

CARVER COUNTY PARKS

11360 Highway 212 West, Suite #2 Cologne, MN 55322 Phone (952) 466-5250 Fax (952) 466-5223 www.co.carver.mn.us/parks Division of Public Works

11360 Hwy. 212 West, Suite #1 Cologne, MN 55322 Phone (952) 466-5200 Fax (952) 466-5223

Park Commission

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

6:30 p.m. Lake Waconia Regional Park
Waconia Event Center
8170 Paradise Lane

Agenda

- 1) Call Meeting to Order, Roll Call (6:30 p.m.)
- 2) Approval of the April 13, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes (6:31 p.m.)
- 3) Additions or Deletions to the Agenda (6:32 p.m.)
- 4) Approval of Agenda (6:33 p.m.)
- 5) Commissioner Liaison Report (6:35 p.m.)
- 6) Open to the Public (6:40 p.m.)
- 7) U of M Resilient Communities Project Presentation (6:40 p.m.)
- 8) New Business (7:30 p.m.)
 - a. Draft Goose Management Plan
 - b. Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment
- 9) Small CIP Projects Discussion (8:15 p.m.)
- 10) Staff Reports (8:35 p.m.)
 - a. New Recreation Programs and Services
 - b. Lake Waconia Regional Park Master Planning Work
 - c. Legislative Update
 - d. MN River Bluffs Regional Trail
 - e. Events and Activities
- 11) Commission Member Reports (8:50 p.m.)
- 12) Set Next Tour/Meeting Date (8:55 p.m.) Proposed date June 8th
- 13) Adjourn Meeting (9:00 p.m.)

Please note if a Commission Member cannot attend the meeting, please call the Park Office at 466 – 5250.

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<u>Draft</u> **Meeting Minutes**April 13 2016

Members Present:

Carroll Aasen, Jim Boettcher, Jim Manders, Gerald Bruner, Curt Kobilarcsik, Mark

Lagergren and Commissioner Lynch

Staff Present:

Marty Walsh, Connie Keller, Sam Pertz

Tour of Baylor Park:

6:30pm - 8:00pm

Staff and Park Commission toured Baylor Regional Park, starting in the office area, touring the community room and deck, sugar shack, campground areas, boardwalk,

group campsite, observatory area, tennis courts, playground and beach area.

Call to Order:

Manders, called the meeting to order at (8:00p.m.)

Approval of Minutes:

(8:00p.m.)

Aasen motioned to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2016 regular meeting

minutes Boettcher seconded the motion.

Motion passed 6 to 0

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda: (8:00p.m.)

None

Approval of Agenda:

(8:00p.m.)

Boettcher motioned to approve meeting agenda

Aasen seconded the motion.

Motion passed 6 to 0.

Commissioner Liaison Report:

(8:01p.m.)

Lynch thanked the Park Commission Members for being part of the commission, and commented how nice it was to see people out using the park.

Open to the Public:

(8:02p.m.)

None present

Park Commission Orientation Presentation: (8:02p.m.)

Staff presented a power point presentation on the overview of the Carver County Park system. The presentation covered, the responsibilities of the Park Commission, the Regional Park and Open Space System, the parks covered by Carver County which consist of about 900 acres, also reviewed parks staffing, parks services, events, projects, were funding comes from for these projects, land acquisition and comprehensive plan.

Questions or Comments:

Lagergren asked about the trails that go over 212; Staff shared a map of the trails that the County has now.

Aasen asked about a trail going over the MN River in the City of Carver to Scott County; Staff stated with lack of development in this portion of Scott County, a trail connection is well into the future.

Manders asked if there has been any discussion of expanding the county parks in Carver County; Staff stated that yes there are search areas in the county, which staff pointed out on a map, those areas will be looked at when the County goes through another comprehensive plan. Discussion ensued on the search areas.

<u>Discussion Items</u> (8:26p.m.)

A. Lake Waconia Regional Park Phase I Development Scenarios

Staff shared with Park Commission that there is two sewer lines that go through the old highway 5 corridor and Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) would like to replace one of those lines in the near future. Staff stated that MCES would like to do that work in 2017-2018. Staff also stated that might be an opportunity for us to do trails in the same corridor at that time. Other outside influences on the park include not knowing the DNR's timeline for the development of the watercraft access, and eventual city sewer and water service to serve the park. Staff would like to coordinate park development with the Metropolitan Council and DNR to do everything at the same time. Staff stated that this is something we might want to start thinking about going forward.

Staff stated they are working with the consultant on Phase I approach and the cost of that so we can inform the County Board of the costs.

Discussion was had on the utility lines and the best place for them and possible coordination with the DNR time frame with their project.

Questions or Comments:

Lynch stated that it would be nice to coordinate the job with everything being done all at once. Staff stated that would be nice.

B. Funding Options for Phase I Development Program

Staff shared with Park Commission the different approaches for funding of the park development one would be pooling funding streams, but that might not be efficient enough to get the job done, another option would be a State bonding request, which would need our state legislators support. Discussion was had on the bonding process.

Other options are County general obligation bonds, which spread the cost over a growing population.

Staff stated that maybe a combination of all these items.

Staff stated that the consultant will have a cost for the Phase I development shortly.

Discussion was also had on the process of a bonding bill and how that takes time and the process.

Staff stated that we will need to look at all the pro's and con's for all options.

Questions or Comments:

Aasen suggest that we go out for a vote to public during an election for a referendum; Staff stated might be something to look at. Discussion was had on a referendum and how to go about it and how it would be perceived by the public and what that referendum would include and whether it would pass any place other than Waconia.

Kobilarcsik commented that he thinks a bonding bill would be the way to go.

Aasen asked if we had a cost yet; Staff stated not at this time but we are getting close on numbers.

No other Questions and Comments

Staff Reports:

(8:46 p.m.)

A. Lake Waconia Regional Park Master Planning Work

Staff stated that they met with the consultants architect on the plans for the Lake Waconia Park master plan, items covered were restroom buildings in the park, they also reviewed the ballroom and how the ballroom could be used and what type of improvements can be made to the ballroom. Architect will come back with building program modifications.

Staff stated that they are working with townships for approval of design to move to County Planning Commission then on to the County Board.

Discussion was also had on type of buildings on the island; staff stated that those buildings were also reviewed by the architect.

Questions or Comments:

Aasen stated that are we looking at single use bathrooms; Staff stated that we are looking at family restrooms to be included in the design.

No Questions or Comments

B. Legislative Update

Staff stated that there have been a couple of hearings on the bonding funds at 11 million dollars and a letter circulating, governor is requesting 10 million.

C. MN River Bluffs Regional Trail

Staff shared pictures with Park Commission on the bridge that was installed over Spring Creek in Carver; staff also stated that work should start back up next week on the trail. A ribbon cutting ceremony is tentatively scheduled for May 17th at 5:30pm an alternative date will be in June.

D. Events & Activities

Earth day volunteer event will be held on April 23rd at Lake Minnewashta Park staring at 9:00am - 11:00am.

Camping starts up on May 13th; Seasonal staff hired for the rec programs, gate areas and are ready for summer!

E. Resilient Communities Project, Engaging under Represented Groups

Staff stated that they have been working with a group from the U of M. This group is part of the planning college that is working on thirty projects for the County. Staff explained what they are helping the Parks Department with the Resilient Communities Project. They look at the equity in the parks system which consists of services, amenities, park layout and design. They will prepare information for the Parks Department and present at the next Park Commission meeting.

F. Compliance with DNR Goose Management Procedures

Staff shared with Park Commission that the DNR has requested a written plan on how we plan on managing the geese population in the parks; Staff is in the process of writing up this plan and will bring back to Park Commission at next meeting to review.

Questions or Comments:

Manders asked what the motivation for this is plan; Staff stated that they are tightening up on guidelines and wanting an approved plan by elected officials to ensuring that a plan has received proper approvals from an agency for geese removal.

No other questions or comments

Commission Member Reports:

(9:07 p.m.)

Aasen stated that it is time to go fishing!

Boettcher stated that he was at the maple syrup event and had a good time and had a nice turn out.

No other comments

Next Meeting Date:

(9:08 p.m.)

Next meeting will be on <u>May 11th, 2016 at 6:30p.m. Meeting will be held at the Lake Waconia Regional Park, meeting to take place at the Lakeside Ballroom</u>

Park Commission would like copies of blue prints of the ballroom/dimensions.

Adjourn Meeting:

(9:11 p.m.)

Boettcher motioned to adjourn the meeting Aasen seconded the motion.

Motion passed 6 to 0.



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MEMO

TO: Members of the Carver County Park Commission

CC: Marty Walsh, Parks Director

FROM: Sam Pertz, Parks & Trails Supervisor

SUBJECT: Resilient Communities Project – Engaging Underrepresented Groups in Parks

DATE: May 6, 2016

This memorandum outlines a research project conducted on behalf of the Parks Department in collaboration with the Carver County Planning & Water Mgmt. Office, and the University of Minnesota's Resilient Communities Project (RCP).

Carver County was selected through a competitive process as the 2015/16 community partner for the U of M's RCP. RCP is a program at the U of M run out of the Center of Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that pairs students with public agencies to further research and study community-identified topics of interest as a part of their regular coursework. The Carver County Parks Department was involved with two RCP projects over the 9 month 2015/16 school year. Most recently this spring semester, provided an opportunity for a group of master's degree students working on their capstone project (required for graduation) to work closely with staff from County Planning and Park Offices to study and research deeper, the subject of engagement of underrepresented groups/populations in the regional park areas within Carver County.

The project framework was to have a team of students develop a public engagement process that could be implemented to generate public and stakeholder input from a generally diverse range of residents, park users, and other stakeholders. The purpose is to further inform and update work of the Parks Open Space and Trails chapter for the 2040 Carver County Comprehensive Plan. Particular focus was given to both historically & generally underrepresented groups. The public engagement process explored core needs and opportunities for design themes/concepts, recreation services, programs, and park facilities. In doing so, a variety of engagement methods and tools have been created and identified by the student group to improve participation and engagement with both current and prospective users of the regional park system within Carver County. Student recommendations target residents within the primary service areas within Carver County, as well as secondary service areas as outlined in Metropolitan Council studies.

As part of the project, the students have prepared a final product in the form of a report as well as presentation. The group will be presenting their findings, fielding questions and comments brought forward by the Park Commission and staff at the May 11th, 2016 meeting.

No action is required at this time.



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<u>MEMO</u>

TO: Members of the Park Commission

FROM: Marty Walsh, Parks Director

SUBJECT: Canada Goose Management Plan

DATE: May 6, 2015

Enclosed is the Draft Canada Goose Management Plan. A goose management plan is a requirement of the DNR in order for a permitted service provider to trap and remove geese. This is a new requirement as the Department prepares for the potential to remove geese from Carver County operated beaches.

The Parks Department has conducted licensed trapping of geese at all three of its regional park areas.

The Draft Canada Goose Management Plan provides information about Canada Geese, public health potential impacts and damages, regulation, historical background information and a goose management program. In addition to fulfilling the requirement of having a plan, the documentation is beneficial for communication purposes both internal and external.

Recommendation: It is requested that the Park Commission recommend approval of the Draft Canada Goose Management Plan to the County Board.

Carver County Regional Park & Trail System Canada Goose Management Plan

Est. 2016

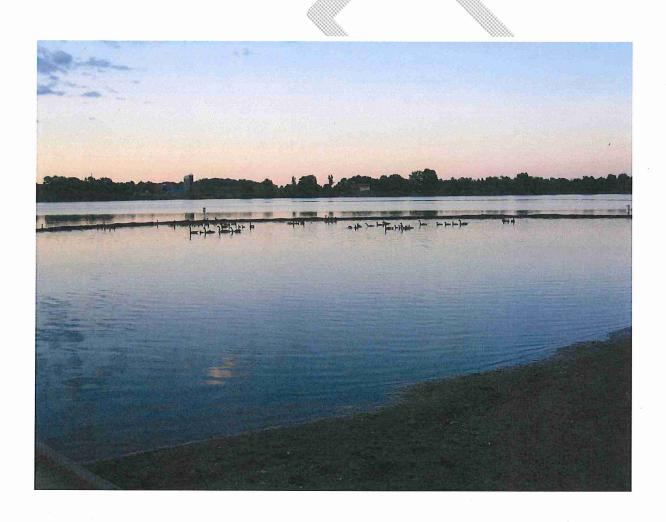
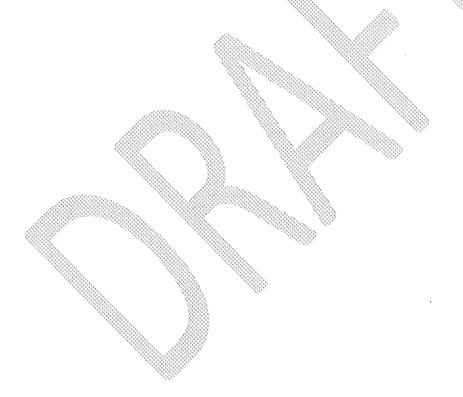


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1.0 Overview, Goals & Objectives

The material to follow is written to provide an overview of the Canada goose species, information regarding State and Federal regulations, public health considerations, information on recognized management options and a staff recommendation for best tactic for population control at park and trail areas operated by Carver County.

The mission of the Carver County Parks Department is to provide a variety of quality recreational experiences, services and lands that meet the needs of the residents of Carver County and Carver County Regional Park users.

The goal is to manage geese in a safe and responsible manner. This written management plan communicates the County's role in geese management and allows for the County to be permitted by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to attempt to control the population of geese by the State.

The objective of this plan is to efficiently, effectively and appropriately control the local Canada goose populations that utilize the park and trail areas during the summer months so as to provide the a safe and enjoyable environment and experiences for the public. An additional objective is to align the County Park Ordinance with a goose management plan.

2.0 Introduction

The Canada goose is the most widespread and abundant North American goose, found in every state and Canadian province at some time during the year. In spring, the species breeds from Labrador, throughout the high Canadian arctic islands to Alaska, south to California, and eastward to Georgia. Wintering Canada geese are found from southeastern Alaska to Hawaii and northern Mexico eastward to Massachusetts and Florida (Bellrose, 1976). The Canada goose is one of the earliest spring migrants, first among Midwestern waterfowl to return to the breeding grounds.

Population surveys have provided results of the species exceeding 4 million individuals. At one time virtually extinct, the Canada goose was re-established over much of its former range by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), state wildlife departments, and conservation clubs. The population, particularly in urbanized areas, is now growing exponentially. The Minnesota wild giant Canada goose population went from zero in 1954 to more than 360,000 in 2004.

The Canada goose shows great variation in body size and regional differences in plumage, bill shape and call. One resident and three migrant Canada goose subspecies are found in Minnesota. These include Richardson's goose, Canada goose and Todd's Canada goose. The largest birds average 12 to 14 pounds, although some weigh up to 18 pounds.

Mowed lakeshores, parks & open space and golf courses provide an abundance of brood-rearing habitat and food sources. Predator densities are low, hunting is limited and the bird is unaffected by most human activities. As such, the species has become supremely adapted to an urban environment. When Canada geese damage crops, golf courses, parks & open space; reduce water quality; or endanger human life on roads and airports, intensive management plans and programs are needed.

2.1 Nesting

Female geese build the nest and incubate the eggs without direct aid from the gander (the male). The gander guards the female from disturbance by other mature pairs and assists the female in protecting the eggs, and later, the goslings. Eggs are laid as soon as there is open water for mating and snow-free nest sites. It is not unusual for the birds to continue nesting in spite of temperatures as low as zero degrees Fahrenheit and snowfalls up to 10 inches.

Pair bonding takes place in spring among young geese at 1 or 2 years of age. The pair typically remains steadfast until the death of one of the members. There are no known cases where a female has successfully nested after the death of

her mate.

Nests are typically built on isolated sites separated from adjacent dry land by a moat of open water; this could include nesting islands, beaver lodges or sedge hummocks. Females often use the same site year after year or alternate between 2 nest sites in close proximity. Young females nesting for the first time attempt to nest close to the location where they were reared.

The female incubates from 97 to 98% of the day, taking only one or two brief recesses from incubation. Because she feeds so little, the female can lose up to 30% of her body weight during incubation and is within 4-10 days of starvation when the eggs hatch.

Canada goose nesting success normally ranges from 60 to 80%. On average, 4 goslings are hatched per successful nest. Nests can be lost to predators such as coyote, fox, skunk, raccoons, crows, ravens and large gulls. Nests can also be lost to flooding or desertion (usually due to interference by adjacent territorial pairs).

2.2 Brood-rearing

Once the young have hatched, the family abandons the nest site and travels overland, up to 5 miles in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA), to a suitable brood-rearing site. Most commonly, brood concentration sites have expanses of grass (such as bluegrass turf) where visibility is good, food is abundant and open water is immediate proximity. Geese are social animals and flocks can easily exceed 100+ birds.

2.3 Molting

Five weeks after hatch, the breeding female loses her flight feathers and enters what is termed a molt period. The male molts 4 to 10 days later. Both remain flightless until the young can fly, which is approximately 9 to 10 weeks of age. Because of the energy and nutrients needed to replace the adults' flight feathers and for the goslings to grow from fist-sized to nearly full-grown in less than 10 weeks, large quantities of food must be consumed during this period by each bird.

3.0 Public Demand for Clean Facilities

The Parks department has documented instances when public complaints and criticism has been brought forward due to unclean beach and picnic areas. Oftentimes the criticism comes at the beginning of the season prior to management efforts for geese. There is an expectation by the public for a desired experience of clean and safe facilities. Unsightly and pungent odors associated with geese droppings are conditions that reduce the ability for the public to enjoy the investments made in the parks and trail system.

3.1 General Public Health Concerns

Potential health risks posed by the abundant droppings of the Canada goose are a relatively untouched area of study as the urban goose concentrations are a relatively new phenomenon. Human pathogens, such as *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* have been found in goose droppings in New Jersey, although the longevity of the pathogens in the droppings or the likelihood of human ingestion or inhalation was not studied. (New Jersey Wildlife Department)

A study conducted in London, England (Feare et al. 1999), where introduced Canada geese are also causing damage in urban parks & open space and at airports, showed that bacterial species such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella* remained viable in Canada goose droppings for at least a month after they were deposited. Because fecal material is readily transferred to human hands by the handling of sport game balls and other outdoor equipment typically used in park and open space settings, the authors concluded that pathogens present in waterfowl droppings constitute a potential health risk to humans using parkland for recreation activities.

Locally, high fecal coliform levels attributed to goose droppings have been identified in lakes in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. These findings have resulted in mandatory beach closures after analysis of water samples by the Minnesota Department of Health. Due to the fact that it is possible to contract disease from goose fecal matter, following are general recommendations for areas where these droppings may be present.

- Wash hands, clothes and sports equipment immediately after exposure
- Small children, pregnant women or immune-compromised individuals should avoid areas with high concentrations of droppings
- Small children who may put hands in their mouths should not be placed in contact with these areas.

3.2 Avian Influenza Risks

Over the last 10-15 years concern and research on the potential pandemic threat of avian influenza (otherwise known as bird flu or the H5N1 virus) has grown.



The virus will lose it virulence and while still spreading be less of a threat to humans and birds. This is hypothetical, based on changes between influenza strains found in the past and current flu outbreaks. The virus will remain as it is and be spread widely by migratory birds. Management of bird/bird and bird/human contacts is and will continue to be required to follow the spread of the virus and will be important if the virus reaches Minnesota. The virus can mutate and be transmitted human to human. This could produce a worldwide pandemic and would need to be addressed by the development of effective rapid quarantine methods and production of a vaccine. There is a high likelihood that H5N1 will be brought to Minnesota by migratory birds. The Tundra swan is a likely vector candidate and their migratory route includes Minnesota in both spring and fall where they mingle with migrating geese. Ducks may also carry the virus to the Midwest. There are a number of measures that are and should be done now.

- Monitor for the virus. The DNR and the Canada Goose Program, Inc. agreed to cooperate with the University of Minnesota's H5N1 monitoring program beginning in summer 2007.
- Determine where humans would be exposed to infected birds. Unlike the current situation overseas, where human
 contact has been primarily with infected domestic poultry and waterfowl, North American exposure is likely to
 come from wild bird populations as most domestic North American fowl are reared indoors. Top among the wild
 birds that have the potential to transmit the virus to humans is the Canada goose. This is because viruses are
 common in geese and other waterfowl, are shed in the droppings, and Canada geese concentrate droppings in
 numerous public areas that are frequently used by people.

If bird flu were detected, The Canada Goose Program recommends that a massive goose reduction program be implemented to reduce the chance of human-goose dropping contact in parks, playing fields, beach areas and others. In addition, goose harassment should be used in areas where geese remain on or near playing fields, beaches or others to further limit human exposure to the droppings.

Additional information on the avian flu and its risks can be found at the following web sites:

- U.S. Center for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/
- U.S. National Wildlife Health Laboratory www.nwhc.usgs.gov/research/avian_influenza/avian_influenza.html
- U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib121304.html
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/issues/AvianFlu/WBAvianFlu.html

3.3 Potential Damages Caused by Species

- Damage complaints due to Canada geese have been filed for damage to crops, golf courses, lawns, gardens, decks, vehicles, ponds and lakes due to feeding habits, excretion of fecal matter and walking or flying into traffic. When human health or safety is endangered, intensive management plans and programs are often needed.
- Goose digestive systems are relatively inefficient and results in production of approximately 3 to 4 lbs. of droppings or fecal matter per day. The amount of droppings produced can reduce water quality in lakes and ponds adjoining brood-rearing and feeding areas. In 1994, Manny, Johnson, and Wetzel found that goose droppings were contributing up to 70% of the phosphorus entering a small Michigan lake. The goose serves as a transport vector, moving nutrients derived from upland grass into or near a wetland, pond or lake. The potential for impact depends on size of goose population, volume of water, time spent on the water body and water inflow and outflow.
- In summary, the Canada goose has adapted to both highly human altered and wilderness settings. Predation is low, hunting is limited in urban areas, and the species is largely unaffected by most human activities.

4.0 Species Regulations

The Canada goose is a migratory bird protected by Federal and State law. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 prohibits the taking of migratory birds and their nests and eggs except during established hunting seasons or by USFWS permit. Activities covered by permits include capture and banding (Banding Permit), collection for scientific or educational purposes (Scientific Collecting Permit), removal of eggs from wild nests and possession of captive birds by aviculturists (Special Purpose Permit), and the removal of birds, nests or eggs to protect people or property from damage (Depredation Permit).

Due to the rapid expansion of Canada geese and the concurrent increase in requests for depredation permits, the USFWS has implemented a policy allowing states broader authority to address goose damage under a 5-year Resident Canada Goose Permit. The precedence for issuing a depredation permit was upheld in federal court under *Humane Society of the United States vs. USFWS*. Currently this permit is being used in states such as Minnesota where an urban Canada goose management plan has been prepared.

Minnesota statutes also protect migratory birds. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was established as the regulatory authority to review and issue permits to manage goose populations. The legality and humaneness of the procedures used in the Twin Cities were upheld in state court by *People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) vs. the DNR and the University of Minnesota*.

More information on State and Federal provisions and permits can be found online at the following websites.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

http://www.fws.gov/

http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/issues/cangeese/finaleis.html

State of Minnesota:

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us

http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/stats

<u>Carver County Park Ordinance</u>: Park Ordinance \$91.07 section B pertaining to wildlife management states, disturbance of wildlife is unlawful for any person except in nuisance situations with coordination and issuing of a special use permit.

5.0 Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA) Urban Goose Management Plan

In 1982 when it became clear that the Canada goose population was negatively impacting people and the environment, the DNR took the lead in developing an urban Canada goose management program as well as joining U of M and UMES cooperative research program. The DNR has established an Urban Goose Management Plan for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA). Much of this information is collected from the Goose Management Plan for the TCMA. The management plan for the TCMA includes information on:

- Canada goose history and biology
- Social goose carrying capacity within the TCMA
- Rationales for management technique recommendations
- The damage site management decision making process
- Policies for goose hunting and goose removal
- Requirements for goose removal contractors
- Population management

Central to the management plan is the acceptance of the fact that the biological carrying capacity (the level the goose population would reach if left alone) far exceeds the social carrying capacity (the number of geese people will tolerate). The estimated biological carrying capacity has been estimated at 400,000 to 500,000 birds, with a social capacity at 25,000 in the summer.

The decision-making process for addressing damages via the Canada goose population was adapted in 1982 from the DNR's urban deer control policy. This policy requires that where a hunting harvest cannot be used to manage a wildlife population, the local governmental unit (usually a city council or township board) must establish population goals, select control procedures, fund the operational phase and evaluate the program. Procedures must comply with State and Federal statutes and permit requirements. The DNR, USFWS, and the UMES provide technical input, and a contractor provides operational assistance and evaluation.

A goose hunting policy was adopted state-wide in Minnesota in 1994. Based on the distribution of open space, metropolitan area municipalities are classified by the potential for safe hunting. Priorities are set for removal of problem geese based on the potential for hunting harvest. Assistance in determining the potential for safe hunting is provided by DNR Area Wildlife Managers.

6.0 Carver County Canada Goose Management History

Carver County has conducted goose management efforts on local populations of Canada Geese as since 2006. Early work to manage geese occurred at Baylor Regional Park which is 201 acres in size and has shoreline on the 183 acre Eagle Lake. These efforts were in the forms deterrent type geese decoys and harassment. The decoys and harassment techniques were ineffective. In the spring of 2008, there were over 100 geese regularly observed on the beach and picnic area adjacent to the beach at Baylor Regional Park. The number of geese on the Eagle Lake had gotten to a point that staff could not provide a safe, clean or enjoyable facility for the public. Carver County Parks hired Canada Goose Management Inc. to remove the geese from Baylor Regional Park. The removal efforts resulted in 120+ geese removed from the park and Eagle Lake.

Upon the removal of geese, neighboring property owners expressed concern about the County removing geese from Eagle Lake. In August of 2010, Park Staff meet with property owners on the lake to obtain input and reach consensus on geese removal. A threshold number of geese were established when trapping and removal could occur. Additionally, a desired number of pairs of geese to remain on the lake was established (see Appendix A).

Since then, additional geese removal efforts have been conducted at the regional parks of Lake Minnewashta and Lake Waconia regional parks in Chanhassen and Waconia respectively. Geese populations there have have at times exceeded 100+ geese. While the population of geese fluctuates year to year, by in large the geese population has been kept in check as result of the management efforts applied.

It is neither surprising nor uncommon that the species are typically well established at the parks, beaches and maintained turf areas. Typically the birds nest in the wetland areas, utilize the lake for protection, find food, gravel on the sand beaches and maintained turfed area adjacent. With nearly ideal habitats, local goose populations often make the Carver County park areas home.

7.0 Geese Population Data Collection

On an annual basis, Park staff will count the number of geese at park and trail areas that are using the park for habitat during the brooding and molting period. This effort typically starts early to mid-spring and continue through June to have as accurate as possible understanding of the population at that particular park or trail. Through observation of the geese population impact on recreation facilities and user satisfaction, staff determines if routine maintenance practices are sufficient to provide quality experience or if trapping and removal is recommended. When the ability to maintain sanitary conditions is such that routine maintenance practices are not able to maintain user satisfaction, goose trapping and removal may occur.

8.0 Carver County Parks and Trails Geese Population Management Program

The use of trapping and removal is the most successful management strategy for species population control on beaches. This tactic has proven to provide the best results and thus allows the greatest level of public service. Trapping and removal efforts on beaches will be limited to an annual timeframe of June 1st – July 15th so as to have the greatest chance of success for population control.

In addition to trapping and removal, for other areas in proximity to the beach areas, less aggressive management practices might be implemented. The use of predator decoys or harassment tactics would be deployed.

The County will conduct geese removal upon notification and or consulting with local homeowner groups, area cities in which the beach resides. The Park Commission will make recommendations pertaining to the removal of geese to the County Board before action to remove geese is taken. Current trapping and removal quantities are as follows:

Baylor Park/Eagle Lake: (established in 2010)

Population threshold: 40 birds

Desired population: 10-20 birds with 5-10 nesting pairs

Waconia Park/Lake Waconia:

Population threshold: n/a (threshold has not been established with City of Waconia Desired population: n/a (threshold has not been established with City of Waconia)

Minnewashta Park/Lake Minnewashta:

Population threshold: n/a (threshold has not been established with City of Chanhassen)
Desired population: n/a (threshold has not been established with City of Chanhassen)

Procedures:

This management plan will follow standard operating procedures on an annual basis to include

- Comply with State & Federal requirements for Canada Goose management
- Prepare and hold an active contract for services to be conducted by a MN DNR licensed vendor
- Population assessment by routinely sight counting bird populations at each park location on a routine basis during the months of May & June
- Coordination with vendor to conduct trapping & removal activity during low park use day of the week and time of day
- Conduct weekly water testing at the three beach areas within the park system
- Record keeping of invoicing for service showing # of birds trapped and removed from each park location

- Receive initial approval from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources of this plan and there so after as needed/required
- Integrate or adapt this plan as needed to be a part of a larger Carver County Park natural resource management plan.
- Report on the trapping and removal activity to the Park Commission, Administration and County Board as necessary.

Public Coordination:

This management plan will follow public coordination efforts on an annual basis to include

- Awareness to County Administration and members of the County Board
- Informational letter sent to the homeowners on Eagle Lake
- Memo or written communication to cities of Waconia and Chanhassen
- Staff report item at monthly park commission meeting leading into ideal trapping & removal timeframe (typically June)
- Provide this planning document on the parks website

9.0 Supportive Items & Information to this Document

Exhibits A – D are provided as supportive information to this document and to further illustrate the steps taken and public process utilized as it pertains to population control of Canada geese in the Carver County Park and Trail areas. Information and material within this document has been collected from other sources, some of which came from approved management plans listed below.

- City of Eden Prairie Parks Department
- City of Little Canada
- City of Burnsville
- City of Plymouth



Carver County Parks

Department of Public Works

11360 Hwy. 212, Suite 1 Cologne, Minnesota 55322 Phone (952) 466-5200 Fax (952) 466-5223

11360 Highway 212 Suite 2 Cologne, MN 55322 Phone (952) 466-5250 Fax (952) 466-5223 www.co.carver.mn.us/parks

MEMO

TO: Members of the Park Commission

FROM: Marty Walsh, Parks Director

SUBJECT: Southwest Regional Trail Connection Master Plan Amendment

DATE: May 5, 2016

In preparation for the 2017 trail construction project between County Road 61 and Bluff Creek Drive a Draft Master Plan amendment has been prepared for the Southwest Regional Trail Connection. An amendment to the master plan is needed to help ensure consistency with use of regional funds for the project.

The original trail master plan was created in 2006. The planned trail alignment extends from the eastern border of Chaska, winds its way along the east creek diversion channel, Chaska levee, makes use of road right-of-way, open space, and former railroad corridor before entering the downtown area of the City of Victoria.

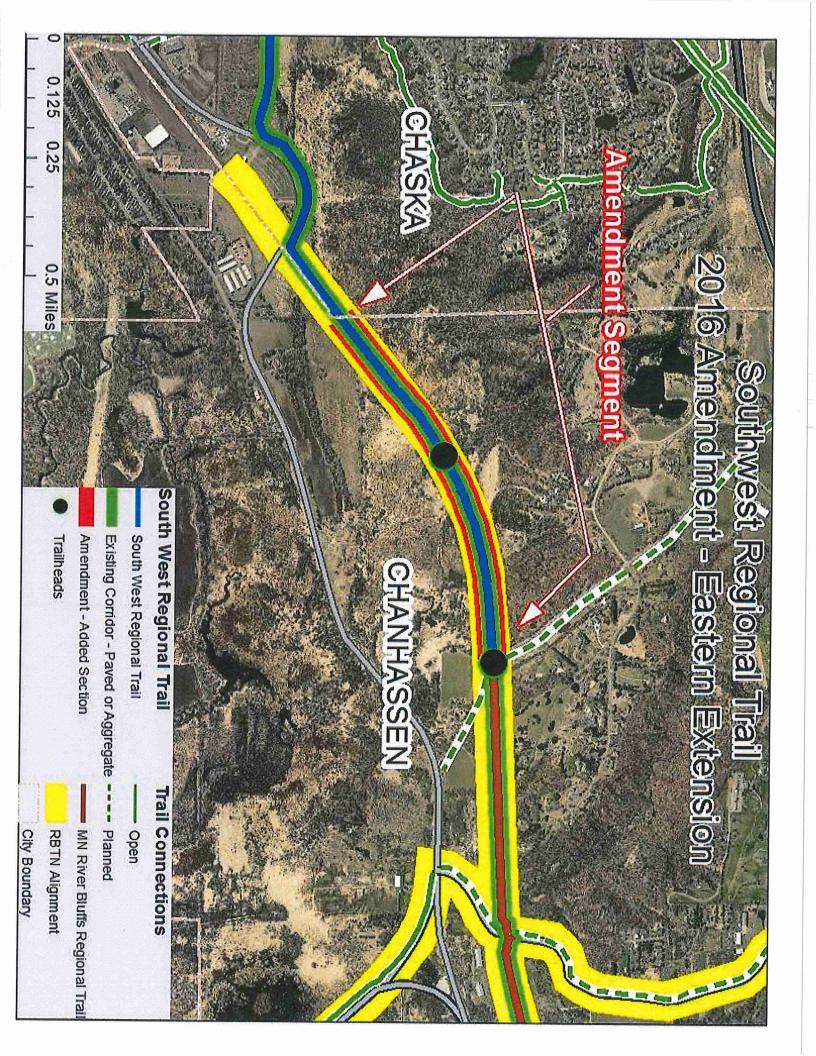
The current mapped terminus of the Southwest Regional Trail Connection is near the border of Chaska and Chanhassen. The proposed amendment would extend the trail alignment from near County Road 61 and the Chaska/ Chanhassen Boarder to Bluff Creek Drive. This alignment is consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and city trail plans.

Amended changes to the master plan are shown in Section I pages 1.3, Section II page 2.4, Section III pages 3.3, 3.5, and 3.7. Additionally an Amendment Segment Map further shows the new eastern limits of the planned trail alignment

Staff is recommending approval of the draft master plan amendment and preparing minor additional changes to Section I page 1.3, substitute "adjacent" for "through", and correct typos. Section II, page 2.4 substitute "resolution" for "letter of support". Section III page 3.1 substitute "adjacent" for "through", pages 3.6 and 3.7 correct text to indicate parking facility is not within the amendment area.

Recommendation

It is requested that the Park Commission recommend approval of the Southwest Regional Trail Connection Master Plan Amendment to the County Board.

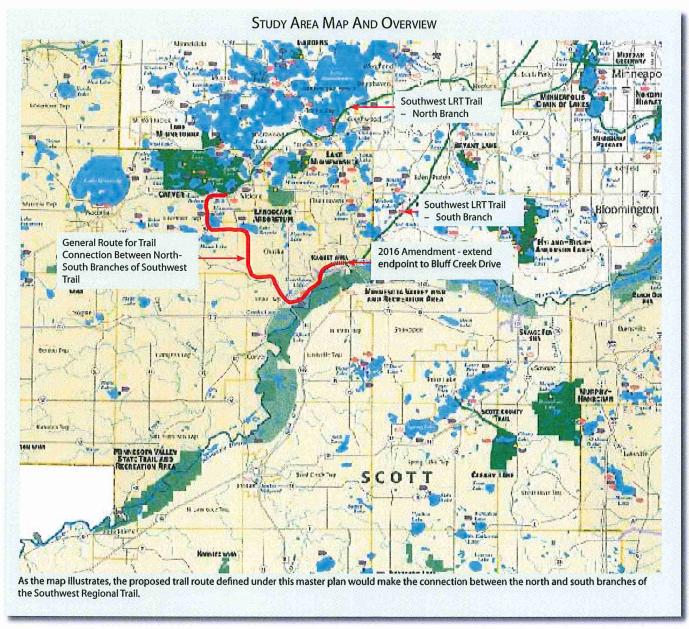


SECTION I

PLANNING CONTEXT / GENERAL BACKGROUND

PROJECT SCOPE

The project focused on preparing a regional trail master plan for the connection between the north and south branches of the Southwest Regional Trail. The southern branch currently ends in the City of Chaska, with the northern branch ending in the City of Victoria. The following map illustrates the general location of the proposed regional trail relative to the two existing trail branches.



RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING A REGIONAL TRAIL CORRIDOR

The primary rationale for developing this regional trail connection is to: 1) link the north and south branches of the Southwest Regional Trail to form a loop and 2) tie together numerous federal, state, regional, and local parks, natural areas, and trails into a cohesive, interlinked system.

In recent years, increasing development pressures in Carver County also heightened the importance of establishing this trail corridor while there is still an opportunity to consider alternative alignments.

INTERCONNECTION WITH PUBLIC PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

As noted, linking together parks and natural areas within the study area is one of the reasons for the regional trail. The following considers some of the key areas that the Southwest Regional Trail helps link together, especially with the addition of the trail connection defined under this master plan.

CARVER PARK RESERVE

Located on the western edge of the Twin Cities, Carver Park Reserve supports a large wildlife population of trumpeter swans, osprey, mink, white-tailed deer, barred owls and numerous waterfowl and songbirds. The park reserve is home to the Lowry Nature Center, the first public environmental education center of its kind in the state. The park offers rolling wooded terrain and interconnected lakes and marshes. The park features miles of trails that wind around the nature center, historic Grimm Farm and the King Waterbird Sanctuary. The trails provide a valuable link to the Southwest Regional Trail. The park also offers boating, angling, and camping opportunities.

The Lowry Nature Center provides a wide variety of nature-oriented programming for school children, adults and families. A 1,700-foot boardwalk winds through marsh and tamarack swamps, while wood-chipped trails through woods allow visitors to observe wildlife.

BRYANT LAKE REGIONAL PARK

Located on Bryant Lake in Eden Prairie, this 170 acre park is nestled among rolling hills, woodlands, wetlands and grasslands offering habitat for deer, waterfowl and a variety of songbirds.

The sand-bottomed Bryant Lake is ideal for swimming, boating and fishing. An enclosed pavilion, available for group reservations from early May through the end of September, is in close proximity to the creative play area, fishing pier and other park amenities.

LAKE MINNEWASHTA REGIONAL PARK

Lake Minnewashta Regional Park is a developing park on the shores of Lake Minnewashta. Facilities completed to date include a swimming beach, bathhouse, reservable picnic shelters, volleyball courts, creative playground, and concessions. Two boat accesses within the park accommodate 35 vehicles with boat trailers. A fishing pier is located north of the beach area within a picnic area.

Approximately five miles of trails meander along the edge of Lake Minnewashta and through forested and prairie areas of this 340 acre-park. In the winter, separate trails are groomed for skiing and walking. Although the park is not directly connected to the Southwest Regional Trail, it will be accessible from the regional trail via local trail systems in the future.

CONNECTION TO MINNESOTA RIVER STATE TRAIL

The Southwest Regional Trail connects with the Minnesota River State Trail that runs between Chaska and Shakopee. The connection point between the trails is at the State Highway 41 bridge crossing the Minnesota River on the south side of downtown Chaska (refer to Trail Segment #1).

CONNECTIONS TO NATURAL AREAS

The Southwest Regional Trail also connects with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) – Chaska Lake Area. The comprehensive plan for the NWR area includes provisions for refuge uses, natural vegetation and habitat protection, and environmental education. The Southwest Regional Trail will connect with nature trails in the Chaska Lake NWR area just outside of downtown Chaska (refer to Trail Segment #1). The regional trail also overlooks the refuge as it traverses along the southern edge of downtown Chaska along the existing levee.

The 2016 amendment to this plan etends the trail on abandonded railroad corridor through the Seminary Fen Scientific and Natural Area (SNA). The Seminary Fen is a rare natural feature that is home to a number of unique and protected plant species. Including this area in the regional trail alignment increases opportunities for usersto connect to the unique natural feature.

No major land use or other conflicts are anticipated with the regional trail alignment as defined under this master plan. Carver County, City of Chaska, and City of Victoria have each approved the master plan and have incorporated the trail's alignment into their local comprehensive parks and trails plans.

Since the majority of the proposed traill, including the eastern extension amended to this plan in 2016, is located within public rights-of-way, land acquisition is not a significant issue of concern for much of the trail. Where the trail is shown to traverse across private property, it is anticipated that land will be obtained under a willing seller basis as part of future developed proposals that would be overseen and approved by the local LGUs.

As shown on the trail segment maps, the master plan provides alternative routes in select areas to provide Carver County, Chaska, and Victoria with some flexibility to work with land owners and developers on determining the best location for the trail at the time of implementation. As development occurs, the local LGU in concert with Carver County will determine which route in these instances best serves the public's best interests while minimizing any conflicts that may arise.

Aside from the trail alignment issues as defined above, no other conflicts with other land uses or proposed projects are envisioned.

2016 AMENDMENT: CHANHASSEN EAST TRAIL EXTENSION

This master plan was amended on MONTH DATE, YEAR to extend the eastern trail terminus. The original plan document set an eastern terminus near County Road 61 near the Chaska/Chanhassen City Boundary. The amendment extends the eastern trail terminus through the Seminary Fen SNA to the intersection of the former rail corridor and Bluff Creek Drive in Chanhassen. Extending the trail by amending this master plan supports improvements to the existing corridor to fill a critical gap in the regional trail network, and enhance user experience.

LAND USE OR OTHER CONFLICTS



With the majority of the trail located in public rights-ofway, conflicts with private land uses are expected to be minimal.

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SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTION —
CARVER COUNTY PARKS

SECTION II

VISION AND PUBLIC VALUES STATEMENT

OVERVIEW

The undertaking of this planning process was based on the presumption that making this connection between the north and south branches of the Southwest Regional Trail would be of high regional and local value. To ensure that the perspectives of all interested individuals and stakeholders were considered, Carver County, in partnership with Chaska and Victoria, undertook an extensive and inclusive public process. This section defines the findings of that process.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision for the master plan is to establish a regional trail that offers high recreational value, which is defined as being:

- Visually appealing (i.e., provide scenic values) by taking advantage of scenic areas where encountered
- · Contiguous, with limited interruptions and impediments to travel
- · Of an acceptable grade suitable for all levels of ability
- · Safe to use for a family or those with limited skills

By creating this connection between the existing branches of the trail, the overall recreational value of the Southwest Regional Trail will be considerably enhanced to better serve residents of the area.

COMMUNITY VALUE OF THE REGIONAL TRAIL

The community value statement defines the benefits that the regional trail would bring to a regional constituency relative to any potential impacts – ranging from safety and crime to property values and loss of privacy. In this context, regional constituency refers to those residing in or traveling to the area for recreational pursuits.

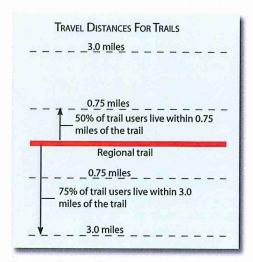
Taken as a whole, the community value statement defines whether or not the perceived benefits of the trail outweigh perceived impacts to justify its development. The following statement summarizes these findings.

COMMUNITY VALUE STATEMENT

With respect to the overall benefits, research clearly indicates that trails offer a very high degree of community value by providing the type of recreational amenity that the majority of the population would actually use and like to have available near their home. As defined in the table on the next page, recreational trends indicate that trail activities are the highest ranked recreational pursuits in this metropolitan region.

In addition, the improved safety for pedestrians and bicyclists as they travel along the proposed trail corridor is a value that some would argue is more important than that of the recreational experience. The community value statement is strengthened by evidence suggesting that potential down sides, such as crime, trespassing, and littering, generally do not manifest themselves to any appreciable degree when a new trail is developed.

In terms of actual users of trails, recent research by the Metropolitan Council indicates that majority of trail users live within three miles of the trail, as the graphic to the left illustrates. The table on the next page provides an overview of the other key research on the community values associated with regional trails.



SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL CONNECTION –
CARVER COUNTY PARKS

COMMUNITY VALUES FROM TRAILS

VARIABLE	Discussion
DEMAND FOR TRAILS	 From a regional perspective, trails are the highest ranked recreational activity. Survey results conclude: Walking, especially within the neighborhood, is the #1 ranked recreational activity, with 85% of respondents being interested in this activity.* Walking in natural areas and large parks is the #2 ranked recreational activity, with 78% of respondents being interested in this activity.* Leading activity for Minnesota adults is walking/hiking outdoors, with 54% actually participating annually.
	Source: Recreational trends survey conducted by the University of Minnesota Survey Research Center on behalf of the Metropolitan Council* and 2004 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey (MNDNR)**
Longer-Term Trends	A ten-year forecast of Minnesota adult outdoor recreation participation was completed by the MNDNR in 2004. With respect to trails, annually participation in walking and hiking outdoors is projected to remain very stable and highest among all outdoor recreational activities. Based on the study, the current 54% rate of actual participation is expected to remain at about that same level out to 2014, the end of the forecast. This is substantially higher than any other outdoor recreational pursuit listed in the study.
USE OF TRAILS	The following summarizes the dynamics of trail use of the Gateway Trail based on regional trail use surveys: • 80% of trail users are adult. • Median age of trail users is 40-44, although youth use is growing. • 80% of trail users live within the county or city where the trail is located. • Proximity of the trail to one's place of residence is very important to discovering it. • Visiting new areas was not all that important to trail users. • 95% use the trail for recreation, 4% for commuting, and 1% for getting to retail stores. • Walking is the most popular use (39%), biking second (31%), and jogging third (18%). • Use of the trail has increased dramatically in the last sixteen years. Source: Metropolitan Council – Twin Cities Regional Trail Visitor Study (1999).
IMPACT OF TRAILS	The following summarizes the results of a survey related to a new trail retrofitted into an area:
On Adjacent Properties	 Usage – 75% of adjacent property owners use the trail (many of which were against the trail being developed). Problems – over 95% of the adjacent property owners reported no problems with the trail (such as loitering, litter, and trespassing). Economic impacts – vast majority reported that they believed that the trail would have no negative impact on their property values, with many believing that it could even increase values. Values – 75% say living near the trail offers distinct advantages, such as ease of access, convenience, exercise, and so forth.
	Source: Lake Wobegon Regional Trail, Stearns County.
POLICING AND CRIME	 Review of policing issues associated with trails within Washington and Ramsey County yields the following: Incidents of crime associated with trails is so low that local police do not keep track of it separately. The contention that trail users routinely commit crimes to adjacent properties is not supported by crime statistics and evidence. Biggest area of concern with crime is at parking lots, where occasionally theft from the cars of trail users occurs (Note: Theft from cars in parking lots is not unique to trails, but occurs at parks, shopping centers, and other areas where the opportunity for a quick getaway exists).
	Source: Washington and Ramsey County Sheriffs Department.
SAFETY OF DEVELOPED TRAILS	 Discussions with local cities that have retrofitted trails into similar settings yields the following with respect to safety for the trail user: Actual and perceived pedestrian safety is improved when off-street trails are added along busy roads simply because people are no longer walking along the shoulder of the road where traffic speeds can be up to 55 MPH and shoulder widths are often very narrow. The incidence of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles at driveway crossings has not been found to be a major issue, with few reported occurrences of accidents (Note, however, that both the driver and the trail user have a responsibility to watch out for each other similar to any crosswalk or sidewalk system common in many cities). Adhering to accepted design standards and practices for trails, including driveway crossings, is important to maintaining a safe pedestrian environment.

POPULATION TRENDS AFFECTING THE REGION

One of the more important trends affecting the region is that the population in the metropolitan area is expected to continue to grow substantially over the next 20 and 50 years. As the following table illustrates, the population in Carver County is expected to be near the top in terms of percentage increase in population over that time period.

POPULATION TRENDS

Population forecasts stratified by regional park agency jurisdiction. (Source: Metropolitan Council System Analysis of the Regional Recreation Open Space System)

	- Propt	Professory varior estimates		Tetal increase from 2000		% increase from 2000	
County/City	2000	2020	2020	2270	7050	2720	203
Caketa County	351,249	450,160	579.4%	104,970	225 <u>,</u> 190	w.	699
Suburban Horm County	646.559	737,430	H17.09	WX970	182,918	16%	778
Virashiryaan County	200,120	250.620	377,002	A5.550	173,962	67%	D//N
Areka County	295,915	050,410	#40,575	54,500	144,465	18%	49%
Scott County	61,590	,37,910	167,452	55,920	105,462	68%	129%
Cover County	66,780	(34,420	145,(44	38,260	75,984	18%	11.2%
Subsubar Ransej Cu	231,020	243,340	263.916	12,320	32.695	5%	1 996
St. Faul	274,500	294,000	301,723	19,500	27,521	7%	10%
Мітнериіз	379,000	000,886	392.656	18,500	22,655	5%	6%
Bloomingson,	8R,500	P1,000	92.978	2,500	4,478	3%	5%
Total	2,408,990	3,097,390	3,518,151	482,400	1,009,162	18%	39%

Note: Suburban Hermepin County does not include Bloomington or Minneapolis Note: Suburban Bornsky County does not include St. Few

Undoubtedly, this population growth trend will increase pressure for developing regional trails to service an expanding population with a wide range of outdoor recreation pursuits and service expectations.

LOCAL INPUT FROM THE PUBLIC PROCESS

Making the connection between the southern and northern branches of the Southwest Regional Trail has been considered to be desirable by the cities of Chaska and Victoria for many years. To ensure public access to the planning process, a number of opportunities for public input were provided in both cities as part of this project, as the following meeting schedule illustrates:

- Victoria Park Commission Meeting May 5, 2005
- Chaska Planning Commission May 11, 2005
- Victoria Planning Commission May 17, 2005
- Chaska City Council May 16th, 2005 resolution adopted
- · Carver County Park Commission June 8th, 2005
- · Victoria City Council August 11, 2005
- Victoria City Council October 13th, 2005 resolution adopted

Public comments and findings from these meetings were consistent with the regional trends and the community value statement previously defined in this section. After taking public comment, there was a general consensus among those on the various boards, commissions, and city councils that the trail would be a positive amenity to their communities and they each look forward to its completion. With the approval of the resolutions in support of the trail connection, the cities of Chaska and Victoria formally adopted the proposed regional trail master plan.

Subsequent to the local meetings, the master plan was publicly reviewed approved and adopted by the Carver County Park Commission and Carver County Board of Commissioners in January and February of 2006.

2016 AMENDMENT: CHANHASSEN EAST TRAIL EXTENSION

The 2016 amendment is considered a minor adjustment, and followed an administrative process. The amendment is a minor adjustment because it adds a trail segment located within a decommissioned railbed in Chanhassen that already operated as a trail at the time of the amendment.

A number of amendment reviews were completed prior to adoption by the County Board. First, a letter of support was obtained from the City of Chanhassen following the City's review. The Carver County Parks Commission then reviewed to make a recommendation to the Carver County Board. Subsequently, the Carver County Board approved submission to the Metropolitan Council for regional review. Finally, upon successful review by the Metropolitan Council, the Carver County Board adopted the amendment to the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan.

INFLUENCE OF THE PUBLIC PROCESS ON PLANNING OUTCOMES

At a community values level, research indicates that a regional trail through the study area is justified and would be successful. Local adoption of the trail plan confirms that the local communities also see considerable value in the trail. By staying within public rights-of-way to the degree possible, the proposed trail alignment also poses the least disruption to private property interests while still fulfilling the goals of the project.

SECTION III

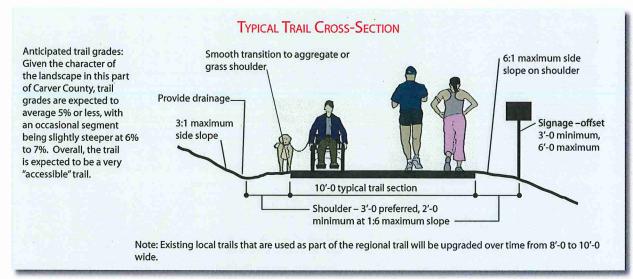
Trail Master Plan

OVERVIEW

The master plan for this regional trail connection consists of a combination of existing local trails and new trail alignments that will be used to link the existing south and north branches of the Southwest Regional Trail. Under the master plan, the local existing trails will be reclassified as regional trails to ensure consistency in development standards, operations, and maintenance. The overall length of the interconnecting trail is 13.1 miles, of which 7.9 miles will be new trail and 5.2 miles will follow existing trail alignments (which are now 8'-0 wide, but will be widened to 10'-0).

Trail Uses And Overall Trail Characteristics

Consistent with regional standards, the trail will be 10'-0 wide and asphalt surfaced to accommodate walkers, bicyclists, inline skaters, and wheelchairs. It will not accommodate any unauthorized motorized uses. The existing local trails that are currently 8'-0 wide will be upgraded over time to 10'-0 to be consistent with the regional standard. The following graphics and photos highlight these trail characteristics and design standards.







(Left photo.) Existing local trails used as part of the regional trail interconnection will be widened to 10'-0 over time.

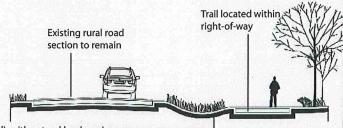
(Right photo.) Wherever feasible, the new regional trail will be developed to a 10'-0 wide standard with some form of vertical and/or horizontal separation from the roadway. (This photo is associated with Section C on Trail Segment Map #1)

RELATIVE TRAIL LOCATIONS

The varying width and character of the public rights-of-ways and trail easements encountered along the trail corridor requires some flexibility in where the trail will be located. The following cross-sections highlight the location of the trail under varying right-of-way and trail easement conditions.



Where right-of way width is limited, the boulevard between the trail will also be limited, with 10'-0 being the preferred minimum. Natural landscaping would be used on these areas.



Boulevard maintained (10+ preferred), with natural landscaping

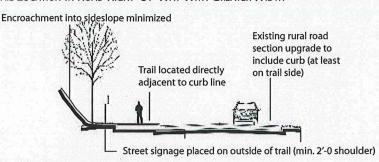
TRAIL LOCATION IN ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH LIMITED WIDTH

Where right-of way width is ample, the boulevard between the trail will be maximized to create a sense of separation between the trail and vehicular traffic. Natural landscaping and ditches would be common in these areas.



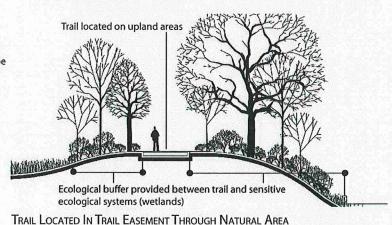
TRAIL LOCATION IN ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH GREATER WIDTH

Where space is very limited due to right-of-way width, topography, or vegetation, the trail may be placed along a curb line to provide a vertical separation between it and the roadway.



TRAIL LOCATION DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO ROADWAY

In areas where the trail is within an easement through a natural area, ecological buffers will be provided on each side of the trail to minimize impacts to sensitive ecological systems.



Overview Of Master Plan Trail Segment 1 Of 3

The cross-section and accompanying photos on the Trail Master Plan Segment Maps 1 - 3 provide additional information on the anticipated location of the trail in rights-of-way or trail easements.

As shown on the corresponding master plan, The Southwest Regional Trail Connection begins on the existing rail to trail corridor at Bluff Creek Drive in Chanhassen, and continues throughin Chaska where at the end of the existing southern branch of the trail follows County Road 61 and Engler Blvd before connecting to the existing Chaska levy system trail. near Flying Cloud Drive/US Highway 212. The southern branch of the trail is currently aggregate surfaced. The following describes each of the trail segments from this point covered by this plan.

2016 AMENDMENT: CHANHASSEN EAST TRAIL EXTENSION

As shown on the 2016 East Trail Extension Amendment map, the 2016 amendment to the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan extends the trail's eastern terminus about 0.75 miles from near the Chaska/Chanhassen city boundary to Bluff Creek Drive in Chanhassen. Completing the extension will create a paved connection from downtown Chaska to the link with the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail across Bluff Creek Drive. This added segment is located within the City of Chanhassen, and incorporates an existing crushed gravel multi-use trail that follows an abandoned railway through the Seminary Fen Scientific and Natural Area (SNA). The added segment is recognized as a Tier 1 Alignment on the Metropolitan Council's Regional Bicycle Transportation Network.

Connections:

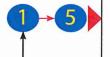
At the western end of the added segment, the trail connects to an existing paved segment of the Southwest Regional Trail that continues east into downtown Chaska. To the west, the trail connects to the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail by crossing Bluff Creek Drive. At this point, a local trail is also planned to follow Bluff Creek Drive north and south. In addition, a future trail is planned to follow Highway 101 up the bluff when roadway improvements are made at that location, completing a trail that will follow Highway 101 from Minnetonka south to Shakopee. In addition to trail connections, this segment connects users to the Seminary Fen SNA, a rare natural feature that is home to a number of unique and protected plant species.

Expected Use:

The trail extension is currently heavily used as it connects two popular regional trails. Annual trail counts published by the Metropolitan Council show use on the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail has consistently increased from 109,000 users in 2012 to 146,500 users in 2014. The first Southwest Regional Trail user count completed in 2014 estimated 639,400 users on the completed sections of the trail. Paving the amended segment will connect these two popular routes, and will likely encourage increased use of both regional trails.

FLYING CLOUD DRIVE COUNTY ROAD 61/ENGLER BOULEVARD/EAST CHASKA CREEK CHANNEL SEGMENT

As shown on the plan, the first segment of trail along <u>County Road 61</u> <u>currently transitions from aggregate to a paved</u> trail located within the existing right-of-way. Once it reaches Engler Boulevard, the trail <u>will-ties</u> into an existing local 8'-0 wide asphalt trail that heads west until it crosses Audubon Road and ties into the existing East Creek Channel trail. An existing parking lot with ample parking is provided at this intersection.



Numbers correspond to photo numbers on Trail Segment Map 1 of 3 to provide an approximate reference between the text and the mapping. The 8'-0 asphalt East Creek Channel trail follows the channel south all the way down to the Minnesota River. The grade-separated crossings along this segment provide a safe, unimpeded trail experience separated from vehicular traffic.



LEVEE TRAIL SEGMENT ALONG THE MINNESOTA RIVER

Once to the Minnesota River, the existing 8'-0 asphalt trail continues southwest along the top of the levee, offering pleasant views of the edge of the city and natural areas along the river banks. Several overlooks are already provided, as shown on the plan. The trail continues along the levee until it reaches 1st Street West, where there is an at-grade crossing.

A number of parking areas are provided along the levee section of the trail, which collectively should be adequate for day-to-day trail use. There is also room to expand these facilities in the future if warranted by demand. Street parking in the nearby downtown area and residential streets is also available on a periodic, low level basis.

At the State Highway 41 bridge the trail interconnects with the Minnesota River Valley State Trail that runs between connects Chaska and Shakopee. From this point, the levee trail also connects with the downtown area and an existing public plaza and park area, which provides a pleasant rest area and trailhead location.

At the intersection with 1st Street West, the regional trail will connect with a spur trail over to the Chaska Lake NWR, which is part of the larger refuge system along the river and provides nature trails and interpretive opportunities that complement the regional trail.



RAILROAD CORRIDOR TO FLYING CLOUD DRIVE/US HIGHWAY 212 SEGMENT

From the 1st Street West at-grade crossing, the existing 8'-0 asphalt trail heads northeast following an existing railroad corridor until it ends at a local street, as shown on the plan. The existing trail crosses the railroad tracks at a midway point along this segment where sightlines in both directions appear adequate. As the regional trail plan is implemented, the safety of this crossing should be reevaluated to ensure that it meets regional standards for the anticipated levels and types of use.

The new segment of the trail starts at the intersection with the local street with an at-grade crossing, then heads northwest across West Chaska Creek on the north side of the street. Since the bridge crossing the creek is too narrow, an adjacent pedestrian bridge will be required to accommodated the trail.

At Flying Cloud Drive/US Highway 212 another at-grade crossing is encountered at a signalized intersection, which provides a relatively safe crossing movement for those using the trail. The trail then continues northerly along the west side of Flying Cloud Drive_until it reaches an at-grade crossing of Creek Road. Given the limited right-of-way and grades along Flying Cloud Drive, the trail will likely be located in close proximity to the road edge. As shown on cross-section "C" on the plan, a curb is recommended along this segment of road to create some vertical separation between the trail and roadway to enhance pedestrian safety.



CHASKA CREEK AND CREEK ROAD SEGMENT

From Flying Cloud Drive, the regional trail follows the Creek Road right-of-way in a northerly direction. As shown on the plan, a portion of this road will ultimately be abandoned as part of the Chaska's long range transportation plan resulting in the reconfiguration of roads in this area.

Overview Of Master Plan Trail Segment 2 Of 3

Initially, the trail will stay within the right-of-way on the north side of Creek Road from Flying Cloud Drive until it reaches a proposed cul-de-sac as shown on the plan. From the cul-de-sac, the trail will be placed on what will be an abandoned road bed, which significantly reduces development impacts along the steepest and most constricted part of this ravine area along Chaska Creek. (This segment of trail will be very pleasant.)

At the northern end of the Creek Road where another cul-de-sac is planned, the trail will once again be located on the north side of the roadway within the right-of-way until it reaches Engler Boulevard, where there will be an at-grade, signalized crossing. From Engler, the trail heads north along Clover Ridge Drive, where an existing 8'-0 wide asphalt trail already exists. Note that the master plan also identifies an alternate route that starts at this intersection, which is considered in more detail under the following description for Trail Segment 2.



Numbers correspond to photo numbers on Trail Segment Map 2 of 3 to provide an approximate reference between the text and the mapping.

CLOVER RIDGE DRIVE SEGMENT

Heading north from Engler Boulevard along Clover Ridge Drive, the existing trail on the west side of the road continues through a new development area, as shown on the plan. From the railroad tracks, the trail will be located in the right-of-way of a future local road that will connect to Victoria Drive. Although this alignment will work, it is a bit constricted in some areas though a new development and additional signage may be required to ensure that trail users recognize where the regional trail goes.

The master plan also includes an alternate trail alignment in this area that would make use of roadway that is anticipated to be abandoned by the City as part of the local transportation plan. If and when that occurs, the corridor would be potentially available for regional trail use. The main advantage of this trail route is that it is more contiguous and has fewer road crossings than the previously defined existing trail. It also connects more directly with the local school and park than the existing trail.

The determination as to which of the trail routes between Engler Boulevard and Victoria Drive is best suited for the regional trail will be determined at the time of plan implementation when the dynamics of roadway abandonment, future development patterns, and any local resident issues are better understood.



SHADY OAK DRIVE SEGMENT (WITH GUERNSEY AVENUE ALTERNATE)

From Victoria Drive, there are two route options shown on the plan. The first alignment follows Shady Oak Drive, with an alternate alignment following GuernseyVictoria Avenue. The determination as to which of these trail routes is best suited for the regional trail will be made at the time of plan implementation when the dynamics of future development patterns are better understood. The route that is ultimately the most contiguous with the fewest roadway crossings at that time will be selected.

Following either of these routes, the trail will be located within the road right-of-way until it reaches the proposed city park as shown on the plan. Once to this parcel, the trail will traverse through the park in some manner consistent with its to-be-developed master plan. Note that the section of road on the south side of Lake Bavaria will be abandoned in the future, with the roadway being converted to the regional trail, as shown on the plan.

At this point, at-grade crossings are being proposed across Victoria Drive for both of these routes. Note that grade-separated crossings or signalized intersections may need to be considered at the time of implementation based on actual traffic counts and safety considerations.



GUERNSEY AVENUE TO CHURCH LAKE BOULEVARD (CSAH43) SEGMENT

At Guernsey Avenue, a grade-separated crossing is proposed to maximize crossing safety and trail continuity. Existing road grades in this area should provide adequate space for a box-culvert type underpass.

Once across Guernsey Avenue, the trail heads west over to Church Lake Boulevard. The first part of this trail segment has been constructed as part of a 2005/2006 development, as shown on the plan. From the end of this existing trail to Church Lake Boulevard, the trail alignment traverses across currently undeveloped land. As shown on the plan, the optimal route follows wetland and lake edges to take advantage of the natural setting and scenic qualities of the area. Assuming this route is followed, an adequate buffer between the trail and any sensitive ecological systems encountered will be provided. Providing an adequate buffer between the trail and any future development should also be considered at the local level as development occurs to ensure that the natural character of this trail segment is retained.

Given the extent of wetlands and other land use uncertainties in this area, an alternative trail alignment on the south side of the lake is included in the master plan. As shown on the plan, this segment will have to be integrated with any future development to ensure that an adequate trail corridor is provided. Although this is a viable option, the route adjacent to the lake is more appealing and is considered the highest priority.

Once to Church Lake Boulevard, the trail will have to cross the road due to limited right-of-way and excessive grades further to the north along the road. A grade-separated crossing is shown on the plan at this location for safety and maintaining trail continuity. If that is not possible, relocating the crossing to an intersection is an acceptable approach, albeit less desirable since it forces trail users go out of their way to make the crossing.

After the crossing, the trail will head north staying within the right-of-way on the west side of Church Lake Boulevard.

Heading north on the west side of Church Lake Boulevard/County Road 43, the trail continues in the right-of-way, making an at-grade crossing at Tellers Road. From there, it continues north along the road until it branches off and heads north through a rapidly developing area, as shown on the plan. The trail corridor through this undeveloped area is already part of Victoria's local trail plan, which will ensure that it will be integrated into future developments as they occur.

As the trail corridor approaches the small lake, it turns north and follows an existing farm road through a wetland area. This route was selected to avoid any additional impacts to the wetlands in this area and to take advantage of the natural, scenic qualities and views of the surrounding area.

On the north side of the lake, the proposed trail corridor connects with the abandoned rail grade that has already been established as a trail corridor further to the east. Following this rail grade, the trail ultimately connects with the northern branch of the Southwest Regional Trail near a small local park, where a small parking lot is provided.

Since the regional trail traverses through or near a variety of park areas, downtown districts, schools, and other public facilities, the need to develop standalone parking lots and other facilities specifically for the regional trail is very limited. With respect to parking, the existing lots as shown on the plans are expected to be sufficient to accommodate trail users driving to the trail.

Should demand warrant, there are several locations where parking could be expanded. This includes providing additional parking along the levee in Chaska and adding parking near the trail at Carver Park Reserve.

The eastern trail extension, amended to this plan in 2016, includes one trailhead location and another location for informational signage. A parking area exists at the northeast corner of the trail's intersection with Bluff Creek Drive. As the trail develops, enhanced wayfinding signage and paving the

Overview Of Master Plan Trail Segment 3 Of 3



Numbers correspond to photo numbers on Trail Segment Map 3 of 3 to provide an approximate reference between the text and the mapping.

TRAILHEADS AND PARKING

parking area would be appropriate improvements to this location. Given the parking area's proimity to the Seminary Fen, stormwater management will be an important consideration when paving. Best management practices, including the potential for pervious pavement treatments, will be explored and incorporated to capture, and treat runoff as appropriate.

Informational signage will be installed near the half-way point of this segment to inform trail users about the Seminary Fen, the benefits of this unique ecological system, and its location relative to the trail.

DESIGN ELEMENTS TO MEET SPECIAL NEEDS

As defined by the master plan, the regional trail is aligned to accommodate a wide-range of user groups with varying abilities and offers access to many populations.

With reasonable grades throughout, there is ample opportunity for trail visitors of all abilities to find a place to recreate.

Under current policy, Carver County Parks will not charge a fee for use of the trail, making it affordable to all populations.

Public Services

Consistent with other comments, there are no major new public services required to support the trail other than those previously identified in this section.

SECTION V

IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

OVERVIEW

Implementing the master plan will require significant initial and long-term capital investments for physical development, operations, and maintenance. Implementation is expected to occur over a number of years as funding and other resources become available and plans become refined and ready for implementation.

The following considers an overall strategy for implementing the master plan and managing the trail once it is completed. This section also considers Carver County's approach to operations and management as it pertains to the trail. Implementation components include:

- Acquisition Plan
- Development Cost Projections
- Implementation Strategy and Priorities
- Management and Operations
- Public Involvement in Implementing the Master Plan

This following considers each of these in greater detail.

Acquisition Plan

As shown on the master plan maps, most of the trail, including the eastern extension amended to this plan in 2016, is located in the public right-of-way. In the limited situations where it traverses across private property, a trail right-of-way or easement will be sought by the County in concert with the LGU as part of future land development proposals or direct negotiations with the land owner. If land acquisition is not feasible through local park or trail dedication or by other negotiated means, Carver County will seek acquisition funding assistance through the Metropolitan Council.

Where feasible, a 100 foot right-of-way or easement width will be used as the basis for negotiation and determining the cost for acquisition. This easement width is recommended to provide adequate space for the trail and ecological and visual buffers, drainageways, and utilities. Note that the master plan does allow Carver County and the local cities some flexibility on the final width of rights-of-ways or easements to accommodate site-specific concerns of property owners and the realities of negotiating with a developer or land owner under a willing seller context.

TRAIL EASEMENT ACQUISITION COST PROJECTIONS

Given the rapidly changing land values and the typical sensitivity of the issue to local land owners, acquisition cost projections have not been established. Once the master plan has been adopted, Carver County will maintain an open a dialogue with the local cities and affected property owners to stay abreast of market rate acquisition costs and their level of interest in providing a right-of-way or an easement. At the time of trail funding, Carver County will formally establish property values for review and approval by the Carver County Board and Metropolitan Council. To-date, no property owner has been individually contacted about acquisition or property valuations.

DEVELOPMENT COST PROJECTIONS

Cost projections for developing the trail are on a unit basis based on typical average costs for developing similar trails in Carver County and other counties and local municipalities. Typically, development costs to build a 10 foot wide asphalt trail range from \$140,000 to \$180,000/mile, with standard grading and site preparation costs included. For this estimate, an average cost of \$160,000/mile is used, with additional line items provided as needed for special features.

For estimating purposes, the cost to upgrade an 8'-0 trail to 10'-0 assumes that an overlay would be placed across the whole trail. An average cost of \$80,000/mile is used for this purpose.

The following table defines the projected cost for developing the optimal trail route only. Alternate routes are not considered.

Ітем -	Description	Cost Estimate
New Trails	Development of 7.9 miles of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide. Includes 2.5 inches of asphalt and 7 inches of Class 5 aggregate base. Also includes basic grade preparation. \$160,000/mile was used.	\$1,264,000
Upgrade Existing Trails	Upgrading of 5.2 miles of existing paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide. Includes 2.5 inches of asphalt over existing trail + extra base work. Also includes basic grade preparation. \$80,000/mile was used.	\$416,000
Trail Box Culverts	Two box culverts under roads at \$90,000/ each	\$180,000
Trail Amenities	Basic support amenities, including information signage, trailhead kiosks, benches, picnic tables, and related.	\$90,000
Misc.	Extra construction related to trail development, including native vegetation reestablishment/enhancement, retaining walls, storm sewers, etc.	\$150,000
	Total Master Plan Cost Estimate	\$2,100,000
Profess	ional Fees (Survey, Design, Engineering) @ 15%	\$315,000

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES

Optimally, full development of the trail under one phase would be the most efficient and serve the broadest public need. Realistically, actual implementation of the master plan will occur over a period of time as funding becomes available and the remaining trail rights-of-way can be acquired as development occurs. The timing of local roadway realignments and abandonments will also factor into the time frame for trail development along some segments.

PROJECT PHASING AND PRIORITIES

The implementation of the master plan is expected to start in Chaska, where the first priority will be for Carver County to negotiate with the City to take over the responsibility for operating, maintaining, and redeveloping the existing local trails that are identified as being part of this regional trail. Carver County's operation of the trail will be consistent with its established policies. This does not include plowing the trails in the winter, although the County will allow the City to take on this responsibility under a separate agreement, if so requested.

The second implementation priority is for Carver County to continue to work with each of the local cities on securing trail rights-of-ways as development occurs to accommodate the trail alignment as shown on the master plan. This is expected to occur over the next five years or less, given the current pace of development in this area.

The third implementation priority will be to fill in any gaps that remain. This will occur as funding allows over time.

The eastern trail extension, amended to this plan in 2016, will be paved to regional standards in 2017.

Management And Operations

Carver County is an implementing regional park agency of the Metropolitan Regional Park System. As an implementing agency, Carver County plans, operates and maintains regional parks and trails. The Metropolitan Council establishes policies governing regional parks and trails. The Council's capital improvement program budgets and prioritizes funds for the acquisition, development and redevelopment of regional parks and trails. Matching funds are provided by the State of Minnesota to the Metropolitan Council for capital improvements to the Regional Park System. The Metropolitan Council distributes capital improvement funds to implementing regional park agencies.

Carver County Parks is charged with the management and operation of the County's parks and trails system, including the trail defined by this master plan. The Carver County Board of Commissioners establishes policies and ordinance for the park and trail system. The County Board sets a budget for operations and maintenance as well as capital improvements for the Parks Department.

The Parks Commission, appointed by the County Board of Commissioners, serves as an advisory committee advocate for County parks and trails. Specific responsibilities include:

- Review proposals and make recommendations concerning park and trail acquisition
- Update the park and trail section of the County Comprehensive Plan
- Prepare master plans for regional parks and trails
- · Recommend park operating policies and fees
- Perform fact finding tasks as directed by the County Board

ORDINANCES

Carver County will be amending its park ordinance to govern public use and enjoyment of the Southwest Regional Trail Connection. The ordinance will incorporate pertinent Minnesota statutes and address the following issues:

- Regulation of Public Use
- Regulation of General Conduct
- Regulations pertaining to General Park Land Operations
- Protection of Property, Structures, and Natural Resources
- Regulation of Recreation Activity
- Regulation of Motorized Vehicles and Parking

A copy of the ordinance will be available through Carver County.

ENFORCEMENT

Trail users will be informed of trail rules and regulations in a variety of ways. Kiosks and signs will be strategically located to address specific information about allowable trail uses, permitted and prohibited activities, fees, and directions. The Carver County Sheriff's Department responds to emergencies and criminal complaints.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

The Parks Division has an annual operations and maintenance budget of approximately \$780,000 to operate and maintain the County's park and trail system with approximately 6 permanent employees. In addition, approximately 12 seasonal employees are hired each year as maintenance workers and gate attendants.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of facilities and lands is essential to protect public investment, enhance natural resource qualities and achieve the County's goals of providing users clean, safe, enjoyable year round park experiences. Carver County Parks Division has a clearly defined maintenance program. Reporting to the Park Director is the Lead Park Keeper who directs full and part-time maintenance workers in the maintenance and operations of the park system.

Accomplishing the maintenance needs of this regional trail will add new challenges. As trails and other park land and facilities are further developed, new or expanded maintenance services will need to be provided. Carver County recognizes the need to remain committed to the maintenance needs of parks and trails. The County will budget additional resources as appropriate to operate and maintain new units of the park system.

OUTREACH AND MARKETING

Carver County continues to expand its outreach effort, in an effort to improve public awareness of its park and trail facilities, programs, and services. This outreach effort has various components, including the following:

- Printed Materials: Carver County has developed and distributes on a regular basis brochures and maps, including trail and park maps and picnic, camping, and other brochures. Park and trail fliers are also distributed to County departments, libraries, community agencies, and other contacts throughout the community.
- Electronic Communication: Carver County has a web page to inform citizens about the County's functions and services (e.g., Park Commission meetings, the master planning process, trails, park facilities, and programs). In addition, the public can contact the Parks office through the County's e-mail system.
- Other Outreach: Other forms of outreach and marketing include displays at the Carver County Fair, articles in the County Commissioners'

quarterly newspaper, the production of flyers and brochures and the display of information at County Service Centers and park kiosks. The County also publishes news releases and advertisements in local community and metropolitan area newspapers that highlight upcoming programs and facility openings. The County also promotes park and trail use through feature articles and presentations to other County departments and local agencies.

Marketing Initiatives: Carver County will continue to expand its marketing
efforts over time to increase public awareness, understanding, and use of
park facilities, services and programs. In addition, the marketing plan will
identify the need to expand and diversify marketing and communication
efforts to advance park use by minority populations and special needs
groups.

2016 AMENDMENT: CHANHASSEN EAST TRAIL EXTENSION

The property for the segment added by this amendment is owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA). A joint agreement will grant Carver County Parks the authority to operate, maintain, and manage the trail. HCRRA will maintain ownership of the property. Operation, maintenance, and management by Carver County Parks will be consistent with this section of the plan. Carver County Parks has obtained a letter of support from HCRRA for the proposed trail segment.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING THE MASTER PLAN

Public involvement and comment will continue to be sought during the design and construction phase to ensure that any individual concerns about trail development are addressed in a good-faith manner. In addition, forums for broader public input (e.g., open houses and presentations) are also envisioned as needed to communicate and exchange ideas with interested citizens.

The objectives associated with involving citizens in the implementation process include:

- Determine who the stakeholders are and their interest in a particular segment of the trail
- Understand their needs and unique perspectives
- · Identify and understand concerns and problems
- Develop alternatives and find appropriate solutions with input from stakeholders

In addition, Carver County has an appointed Park Commission that advises the County Board on development initiatives within the county. The public is welcome to attend its regularly scheduled meetings. Also, Carver County is continuing to develop numerous tools to provide a consistent level of communication with interested citizens, as previously defined.

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Carver County Parks

Department of Public Works

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MEMO

TO: Members of the Park Commission

FROM: Marty Walsh, Parks Director

SUBJECT: Small Capital Project Repairs and Purchases

DATE: May 6, 2016

For awareness and discussion, the attached listing of Small Capital Repairs and Purchases are items planned or under consideration for the 2016 season. These items represent higher priority needs to maintain existing buildings and grounds, address safety considerations.

Funding for the projects is largely dedicated revenue collected from park fees and designated for maintaining existing park facilities.

Staff will present slides depicting the project items. It is desired that the Park Commission review the planned and proposed listing and provide additional input or make suggestions.

2016 SMALL CAPITAL PROJECT REPAIRS AND PURCHASES

<u>Project</u>	<u>Priority</u>	
Painting at BP Barn, House	B1	\$ 17,750
LMP #5 Counter Replacements	B1	\$ 12,000
Playground Repairs	Α	\$ 25,000
LMP Iron Removal System	Α	\$ 12,910
LMP Boards for Playground walk	Α	\$ 1,900
BP Praire Shelter Roof Replace	Α	\$ 4,000
Waconia Shelter Roof	Α	\$ 5,000
Waconia Restroom Roof Replace	Α	\$ 3,000
Purchase of AED's	Α	\$ 5,200
Mis Concrete Repairs	B1	\$ 5,000
BP Park Barn Deck Replace	B1	\$ 13,500
Tree Removal DRT	Α .	\$ 10,000
BP Restroom Floors	В	\$ 8,600
Electric Locks	Α	\$ 16,100
BP Shop Sofit repairs	B1	
BP Tennis Court Removal	B1	
LMP Curb	B1	
Baylor Park Bridge Repair	Α	

Total \$ 139,960