback on the proposals to help guide staff review and evaluation of the proposals. In July, following a systematic review of each system addition proposal using MPOSC input and the RPPP as guides, Council staff will share a draft recommendation on system additions with MPOSC and CDC.

The results of the system additions process, including the proposed language additions discussed in March, April, May and June 2020, will be added to the RPPP during the amendment that is scheduled for the second half of 2020. A public comment period is proposed to begin in late August and conclude in late October.

### **Thrive Lens Analysis**

The System Additions project will advance Stewardship, Equity, and Livability. Stewardship advances the Council's mission of orderly and economical development by responsibly managing the region's natural and financial resources, and making strategic investments in our region's future. Additions to the Regional Park System that protect natural resources, adapt to changing conditions, and serve future residents advance this outcome.

Equity connects all residents to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities so that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change. System additions that consider the context of geography and demographics have the potential to positively impact a variety of underrepresented groups. Bridging facilities are an area of particular interest in advancing the Equity outcome.

Livability focuses on quality of life and experiences in our region, and how places and infrastructure create and enhance the quality of life that makes the Twin Cities metro area a great place to live. System additions that create more opportunities for residents to recreate in the regional park system also improve the quality of life for the region's residents.

**Attachment 1a**

**Scott County Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail to Scott West Regional Trail -  
Regional Trail Search Corridor**



## SCOTT COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS PROGRAM

GOVERNMENT CENTER 114 • 200 FOURTH AVENUE WEST • SHAKOPEE, MN 55379-1220  
(952) 496-8475 • Fax (952) 496-8496 • Web [www.co.scott.mn.us](http://www.co.scott.mn.us)

May 20, 2020

Colin Kelly  
Planning Analyst  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Regional Parks System Additions

Dear Colin,

In response to your email on April 2, 2020 announcing the application period for the Regional Parks System Additions, please see the attached system addition application from Scott County, for:

- Lake Marion to Scott West Regional Trail

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the County's proposed regional park system additions. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Patty Freeman  
General Manager, Scott County Regional Parks and Trails

Office: 952-496-8752  
Mobile: 612-308-1770



1. **System Addition Proposal:** Please describe the proposal, it's location, the proposed acreage or trail miles, and if applicable, partner arrangement. Please include an overview map of the proposal depicting the location in your agency's jurisdiction. If the proposal calls for converting an existing county or local park or trail to a regional park or trail; is a boundary adjustment for an existing regional park or park reserve; or is for a bridging facility, please also include a more detailed map depicting the location in the local jurisdiction(s) (e.g., city, township).

This proposed search corridor is an opportunity for Scott County to increase connectivity to and between two regional park facilities and establish a link between Scott and Dakota County via regional trails in an area that is home to a growing diverse population. This trail is envisioned to run in the vicinity of the north-western and western side of Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve in Savage to connect the Dakota County Lake Marion Greenway Trail to the Scott West Regional Trail. This trail will provide a regional paved trail amenity around or through Murphy-Hanrehan, an amenity that is not present in the Park Reserve. Though search corridors do not have a defined alignment, we are suggesting that this regional trail would be between three and six miles long and meander through to connect these points of interest. There is also an opportunity for this linking regional trail to provide scenic views as there are several natural areas and native plant communities within the search area. By adding a critical connection between regional facilities as well as increasing access to natural areas, this trail would serve as an impactful recreational feature for current and future residents of this growing portion of the metro to utilize and explore.

A similar segment was recognized in the 2030 Parks Policy Plan and in Dakota County's Metropolitan Council approved Lake Marion Greenway Master Plan. See the attached system plan map to see how the connection will fit within the trail network in Scott County and adjacent jurisdictions.

2. **General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

This proposed trail connects two regional trail segments without duplicating an existing regional trail; this trail alignment would close a gap in the greater regional trail network between the Dakota County Lake Marion Greenway and the Scott County Scott West Regional Trail. The closest north/south regional trails are over 7 miles away to the east in Shakopee, well over the 1.5-mile minimum requirement. An existing search corridor (Prior Lake Outlet) exists 5 miles from this proposed addition, and is separated by a significant barrier, Prior Lake. This new search corridor will increase connectivity to Cleary Lake Regional Park, one of the most popular regional recreation facilities in the south metro. While we plan on this trail being a linking trail, given that portions of the area are relatively underdeveloped and there are key natural communities within the corridor, significant portions are envisioned to be developed away from the roadway system to offer a more scenic route.

3. **Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency’s board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.

The Scott County Parks Advisory Commission recommended the approval of the parks chapter in the 2040 comprehensive plan and the Scott County Board moved to approve the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The City of Savage, Credit River Township, and Dakota County have provided letters of support for the addition to the regional trail search corridor network. Both Savage and Credit River see this connection as an important component of their local trail networks as it will link their residents with better access to the multitude of recreational facilities that are present in the region. Dakota County took the initial step in developing the Lake Marion Greenway to which this trail will connect and currently supports the connection as an important system addition. The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District has also written a letter of support for this search corridor because the Credit River Watershed, where the trail would be located, is a rapidly developing area where the SWCD is actively looking to increase native pollinator habitat and encourage alternatives to high-maintenance turf. The SWCD sees this trail as a potential collaboration between them and the County. The Scott Watershed Management Organization has provided a letter of support that emphasizes their interest in collaborative planning, education and outreach in the implementation of the trails as well as the support for the conservation benefits from these projects. The Scott County Public Health Department submitted a letter of support, highlighting their support for the increase in trail access in an area of the county with a growing diverse population, and the overall health benefits that are seen in communities with a well-connected trail system.

4. **Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.

We have heard from the community in park and trail user surveys, county and city resident surveys, and online engagement that the people of Scott County would like more bike lanes and trails. The City of Savage recently completed a pedestrian and bicycle master plan which found that there is a strong desire to access the city's natural areas. They have also identified trail gaps within the same area of this proposed search corridor. This trail would provide two access points to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and will complete longer distance connections to other natural features in Scott County and in neighboring Dakota County and to the Minnesota River. The Park Reserve has limited accessible opportunities as it is intended to be a rustic park with well-preserved natural features. The addition of the proposed regional trail connection would not only increase access to this park reserve, but also provide visitors with more accessible recreation opportunities in the area. This search corridor was presented in the public engagement process as a goal to increase connectivity within Scott County to the regional parks and trail system, something the community considers a need both for transportation and for recreation. This was shown at multiple engagement events including open houses, public hearings, and community reviews. The response to this addition to the system was entirely positive.

5. **Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).

The proposed regional trail advances several of the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes by promoting community access to facilities and natural areas via trails, strengthening equitable usage within and access to our facilities, and balancing recreation activities with conservation efforts.

This trail would provide two access points to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and will complete longer distance connections to other parks and trails in Scott and Dakota Counties. As well, this trail would provide an accessible recreation option. This park is closer to some of the larger proportions of residents (Savage and western Burnsville) with a disability, but the park reserve itself is more rustic in nature and has limited infrastructure in place to accommodate accessibility. Looking forward, the search corridor and nearby areas have an aging middle-aged population, with 43% between the ages of 40-64. This proposed addition of an accessible regional trail in this area will improve access to Murphy-Hanrehan and nearby facilities for current and future accessibility needs. Within this area, there are also several census tracts with a larger proportion of residents who identify as Black or Asian, as compared to much of the rest of the County. Visitation patterns for our parks have indicated that predominantly white, able, and middle and upper-class individuals are utilizing our facilities. Increasing trail access within this area could provide better connectivity between our regional facilities and these communities. This trail will also provide the County with the opportunities to connect residents to critical natural resources without the use of vehicles. The search area we are proposing overlaps with areas of ranked native plant communities by the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, wetlands listed on the Department of Natural Resources National Wetland Index, and Scott County's Natural Area Corridors. The search area has native plant communities including Maple-Basswood forest, mixed-emergent marshes, and wet meadows, all that provide habitat for local wildlife but also offer scenic experiences for residents and visitors. Overall, by creating scenic connections to our facilities in strategic locations, we hope to encourage people of varying backgrounds to access our parks and trails, aligning with our goals as an implementing agency and with the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes.

6. **Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

Future master planning of the Lake Marion Greenway to Scott West Regional Trail connection will determine a priority trail alignment and its length, as well as opportunities to implement the trail through existing public lands and easements at no or limited cost. For purposes of this application, it is assumed that there will be a cost associated with acquisition of the full trail corridor, at a rate of \$256,750 per acre, however this is noted as being on the high end of anticipated cost. The trail is anticipated to be between 3.0 and 6.0 miles in length. Based on an average trail width of 25 feet, and \$256,750 per acre, the anticipated future acquisition costs is between \$2,334,090 and \$4,668,181. The future master plan will identify more precise acquisition costs.

Planning for this regional trail will occur in the next 5-6 years, with acquisition and development occurring over the next 7 to 15 years.



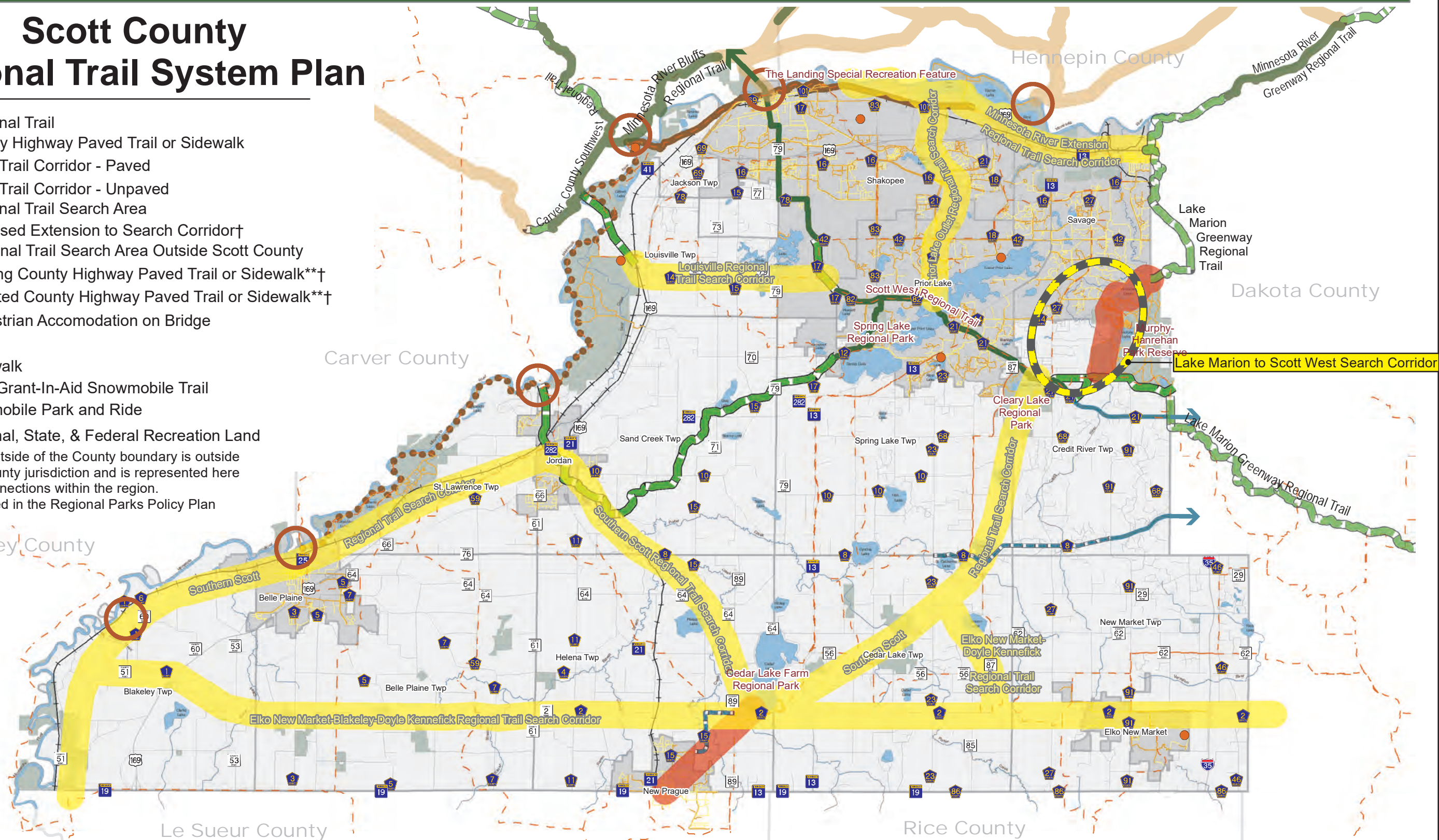
# Scott County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update



## Scott County Regional Trail System Plan

- Regional Trail
- County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk
- State Trail Corridor - Paved
- State Trail Corridor - Unpaved
- Regional Trail Search Area
- Proposed Extension to Search Corridor†
- Regional Trail Search Area Outside Scott County
- Existing County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk\*\*†
- Targeted County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk\*\*†
- Pedestrian Accomodation on Bridge
- Trail
- Sidewalk
- State Grant-In-Aid Snowmobile Trail
- Snowmobile Park and Ride
- Regional, State, & Federal Recreation Land

\*Any trail outside of the County boundary is outside of Scott County jurisdiction and is represented here to show connections within the region.  
 †Not adopted in the Regional Parks Policy Plan

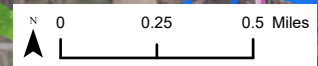
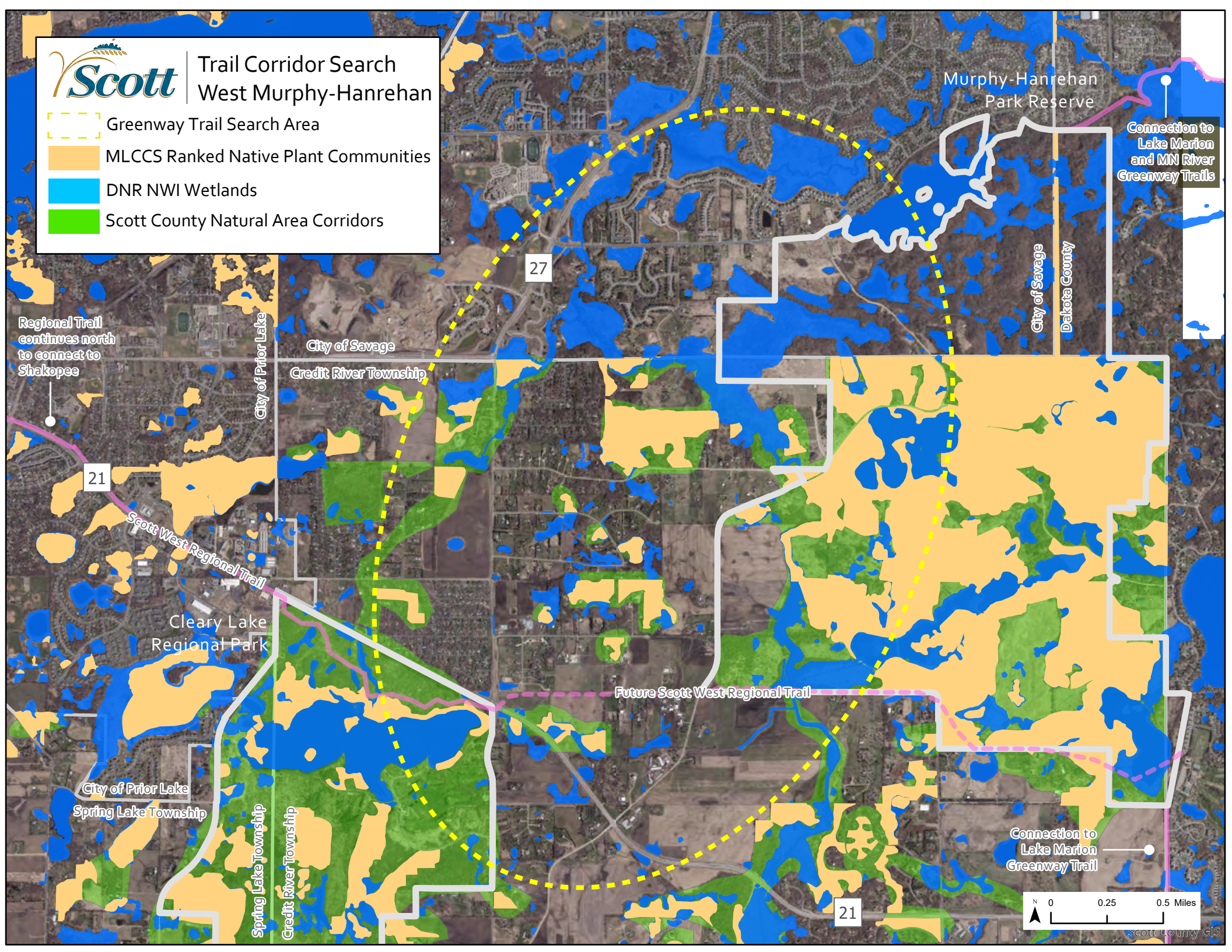






# Trail Corridor Search West Murphy-Hanrehan

- Greenway Trail Search Area
- MLCCS Ranked Native Plant Communities
- DNR NWI Wetlands
- Scott County Natural Area Corridors







CITY OF  
**SAVAGE**  
MINNESOTA

PUBLIC WORKS  
13770 Dakota Ave.  
Savage, MN 55378

 952-224-3400  
 952-224-3430  
 [comments@ci.savage.mn.us](mailto:comments@ci.savage.mn.us)  
 [cityofsavage.com](http://cityofsavage.com)

December 30, 2019

Nathan Moe  
200 Fourth Ave West  
Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Re: Lake Marion to Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail Search Corridor

Dear Scott County Parks and Trails,

The City of Savage is aware that Scott County has proposed a regional trail search corridor connection between the southern terminus of the Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail and the northern end of the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail.

This segment of regional search corridor is a welcome addition to the trail system in Savage and the region. This planned connection is complementary to our 2040 comprehensive plan and will provide important trail connections to the regional trail system and other regional park facilities.

The City of Savage supports the proposed addition to the regional system.

Sincerely,

Greg Boatman  
Public Works Director

Credit River Township  
18985 Meadow View Blvd, Prior Lake, MN 55372  
952-440-5515

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January 6, 2020

Nathan Moe  
200 Fourth Ave West  
Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Re: Minnesota River Greenway to Lake Marion Regional Trail Search Corridor

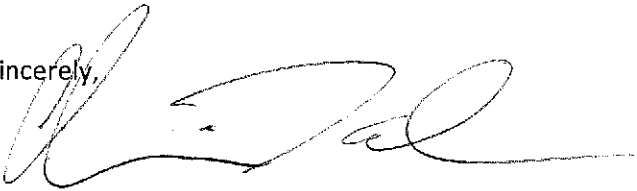
Dear Scott County Parks and Trails,

Credit River Township is aware that Scott County has proposed a regional trail search corridor connection between the southern terminus of the Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail and the northern end of the Lake Marion Greenway Regional Trail.

This segment of regional search corridor is a welcome addition to the trail system in Credit River and the region. This planned connection is complementary to our 2040 comprehensive plan and will provide important trail connections to the regional trail system and other regional park facilities.

Credit River Township supports the proposed addition to the regional system.

Sincerely,



Chris Kostik  
Chairman, Credit River Township

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman, General Manager  
Scott County Parks & Trails  
200 Fourth Ave West  
Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Re: Regional Trail Search Corridor Additions

Dear Patty:

On behalf of the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission (PAC) I want to express our very strong support for the two additions to the trail system being proposed by Scott County. The PAC recognizes the importance of connecting each of the cities in the county to our regional trail network. These proposed additions will provide for a more complete and equitable system of trail connections for residents, so they can reach every community, as well as our existing and planned regional parks, by foot or bicycle.

The southern search corridor near the city of New Prague and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park will provide a destination trail to a tri-county area lacking many recreational amenities, with new trail connections to the rest of the county. As the PAC representative from the northeast portion of the county, I can attest that the search corridor adjacent to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve will provide an important connection for an increasingly diverse population, to four regional recreation facilities in the immediate area; including the Lake Marion Greenway and the Minnesota River Greenway trails in neighboring Dakota County.

Given the popularity of trails among our residents, and their desire for increased connectivity, these two proposed additions will fill critical gaps for a comprehensive countywide trail system. The Parks Advisory Commission fully supports the proposed additions and believes they will provide terrific recreation opportunities for all Scott County residents, as well as those in neighboring counties.

Sincerely,

Patrick Stieg  
Scott County Parks Advisory Commission Chair



## SCOTT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

*"Helping Scott County Citizens Protect and Preserve  
Natural Resources since 1941"*

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman  
General Manager Scott County Parks  
Scott County  
200 Fourth Avenue West  
Shakopee Mn, 55379

Re: Regional Destination Trail Search Corridor - Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague  
Regional Trail Search Corridor - Minnesota River Greenway to Lake Marion Regional Trail

Dear Ms. Freeman,

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District is aware Scott County has proposed a regional destination trail search corridor between Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague and a regional trail search corridor in the City of Savage and Credit River Township area, to connect the Minnesota River Greenway to the Lake Marion Regional Trail.

In addition to supporting the increased regional trail access, the SWCD welcomes the opportunity the planning and development of these facilities will present to identify and potentially restore and protect water, greenways, and other high-quality natural resources in Scott County.

The proposed Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague destination trail search area includes Sand Creek and numerous tributary streams and lakes, where we are actively working to with private landowners to mitigate impacts from agriculture and changing precipitation patterns through the introduction of native perennial cover on environmentally sensitive lands and restoration of buffers along waterways. The proposed search area for Lake Marion Regional Trail is in the rapidly developing watershed of the Credit River where we are actively targeting natural landscaping and pollinator habitat as alternatives to traditional high maintenance turf. We look forward to participating in the planning for both these facilities and the synergy it will bring to achieving both public access and resource conservation outcomes.

The Scott SWCD supports these two additions to the regional park and trail system and we look forward to the opportunity to be a part of these initiatives in the future.

Sincerely,

 District Director, for

Doug Schoenecker, Chair



## SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION

PUBLIC HEALTH • MARSCHALL ROAD TRANSIT STATION

1615 WESTON COURT • SHAKOPEE, MN 55379-4426

(952) 496-8555 • FAX (952) 496-8072 • [WWW.CO.SCOTT.MN.US](http://WWW.CO.SCOTT.MN.US)

May 18, 2020

Re: Regional Trail Search Corridor Additions

Scott County Parks and Trails,

Scott County Public Health and its Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) is supportive of the two system additions proposed in Scott County. The search corridor adjacent to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve provides an important connection between four parks or trail facilities and will provide active living opportunities for an increasingly diverse population. The southern search corridor near New Prague and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park will provide an area sorely lacking in recreational amenities with a destination trail to increase opportunities for biking, walking, and other trail activities. Through SHIP, we would like to see increases in physical activity and walkability in our community to assist with reducing the burden of chronic diseases. Walkability is an important aspect in our community to ensure all residents have access to opportunities, such as parks and trails. Given the popularity of trails and the desires for more from our residents, these additions are a welcome addition to the future plans of regional trails in Scott County.

Scott County's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership supports the proposed additions to the regional system and believes it will assist with long-term improvements for active living opportunities for residents of Scott County.

Sincerely,

Respectfully,

Lindsay Nelson, BS, MCHES  
SHIP Coordinator



*Scott Watershed Management Organization*

200 Fourth Avenue West

Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

952-496-8054 Fax 952-496-8496

[www.co.scott.mn.us](http://www.co.scott.mn.us)

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman  
General Manager Scott County Parks  
Scott County  
200 Fourth Avenue West  
Shakopee Mn, 55379

Re: Regional Destination Trail Search Corridor - Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague Regional Trail Search Corridor - Minnesota River Greenway to Scott West Regional Trail

Dear Ms. Freeman,

The Scott Watershed Management Organization (SWMO) is aware that Scott County has proposed a regional destination trail search corridor between Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague; and a regional trail search corridor in the City of Savage and Credit River Township area.

Each of the search corridors contain portions of Scott County's Natural Area Corridors, including native plant communities and water resources, and through collaborative planning of these trails, these could be protected, enhanced and highlighted for public enjoyment. Additionally, there are degraded and marginal lands in these areas that could be restored to natural vegetation – forest, woodland, prairie, wetland.

I welcome the opportunity that the planning and development of these facilities presents to protect and restore high-quality natural resources and to implement natural buffers and other green infrastructure solutions, and see the potential of collaborative projects that support the goals of the SWMO and could assist in implementing multiple water quality improvement projects identified in our Local Surface Water Management Plan as well as the previously mentioned wetland and native habitat restoration opportunities, education and outreach opportunities, and integral coordination of land use planning and water resource management.

I support these additions to the regional park and trail system and look forward to the opportunity for Scott Watershed Management Organization to be a part of these initiatives in the future.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Strong  
Water Resources Supervisor Scott County/Administrator Scott WMO

**Attachment 1b**

**Scott County Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague -  
Regional Trail Search Corridor**



## SCOTT COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS PROGRAM

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May 20, 2020

Colin Kelly  
Planning Analyst  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Regional Parks System Additions

Dear Colin,

In response to your email on April 2, 2020 announcing the application period for the Regional Parks System Additions, please see the attached system addition application from Scott County, for:

- Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague Destination Regional Trail

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the County's proposed regional park system additions. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Patty Freeman  
General Manager, Scott County Regional Parks and Trails

Office: 952-496-8752  
Mobile: 612-308-1770



1. **System Addition Proposal:** Please describe the proposal, it's location, the proposed acreage or trail miles, and if applicable, partner arrangement. Please include an overview map of the proposal depicting the location in your agency's jurisdiction. If the proposal calls for converting an existing county or local park or trail to a regional park or trail; is a boundary adjustment for an existing regional park or park reserve; or is for a bridging facility, please also include a more detailed map depicting the location in the local jurisdiction(s) (e.g., city, township).

This proposed search corridor is an opportunity for Scott County to create a destination trail in the southern region of the county and the region, where there are limited regional trail and recreation opportunities and many opportunities to conserve natural resources. The trail is envisioned as a 3 to 6-mile destination trail, with anchor points at Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague. In addition to serving the residents of New Prague, Cedar Lake Farm, the only regional park in southern Scott County, serves the communities of Elko-New Market and Belle Plaine and several townships. The trail will meander through the watershed of Sand Creek and its tributary streams and lakes, which drain to the Minnesota River, and it will connect the community of New Prague with the greater future Regional Trail network (see the Elko New Market-Blakeley-Doyle Kennefick Search Corridor). This trail would encompass a 100-200' wide corridor for as much of its length as possible down to a minimum of a 25' when required. These widths will give us opportunity to protect and improve important natural resources, which will support multiple conservation benefits locally and for the greater region. This proposed corridor will fill a gap in the County's regional trail network, allowing connections between all cities within the county as well as potentially provide an opportunity for Le Sueur County (south) to connect to Scott County. During both the 2030 and the 2040 comprehensive planning processes, the communities in the southern portion of the county consistently expressed the desire for more regional recreational amenities and trail connections. By providing a destination trail in this part of the region we are balancing the critical need for conservation with the critical need for recreation, and access to natural areas and to the greater regional trail network.

2. **General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

This trail is a regionally significant feature as it will fill a gap in the regional trail network in southern Scott County, draw residents from across the region to enjoy a scenic connection between a lakeside regional park and the city of New Prague, and its implementation will support conservation, enhancement and restoration of natural resources. In the system as planned today, southern Scott County residents, in particular residents of the growing City of New Prague, have limited connections to natural areas and no existing or planned connection to the entirety of the greater regional parks and trails network or the State trail planned along the Minnesota River to the west. This trail fills that gap. The scenic quality of the envisioned trail, points of interest at either end, and its accessible length, will provide a compelling opportunity for a day trip. Within Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park, the closest regional facility in the area, there is a lovely lakeside setting and a small network of natural-surface trails. However, there are few paved trails within the park. The closest continuous trail of more than three miles is a roadside adjacent city trail in Elko-New Market that is over ten miles away. The addition of the proposed destination trail connects the community of New Prague and surrounding Townships to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park, to the regional trail network, and to the planned State trail. Our intention is to use Scott County's identified Natural Area Corridors as a guide for the future planning and alignment of the trail. The corridors include prioritized high-quality natural lands and water as well as marginal lands that if restored can provide great conservation benefit. This type of development will allow for more than 50% of the trail to be visually separate from roadways. Our goal is to create a scenic trail experience with creek-side paths and restored native landscapes for residents to enjoy, while also connecting a significant population center within Scott County to have access to the Regional Parks and Trails network without use of vehicles.

3. **Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.

The Scott County Parks Advisory Commission recommended the approval of the parks chapter in the 2040 comprehensive plan, and the Scott County Board moved to approve the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The City of New Prague provided comments in their review of the plan in support of the proposed trail connection, and they have since provided a letter of support for the addition to the regional trail search corridor network. The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District has written a letter of support for this Destination Trail, not only because the trail will improve recreational access within the community, but also because protecting Sand Creek and numerous streams and tributaries is an on-going effort by the SWCD. They indicate that this trail could help bolster their efforts to buffer these critical waterways to promote resiliency against climate change effects and promote native plant cover. The Scott Watershed Management Organization has provided a letter of support that emphasizes their interest in collaborative planning, education and outreach in the implementation of the trails as well as the support for the conservation benefits from these projects. The Scott County Public Health Department submitted a letter of support, highlighting their support for the increase in trail access in an area of the county with a growing diverse population, and the overall health benefits that are seen with a connected trail system.

4. **Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.

The community engagement for the 2040 plan included strong evidence that residents feel that there is a lack of trails for both transportation and recreation. This same response has been echoed consistently in community engagement efforts and annual surveys conducted by Scott County as well as many of the cities within the County. During the 2040 comprehensive plan, the City of New Prague provided feedback from their City Council and Parks Commission, and a public engagement initiative they completed on recreation needs and other community needs. From this they found the biggest barrier to biking and walking is a lack of sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. They also found that Cedar Lake is the 6<sup>th</sup> most desired destination for residents in the community. The proposed destination trail was presented as a solution for the community at multiple engagement events hosted by Scott County through the 2040 comprehensive planning process including open houses, public hearings, and community reviews. The response to this addition to the system was entirely positive.

5. **Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).

This trail would provide the County with the opportunities to connect residents to natural areas while also helping to conserve those resources. The search area we are proposing has several sections of the County's Natural Area Corridors. These corridors include areas of ranked native plant communities by the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, wetlands listed on the Department of Natural Resources National Wetland Index, as well as agricultural and other marginal lands. We are suggesting a destination trail here because a wide corridor would give the County an opportunity to provide up to 100-200' wide swaths through these natural communities, offering buffer protection along these critical waterways and conversion of marginal lands to natural cover of forest, woodland and prairie. The search area extends across Sand Creek, which is the watershed drainage point for most of central Scott County. As precipitation events increase in frequency and severity due to climate change, buffering this waterway will be a critical step in helping reduce water overflow through the creek. This waterbody is also a large pollution source to the Minnesota River Valley, with many of its sections listed as impaired for turbidity, chloride, and eutrophication. By adding conservation buffers with the potential of native plant community protection and restoration, there is opportunity for the water quality of Sand Creek to improve. Throughout the search area there are native Oak, Floodplain, and Maple-Basswood Forests that help support local wildlife by providing food and habitat, as well as improving our air and water quality. These natural areas are crucial tools in the fight against the changing climate, and as the county continues to increase in population, the opportunity to protect such resources diminishes.

This trail would also offer a paved recreation along scenic areas, a feature that is non-existent in southern Scott County. This trail will be a stepping-stone to further providing more equitable access to the residents of rural Scott County, including communities of higher disability rates within the county as the regional trail network in Scott County expands. As well, the park reserve is surrounded by an aging middle-aged population, with 32% between the ages of 40-64. Looking forward, the population of New Prague and Cedar Lake Township are expected to increase by ~45% and ~30% by 2040 according to Thrive MSP 2040 projections. This proposed addition of an accessible regional trail in this area will improve access to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague for current and future accessibility needs.

6. **Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

Future master planning of the Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague Destination Regional Trail will determine a priority trail alignment and its length and width, as well as opportunities to implement the trail through existing public lands and easements at limited or no cost. For purposes of this application, it is assumed that there will be a cost associated with acquisition of the full destination trail corridor, at a rate of \$36,950 per acre however this is noted a likely to be on the high end of cost. The future master plan will identify more precise acquisition costs.

The trail is anticipated to be between 3.0 and 6.0 miles in length. Based on an average trail width of 100 feet, and \$36,950 per acre, the anticipated future acquisition costs is between \$1,343,636 and \$2,687,273.

Planning for this regional trail will occur in the next 5-6 years, with acquisition and development occurring over the next 7 to 20 years.



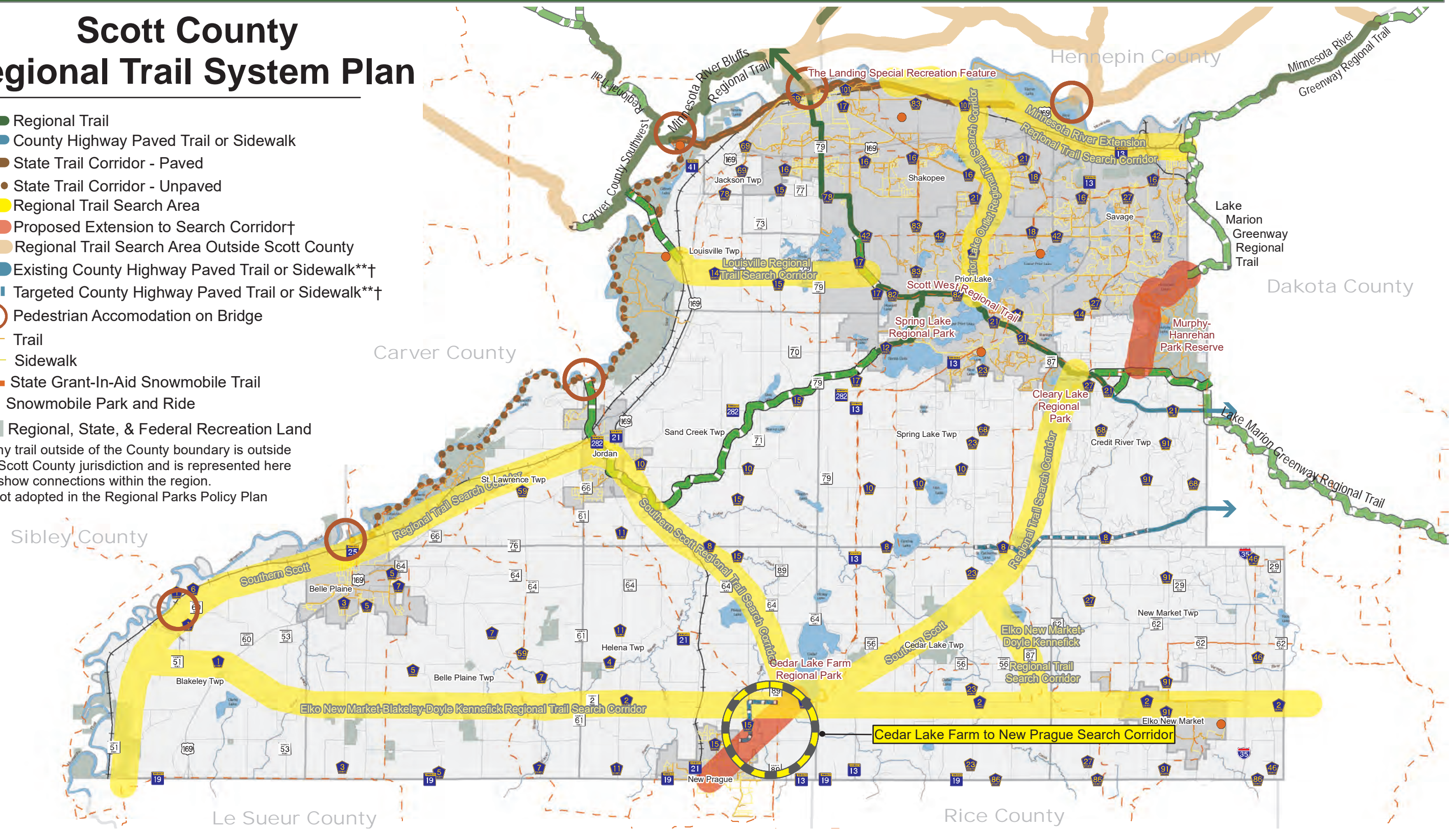
# Scott County 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update



## Scott County Regional Trail System Plan

- Regional Trail
- County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk
- State Trail Corridor - Paved
- State Trail Corridor - Unpaved
- Regional Trail Search Area
- Proposed Extension to Search Corridor†
- Regional Trail Search Area Outside Scott County
- Existing County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk\*\*†
- Targeted County Highway Paved Trail or Sidewalk\*\*†
- Pedestrian Accomodation on Bridge
- Trail
- Sidewalk
- State Grant-In-Aid Snowmobile Trail
- Snowmobile Park and Ride
- Regional, State, & Federal Recreation Land

\*Any trail outside of the County boundary is outside of Scott County jurisdiction and is represented here to show connections within the region.  
 †Not adopted in the Regional Parks Policy Plan

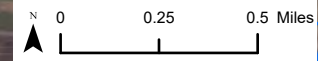
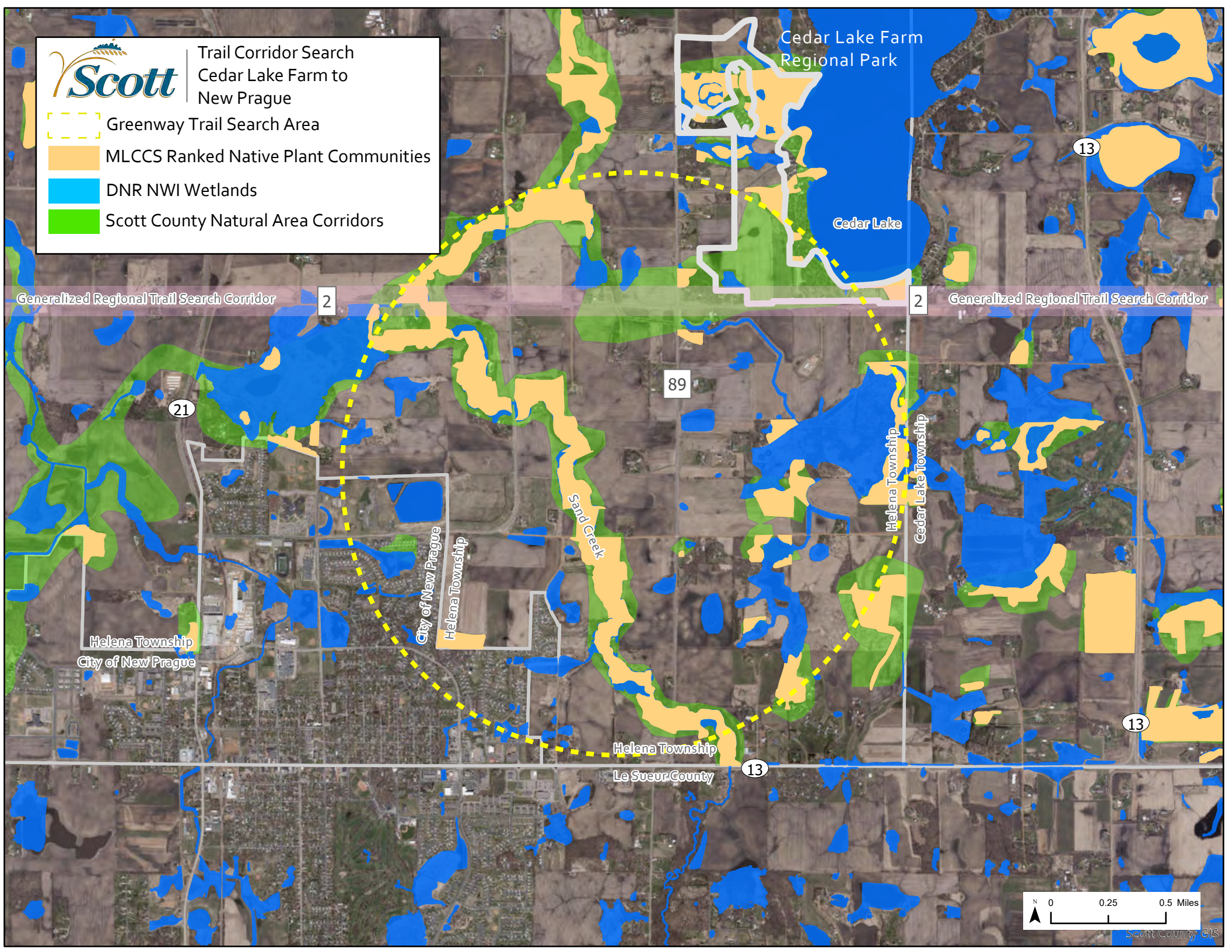






Trail Corridor Search  
Cedar Lake Farm to  
New Prague

- Greenway Trail Search Area
- MLCCS Ranked Native Plant Communities
- DNR NWI Wetlands
- Scott County Natural Area Corridors







## SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION

PUBLIC HEALTH • MARSCHALL ROAD TRANSIT STATION

1615 WESTON COURT • SHAKOPEE, MN 55379-4426

(952) 496-8555 • FAX (952) 496-8072 • [WWW.CO.SCOTT.MN.US](http://WWW.CO.SCOTT.MN.US)

May 18, 2020

Re: Regional Trail Search Corridor Additions

Scott County Parks and Trails,

Scott County Public Health and its Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) is supportive of the two system additions proposed in Scott County. The search corridor adjacent to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve provides an important connection between four parks or trail facilities and will provide active living opportunities for an increasingly diverse population. The southern search corridor near New Prague and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park will provide an area sorely lacking in recreational amenities with a destination trail to increase opportunities for biking, walking, and other trail activities. Through SHIP, we would like to see increases in physical activity and walkability in our community to assist with reducing the burden of chronic diseases. Walkability is an important aspect in our community to ensure all residents have access to opportunities, such as parks and trails. Given the popularity of trails and the desires for more from our residents, these additions are a welcome addition to the future plans of regional trails in Scott County.

Scott County's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership supports the proposed additions to the regional system and believes it will assist with long-term improvements for active living opportunities for residents of Scott County.

Sincerely,

Respectfully,

Lindsay Nelson, BS, MCHES  
SHIP Coordinator

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman, General Manager  
Scott County Parks & Trails  
200 Fourth Ave West  
Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Re: Regional Trail Search Corridor Additions

Dear Patty:

On behalf of the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission (PAC) I want to express our very strong support for the two additions to the trail system being proposed by Scott County. The PAC recognizes the importance of connecting each of the cities in the county to our regional trail network. These proposed additions will provide for a more complete and equitable system of trail connections for residents, so they can reach every community, as well as our existing and planned regional parks, by foot or bicycle.

The southern search corridor near the city of New Prague and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park will provide a destination trail to a tri-county area lacking many recreational amenities, with new trail connections to the rest of the county. As the PAC representative from the northeast portion of the county, I can attest that the search corridor adjacent to Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve will provide an important connection for an increasingly diverse population, to four regional recreation facilities in the immediate area; including the Lake Marion Greenway and the Minnesota River Greenway trails in neighboring Dakota County.

Given the popularity of trails among our residents, and their desire for increased connectivity, these two proposed additions will fill critical gaps for a comprehensive countywide trail system. The Parks Advisory Commission fully supports the proposed additions and believes they will provide terrific recreation opportunities for all Scott County residents, as well as those in neighboring counties.

Sincerely,

Patrick Stieg  
Scott County Parks Advisory Commission Chair



## SCOTT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

*"Helping Scott County Citizens Protect and Preserve  
Natural Resources since 1941"*

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman  
General Manager Scott County Parks  
Scott County  
200 Fourth Avenue West  
Shakopee Mn, 55379

Re: Regional Destination Trail Search Corridor - Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague  
Regional Trail Search Corridor - Minnesota River Greenway to Lake Marion Regional Trail

Dear Ms. Freeman,

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District is aware Scott County has proposed a regional destination trail search corridor between Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague and a regional trail search corridor in the City of Savage and Credit River Township area, to connect the Minnesota River Greenway to the Lake Marion Regional Trail.

In addition to supporting the increased regional trail access, the SWCD welcomes the opportunity the planning and development of these facilities will present to identify and potentially restore and protect water, greenways, and other high-quality natural resources in Scott County.

The proposed Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague destination trail search area includes Sand Creek and numerous tributary streams and lakes, where we are actively working to with private landowners to mitigate impacts from agriculture and changing precipitation patterns through the introduction of native perennial cover on environmentally sensitive lands and restoration of buffers along waterways. The proposed search area for Lake Marion Regional Trail is in the rapidly developing watershed of the Credit River where we are actively targeting natural landscaping and pollinator habitat as alternatives to traditional high maintenance turf. We look forward to participating in the planning for both these facilities and the synergy it will bring to achieving both public access and resource conservation outcomes.

The Scott SWCD supports these two additions to the regional park and trail system and we look forward to the opportunity to be a part of these initiatives in the future.

Sincerely,

District Director, for

Doug Schoenecker, Chair



# City of New Prague

In the Counties of Scott & Le Sueur

118 CENTRAL AVENUE NORTH · NEW PRAGUE, MINNESOTA 56071 · PHONE (952) 758-4401  
www.ci.new-prague.mn.us

**Kenneth D. Ondich**  
Planning / Community Development Director

December 10, 2019

Nathan Moe  
200 Fourth Ave West  
Shakopee, MN 55379-1220

Re: New Prague to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Trail Search Corridor

Dear Scott County Parks and Trails,

The City of New Prague is aware that Scott County has proposed a regional trail search corridor connection from the City of New Prague to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and connecting with the Elko New Market-Blakeley-Doyle Kennefick Regional Trail Search Corridor.

This addition to the regional search corridor is desired by the residents of New Prague. Without this connection the City of New Prague would not have any connection to the other trails or parks in Scott County. We have also planned for a future connection in our Comprehensive Plan and hope to see future trail connections to the region potentially connecting Montgomery, Lonsdale, and New Prague with the Scott County Regional Trail system.

New Prague supports the proposed addition to the regional system.

Sincerely,

Ken Ondich  
Planning / Community Development Director



*Scott Watershed Management Organization*

*200 Fourth Avenue West*

*Shakopee, MN 55379-1220*

*952-496-8054 Fax 952-496-8496*

*www.co.scott.mn.us*

May 19, 2020

Patricia Freeman  
General Manager Scott County Parks  
Scott County  
200 Fourth Avenue West  
Shakopee Mn, 55379

Re: Regional Destination Trail Search Corridor - Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague Regional Trail Search Corridor - Minnesota River Greenway to Scott West Regional Trail

Dear Ms. Freeman,

The Scott Watershed Management Organization (SWMO) is aware that Scott County has proposed a regional destination trail search corridor between Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and the City of New Prague; and a regional trail search corridor in the City of Savage and Credit River Township area.

Each of the search corridors contain portions of Scott County's Natural Area Corridors, including native plant communities and water resources, and through collaborative planning of these trails, these could be protected, enhanced and highlighted for public enjoyment. Additionally, there are degraded and marginal lands in these areas that could be restored to natural vegetation – forest, woodland, prairie, wetland.

I welcome the opportunity that the planning and development of these facilities presents to protect and restore high-quality natural resources and to implement natural buffers and other green infrastructure solutions, and see the potential of collaborative projects that support the goals of the SWMO and could assist in implementing multiple water quality improvement projects identified in our Local Surface Water Management Plan as well as the previously mentioned wetland and native habitat restoration opportunities, education and outreach opportunities, and integral coordination of land use planning and water resource management.

I support these additions to the regional park and trail system and look forward to the opportunity for Scott Watershed Management Organization to be a part of these initiatives in the future.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Strong  
Water Resources Supervisor Scott County/Administrator Scott WMO

## **Attachments 2a-2f**

### **Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

#### **Six Regional Trail Search Corridors including:**

**2a - Weaver Lake**

**2b - Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake**

**2c - Gray's Bay**

**2d - Silverwood**

**2e - Purgatory Creek**

**2f - Lake Sarah**

# REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ADDITION REQUEST

## REGIONAL TRAIL SEARCH CORRIDORS #1-6

### Q1: SYSTEM ADDITION PROPOSAL

FOR ALL SEARCH CORRIDORS UNLESS NOTED

Three Rivers is requesting 6 new/expanded regional trail search corridors totaling 50.5 miles. This additions effectively complete the envisioned 2040 Regional Trail System within Suburban Hennepin County.

#### Regional Trail Search Corridors #1-6

- New Regional Trails and extension of existing Regional Trail Search Corridors
- 50.5 miles total
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails

Regional trail use accounts for about 45% of all visitation to Three Rivers Parks and Trail System. Many users frequent the Regional Trail System weekly if not daily and do so in all seasons of the year. Unlike many of the regional parks and park reserves which require driving to get there, regional trails are integrated directly within the communities and their visitation more closely mirrors the communities where they are located.

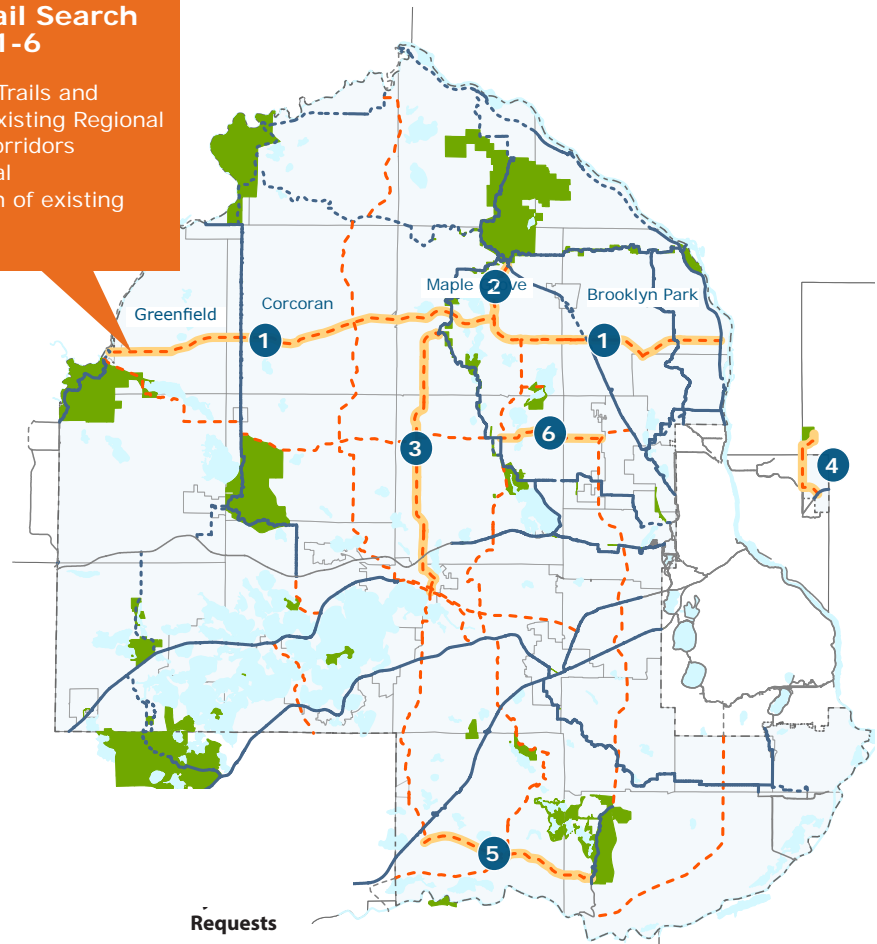
Regional trails are often a preferred regional recreation destination because of the safety and comfort they offer and the ongoing maintenance Three Rivers provides. They are designed to be multi-use, separated from vehicles, connect to local and regional destinations, over come barriers such as hwy's and rivers and, when not avoidable, provide safe crossing of the vehicular transportation network.

There are six regional trail search corridor requests - some are for new regional trail corridors and others for expanding existing corridors to more fully accomplish their regional recreation potential and purpose. In total they will provide an addition 50 miles of regional recreation and will be a composition of linking and destination regional trails.

Including these requests in the Regional Parks Policy Plan allows Three Rivers to work collaboratively and proactively with local communities, transportation providers, developers and willing land owners to determine the actual, preferred routes and develop associated master plans.

This ensures that all parties are prepared to move forward with regional trail development when an opportunity presents itself to do so - which could take several decades to fully implement. In addition, it is more effective and efficient to identify and plan for regional trails in advance of development and road redevelopment projects as retrofitting a developed corridor or key piece of infrastructure (like a hwy bridge which lasts 50 years) is expensive and often not publicly or politically supported.

Further, regional trails are a strong investment in the region's future as they contribute to the overall live-ability and quality of life helping to create desirable places to the live, work and play. In fact, Three Rivers and many of its local communities conduct surveys to better understand their constituents priorities - and the need and preference for more trails, specifically trails separated from vehicles, continues to be a high priority regardless of where you live. Regional trails also positively affect property value, provide an additional tool to protect natural resources and support the mental, physical and emotional health of those that use them. It is one of the most important investments we can make in our region's future.



### Three Rivers Park District Proposed Regional Trail Search Areas



## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA - REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

FOR ALL SEARCH CORRIDORS UNLESS NOTED

Three Rivers 2040 Regional Trail System was developed in 2014 in partnership with the Hennepin County 2040 Bicycle Transportation Plan. The regional trail component of that plan essentially serves as the backbone to the entire system providing nearly 400 miles of off-road, multi-use regional trails for both recreation and transportation purposes. While this is an ambitious system it meets the needs and desires of the communities it aims to serve.

The Regional Trail System was developed using the 1.5 mile Met Council defined service area for regional trails and contributed to the resulting grid pattern and addition of several new north-south corridors which the previous hub and spoke system lacked. It creates opportunities for both north/south and east/west recreation regardless of where you live and has a more concentrated system closer to the more urban and densely populated areas of Three River's jurisdiction.

The new Regional Trail System purposely incorporates many loops which are sized for 30 mins (5 miles biking), 1 hour (10 miles biking) and more of recreation. It also plays a key role in removing barriers that local trail systems often cannot overcome (examples: rivers and MnDOT hwy system), crossing local jurisdictional boundaries and connecting with the adjacent regional and state trail systems.

While each individual regional trail unit serves a particular purpose - most notably providing regional recreation opportunities directly in communities which people live - it is the combination of all the individual units which truly provides a regional recreational offering worth celebrating. Each community is served and connected to the broader Regional Parks System providing geographic balance within Three Rivers' system and building off of the success of the existing trail corridors that absolutely serve a regional purpose. When fully complete, this will serve as a model for the entire Regional Parks System.

The system is comprised of both linking and destination regional trails (see summary in the upper left). This provides a variety of experiential opportunities within the system and allows for linking regional trail development where an independent, destination regional trail corridor may not otherwise be feasible due to existing developments patterns. These linking trails, still play an important part as they connect users to regional parks/park reserves as well as the more scenic and desirable destination regional trail corridors which offer a more linear park experience.

Similar to Three Rivers' park search area proposals, the regional trail search corridors considered:

- Geographic balance, jurisdictional coordination, barrier and gap removal and desire for recreational loops, more north-south recreational opportunities and recreational opportunities close to home;
- Development timing and patterns;
- Existing service areas coverage; and
- Public engagement findings: remove barriers, expand focus and diversify offerings.

### RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM REGIONAL TRAIL CATEGORIES

	Destination Trail	Linking Trail
PURPOSE	Service Area Distance: 1.5 mile walk/bike	Service Area Distance: 1.5 mile walk/bike
	Providing a regional recreation facility along a greenway or linear park Trail acts as a destination	Providing access to regional parks and to the greater regional trail network
DEVELOPMENT	Independent, wide corridor with opportunities to improve and protect natural and cultural resources and provide recreation amenities	Multi-use corridor routed to connect people, destinations and the greater transportation system

**75%**  
of regional park  
visitors walk/bike  
**1.5 mile  
or less**

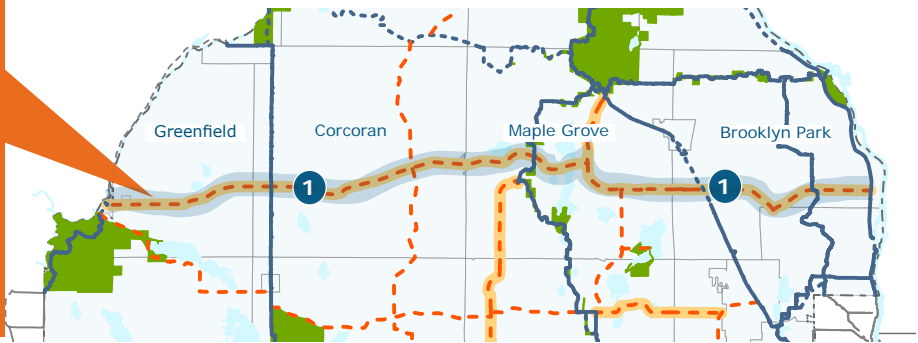


## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #1

#### Weaver Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor #1

- New Regional Trail centered on Brooklyn Blvd. in Brooklyn Park, Elm Creek Blvd. & Weaver Lake Road in Maple Grove and Rebecca Park Trail in Corcoran & Greenfield
- Total regional trail length: 23 miles from Crow River Regional Trail/Lake Rebecca Park Reserve to West Mississippi River Regional Trail
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails



### Regional Trails Criteria

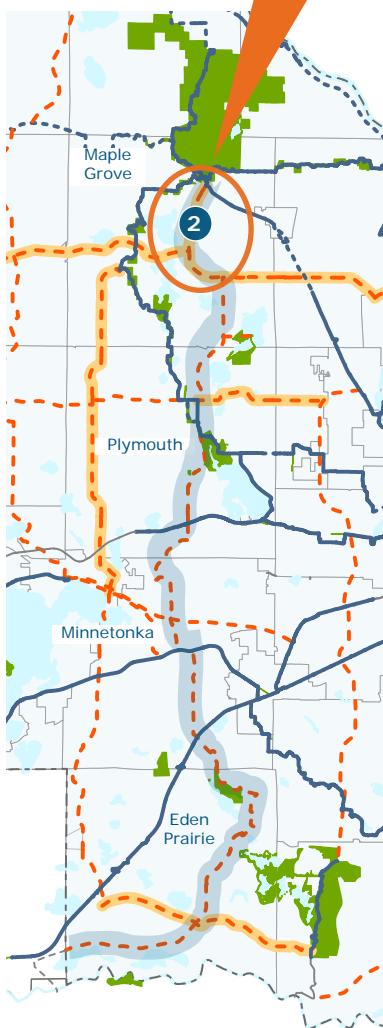
Search Corridor # 1	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Search corridor is proposed to be about 23 miles long, span 4 cities across suburban Hennepin County and offer nearby trail connections to Wright County as well as to Anoka County and Minneapolis via the West Mississippi River Regional Trail/Mississippi River Trail/US Bikeway 45.</li> <li>• Due to its size and regional connections, it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This corridor does not duplicate an existing regional trail; however, it does fill a hole in regional trail service area coverage and create opportunities for desirable loops and improved non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system.</li> <li>• It is located approximately 3 miles south from Rush Creek Regional Trail Corridor and separated by Hwy 610 and 3.5 miles north of a Lake Sarah Regional Trail search corridor and separated by I-94.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will connects 8 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors - including the national Mississippi River Trail/US Bikeway 45, Lake Rebecca Park Reserve, the Mississippi National River Recreation Area and Fish Lake Regional Park via a short trail connection.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials & local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spans entire width of Hennepin County with a direct connection to Wright County.</li> <li>• Connects 8 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and numerous local trail systems.</li> <li>• Removes barriers of I-94, TH 169 and Hwy 252 as well as several county roads.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service coverage for regional trails extend 1.5 mile from the trail centerline as such this corridor is currently not served by another east-west regional trail.</li> <li>• It is located approximately 3 miles south from Rush Creek Regional Trail Corridor and separated by Hwy 610 and 3.5 miles north of the Lake Sarah Regional Trail search corridor and separated by I-94.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations potentially including many cultural places of business in Brooklyn Park, churches, schools, Palmer Lake Park (a potential First-Ring Special Recreation Feature), Arbor Lakes retail/employment node in Maple Grove, Weaver Lake Community Park and more. Exact connections will be determined during the master planning stage.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #2

#### Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor #2

- Extension of Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake Regional Trail north 5 miles to Elm Creek Park Reserve along Elm Creek Blvd. in Maple Grove
- Total regional trail length: 21 miles from Elm Creek Park Reserve to Carver County Regional Trail System
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails



#### Regional Trails

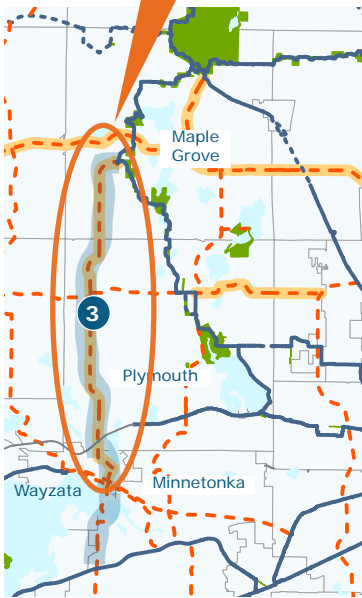
Search Corridor # 2	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This regional trail search corridor extension is proposed to be about 5 miles long completely within Maple Grove and be part of a larger 21 mile corridor spanning almost the entire length of Hennepin County through 4 cities with a direct connection to the Carver County Regional Trail System and Minnesota Valley State Trail.</li> <li>• Due to its size and regional connections, it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While located in close proximity to the Medicine Lake Regional Trail (to the west) it is not duplicative as it is separated by I-494 reducing access/service. It also creates opportunities for desirable loops and improved non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the north termini the search corridor it connects directly to Elm Creek Park Reserve and three existing regional trails at the south termini of the search corridor it connects to the Weaver Lake Regional Trail search corridor. The greater trail corridor includes connects to Eagle Lake, French and Bryant Lake Regional Parks as well as Hyland Park Reserve, six other regional trails, the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge and Minnesota Valley State Trail.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials and local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In combination with the greater existing search corridor, this search corridor spans nearly the entire length of Hennepin County and serves an important north-south function.</li> <li>• Connects 9 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and numerous local trail systems.</li> <li>• Crosses/removes barrier of I-94 (this search corridor request), Hwy 610, TH 55, I-394, Hwy 7, Hwy 62, TH 212, I-494 and several county roads (greater, existing search corridor).</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While in close proximity to the Medicine Lake Regional Trail, it is located on the other side of I-494, and therefore, serves a portion of the community without direct access to north-south regional trails.</li> <li>• Provides a direct connect to Elm Creek Park Reserve - a main regional recreation destination.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations. This will be determined during the master planning stage and likely include several schools, churches, parks, both local and regional retail/commercial nodes, Arbor Lakes retail center and industrial/warehouse/office employment areas.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #3

#### Gray's Bay Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor #3

- 10.5 miles centered on Dunkirk Lane/Lawndale in Maple Grove, Peony Lane and CR 101 in Plymouth and CR 101 in Wayzata
- Connects Medicine Lake Regional Trail on north end with Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail on south end
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails



#### Regional Trails

Search Corridor #3	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is proposed to be about 10.5 miles long, span 3 cities in Hennepin County and connect to 3 regional trails and the Luce Line State Trail. Existing search corridor is about 1 mile long between the Dakota Rail and Lake Minnetonka Regional Trails.</li> <li>• Due to its size and regional connections, it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This corridor does not duplicate an existing regional trail; however, it does fill a hole in regional trail coverage and create opportunities for desirable loops and improved non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system.</li> <li>• It is located about 3 miles east of the Diamond Lake Regional Trail search corridor and about 3 miles west of the Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake Regional Trail search corridor and separated by I-494.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The search corridor connects 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and the Luce Line State Trail.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials and local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves a much needed north-south function.</li> <li>• Connects 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, the Luce Line State Trail and numerous local trails systems.</li> <li>• Crosses/removes barrier of TH 55 and TH 12 as well as several county roads.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service coverage for regional trails extend 1.5 from the trail centerline as such this area is currently not served by an east-west regional trail.</li> <li>• It is located about 3 miles east of the Diamond Lake Regional Trail search corridor and about 3 miles west of the Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake Regional Trail search corridor and separated by I-494.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations. This will be determined during the master planning stage and likely include Lake Street in Wayzata - retail/commercial/restaurant hub, Wayzata high school, several elementary schools, churches, local parks and several neighborhood and regional retail nodes.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors such as large sewer lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #4



#### Silverwood Regional Trail Connector Search Corridor #4

- New Regional Trail connecting Silverwood SRF with the Grand Rounds/NE Diagonal Regional Trail. Search corridor is between Stinson Blvd. and Silver Lake Road (trail will likely follow one or the other) through St. Anthony Village
- 2 miles
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails

### Regional Trails

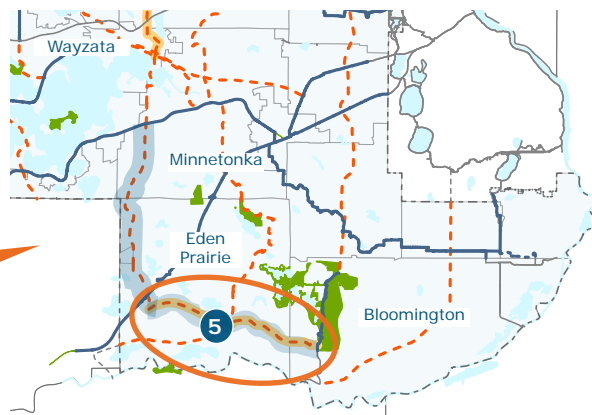
Search Corridor #4	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor is proposed to be about 2 miles long, span 1-2 cities in Hennepin County with a short connection into Anoka and/or Ramsey counties.</li> <li>• Due to its location at the converge of 3 counties and connection between several regional destinations - the Minneapolis Grand Round System/NE Diagonal Regional Trail/Francis A. Golf Course/Ridgeway Parkway and Silverwood SRF - it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This corridor does not duplicate an existing regional trail; however, it does fill a hole in regional trail coverage and create critical connections between different implementing agencies' jurisdictions and improves non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will connects Minneapolis Grand Round System/NE Diagonal Regional Trail/Francis A. Golf Course/Ridgeway Parkway and Silverwood SRF.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials and local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connects with 1-2 existing regional trails and to numerous local sidewalks, bike lanes and trails.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes! Fills a key gap between Three Rivers, Minneapolis Park Board and Ramsey County regional park/trail systems.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations. This will be determined during the master planning stage and likely include restaurants, shopping and health care clinics, several churches, schools, Silver Lake Village Shopping Center and senior housing.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors such as large sewer lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #5

#### Purgatory Creek Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor #5

- Extends Purgatory Creek Regional Trail Search Corridor 6 miles to Hyland Park Reserve along Pioneer Trail. Regional Trail
- Total length: 14 miles from Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail to Hyland Park Reserve
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails



### Regional Trails

Search Corridor #5	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is about 6 miles long and spans 2 cities in southwest Hennepin County with connections to 3 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and nearby regional trail connections to Carver and Scott counties and the Minnesota Valley State Trail. The greater trail corridor includes an additional 8 miles through another city as well as an additional regional trail connection.</li> <li>• Due to its size and regional connections, it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This corridor does not duplicate an existing regional trail; however, it does fill a hole in regional trail coverage and creates opportunities for loops and improved non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system - enhancing access to Hyland Park Reserve from the southwest suburbs via foot or bike.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail, in total, will connect 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, Hyland Park Reserve and the Minnesota Valley State Trail via a short trail connection.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials and local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves the southwest communities of Hennepin County and greater region.</li> <li>• Connects 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, local trails and Minnesota Valley State Trail.</li> <li>• Crosses/removes barrier of Hwy 7, Hwy 5, TH 212 and TH 169 as well as several county roads.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service coverage for regional trails extend 1.5 from the trail centerline as such this area is currently not served by an east-west regional trail and provides a critical connection to Hyland Park Reserve - a major regional recreation destination.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations. This will be determined during the master planning stage and likely include several parks, schools, churches and local and regional retail nodes and employment centers.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors such as large sewer lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### SEARCH CORRIDOR #6



#### Lake Sarah Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor #6

- Extend Lake Sarah Regional Trail Search Corridor 4 miles east through Plymouth and New Hope along Schmidt Lake Road and 49th Avenue
- Total trail length: 18 miles from Lake Rebecca Park Reserve/Lake Sarah Regional Park to CP Rail Regional Trail
- Likely inclusion of existing local trails

### Regional Trails

Search Corridor #6	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draw visitors from across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is 4 miles long and spans 2 cities in Hennepin County and in combination with the greater regional trail corridor spans the width of nearly the entire county through 5 cities with connections to the Wright County trail system.</li> <li>• Due to its size and regional connections, it will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benefits the regional trail system and does not duplicate an existing trail (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This corridor does not duplicate an existing regional trail; however, it does fill a hole in regional trail coverage and create opportunities for desirable loops and improved non-motorized access to the greater regional parks and trail system.</li> <li>• It is located approximately 3 miles south from Weaver Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor and separated by I-94 and about 1.5-2 miles north of the Bassett Creek Regional Trail.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects two or more units of the Regional Parks System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail, as a whole, will connect 7 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, Lake Rebecca Park Reserve, Lake Sarah Regional Park, Baker Park Reserve and French Regional Park via a short trail connections.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Serves as backbone to local trail network, with regional trail functioning much like regional highway that interconnects with more local arterials and local streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spans almost the entire width of Hennepin County.</li> <li>• Connects 7 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and numerous local trail systems.</li> <li>• Crosses/removes barrier of I-94, TH 169 and Hwy 100 as well as several county roads.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fills a gap in the regional recreation system (REQUIRED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service coverage for regional trails extend 1.5 from the trail centerline as such this area is currently not served by an east-west regional trail.</li> <li>• It is located approximately 3 miles south from Weaver Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor and separated by I-94 and about 1.5-2 miles north of the Bassett Creek Regional Trail.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connects to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural, and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The trail will be routed to purposely connect to regional and local destinations. This will be determined during the master planning stage and likely include churches, parks, schools, local and regional retail/commercial/employment nodes.</li> </ul>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May utilize surface rights of utility corridors such as large sewer lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBD during the master planning phase.</li> </ul>



## G2: GENERAL CRITERIA 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

FOR ALL SEARCH CORRIDORS UNLESS NOTED

### Siting and Acquisition

- ✓ Strategy 1: Priorities  
Lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System.

  - These priorities are high priorities for Three Rivers as well and will be thoroughly considered when determining the route and boundaries of the regional trail.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Geographic balance  
Geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns shall be a consideration when exploring system additions.

  - The 2040 Regional Trail System Plan was developed to provide access of all of Suburban Hennepin County with a greater density of trails near the urban core. In addition, trails are generally spaced every three miles apart north/south and east/west in consideration of the regional trail service area which is 1.5 miles in either direction of the trail center line. Major barriers such as the transportation network and rivers which effectively sever a service area were also considered.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Council-approved master plans  
Priorities for land acquisition are set by regional park implementing agencies in Council-approved master plans.

  - Three Rivers intends to identify the trail route and acquisition intentions as part of the regional trail master planning process and in partnership with the local communities and Metropolitan Council within 5-7 years of establishing the regional trail search corridor.
- ✓ Strategy 4: New regional trails  
New regional trails must serve a regional audience and provide connections between regional parks, park reserves, and regional trails without duplicating an existing trail.

Search Corridor	Audience, connections and duplicity
All Search Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the size and/or regional connections, each search corridor will undoubtedly attract visitors from multiple communities and other regional park implementing agencies' jurisdictions.</li> <li>• None of the proposed search corridors are duplicative of other regional trails.</li> </ul>
Search Corridor #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor is about 23 miles long, spans 4 cities across Hennepin County and offers nearby trail connections to Wright County as well as to Anoka County and Minneapolis via the West Mississippi River Regional Trail.</li> <li>• The trail will connect 8 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, Lake Rebecca Park Reserve, the Mississippi National River Recreation Area and Fish Lake Regional Park via short trail connections.</li> </ul>
Search Corridor #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is about 5 miles long and completely within Maple Grove. It is part of a larger 21 mile corridor spanning almost the entire length of Hennepin County through 4 cities with a direct connection to the Carver County Regional Trail System and Minnesota Valley State Trail.</li> <li>• The north termini of the search corridor connects directly to Elm Creek Park Reserve and three existing regional trails at the south termini of the search corridor connects to the Weaver Lake Regional Trail search corridor. The greater trail corridor includes connections to Eagle Lake, French and Bryant Lake Regional Parks as well as Hyland Park Reserve, six other regional trails and the Minnesota Wildlife Refuge.</li> </ul>
Search Corridor #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is about 10.5 miles long and spans 3 cities in Hennepin County. The existing search corridor is about 1 mile long between the Dakota Rail and Lake Minnetonka Regional Trails.</li> <li>• The entire trail corridor connects 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors and the Luce Line State Trail.</li> </ul>

Search Corridor #4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor is about 2 miles long, spans 1-2 cities in Hennepin County with a short connection into Anoka and/or Ramsey counties.</li> <li>• The trail will connect Minneapolis Grand Round System/NE Diagonal Regional Trail/Francis A. Golf Course/Ridgeway Parkway and Silverwood SRF.</li> </ul>
Search Corridor #5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is about 6 miles long and spans 2 cities in southwest Hennepin County with connections to Carver and Scott counties. The total trail corridor is 14 miles long spanning 3 cities.</li> <li>• The trail, in total, connects 4 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, Hyland Park Reserve and the Minnesota Valley State Trail via a short trail connection.</li> </ul>
Search Corridor #6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This search corridor extension is 4 miles and spans 2 cities in Hennepin County. In combination with the greater regional trail corridor, it is 18 miles long and spans the width of nearly the entire county through 5 cities with connections to the Wright County trail system.</li> <li>• The trail, as a whole, connects 7 existing/planned regional trails and/or search corridors, Lake Rebecca Park Reserve, Lake Sarah Regional Park, Baker Park Reserve and French Regional Park via a short trail connections.</li> </ul>

Strategy 5: Special recreation features - **N/A**

Special recreation features must enhance services and facilities already offered, not compete with, or duplicate them.



## G3: AGENCY AND OTHER SUPPORT

*DENOTED BY SPECIFIC SEARCH CORRIDOR*

Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners has been discussing this park search area for the last two years as part of the ongoing 2040 System Plan work which is tentatively scheduled for approval in summer 2020. It was most recently discussed at the regular meeting on March 12, 2020 in regards to formally submitting the System Plan Addition Request to the Metropolitan Council. Letters of support from are attached (or coming soon) from the following cities.

Search Corridors  
#1-6



Search Corridor  
#1



Search Corridor  
#2



Search Corridor  
#3



*pending City Council approval June 2*

Search Corridor  
#4



Search Corridor  
#5



Search Corridor  
#6



*Requested; anticipated soon*

## Q4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### FOR ALL SEARCH CORRIDORS

Engagement Activities	Engagement Findings	Engagement Level
<b>2040 System Plan</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Survey</li> <li>• Mentimeter</li> <li>• One-on-one Conversations</li> <li>• Deep Dive Discussions</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• Pop-up in the Parks</li> <li>• Nature Connection Posters</li> <li>• Events</li> <li>• 2040Plan@threeriversparks.org</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remove Barriers.</b> Identify and actively remove the factors that impede access to our parks, trails and offerings. Barriers include location, rules, awareness, accessibility, gear and distance from a park or trail.</li> <li>• <b>Expand Focus.</b> Be welcoming, convenient and relevant to all, broaden perspectives, approaches and programs. Seek partnerships and identify opportunities to meet people where they are, including outside of our parks and beyond our traditional offerings.</li> <li>• <b>Diversify.</b> A one-size-fits-all approach will not work; provide unique, targeted offerings that vary between parks. Accept that not all offerings will serve all people, but overall, there needs to be something for everyone.</li> </ul>	Consult Involve Collaborate
<b>2018 General Population Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone survey; random sample of 1,000 households</li> <li>• Stratified and weighted into four tiers to reflect population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Importance of future actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84% said it was important to acquire land for future parks</li> <li>• 76% said it was important to add recreation facilities</li> <li>• 73% said it was important to add nature education facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary goal of Three Rivers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24% said preserve open space</li> <li>• 3% said provide places for recreation</li> <li>• 64% said both preserve open space and provide places for recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Opinions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 98% preserving natural areas and habitats is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 93% offering outdoor recreational opportunities is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 96% regional parks are valuable evening if you don't actually use them very much</li> </ul>	Consult
<b>2018 Regional Trail Visitor Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercept surveys with personal and self-administrated surveys</li> <li>• All trail visitors 16 years old or older were eligible to participate</li> <li>• Findings were weighted to mirror actual visitation patterns</li> </ul>	<p><b>Factors in determining to visit a regional trail:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High importance: Trail is separated from motorized traffic or trail provides place to exercise</li> <li>• Medium importance: Trail is close to my home, trail is smooth, feeling of safety while on this trail or opportunity to experience nature</li> </ul> <p><b>What changes would increase regional trail use:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better removal of snow/ice, more trail amenities (e.g. bathrooms, benches, drinking water), more local trail connections or fewer road crossings</li> </ul>	Consult
<b>2040 Hennepin County Bike Plan</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public workshops</li> <li>• Community listening sessions</li> <li>• Online engagement</li> <li>• Community events and other in-person engagement</li> </ul>	<p>Many concerns, ideas and priorities were repeated across participant groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference for facilities that increase separation between motor-vehicle traffic and bicycle traffic;</li> <li>• Desire for improved connections between neighborhoods to regional trails and local destinations, recreational loops and more regional trail north-south connections</li> <li>• Identification of closing system gaps as an important priority;</li> <li>• Traffic safety concerns at intersections and trail crossings;</li> <li>• Desire for improved coordination between jurisdictions;</li> <li>• Education of bicyclists and drivers about traffic laws, and improved enforcement;</li> <li>• Provision of consistent and on-going maintenance;</li> <li>• More end of trip facilities for both recreational riders and commuters; and</li> <li>• Traffic safety and public safety are barriers to bicycling.</li> </ul>	Consult Involve Collaborate

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

FOR ALL SEARCH CORRIDORS UNLESS NOTED

- ✓ Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents
  - Three Rivers 2040 System Plan calls for protecting existing high-quality natural resources and connecting them to each other through buffers and natural resource corridors - regional trails will be routed to support this effort whenever politically and financially feasible. At Three Rivers it is standard practice to incorporate areas of natural resources within regional trail corridors when ever possible both enhancing the trail visitor experience and helping protect natural resources. Where opportunities for this to occur exist, Three Rivers will develop management and restoration plans to further enhance and reflect the natural communities of the region.
  - The protected and restored areas will provide opportunity for carbon sequestration, urban island heat affect reduction and places for people to connect to nature close to home - which can positively affect mental, physical and emotional well being.
  - While none of the exact routes are determined yet as this occurs during the master panning phase, routes adjacent to wetlands, creek and rivers may provide opportunities to contribute to a resilient region by offsetting flooding, improving water quality and providing wildlife habitat.
  
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities
  - The 2040 Regional Trail System is a combination of linking and destination regional trails - it aims to provide as much protection and connection to natural resources through route selection, route width/boundaries, destinations and connections while being grounded in the reality that some corridors will have a greater opportunity than others to incorporate natural resources and/or a natural setting.
  - While linking trails provide limited opportunities to protect natural resources along the corridors, they are routed to connect people to these area where nature-based regional recreation opportunities may occur. This ultimately helps provide balance between conservation and recreation amongst the greater system. In addition, destination regional trails often acts as linear parks directly incorporating natural recourses into the corridor balancing and promoting the coexistence of natural and recreation resources within one unit.
  
- ✓ Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems
  - The planned 2040 Three Rivers Regional Trail System includes several existing and planned regional trails and regional trail search corridors which do exactly this. The entire 2040 Regional Trail System was developed to provide connections to itself, the local/ state/regional/federal park and trail systems, transit, sidewalk/bike lanes and destinations in which people commonly access by foot or bike. This requests adds 50 miles to the regional trail system.
  - A detailed break down of each routes' connection with the broader park, trail and transportation system is thoroughly answered in Question 2. Further, during the master planning process, Three Rivers will work with the local communities as well as the Metropolitan Council to ensure their transportation networks including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems which provide adequate and safe access to the regional trails for all people.
  
- ✓ Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.
  - This is a core goal of the 2040 Regional Trail System - as it intends to serve all people by providing convenient access within/ adjacent to every community, not charging an entrance or use fee and incorporating additional amenities to support users such as benches, fix-it stations, way-finding, waste collection, parking, bathrooms, water and providing a similar level of service one would find in regional park. Three Rivers is also working more collaboratively with local communities to increase the level of service in the winter season which helps people stay active year-round and provides for a more reliable transportation corridor to those that use regional trails for that purpose.
  - In addition, Three Rivers is interested in increasing programming on the regional trail system (learn to bike, affinity groups, tours, etc.) which will help introduce new users and increase their overall comfort.
  - Much of the regional trail system was routed to provide a regional recreation amenity when none existed - such as the recent investment of miles and miles of regional trails within the first-ring communities. This next phase of search corridors builds off of that success by also providing regional recreation amenities when convenient access may also not exist.

## Q6: ANTICIPATED TIMING AND COST

*DENOTED BY SPECIFIC SEARCH CORRIDOR AS WELL AS COMBINED TOTAL*

Search Corridor	Timing	Length (miles)	Ballpark Cost (per Met Council per acre estimates)	Estimates Notes
1	0-30 yrs	23	\$1.81M	15 miles w/i MUSA @ 5' width 8 miles outside MUSA @ 30' width
2	0-10 Yrs	5	\$.78M	5 miles w/i MUSA @5 width
3	0-20 Yrs	10.5	\$1.63M	10.5 miles w/i MUSA @ 5' width
4	0-10 Yrs	2	\$.31M	2 miles w/i MUSA @ 5' width
5	0-20 yrs	6	\$.93M	6 miles w/i MUSA @ 5' width
6	0-10 Yrs	4	\$.62M	4 miles w/i MUSA @ 5' width

Total 50.5 Miles

Total \$6.08M



# Brooklyn Park Recreation & Parks

May 19, 2020

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

**RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #1**

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Brooklyn Park staff supports inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #1 that includes Brooklyn Park that is within the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #1 was included as a future regional trail corridor in the 2040 Hennepin County Bicycle Transportation Plan and reconfirmed in the 2040 Three Rivers System Plan. Both planning efforts included significant public engagement efforts and coordination with local communities. In addition, both plans were developed off of the existing and planned bicycle network within our community and is consistent with the City's 2040 Comprehensive plan.

Finally, as part of the Park Systems Plan the Brooklyn Park community indicated that investment in the local and regional trails system as its top two priorities. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community as assets which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

Sincerely,



Jody Yungers  
City of Brooklyn Park  
Recreation and Parks Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District



City of  
**Maple Grove**  
**Parks & Recreation Board**

12951 Weaver Lake Rd • Maple Grove, MN 55369-9409  
Phone: (763) 494-6500 • Website: maplegrovmn.gov

May 19, 2020

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

RE: Letter of Support for Three Rivers: Regional Trail Search Corridors #1, #2 and #3

Emmett –

I hope you are well.

The City of Maple Grove staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Corridors #1, #2 and #3 in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

Although these search corridors are not defined in the Maple Grove Parks and Recreation System Plan and have not been vetted by our policy making leadership, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area/corridor possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Respectfully,

Chuck Stifter  
City of Maple Grove  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District  
Ken Ashfeld – Maple Grove City Engineer and Public Works Director  
Heidi Nelson – Maple Grove City Administrator

**“Serving Today, Shaping Tomorrow”**



# CITY OF CORCORAN

*A Hidden Gem Waiting To Be Discovered*

[www.ci.corcoran.mn.us](http://www.ci.corcoran.mn.us)

May 16, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Park Search Area #1 and Regional Trail Search Corridor #1

Dear Mr. Mullin,

I am writing to share the support of the City of Corcoran for the inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Park Search Area # 1 and Regional Trail Search Corridor #1 within our community in the Metropolitan Councils Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a preferred environment to live, work, play, and conduct business both now and in the future. Further, I believe that investing in Corcoran would serve the greater metropolitan region in protecting and highlighting high quality natural resources to be enjoyed by future generations.

City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search park area and trail search corridor possibilities, and to develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

Brad Martens  
City of Corcoran  
City Administrator

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District



# City of Greenfield

May 19, 2020

7738 Commerce Circle  
Greenfield, Minnesota 55373  
763.477.6464/Fax: 763.477.4172

Email: [cityhall@ci.greenfield.mn.us](mailto:cityhall@ci.greenfield.mn.us)  
Web: [www.ci.greenfield.mn.us](http://www.ci.greenfield.mn.us)

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Corridor #1

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Greenfield staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Corridor #1 within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan. This search corridor is included in the City of Greenfield's recently adopted [Comprehensive Plan](#) (see Chapter 6 and page 6-80 and Figure 3-10).

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area/corridor possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date. Any financial contribution by the City of Greenfield to such efforts will require consideration and approval by the Greenfield City Council.

Sincerely,



Margaret Webb

City Administrator/Clerk  
City of Greenfield

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District





*Adding Quality to Life*

May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Corridors #3 and #6

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Plymouth staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Corridors #3 and #6 within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area/corridor possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

Diane Evans  
City of Plymouth  
Director of Parks & Recreation

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District





May 15, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Corridor #4

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of St. Anthony Village staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Corridor #4 essentially connecting the Minneapolis Grand Rounds and Silverwood Special Recreation Area in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area/corridor possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

Mark Casey  
City Manager

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District



May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Corridor #5

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Eden Prairie staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Corridor #5 within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

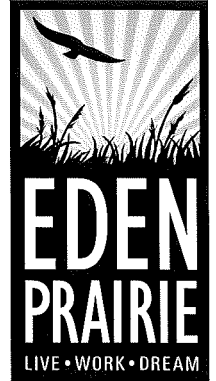
In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area/corridor possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

  
Jay Lotthammer

City of Eden Prairie  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District



OFC 952 949 8300  
FAX 952 949 8390  
TDD 952 949 8399

8080 Mitchell Rd  
Eden Prairie, MN  
55344-4485

[edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org)



May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #5

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Bloomington staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #5 within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Regional Trail Search Area Corridor #5 was included as a future regional trail corridor in the 2040 Hennepin County Bicycle Transportation Plan and reconfirmed in the 2040 Three Rivers System Plan. Both planning efforts included significant public engagement efforts and coordination with local communities. In addition, both plans were developed off of the existing and planned bicycle network within our community and is consistent with the City's Alternative Transportation Plan and 2040 Comprehensive plan.

We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Ann Kattreh  
City of Bloomington  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District

**Attachment 2g**

**Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Rogers-Corcoran Regional Park Search Area**

# REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ADDITION REQUEST

## ROGERS-CORCORAN REGIONAL PARK SEARCH AREA #1

### Q1: SYSTEM ADDITION PROPOSAL

*The Rogers-Corcoran Regional Park Search Area addresses the lack of regional park services in northwest Hennepin County and reduces future development pressure of Crow-Hassan Park Reserve, one of the wildest parks in the Regional Parks System.*

This area is unlike the developing and developed portions of Hennepin County. Much of the land remains rural, a matrix of farm fields, hobby farms and large residential lots. Neighbors all know each other with connections spanning several generations. It is an area which reminds one of the past and provides opportunity to connect with nature close to home. Pheasants, deer, turkey and sandhill cranes dot the landscape.

This area is rich in wetlands, rolling hills and scenic vistas as far as the eye can see.

This regional park could mirror existing regional parks offering large, centralized and highly developed recreation areas or it could challenge the mold and be more linear in fashion following a natural resource corridor and providing pockets of nature-based recreation in a decentralize, smaller more intimate fashion. A place that both respects the landscape and connections people to it. The opportunities are vast and the time to act is now.

### Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA - REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

This area was identified by Three Rivers as a new regional park search area in consideration of:

- The goal to keep Crow-Hassan Park Reserve as natural and undeveloped as possible;
- Existing park service areas & visitor demographics;
- Future population/residential growth projections; and
- Public engagement findings: remove barriers, expand focus and diversify offerings.

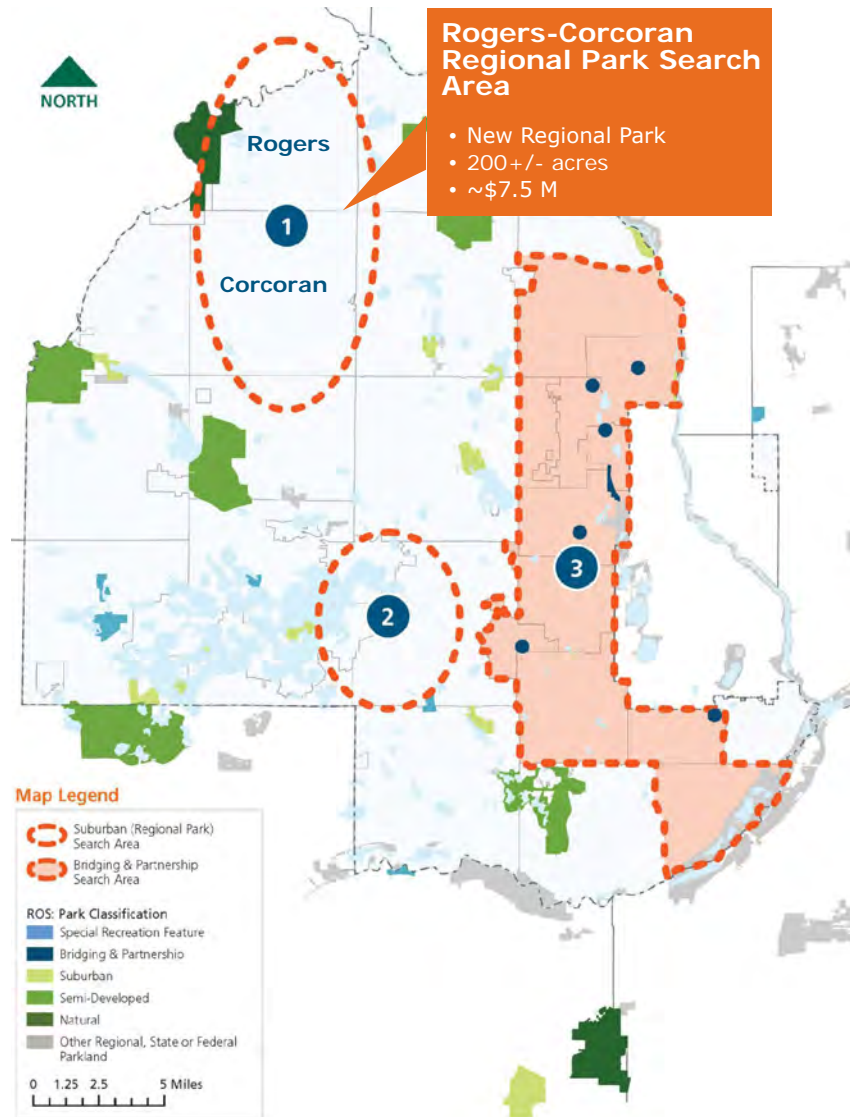
Three Rivers utilizes the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS, see following page) model to ensure a diversity of experiences are present throughout our system. The ROS recognizes that people are as diverse as the resources we are trying to protect. Each person is looking for a unique experience – from nature immersion to highly social gatherings.

It is built on the understanding that not every park will serve all people, but that all people will be served somewhere within the system. It helps protect the most cherished natural resources from over development, creating places for nature immersion while also allowing other areas to be developed for heavy recreational use.

This is noteworthy as Crow-Hassan Park Reserve is located within Rogers. As a Natural Park, Crow-Hassan Park Reserve will not fulfill the wide range of regional recreation needs of the area but will serve a niche and demographic that regional parks often do not.

This park search area was established in part using service area mapping. Northwest Hennepin County has greater challenge accessing regional parks (see following page) than the majority of the County. This is problematic as Three Rivers General Population Survey, 2018 Summer Park Visitation Survey and 2040 System Plan engagement work confirm proximity and convenience to parks matters.

The service coverage map shows standard for service area coverage based on known use patterns: a 15-minute drive, typically serving 75 percent of a park's visitors. Areas in light orange are within 15 minutes of at least one



### Three Rivers Park District Proposed Parks Search Areas





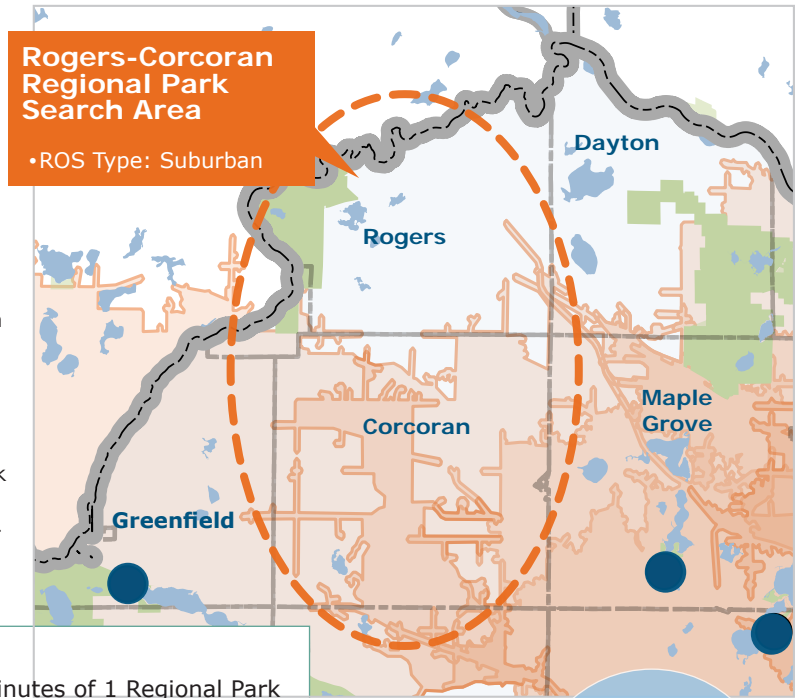
regional park and areas in progressively darker orange are within two or more regional park service areas. Northwest Hennepin County is not served as well as other areas of Three Rivers jurisdiction by regional parks.

The search area does not extend into Dayton even though this area is also flagged as under served by regional parks because of the vast recreational offerings at Elm Creek Park Reserve which serve a regional park function to this area. While Corcoran appears well served by regional parks, it is included in the search area to both provide flexibility at this planning stage and in recognition of future growth and associated transportation access challenges moving forward.

This search area is also the same area that the Metropolitan Council projections call for some of the greatest population and development growth (new households by 2040: 90%+ in Rogers; 150%+ in Corcoran) over the next twenty years.

If land is not secured prior to or in partnership with development, the opportunity for an additional regional park will be lost forever and the existing and future residents will continue to have limited access to the regional park system.

## Three Rivers Park District Regional Park Service Coverage Map



**Rogers-Corcoran Regional Park Search Area**  
 • ROS Type: Suburban

**Map Legend**

- Lightest orange: Within 15 minutes of 1 Regional Park
- Medium orange: Within 15 minutes of 2 Regional Parks
- Darker orange: Within 15 minutes of 3 Regional Parks
- Blue circle: Three Rivers Regional Park

**75%**  
 of regional park visitors drive 15 minutes or less

**Suburban**

**Regional Park**  
 Service Area Travel Time: 15 min. drive

**PURPOSE**  
 Connecting people to nature comfortably and conveniently through nature-based recreation offerings

**DEVELOPMENT**  
 Allows visitors to transition into nature as their comfort level increases  
 The entire park may be developed, provided that a natural setting remains

### RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM



## Q2 (CONT.): GENERAL CRITERIA - 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### Regional Parks

- ✓ Draws visitors from across the region
  - Service area expands into Wright and Anoka Counties.
  - Recreation development would be complementary, not duplicative of other area offerings.
- ✓ Provides for geographic balance
  - Fills hole in regional park service area coverage.
- ✓ Conserves a diversity of high-quality natural resources, either naturally occurring or human built, that support outdoor recreation activities
  - Park location and boundaries would be established to incorporate and protect natural resources and to provide a wide range of regional recreational offerings.
  - Undeveloped areas would be restored into natural communities.
- ✓ At least 100 acres; typically, 200-500
  - 200+/- acres are envisioned.
- ✓ Accommodates a variety of outdoor recreation activities
  - Park siting/location will be selected to support a wide range of regional recreation offerings which are complementary and not duplicative of other area recreation offerings.

### Siting and Acquisition

- ✓ Strategy 1: Priorities
 

Lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System.

  - These priorities are also high priorities for Three Rivers and will be considered when determining the site, boundaries and size of the park.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Geographic balance
 

Geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns shall be a consideration when exploring system additions.

  - This area is currently under served by existing regional parks as it has a greater than average access barrier. At the same time it is projected to see some of the greatest population and development growth in Hennepin County. Planning for a new regional park and acquiring property as it becomes available from willing sellers will be critical to ensuring that all residents have close, convenient access to regional parks - regardless of where you live.
  - Service area coverage will extend into Anoka and Wright counties as well as multiple communities within Hennepin County.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Council-approved master plans
 

Priorities for land acquisition are set by regional park implementing agencies in Council-approved master plans.

  - Three Rivers intends to identify the exact park location, boundary and size and complete an acquisition master plan in partnership with the local communities and Metropolitan Council within five years of establishing the regional park search area.
- Strategy 4: New regional trails - **N/A**

New regional trails must serve a regional audience and provide connections between regional parks, park reserves, and regional trails without duplicating an existing trail.
- Strategy 5: Special recreation features - **N/A**

Special recreation features must enhance services and facilities already offered, not compete with, or duplicate them.

## Q3: AGENCY AND OTHER SUPPORT

Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners has been discussing this park search area for the last two years as part of the ongoing 2040 System Plan work which is tentatively scheduled for approval in summer 2020. It was most recently discussed at the regular meeting on March 12, 2020 in regards to formally submitting the System Plan Addition Request to the Metropolitan Council. Letters of support are attached from the following cities.



✓ Three Rivers Park District:  
2040 System Plan  
*tentative adoption summer 2020*



✓ City of Rogers:  
May 19, 2020 Letter of Support



✓ City of Corcoran:  
May 16, 2020 Letter of Support

## Q4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Three Rivers Public Engagement

Activities	Findings	Level
<b>2040 System Plan</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Survey</li> <li>• Mentimeter</li> <li>• One-on-one Conversations</li> <li>• Deep Dive Discussions</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• Pop-up in the Parks</li> <li>• Nature Connection Posters</li> <li>• Events</li> <li>• 2040Plan@threeriversparks.org</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remove Barriers.</b> Identify and actively remove the factors that impede access to our parks, trails and offerings. Identified barriers include location, rules, awareness, accessibility, gear and distance from a park or trail.</li> <li>• <b>Expand Focus.</b> Be welcoming, convenient and relevant to all and broaden perspectives, approaches and programs. Seek partnerships and identify opportunities to meet people where they are, including outside of our parks and beyond our traditional offerings.</li> <li>• <b>Diversify.</b> A one-size-fits-all approach will not work; provide unique, targeted offerings that vary between parks. Accept that not all offerings will serve all people, but overall, there needs to be something for everyone.</li> </ul>	Consult Involve Collaborate
<b>2018 General Population Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone survey; random sample of 1,000 households</li> <li>• Stratified and weighted into four tiers to reflect population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Importance of future actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84% said it was important to acquire land for future parks</li> <li>• 76% said it was important to add recreation facilities</li> <li>• 73% said it was important to add nature education facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary goal of Three Rivers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24% said preserve open space</li> <li>• 3% said provide places for recreation</li> <li>• 64% said both preserve open space and provide places for recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Opinions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 98% preserving natural areas and habitats is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 93% offering outdoor recreational opportunities is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 96% regional parks are valuable evening if you don't actually use them very much</li> </ul>	Consult
<b>2018 Park Visitor Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercept surveys with personal and self-administrated surveys (4,648 total surveys)</li> <li>• All park visitors 16 years old or older were eligible to participate except those golfing, group camping or participating in a staff-led organized group</li> <li>• Findings were weighted to mirror actual visitation patterns</li> </ul>	<p><b>Factors in determining to visit a park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High importance: Do something with family/friends or experience nature</li> <li>• Medium importance: Low cost of recreation, improve fitness/mental health, park is close to home or comfortable with park</li> </ul> <p><b>What actions are important moving forward:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93% said improve the quality of natural resources</li> <li>• 78% said acquire land for future parks and trails</li> <li>• 71% said develop additional recreation facilities</li> <li>• 63% said partner with a local city to provide outdoor activities that don't have a Three Rivers park</li> </ul>	Consult

### Consistency with Non-Three Rivers Plans that Included Public Engagement Led by Others

- 2040 City of Rogers Comprehensive Plan

## Q5: REGIONAL CONTEXT

- ✓ Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents
  - Three Rivers 2040 System Plan calls for protecting existing high-quality natural resources and connecting them to each other through buffers and natural resources corridors - this park will play a role in this. The park will be located to protect existing natural resources - especially those identified as high quality - and, upon acquisition, other areas will be restored to reflect the natural communities of the region. The protected and restored areas will provide opportunity for carbon sequestration, urban island heat affect reduction and places for people to connect to nature close to home - which can positively affect mental, physical and emotional well being.
  - This area has many wetlands under production which when restored, will provide opportunities to contribute to a resilient region by offsetting flooding, improving water quality and providing wildlife habitat. It is likely that the park will be sited specifically to incorporate a wetland system while supporting complementary and much needed recreational offerings.
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities
  - The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum was developed for this very purpose. It calls for some parks being more heavily developed and providing a higher level of social interaction and others remaining undeveloped and providing opportunities for nature immersion. A key purpose of a new regional park in this area is to protect the natural resources at Crow-Hassan Park Reserve (one of Three Rivers most undeveloped parks) as the pressure to continue recreation development continues to mount and create tension with the surrounding developing communities. This park will relieve that pressure/tension by providing additional recreational opportunities.
- ✓ Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems
  - The planned 2040 Three Rivers Regional Trail System includes several existing and planned regional trails and regional trail search corridors within this area and calls for using regional trails to connect people to parks and parks to each other. With this in mind, future regional trails and regional trail search corridor planning efforts will be routed to provide a connection to the new regional park, improving non-motorized access to the park and regional recreational opportunities close to home.
  - Many regional trail corridors in this area are envisioned to be destination regional trails. They would be routed to incorporate natural resources providing greenway corridors and allowing for wildlife movement between one park and another.
  - During the master planning process, Three Rivers will work with the local communities as well as the Metropolitan Council to ensure their transportation networks to provide adequate and safe access to the park for all people.
- ✓ Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.
  - This is a core goal of this regional park search area. While Crow-Hassan Park Reserve is close by it serves a demographic that does not mirror Suburban Hennepin County demographics but does serve a demographic not served as well in other parks (i.e. older adults and women in particular).
  - It is expected that this park will have a stronger focus on serving new, introductory users and providing more standard nature-based recreation offerings than parks with a more specialized focus. This park will be planned and designed to serve and meet the needs of a wider community base which more closely mirrors the demographic of Suburban Hennepin County.

## Q6: ACQUISITION TIMING AND COST

Acquisition  
timing & cost

5-25 years

\$7.5M

Acquisition will commence following completion and approval of a master plan and on a willing-seller basis. Exact acquisition costs are unknown as the park location and boundaries are yet to be determined. A very ball park estimate for acquisition of a new regional park outside of the MUSA boundary is \$7.5 million.

Acquisition would likely commence in about 5 years and continue for another 20 years.



City of Rogers  
Parks and Recreation  
Mail: 22350 South Diamond Lake Road  
Office: 21080 141<sup>st</sup> Ave N  
Rogers, Minnesota 55374  
Phone: 763.428.1033  
Fax: 763.428.0033  
[www.RogersMN.gov](http://www.RogersMN.gov)

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May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Park Search Area #1

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Rogers staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Park Search Area #1 within our community in the Metropolitan Councils Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset that will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work, and play both now and in the future.

Also, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search area possibilities and develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Bauer".

Mike Bauer  
City of Rogers  
Recreation & Facilities Director

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District





*A Hidden Gem Waiting To Be Discovered*

*www.ci.corcoran.mn.us*

May 16, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Regional Park Search Area #1 and Regional Trail Search Corridor #1

Dear Mr. Mullin,

I am writing to share the support of the City of Corcoran for the inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Regional Park Search Area # 1 and Regional Trail Search Corridor #1 within our community in the Metropolitan Councils Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a preferred environment to live, work, play, and conduct business both now and in the future. Further, I believe that investing in Corcoran would serve the greater metropolitan region in protecting and highlighting high quality natural resources to be enjoyed by future generations.

City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the search park area and trail search corridor possibilities, and to develop a more detailed master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals at a future date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Martens".

Brad Martens  
City of Corcoran  
City Administrator

C: Kelly Grissman, Director of Planning – Three Rivers Park District

## **Attachment 2h**

### **Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

#### **Minnetonka and Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area**

# REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ADDITION REQUEST

## MINNETONKA & MINNEHAHA CREEK CORRIDOR

### PARK SEARCH AREA #2

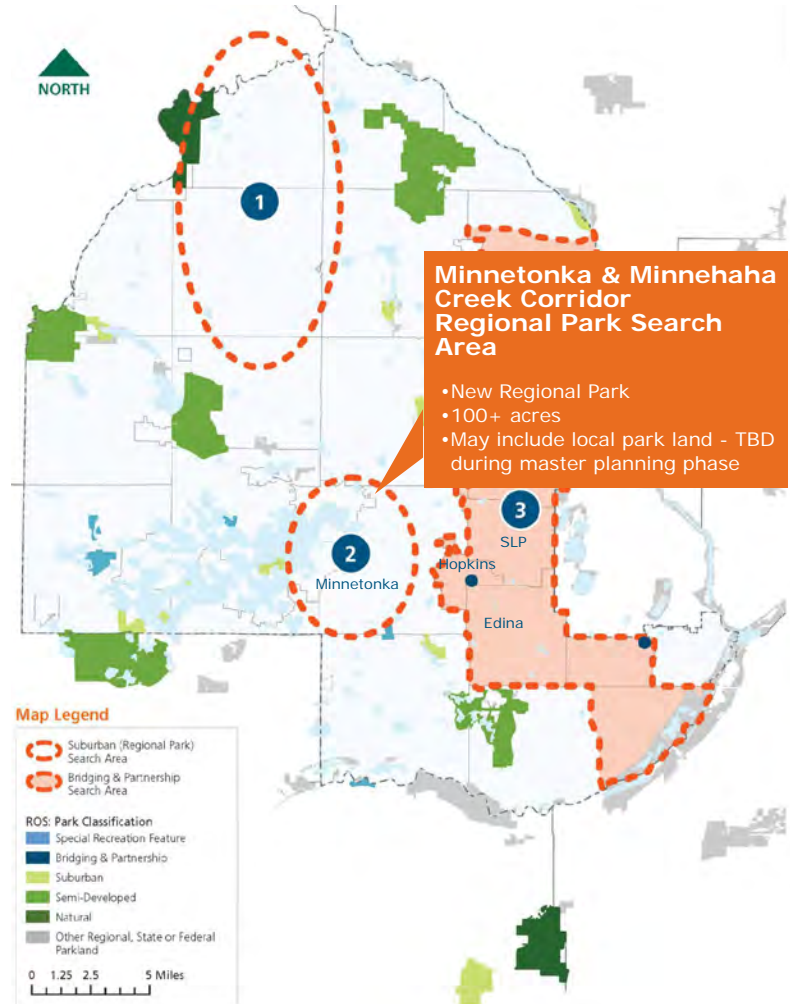
#### Q1: SYSTEM ADDITION PROPOSAL

A new regional park search area is needed in the Minnetonka/Minnehaha Creek area to address the lack of regional park services, and to best make use of the Creek as a major regional recreational resource.

A new regional park is envisioned east of Lake Minnetonka in the City of Minnetonka and/or along the Minnehaha Creek corridor within Hennepin County. This area is already fully developed creating both unique challenges and opportunities for establishing a new regional park. There are no large, undeveloped tracts of land left that meet the regional park requirements but there are many local parks and undeveloped public parcels along the Minnehaha Creek corridor within and potentially beyond the City of Minnetonka which could create a more linear, creek-based regional park/greenway similar to the greenways found in Minneapolis.

The existing local parkland and undeveloped public parcels along the Creek are not planned or operated as one unit as such they do not yet provide a regional recreational amenity. However, if planned, enhanced and operated as one regional park/greenway unit. This would provide a regional attraction and the service area would extend throughout several communities in Hennepin County and beyond into northeast Carver County and Minneapolis.

This is one concept - it is possible that there are other concepts within this general area that will also provide regional nature-based recreational offerings that are both publicly and politically supported. Three Rivers envisions pulling neighboring communities and the public together to identify, evaluate and recommend a locally supported regional park concept within the next three to five years.



#### Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA - REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

#### Three Rivers Park District Proposed Parks Search Areas

This area was identified by Three Rivers as a new regional park search area in consideration of:

- The goal to protect and connection natural resources through buffers and greenway corridors;
- Existing park service areas & visitor demographics; and
- Public engagement findings: remove barriers, expand focus and diversify offerings.

Many fully developed communities have pockets of natural resources that are managed as independent units rather than part of a larger natural system due to jurisdictional boundaries, available resources and associated expertise - the natural areas in Minnetonka and along the Minnehaha Creek Corridor are no different. A goal of this regional park is to identify and help enhance/restore these natural areas as part of broader natural resources system with connections from one natural area to another through buffers, greenway corridors and comprehensive planning and management.

This regional park search area is also supported by service area mapping. The area east of Lake Minnetonka, generally centered on the City of Minnetonka, has less access to regional parks than other areas in Hennepin County (see following page). This is problematic as Three Rivers General Population Survey, 2018 Summer Park Visitation Survey and 2040 System Plan engagement work all indicate that proximity and convenience to parks matters.

The service area coverage map shows standard for service area coverage based on known use patterns: 15-minute drive, typically serving 75 percent of a park's visitors. Areas in light orange fall are within 15 minutes of at least one regional park and areas in progressively darker orange are within two or more regional park service areas.



The map shows that this park search area is not served as well as other areas of Three Rivers jurisdiction by regional parks.

The search area does not extend into Wayzata even though this area is also flagged as under served by regional parks because of the vast recreational offerings at Baker Park Reserve which serve a regional park function to this area. In addition, the Chain of Lakes Regional Park (non-Three Rivers and not mapped) provides regional park service to St. Louis Park which also pops up as under served.

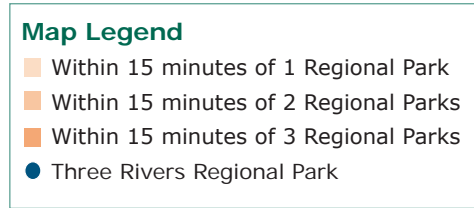
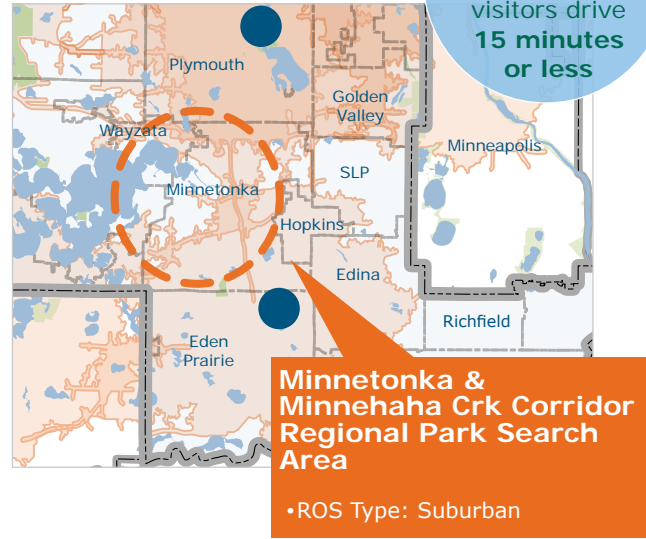
In addition to providing full service area coverage across Three Rivers jurisdiction, Three Rivers strives to provide a diversity of experiences and created the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS, see below) model to help do so. The ROS recognizes that people are as diverse as the resources we are trying to protect. Each person is looking for a unique experience – from nature immersion to highly social gatherings.

It is built on the understanding that not every park will serve all people, but that all people will be served somewhere within the system. It helps protect the most cherished natural resources from over development, creating places for nature immersion while also allowing other areas to be developed for heavy recreational use.

This park is envisioned as a Suburban Regional Park and will focus on connecting people to nature comfortably and conveniently through introductory nature-based recreational offerings.

## Three Rivers Park District Regional Park Service Coverage Map

**75%**  
of regional park  
visitors drive  
**15 minutes  
or less**



**Suburban**

Regional Park

Service Area Travel Time: 15 min. drive

**PURPOSE**  
Connecting people to nature comfortably and conveniently through nature-based recreation offerings

**DEVELOPMENT**  
Allows visitors to transition into nature as their comfort level increases  
The entire park may be developed, provided that a natural setting remains

## RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM



## Q2 (CONT.): GENERAL CRITERIA - 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### Regional Parks

- ✓ Draws visitors from across the region
  - Service area coverage extends into eastern Minneapolis and northeast Carver County as well as several cities within suburban Hennepin County.
  - It is possible that the park will consist of several units located along the Creek with the Creek itself being the central spine and unifying element of the regional park. There is substantial parkland adjacent to Minnehaha Creek; however, it is owned and operated by six public entities each with their own priorities, management practices, rules and offerings. Merging these into one cohesive unit allows the corridor to serve a greater regional recreation function and serve a broader geographic area.
  - Recreation development would be complementary, not duplicative of other area offerings and potentially focused on the Creek-based recreation concepts.
- ✓ Provides for geographic balance
  - Due to the transportation network and challenges of navigating around Lake Minnetonka this area has more challenging access to regional parks. Adding a new regional park in this area addresses the service area gap and removes the known access barrier.
- ✓ Conserves a diversity of high-quality natural resources, either naturally occurring or human built, that support outdoor recreation activities
  - The park location and boundaries would be established to incorporate and protect existing natural resources, potentially along and associated with Minnehaha Creek corridor.
  - Parkland not currently in a natural state or planned for recreation development would be restored.
- ✓ At least 100 acres; typically, 200-500
  - 100+ acres are envisioned
- ✓ Accommodates a variety of outdoor recreation activities
  - Park siting/location will be selected to support a wide range of regional recreation offerings which are complementary and not duplicative of other area recreation offerings.
  - It is likely that recreation offerings will be water-based, complementary to the Creek corridor and focus on introducing people to nature-based recreation.

### Siting and Acquisition

- ✓ Strategy 1: Priorities
  - Lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System.
  - These priorities are also high priorities for Three Rivers and will be considered when determining the site, boundaries and size of the park.
  - It is likely that the park will be focused on Minnehaha Creek providing a consistent natural resource management plan from one city to the other along the creek. Partnerships with the local communities and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District will be essential to fully realizing this opportunity.
- ✓ Strategy 2: Geographic balance
  - Geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns shall be a consideration when exploring system additions.
  - This area is currently under served by existing regional parks due to the transportation network and Lake Minnetonka. At the same time it is fully developed and options to easily connect this community to existing regional parks is limited. As such, this creates both a unique challenge and opportunity when considering new regional park proposals and models - which could be different to other existing regional parks.
  - Service area coverage will extend into Minneapolis and Carver County as well as multiple communities within Hennepin County.
- ✓ Strategy 3: Council-approved master plans
  - Priorities for land acquisition are set by regional park implementing agencies in Council-approved master plans.
  - Three Rivers intends to identify the exact park location, boundary and size and complete an acquisition master plan in partnership with the local communities and Metropolitan Council within three-five years of establishing the regional park search area.
  - Since this area is fully developed and large tracts of undeveloped land no longer exist, it is expected that the new regional park will incorporate local parkland and significant acquisition will not be required - however, the location, extents and ownership arrangements of this park are not yet known.
- Strategy 4: New regional trails - **N/A**
  - New regional trails must serve a regional audience and provide connections between regional parks, park reserves, and regional trails without duplicating an existing trail.
- Strategy 5: Special recreation features - **N/A**
  - Special recreation features must enhance services and facilities already offered, not compete with, or duplicate them.



### Q3: AGENCY AND OTHER SUPPORT

Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners has been discussing this park search area for the last two years as part of the ongoing 2040 System Plan work which is tentatively scheduled for approval in summer 2020. It was most recently discussed at the regular meeting on March 12, 2020 in regards to formally submitting the System Plan Addition Request to the Metropolitan Council. A letter of support was requested from the City of Minnetonka; however, staff are interested in the proposal but would like to discuss further before providing a letter of support. A meeting and follow up letter of support are anticipated in the next two weeks.



**Three Rivers Park District:**  
2040 System Plan  
*tentative adoption summer 2020*



**City of Minnetonka:**  
*Pending*

### Q4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

#### Three Rivers Public Engagement

Activities	Findings	Level
<b>2040 System Plan</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online Survey</li> <li>Mentimeter</li> <li>One-on-one Conversations</li> <li>Deep Dive Discussions</li> <li>Focus Groups</li> <li>Pop-up in the Parks</li> <li>Nature Connection Posters</li> <li>Events</li> <li>2040Plan@threeriversparks.org</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Remove Barriers.</b> Identify and actively remove the factors that impede access to our parks, trails and offerings. Identified barriers include location, rules, awareness, accessibility, gear and distance from a park or trail.</li> <li><b>Expand Focus.</b> Be welcoming, convenient and relevant to all and broaden our perspectives, approaches and programs. Seek partnerships and identify opportunities to meet people where they are, including outside of our parks and beyond our traditional offerings.</li> <li><b>Diversify.</b> A one-size-fits-all approach will not work; provide unique, targeted offerings that vary between parks. Accept that not all offerings will serve all people, but overall, there needs to be something for everyone.</li> </ul>	Consult Involve Collaborate
<b>2018 General Population Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telephone survey; random sample of 1,000 households</li> <li>Stratified and weighted into four tiers to reflect population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Importance of future actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>84% said it was important to acquire land for future parks</li> <li>76% said it was important to add recreation facilities</li> <li>73% said it was important to add nature education facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary goal of Three Rivers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24% said preserve open space</li> <li>3% said provide places for recreation</li> <li>64% said both preserve open space and provide places for recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Opinions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>98% preserving natural areas and habitats is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>93% offering outdoor recreational opportunities is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>96% regional parks are valuable even if you don't actually use them very much</li> </ul>	Consult
<b>2018 Park Visitor Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intercept surveys with personal and self-administrated surveys (4,648 total surveys)</li> <li>All park visitors 16 years old or older were eligible to participate except those golfing, group camping or participating in a staff-led organized group</li> <li>Findings were weighted to mirror actual visitation patterns</li> </ul>	<p><b>Factors in determining to visit a park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High importance: Do something with family/friends or experience nature</li> <li>Medium importance: Low cost of recreation, improve fitness/mental health, park is close to home or comfortable with park</li> </ul> <p><b>What actions are important moving forward:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>93% said improve the quality of natural resources</li> <li>78% said acquire land for future parks and trails</li> <li>71% said develop additional recreation facilities</li> <li>63% said partner with a local city to provide outdoor activities that don't have a Three Rivers park</li> </ul>	Consult

#### Consistency with Non-Three Rivers Plans that Included Public Engagement Led by Others

- 2040 Comprehensive Plans of Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Edina all include parkland and/or public access points, trails and other public investment along the Minnehaha Creek. Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Management Plan also recognizes the importance of protecting and providing public access to the Creek corridor.

## Q5: REGIONAL CONTEXT

- ✓ Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents
  - Three Rivers 2040 System Plan calls for protecting existing high-quality natural resources and connecting them to each other through buffers and natural resource corridors - this park will play a role in this. The park will be located to protect existing natural resources - especially those identified as high quality - however, many natural areas in more fully developed communities are lower quality and require thoughtful restoration plans and work to realize their full potential. Three Rivers has over 60 years of experience doing restoration and natural resource management and, with a dedicated team of natural resource experts, is better positioned than many local communities to do this work.
  - Similar to other nature-based parks and greenway corridors, the protected and restored areas will provide opportunity for carbon sequestration, urban island heat affect reduction and places for people to connect to nature close to home - which can positively affect mental, physical and emotional well being.
  - This area has many wetlands and floodplains which when restored/enhances/operated as a working system across jurisdictional boundaries, will improve opportunities to contribute to a resilient region by offsetting flooding, improving water quality and providing wildlife habitat. It is likely that the park will be sited specifically to incorporate wetlands and floodplains while supporting complementary and much needed recreational offerings.
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities
  - The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum was developed for this very purpose. It calls for some parks being more heavily developed and providing a higher level of social interaction and others remaining undeveloped and providing opportunities for nature immersion. This park will be classified as a Suburban Regional Park within the ROS and it will focus on connecting people to nature comfortably and conveniently through nature-based recreation offerings.
  - It is possible that this regional park will build off of existing recreational amenities along the Minnehaha Creek Corridor - all of which are nature-based. By adding an element of consistency and cohesion across jurisdictional boundaries the natural resources and recreational offerings will be managed as one system creating a regional recreational destination and more pristine greenway corridor. Essentially the recreation amenities and natural resources features will work hand and hand with each other and rise to the level of regional significance like the greenways in Minneapolis.
- ✓ Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems
  - While the exact concept/location of this regional park is unknown and will not be determined until thoroughly evaluated in partnership with the local communities as well as the Metropolitan Council during a master planning process, a key purpose of locating a new regional park in this general area is because it is currently not very accessible to existing regional parks due to the transportation networks including limited transit offerings and Lake Minnetonka.
  - As different regional park concepts are evaluated and the master plan created, opportunities to connect the regional park to other parks, trails and broader transportation network will be thoroughly considered and addressed in the master plan so all people have safe, convenient access to the park.
- ✓ Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.
  - This is a core goal of this regional park search area and Three Rivers 2040 System Plan. Locating a regional park in this area will serve many areas with greater densities of people of color, older adults, lower income households and more as the service area extends into Crystal, New Hope, Richfield and southeast Edina where many underrepresented communities groups reside. It would also promote access to public land which may not be readily available for the broader public to access and enjoy.
  - In addition, as a Suburban Regional Park, especially one so close to many underrepresented community groups, it is expected that this park will have a stronger focus on serving new, introductory users and providing more standard nature-based recreation offerings than parks with a more specialized focus. This park will be planned and designed to serve and meet the needs of a wider community base and more closely mirror the demographic of Suburban Hennepin County. As such, this park may have a stronger partnership focus, off-site and on-site programming offerings and free or low cost equipment rental.

## Q6: ACQUISITION TIMING AND COST

Park boundaries and land holdings will be determined through a master planning process and will likely include land already in public ownership, with no related acquisition cost. The Master Plan is expected to be completed within the next 2-5 years and would contain detailed acquisition, development and operational costs estimates, which could be included in the Metropolitan Council's next scheduled Policy Plan Update.

Acquisition  
timing & cost

5-10 years

\$0

## **Attachment 2i**

### **Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

#### **First-Ring Special Recreation Feature Search Area**

# REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEM ADDITION REQUEST

## FIRST-RING REGIONAL SPECIAL RECREATION SEARCH AREA#3

### Q1: SYSTEM ADDITION PROPOSAL

*A System of Bridging Facilities is needed in the most diverse and densely populated first-ring cities in Hennepin County. The System will introduce and link new visitors to the regional parks system by bringing parks and programming to where people live.*

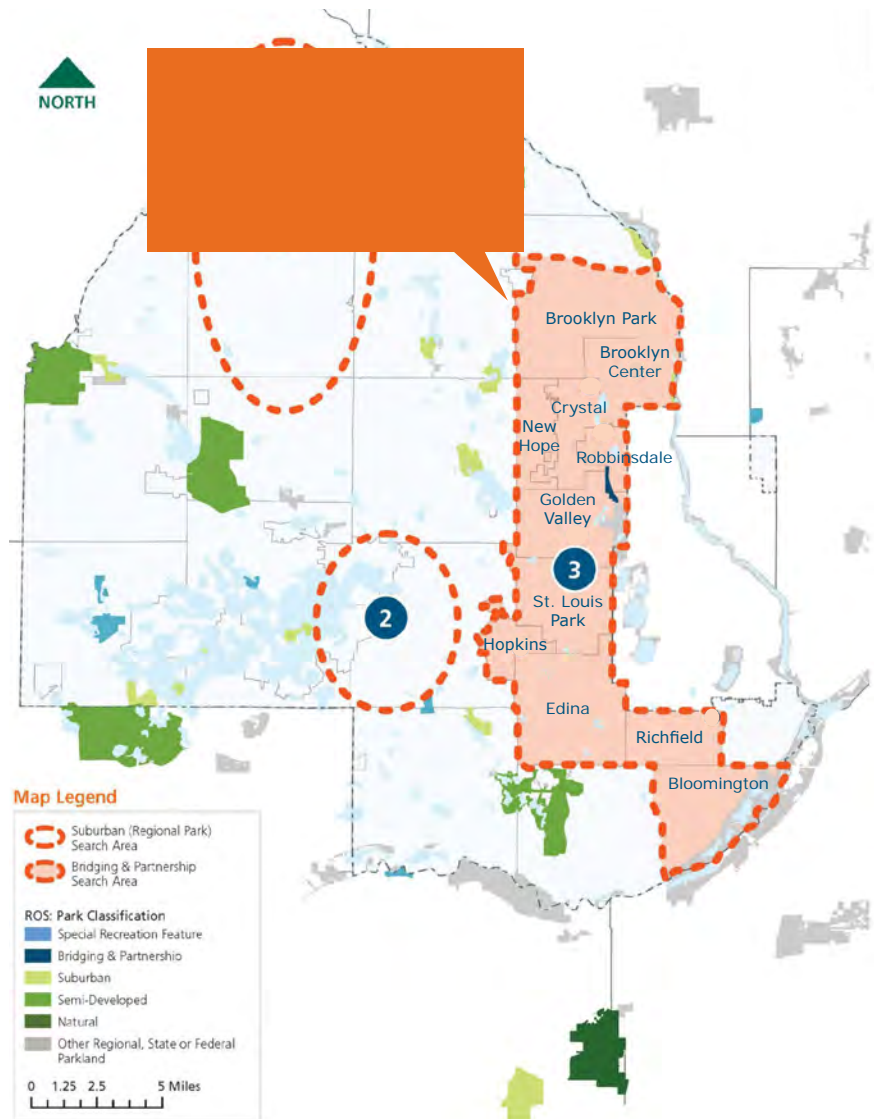
Three Rivers proposes a System of Bridging Facilities to be located throughout a search area encompassing all, or portions of, the 11 first-ring cities in Hennepin County (see Search Area Map). That system is yet to be defined – hence the request for a Search Area. Defining the system is work best done through a comprehensive and inclusive master planning process. The System of Bridging Facilities will accomplish the following goals:

- 1) Meet the needs of historically underserved populations with new regional park facilities and services located near where people live.
- 2) Increase use of the regional parks system by historically underserved groups.

The master plan will work with the public, the 11 cities and the Council to identify the needs, opportunities and solutions that will serve as the basis for creation of a system of bridging facilities. The product of the master planning process is envisioned as a set of several proposed bridging facilities spread across the cities in the search area. Each proposed bridging facility will be unique in its own right, and tailored to fit the needs and interests of the local area residents and the physical opportunities within those areas. This may involve development of facilities such as micro-nature centers, outdoor recreation class programs targeted at specific populations, transportation services, traffic gardens, urban food farms, or other creative solutions identified by those who we are trying to reach. In addition, Three Rivers' early experiments with bridging facilities (e.g. Sochacki Park in Robbinsdale/Golden Valley, the Crystal-MAC Environmental Area) may be incorporated into the proposed system.

Once the Master Plan has been approved, it is envisioned that the Council would then add the proposed bridging facilities to the regional parks system.

A similar approach was used to create and operate the Mississippi National River Recreation Area (MNRRA), which is composed of many stand-alone units operated in partnership with local providers, and which serves a national audience. The System of Bridging Facilities would weave a tapestry of opportunities across this underserved area, allowing more localized needs and interests to be met, while promoting the goals of more equitable service and increased park system use. Approval of the System of Bridging Facilities Search Area is the first step in reaching these goals.



**Three Rivers Park District  
Proposed Parks Search Areas**

## Q2: GENERAL CRITERIA - REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

The Council's Policy Plan recognizes the use of Bridging Facilities to address the System of Bridging Facilities goals. The Plan defines Bridging Facilities as "specialized or single-purpose special recreation features that are intended to attract and introduce new outdoor recreation users to the regional parks system and trails."

The first-ring cities were fully developed prior to the creation of Three Rivers Park District. These densely populated cities are home to over 440,000 people – a population larger than Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, or Washington counties. These cities account for over 50 percent of the residents in Three Rivers' jurisdiction. They are home to over 70 percent of the jurisdiction's racial and ethnic populations, and home to over 70 percent of people living at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

Three Rivers has no regional park facilities within the proposed search area due to historical development patterns. At the same time, it is well known that proximity to parks is the best predictor of use. Being close to parks, to outdoor programming, to nature – is critically important for introducing new visitors to the regional parks system.

Development of the System of Bridging Facilities Search Area will more equitably serve these residents, and will attract and introduce new visitors to the greater regional parks system as a whole.

### The Visitor Experience Model (VEM)

Three Rivers has developed and embraced the Visitor Experience Model (VEM) as a framework for understanding the program, service and facility needs of our visitors. The model functions as a spectrum and is designed to meet people where they are. It provides a structure for how we encourage and support community members in their nature-based education and outdoor recreation growth. It categorizes the experiences and needs of individuals into five stages: not aware, curious, beginner, advanced and expert.

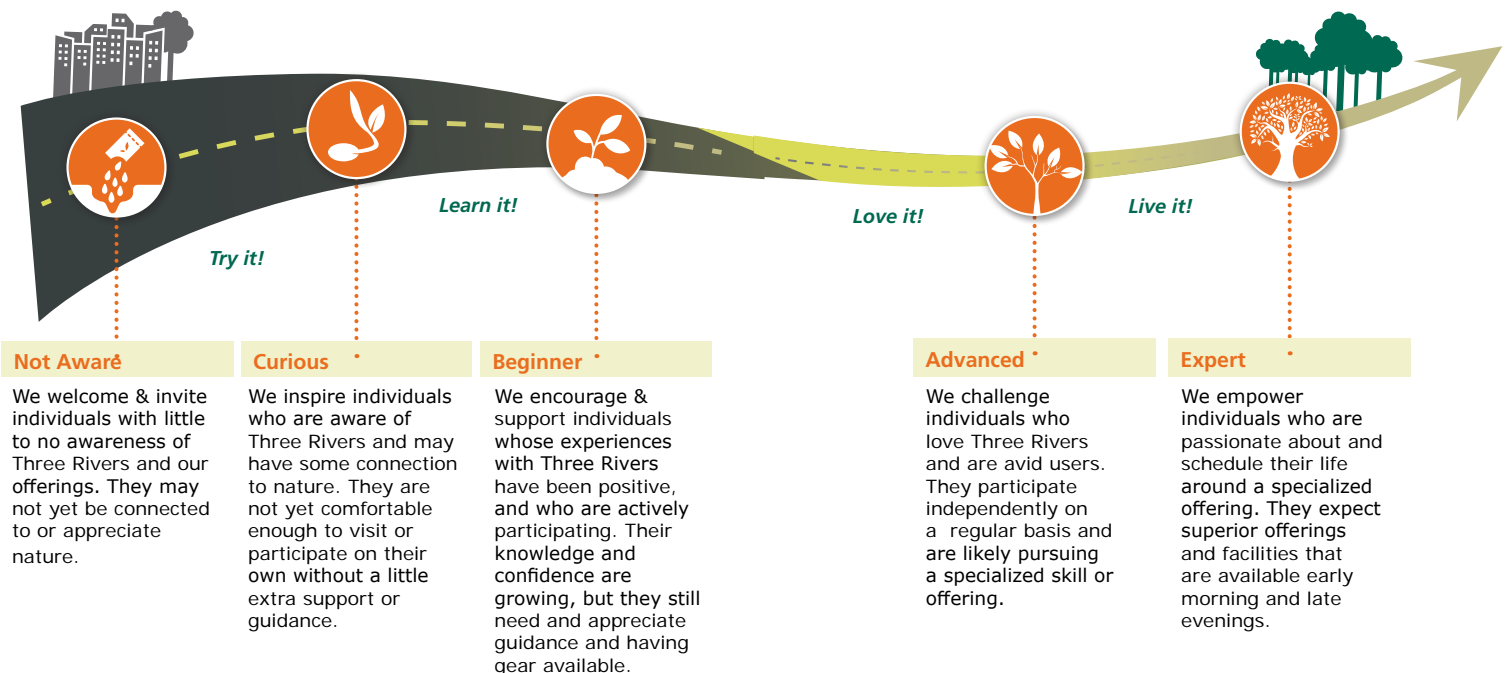
While movement from the left side of the spectrum (not aware/curious) to the right side (advanced/expert) is desired, it is expected that some visitors will remain where they are, and as long as their needs are met and their Three Rivers experiences are positive, this is acceptable. We want all community members to know and feel like they belong at Three Rivers.

Each existing and potential visitor's connection to and comfort in nature is unique. Some may have very fond memories of camping, hiking or picnicking with their family as a young child and now continue that tradition with their own children, grandchildren and friends. Others may have never participated in outdoor recreation or don't share the same positive experiences in nature. Participating in introductory offerings such as picnicking or sledding may be adventurous for some, while others thrive in more specialized offerings like cross-country skiing or mountain biking. We also recognize that many are not yet aware of our outdoor recreation and education offerings.

The VEM is designed with this diversity in mind. The model is intended to be dynamic, expecting that people will fluctuate from one stage to another as their experiences and preferences change over time. Some may fall into multiple categories all at once – for example, a person may be an expert hiker but not aware that mountain biking is an option available for them to try.

While each individual visitor within a category is unique, they typically share several similarities. These similarities may include level of awareness, skill and passion for nature. By recognizing each category as an independent and specialized group, we can customize our marketing, outreach, engagement and offerings to better serve those in each category.

The VEM creates a framework for more intentional focus on reaching and serving underrepresented community groups and new visitors within each category. While we will maintain the same level of support for specialized offerings, Three Rivers and the System of Bridging Facilities calls for a renewed focus on introductory offerings to ensure we are making nature available and accessible to all community members in ways that are convenient and comfortable.





## Q3: GENERAL CRITERIA- 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN CRITERIA

### Special Recreation Feature

The bridging Facilities developed in the Master Plan will, as a package, meet all of the criteria within Table 4.1 as it relates to Special Recreation Features/Bridging Facilities, including:

- ✓ Draws visitors from across the region
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will draw visitors regionally from across 11 cities and serve a population of over 440,000 people.
- ✓ Provides for geographic balance
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will provide geographic balance through development of regional facilities and services in an area that historically has been underserved and which has no Three Rivers regional parks or park reserves.
  - The system of bridging facilities will serve a population greater than Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, or Washington counties.
- ✓ Provides a unique high-quality outdoor recreation experience
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will be tailored to individually meet the needs and interests of the underserved populations within each community. This will likely involve tailored programming and potentially new facilities for that programming.
- ✓ Provide a natural resource based and scenic setting offering a compelling sense of place
  - When possible, the bridging facilities will be anchored in natural resource areas of high quality. It may be necessary to create new natural resource features, such as ponds, wetlands, forest plots, and prairies. It may be desirable to reclaim disturbed areas.
- ✓ Demonstrates the existence or potential for drawing a regional audience
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will draw visitors regionally from across 11 cities and serve a population of over 400,000 people.
  - Because these bridging facilities will be tailored to the needs and interests of the local residents, participation rates are expected to be greater than generic facilities built in areas of less dense populations.
- ✓ Has a unique managing or programming effort
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will be developed and programmed for the population within the immediate area.
- ✓ Serves as a bridging facility, intended to attract and introduce new outdoor recreation users to the regional parks system
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will create near-home opportunities for residents to experience what the regional parks system has to offer, with programs that teach outdoor skills and environmental education, and with facilities that exemplify what can be found in the greater parks system. These will act as an introduction to the regional parks system, making people want to explore the greater system.
- ✓ Compliments the Regional Parks System
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will act as the “front door” to the greater regional parks system though offering near-home experiences and opportunities to new visitors.

## Siting and Acquisition

- ✓ Strategy 1: Priorities  
Lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System.
  - Development of proposed bridging facilities will strive to meet this strategy whenever possible, and may need to involve creation of new natural resource features such as ponds, prairies and mini-forests.
  
- ✓ Strategy 2: Geographic balance  
Geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns shall be a consideration when exploring system additions.
  - The Search area is home to more people than Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, or Washington counties, yet there are no Three Rivers' parks within its boundaries due to historical development patterns. The envisioned system of bridging facilities will provide near-home regional park system services for over 440,000 people, introducing them to the system, teaching them outdoor skills, making them more comfortable in more wild parks. The proposed system will draw new visitors to the entire regional parks system.
  
- ✓ Strategy 3: Council-approved master plans  
Priorities for land acquisition are set by regional park implementing agencies in Council-approved master plans.
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will primarily focus on available existing public lands, and potentially on public/private partnerships. Acquisition of any significant acreage would likely be limited since the communities in the search area are fully developed. The Master Plan will identify all parcels needed to achieve its vision.
  
- Strategy 4: New regional trails - **N/A**  
New regional trails must serve a regional audience and provide connections between regional parks, park reserves, and regional trails without duplicating an existing trail.
  
- ✓ Strategy 5: Special recreation features  
Special recreation features must enhance services and facilities already offered, not compete with, or duplicate them.
  - The bridging facilities will be uniquely tailored to the surrounding area's needs and physical opportunities, but will share a common purpose of providing more equitable regional park services to historically underserved communities, and to introduce new users to the regional parks system. They will compliment, not compete with, local parks by offering a higher level of outdoor skills programming, nature education, and regional facilities than what are typically found in local park and recreation programs and parks.

## Q3: AGENCY AND OTHER SUPPORT

The search area for the System of Bridging Facilities is recognized in the draft Three Rivers 2040 System Plan. Final approval of that plan was postponed due to the Pandemic, but is anticipated to be approved in the summer of 2020.

Letters of support have been obtained, or are in the process of being obtained (delays due to the Pandemic), from each of the cities within the search area: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Edina, Golden Valley, Hopkins, New Hope, Richfield, Robbinsdale and St. Louis Park.



## Q4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Three Rivers Public Engagement

The following matrix shows the public participation used to determine the need for the System of Bridging Facilities Search Area. Individual components of this system will be determined in an inclusive and comprehensive master planning process that will fully engage the public and all partners.

Engagement Activities	Engagement Findings	Engagement Level
<b>2040 System Plan</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Survey</li> <li>• Mentimeter</li> <li>• One-on-one Conversations</li> <li>• Deep Dive Discussions</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> <li>• Pop-up in the Parks</li> <li>• Nature Connection Posters</li> <li>• Events</li> <li>• 2040Plan@threeriversparks.org</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Remove Barriers.</b> Identify and actively remove the factors that impede access to our parks, trails and offerings. Identified barriers include location, rules, awareness, accessibility, gear and distance from a park or trail.</li> <li>• <b>Expand Focus.</b> Be welcoming, convenient and relevant to all and broaden perspectives, approaches and programs. Seek partnerships and identify opportunities to meet people where they are, including outside of our parks and beyond our traditional offerings.</li> <li>• <b>Diversify.</b> A one-size-fits-all approach will not work; provide unique, targeted offerings that vary between parks. Accept that not all offerings will serve all people, but overall, there needs to be something for everyone.</li> </ul>	<p>Consult Involve Collaborate</p>
<b>2018 General Population Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone survey; random sample of 1,000 households</li> <li>• Stratified and weighted into four tiers to reflect population</li> </ul>	<p><b>Major obstacles to visiting more:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of time (30%)</li> <li>• Unaware (23%)</li> <li>• Too far away (11%)</li> </ul> <p><b>Importance of future actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 84% said it was important to acquire land for future parks</li> <li>• 76% said it was important to add recreation facilities</li> <li>• 73% said it was important to add nature education facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Primary goal of Three Rivers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24% said preserve open space</li> <li>• 3% said provide places for recreation</li> <li>• 64% said both preserve open space and provide places for recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Opinions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 98% preserving natural areas and habitats is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 93% offering outdoor recreational opportunities is very important in maintaining the quality of life in this area</li> <li>• 96% regional parks are valuable even if you don't actually use them very much</li> </ul>	<p>Consult</p>
<b>2018 Park Visitor Survey</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercept surveys with personal and self-administrated surveys (4,648 total surveys)</li> <li>• All park visitors 16 years old or older were eligible to participate except those golfing, group camping or participating in a staff-led organized group</li> <li>• Findings were weighted to mirror actual visitation patterns</li> </ul>	<p><b>Factors in determining to visit a park:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High importance: Do something with family/friends or experience nature</li> <li>• Medium importance: Low cost of recreation, improve fitness/mental health, park is close to home or comfortable with park</li> </ul> <p><b>What actions are important moving forward:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93% improve the quality of natural resources</li> <li>• 78% said acquire land for future parks and trails</li> <li>• 71% said develop additional recreation facilities</li> <li>• 63% said partner with a local city to provide outdoor activities that don't have a Three Rivers park</li> </ul>	<p>Consult</p>

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

- ✓ Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities may involve active natural resources management by Three Rivers, including water quality, forestry and wildlife management. This may involve restoration of natural areas that have not been actively managed or maintained, or possibly restoration /reclamation of heavily disturbed sites.
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will bring regional park services to where people live in an area with a population of over 440,000 which currently has no Three Rivers regional parks.
  - This will attract new visitors to the regional parks system, which in turn, will create future conservation stewards and champions for natural-resource based parks.
- ✓ Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems
  - As envisioned, individual bridging facilities will be located adjacent or near regional trails to allow for bicycle and pedestrian access to the facility. Three Rivers' Regional Trail Network provides access to nearly all of its regional parks and park reserves, and is a recreational resource itself, with over 160 miles of regional trails currently open for public use.
  - Establishment of the system of bridging facilities in the first-ring cities will mesh nicely with the existing transit system, as transit is located primarily in the more densely populated cities, and offer very few existing connections to regional parks outside of the urban core.
- ✓ Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will serve a population of over 440,000 people – a population larger than Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott, or Washington counties. The system's search area is home to over 70 percent of the Three River's racial and ethnic populations, and home to over 70 percent of people living at or below 185 percent of the federal population level.
  - As envisioned, the system of bridging facilities will act as the "front door" to the greater regional parks system though offering near-home experiences and opportunities to historically under-served populations.

## Q6: ACQUISITION TIMING AND COST

The addition of the System of Bridging Facilities Search Area in upon itself bears no financial costs to the Regional Parks System. It is simply a search area. Estimated costs for acquisition, development and operations; estimated funding sources, and estimated timing are all components of the master planning process. Once the Master Plan is approved by the Metropolitan Council, the associated costs should then be added in the next Parks Policy Plan Update.

Acquisition  
timing & cost

5-10 years

\$0



May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Bloomington staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

Ann Kattreh  
City of Bloomington  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District

**Brooklyn Park**   
**Recreation & Parks**

May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Brooklyn Park staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system, filling gaps in park offerings and amenities and in many cases provides alternative transportation links to key destinations in the city of Brooklyn Park. We consider Three Rivers current and future amenities to be planned within our community as assets, by which positively contributes to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,



Jody Yungers  
City of Brooklyn Park  
Director, Recreation and Parks Department

Cc: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District





May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Brooklyn Center staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

Jim Glasoe  
City of Brooklyn Center  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District



**CITY of CRYSTAL**

4141 Douglas Drive North • Crystal, Minnesota 55422-1696

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Tel: (763) 531-1000 • Fax: (763) 531-1188 • [www.crystalmn.gov](http://www.crystalmn.gov)

May 15, 2020

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

**Letter of Support for a Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area**

Dear Mr. Mullin,

City of Crystal staff supports the inclusion of Three Rivers Park District's proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers Park District provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers Park District amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers Park District to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers Park District and City of Crystal recreation and natural resource goals. If you have any questions, please let me know. I can be reached at (763) 531-1150 or [john.elholm@crystalmn.gov](mailto:john.elholm@crystalmn.gov).

Sincerely,

John Elholm  
Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District



May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Edina staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

Perry Vetter  
City of Edina  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District



1000 Golden Valley Road  
Golden Valley, MN 55417

May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Golden Valley staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Birno", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Birno  
City of Golden Valley  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District





May 15, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The city of New Hope staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complimentary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

Susan Rader  
City of New Hope  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District

## CITY OF NEW HOPE

4401 Xylon Avenue North ♦ New Hope, Minnesota 55428-4898 ♦ [www.ci.new-hope.mn.us](http://www.ci.new-hope.mn.us)  
City Hall: 763-531-5100 ♦ Police (non-emergency): 763-531-5170 ♦ Public Works: 763-592-6777  
City Hall Fax: 763-531-5136 ♦ Police Fax: 763-531-5174 ♦ Public Works Fax: 763-592-6776



**Recreation Services Department**

May 19, 2020

**MAYOR**  
MARIA REGAN  
GONZALEZ

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

**CITY COUNCIL**  
EDWINA GARCIA  
MARY SUPPLE  
SIMON TRAUTMANN  
BEN WHALEN

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

**CITY MANAGER**  
KATIE RODRIGUEZ

Dear Mr. Mullin,

The City of Richfield staff support inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff is supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Markle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Amy Markle  
City of Richfield  
Park and Recreation Director

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District





## City of Robbinsdale

4100 Lakeview Avenue North  
Robbinsdale, Minnesota 55422-  
2280 Phone: (763) 537-4534  
[www.robbsdalemn.com](http://www.robbsdalemn.com)

May 19, 2020

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

RE: Providing Letter of Support for Three Rivers:  
Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area

Dear Mr. Mullin,

On behalf of the Robbinsdale City Council, City staff supports inclusion of Three Rivers proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community in the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks Policy System Plan.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We consider additional Three Rivers amenities within our community an asset which will positively contribute to our community being a desirable place to live, work and play both now and in the future.

In addition, City staff are supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals.

Sincerely,

Regan Murphy  
Mayor  
City of Robbinsdale

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District



# City of Hopkins

1010 First Street South • Hopkins, MN 55343-7573 • Phone: 952-935-8474 • Fax: 952-935-1834

Web address: [www.hopkinsmn.com](http://www.hopkinsmn.com)

May 21, 2020

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

RE: Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area in Hopkins

Dear Mr. Mullin,

City of Hopkins staff supports the concept of a proposed Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area within our community and would support the inclusion of the search area in the regional parks system through the Metropolitan Council's *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, with the understanding that the general search area would apply to publicly owned land within Hopkins.

Three Rivers provides recreation and natural resources offerings which are complementary to our local park system and serve as an amenity for our residents. We have a strong partnership with Three Rivers for the five regional trails in our community as well as for The Depot Coffee House, which serves as a regional trailhead and community asset. We welcome additional conversations with Three Rivers about future amenities within our community which will positively contribute to Hopkins' reputation as a desirable place to live, work and play.

City staff is supportive of partnering with Three Rivers to further explore the Special Recreation Feature/Bridging Facilities Search Area possibilities through development of a master plan which meets both Three Rivers' and the City's recreation and natural resource goals and is subsequently approved by the Hopkins City Council.

Sincerely,

Mike Mornson  
City Manager

C: Jonathan Vlaming, Associate Superintendent – Three Rivers Park District

**Attachment 2j**

**Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Crow-Hassan Park Reserve - Boundary Adjustment**

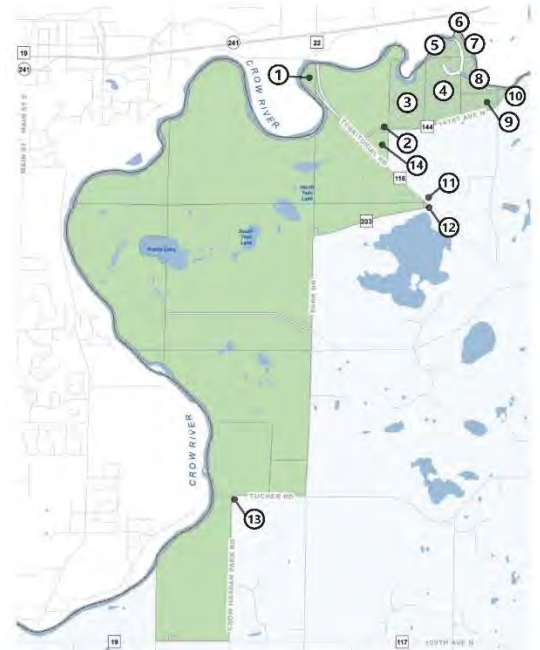
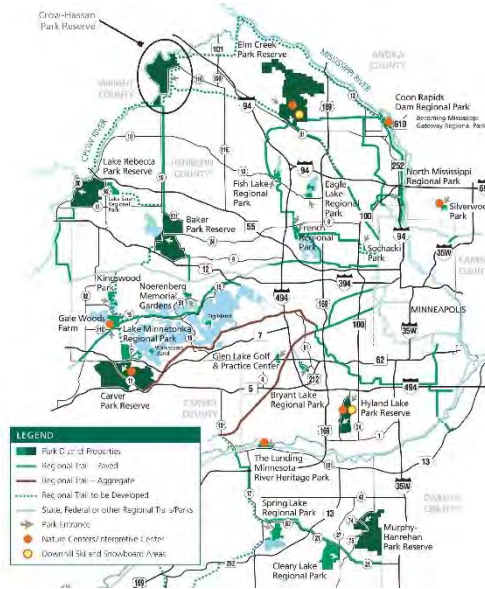
# Regional Parks Policy Plan System Addition Request: Crow-Hassan Park Reserve: Boundary Expansion



Expand Crow-Hassan Park Reserve to better protect and provide access to the Crow River and preserve park land for future recreation development in 25+ years.

## 1. System Addition Proposal:

Three Rivers Park District submitted a master plan for Crow-Hassan Park Reserve for Metropolitan Council review and approval in February. The master plan included a boundary expansion along the Crow-River at the request of the City of Rogers and in accordance with its 2040 Comprehensive Plan – which was recently reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan Council.



**FIGURE 14 | CROW-HASSAN INHOLDINGS**  
Source: Three Rivers Park District & Hennepin County

INHOLDINGS			
#	PID	Acreage	Market Value (2019)
1*	1812023110001	9.26	\$87,000
2**	1712023240001	0.97	\$257,000
3***	1712023120001	59.0	~\$1,038,000
4***	1712023110001	65.1	~\$474,000
5	0812023440001	12.96	\$17,800
6	0812023440002	1.22	\$1,200
7	0912023330001	2.85	\$2,900
8	1612023220001	14.94	\$50,600
9	1612023230001	20.88	\$137,900
10	1612023240005	2.9	\$256,000
11***	1712023410001	0.06	~\$240
12	2012023110002	0.63	\$235,000
13	3112023120006	0.25	~\$8,800
		191.02 ac	\$2,566,440

Properties 3-10 identified per City of Rogers 2040 Comp Plan Update (new inholdings).  
\* Property requires significant environmental clean-up, current use gun club.  
\*\* Purchase by Park District currently being negotiated.  
\*\*\* Partial property acquisition proposed, market value estimated based on acreage.

The boundary expansion allows for:

- additional protection and public access along the Crow River.
- consistency with the City's long-range transportation and land use plans which envisions realigning a county road along the revised park boundary and using the road and park to help organized adjacent land uses.
- additional recreational development within Crow-Hassan Park Reserve without negatively impacting the largest restored prairie in the metro or the overall wilderness and undeveloped aspects of the greater park at which time demand warrants it.

The park location with Three Rivers system and expansion area is illustrated above and includes inholdings 3-10 (shaded in gray on the above table) for a total of about 180 acres. The expansion was sized to support a future standalone regional park and include all of the area east of Territorial Road should future (long-term, 25+ years) demand warrant it – this simply preserves/provides that opportunity for future consideration should it be the best solution to meeting regional recreational needs in the future/long-term.

2. **General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Crow-Hassan Park Reserve is already a recognized unit within the Regional Parks Policy Plan System. In addition, and in accordance with the Policy Plan the park boundary and proposed expansion was determined during the recent master planning work and in partnership with the City of Rogers, general public and park users.

Expanding the park reserve boundary further helps the Council achieve its Regional Parks Policy Plan by:

- *Protecting lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System – both within the existing park and within the proposed expansion.*

*The land included in the expansion is directly on the Crow River and while much of it is currently in agriculture/protection this often provides for the most efficient and effective restoration work as the land is free from invasive species, development and other items that make restoration challenging. This area also includes wetlands, flood plains and a rolling landscape with scenic vistas. By including this land within the park boundary it allows for additional (future) recreational development when warranted by demand/future growth without negatively impacting the natural resources and undeveloped nature of the greater park. This is important to provide a diversity of recreational offerings across the greater regional park system and ensuring that everyone's needs are met somewhere in the system.*

- *Identifying regional park implementing agency priorities for land acquisition in Council-approved master plans.*

*In accordance with the Regional Parks Policy Plan, Crow-Hassan Park Reserve is already identified as a unit within the Regional Parks System and it's official master plan boundary developed and proposed within the master plan which is currently pending review by the Metropolitan Council as staff delayed official review and approval to focus on the system addition process.*

3. **Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.

Three Rivers Board of Commissioners approved the master plan – which details the boundary expansion - for Met Council review/approval in January 2020 and the City of Rogers provided a resolution of support for the master plan in May 2020. The resolution of support is enclosed for Council review.

4. **Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.

Please see chapter 2 of the previously submitted master plan for a detailed account of public engagement, key findings and recommendations. Some of the key themes pertinent to this request are below:

- **Protect unique natural resources.** The most consistent and dominant theme across all engagement strategies was an interest in protecting the current natural resource features of the park. Feedback from the adjacent communities, current users and expert park volunteers identified the park's natural resource features as the primary draw of users from around the region and an invaluable resource for the region's natural systems.

- **Maintain the rustic quality.** Current users identified the park's rustic condition and the immersive experience of the park's natural systems as a primary draw for their visits. This was consistent across existing user groups including hikers, equestrian riders and volunteers. A common comment seen in survey responses was, "keep the park just as it is."

- **Improve accessibility.** The primary barrier of Crow-Hassan use across engagement materials was the lack of accessible infrastructure. The current unpaved trail system's rustic quality and often times uneven natural surfacing prevents those individuals with varying levels of mobility from using the park. This includes people with disabilities, families with strollers, young children and aging adults.

- **Increase natural resource-based programming, education and experiential opportunities.** Results from the survey, listening sessions and events all indicated a strong interest in increased natural resource-based programming, education and experiential opportunities within the park, particularly for youth and adults. For prospective users, a lack of programming and support for families was a primary barrier of park use. Survey participants, in particular, expressed an interest in learning about the history of the park and desired interpretive features to bolster their knowledge of the park's ecology. There was also significant interest in play features being added to the park. However, many specified that the play features should be minimal or educationally focused. This same light-touch focus was seen in the intercept engagement results. Insect netting, butterfly tagging, dog sledding, bird watching and horseback riding were the top requested dream activities for children. Camping, pop-up saunas, paddling and bicycle trails were the top requests from the adult participants.

5. **Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).

**Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents**

- Three Rivers 2040 System Plan calls for protecting existing high-quality natural resources and connecting them to each other through buffers and natural resources corridors - this park and boundary expansion plays a role in this. The park and its boundary expansion is located to protect existing natural resources - especially those identified as high quality - and, upon acquisition, the expanded areas will be restored to reflect the natural communities of the region. The protected and restored areas will provide opportunity for carbon sequestration, urban island heat affect reduction and places for people to connect to nature close to home - which can positively affect mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.
- This area includes wetlands and floodplains under production which when restored, will provide opportunities to contribute to a resilient region by offsetting flooding, improving water quality and providing wildlife habitat.

**Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities**

- Three Rivers Park System was developed for this very purpose. It calls for some parks being more heavily developed and providing a higher level of social interaction and others remaining undeveloped and providing opportunities for nature immersion. A key purpose of expanding in this area is to protect the natural resources at Crow-Hassan Park Reserve (one of Three Rivers most undeveloped parks) as the pressure to continue recreation development continues to mount and create tension with the surrounding developing communities. This park will relieve that pressure/tension by providing additional recreational opportunities. Development is likely 25+ years out – but the time to protect the land in anticipation for that need is now!

**Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems**

- The Crow River Regional Trail will traverse this expanded park area and connect people walking, biking, running, inline-skating and more to Crow-Hassan Park Reserve as well as the greater system of nearly 400 miles of regional trails.



- The City of Rogers envisions reworking the county roads in this area providing a desirable park boundary and improved access to the expanded parkland. With this in mind as well as future recreational development in this area, parking, local trail connectivity – and, as well as Metro Transit access should it be expanded by the time the park is developed - will be considered in this area.

**Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region’s residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.**

- Crow-Hassan Park Reserve serves a demographic that does not mirror Suburban Hennepin County demographics but does serve a demographic not served as well in other parks (i.e. older adults and women in particular). The expansion area and related (future) recreational development will be planned and designed to serve and meet the needs of a wider community base which more closely mirrors the demographic of Suburban Hennepin County. It is likely that this area will have a stronger focus on serving new, introductory users and providing more standard nature-based recreation offerings than parks with a more specialized focus (such as the rest of Crow-Hassan).

6. **Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

Acquisition for the expansion is about \$1,978,400 based on the assessor market rate for the portion of the properties included within park boundary and as outlined in the draft master plan. Acquisition timing is 0 to 30+ years as this is a long-term plan which will be implemented on a willing seller basis and focused on preserving land for future recreational development when demand warrants it. In addition, and in accordance with the City of Roger’s comprehensive plan portions of the land will first be mined for gravel and sand prior to being available for parkland. These areas will not be available fore acquisition for 25+ years.

Another parcel (Inholding 3) is owned by the Metropolitan Council and was purchased to support a water treatment plant to the south. For many years Three Rivers and the Met Council discussed exchanging surplus park property (located on the opposite side of the road from the greater park and adjacent to the waste water treatment site) for Inholding #3. It had been discussed as an even exchange for many years; however, the Met Council recently expressed that it may no longer be interested in an even exchange and instead may be interested in selling the land for financial gain or using for wetland restoration. In either event, this land is instrumental to meeting future regional recreational needs.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-43**

**A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE  
CROW-HASSAN PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, The City of Rogers recognizes Crow-Hassan Park Reserve as an important component of the regional parks system providing natural resource protection and nature-based recreation to the residents of the City and the region; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff have been working in partnership with Three Rivers Park District in development of the master plan to ensure the park's guiding principles of preserving the unique natural resources, celebrating the Crow River and introducing people to nature and outdoor recreation match Roger's community values; and

**WHEREAS**, The City of Rogers recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has gathered significant public input in the development of the Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, The City of Rogers recognizes that Three Rivers Park District has drafted the Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Master Plan and accepted and responded to public comments appropriately; and

**WHEREAS**, The Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Master Plan is consistent with other approved local and regional plans; and

**WHEREAS**, The Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Master Plan and includes greater access to the park, programing and future expansion; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Rogers supports the acquisition, design, implementation and operation of the Crow-Hassan Park Reserve pursuant to the Master Plan; and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Rogers supports the Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Master Plan.

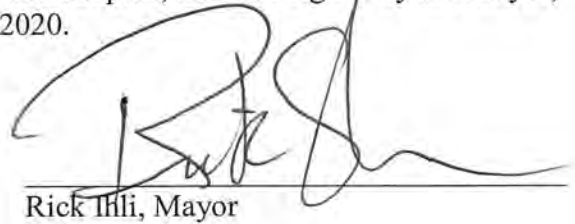
Moved by Councilmember *Jakel*, seconded by Councilmember *Klick*

The following voted in favor of said resolution: *Eiden, Gorecki, Ihli, Jakel and Klick*

The following voted against the same: *none*

The following abstained: *none*

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted, and was signed by the Mayor, and attested by the Clerk dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020.



\_\_\_\_\_

Rick Iffli, Mayor

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_

Stacy Scharber, City Clerk

**Attachment 2k**

**Three Rivers Park District Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Gale Woods Farm Special Recreation Feature- Boundary Adjustment**

# Gale Woods Special Recreation Feature: Boundary Expansion



Expand Gale Woods to provide consistent protection and management of natural areas which expand across the park boundaries and better align the boundary with logical infrastructure/boundaries.

## 1. System Addition Proposal:

Three Rivers Park District is preparing a master plan amendment to include an additional 33 acres within the Gale Woods Special Recreation Feature boundary. This includes a variety of acquisition scenarios (see table below) including an immediate acquisition opportunity to acquire 28 acres in the southeast corner of the park which has a willing seller with a strong desire to close on the property this year.

Three Rivers already owns two of the properties and acquired them without Met Council funding and 3 (totaling .9 acres) will hopefully be acquired through a land exchange agreement with the Boys and Girls Club (Camp Voyagers) located north of the park. In a nutshell Three Rivers would retain all property south of CR 15 and the Boys and Girls Club would retain all property north of CR 15 and provide a regional trail easement for the Baker-Carver Regional Trail.

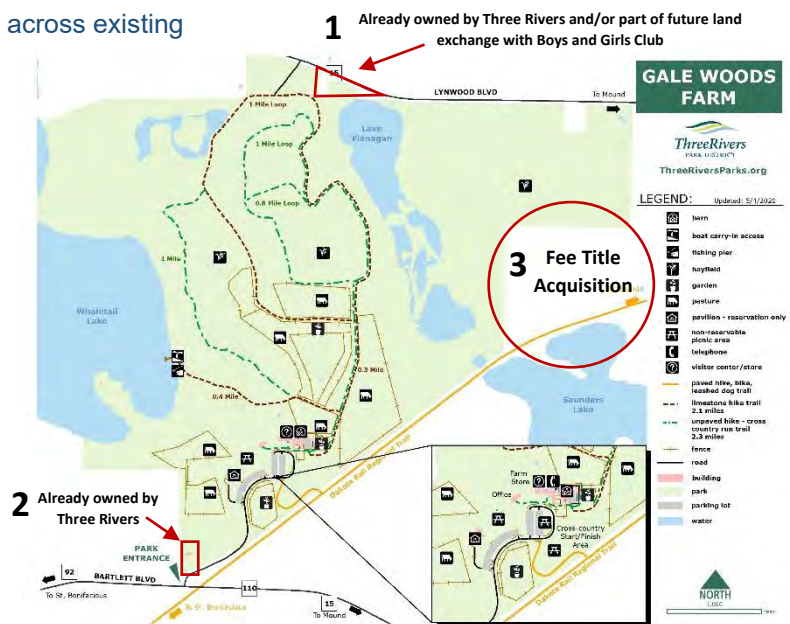
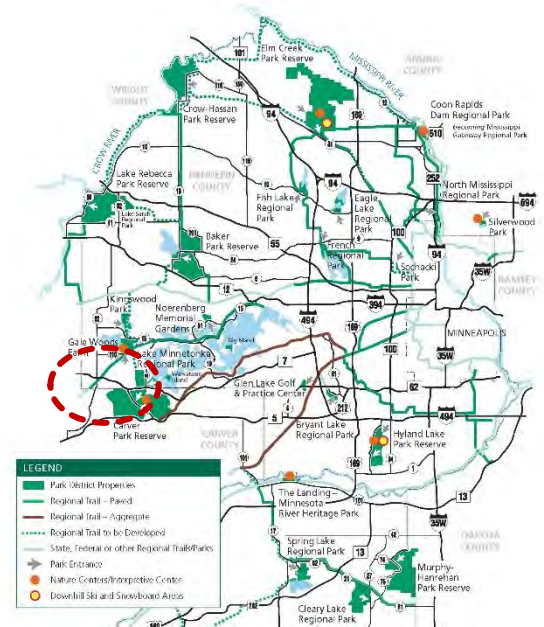
The master plan amendment is anticipated to be submitted to the Met Council in late summer in conjunction with the immediate acquisition opportunity grant fund request which will reflect a willing seller arrangement. The boundary expansion allows for:

- additional natural resource protection and consistent management of existing and new natural areas – especially those natural areas which cross the park boundary.
- potential securing of associated regional trail land.
- protection of parkland as Property 3 is land locked and the owner could petition the City for access across existing parkland disrupting the operations of the working farm and natural areas or adjacent Dakota Rail Regional Trail.

The original park boundary was limited to the original 410 acre donation as that was what was politically and publicly supported in 2000. The adjacent property owners and broader community are supportive of the park and now interested in working with Three Rivers to expand the boundary. The park location within

	Size	Status/Plan
1	4.1 acres	3.2 acres already owned .9 acres through land exchange with Boys and Girls Club (no significant acquisition costs foreseen)
2	.9 acres	Already owned
3	28 acres	Currently for sale by a willing seller (\$585,000)

33 acres





2. **General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Gale Woods Special Recreation Area is already a recognized unit within the Regional Parks Policy Plan System and the park boundary and proposed expansion is intended to be updated in an upcoming master plan amendment. Expanding the park reserve boundary further helps the Council achieve its Regional Parks Policy Plan by:

- *Protecting lands with natural resource features, access to water, and/or restoration potential will be a priority for the Regional Parks System – both within the existing park and within the proposed expansion.*

*Much of the land included in the expansion request is underdeveloped and includes natural areas/resources that extend from the master plan boundary onto the properties proposed for inclusion in the official master plan boundary. Ownership and inclusion of the properties within the boundary helps ensure that these natural areas, in whole, will be protected and consistently managed as one ecosystem unit.*

- *Identifying regional park implementing agency priorities for land acquisition in Council-approved master plans.*

*In accordance with the Regional Parks Policy Plan, Gale Woods Special Recreation Feature is already identified as a unit within the Regional Parks System and it's official master plan boundary amendment are anticipated to be submitted later this summer/early fall for Council review/consideration. Additional detail on each parcel will be discussed as part of that work/narrative.*

3. **Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.

Three Rivers Board of Commissioners approved moving forward with updating the master plan to reflect the true envisioned boundary and proceeding with a purchase agreement specifically for Parcel 3. Upon receipt of a purchase agreement, Three Rivers will further coordinate the appropriate approvals with the City of Minnetrista. Minnetrista is aware of the potential land exchange as well as the immediate acquisition opportunity. No opposition is envisioned as part of the land exchange and the property owner for Property 3 has indicated that they've discussed the acquisition opportunity with their elected officials and does not foresee opposition due to the development potential and access challenges of the property.

4. **Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.

Three Rivers General Population Survey and Park Visitor Survey indicate that 84% said acquire land for future parks/88% said preserve open space and 93% said improve the quality of natural resources/78% said acquire land for future parks and trails respectively.

5. **Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).

**Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents**

- Three Rivers 2040 System Plan calls for protecting existing high-quality natural resources and connecting them to each other through buffers and natural resources corridors - this park and boundary expansion plays



a role in this. The park and its boundary expansion is located to protect existing natural resources - especially those identified as high quality - and, upon acquisition, the expanded areas will be restored to reflect the natural communities of the region. The protected and restored areas will provide opportunity for carbon sequestration, urban island heat affect reduction and places for people to connect to nature close to home - which can positively affect mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

- This park includes wetlands and floodplains under production which when restored, will provide opportunities to contribute to a resilient region by offsetting flooding, improving water quality and providing wildlife habitat.

### **Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities**

- Three Rivers Park System was developed for this very purpose. Gale Woods Special Recreation Feature provides a unique regional recreation offering not found elsewhere within the Regional Parks System and surrounding by natural areas providing (and preserving) a glimpse as to what the area looked like during European settlement. The park provides an opportunity for people to visit a working farm and learn about where their food comes from as well as sustainable practices of the farm and the adjacent natural areas.

### **Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems**

- Gale Woods is located directly at the intersection of the Dakota Rail Regional Trail and the future Baker – Carver Regional Trail off of CR 110. It is accessible by car, foot and bike. At this time, Metro Transit does not provide service to the park although it is desired.

### **Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region’s residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.**

- Gale Woods Special Recreation Feature provides a unique regional recreation offering not found elsewhere within the Regional Parks System. It operates a community supported agricultural program and works closely with several groups to teach urban kids about sustainable farming, where food comes and animal care. Many of the program participants have never been to a working farm much less worked at one providing an opportunity for kids to expand their connection to nature and the earth. The park also includes more folk-based education offerings (sheep shearing, yarn dying, cooking classes, Saturday mornings on the farm) which often provide a fun, social experience and serve people that may not otherwise be connected to Three Rivers or the parks.

6. **Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

Acquisition for the expansion is about \$585,000 (plus related acquisition costs) based on a recent appraisal. Preferred acquisition timing is before the end of the year per the willing seller’s request.

**Attachment 3a**

**City of Saint Paul Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Mississippi Gorge Regional Park (Saint Paul) to Samuel Morgan Regional Trail / Midtown Greenway Extension Regional Trail Search Corridor**

# Regional Parks System Additions Application

**DATE:** April 22, 2020  
**TO:** Regional Parks System Implementing Agencies  
**FROM:** Community Development, Regional Parks and Natural Resources  
**SUBJECT:** 2019 - 2020 Systems Additions – *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* Amendment Process

Minnesota State Statute 473.147, subd. 1 states that the Metropolitan Council (Council) shall plan for the Regional Parks System. The updated *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* commits the Council to convene a region-wide discussion about system additions in 2019. To inform the discussion, please provide a separate response for each system addition proposal that addresses following topics:

- 1. System Addition Proposal:** Please describe the proposal, it's location, the proposed acreage or trail miles, and if applicable, partner arrangement. Please include an overview map of the proposal depicting the location in your agency's jurisdiction. If the proposal calls for converting an existing county or local park or trail to a regional park or trail; is a boundary adjustment for an existing regional park or park reserve; or is for a bridging facility, please also include a more detailed map depicting the location in the local jurisdiction(s) (e.g., city, township).
- 2. General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
- 3. Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.
- 4. Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.
- 5. Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).
- 6. Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

<sup>1</sup> *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, Updated November 2018

1. System Addition Proposal. Commonly referred to as the Midtown Greenway Extension, a regional trail search corridor is proposed parallel to I-94/Ayd Mill Rd and CP Rail's Merriam Park Subdivision. The trail extension would connect the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis—with possible connections into regional parks and trails operated by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board—to Mississippi Gorge Regional Park then down to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail. This application only proposes a search corridor for the Mississippi Gorge to Samuel Morgan segment. No current trail exists within the corridor, but a trail in the Ayd Mill Rd portion of the corridor will be constructed within two years.

The proposed corridor encompasses approximately 5.7 miles of trail. Exact segment length will depend on the final alignment that is chosen during the master planning process, particularly in how the trail crosses Shepard Rd to connect to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail.

A map from Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is attached showing the location of the proposed regional trail search corridor in relation to the regional parks and trails system within the city.

2. General Criteria. The proposed search corridor will be regionally significant and is consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP). The proposed search corridor meets all the requirements of a linking trail listed in Table 4-2 of the RPPP.

Both termini of the search corridor are near other implementing agency jurisdictions. The western end will be at the boundary with Minneapolis and is expected to carry a portion of the high usership of the existing Midtown Greenway, as well as visitors to Mississippi Gorge Regional Park. The eastern end will be along the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail which connects to a major crossing of the Mississippi River at I-35E bringing significant usership from Dakota County residents. Additionally, the trail corridor is already identified in the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network identified in the Transportation Policy Plan as a Tier 2 Corridor. Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 of the RPPP requires that "future regional trail proposals need to be evaluated within a comprehensive, region-wide framework, most notably within the context of the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network."

The proposed search corridor supplements the regional trail system by providing direct connections between regional park units that are currently connected by a much longer and more circuitous route. There are no existing or planned trails that parallel this corridor. Additionally, this corridor traverses the portions of Saint Paul that are furthest from existing regional parks and regional trails. This has the potential to greatly increase access to the regional park system and fills a recreation gap for trail uses in this part of the city.

The proposed search corridor primarily will function as a linking trail connecting Mississippi Gorge Regional Park and the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail, but it will also provide important connections to the local bikeways system. The corridor intersects with more than a dozen Major and Minor Bikeways identified in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan, including the recently revitalized Little Bohemia Trail.

The proposed search corridor also provides significant connections to local destinations. Through its connection along the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail, the corridor increases access to Downtown Saint Paul, the city's greatest concentration of employment. More than ten schools and two libraries are in close proximity to the trail corridor. The corridor also runs along the edge of the Historic Hill District, a local, state, and national historic preservation district.

Consistent with RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 1, the proposed search corridor provides access to the Mississippi River in two very different settings—upstream in the river gorge and downstream in the river valley. By proposing this search corridor along an active rail line, future acquisition could be streamlined allowing quicker development as a regional trail as acknowledged in RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 which notes that "the availability of these [rail] corridors may offer excellent

opportunities for the regional trail system to expeditiously acquire links that would otherwise have to be assembled on a parcel-by-parcel basis.”

3. Agency and Other Support. The proposed regional trail search corridor was included in Saint Paul’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The plan was approved by the Saint Paul City Council on June 19, 2019. The resolution approving the plan is attached.

4. Public Participation. There has been significant public support demonstrated for the connection proposed by the search corridor. The City of Saint Paul has not led these efforts for the entire corridor and instead is supporting an effort led by community groups such as the Midtown Greenway Coalition and Friends of the Mississippi River. These community-led efforts included fundraising \$45,000 to hire an engineering firm to evaluate the feasibility of adding bicycle and pedestrian traffic to the existing railroad bridge that crosses the Mississippi River. The river crossing is outside the scope of this particular corridor, but could be part of a larger trail project.

Specific to the Ayd Mill Rd portion of the corridor, City-led engagement on the design of the corridor has gone back decades and involved numerous task forces and neighborhood organizations. During 2019-2020, the community was engaged to make a final decision about the configuration of the road. As COVID-19 impacts ramped up, Saint Paul Public Works shifted engagement online by recording a project presentation, creating design graphics, and posting this information on a webpage with a survey. The survey was heavily promoted and the response led to a final design decision to include an off-street trail in the corridor when the road receives resurfacing over the next year.

More broadly, this search corridor was included in maps during the process of developing the City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The engagement process during plan development reached over 2,200 people and generated over 3,700 comments that shaped the final plan.

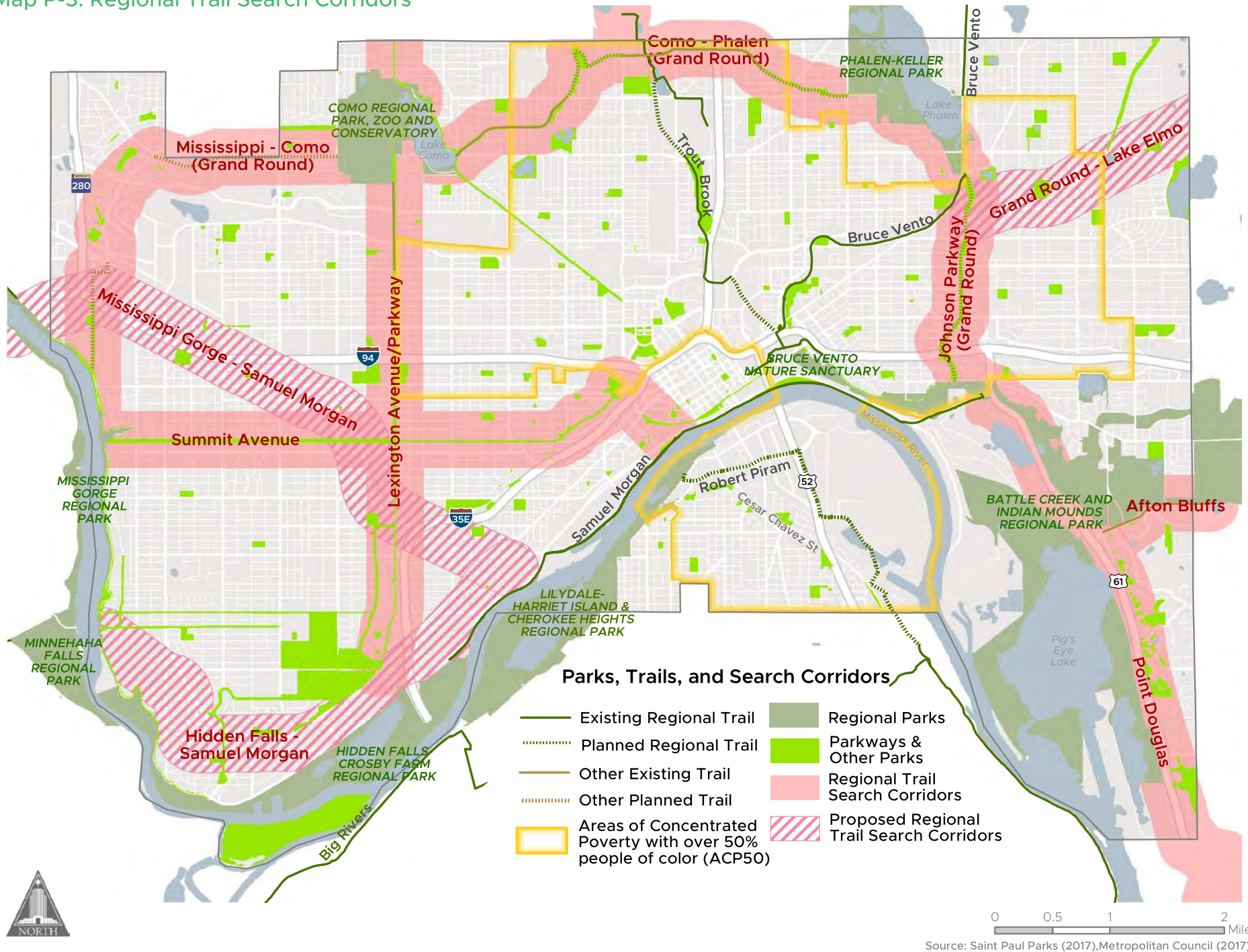
5. Regional Context. The most significant regional context that this proposed corridor fits within is climate resilience and access to the regional park system. Saint Paul’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies resiliency and sustainability as a core city value. Specific policies in the plan elaborate on implementing this value. Policy T-21 guides to “reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 40% by 2040 by improving transportation options beyond single-occupant vehicles.” Achieving this policy will require the development of the network of local and regional trails and bikeways to provide safe infrastructure for alternative modes of travel. This corridor will play a significant role in that system.

As noted earlier, this corridor will serve the parts of Saint Paul with the least access to regional parks and trails. Goal 5 of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter of the 2040 Plan emphasizes “strong and accessible connections” to parks and trails. Policy PR-36 reinforces this by calling to “integrate parkways and trails with the city’s broader transportation network to provide convenient and safe access to the park system.” Policy PR-44 additionally calls to “support facility improvements that better connect neighborhoods to the Mississippi River.” This corridor will make these connections, providing better access to the regional park system for Saint Paul residents, while also developing a corridor that will serve a regional audience.

6. Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline. Development of this trail is expected in the longer term (more than 20 years). The acquisition portion of this project could be roughly estimated at \$7 million, however no formal cost estimates have been prepared for this corridor. Less acquisition would be necessary if portions of the trail could be constructed along existing right of way.



# Map P-3: Regional Trail Search Corridors







## Legislation Text

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**File #:** RES PH 19-128, **Version:** 1

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Adopting Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan. (Public hearing held May 15)

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statute Chapter 473.145 requires the Metropolitan Council to: 1) prepare a comprehensive development guide for the metropolitan area; and 2) adopt long-range comprehensive system plans for transportation, wastewater treatment, parks and water resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Council adopted *Thrive MSP 2040* as the region's comprehensive development guide in 2014; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy direction in *Thrive MSP 2040*, and the regional systems and policy plans that followed, guide local governments to create consistent, compatible and coordinated local comprehensive plans that together strive to achieve local visions within the regional policy framework; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statute Chapter 473 also requires all cities, counties and townships within the 7-county region to prepare a comprehensive plan every 10 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan is required to contain the following plan elements: land use, transportation, water resources, parks and trails, housing and implementation, but may also include other chapters relevant to a particular city; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan is required to show how each city will fulfill its role in the regional policy framework, and help ensure efficient and cost-effective regional infrastructure, in addition to guiding local physical development decisions and investments; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan is to have a 20-year planning horizon; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Saint Paul's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2010, with a planning horizon of 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff began working on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan in 2015, with significant public engagement in 2016 that reached over 2300 people at nearly 70 events; and

**WHEREAS**, public engagement, focus groups, Open Houses and even radio call-in shows helped identify priorities, themes, issues and ideas that shaped the Plan's contents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee of the Planning Commission oversaw the plan preparation process, guiding staff work, maintaining a city-wide perspective, and ensuring that the plan addresses the key issues and opportunities facing Saint Paul; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff regularly engaged the Transportation Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Heritage Preservation Commission, Mayor and City Council in framing issues and policies, providing feedback on draft policies and implementation strategies, and setting timelines and priorities for implementation; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Saint Paul requested and was granted an extension by the Metropolitan Council to submit its completed plan by June 30, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan has seven city-wide chapters: 1) Land Use; 2) Transportation, 3) Parks, Recreation and Open Space; 4) Housing; 5) Water Resources Management; 6) Heritage and Cultural Preservation; and 7) Implementation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan also has a Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area chapter, which pertains only to the Critical Area within Saint Paul city limits; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff sent a preliminary draft of the seven city-wide chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan to the Metropolitan Council and adjacent and affected jurisdictions in March 2018, met with all district councils from June-August 2018, and held two public open houses in June 2018 to get additional feedback; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff incorporated comments from all these parties into an official public hearing draft; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the seven city-wide chapters on January 11, 2019, and kept the public record open until January 14, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission made changes to the seven city-wide chapters in response to public comments; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission approved the amended city-wide chapters of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan* on March 22, 2019, and forwarded them to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration and approval prior to submittal to the Metropolitan Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council held a public hearing on the seven city-wide chapters on May 15, 2019, at which interested persons were heard.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Saint Paul City Council, based upon the foregoing, has considered and approved the seven city-wide chapters of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan* (Land Use; Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Housing; Water Resources Management; Heritage and Cultural Preservation; and Implementation) as required by Minnesota Statutes Section 473.864, Subd. 2, and hereby forwards them to the Metropolitan Council for its review.

## **Attachment 3b**

### **City of Saint Paul Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

#### **Hidden Falls Regional Park to Samuel Morgan Regional Trail / "Ford**

#### **Spur" Regional Trail Search Corridor**

# Regional Parks System Additions Application

**DATE:** April 22, 2020  
**TO:** Regional Parks System Implementing Agencies  
**FROM:** Community Development, Regional Parks and Natural Resources  
**SUBJECT:** 2019 - 2020 Systems Additions – *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* Amendment Process

Minnesota State Statute 473.147, subd. 1 states that the Metropolitan Council (Council) shall plan for the Regional Parks System. The updated *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* commits the Council to convene a region-wide discussion about system additions in 2019. To inform the discussion, please provide a separate response for each system addition proposal that addresses following topics:

- 1. System Addition Proposal:** Please describe the proposal, it's location, the proposed acreage or trail miles, and if applicable, partner arrangement. Please include an overview map of the proposal depicting the location in your agency's jurisdiction. If the proposal calls for converting an existing county or local park or trail to a regional park or trail; is a boundary adjustment for an existing regional park or park reserve; or is for a bridging facility, please also include a more detailed map depicting the location in the local jurisdiction(s) (e.g., city, township).
- 2. General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
- 3. Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.
- 4. Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.
- 5. Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).
- 6. Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

<sup>1</sup> *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, Updated November 2018

1. System Addition Proposal. A regional trail search corridor is proposed along the CP Rail spur leading to the Ford Site from the Samuel Morgan Trail along the Mississippi River in the neighborhoods southwest of Downtown Saint Paul. The corridor would connect the Hidden Falls unit of Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail. No current trail exists within the corridor.

The proposed corridor encompasses approximately 4.7 miles of trail. Exact segment length will depend on the final alignment that is chosen during the master planning process, particularly in how the trail crosses Shepard Rd to connect to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail.

A map from Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is attached showing the location of the proposed regional trail search corridor in relation to the regional parks and trails system within the city.

2. General Criteria. The proposed search corridor will be regionally significant and is consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP). The proposed search corridor meets all the requirements of a linking trail listed in Table 4-2 of the RPPP.

Both termini of the search corridor are near other implementing agency jurisdictions. The western end will be at the Mississippi River across from Minneapolis and both Mississippi Gorge Regional Park and Minnehaha Regional Park. The eastern end will be along the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail which connects to a major crossing of the Mississippi River at I-35E bringing significant usership from Dakota County residents.

The proposed search corridor supplements the regional trail system by providing direct connections between regional park units for users that avoids some of the challenging barrier crossings needed to reach portions of the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail and other trails along Shepard Rd in regional parks to the west. Except for a portion of the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail where this proposed corridor would connect to it, there are no existing or planned regional trails within 1.5 miles of this corridor. There are existing trails along Shepard Rd in Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park that are within 1.5 miles. However, these trails are separated from the proposed corridor by significant grade as well as Shepard Rd itself—a 4-lane, 50MPH road that functions as a feeder to I-35E. RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 provides an exception to the 1.5 mile separation requirement when trails are “separated by natural or human-built barriers.”

The proposed search corridor primarily will function as a linking trail connecting Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park and the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail, but it will also provide important connections to the local bikeways system. The corridor intersects with more than a dozen Major and Minor Bikeways identified in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan. Additionally, construction of the trail in this corridor would resolve four of the Tier 1/High Priority barriers identified in the Met Council's Regional Bicycle Barriers Study.

The proposed search corridor also provides significant connections to local destinations. Through its connection along the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail, the corridor increases access to Downtown Saint Paul, the city's greatest concentration of employment. Four schools and two libraries are also in close proximity to the trail corridor. The corridor also bisects the large Victoria Park that is currently being developed and its network of trails.

Consistent with RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 1, the proposed search corridor provides access to the Mississippi River in two very different settings—upstream in the river gorge and downstream in the river valley. By proposing this search corridor along an active rail line, future acquisition could be streamlined allowing quicker development as a regional trail as acknowledged in RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 which notes that “the availability of these [rail] corridors may offer excellent

opportunities for the regional trail system to expeditiously acquire links that would otherwise have to be assembled on a parcel-by-parcel basis.” The spur is currently inactive following the closure of the Ford Assembly Plant and is not expected to be reactivated.

3. Agency and Other Support. This corridor was studied in-depth by a team led by Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development. The study produced a report that would be the basis of a future master plan for the corridor. The proposed regional trail search corridor was also included in Saint Paul’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The plan was approved by the Saint Paul City Council on June 19, 2019. The resolution approving the plan is attached.

4. Public Participation. The planning process for the Ford Spur study included significant participation from the public. The study had a Technical Advisory Group and a Project Advisory Group that included stakeholders from other agencies, business groups, neighborhood organizations, and other nonprofit organizations. Three public open houses were held bringing in approximately 170 total attendees. The input received during this process shaped and refined design concepts for the corridor and identified support for a trail in this location.

More broadly, this search corridor was included in maps during the process of developing the City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The engagement process during plan development reached over 2,200 people and generated over 3,700 comments that shaped the final plan.

5. Regional Context. This proposed corridor fits within several outcomes including climate resilience, access to the regional park system, planning for future population growth, and strengthening equitable usage. Saint Paul’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies resiliency and sustainability as a core city value. Specific policies in the plan elaborate on implementing this value. Policy T-21 guides to “reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 40% by 2040 by improving transportation options beyond single-occupant vehicles.” Achieving this policy will require the development of the network of local and regional trails and bikeways to provide safe infrastructure for alternative modes of travel. This corridor will play a significant role in that system.

The proposed corridor will also integrate into the development of the Ford Site adjacent to Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park, one of the most significant opportunity sites for growth in the entire city. This 122-acre site will become home to up to 4000 new units of housing, 20% of which will be affordable units (10% at 30% AMI, 5% at 50% AMI, and 5% at 60% AMI). It is expected that housing on the site will also be particularly supportive for seniors. In addition to the addition of housing units, the site will contain commercial uses throughout, as well as local parkland. The direct connection of these residents to the trail, combined with this site being a destination for trail users outside the development, will make this future trail highly used.

At Victoria Park further to the east, planning and fundraising are underway for the development of the city’s first universally accessible play area. The play area itself is expected to draw use from outside Saint Paul. The addition of a regional trail adjacent to the play area will greatly expand regional trail access to users of all abilities.

Goal 5 of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter of Saint Paul’s 2040 Plan emphasizes “strong and accessible connections” to parks and trails. Policy PR-36 reinforces this by calling to “integrate parkways and trails with the city’s broader transportation network to provide convenient and safe access to the park system.” Policy PR-44 additionally calls to “support facility improvements that better connect neighborhoods to the Mississippi River.” This corridor will make these connections, providing better access to the regional park system for existing and future Saint Paul residents, while also developing a corridor that will serve a regional audience.



6. Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline. Development of this trail is expected in the medium term (11-20 years). However, segments of the trail may be developed in a shorter period of time. The acquisition portion of this project could be roughly estimated at \$5.8 million. Less acquisition would be necessary if portions of the trail could be constructed along existing right of way.

**Attachment 3c**

**City of Saint Paul Regional Parks System Addition Proposals**

**Grand Round - Lake Elmo Park Reserve Regional Trail Search Corridor**

# Regional Parks System Additions Application

**DATE:** April 22, 2020  
**TO:** Regional Parks System Implementing Agencies  
**FROM:** Community Development, Regional Parks and Natural Resources  
**SUBJECT:** 2019 - 2020 Systems Additions – *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* Amendment Process

Minnesota State Statute 473.147, subd. 1 states that the Metropolitan Council (Council) shall plan for the Regional Parks System. The updated *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* commits the Council to convene a region-wide discussion about system additions in 2019. To inform the discussion, please provide a separate response for each system addition proposal that addresses following topics:

1. **System Addition Proposal:** Please describe the proposal, it's location, the proposed acreage or trail miles, and if applicable, partner arrangement. Please include an overview map of the proposal depicting the location in your agency's jurisdiction. If the proposal calls for converting an existing county or local park or trail to a regional park or trail; is a boundary adjustment for an existing regional park or park reserve; or is for a bridging facility, please also include a more detailed map depicting the location in the local jurisdiction(s) (e.g., city, township).
2. **General Criteria:** Describe how the proposed Regional Park System addition is regionally significant and meets *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* criteria. Address the applicable general criteria (located in the tables 4-1 and 4-2, page 66) and applicable strategies in Chapter Four Siting and Acquisition of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
3. **Agency and Other Support:** Please provide your agency's board approvals, government partner support, and other partner support documents specific to this proposed system addition. Less formal letters of support from local government staff will also suffice.
4. **Public Participation:** Please describe the level of public input that has occurred specific to this proposed system addition and what was learned (if applicable). Input may have been gathered through a comprehensive plan update, the development of an agency system plan, public hearing or other avenues.
5. **Regional Context:** Describe how your proposal advances one or more *Thrive MSP 2040* or Regional Parks System outcomes including: planning for future population growth, expanding natural resource management, increasing climate resilience, balancing conservation with recreation, promoting access via trails and transit to local, state, and federal park lands, and strengthening equitable usage (Chapter Two of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, page 15).
6. **Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline:** Please provide a high-level funding estimate for anticipated acquisitions and the anticipated timeline for implementing this proposal (e.g., 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 20+ years). For acquisition estimates, please use \$256,750 per acre within the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) and \$36,950 per acre outside of the MUSA.<sup>1</sup> (Unless more location-specific acquisition cost information is known.)

<sup>1</sup> *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, Updated November 2018



1. System Addition Proposal. A regional trail search corridor is proposed parallel to Union Pacific Railroad's Altoona Subdivision. The trail extension would connect Lake Elmo Park Reserve to the intersection of Phalen Regional Park, the Bruce Vento Regional Trail, and the Grand Round North Regional Trail. No current trail exists within the corridor.

The proposed corridor encompasses approximately 6.8 miles of trail. Exact segment length will depend on the final alignment that is chosen during the master planning process. Portions of the trail would be within the City of Saint Paul, and portions within Ramsey and Washington Counties.

A map from Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan is attached showing the location of the proposed regional trail search corridor in relation to the regional parks and trails system within the city.

2. General Criteria. The proposed search corridor will be regionally significant and is consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP). The proposed search corridor meets all the requirements of a linking trail listed in Table 4-2 of the RPPP.

The proposed search corridor traverses three different implementing agency jurisdictions and consequently is expected to have high regional usage. Additionally, a portion of the trail corridor is already identified in the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network identified in the Transportation Policy Plan as a Tier 2 Corridor. Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 of the RPPP requires that "future regional trail proposals need to be evaluated within a comprehensive, region-wide framework, most notably within the context of the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network."

The proposed search corridor supplements the regional trail system by providing direct connections between regional park units that are currently unconnected by trails. There are very few planned or existing trails that even make an east-west connection between Ramsey and Washington County within the regional trail system. There are no existing or planned trails that parallel this proposed corridor. Streetlight traffic data show that a significant portion of the nonlocal visitation to Lake Elmo Park Reserve comes from the neighborhoods around Lake Phalen, so there is a demonstrated demand for access within this corridor already. This has the potential to greatly improve access to the regional park system.

The proposed search corridor primarily will function as a linking trail connecting Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Phalen-Keller Regional Park/Bruce Vento Regional Trail/Grand Round North Regional Trail. It will also provide important connections to the local trail systems, including potential connections to the Furness Pkwy Trail and the trails along McKnight Rd, Hadley Ave, and Ideal Ave. The corridor would also connect indirectly to the Gateway State Trail via the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.

Consistent with RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 1, the proposed search corridor provides access to major lakes—Lake Phalen on the west and Lake Elmo on the east. By proposing this search corridor along an active rail line, future acquisition could be streamlined allowing quicker development as a regional trail as acknowledged in RPPP Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4 which notes that "the availability of these [rail] corridors may offer excellent opportunities for the regional trail system to expeditiously acquire links that would otherwise have to be assembled on a parcel-by-parcel basis." This is made more likely as the Altoona Subdivision parallels less than ten miles away CP Rail's Withrow Subdivision/CN Rail's Minneapolis Subdivision between the Twin Cities and Eau Claire, and future rail consolidation could remove one of these lines from service.

3. Agency and Other Support. The proposed regional trail search corridor was included in Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The plan was approved by the Saint Paul City Council on June 19, 2019.

The resolution approving the plan is attached. Washington County is proposing a search corridor between these two parks as well. Ramsey County is supportive of the proposal.

4. Public Participation. There has not been public engagement for this corridor led by the City. This proposed search corridor instead originated from the community. During the engagement in developing the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, a neighborhood organization submitted a comment requesting this corridor be considered for inclusion in the regional trail system. The City of Saint Paul responded by adding the corridor to its Comprehensive Plan and is advancing the request through this system addition process.

5. Regional Context. The most significant regional context that this proposed corridor fits within is climate resilience and access to the regional park system. Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies resiliency and sustainability as a core city value. Specific policies in the plan elaborate on implementing this value. Policy T-21 guides to "reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 40% by 2040 by improving transportation options beyond single-occupant vehicles." Achieving this policy will require the development of the network of local and regional trails and bikeways to provide safe infrastructure for alternative modes of travel. This corridor will play a role in that system. As previously noted, there is significant amount of automotive traffic from the corridor area in Saint Paul to Lake Elmo Park Reserve. This trail could allow some of those car trips to be replaced with bicycling.

Goal 5 of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter of the 2040 Plan emphasizes "strong and accessible connections" to parks and trails. Policy PR-36 reinforces this by calling to "integrate parkways and trails with the city's broader transportation network to provide convenient and safe access to the park system." This corridor will provide better access to the regional park system for residents of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Washington County, and beyond.

6. Anticipated Funding Request and Timeline. Development of this trail is expected in the longer term (more than 20 years). The acquisition portion of this project could be roughly estimated at \$14 million, however no formal cost estimates have been prepared for this corridor. Less acquisition would be necessary if portions of the trail could be constructed along existing right of way. Acquisition expenses would be shared between the implementing agencies developing and operating this trail.