

Business Item 2021-206

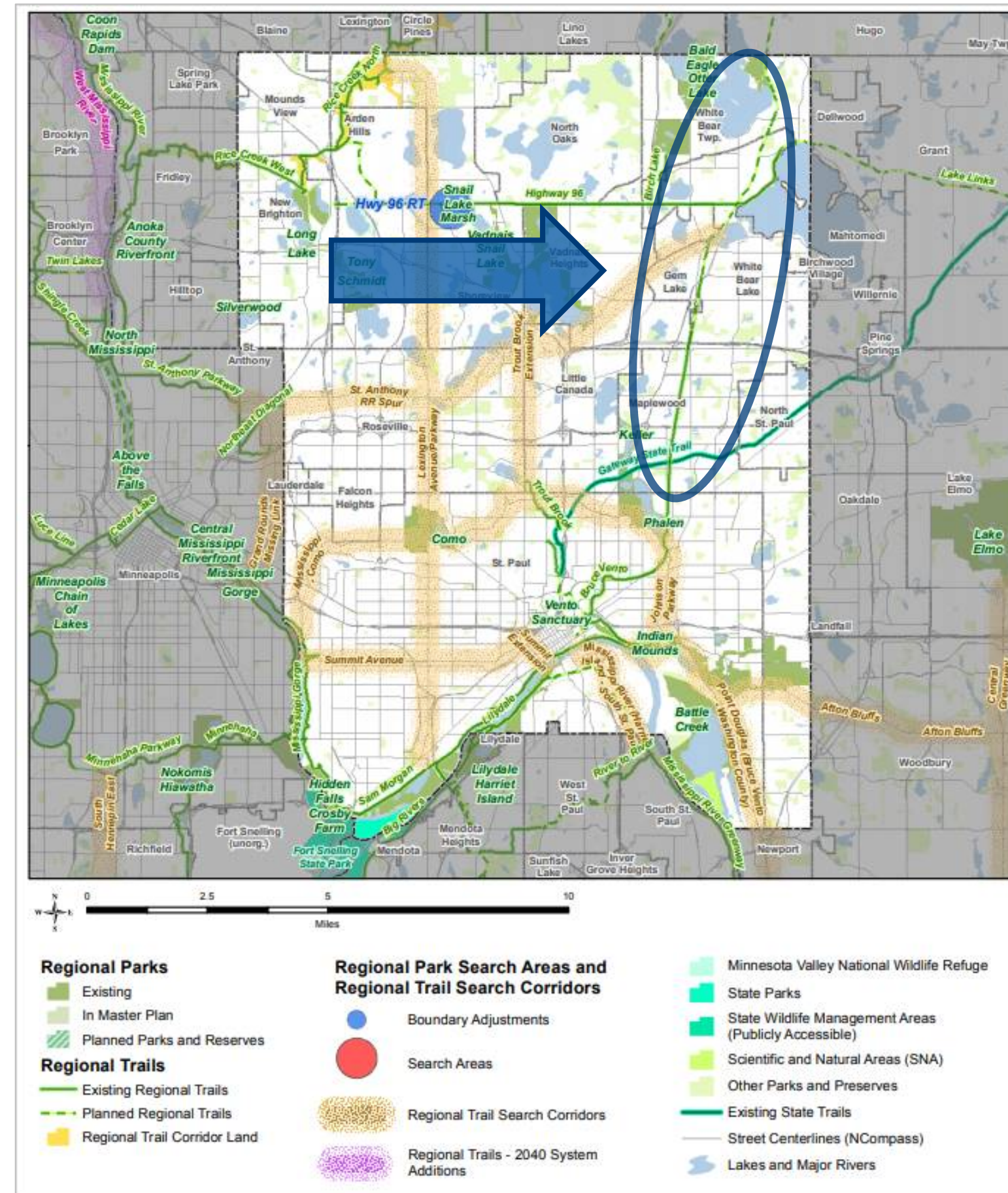
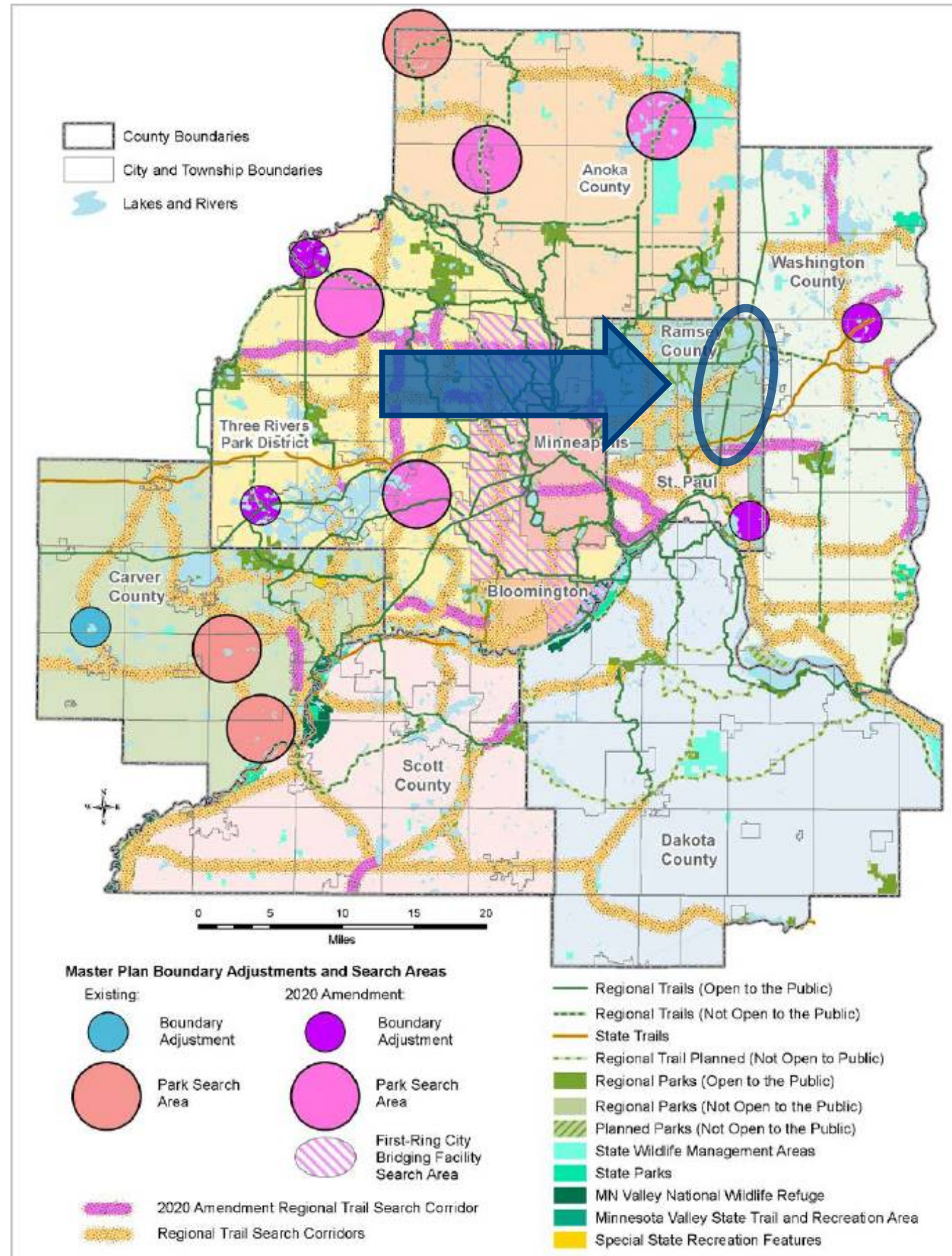
Bruce Vento Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment Ramsey County

August 5, 2021

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Bruce Vento Regional Trail (Ramsey County)



Public Engagement

Segments 2B, 2C

- Coordinated engagement activities with Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project staff
- Project team strived to connect with historically underrepresented communities living and working near the trail corridor, and prioritized events to attend using the following criteria:
 - Equity
 - Inclusivity
 - Maximizing voices heard
 - Geographic representation

Segments 3 and 4

- Two initial public open houses in May 2016
- Planning study initiated in 2018 to refine alternative regional trail alignment corridors, included two engagement meetings in Oct.
- Final open house meeting in 2019 informed the preferred and alternative alignments



Bruce Vento Regional Trail
HIGHWAY 96 TO COUNTY ROAD J EXTENSION

Community Engagement Meetings

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is initiating a planning study to refine alternative regional trail alignment corridors out of the rail right-of-way. This process will find one preferred trail alignment for the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.

OCTOBER 4 6 - 8 p.m. <i>Present proposed corridors for public input.</i>	OCTOBER 25 6 - 8 p.m. <i>Present refined corridor from first meeting and gain additional public input.</i>
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Meeting Location:
WHITE BEAR LAKE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
4701 Highway 61, White Bear Lake, MN 55110

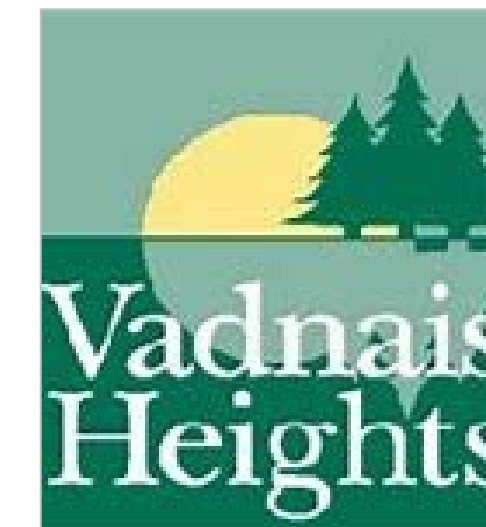
RAMSEY COUNTY
Parks & Recreation



Partner Engagement

Overall

- Cities of Saint Paul, Maplewood, White Bear Lake, and Vadnais Heights
- White Bear Township
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources



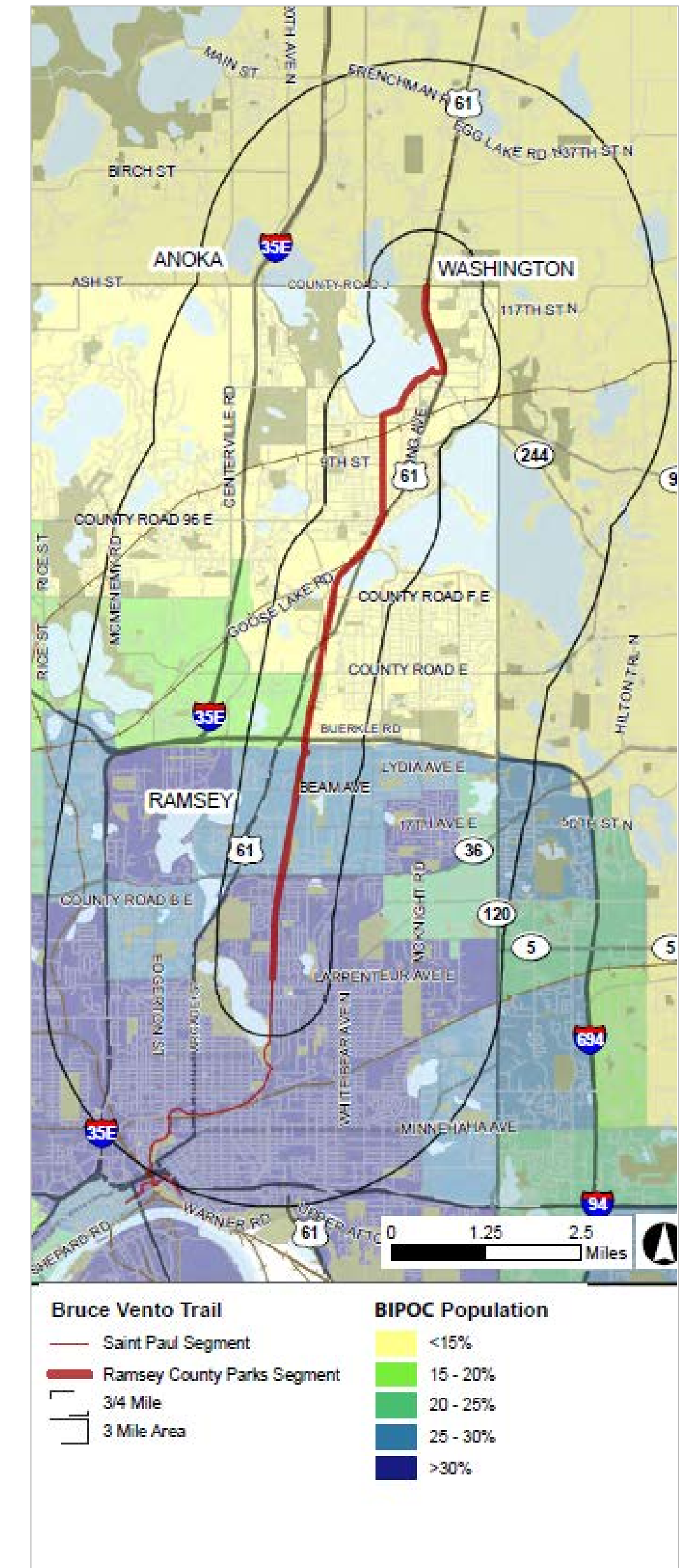
Segment 3 Specific

- Cities of White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights
- White Bear Township
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF)
- Ramsey County Public Works
- Rush Line Leadership



Equity Analysis

- The project included multiple rounds of community engagement to ensure the future trail alignment will best meet the needs of the communities it seeks to serve.
- The outcomes of engagement were accessible to the public and published on Ramsey County's website to generate transparency in the planning process.
- The regional trail benefits people with low-incomes; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); populations with disabilities; youth; and elders by providing a safe, multi-use trail that connects housing, shopping, schools, jobs, services, and transit facilities.
- Because the trail is directly linked to Rush Line BRT, the trail will provide enhanced transit access to communities and businesses in job centers around Frost Avenue, Highway 36, Interstate 694, Buerkle Road, and near Maplewood Mall, as well as to residential areas to the north and south.

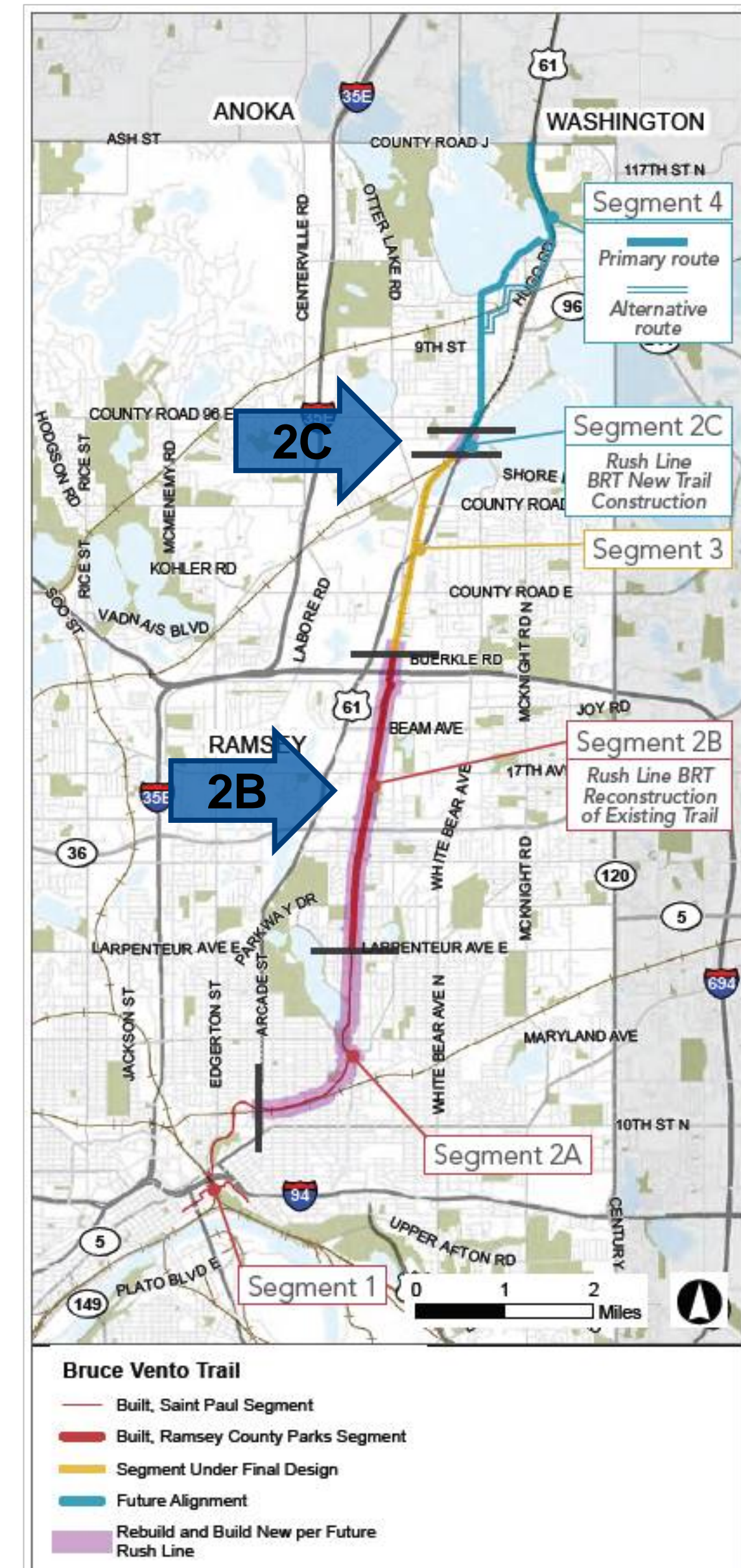
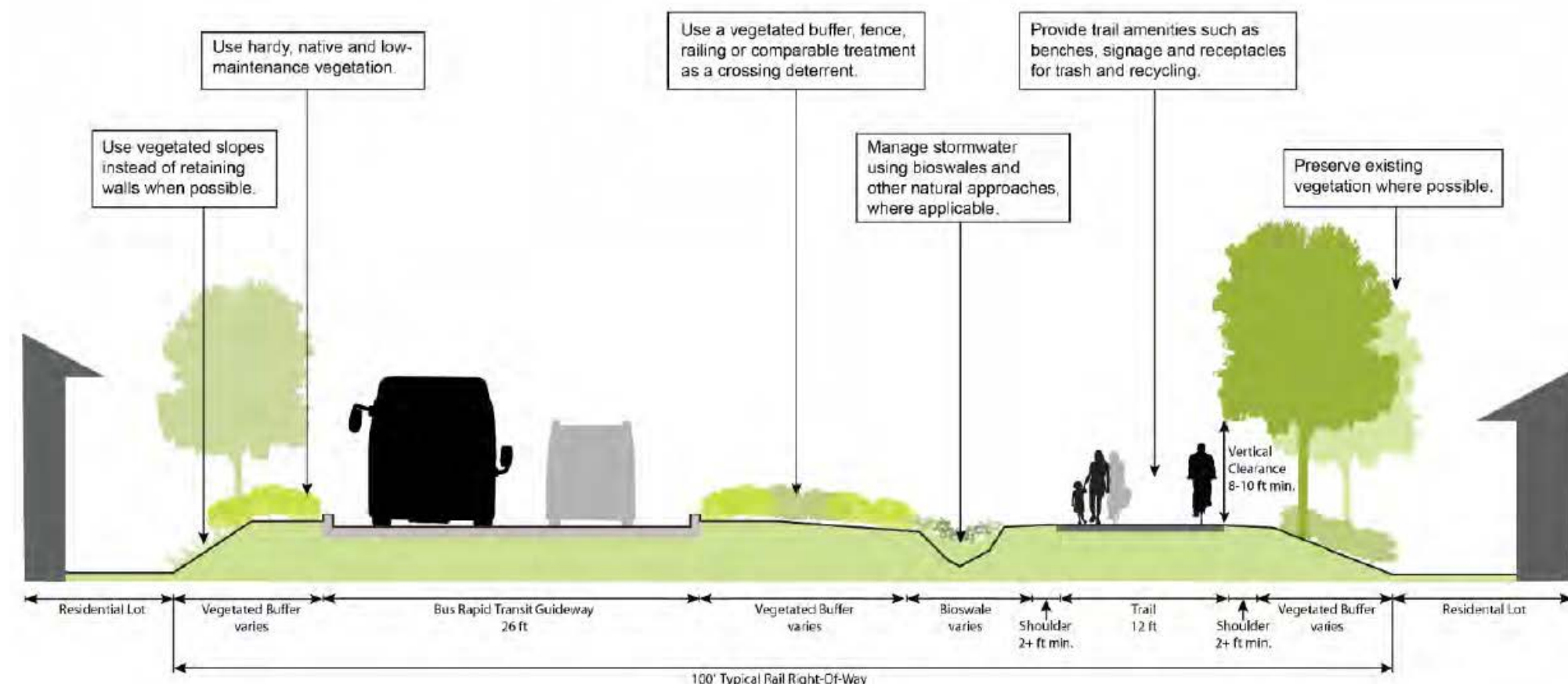


Development Concept

1. Rush Line Collaboration (Segments 2B, 2C)
2. Buerkle Road to White Bear Avenue Extension (Segment 3)
3. Future Extension (Segment 4)

Rush Line Collaboration (Segments 2B, 2C)

- From Larpenteur Ave to Buerkle Rd (Segment 2B), the trail will be reconstructed and realigned.
- From Whitaker St to White Bear Ave (Segment 2C), a BRT station will be constructed along a short segment of new trail.
- Reconstructed trail segments will provide access to adjacent BRT stations including updated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) infrastructure.



Development Concept *continued*

Buerkle Road to White Bear Avenue Extension (Segment 3)

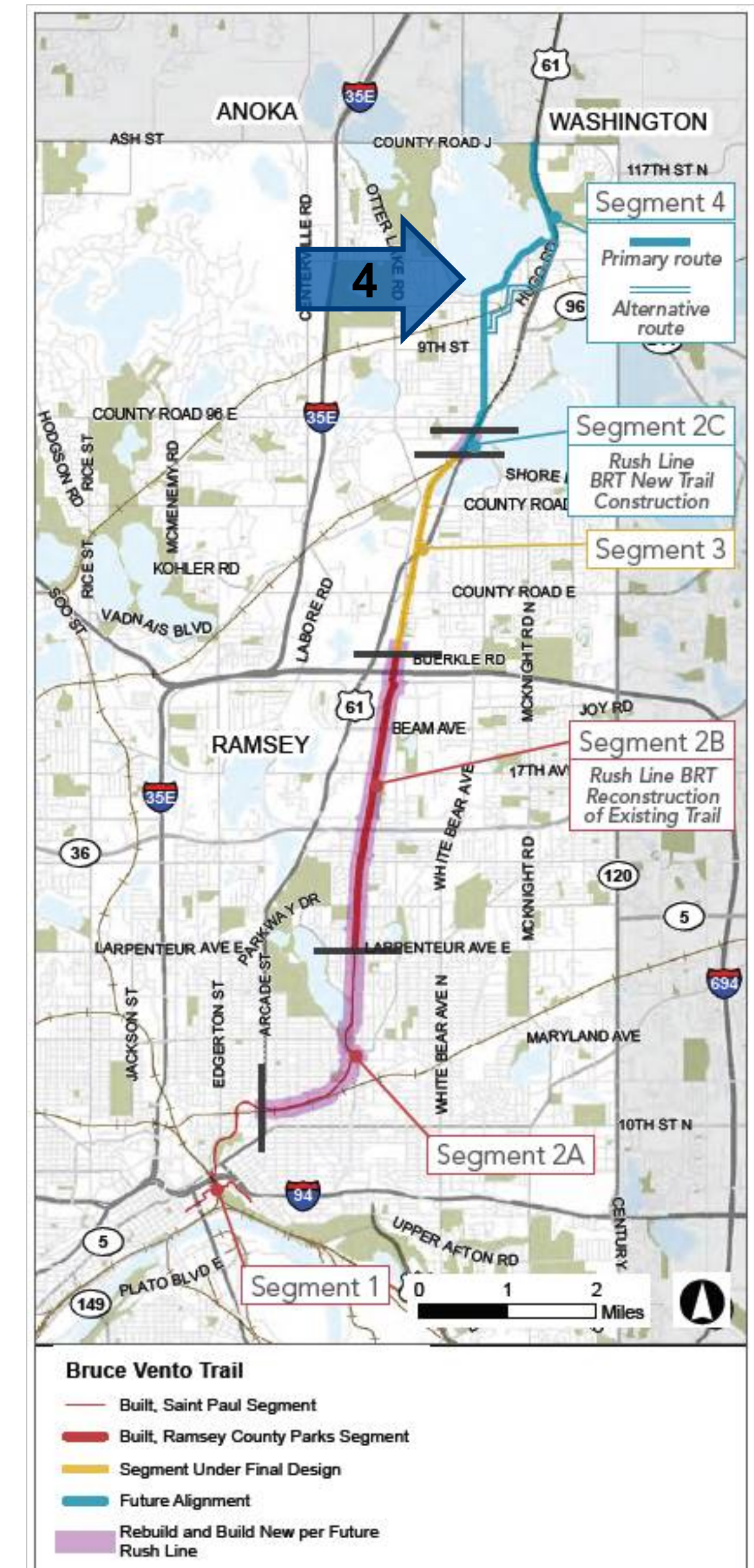
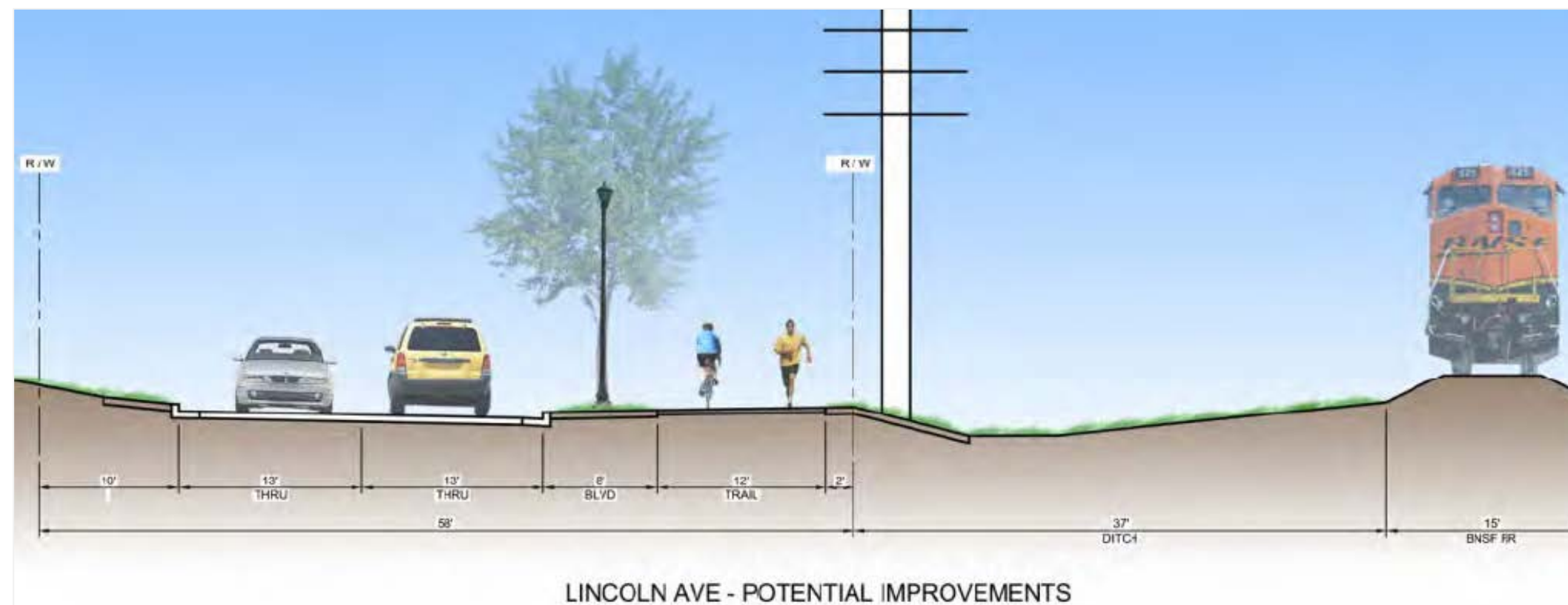
- The first of two segments to eliminate nearly half of the remaining six-mile trail gap in the regional trail system.
- Segment 3 is a 2.7-mile segment being designed and constructed separately from the Rush Line BRT project.
- Detailed design work has been completed. This segment is planned for construction in 2024 or 2025.
- Proposed trail will use approximately 0.5 miles of existing BNSF railway right-of-way with remainder in Ramsey County right-of-way.
- Trail amenities include wayfinding, rest areas with benches and trash receptacles, landscaping for buffers, and vegetation replacement.
- Efforts were made to provide a trail that meets ADA goals, reduces impacts to vegetation, provides diverse trail experiences, and provides opportunities to improve adjacent community infrastructure like drainage.



Development Concept *continued again*

Future Extension (Segment 4)

- Ramsey County is currently planning the second of two segments to eliminate the six-mile trail gap in the regional trail system. This segment extends from Whitaker Street in White Bear Lake to County Road J.
- Between Whitaker Street and Highway 96, the trail is planned to be within Lincoln Avenue right-of-way and adjacent to the BNSF rail corridor.
- Between Highway 96 and County Road J, eight different routes and alignments were studied over a two-year period.
 - No feasible solutions for locating the trail within the BNSF right-of-way or Highway 61 corridor.
 - “Route 1” was determined as the preferred route.
- Funding has not been secured for the implementation of Segment 4



Estimated Project Costs

- The total estimated cost of acquisitions in Segments 3 and 4 of the regional trail is between \$71,000 and \$421,000.
 - The variability in this estimate is because the final alignment of Segment 4 has not yet been established.
- The total estimated cost associated with the construction and maintenance of Segments 3 and 4 is \$15,810,000.
- The total estimated annual operating budget is \$64,400.
- Altogether, the total estimated cost associated with this master plan amendment is between \$15,945,400 and \$16,295,400.
- Approval of master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time.



Rationale for Proposed Action

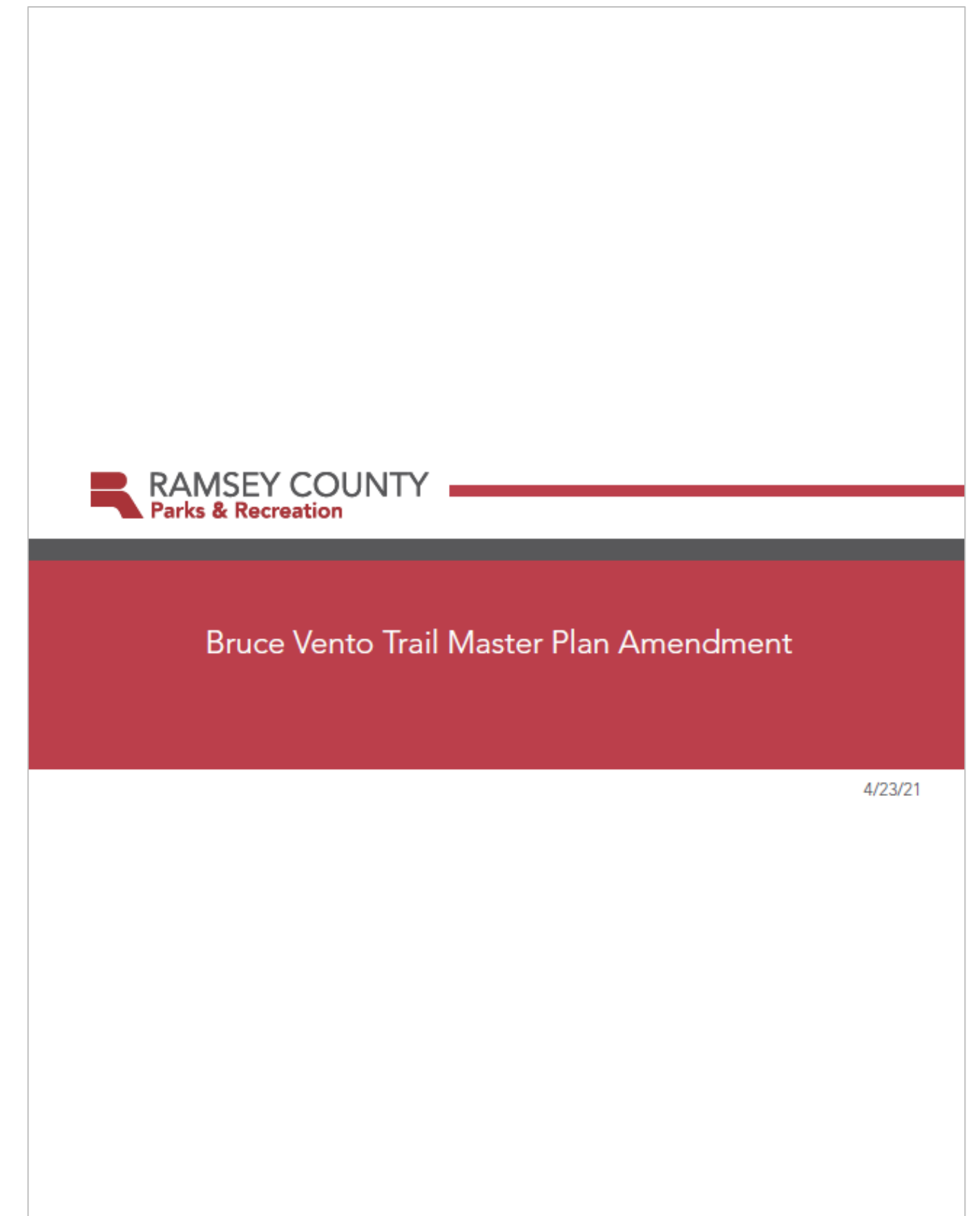
- The Bruce Vento Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment is consistent with the requirements of the:
 - *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*
 - Planning Strategy 1
 - Other Council policies



Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve Ramsey County's Bruce Vento Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment.
2. Inform Ramsey County that, when Segment 4 alignments have been finalized, it must submit a future master plan amendment to update regional trail boundaries and acquisition costs.
3. Require Ramsey County, prior to initiating any new development of the regional trail corridor, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division Assistant Manager.



Thank you

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