

# Regional Park System 2020 Bonding Program Overview and Equity Highlights

Regional Park Implementing Agency Presentations

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Meeting

September 5, 2019



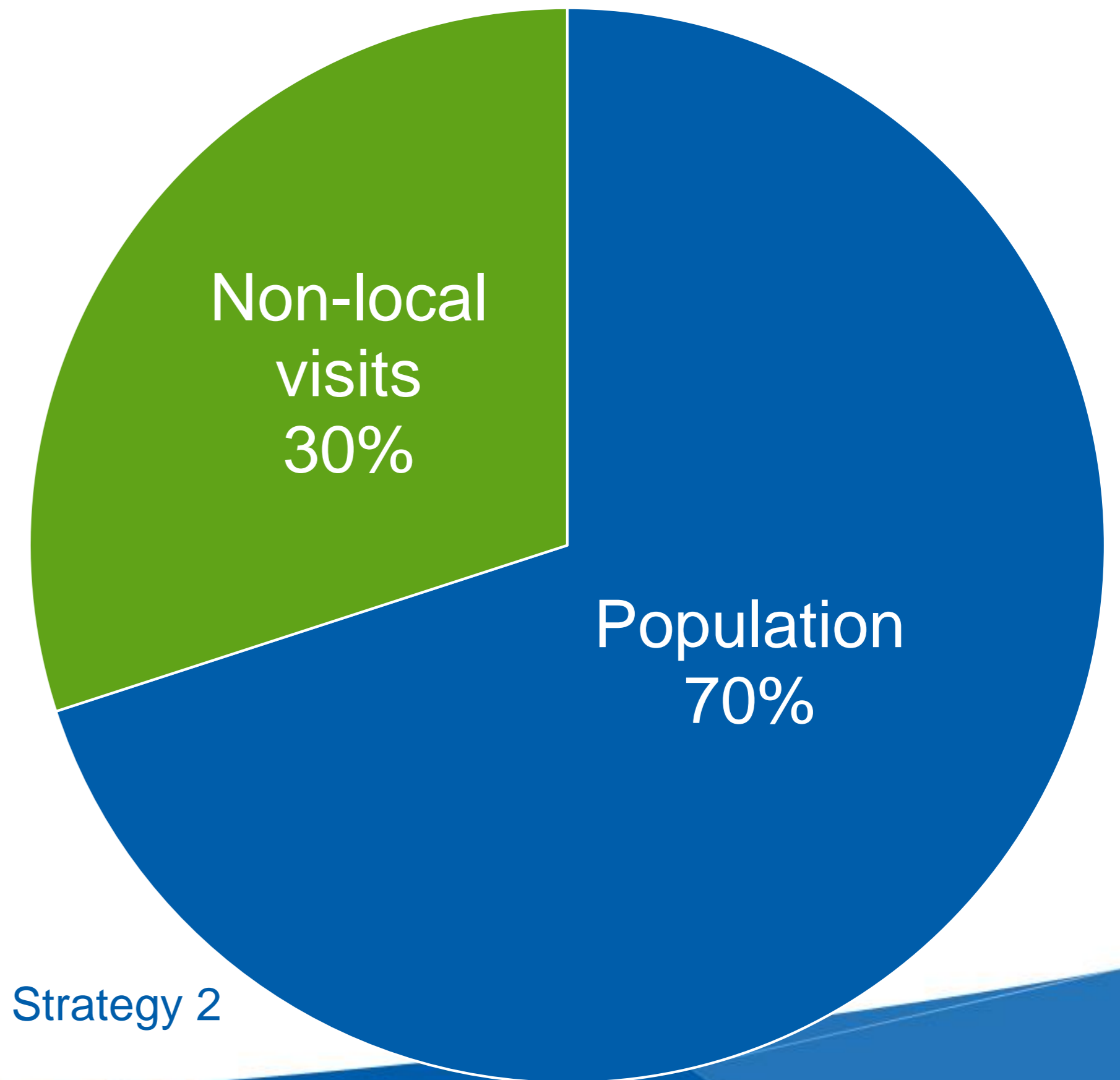
# Regional Park System grant programs

<b>Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding Source</li><li>• Distribution Methodology</li></ul>
<b>Bonding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State matched by Council bonds</li><li>• Formula</li></ul>
<b>Parks &amp; Trails Legacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State</li><li>• Formula</li></ul>
<b>Operations &amp; Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State</li><li>• Formula</li></ul>
<b>Park Acquisition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State matched by Council bonds</li><li>• 1<sup>st</sup> come, 1<sup>st</sup> served</li></ul>
<b>Equity Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council bonds</li><li>• Competitive</li></ul>

- By statute, the Council can give Regional Parks funding only to the Regional Park Implementing Agencies
- Three of the funding sources are formula-driven:
  - Operations and Maintenance funding
  - Parks and Trails Legacy Fund
  - Regional Parks Bonding program

# Regional Parks Bonding Program

- Legislatively-appropriated state general obligation bonds for capital purposes (i.e., development, rehabilitation and restoration)
- The Council matches every \$3 of state bonds with \$2 of regional park bonds
- Formula distribution



\* Policy Reference: Minnesota Statutes 473.325 and Regional Parks Policy Plan Chapter 8, Strategy 2

# Equity Highlights

- One of the goals of our Bonding Program is to work in partnership with the ten Regional Park Implementing Agencies, to use our collective influence and investments to advance the equitable use of the Regional Parks System.
- Each of the agencies have completed the equity toolkit for each of their proposed projects. They will include some of these highlights in their presentations this afternoon.
- Projects included in the Bonding Program must be used on capital investments.
- The Bonding Program is just one funding tool we have to advance equity in the region.

# Proposed Bonding Program for 2020

\$15 million proposed State Bonding Program - Request to Governor's Office

\$10 million Council Bond Match

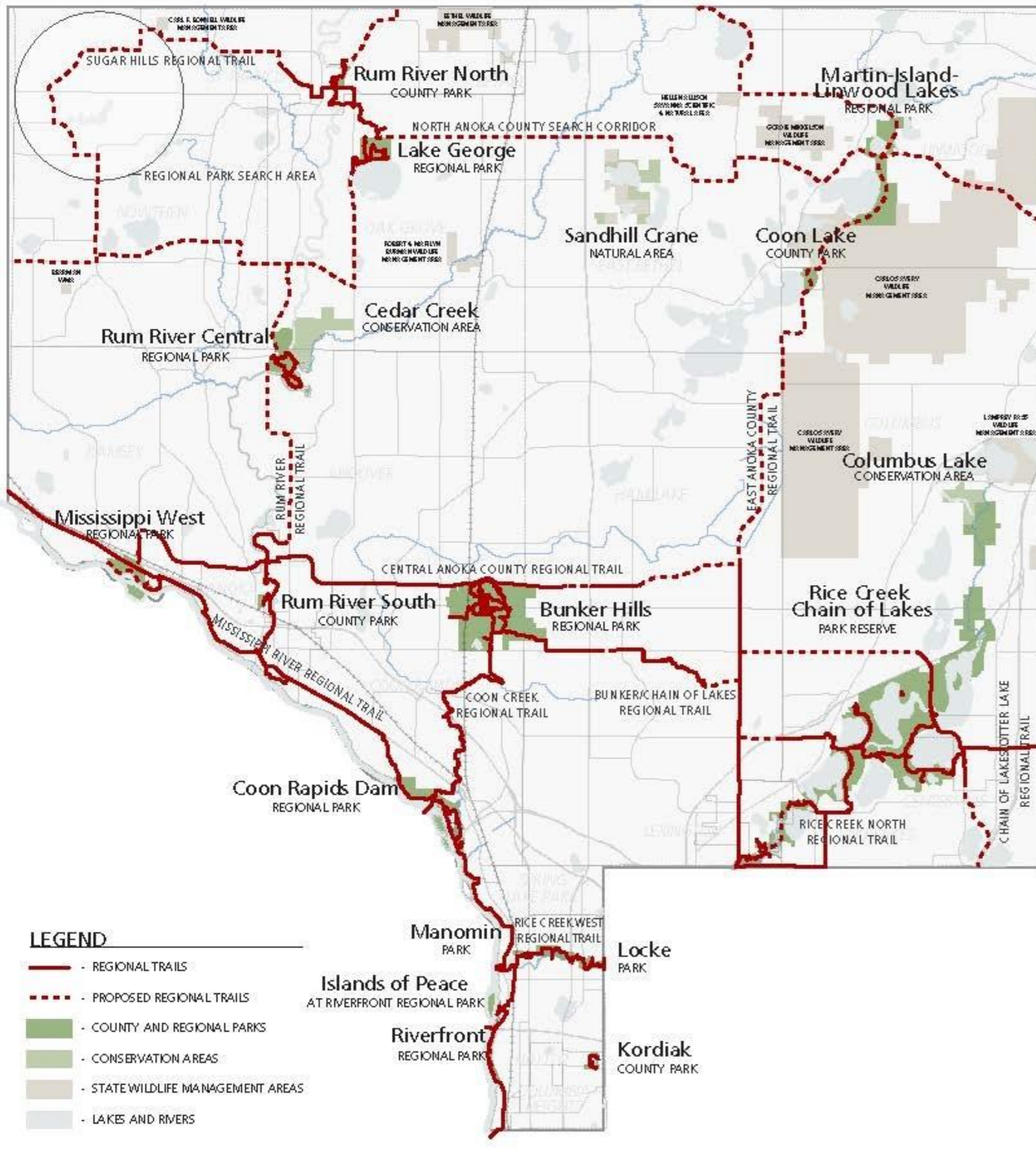
**\$25 million total proposed 2020 Bonding Program**

## Purpose of Today's Information Item

- Share 2020 Bonding Program, which is part of the Council's 5-year Capital Program
- Invite agencies to share Equity Highlights and proposed bonding projects
- Recognize that the Regional Parks Bonding Program is one of the ways we address equity

# ANOKA COUNTY

- 50 years old, first county park system established in the state.
- Varied landscapes



- Partnerships

- Engagement to create awareness of park system

- Removing barriers to use



# Highlights of Communities you are trying to better serve



- Age and ability are two of the communities Anoka County is trying to better serve with this round of funding.
  - 2 of the projects remove barriers and create safer access in areas where senior housing is nearby; seniors and children make up 35% of the population and people with disabilities make up 7-9% of the population.
  - 1 project provides easy access to regional parks for age, ability, and populations with a lower median household income of \$49,000.
  - 2 of the projects fill gaps in the regional trail system where children and seniors make up 42% of the population and 14% are people with disabilities.
- Foreign-born and lower income population segments are also served by two of the trail projects that fill gaps. These projects also provide access for the Anoka Hennepin Regional High School and a senior care center.

# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

- Fundamental change in service philosophy.
  - Engaging non-users to create awareness and invite participation.
  - Focus on targeting specific communities for input.
  - From core user groups to creating new core users.



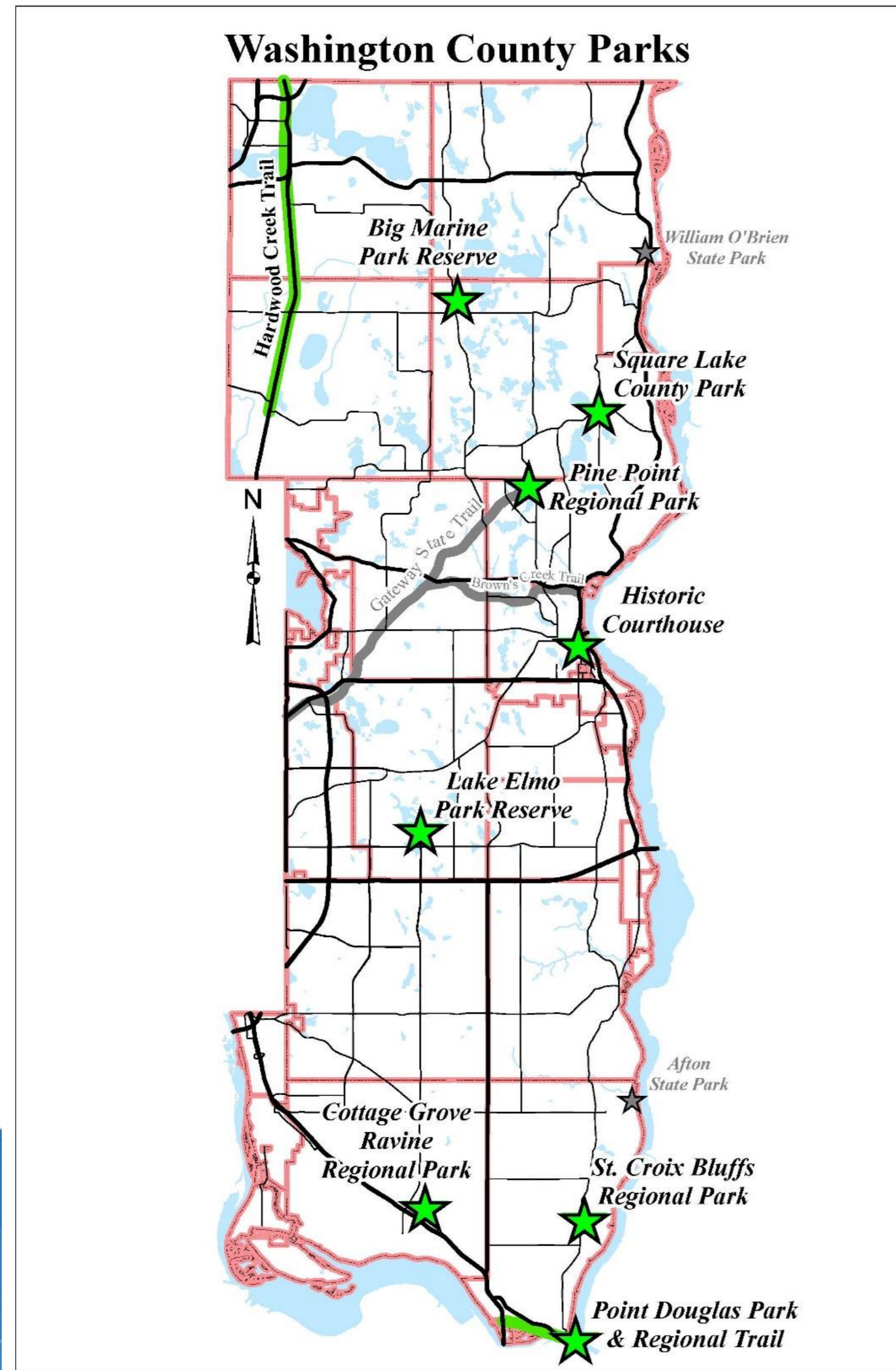
- Larger focus on connections; connecting parks/facilities/trails, safe routes to school, safe trail crossings and educating people about it.





Anoka County Projects	Total Allocation: \$2,460,000
Project Title and Description	Equity Toolkit
<p><b>Central Anoka County RT, Andover Pedestrian Tunnel Construction</b> (Reimbursement): Design, engineering, and construction of a pedestrian tunnel that connects/links the regional trail to Bunker Hills Regional Park in the City of Andover</p>	Ability, Age
<p><b>Central Anoka County RT, Overpass Construction</b> (Reimbursement): Design, engineering and construction of a pedestrian bridge over 35W that connects NE Lino Lakes to Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve and Wargo Nature Center.</p>	Ability, Age
<p><b>Coon Creek RT, Egret Blvd Trail Construction</b> (Reimbursement): Design, engineering and construction of 2000LF of paved trail in City of Coon Rapids</p>	Age, Foreign born, Income, National Origin, Ability
<p><b>Coon Creek RT, Coon Rapids Blvd Trail Construction:</b> Design, engineering, and construction of 2100LF of paved trail in City of Coon Rapids.</p>	Age, Foreign born, Income, National Origin, Ability
<p><b>Mississippi River RT, Anoka/Ramsey Trail Construction</b> (Reimbursement): Design, engineering and construction of regional trail from City of Anoka’s Mississippi Community Park to Mississippi West Regional Park in the City of Ramsey.</p>	Age, National Origin, Ability
<p><b>Riverfront Regional Park, New Maintenance Facility:</b> Design, engineering and construction of a new maintenance facility at Riverfront Regional Park.</p>	N/A

# Introducing Washington County



## Existing

- 3 Regional Parks
- 2 Park Reserves
- 2 Regional Trails
- 1 Spec Rec. Feature



## Total:

- ~ 4,500 acres
- ~ 1.7 million visitors

## Planned

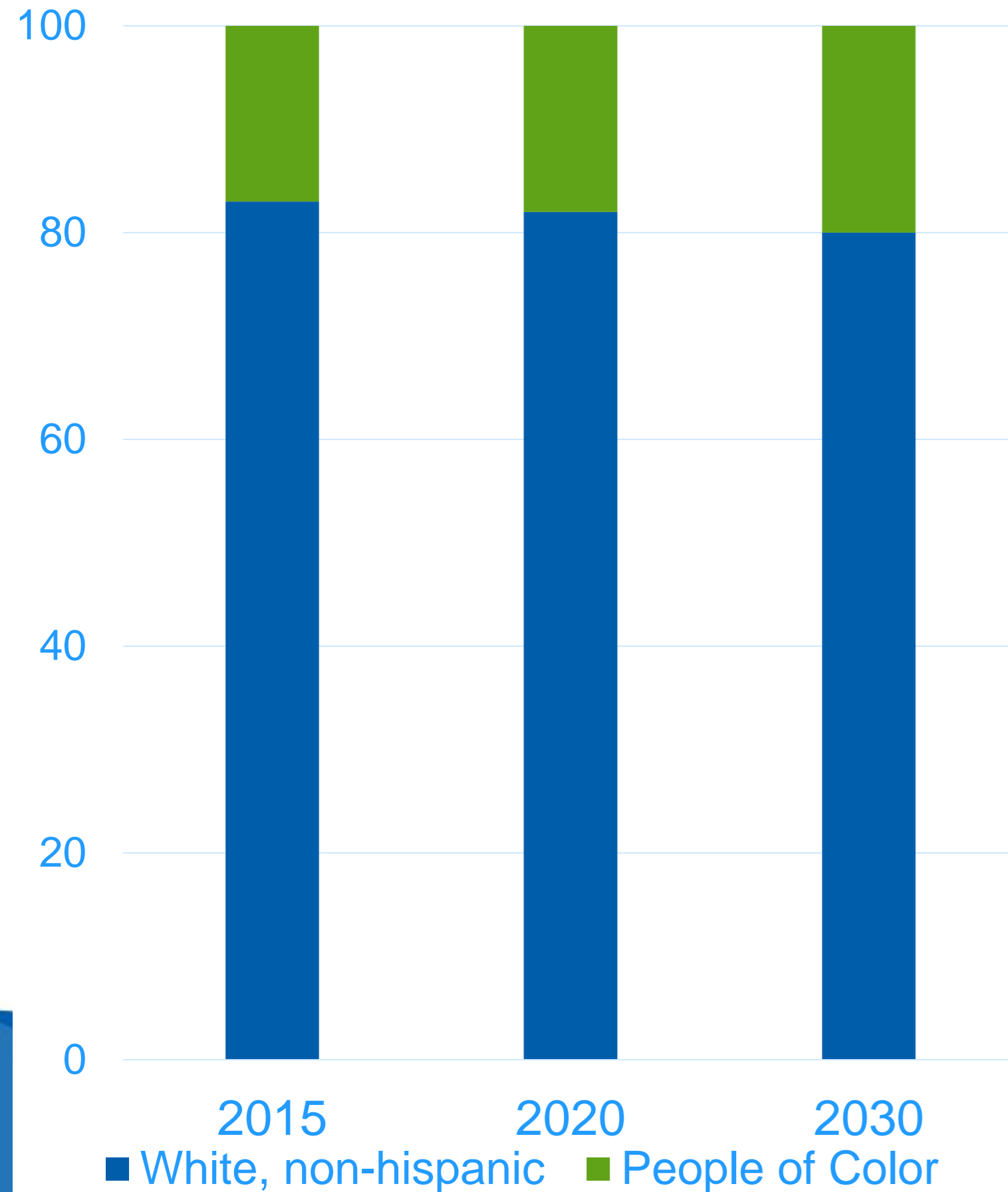
- 1 Regional Park
- 3 Regional Trails

## Search Corridors

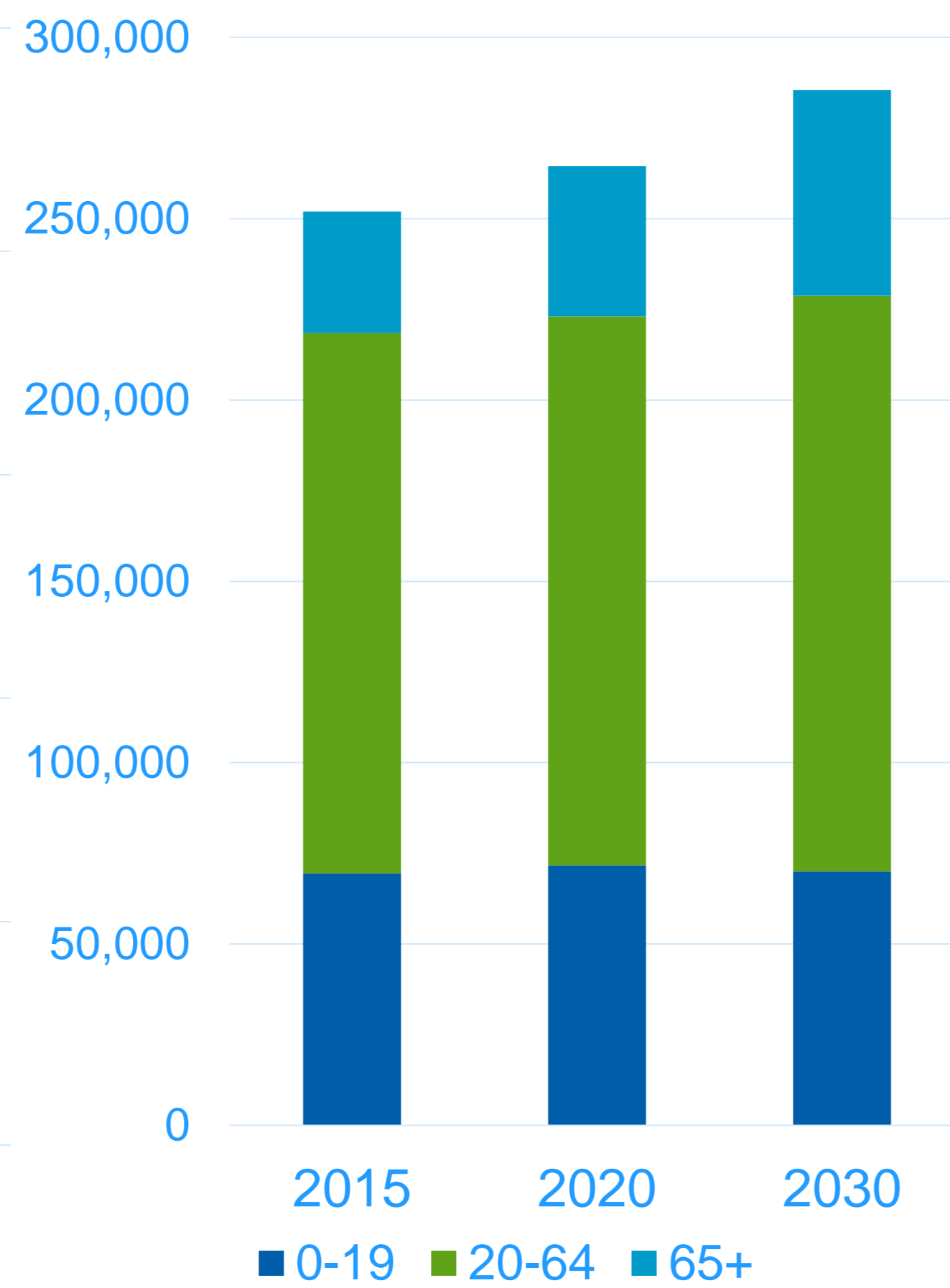
- 5 Regional Trails

# Highlights of Communities you are trying to better serve

County % Race/Ethnicity



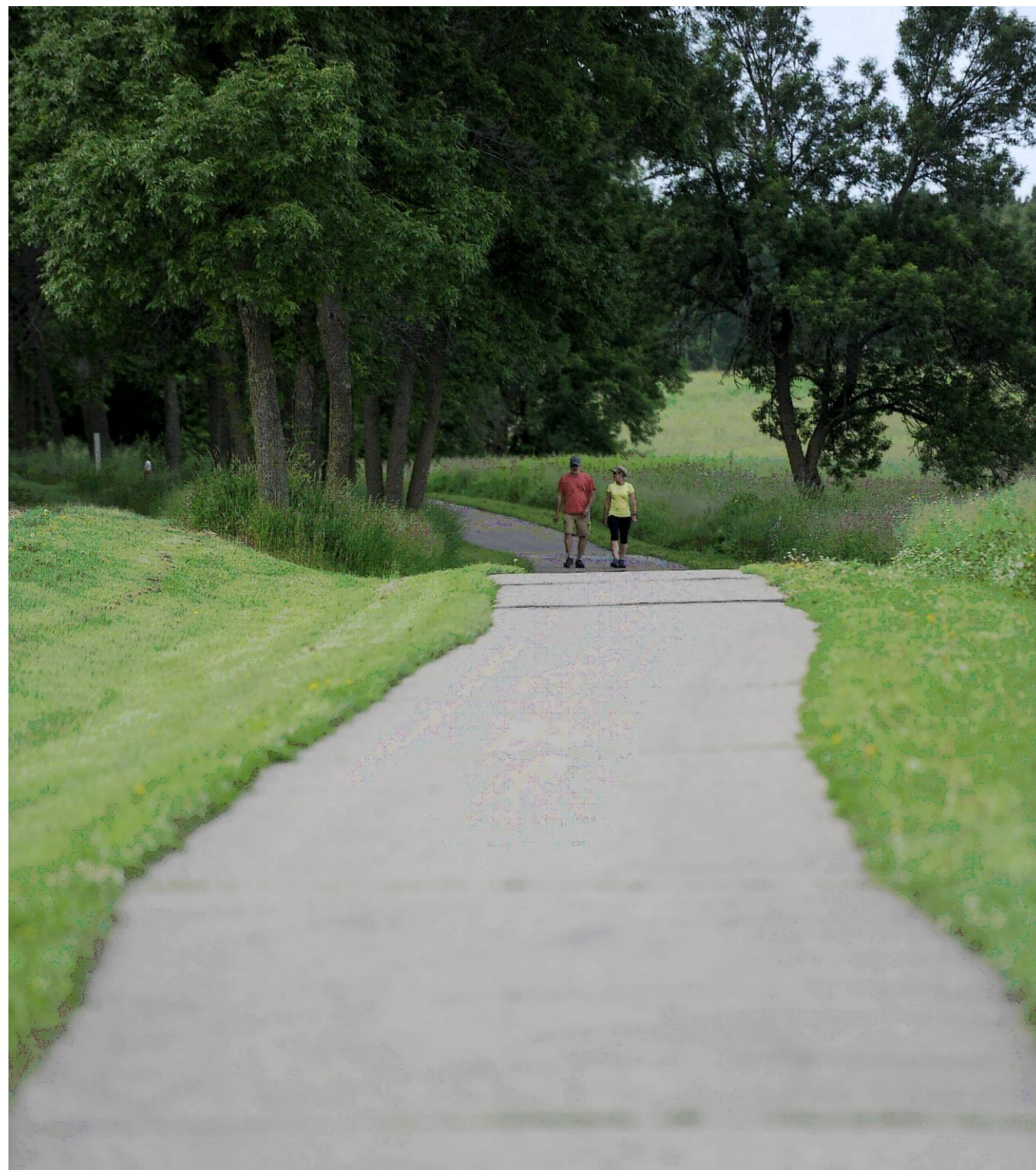
County Age Population



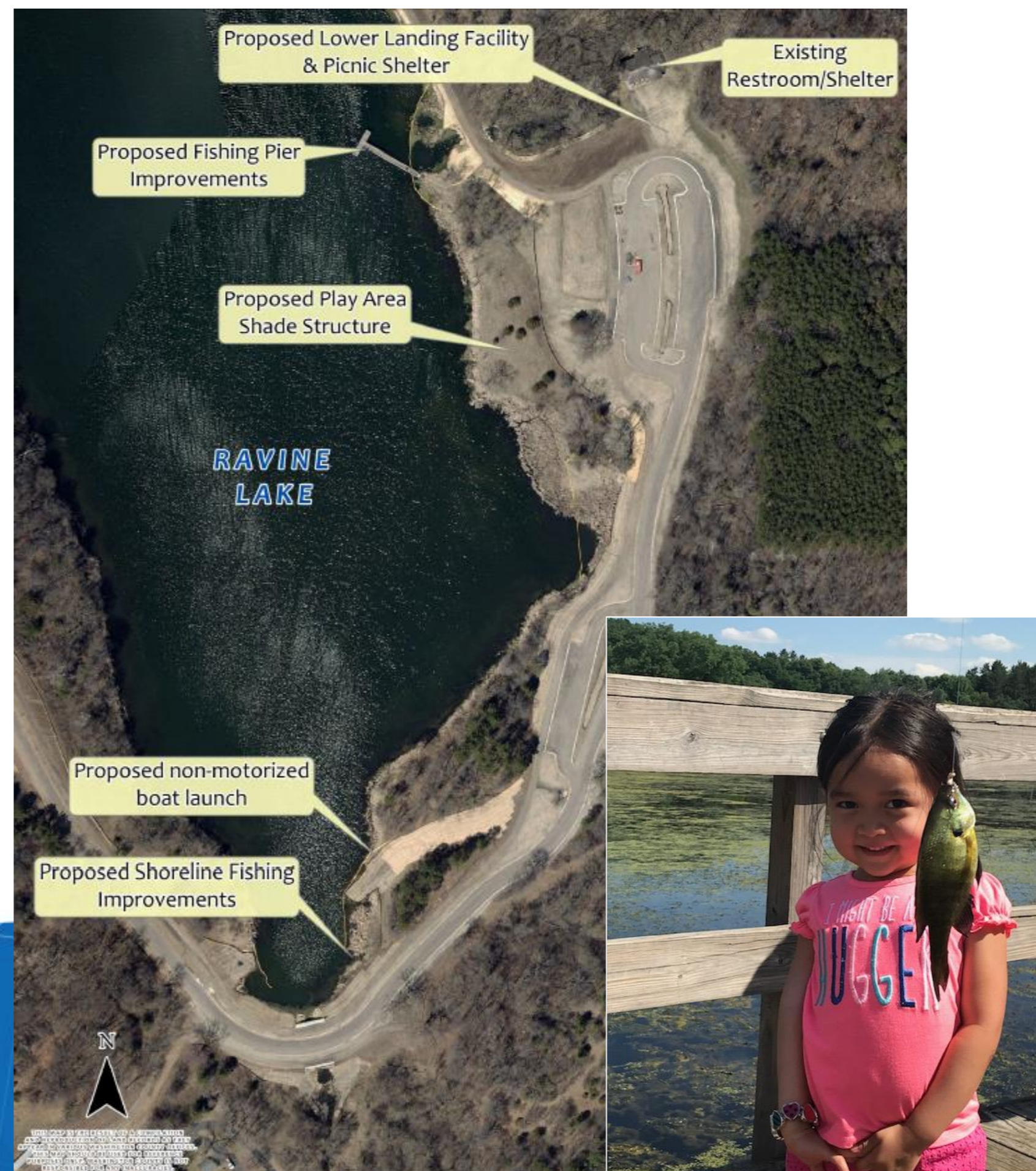
# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

Cen. Greenway RT & LEPR



CG Ravine RP Lower Landing



Pt Douglas RT Trailhead



**Washington County Projects**

**Total Allocation:  
\$1,610,189**

**Project Title and Description**

**Equity Toolkit**

**Central Greenway Reg. Trail and Lake Elmo Park Reserve - Trail Improvements**

Ability

**Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park - Lower Landing Facility**

Ability, Race

**Point Douglas Regional Trail - Trailhead Improvements**

Ability



# Three Rivers Park District



## ***Protecting the last best places:***

*~27,000 acres protected in perpetuity*



## ***Engaging New Visitors:***

*Environmental Ed, Recreation Programming, Community Outreach:  
\$8 million annual operational investment, 25 % of all FTE's.*

The Mission of the Park District is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system

# Silverwood's Success: Lessons Learned



# Proximity is important



## Three Rivers First Tier Initiative



### Regional Trails

- Twin Lakes
- Crystal Lake
- Bassett Creek
- Nine Mile
- Nokomis-Mn River

### Bridging Facilities

- Centennial Park
- MAC Nature Area
- Sochacki Park
- Schaper Park
- Taft Park

### Community Outreach

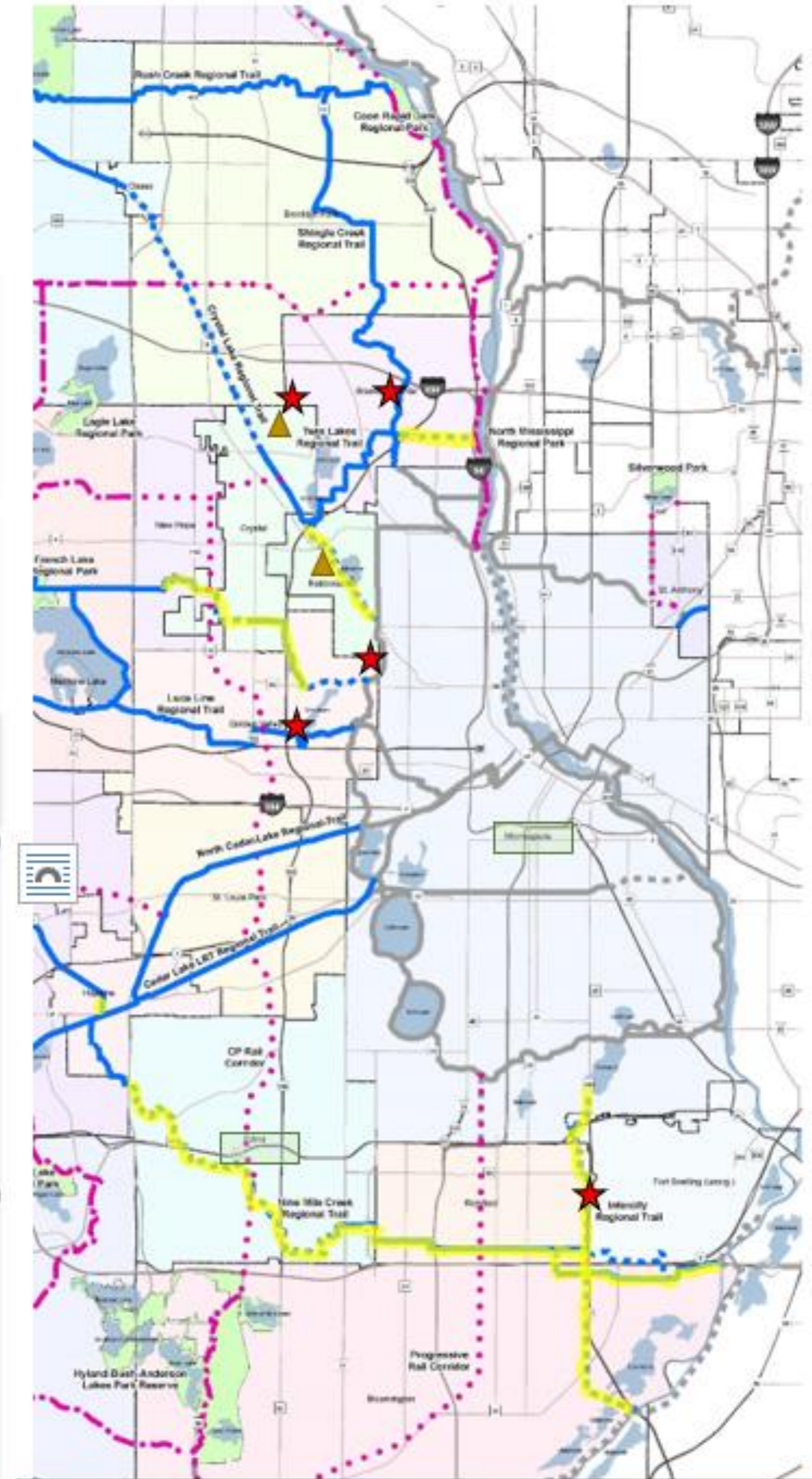
- 146 Parks on the Go Events in 2018
- 6 days of Parks Expo events
- 18 Explorer camps

### Educational Outreach

- 332 programs in 2018 at local parks and schools

### Community Partners

- AARP
- AVIVO
- Beth El Synagogue
- Bloomington Schools Office of Educational Equity
- Brooklyn Center Community Schools
- Cities of Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Edina, Golden Valley, Hopkins, New Hope, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony, St. Louis Park
- CEAP (Community Emergency Assistance Program)
- Dar Al-Farooq Community Center
- Girl Scouts of River Valley, Hmong Initiative
- Hennepin Tech
- Metro North ABE (Adult Basic Education)
- Success Academy
- Zanewood Recreation Center



### Measuring Success:

First-Tier Household visitation to Three Rivers Parks and Trails increased from 45 % in 2013 to 75 % in 2018



**Three Rivers Projects**

**Total Allocation:  
\$5,405,277**

**Project Title and Description**

**Equity Toolkit**

Silverwood Special Recreation Feature- Partial Acquisition Reimbursement

Age, Race, Ethnicity,  
Income

Baker Park Reserve- Campground Electrical Upgrades

Age, Race, Ethnicity,  
Ability

Baker Park Reserve- New Shower Building

Ability

Gale Woods SRF and Crow-Hassan PR- Solar Roof Installations

N/A

Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail- Overpass Reconstruction

N/A

Lake Independence Regional Trail Resurfacing

N/A

Luce Line Regional Trail- Boardwalk Redecking

N/A

Eagle Lake Regional Park- Road and Parking Lot Mill and Overlay

N/A

Baker Park Reserve- Roads and Parking Lots Pavement Management

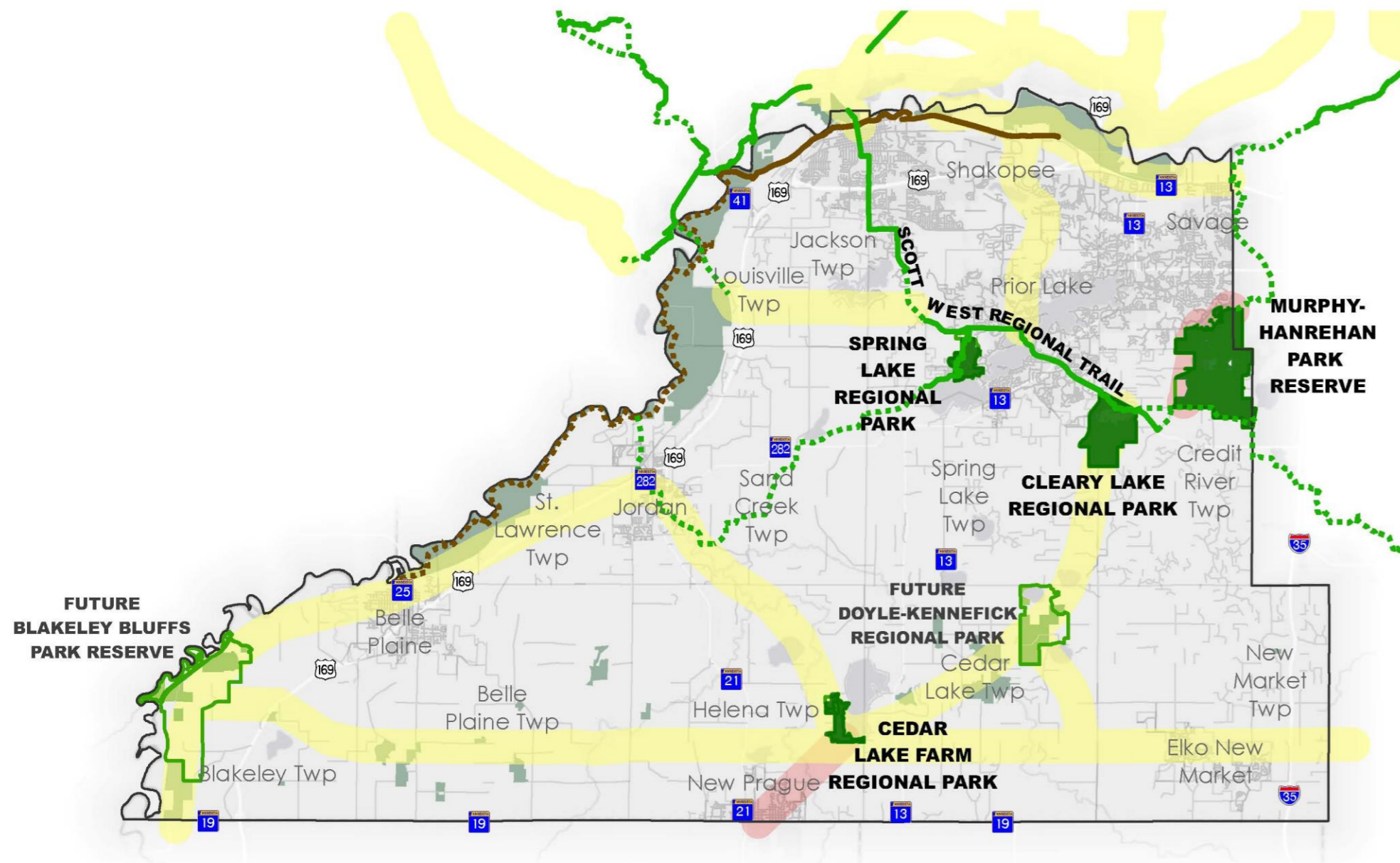
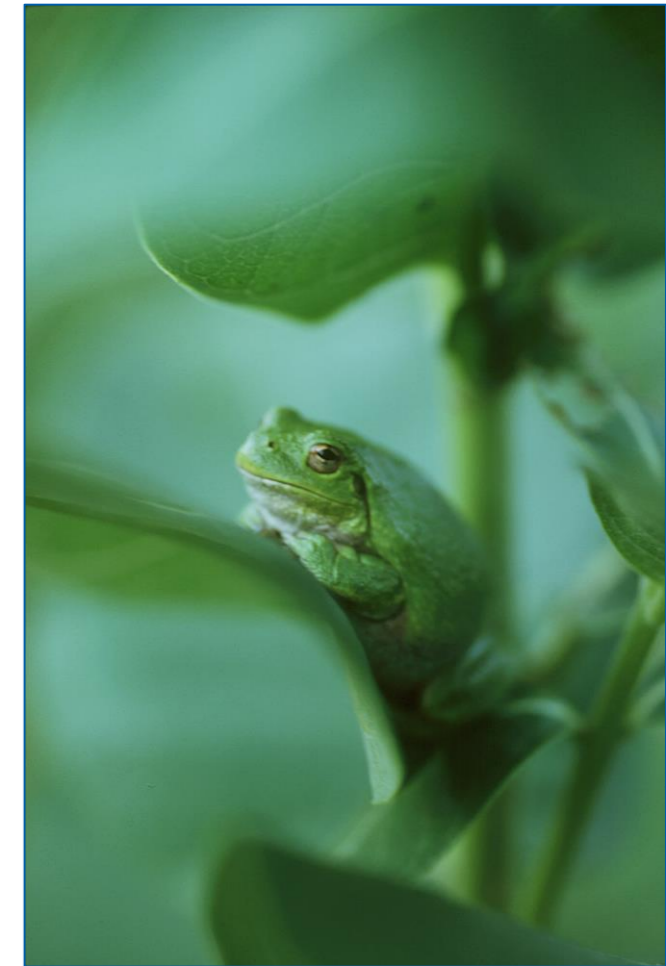
N/A



# Introducing Scott County

## Balancing of Three Priorities

- Protecting habitats and natural spaces for people
- Expanding regional recreation opportunities
- Striving for equity



Scott County Regional Parks and Trails

# Highlights of Communities we are trying to better serve

- Age
- Race
- Ability
- National origin
- Income
- Race
- Ethnicity

# Highlights of Communities we are trying to better serve



- Age

- Race



- Ability



- National origin

- Income

- Race

- Ethnicity

# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations



International Walking Club



**Scott County Projects**

**Total Allocation:  
\$869,915**

**Project Title and Description**

**Equity Toolkit**

**Doyle-Kennefick Land Acquisition**

N/A



# Introducing Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

- 179 parks and open spaces, including 6 regional parks and 2 SRFs
- Over 100 miles of trails, including 3 regional trails
- 25 City-operated recreation centers
- Region's only free zoo
- Recognized by Trust for Public Land as #2 park system in the nation—fourth year in a row
- Park system continues to grow



# Serving the diverse communities of Saint Paul

- Income: 1170 individuals participating in 2018 Equity Matters Programming
- Age/Ability: 38,820 free summer meals served
- Race: First-time camping programs in regional parks
- Ability: Sensory-Friendly Mornings at Como Zoo and Conservatory
- National Origin: Foot washing stations in park restrooms
- National Origin: Sepak takraw and tuj lub courts in parks
- Gender Identity: Inclusive restroom policy



# Learnings from Lower Landing Master Plan

- Lower Landing Park is along Sam Morgan RT near downtown
- Improving the park invites the public to the Mississippi River
- In-depth engagement with the Somali community in downtown
- Input led to specific development concepts in the plan (active recreation, nature trail, design around river)
- Unresolved issues identified for additional study (barrier crossings)



Saint Paul Projects	Total Allocation: \$3,283,427
Project Title and Description	Equity Toolkit
<b>Phalen Regional Park Acquisition Reimbursement:</b> Reimbursement of parcel acquisition for trailhead facility	N/A
<b>Robert Piram Regional Trail Acquisition Reimbursement:</b> Reimbursement of eight trail easements for trail construction	N/A
<b>Fish Hatchery Trail Reconstruction Design:</b> Begin pre-design, design, and engineering of stabilization and reconstruction of trail	N/A
<b>Lower Landing Improvements:</b> Reconstruction of Sam Morgan Regional Trail segment to improve access to other park improvements being constructed	N/A
<b>Harriet Island Play Area Replacement:</b> Replacement of deteriorated play area on Harriet Island	Ethnicity, age
<b>Phalen Regional Park East Shore Trailhead:</b> Improvement of trail connections between Bruce Vento Regional Trail and Phalen Regional Park	Age, ability

# Introducing Ramsey County

- One of the most densely populated counties in Minnesota
- Parks & Recreation is the largest landowner in Ramsey County
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks Vision:
  - Take a Residents First approach.
  - Engage in authentic and constructive community dialogue with underrepresented communities.
  - Be nimble and responsive.
  - Advance racial and health equity.
  - Ensure excellence in all that we provide.



# Highlights of Communities you are trying to better serve

- 18% People of Color in Ramsey County, 21% use parks and trails
- Rich diversity of user groups:
  - Knyaw Baptist Church (Karen), Hmong American Partnership, Eritrean Muslim Community of Minnesota, Hmong College Prep Academy, First Hmong Baptist Church, and Tibetan American Foundation of MN
  - Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance, East Side Neighborhood Services, Minnesota Stroke Association, Spina Bifida Assoc of MN, PeaceMaker MN, MN Deaf Blind Project, and Williams Syndrome Association.
  - Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, Hmong Minnesota Senior Center



# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

- Used Met Council tools & tools shared at Met Council meetings to shape toolkit
- Toolkit provided our Racial Equity Committee a chance to think through the development process with our planning department.

<b>Ramsey County Projects</b>	<b>Total Allocation: \$2,129,239</b>
<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Equity Toolkit</b>
<b>Long Lake Regional Park:</b> Phase 2 building, site and infrastructure improvements throughout Long Lake Regional Park, including design, engineering, construction and contingencies.	Age, Race, Ethnicity, Income, National Origin, Ability

# Introducing the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

- Founded in 1883 as an independent park district
- Consistently rated as one of the top park systems in the nation by TPL
- Includes many of the most visited regional parks and the most visited parks in the entire state
- Developed the first equity-focused data-driven CIP in the nation, which applies to selection of capital projects in neighborhood AND regional parks
  - Regional parks in areas of lower wealth, higher density, and high populations of people of color are prioritized
  - “Incomplete” regional parks (Above the Falls and Missing Link) collectively receive 25% of all capital funding annually until complete

# Highlights of Communities you are trying to better serve

- Minneapolis ranks high compared to other implementing agencies in many race/ethnicity categories (by percentage)
  - The highest percentage of blacks/African-Americans (18.4%)
  - The highest percentage of Latinx people (9.6%)
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest percentage of whites (60.4%)
- Minneapolis has the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest overall average household earnings among IAs, and the largest percentage of people earning less than \$20,000/year
- Several Minneapolis regional parks are immediately adjacent to areas with extremely low incomes (in the 0-20 percentile) and higher percentage of foreign born persons (some areas greater than 50%)
  - North/Northeast Minneapolis (Above the Falls, Missing Link, Wirth Park, Victory, Shingle)
  - Cedar-Riverside, Phillips, Elliot Park (Mississippi Gorge, Central Mississippi)



# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

- The areas of Minneapolis that lack access to water-based recreation are the same areas that have lower incomes and higher non-white and/or foreign born populations
- MPRB is prioritizing regional park investments in parks in these areas: Mississippi Gorge, Above the Falls, and the Missing Link
- The “incompleteness” of Minneapolis’s system is the critical equity consideration, when considering race and income/wealth
- Recent community engagement has led to new park designs:
  - Cedar-Riverside residents actively involved in design for upper Gorge (Riverside and Bohemian Flats)
  - ATF Master Plan engaged lower income north and northeast residents

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Projects	Total Allocation: \$5,280,768
Project Title and Description	Equity Toolkit
<b>Above the Falls RP, Hall's Island and Graco Park:</b> Design, engineering, and implementation of Hall's Island bridge, boardwalk, trails, and facilities.	Race, Ethnicity, Income, Ability
<b>Mississippi Gorge RP Implementation:</b> Design, engineer and implement park improvements for Mississippi Gorge Regional park, based on new community-engaged master plan.	Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, Ability
<b>Nokomis-Hiawatha RP Implementation:</b> Implementation of master plan throughout park, including new trail construction around Lake Hiawatha.	Age, Ability

Example: Brief overview of your 2020 Bonding project proposals



# Dakota County Parks

## Increasing use

- Over 2.1M visitors (60% growth over 3 years)

## Timely planning and improvements

- All MPs updated by 2021
- Implementation within 2 years
- Integration of NR, VS, Interp, and O&M

## Restoring natural resources

- 1,348 acres restored
- 1,371 acres under active restoration or stabilization (58% of system in total)

## Focus on inclusion

- Outreach Coordinator
- Awareness and Promotion Plan



# Increasing Service to the Underserved

## Systemwide Research Findings

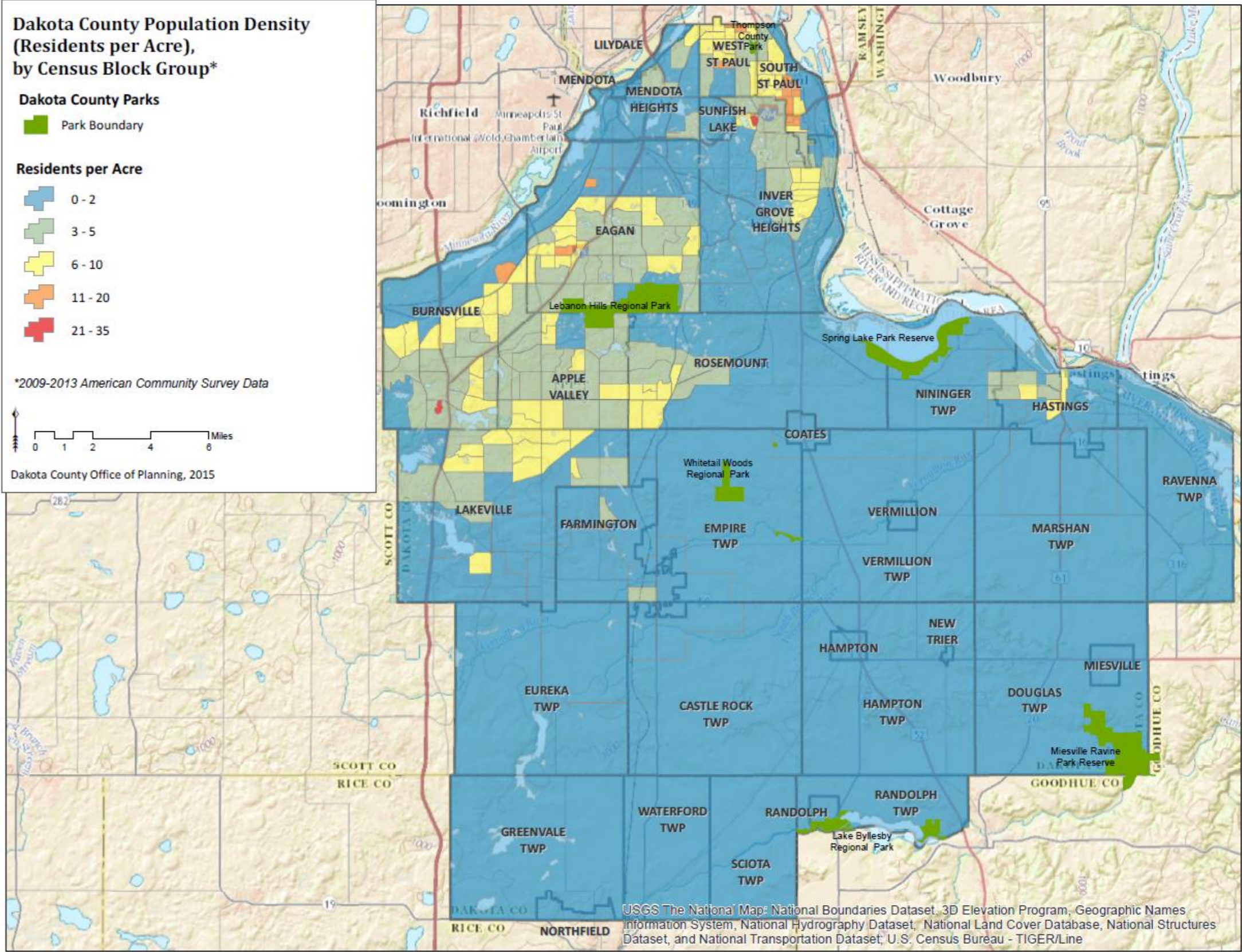
- Higher than expected interest in programs and events
- Lack of awareness of parks and greenways
- Desire for different and relevant services and facilities

## Dakota County Response

- Increase in events (5 to 14)
- Increase in school programs (2,600 more students)

## Spring Lake Park Reserve Planning

- Master Plan update 2019-2020
- Potential to better serve all populations, especially:
  - Rural
  - Youth
  - Older
  - Mobility Impaired
  - Limited Transportation
  - Native / Indigenous



# Engagement & Equity Innovations

## Equity, Inclusion, & Access – Key Planning Principles


- Connect (new) users to park resources
- Leverage Mississippi River Greenway
- Design for physical spaces *and* design for stories
- Use interpretation as a platform for narratives, not as an authority on them
- Focus on absent or misrepresented messages

## Ongoing Engagement Focus

- Dakota people
- Local landowners
- Youth
- Interaction between nature and culture



**ARTIFACTS**



*Dakota*  
forever wild  
PARKS

**The Sorg Pot**

Artifacts are objects from the past—evidence of past peoples, cultural activity, and spiritual beliefs. Archaeologists depend on artifacts to interpret the events of long ago.

The archaeological sites of Spring Lake Park Reserve have provided a wealth of special artifacts. The famous Sorg pot, on permanent display at the Science Museum of Minnesota, was found by archaeologists at the river's edge in 1953. It dates to approximately 2,400 - 1,700 years ago. The nearly 20-inch-tall pot was decorated by pressing reeds and cord or net into the soft clay before it was fired in an earth kiln; the pot was likely used to store food and water.

Other artifacts found in the park include a variety of stone tools, shell jewelry, animal bones, and features such as hearths and the post holes of lodges. Many artifacts were found in cave sites, places where people once found shelter thousands of years ago.

These tangible traces of history are an intrinsic part of the park's landscape and its hidden stories.

**Dakota County Projects**

**Total Allocation:  
\$2,560,682**

**Project Title and Description**

**Equity Toolkit**

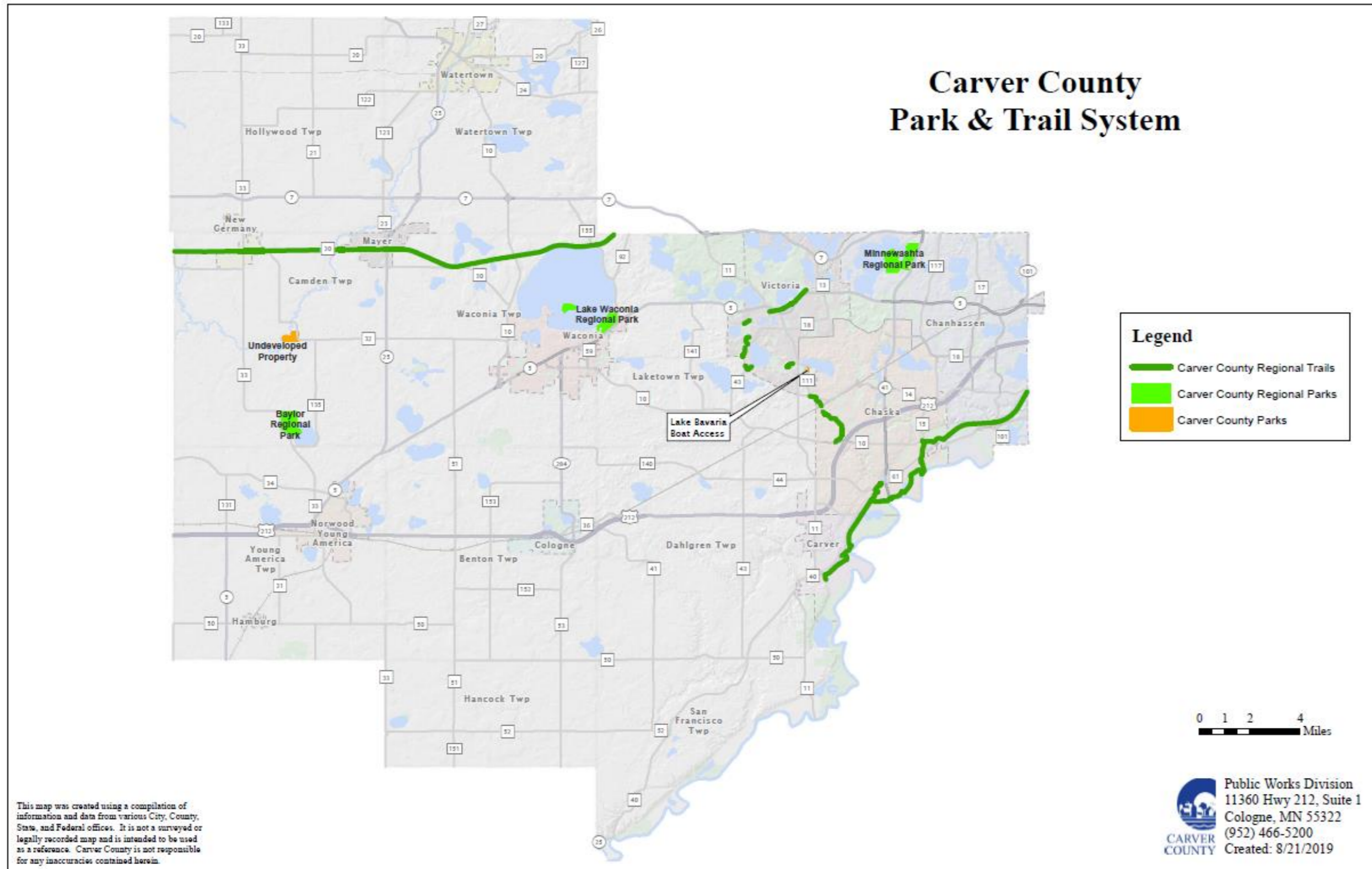
**Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan Improvements:** Design, engineering, research, engagement, restoration, construction, and construction administration for master plan improvements to recreational areas and facilities; historic- and culturally significant sites and facilities; and natural resources throughout the park reserve.

Age, Race, Ethnicity, Income, National Origin, Ability



# Carver County

- Carver County Parks and Trails System
  - Developing System
    - 3 Regional Parks
    - 3 Regional Trails
    - 2 County Parks
    - 930 acres
    - 14 FTES (Includes Seasonal Staff)
    - 102,000 Population



# Highlights of Communities you are trying to better serve

- As the fastest growing Metro. County, Carver County has the highest percentage of youth ages 5-18 years old
  - Collaborative partnerships
    - Outdoor recreation programing
    - Provide affordable and attractive programs
- December 1, 2019
  - Eliminating Park Entrance Fees





# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

- Carver County is laying the ground work for future generations
  - Land acquisition focused
    - Lake shore property
    - Services all demographics



Carver County Projects	Total Allocation: \$737,864
Project Title and Description	Equity Toolkit
Lake Waconia Regional Park Land Acquisition Reimbursement	Age

Example: Brief overview of your 2020 Bonding project proposals



# Introducing City of Bloomington

- Bloomington has nearly 100 local parks and is home to Hyland-Bush-Anderson Regional Park



# Serving all people of Bloomington

- Bloomington's population has been evolving to include a diverse range of age, ethnicity, race, ability and income
- Bloomington has hired a Community Outreach Coordinator specific to parks, as well as recently structured a Community Outreach division for the City
- Primarily have been focusing on lower income families and non-white communities

# Community Engagement/Equity Toolkit

## Learnings or Innovations

- Changing restrooms from shared, gender specific, to individual, gender neutral and ADA accessible rooms after community and staff discussion of equity
- Through Met Council research, we know having a functioning and comfortable restroom is important to new and current park users

<b>City of Bloomington Projects</b>	<b>Total Allocation: \$653,043</b>
<b>Normandale Lake Restrooms and Maintenance Garage Replacement:</b> Replace restroom building & maintenance garage south of the Chalet Rd parking lot with new restrooms that meet ADA requirements and new maintenance/trash/recycling building.	<b>Age, Race, Ethnicity, National Origin, Ability</b>