



CARVER COUNTY SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL

VICTORIA TO CHASKA

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Carver County Parks

WSB PROJECT NO. 12391-00



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Section I:

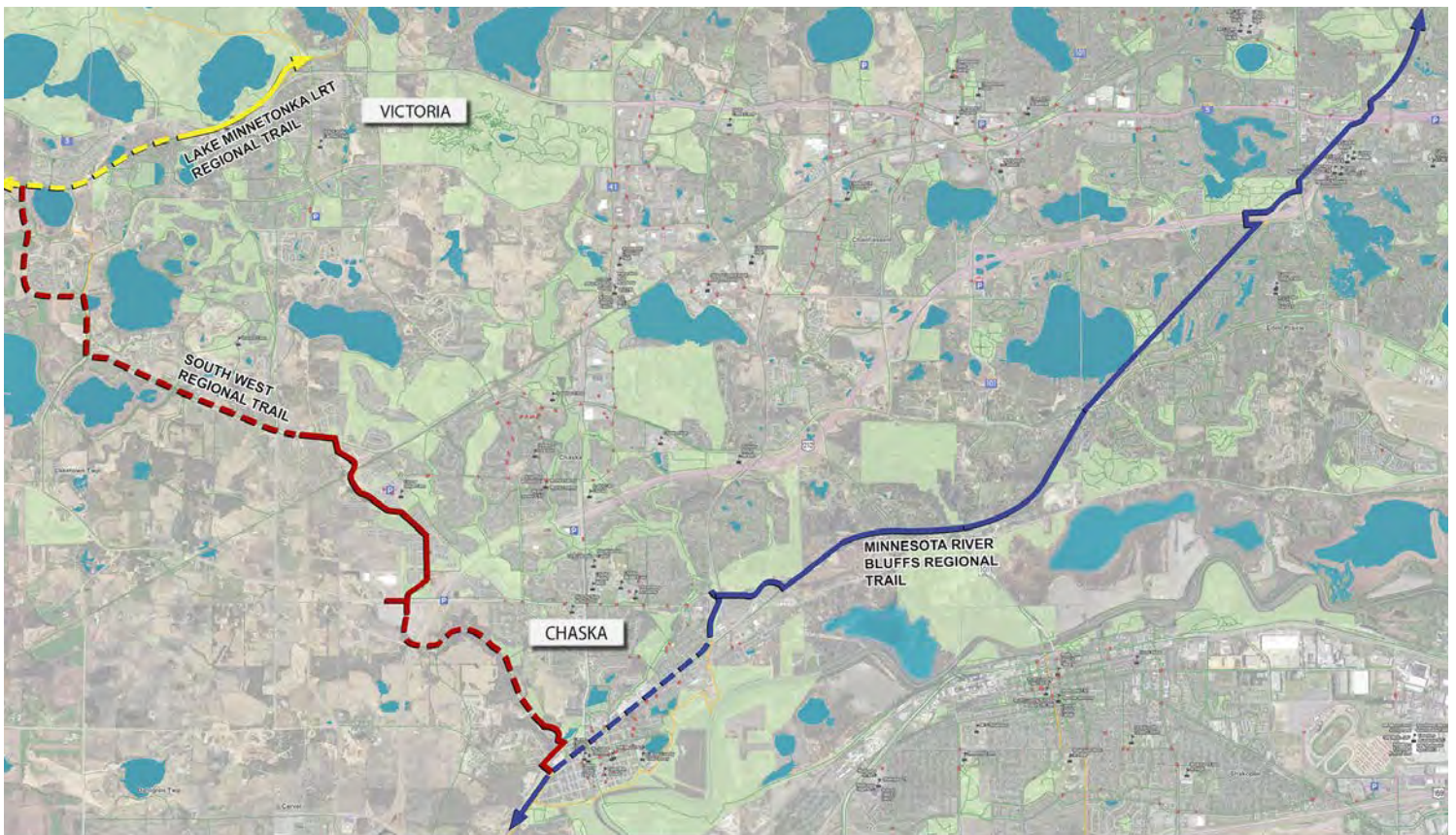
Planning Context / Background

Project Scope

The Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) Master Plan Amendment identifies a crucial linking trail connecting the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail to the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (MRBRT) between the cities of Victoria and Chaska. This is a plan amendment that includes proposed realignments and reclassification of trail segments for both the SWRT and MRBRT.

The following map illustrates the general locations of the existing and proposed trail systems.

STUDY AREA MAP AND OVERVIEW



AS THE MAP ILLUSTRATES, THE PROPOSED TRAIL ROUTE DEFINED UNDER THIS MASTER PLAN WOULD MAKE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TWO REGIONAL TRAIL ROUTES.



Project History

In 2006 Carver County prepared the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan identifying a trail that would link the north and south branches of the Southwest LRT trail segments together between Victoria and Chaska. The Southwest Regional Trail would connect to the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) to the north and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail (MRBRT) to the south.

In 2016, Carver County submitted an amended Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan document to illustrate the extension of the southern trail parameters of the Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) by Chaska to end at Bluff Creek Drive where it would connect with the MRBRT. This added section of trail aligned on an abandoned railroad corridor previously owned by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCRRRA) for light rail transportation, with a permit granted to Carver County for this one mile section of trail, and is currently paved with bituminous surfacing. The remainder of the trail extending northeast to Pioneer Trail along the abandoned railroad corridor remained the Minnesota

River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail, with a permit granted to Three Rivers Park District from the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCRRRA) for this approximate two mile section of trail.

The segment of the MRBRT from County Road 61 to Pioneer trail consists of one mile paved surface and two miles of aggregate. The MRBRT extends along the Minnesota River Valley bluff adjacent to the Minnesota DNR Scientific and Natural Area of the Seminary Fen (NSA) through natural settings, including woodlands and scenic vistas located along the trail corridor.

The MRBRT extends through Chanhassen, Eden Prairie and Hopkins. A portion of this trail was destroyed by landslides in 2014 which remained closed between Eden Prairie and Hwy 101 with detours provided until the trail reconstruction project was completed in 2021.

In 2018, Carver County submitted an Acquisition Amendment Plan to identify the lands owned by the HCRRRA to be acquired by Carver County, as the HCRRRA wanted to divest itself of the former railroad corridor.

PROJECT HISTORY AT-A-GLANCE

2006

Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan is prepared

2016

Carver County amended 2006 Master Plan, former HCRRRA land is acquired

2018

Carver County submitted an Acquisition Amendment Plan for MRBRT

2022

New SWRT Master Plan Amendment replaces all previous documents



in Carver County. The HCRRA and Carver County entered into an agreement to work together to secure funding and fix the slope failure. Upon completing the slope failure repair, the property was deeded to Carver County for the purpose of trail and natural resource preservation and stewardship.

The properties purchased by Carver County start from approximately County Road 61 in Chaska and extend to the eastern county line near Pioneer Trail in Eden Prairie. This acquisition resulted in approximately 90 acres of land and 3 miles of trail located within the corridor. The segment of the SWRT between Bluff Creek Drive and County Road 61 was further reclassified to be an extension of the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and designated as a recreational destination trail.

The 2021 Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment replaces all of the previous Southwest Regional Trail master plans and amendments.

RATIONALE FOR THE REGIONAL TRAIL CORRIDOR

The primary rationale for developing the Southwest Regional Trail corridor remains consistent with previous goals to:

- 1) link the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail with the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail, 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 ahead of ongoing development. Some of the previous proposed SWRT alignments have had to be reconsidered due to lost opportunities as developments took place inconsistent with previous goals and identified trail routes.

It is imperative that the SWRT link be developed appropriately to create a large loop trail system of a high quality meeting regional design standards.

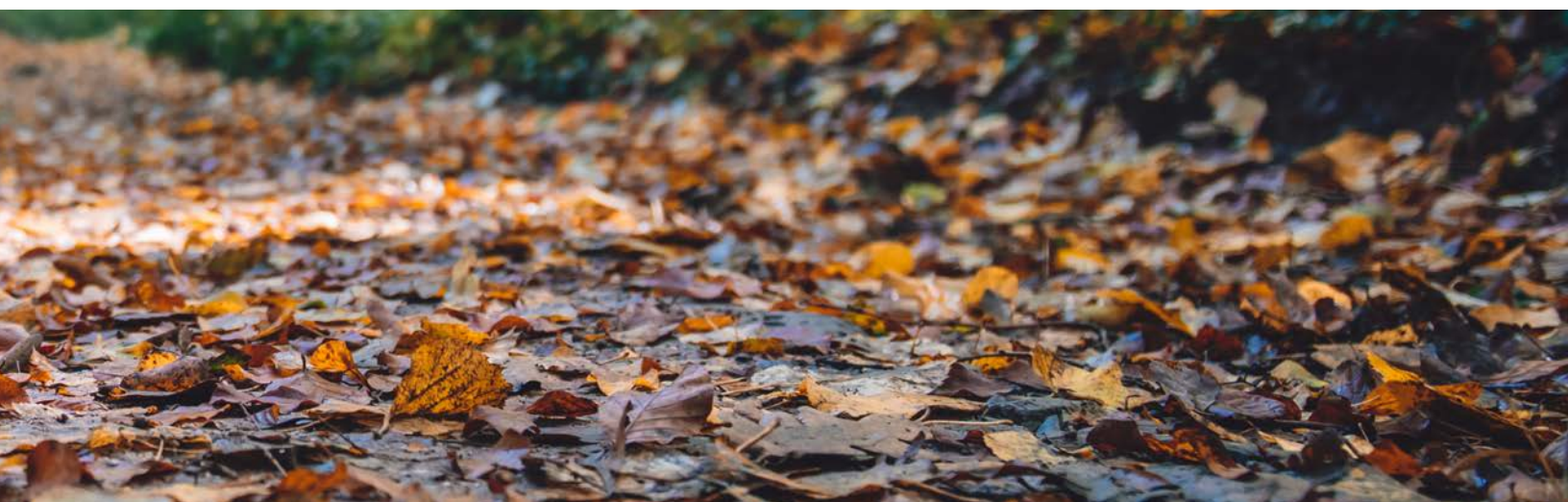


Connection to Parks and Natural Areas

Connecting people to parks, natural areas and other primary destinations within the study area is one of the fundamental reasons of regional trail systems, with loop systems highly valued by trail users.

The Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) will link together the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail (MRBRT) and the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT), thereby creating a large loop trail system providing access to numerous types of natural settings, recreation and destination areas.

The MRBRT also has a trail connection to the Highway 101 pedestrian trail that extends into Shakopee for access to the Minnesota Valley State Trail trail located on the south side of the Minnesota River, creating a loop that links back into downtown Chaska along CSAH 41.



The following considers some of the key parks that the SWRT will link together through its connection between the MRBRT and the LMRT, thereby creating a large loop trail system providing access to numerous types of natural settings, recreation and destination areas.



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 offers rolling wooded terrain and interconnected lakes and marshes and features miles of trails that wind around the nature center, historic Grimm Farm and the King Waterbird Sanctuary. The park trails provide a valuable link to the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail.

The park reserve is also home to the Lowry Nature Center, the first public environmental education center of its kind in the state that provides 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. The park also offers boating, angling, archery, and camping opportunities.



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 340 acre park located on the eastern shores of Lake Minnewashta. Facilities completed to date include a swimming beach, bathhouse, reservable picnic shelters, volleyball courts, creative playground, concessions, fishing piers, off-leash dog park, and year-round trails. A boat access within the park accommodates 48 vehicles with boat trailers.

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



LOCAL PARKS

Local parks either located directly along these regional trail systems, or linked by local trails, are also primary destinations for a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. Some examples include:

- Fireman’s Park in Chaska
- Riley Lake Park in Eden Prairie
- Miller Park in Eden Prairie

Natural Areas

The trail systems will link people to significant natural resource areas, such as the Seminary Fen Scientific and Natural Area (SNA) located along the MRBRT. 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 users to connect to the unique natural features.

The trails also provide access to various locations of the Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The comprehensive plan for the NWR includes provisions for refuge uses, natural vegetation and habitat protection and environmental education.

As noted previously, the regional trails will also connect with the local Chaska levee trail that traverses along the southern edge of downtown Chaska along the Minnesota River levee where it connects to the MRBRT at both ends allowing pedestrian access to the natural ecological systems along the Minnesota River in several locations.



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Section II:

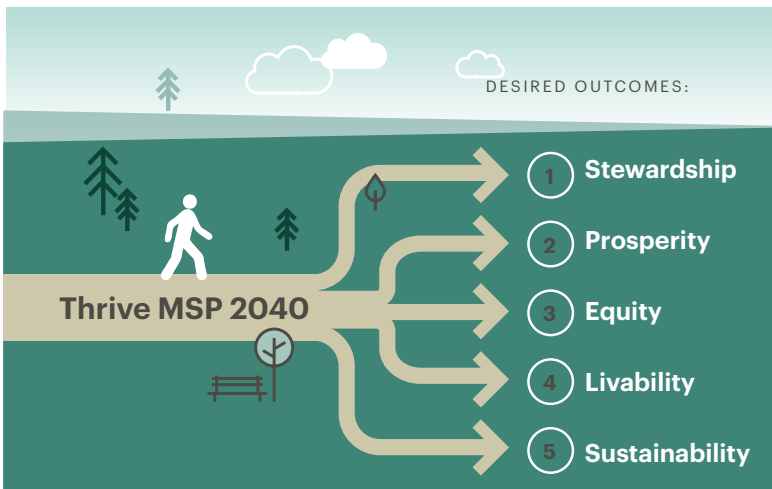
Project Vision





Project Vision

The Metropolitan Council’s comprehensive plan, Thrive MSP 2040, adopted in 2014, establishes a shared regional vision for the park and trail systems that outlines the five desired outcomes.



SOURCE: METROPOLITAN COUNCIL THRIVE MSP 2040

The vision for the SWRT 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 two trails, the overall recreational value of the SWRT will be considerably enhanced to better serve residents of the area by creating a loop system and would support the desired outcomes of the Thrive MSP 2040 vision.



Carver County 2040 Plan

The SWRT meets the vision, values and goals as identified in the Carver County 2040 Parks, Open Space & Trails Plan, as follows:

- Fostering the health and well-being of Carver County, its residents and businesses by providing a balanced network of parks, recreational lands, and conserved open space sufficient to meet present and future needs
- Preserving the geographical characteristics and environmental/high value natural resource areas for historic, cultural, and educational purposes
- Providing areas of diverse natural resources as settings for outdoor recreational activities consistent with regional standards
- Preserving cultural resources for their intrinsic and historical values
- Providing residents with facilities to support a variety of enjoyable recreational activities located in a physically attractive setting
- Ensuring that recreational opportunities are affordable and accessible (by various modes of transportation) to all citizens.
- Fostering a fully integrated and seamless system of regional, local, state, and federal parks, trails, and conservation lands

VISION STATEMENT

“Where the future embraces the past in keeping Carver County a great place to live, work, and play for a lifetime.”



Community Trail Values

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 summarizes these findings.

COMMUNITY VALUES FROM TRAILS

VARIABLE	DISCUSSION
<p>DEMAND AND USE OF TRAILS</p>	<p>From a regional perspective, trails are the highest ranked recreational activity. Survey results conclude:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking and walking rank the #1 activity for regional park and trail users followed by bicycling, then jogging and running, indicating trails as the highest demand for recreation. • A high percentage of regional park and trail users have used the park and trail previously with Carver County noted as having more frequent usage. • Carver County regional trail users surveyed indicated little to no concerns regarding safety on trails. • Summer 2019 visitors to the Regional Park & Trail System included an estimated 12,000 scooter-riders and 387,000 cyclists. • The regional system includes almost 400 miles of trails, with annual trail use reaching over 15 million visits. • Annual use estimates for Carver County between 2015 and 2019 went from approximately 690,000 to 790,000 <p>SOURCE: METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REGIONAL PARKS SYSTEM VISITOR STUDY, NOVEMBER 2016 AND METROPOLITAN COUNCIL - RESEARCH ON THE TWIN CITIES REGIONAL PARKS & TRAILS 2020.</p>
<p>LONGER-TERM TRENDS</p>	<p>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.</p>

CARVER COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - GOAL POST 3

To provide residents with a high quality and interconnected trail and bikeway system for recreation, fitness, and transportation and as a means to tie parks and open spaces together with local communities.

VARIABLE	DISCUSSION
IMPACT OF TRAILS ON ADJACENT PROPERTIES	<p>The following summarizes the results of a survey related to a new trail retrofitted into an area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>SOURCE: LAKE WOBEGON REGIONAL TRAIL, STEARNS COUNTY.</p>
POLICING AND CRIME	<p>Review of policing issues associated with trails within Washington and Ramsey County yields the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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). <p>SOURCE: WASHINGTON AND RAMSEY COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT.</p>
SAFETY OF DEVELOPED TRAILS	<p>Discussions with local cities that have retrofitted trails into similar settings yields the following with respect to safety for the trail user:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

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Section III:

Equity Analysis

Overview

The undertaking of this planning process is based on the presumption that the completion of the Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) as a primary link between the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) and Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail (MRBRT) is 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 inclusive public process.

This section defines the findings of that process.





Trail Demand Forecasts

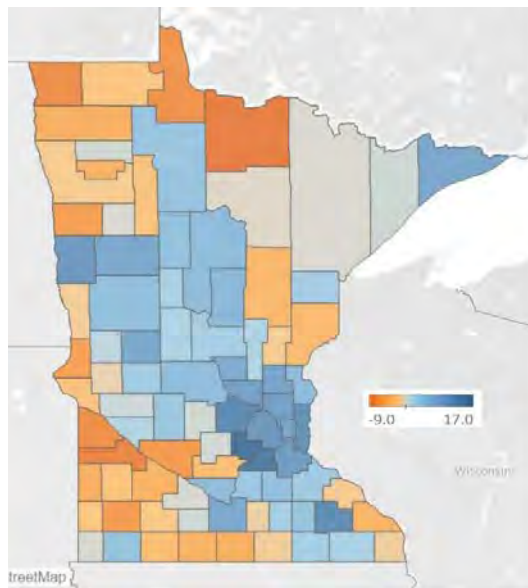
Carver County Demographics / Forecasts

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 years.

The Carver County 2020 Census showed a population of 108,626 and according to the U.S. Census Bureau was ranked #1 for growth between 2010 and 2020 at an approximate 17.4% increase in population.

CARVER COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE

(SOURCE: MINNESOTA STATE DEMOGRAPHIC CENTER; U.S. CENSUS)



Percent Change, Total Population, 2010-2020

Largest Gains (Percentage)

Rank	County	Numeric change	Percentage Change
1	Carver	15,880	17.4%
2	Scott	21,000	16.2%
3	Wright	16,637	13.3%
4	Olmsted	18,599	12.9%
5	Washington	29,432	12.4%

Largest Losses (Percentage)

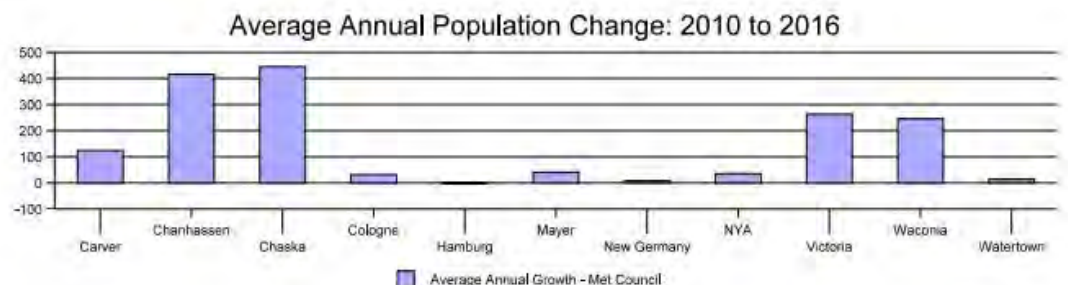
82	Renville	(1,007)	-6.4%
83	Lake of the Woods	(282)	-7.0%
84	Lac qui Parle	(540)	-7.4%
85	Kittson	(345)	-7.6%
86	Yellow Medicine	(910)	-8.7%
87	Koochiching	(1,249)	-9.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Censuses

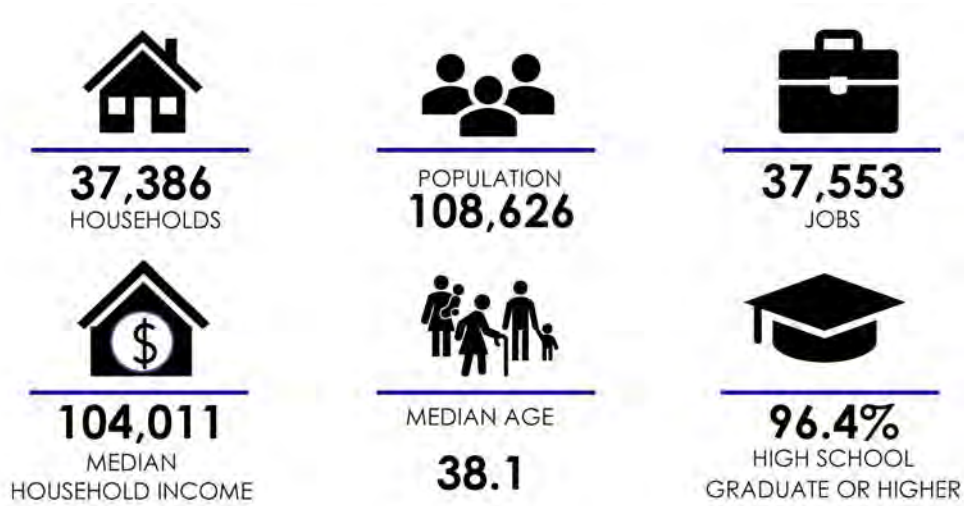
CITIES IN CARVER COUNTY

(SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS; METROPOLITAN COUNCIL; ESRI)

The following table from the Metropolitan Council and identified by Carver County shows Victoria, Chaska and Chanhassen as the fastest growing cities in Carver County between 2010 and 2016.

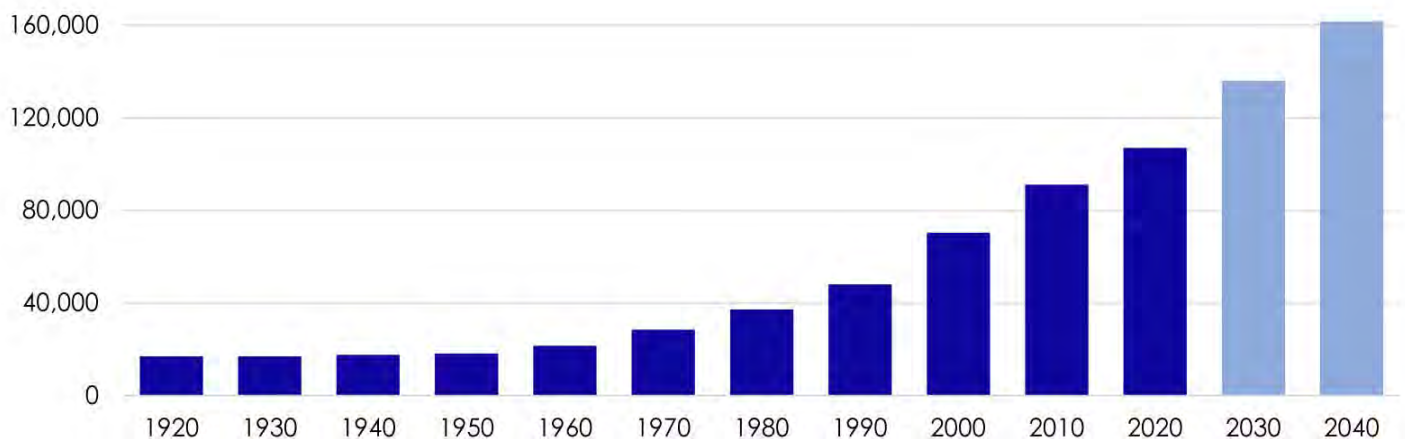


The following snapshot identifies some current Carver County demographics.



Population forecasts produced by the Metropolitan Council anticipate over 160,000 individuals living in the county by 2040, and the following table indicates.

**CARVER COUNTY 2040 FORECASTS:
POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD**



Demographic changes from the 2010 to 2020 census indicate that minority percentages have increased during the 10-year span for some populations. African American races went from 1.2% of the population to 2.1%; Hispanic/Latino races went from 3.9% to 5.0% and Asian went from 2.7% to 3.4% while whites fell from 92.8% to 86.5% showing a general increase in diversity.

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, transportation needs and service expectations.

Trails for walking, biking and hiking remain primary sought-out recreational activities that attract users to the regional system and contribute to overall health. Their popularity is also related to their scenic quality, overall condition and availability/accessibility. The SWRT will “connect people to the outdoors” by providing vital connections between the LMRT and MRBRT through numerous communities and populations.

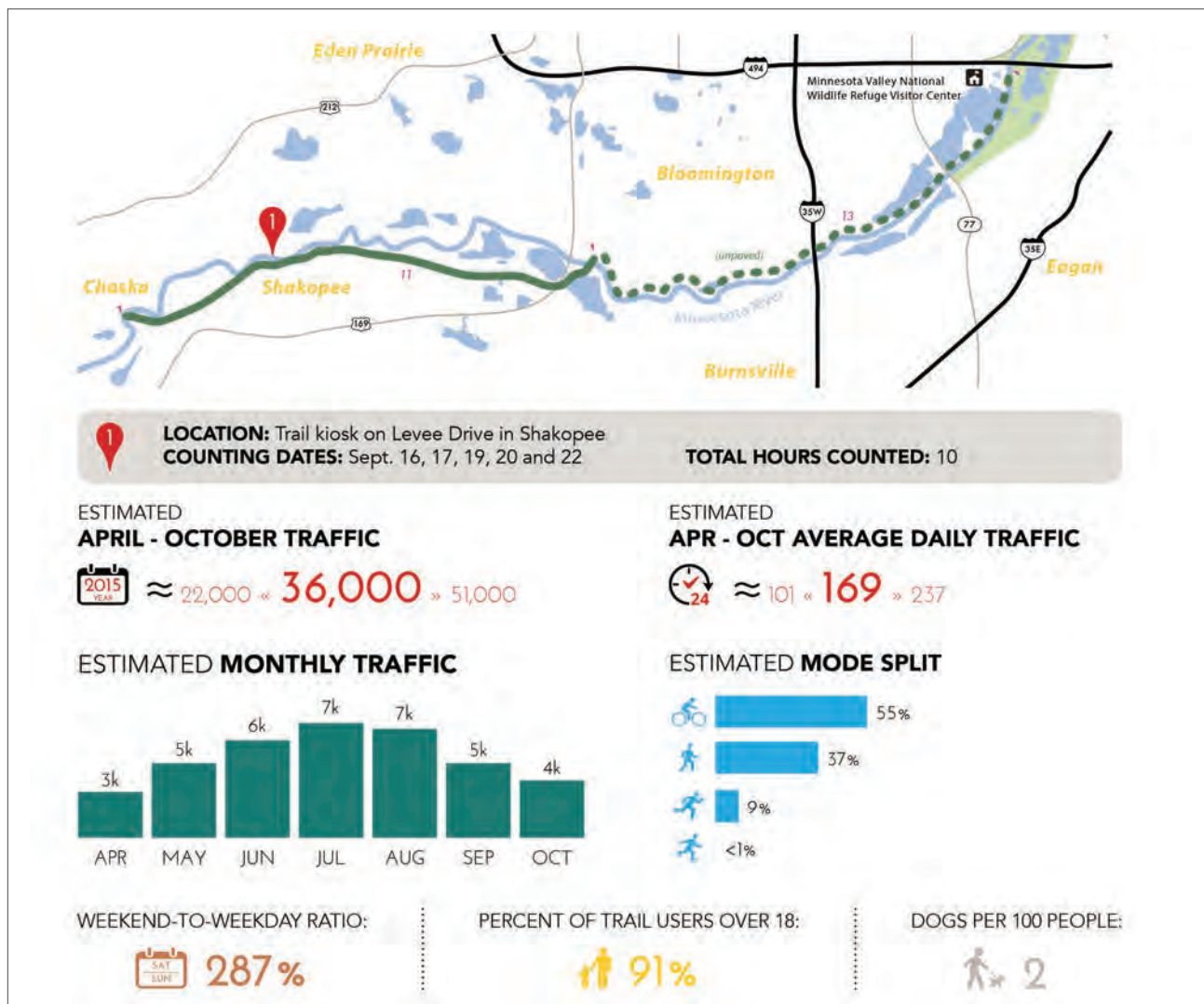
Trail Use Demands

The SWRT currently connects with the MRBRT that runs between Hopkins and Carver, connecting several communities in the southwestern portion of the metro region. The temporary closure of a primary section of the MRBRT between Eden Prairie and Chaska likely affected the trails use over the past six years with many finding alternative routes to avoid the trail detours though the Three Rivers Park District estimates it receives about 250,000 annual visits. The community input gathered during the engagement process indicated a strong demand for correcting the damaged trail segment in order to fully reopen the MRBRT, as this was a highly desirable route, which has just recently been reopened.

The Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) is a popular 27-mile trail that connects numerous communities from Hopkins to Victoria with scenic settings and numerous destinations. Three Rivers Park District estimated 471,000 annual visits to the LMRT.

The following information shows a survey related to trail use on the Minnesota Valley State Trail, taken from the levee trail in Chaska that connects to the MRBRT. The Minnesota Valley State Trail has both paved and unpaved sections with seasonal flooding issues, yet still had considerable user counts showing the draw of trails in this region which will likely increase with the completion of the SWRT that will allow for expanded trail route options.

MAP OF COUNTING LOCATIONS



SOURCE: 2015 STATE TRAIL USER COUNT BY THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA



EXPECTED USE

The first Southwest Regional Trail user count completed in 2014 estimated 64,200 users on the completed sections of the trail. Annual trail counts published by the Metropolitan Council showed use on the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail consistently increased from 109,000 users in 2012 to 146,500 users in 2014 with the Three Rivers Park District estimating it currently receives about 250,000 annual visits.

The recent improvements to the MRBRT segments and additional trail expansions in this area which includes a new pedestrian bridge over Highway 101 and connections to the Hwy 101 and County Road 61 trails have increased overall awareness in the trail system that will continue to attract new trail users now that the trail is completely open. The completion of the SWRT would likely be heavily used as it links together two highly popular regional trails and provides greater connectivity across several communities that are seeing dramatic population growth, both for recreation as well as transportation. As previously stated, Carver County is currently ranked first in population growth which is expected to continue with projections indicating an overall 71.1% growth from 2010 to 2040. In turn, the growth in population is expected to increase usage of the local and regional trail systems further and identifying a need for the SWRT linking trail.



Demographic Context

As part of the equity analysis, the following provides the existing demographic context for the individual trail corridors at an approximate 1-mile boundary to the existing or proposed trail as indicated on the Met Council's Equity Tool.

Southwest Regional Trail Corridor

The SWRT corridor extends across numerous types of existing land uses with varying demographics. The SWRT will link together the communities of Victoria to Chaska with direct connections to the LMRT and MRBRT and access to parks and natural resource areas, business centers, and food services.

VICTORIA TO PIONEER TRAIL

- 20-30% under the age of 15; mainly around 22%
- Primarily white
- 5% with an ambulatory disability generally on the eastern side of the trail corridor
- 1% without a vehicle
- Primarily within an income range of \$136,000-\$163,000 with some locations along the eastern side of Lake Bavaria in the \$227,00 range

PIONEER TRAIL TO CHASKA

- 30-40% under the age of 15 from Pioneer Trail to Chaska Blvd; downtown Chaska consists of 10-20% with 20-30% around periphery of Chaska
- 2-10% Hispanic; 4% Black; 5% Asian
- 5% with an ambulatory disability generally east of the trail corridor
- 1% without a vehicle
- Primarily within an income range of \$118,400-\$222,276

Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail Corridor

The MRBRT demographics include the corridor from Chaska to the border of Hennepin County adjacent to Eden Prairie. The MRBRT has scenic views and surroundings and provides access to parks and natural resource areas, business centers, and food services. It also has the most at-risk populations for being underserved within the community of Chaska.

CHASKA TO ENGLER BLVD

- 30% under the age of 15 north of Chaska Blvd; 18-26% south of Chaska Blvd
- 31% Hispanic; up to 13% Black in select areas; 3% Asian
- 4% with an ambulatory disability
- 23% without a vehicle (highest area)
- Generally within an income range of \$56,000-\$70,000

ENGLER BLVD TO EDEN PRAIRIE

- Primarily near 26% under the age of 15
- 2% Hispanic in ; 0% Black; 15% Asian
- 3% with an ambulatory disability
- 3% without a vehicle
- Generally within an income range of \$171,800-\$175,000

Public Engagement Process

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Making the connection between the Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail (MRBRT) 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 various locations as part of previous planning efforts.

Engagement efforts conducted during previous planning studies for the SWRT included the following:

- 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. 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.

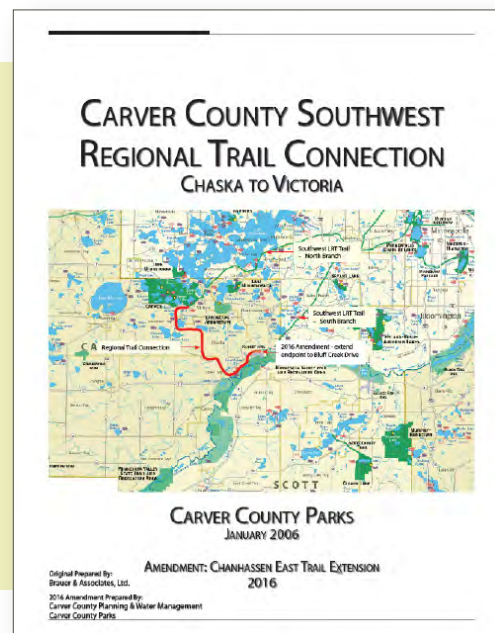
The master plan was publicly reviewed approved and adopted by the Carver County Park Commission and Carver County Board of Commissioners in January and February of 2006.

The 2016 amendment was considered a minor adjustment and followed an administrative process because it added 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 with a resolution of support obtained from the City of Chanhassen. Upon successful review by the Metropolitan Council, the Carver County Board adopted the amendment to the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan.

The following details the public meeting process for the 2016 Amendment:

- Carver County Park Commission May 11, 2016
- Chanhassen Park Commission May 24, 2016
- Chanhassen City Council June 13, 2016 - resolution adopted
- Carver County Board June 21, 2016 - final approval



CURRENT ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

The current planning project included a public awareness process for both the SWRT and the MRBRT trail corridors.

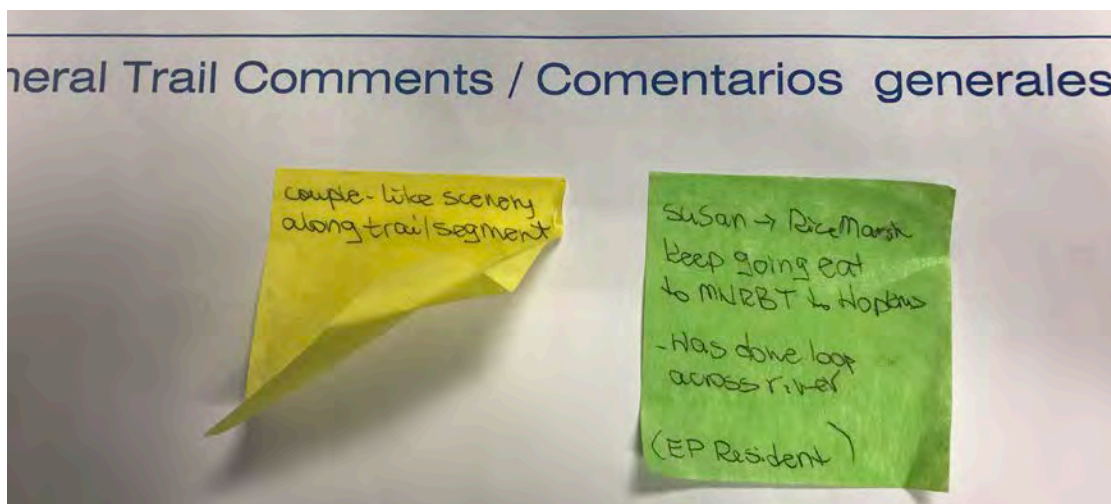
The public awareness project was meant to inform the public about the upcoming land acquisitions in the rail corridor necessary for the MRBRT, reconstruction efforts of the MRBRT, an overview of the local and regional trail systems and access points, and illustrations of the regional trail system to show trail connectivity for both recreational and transportation purposes to promote trail use.

Scope: Carver County included the majority of the engagement efforts in Chaska due to the propensity of underserved populations with an additional event in Chanhassen. Most events were conducted as a pop-up engagement efforts to engage with people where they were already seeking out an activity or recreation. Carver County conducted several press releases throughout the planning project with some direct contact for specific stakeholders, such as the Liga Latina Baseball League and with help from the Carver County HHS, reached out to the Riverview Terrace community to help encourage engagement.

Context: Existing demographics indicate the primary locations for underserved populations exist within the community of Chaska where there are higher Hispanic populations, a higher percentage of lower income families, and a higher percentage of populations who may not own a vehicle.

The following are awareness and engagement efforts used as part of the public awareness project that outlines the engagement location, type of activity and public participation:

- **Engagement #1:** Advertised park engagement at Lake Susan Park in Chanhassen for two hours on Sunday, August 19, 2018 to catch weekend park users, such as those utilizing the lake, trails, playground, tennis courts, basketball court, and ballfield anticipating a Liga Latina Baseball League scheduled game during the visit. A language interpreter was included along with engagement boards that had both English and Spanish languages. Additional engagement initiatives provided by the Carver County recreation staff were included at the event to attract more use (slackline). Less than 10 people, mainly consisting of white adults and a couple of children, provided input. The baseball game did not take place resulting in fewer park attendees. Those that provided input were very familiar with the existing local and regional trail systems and offered good insights. Some liked the MRBRT for its scenery and ride it into Hopkins and have done the loop across the river into Shakopee.



Engagement #2: Advertised park engagement at Firemen's Park in Chaska scheduled for two hours on Sunday, August 19, 2018 to catch weekend park users, which included a broad range of demographics related to the beach, playground, splash pad, curling club, restaurant and pub, lawn area, trails/boardwalk, and those just taking in the scenic setting. A language interpreter was included along with engagement boards that had both English and Spanish languages. Additional engagement initiatives provided by the Carver County recreation staff were included at the event to attract more use (log rolling in the lake). This engagement effort resulted in good attendance and participation by a more diverse group of users in terms of age, ethnicity and familiarity of the trail system. The interpreter engaged with several adult Hispanic couples who provided input. Youth at the beach consisted of white, Hispanic and black, all that were able to participate in English. Many users were familiar with the levee trail and some kids used the trail that connects Chaska to Carver. The majority of the users were not familiar with the proposed SWRT route and there was a higher amount of younger users who were not as familiar with the existing MRBRT route or methods to access it.



Engagement #3: Attendance at the 2018 Downtown Chaska Block Party scheduled for several hours on Saturday, September 29, 2018. A booth with games was set up to attract visitors to provide input while partaking in a fun activity with small prize items. The primary demographic was families with younger kids, many from the local community and primarily white with a few Hispanic families. The games and giveaways attracted visitors, though overall attendance was lower due to cooler weather conditions. Many that provided comments were familiar with the levee trail and some indicated an old bridge that once crossed the river. Many in attendance were also very familiar with the MRBRT and were highly anticipating the trail reconstruction efforts so they could use it again. There were also those who used the Jonathon neighborhood trails and mentioned a desire to safely cross the railroad tracks.



Engagement #4: July 29, 2021 event at the Riverview Terrace Manufactured Home Community in Chaska. Carver County, in conjunction with Carver County Health and Human Services (Erika Rivera Kennedy), held a targeted event on-site with food and activities to promote discussion of the trail systems. Erika Rivera Kennedy strongly advocates for ongoing programming that contributes to the overall health of the community and helped to organize, promote and also attended this event, providing language interpretation as necessary. Approximately 15+ attendees provided responses with the majority being of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Comments received included a general lack of awareness of the two trail systems. Some indicated concerns for safety along the MRBRT due to lack of visibility and steep areas. Others indicated they like the proposed trail routes and methods to connect to McDonald's, businesses and other destinations and also noted that bike safety programs, maps and social media would increase awareness and trail use.



ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

- Many of those who provided feedback prior to the 2020 trail reconstruction efforts indicated they had been anxious for the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail section that was damaged to be repaired so they could continue to use this trail segment for recreation and transportation.
- Some highly desire the connection from Chaska to Victoria due to the new businesses and redevelopment in Victoria which is now a destination, and some users specifically seek out the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail.
- Some youth and a few adults noted they use the trail from Chaska to Carver quite often.
- The Jonathan trails were brought up numerous times as popular local routes, with noted concerns about safety and trail conditions.
- There is a desire for better maps so users feel safer exploring trails without getting lost.
- Many familiar with the Chaska area tend to use the levee trail and asked about the previous bridge crossing by the Courthouse that has since been removed.
- The Minnesota River Valley Trail is used by scouting groups (and regular trail users) but high water years makes it virtually unusable due to flooding conditions.
- It was noted that a safe North-South connection over the railroad tracks is needed on MN Hwy 41 / Chestnut Drive. Trails around McKnight Lake and Lake Jonathan are separated by the tracks with an informal railroad track crossing. McKnight Road once had a bridge over the tracks.
- The Riverview Terrace event resulted in comments that many were not aware of the trail systems within the community. Other comments were made that the natural environment of the MRBRT with wooded conditions, a lack of visibility and some locations with steep embankments made the trail route feel unsafe to them so they tended to use trails in more developed areas.

PANDEMIC EFFECTS ON ENGAGEMENT

There was a gap in engagement efforts from 2020 into 2021 due to difficulties in providing in-person events. Carver County made attempts at working with local educational institutions and providing some on-line awareness, however these proved to be mainly unsuccessful. The completion of the trail improvements to the MRBRT in 2021 and the end of many restrictions allowed for more successful engagement in 2021.

Public Influence

The community engagement findings indicate that the SWRT corridor with connection to the LMRT and MRBRT is justified and would be successful. The SWRT improves connectivity across the varying communities. The community of Chaska has higher percentages of underserved populations that would have improved opportunities to access recreation and food. The trail also improves the ability for neighborhoods with high percentages of kids under the age of 15 to access parks and schools.

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 highest degree possible, the proposed trail alignment also poses the least disruption to private property interests while still fulfilling the goals of the project.

The public engagement findings have highlighted the need for improved signage and wayfinding related to the trail system, as well as the importance of continued recreation programs that promote awareness, teach new skills and enhance the sense of community through outreach. Carver County will continue to implement desired programs to meet these identified needs with continued outreach efforts that build upon the successful planning engagement efforts. Carver County will also work on implementation of a more robust wayfinding program for improved awareness and placemaking.

Partner Engagement

Carver County Parks collaborated with the cities of Victoria and Chaska throughout the planning process. Several meetings were held which included some joint meetings with all partners and additional follow-up meetings for confirmation as the planning process was finalized. Discussion topics included:

- **Previous SWRT Route:** The previous routes were reviewed to determine which sections were most feasible to carry forward in the planning process based on land uses, roadway improvements and general construction timing, and which sections would be less feasible due to current land development that excluded trail corridor development. Previous routes through Victoria were found to be less feasible through recent land developments, so new routes were reviewed. The City of Victoria provided further information of the potential expansion of the Lake Minnetonka LRT that may continue further west to Waconia, as well as the consideration of Marsh Lake Road to be a primary County Road that would be modified as it connects into the existing Tellers Road which helped shape the preferred SWRT route identified on the current plans.
- **Proposed SWRT Route Options:** Several new route options were identified with further discussion with each community in terms of proposed land uses, overall trail setting and experience, road development and improvements, and utility infrastructure to determine the most feasible and desirable trail routes. This included review of potential greenway corridors, pedestrian underpasses, and consideration of updated RBTN routes or search corridors. Some initial discussions included a greenway trail along the Chaska Creek from Victoria Drive to Engler Blvd, however the City of Chaska provided further input this would not be desirable because it would bypass the existing SWRT through the Clover Ridge neighborhood. Difficult construction in areas along the Chaska Creek were also identified due to poor soil conditions. Additional discussions included the trail to connect into downtown Victoria along Victoria Drive. This ultimately was not desired due to the narrow ROW, indirect access to the Lake Minnetonka LRT and crossing over Hwy 5 / Arboretum Drive at a very busy intersection.

In addition to the joint discussion meetings, Carver County held meetings to allow units of government the ability to review the plan amendment and provide feedback, as follows:

- Carver County Park Commission: Preliminary review November 10, 2020
- Chaska Parks Commission: Review November 9, 2021
- Victoria City Council: Resolution of support dated January 25, 2021.
- Chaska City Council: Resolution of support dated September 19, 2022.
- Chanhassen City Council: Resolution of support dated October 10, 2022.
- Carver County Board of Commissioners: Approved Amendment dated November 15, 2022.

In general, the feedback from the various Boards, Councils and Commissions was very favorable and in support of the current plan.



Section IV:

Natural Resources Stewardship Plan

Overview

Natural resources stewardship refers to the thoughtful care of ecological systems to preserve or enhance their natural qualities, which are intrinsic to the trail's value as a place of scenery and respite from the built form. Although much of the trail follows existing rights-of-way, there are still numerous natural resources and ecological issues that need to be addressed.


This section provides a framework for stewardship consistent with those of other parks and open spaces managed by Carver County.



Minimizing Disruption to Natural Ecological Systems

Aligning the trail to minimize disruption to natural systems is also a major objective of the regional trail master plan. Along the trail corridor, two primary developmental situations are encountered, each of which require slightly different approaches to trail development. In either case, the objectives regarding natural systems include:

- 1) Minimize disruption to the ecological and scenic qualities of natural vegetation within the corridor.
- 2) Manage stormwater using natural infiltration techniques. The most advantageous way to accomplish this is being flexible on the location of the trail within the right-of-way to respond to existing conditions.



Technical Resources in Support of the Natural Resources Stewardship Plan

The guidelines for natural resource stewardship defined in two publications from the MNDNR are referenced as part of this master plan. The first is *Guidelines for Managing and Restoring Natural Plant Communities Along Trails and Waterways* (2000) and the second is *Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines* (2006). Both of these provide valuable technical information that support the strategies defined in this master plan.

Consistency With Natural Resource Stewardship Plans

Where appropriate and applicable, the development of the trail will be consistent with all natural resource stewardship plans associated with the public properties directly traversed or adjacent to the trail corridor. The most pertinent of these are the provisions in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The natural resource preservation and protection policies adopted by Carver County pertaining to regional parks under their management authority will also be adhered to as appropriate as the trail is developed. Any related policies by the cities of Chaska and Victoria will be also be given due consideration.

Local Stewardship Opportunities

Carver County promotes numerous cost share programs and stewardship opportunities that encourage volunteers of all ages to aid the County with invasive species removal, water monitoring, an Adopt-A-Water program, and habitat restoration.

Awareness of the stewardship opportunities are located on the Carver County website with some promotion using social media outlets. The Carver County website utilizes varying methods to meet ADA accessibility guidelines.



Ecological Protection Strategy

There are two main aspects to the ecological protection strategy as it relates to the actual development of the trail within the trail corridor. The first is managing stormwater runoff from the trail in an ecologically sustainable manner. The second is aligning the trail to minimize disruption to natural systems. The following considers these in greater detail.

Natural Stormwater Runoff Management

Stormwater runoff is one of the major natural forces to contend with in trail planning, design, and development. Managing runoff in an ecologically sensitive way is fundamental to creating sustainable trails where impacts to adjacent ecological systems are minimal.

Using a natural approach to stormwater management that relies on passive, overland routing of runoff offers a couple of distinct advantages over conventional systems (i.e., storm sewers, engineered ponds, and other built structures), including:

- Introduced contaminants picked up by runoff are removed at the initial stages of water flowage rather than being transported to downstream locations and accumulating in wetland, lake, and river systems. This greatly reduces degradation to water quality and vegetative health in downstream systems.
- Stormwater flow rates and volumes more closely emulate natural conditions. This greatly reduces unnatural fluctuations in water levels in downstream systems (wetlands and lakes) and therefore reduces impacts to the natural condition of water systems and vegetation.

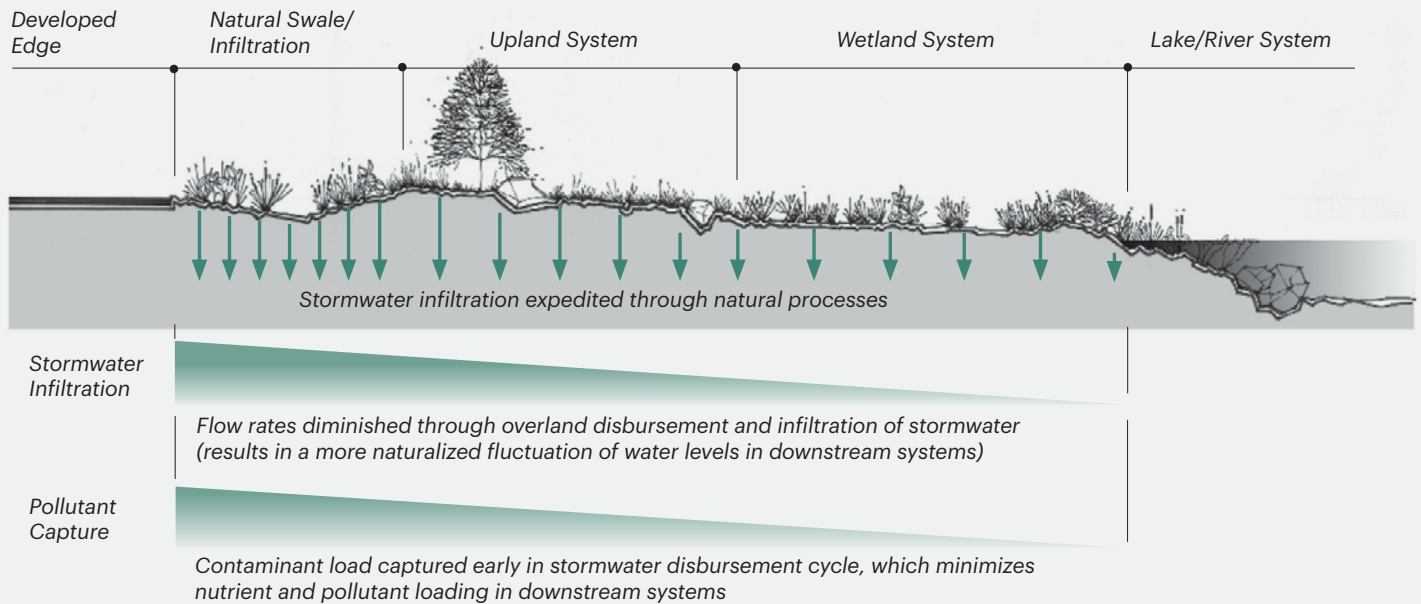
For these reasons, the natural infiltration will be the primary approach used to manage stormwater associated with the development of the regional trail and related support structures.



COMPONENTS OF NATURAL INFILTRATION SYSTEMS

Natural infiltration systems typically consist of four primary components, as illustrated in the following graphic.

NATURAL INFILTRATION SYSTEM



Each of the components illustrated in the previous graphic box function in sequence to treat the water before it enters wetlands, lakes and rivers. The following considers each of these components.



NATURAL INFILTRATION SYSTEMS

Initially, stormwater runoff from the built environment is routed into natural or man-made shallow vegetated swales, or in some cases, raingardens or infiltration basins that are planted with native plants with deep root systems and may include engineered soils and drain tiles. These swales, basins and raingardens provide initial infiltration and removal of pollutants, as well as convey runoff from developed areas and disperse it across upland and prairie systems.



UPLAND SYSTEMS

The upland systems (i.e., prairies and oak savannas) are the second component of this method, functioning to convey stormwater as diffused overland flow to the wetland systems that often link directly or indirectly to bordering lakes and rivers. These systems infiltrate a substantial portion of the annual surface runoff volume due to their very deep root system. They also provide additional solids settling and biological treatment.



WETLAND, LAKE AND RIVER SYSTEMS

The wetlands are the third component of the natural infiltration method and provide both stormwater detention and biological treatment prior to runoff entering the lake and river systems. The final component is the lake or river, which provides stormwater detention, additional solids settling and biological treatment.



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Under the master plan, the natural infiltration approach philosophy to managing stormwater is supported by Best Management Practices that address common development circumstances likely to be encountered as the trail is developed. These practices define specific techniques that can be applied to different development scenarios to achieve stated environmental protection objectives but final approaches will be coordinated with the local watersheds and Land and Water Management Organizations. For trail planning, design, and development, natural infiltration methods will be used as the primary approach to creating sustainable trails where impacts to adjoining natural systems are minimal. Engineered or mechanical systems for conveying stormwater will only be used when natural approaches are technically not feasible or reliable.

The Metropolitan Council's Urban Small Sites Best Management Practice Manual provides the basic underpinning for many of the techniques that will be employed wherever applicable as the trail is developed. Note also that newly emerging ecologically-based techniques will also be applied to achieve desired ecological benefits. Specific techniques envisioned to have application for the trail include:



INFILTRATION SYSTEMS

Use of infiltration systems (e.g., biofiltration systems, rain gardens, filter strips, swales, and slotted/flat curbs) as part of trail designs



SITE GRADING

Use of site grading techniques to achieve naturalized infiltration objectives



EROSION CONTROL

Use of contemporary erosion control techniques to prevent migration of soils during the construction process

In addition to the Best Management Practices, the master plan is also supported by the Metropolitan Council's Model Storm Water Management Ordinance, which defines specific approaches to protecting a site's ecological resources, especially wetland systems. The provisions of the model ordinance will be applied to the trail's development as applicable.



Section V :

Trail Development Master Plans

Overview

The master plan for this regional trail connection consists of a combination of existing local trails and new trail alignments to be designated as the Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) that will link the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail (MRBRT).

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 approximately 8.35 miles, of which approximately 5.6 miles will be new trail and the remaining will follow existing trail alignments.

Trail Design

Trail Design Standards

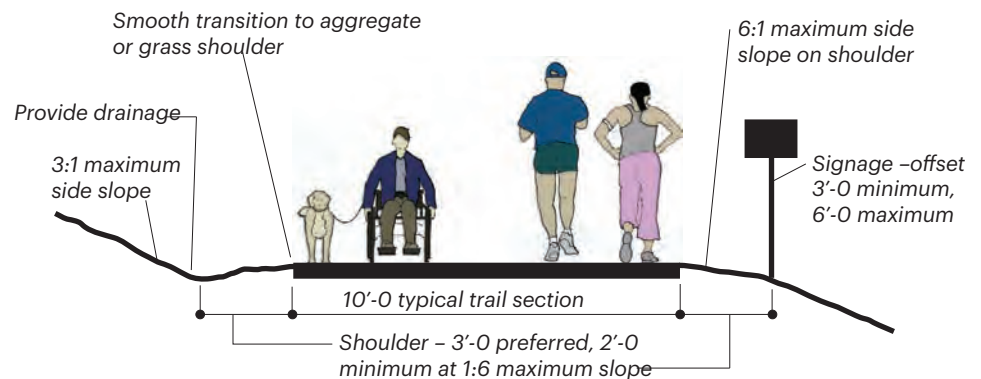
Consistent with regional trail design standards, the trail will be a minimum 10-foot wide and asphalt surfaced to accommodate walkers, bicyclists, inline skaters, and wheelchairs. It will not accommodate any unauthorized motorized uses with the exception of the use of E-bikes (electric assisted bicycles) and scooters. The existing local trails that are currently 8-foot wide will be upgraded over time to be consistent with the 10-foot regional design standard. For trail segments that experience significant use (100 uses per hour or a volume greater than 2,000 individuals per day), a 12 to 14 feet width is encouraged with marked center lanes. In some cases, such as in the Clover Ridge development, there are wide existing concrete walks along the proposed SWRT route that may likely remain concrete in keeping with the more urban design standards. While this is not considered to be a preferable material for a regional trail, it may help slow trail users down in a location where there may be more pedestrians present, and thereby increasing safety.

Additional considerations include:

- Utilize cautionary signage as necessary
- Maintain trails in good condition to avoid potential safety hazards
- Provide a 2-foot width graded shoulder at a max 6:1 slope as a reaction zone for users
- Signage, poles, trees, mailboxes or other obstructions should be a minimum 3- feet from the edge of the trail, however trail signage should not be further than 6 feet from the edge of the trail
- Consider pedestrian scale lighting for user safety and security, especially at road intersections

TYPICAL TRAIL CROSS-SECTION

Anticipated trail grades: Given the character of the landscape in this part of Carver County, trail grades are expected to average 5% or less, with an occasional segment being slightly steeper at 6% to 7%. Overall, the trail is expected to be a very "accessible" trail.



Note: Existing local trails that are used as part of the regional trail will be upgraded over time from 8'-0 to 10'-0 wide minimum.

Trail Accessibility

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 diverse populations. Trails would be constructed with a firm and stable surface to meet accessibility guidelines, and with many areas having reasonable grades, 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.

Research by the Metropolitan Council indicates that the majority of trail users live within three miles of the trail, as the graphic illustrates.

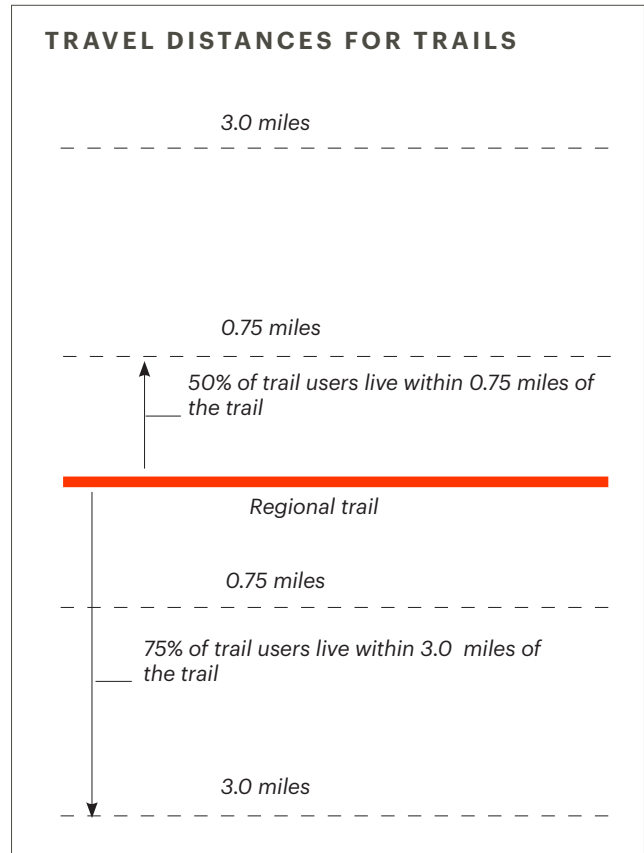
Beyond numerous local neighborhood connections by way of local trails and walks, the SWRT could be accessed from varying points from Victoria to Chaska. This includes downtown Victoria public parking locations with direct access to the LMRT, and at Kirke-Lachen Park, which has a few parking stalls and is directly connected to the LMRT just to the east of Carl Krey Lake. Lakeside Estates Park is anticipated to be connected directly to the SWRT and will have an off-street parking lot.

The Chaska Clover Ridge neighborhood has some on-street parking available with off-street parking at the Chaska Community Park and Clover Ridge Elementary School to provide connection to the SWRT along existing walks and trails. Veterans Park and Firemen's Park in Chaska provide more convenient access to the SWRT with the availability of parking, restrooms and water.

Downtown Chaska has numerous locations with parking available to access the MRBRT, with a separate trailhead parking lot with kiosk and trail access at Engler Blvd and Old Audubon Road. A proposed public library would provide direct connection the MRBRT and would include parking, bike fix-it station, kiosk, and public restrooms.

A gravel parking area with kiosk is currently located adjacent to the MRBRT at Bluff Creek Drive. Additional access points to the MRBRT include the Richard T. Anderson Conservation area which has an improved parking facility, and both Riley Lake Park and Miller Park in Eden Prairie have parking with access to portable restrooms and water. There may be additional opportunities to develop new SWRT trailheads on the north side of Chaska along Creek Drive within the conservation corridor through land acquisitions with willing sellers.

The broad distribution of access points that connect to the LMRT, SWRT and MRBRT provide many alternatives for trail access if users were driving from their homes to access the trail, while many local residents would have more immediate connections by means of local trails and walks.



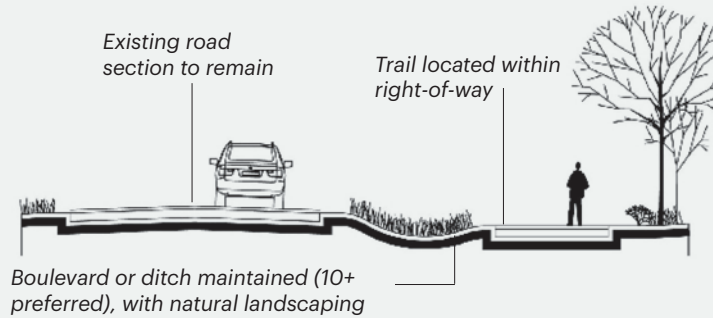
Relative Trail Locations

The varying width and character of the public rights-of-ways and trail easements encountered along the trail corridor requires some flexibility in the trail locations and design. The following cross-sections highlight varying trail designs based on right-of-way and trail easement conditions.

TRAIL LOCATION IN RIGHTS-OF-WAYS AND TRAIL EASEMENTS

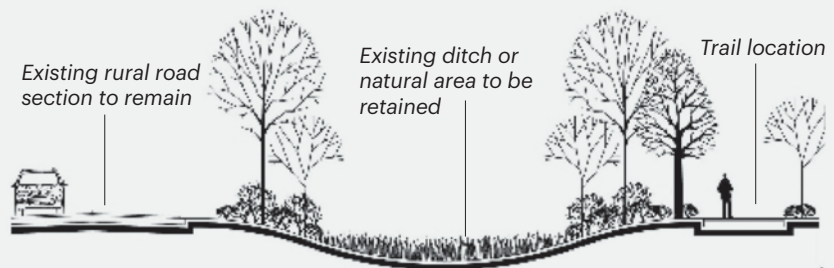
TRAIL LOCATION IN ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH LIMITED WIDTH

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 in ditches and likely maintained turf in boulevards.



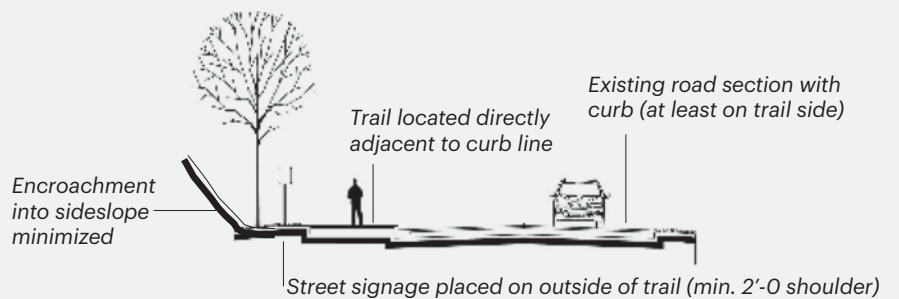
TRAIL LOCATION IN ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY WITH GREATER WIDTH

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



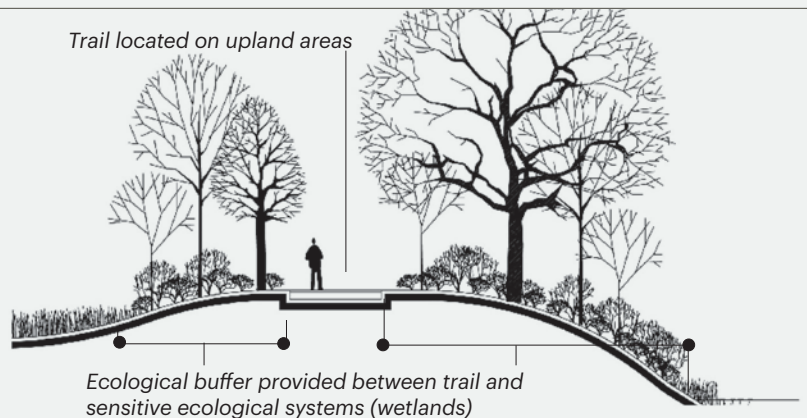
TRAIL LOCATION DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO ROADWAY

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 LOCATED IN TRAIL EASEMENT THROUGH NATURAL AREA

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. The use of boardwalks would be used in wet areas.





Trailheads and Support Facilities

The SWRT traverses through or near a variety of park areas, downtown districts, schools, and other public facilities that have parking available and are currently sufficient to accommodate trail users driving to access the trail. One example is the Clover Ridge Elementary School which currently has sidewalk connections to existing segments of the SWRT.

Future trailhead options for the SWRT include potential sites along Creek Road through a willing seller basis for lands that would be directly connected to the SWRT within a conservation and natural resource area. These sites could provide parking, amenities, and picnic areas within a highly scenic setting that would attract users as a destination.

A small trailhead serving the MRBRT is located where the MRBRT intersects with Bluff Creek Drive and includes gravel parking with a wayfinding kiosk structure operated and maintained by Three Rivers Park District. A more developed trailhead is located north of Engler Blvd off of Old Audubon Road and includes a paved parking lot with approximately 18 stalls, kiosk and trail connection to the levee / east channel trail. This trailhead is in need of improvements and the parking area could be expanded if future demands warrant. Other locations noted for potential trailhead locations for the MRBRT include downtown Chaska where a proposed library will be built along the MRBRT providing parking, restrooms and support amenities.

Appropriate wayfinding signage with a clear branding style is important for maintaining safety but is also key to the user experience as users unfamiliar with an area rely on signs and landmarks to find their destination and trail routes, particularly loop opportunities. Informational or interpretive signage will be installed in locations with unique aspects, such as the Seminary Fen, or even historical locations.

Additional support facilities will include bike repair stations, benches, access to restroom facilities (portable or permanent) and access to drinking water. It is also important to have safe and convenient places to securely lock bikes at primary destination points, such as downtown businesses and parks.



PHOTO EXAMPLES OF WAYFINDING MAPS AND INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE



Land Use Or Other Conflicts

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

The majority of the proposed trail is either existing trail corridors and/or located within public rights-of-way, so land acquisition is not a significant issue of concern for the majority of the trail. Where the trail is shown to traverse across private property, it is anticipated that land and easements 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 future developments take place.

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. At this point it is recommended that the local LGU share any proposed planning documents with Carver County for input on proposed trail routes to ensure suitable routes are secured for trail development.

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



WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE PROPOSED TRAIL ALIGNMENTS LOCATED IN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY, CONFLICTS AND ACQUISITIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE MINIMAL.



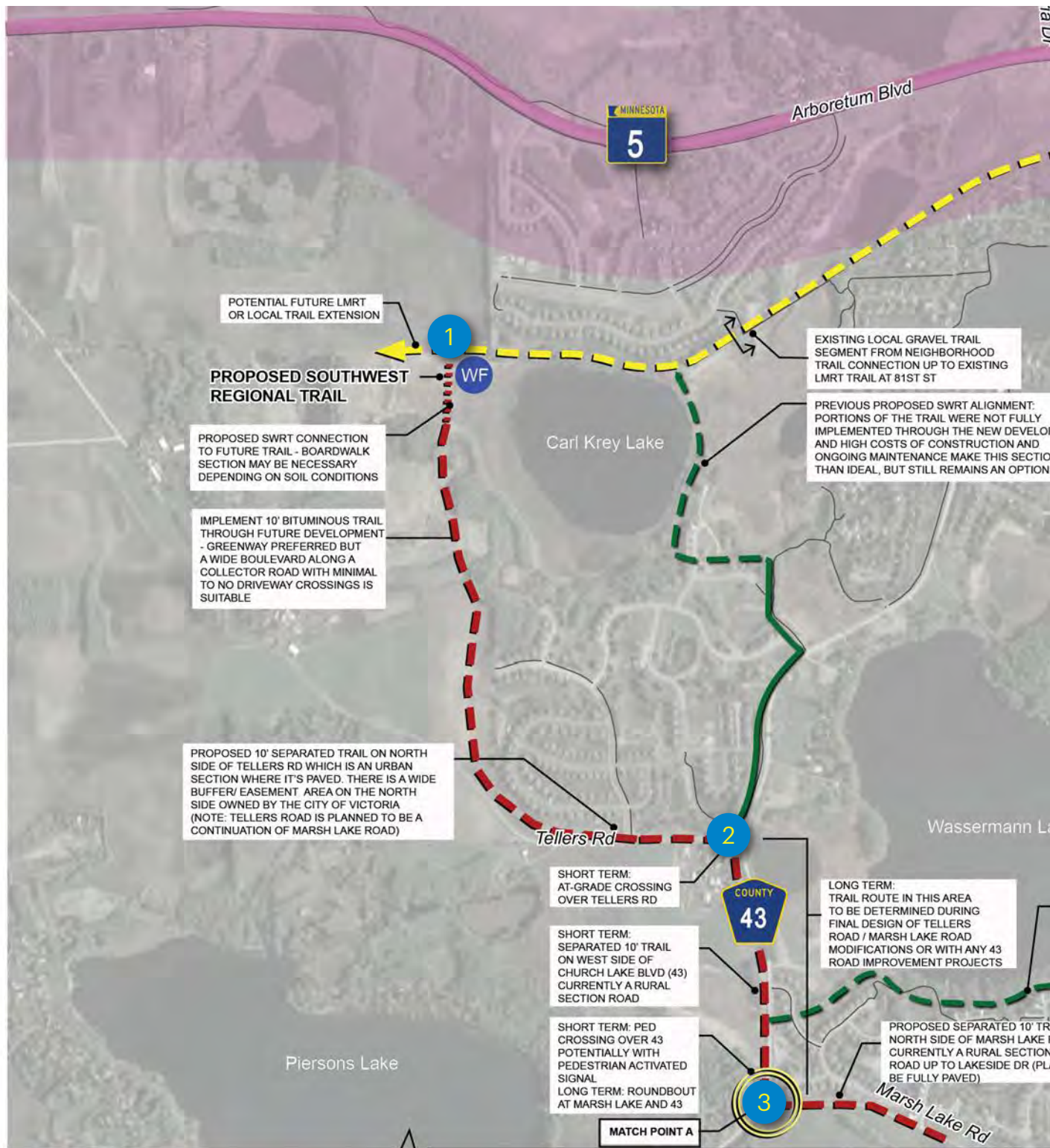
EXISTING TRAILS INDICATE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR IMPROVED CONDITIONS AND 10-FOOT WIDE TRAILS.

BITUMINOUS TRAILS ARE PROPOSED BUT THERE MAY INSTANCES WHERE EXISTING CONCRETE WALK SECTIONS IN MORE URBAN ENVIRONMENTS, AS INDICATED BELOW, WOULD REMAIN.



Overview of the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan

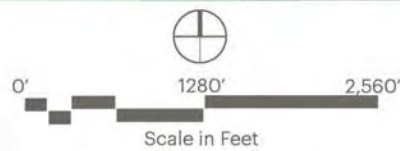
Trail Segment 1



Southwest Regional Trail: Victoria to Chaska Segment 1

Carver County, Minnesota
 November 2021 | WSB Project number: 012391-000

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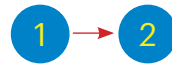


The accompanying descriptions provide additional information on the anticipated location of Trail Segment 1 of the Southwest Regional Trail in more depth. Refer also to the Master Plan for specified trail segments.

City of Victoria to Marsh Lake Road

The western end of the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail (LMRT) is a 10 foot wide bituminous trail that follows an old railroad corridor and currently terminates in Kirke-Lachen Park, a small Victoria neighborhood park with parallel parking provided along 81st St.

Currently there is a section of gravel trail from Heron Lane along the old railbed that connects to the Kelzer Pond trails. The SWRT master plan illustrates a future consideration for the LMRT, or a local trail, to continue along the railbed to the west side of Carl Krey Lake, and ultimately it could continue further west to connect to Waconia and Lake Waconia Regional Park. Additional land acquisitions or easements would likely be needed in order to extend the LMRT or a local trail further west.



The preferred route of the SWRT is identified west of Carl Krey Lake where it is shown connecting to a proposed future trail extension of the LMRT with wayfinding signage to identify the SWRT. The previous master plan identified the SWRT connecting to the LMRT on the east side of Carl Krey Lake through a proposed trail corridor within the newer housing development and along Carl Krey Lake on an old field road. This previously planned trail route was not entirely secured through the planned development. The trail gap necessary to make this connection now likely requires significant lengths of boardwalk and grading due to areas with steep grades, resulting in high construction costs. However, this previous SWRT alignment remains to be listed as an optional route in the event that the LMRT or a local trail does not extend to the west side of Carl Krey Lake. If the alternate route is developed, there may be opportunities for some partial shared funding by the watershed district for portions of the trail through the wetland within an existing utility corridor.

PHOTO: EXISTING CONDITIONS (HOUSING, STEEP GRADES & WETLANDS) OF PREVIOUS SWRT ROUTE FOR CONNECTION TO LMRT



The preferred SWRT alignment includes an approximate 600 foot segment of trail that may include boardwalk as necessary. Ten foot wide bituminous trails would be constructed in uplands and a 12 foot wide boardwalk in wet areas. A suitable trail corridor is proposed to be secured through a future development plan between the LMRT and Tellers Road, preferably within a greenway corridor, though a 10 foot trail with a 5 foot minimum boulevard would be a suitable option.

The trail would run parallel to Tellers Road on the north side within the existing right of way (ROW) up to the Church Lake Blvd / County Road 43 intersection. There is additional land north of the existing Tellers Road ROW currently owned by the City of Victoria which provides a significant buffer between the residential homes and Tellers Road.

An at-grade pedestrian crossing is proposed across Tellers Road in the short term with a 10 foot wide separated trail continuing south along the west side of County Road 43. There is limited right of way in this

segment with constraints on either side of County Road 43 that include lake, wetlands and steep embankments. The trail corridor in this location may be best developed as part of a future road improvement project that may include Tellers Road becoming an extension of Marsh Lake Road.



Previous plans indicated a potential grade-separated crossing beneath County Road 43 with the trail continuing along the southern edge of Wasserman Lake, which was not implemented. Current plans show an at-grade crossing at the intersection of County Road 43 and Marsh Lake Road as an acceptable approach if it includes measures for a safe pedestrian crossing due to the high speed traffic posted at 50 mph and the location of the intersection on a curve. This intersection may include a future roundabout for a safer crossing.



Trail Segment 2

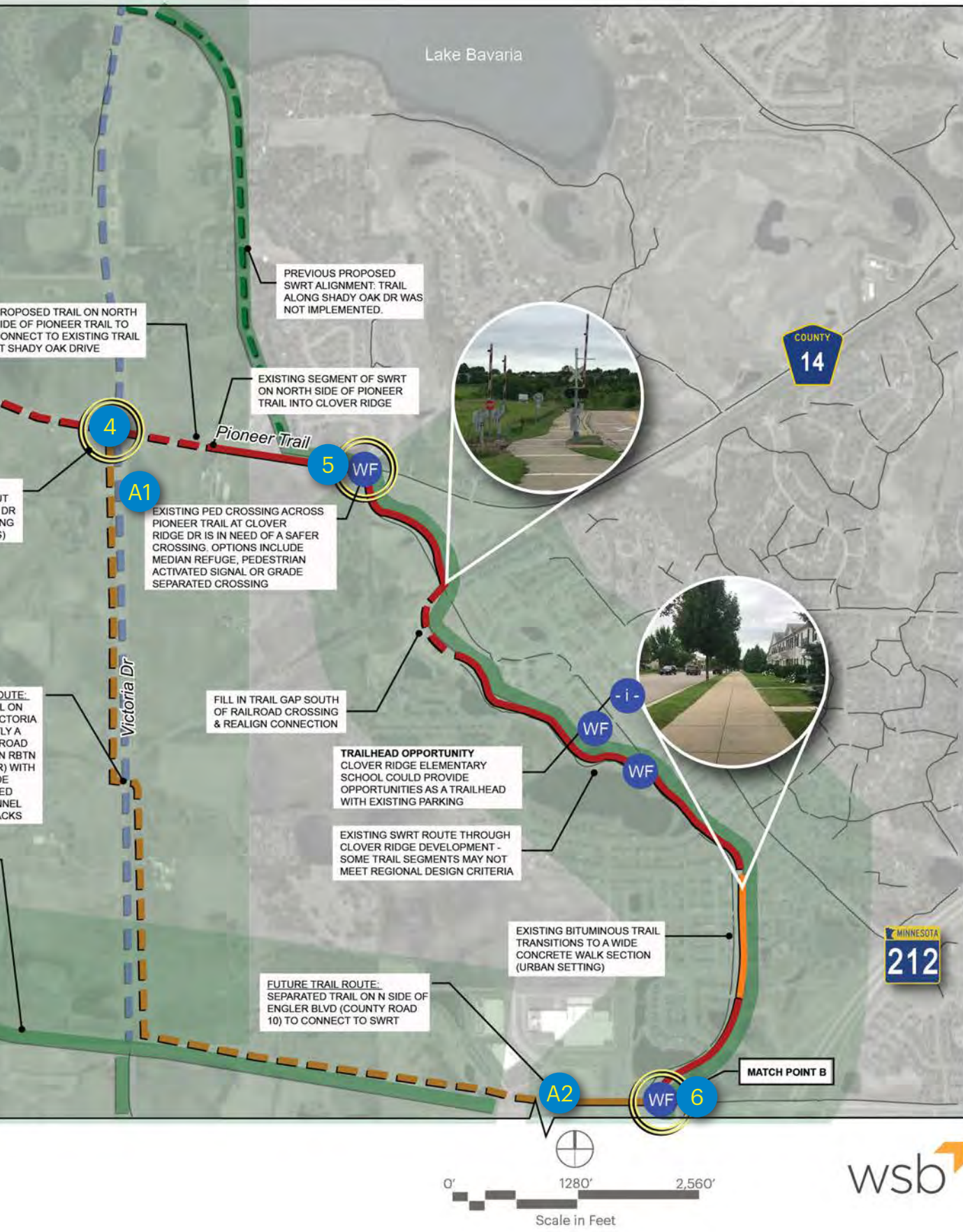


Southwest Regional Trail: Victoria to Chaska Segment 2

Carver County, Minnesota

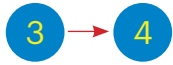
November 2021 | WSB Project number: 012391-000

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The accompanying descriptions provide additional information on the anticipated location of Trail Segment 2 of the Southwest Regional Trail in more depth. Refer also to the Master Plan for specified trail segments.

Marsh Lake Road to Engler Blvd



A separated trail is proposed on the north side of Marsh Lake Road from County Road 43 to Victoria Drive due to the loss of the previous trail option on the south side of Wasserman Lake.

Currently Marsh Lake Road is paved from County Road 43 to just beyond the Lakeside Drive intersection, which is part of a newer residential development. It then transitions back to a rural aggregate surfaced road up to Victoria Drive. It is recommended that the trail segment be implemented at the time that Marsh Lake Road is improved to a paved roadway with a trail connection to the existing Lakeside Estates Park.

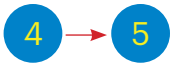
There is a planned future roundabout to be installed at the intersection of Victoria Drive and Marsh Lake Road/ Pioneer Trail that may include an option for a grade separated pedestrian underpass.



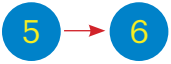
PHOTO: EXISTING CONDITIONS MARSH LAKE ROAD (RURAL)

PHOTO: EXISTING CONDITIONS AT VICTORIA DR AND MARSH LAKE ROAD





The trail would continue along the north side of Pioneer Trail to connect to the existing trail at Shady Oak Drive. There is an existing crosswalk at the intersection of Pioneer Trail and Holstein Road to access Clover Ridge Drive to the south.

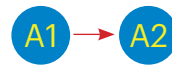


There is an existing 10 foot wide bituminous trail on the western side of Clover Ridge Drive adjacent to the back of the curb. The SWRT continues south to an existing at-grade railroad track crossing. From this point a proposed trail connection of approximately 750 feet is needed to close an existing trail gap through existing natural open space.

The existing 8 foot bituminous trail would be improved to 10 feet wide, which currently winds along natural open spaces, wetlands and public park spaces, including stopping points and overlooks. Crosswalks are necessary at street crossings with wayfinding

signage to be installed to guide trail users through the Clover Ridge neighborhood. There is opportunity to use the Clover Ridge Elementary as a trailhead with existing parking and connection to the SWRT with a trail information kiosk.

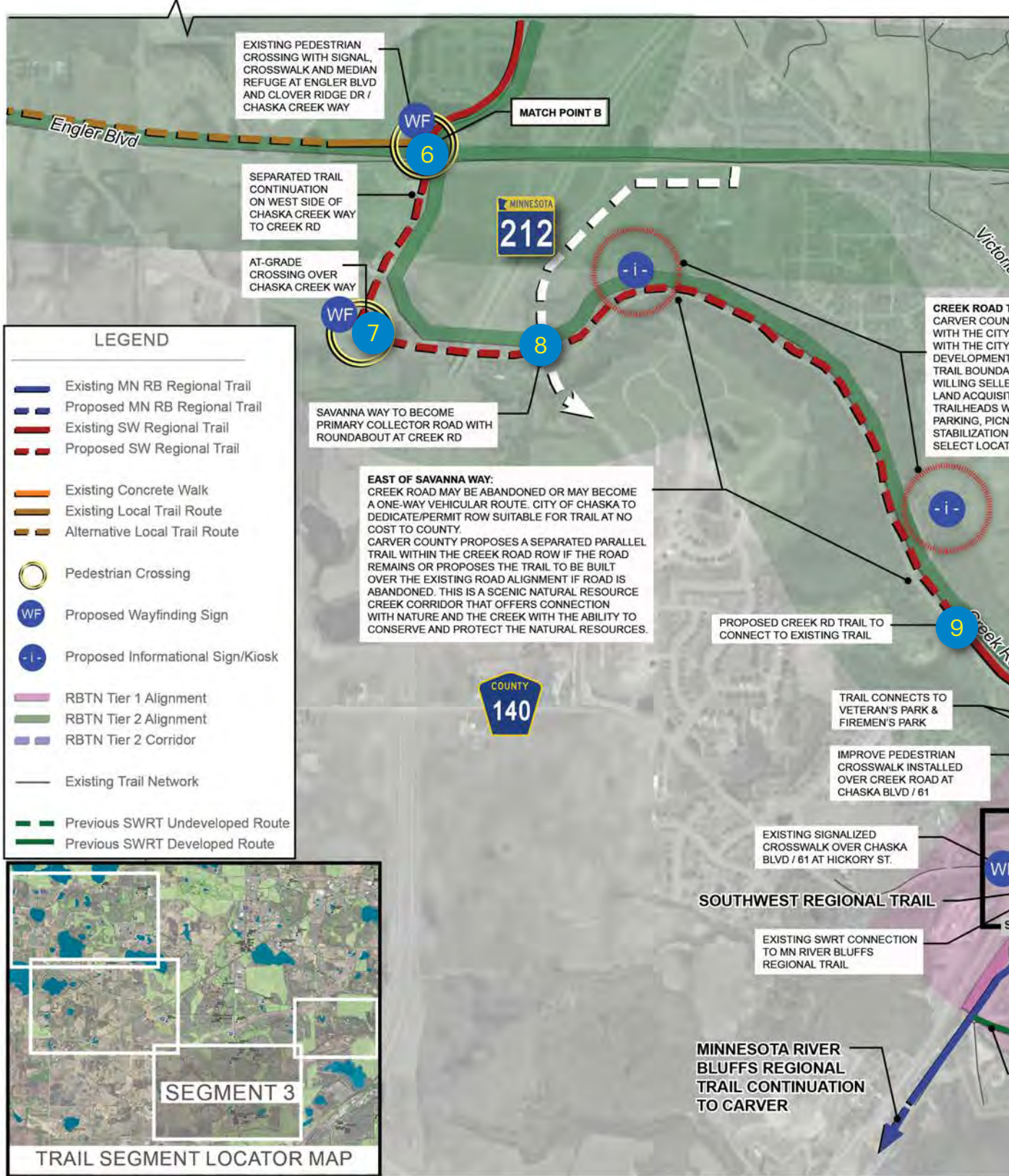
At the intersection of Clover Ridge Drive and Schoolmaster Drive the bituminous trail transitions into a 10 foot wide concrete path in a more urban type of setting for approximately 1,000 feet before going back to a bituminous trail that connects to Engler Drive with an existing crossing. It is recommended that this be reconstructed as bituminous trail but may remain as concrete.



As a local trail consideration, a trail alignment is shown from Marsh Lake Road south along Victoria Drive with a grade separated pedestrian crossing beneath Victoria Drive and the railroad tracks as feasible. The trail would then follow Engler Blvd to connect to existing trail to create a loop.



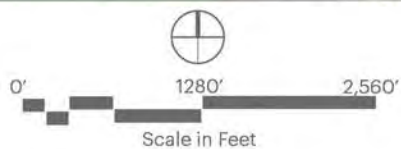
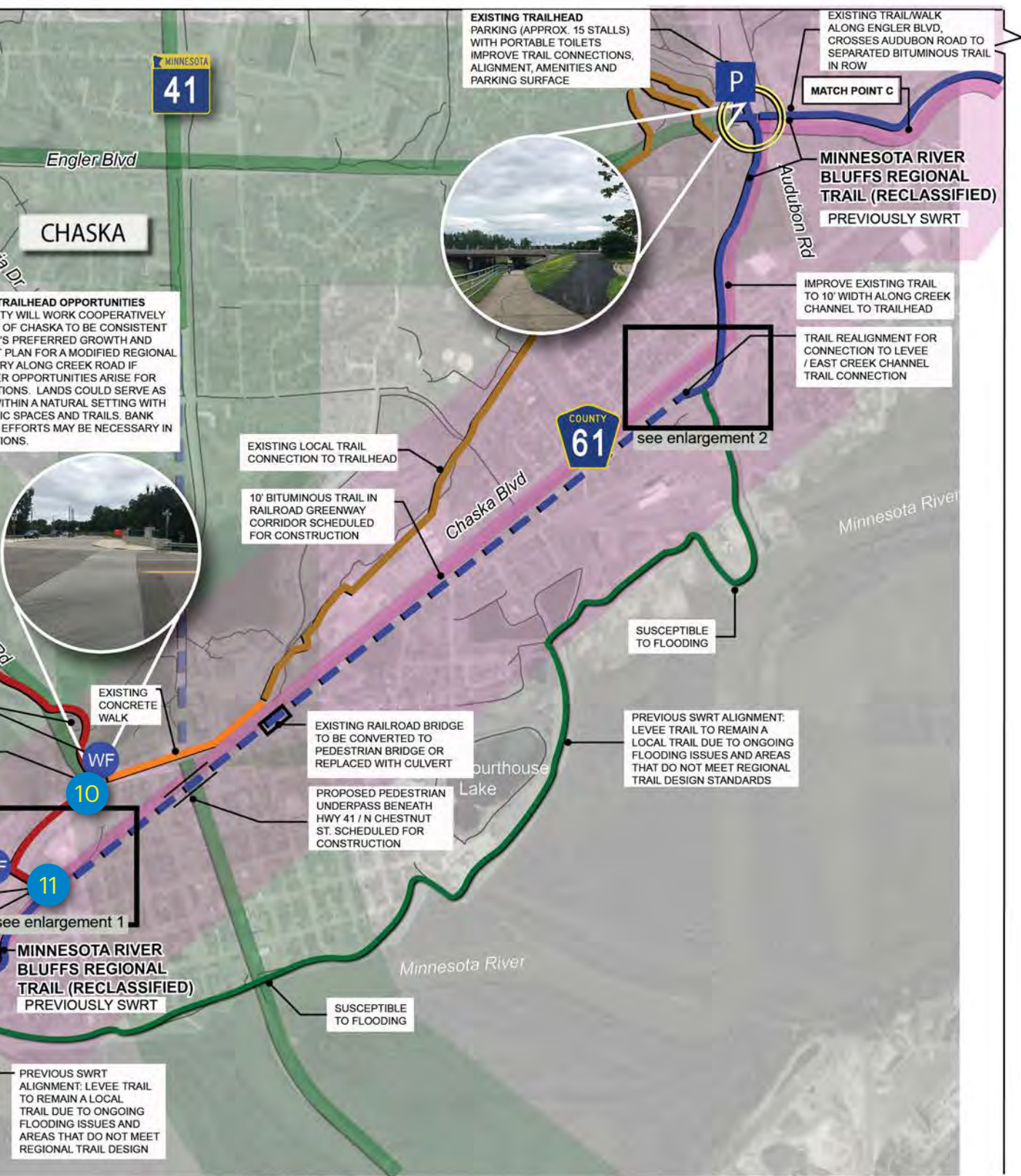
Trail Segment 3



Southwest Regional Trail: Victoria to Chaska Segment 3

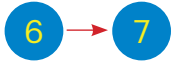
Carver County, Minnesota
 November 2021 | WSB Project number: 012391-000

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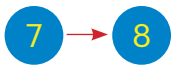


The accompanying descriptions provide additional information on the anticipated location of Trail Segment 3 of the Southwest Regional Trail in more depth. Refer also to the Master Plan for specified trail segments.

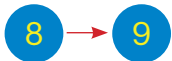
Engler Blvd to County Road 61



There is an existing pedestrian crossing at Engler Blvd and Chaska Creek Way. Improvements for safer pedestrian crossings at this intersection, such as a median refuge, are recommended. There are 10 foot wide bituminous trails with 8 foot boulevards on both sides of Chaska Creek Way until it terminates, with future trail development to occur as construction continues in this area. The SWRT would cross Chaska Creek Way at a crosswalk to access Creek Road with wayfinding signage provided.



Creek Road extends east to Savanna Way which will be developed as a primary collector road from Engler Blvd south to Big Woods Boulevard and eventually further south to Carver. A roundabout will be developed at Savanna Way and Creek Road.

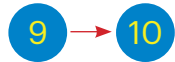


East of Savanna Way, Creek Road would be turned back to the City of Chaska from the County. The City would dedicate or permit trail development within the ROW at no cost to the County.

This section of Creek Road is surrounded by dense wooded areas and hilly terrain, offering a very scenic setting on both sides of the road and access to the creek. Creek Road may either become a one-way vehicular road with the SWRT running parallel to the road or it may be completely abandoned, except for local residential access, to become a trail corridor within a conservation area.

There may be potential opportunities for land acquisitions within this corridor if the lands are of benefit for natural resource improvement or protection,

such as bank stabilization. These lands would also optimally serve as trailheads with parking, trail information kiosk, picnic spaces and related amenities. Land acquisitions would only proceed with willing sellers, which may necessitate a boundary change in the future.



The existing trail along Creek Road connects into the Veterans Park and Firemen's Park trail systems where parking lots and an array of recreational amenities are located. Firemen's Park is a prime destination containing a swimming beach, splash pad, community building, playground, boardwalks and trails, and the Chaska Event Center / Curling Center with a pub restaurant.



PHOTO: FIREMEN'S PARK

There are existing pedestrian ramps and a concrete walk over Creek Road at County Road 61, however a striped crosswalk would be more noticeable and improve the safety of pedestrians at this crossing since this intersection is not currently signalized.

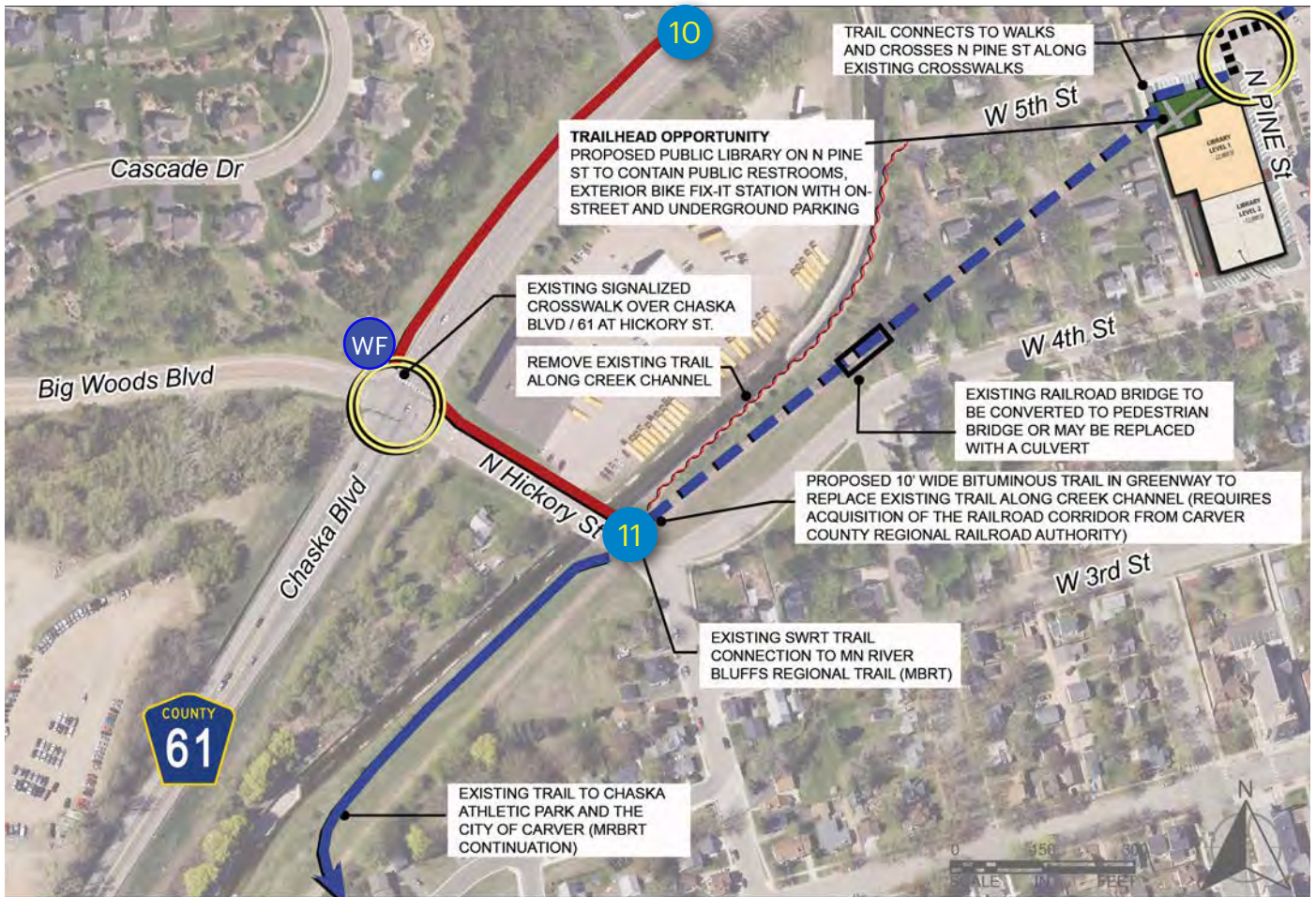
County Road 61 to N Hickory St

10 → 11

An existing trail continues west along the north side of County Road 61 to an existing crosswalk with signal at the intersection with Big Woods Drive / North Hickory Street, which is signalized. Wayfinding signs would help guide users to the SWRT and MRBRT. An existing trail along N Hickory St transitions to a wide concrete walk to a pedestrian ramp at the trail intersection to connect to the MRBRT by the intersection of North Hickory St and W 4th St. This ends the alignment for the proposed SWRT route.

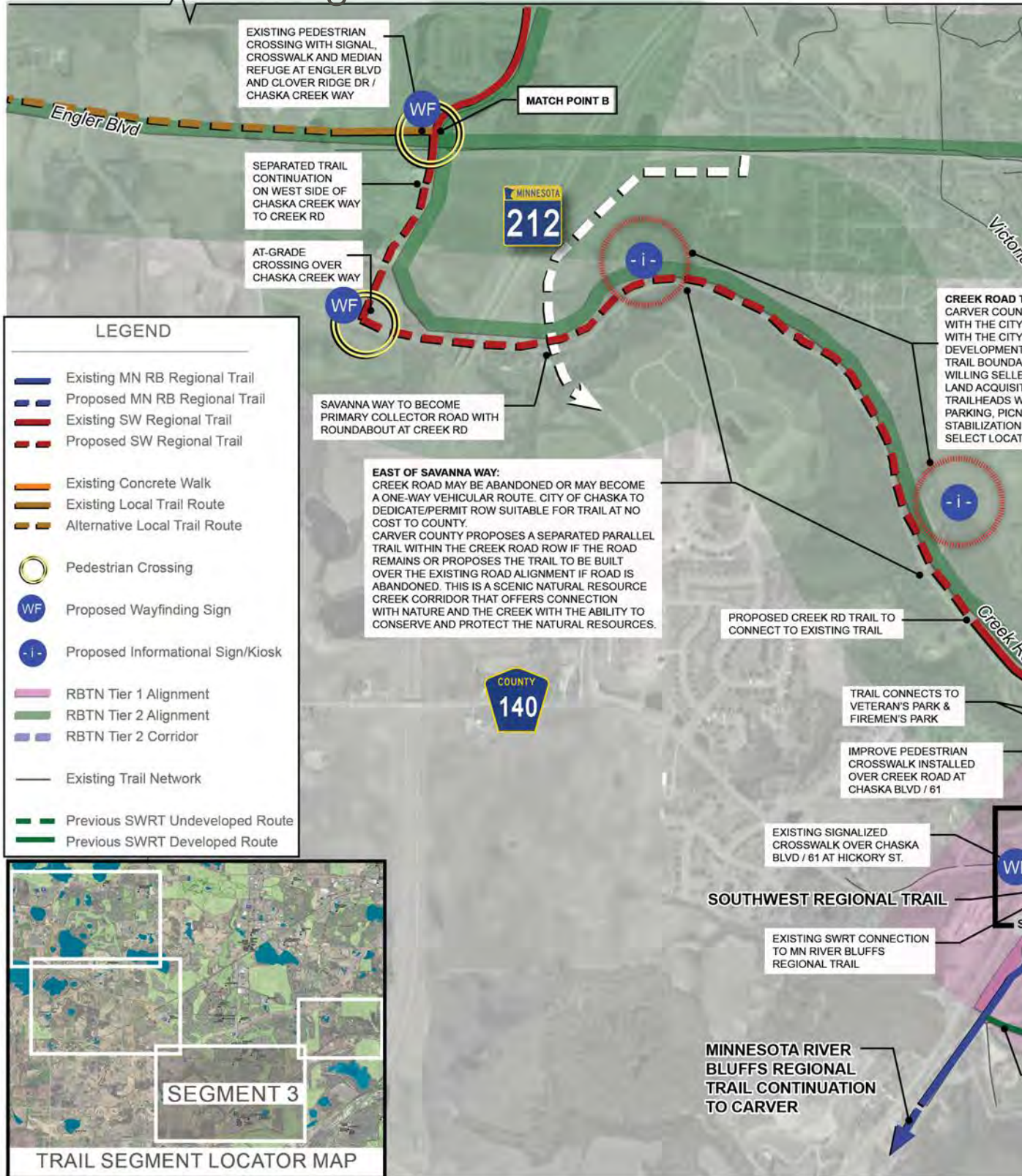


PHOTO: TERMINATION OF SWRT AT N HICKORY ST / W 4TH ST



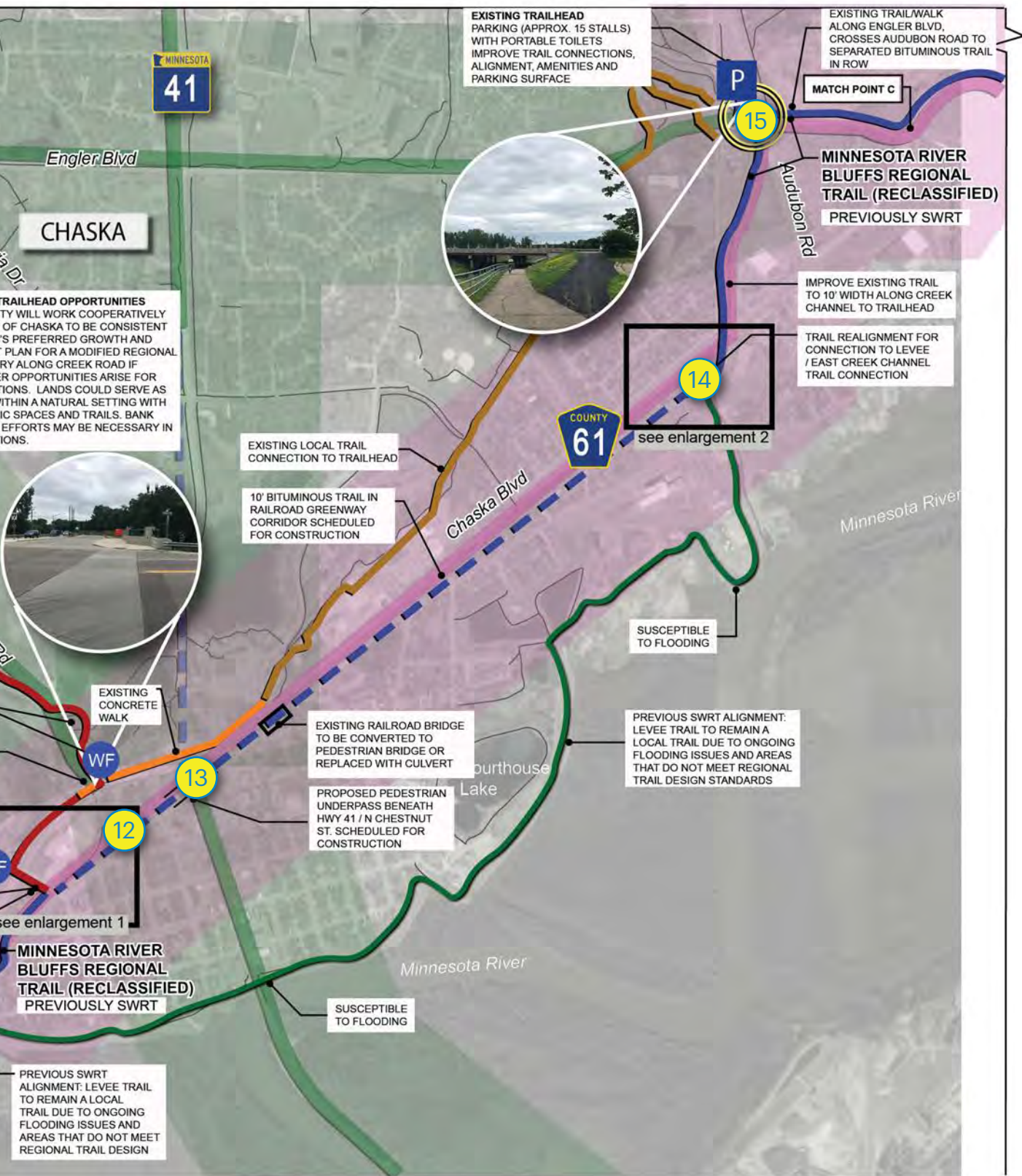
ENLARGEMENT PLAN

Overview of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail Master Plan - Trail Segment 3



Southwest Regional Trail: Victoria to Chaska Segment 3

Carver County, Minnesota
 November 2021 | WSB Project number: 012391-000



The accompanying descriptions provide additional information on the locations of Trail Segment 3 that were previously designated the Southwest Regional Trail and are now to be designated as part of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail. Refer also to the Master Plan for specified trail segment locations.

N Hickory St to N Pine St

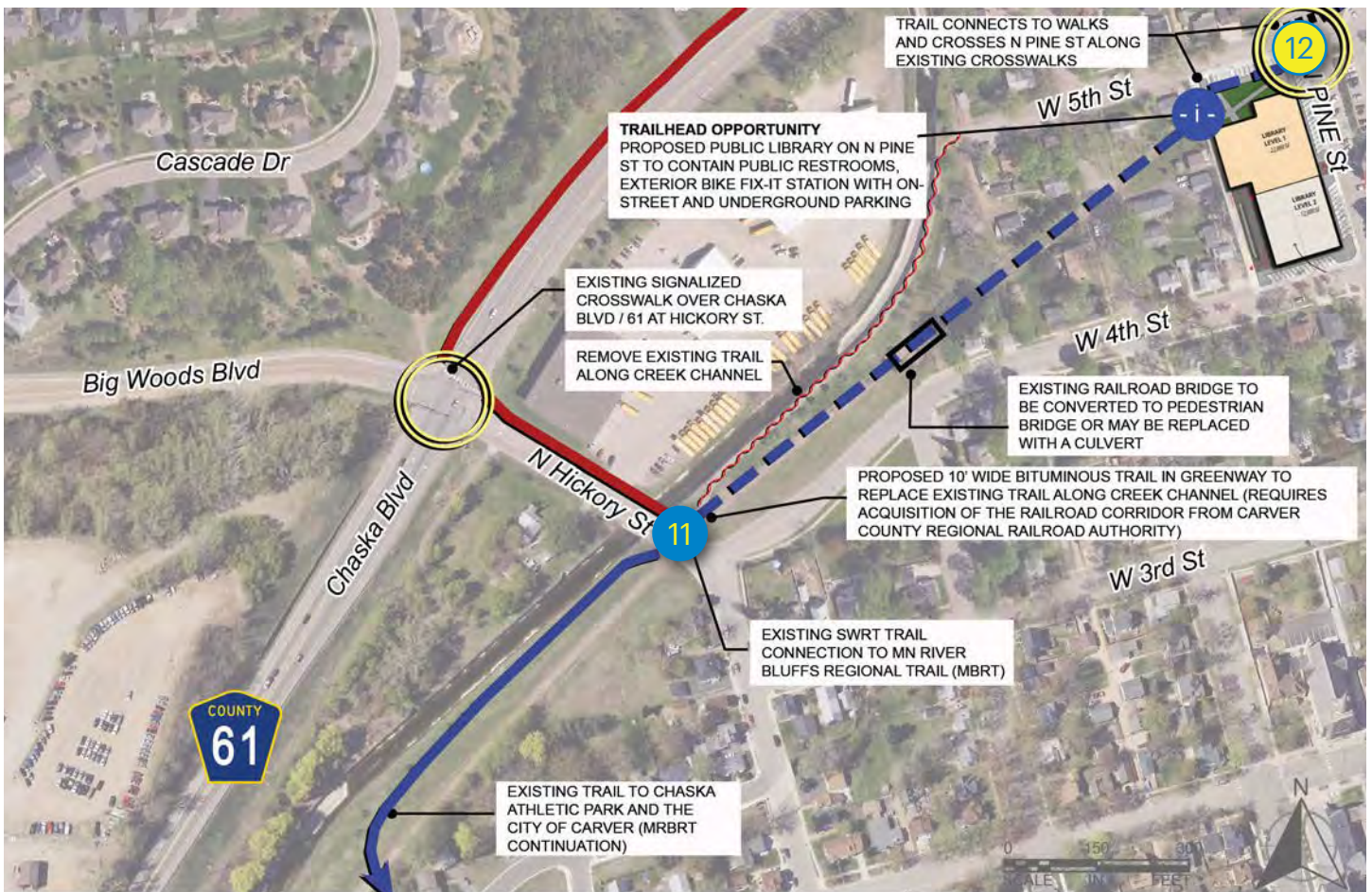


As shown on the enlargement map, the Southwest Regional Trail terminates at N Hickory St where it intersects an existing trail at a crosswalk location. The remaining trails previously designated as the SWRT are now designated as the MRBRT with corresponding segment numbers.

Existing trails extend southwest to connect to the City of Carver and the levee trail, both highly popular trails. The levee trail would remain a local trail as it does not meet regional trail design standards in some locations and has areas with ongoing flooding issues that take the trail out of use during times of high water elevations.

Starting at the crosswalk at N Hickory St and going northeast, a new 10 foot wide bituminous trail would be constructed within an existing trail corridor, once the railroad corridor, and is proposed as a long-term preferred route for the MRBRT through downtown Chaska. This segment of trail will require right of way acquisition of the former railroad corridor currently owned by the Carver County Regional Rail Authority.

This new segment of trail along the railroad corridor through Chaska would be designated as a Tier 1 RBTN Alignment on the Metropolitan Council's Regional Bicycle Transportation Network.



ENLARGEMENT PLAN

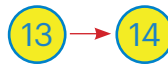
An existing abandoned section of a railroad bridge that remains over a low drainage area would be reconstructed as a pedestrian bridge or replaced with a large culvert beneath the trail to allow for continued drainage in this area. The bituminous trail will continue to an existing concrete sidewalk adjacent to public parking stalls at W 5th St. This would include connection to new walks to be built as part of the new public library on N Pine St. The new library is noted to serve as a trailhead with both on-street and underground parking, public restrooms, an exterior bike fix-it station and trail information kiosk. There are existing pedestrian crossings at the W 5th St and N Pine St intersection.

N Pine St to Engler Blvd



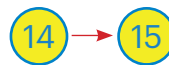
Once across N Pine St, a bituminous trail would continue within the greenway corridor adjacent to The Granary Event Center - Chaska Mill, a historic building. The trail through this section of downtown Chaska provides access to numerous government buildings, restaurants and shopping opportunities.

The greenway trail would enter into a grade separated crossing beneath MN Hwy 41 / N Chestnut St for continuous pedestrian movement and improved pedestrian safety at this major vehicular route.



Beyond Hwy 41, the grade separated crossing would go back up to grade and the bituminous trail would continue in the trail corridor. An existing abandoned section of a railroad bridge may be reconstructed as a pedestrian bridge or replaced with a trail over a culvert to continue drainage in this area. The corridor is generally open with few conflicts. There are areas with heavier vegetation near or within the corridor that may be impacted with the trail construction along this segment.

As the trail nears the northeast end of the existing levee trail near the Crystal Place higher density housing area, some acquisition of property outside of the existing ROW will be necessary. The trail would connect into the existing trail as the primary route with an appropriate radii and improved to a 10 foot width. The levee trail will be modified to connect into the MRBRT as a stop condition at the trail intersection. The enlargement plan shows an example of the proposed trail conditions.



The widened bituminous trail going north along the channel and Old Audubon Road is recommended to be improved to a widened ten foot width and ultimately leads to an existing trailhead with parking facilities at Old Audubon Road and Engler Blvd which includes a trail information kiosk that is recommended to be replaced.



ENLARGEMENT PLAN

Trail Segment 4

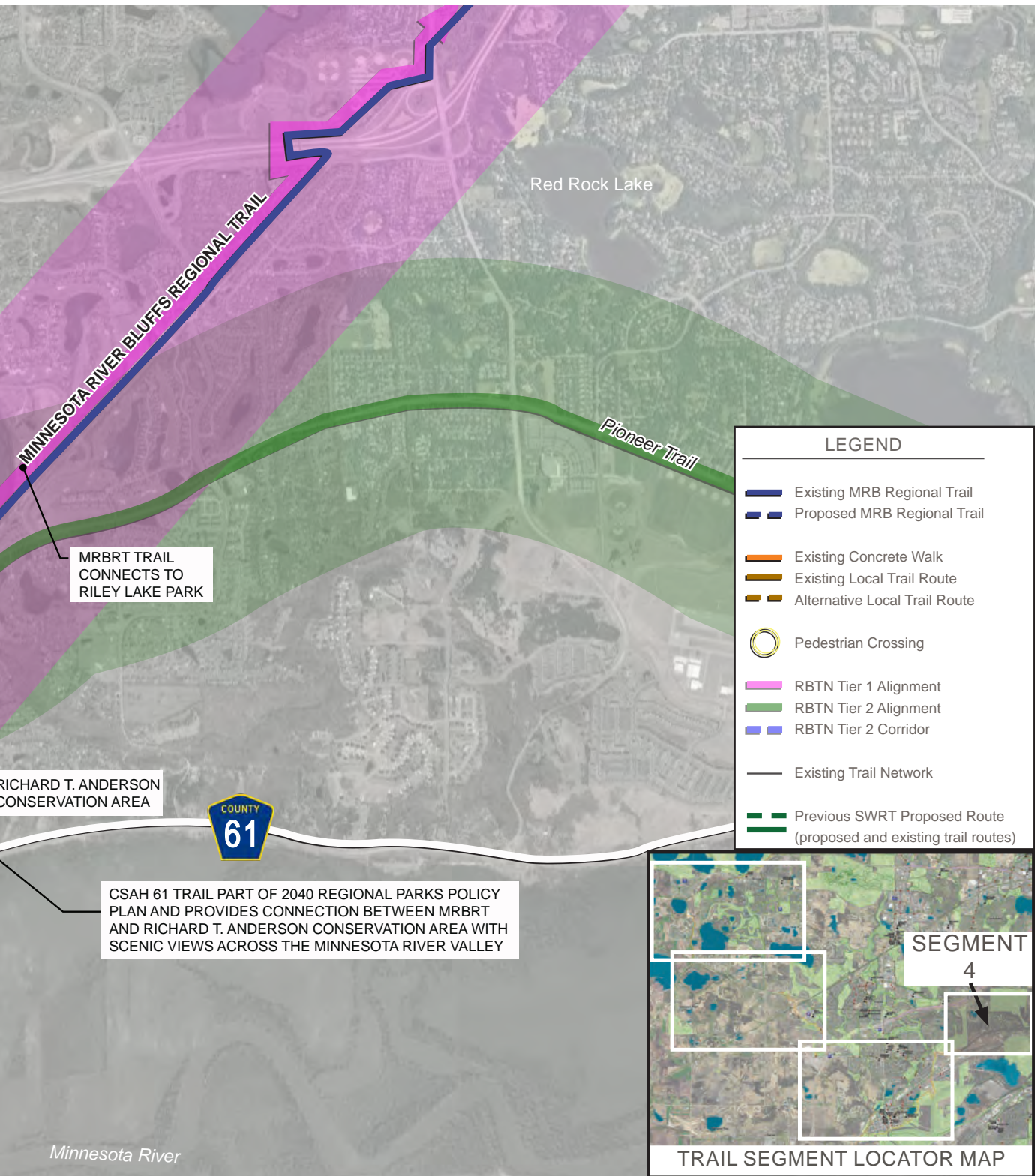


MN River Bluffs Regional Trail: Segment 4

Carver County, Minnesota

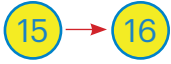
November 2021 | WSB Project number: 012391-000

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The accompanying descriptions provide additional information on the locations of Trail Segment 4 that were previously designated the Southwest Regional Trail and are now to be designated as part of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail, along with the previously identified. Refer also to the Master Plan for specified trail segment locations. .

Old Audubon Rd to Bluff Creek Dr



As shown on the enlargement map to the right, the existing trail from the trailhead parking lot (15) extends to Engler Blvd and crosses over the creek along an existing bridge walkway, then crosses Audubon Road along at an existing crosswalk at a controlled intersection. The trail continues east along Engler Blvd.

The existing trail along Engler Blvd has scenic views of the natural open space and wetland complex on the north side of the trail. This is the transition space out of Chaska to the natural settings along the Minnesota River Bluffs.

At the intersection of Engler Blvd and County Road 61/ Flying Cloud Dr, the MRBRT makes a wide curve to parallel County Road 61 but with greater separation from the road. The trail then takes a corner away from the road and into a natural trail corridor where the trail is immersed in significant natural resource settings adjacent to the Seminary Fen Scientific and Natural Area (SNA), a rare natural feature that is home to a number of unique and protected plant species. The trail intersects with Bluff Creek Drive at-grade where a parking lot for a trailhead is located for easy access to the trail with significant natural resources and views. The trailhead parking lot is small and gravel surfaced with a trail informational kiosk.

The previous designation of the Southwest Regional Trail terminated at Bluff Creek Drive where it met up to the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail.



ENLARGEMENT PLAN

Bluff Creek Dr to Pioneer Trail



At this point, the remainder of the trail is part of the original MRBRT alignment which continues to Eden Prairie. This section of trail has had recent improvements which includes reconstruction of the trail segment that was previously washed out during slope failures, a grade separated crossing over the new Highway 101 section north of the roundabout, and grade separated connections to the existing trails at Highway 101 that connect to Shakopee over the Minnesota River. Trails have also been constructed along County Road 61, part of the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, and connect to the Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area.

The significant improvements and additions made to the trail system have been long desired and are already seeing significant usage since the opening of the recent improvements with improved trail access and scenic views across the Minnesota River valley.



Section VI:

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 Considerations
- 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

Property Boundaries and Acquisitions - SWRT

The boundaries of the proposed remaining segments of the Southwest Regional Trail (SWRT) are anticipated to remain within existing road right-of-way (ROW) with no additional land acquisitions or easements necessary for trail development. However, in the limited situations where it may traverse across private property or where additional land would be of benefit (ie: protection of natural resources, adequate buffer, etc.) a trail right-of-way or easement will be sought by Carver County in concert with the LGU as part of future land development proposals or direct negotiations with the land owner. If land acquisitions are not feasible through local park or trail dedication or by other negotiated means, Carver County will seek acquisition funding assistance through the Metropolitan Council.

The master plan allows 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.

Property boundaries for select segments of the SWRT are illustrated in areas that are not currently developed and actual alignments would be determined during final platting of the proposed developments to include sufficient ROW for trail implementation.

Lands currently under private ownership include lands in Victoria from west of Carl Krey Lake down to Marsh Lake Road. Carver County would work with the City of Victoria to review any future development plans in order to identify ROW suitable for the SWRT corridor through future developments and does not anticipate land acquisition.

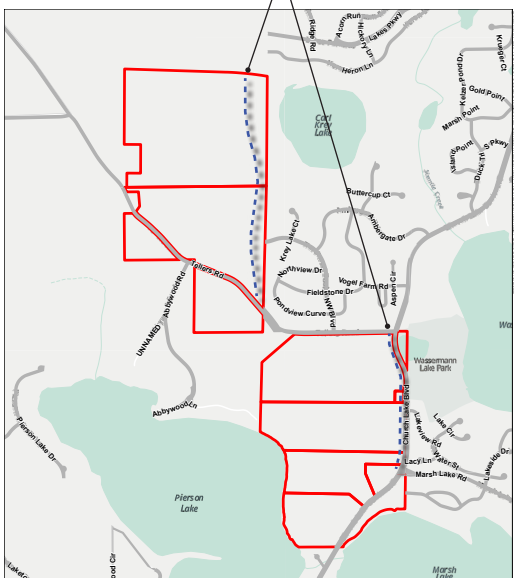
Within the Clover Ridge neighborhood the existing trail gap is currently not under Carver County ownership. Carver County will continue to work with the City of Chaska to review any future development plans in order to secure a trail easement for the existing trail gap.



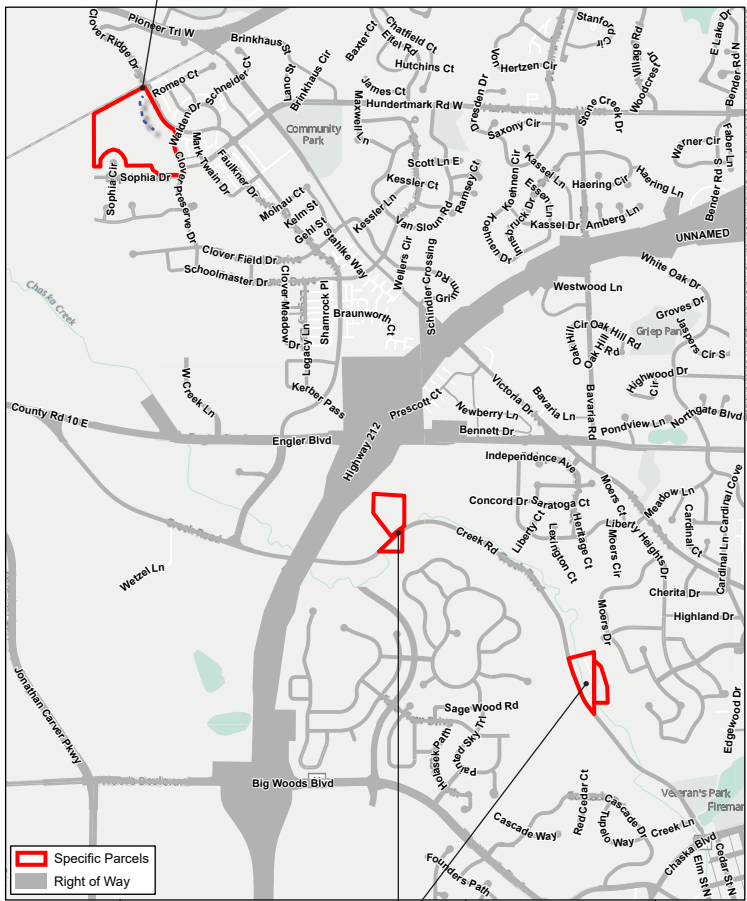
Creek Road in Chaska is currently a County owned road that would be turned back to the City of Chaska. Chaska would provide ROW or easements for trail development within this corridor at no cost to Carver County. Additionally, Carver County will work cooperatively with the City of Chaska consistent with the City's Preferred Growth and Development Plan to identify potential opportunities for land acquisition along the Creek Road corridor through a willing seller process. This could allow for trailhead development, improved access to the creek and natural areas, and protection of the natural resources within this corridor to include bank stabilization efforts. Refer to Trail Segment 3.

The following illustrates existing lands not currently owned or secured by Carver County.

Trail route from Victoria to Marsh Lake Road not currently owned.



Trail route in greenway through Clover Ridge neighborhood not owned



Parcels in consideration for trailheads along Creek Road

Property Boundaries and Acquisitions - MRBRT

In 2018, Carver County completed a land acquisition amendment plan for portions of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (MRBRT) corridor that were owned by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority for purchase by Carver County Parks. This plan illustrates the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail within the parcels now owned by Carver County Parks.

The boundaries of the proposed Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (MRBRT) for the sections within the railroad greenway through downtown Chaska currently includes parcels owned by the Carver County Regional Rail Authority from West 1st Street up to York Street, all of which will require land acquisition to complete the trail as shown in the red boundaries below. The trail along the Crystal Court property will likely require land acquisition or easements for additional property where existing ROW is not sufficient and to make a connection to the existing levee trail.



Trail Easement and Land Acquisition Cost Projections

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, easement or land acquisition. 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 Considerations

Cost projections for developing the trail segments are typical average costs for developing similar trails in Carver County and other local municipalities based on 2020 costs. Costs do not take into consideration special site conditions involving hazardous materials, wetland mitigation, special permitting needs, or road improvement costs.

The following table defines the projected cost for developing the trail.

GENERAL TRAIL DEVELOPMENT COST PROJECTIONS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE
New Trails	Development of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide. Includes 3.0 to 3.5 inches of asphalt and 8 inches of Class 5 aggregate base, general earthwork and subgrade preparation, erosion control, restoration, pedestrian ramps, and crosswalks. Does not include environmental impacts and mitigation, signals, land acquisition, road improvement costs, or retaining walls.	\$250,000 - \$360,000 per mile
Soil Corrections	General soil correction costs to a 4 - 5 foot depth beneath trail. Does not include wetland impacts or mitigation.	\$500,000 to \$1.5M per mile
Upgrade Existing Trails	Remove existing trail and replace with new asphalt trail at 10 feet wide. Includes 3.0 to 3.5 inches of asphalt over existing trail + extra base work.	\$150,000 - \$250,000 per mile
Trail Box Culverts	Trail box culverts under roads. Does not include environmental impacts and mitigation, land or ROW acquisition, or road reconstruction costs.	\$1,500 per lineal foot for culvert
Boardwalk	Construction of a 12 foot wide boardwalk through wet areas. Assumes no environmental impacts or mitigation. Costs can be variable depending on depth needed for footings / helical piers per soil conditions.	\$1500 - \$1800 per lineal foot
Crosswalk Warning	Installation of crosswalk flasher system on low end to hybrid beacon system on high end.	\$15,000 to \$90,000 each
Trail Amenities	Basic support amenities, including trail information signage, trailhead kiosks, bike repair stations, benches, picnic tables, and related. Approximate costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiosks: \$15,000 ea • Bike Repair Stations: \$5,000 ea • Bench: \$2,500 ea • Trash/Recycling Receptacle: \$1,500 ea • Bike Rack: \$1,000 ea • Drinking Fountain: \$8,000 ea (not including water service) • Signage: \$350 ea 	Varies

Note: A 15% construction contingency is recommended to be added for planning purposes with an additional 20% added for design, engineering and permits. Generally 3-5% added on a yearly basis should be added to account for inflation.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL DEVELOPMENT COST PROJECTIONS

TRAIL SEGMENT #1	DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE
From the Lake Minnetonka LRT (anticipated location) to Marsh Lake Road	Wayfinding sign (1) 600 lineal feet of 12' wide boardwalk 1.7 miles of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide Pedestrian activated signal at Marsh Lake Road * Assumes land acquisition or easements are not necessary and soil correction costs or wetland impacts are not included	\$1.5 - \$1.8M
TRAIL SEGMENT #2	DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE
Marsh Lake Road to Pioneer Trail at Shady Oak Drive	2 miles of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide Concrete pedestrian underpass culvert approx. 250' * Assumes land acquisition or easements are not necessary; soil correction costs, wetland impacts and road reconstruction costs are not included	\$1.2 - \$1.7M
Clover Ridge Drive from Pioneer Trail to Grimm Road	Wayfinding signs (4) Informational kiosk (1) 800 lineal feet of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide 3400 lineal feet of widened trail (from 8 to 10 feet wide) 1000 lineal feet of paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide (optional: currently concrete - assumes new base) Pedestrian activated signal at Engler Blvd	\$350 - \$500K
TRAIL SEGMENT #3	DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE
Chaska Creek Way from Engler Blvd to proposed Savanna Way	Wayfinding sign (1) 3500 lineal feet of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide	\$200 - \$240K
Creek Road from Savanna Way to 3550 Creek Road	5500 lineal feet of new paved asphalt trail at 10 feet wide Assumes trail is built within existing ROW roadbed	\$260 - \$375K
Trailhead Development	Parking lot for 10 vehicles Prefabricated or vault restroom (2 unisex stalls) Amenities: fix-it station, bench, bike rack, drinking fountain, trash, kiosk	\$200-\$400K
Land Acquisition	Land acquisition costs (4 parcels - includes buildings)	\$2,459,200
Firemen's Park to N Hickory Street	Wayfinding signs (2)	\$600

Note: A 15% construction contingency is recommended to be added for planning purposes with an additional 20% added for design, engineering and permits. Generally 3-5% added on a yearly basis should be added to account for inflation.

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, reconstruction and abandonments will also factor into the time frame for trail development along some segments.

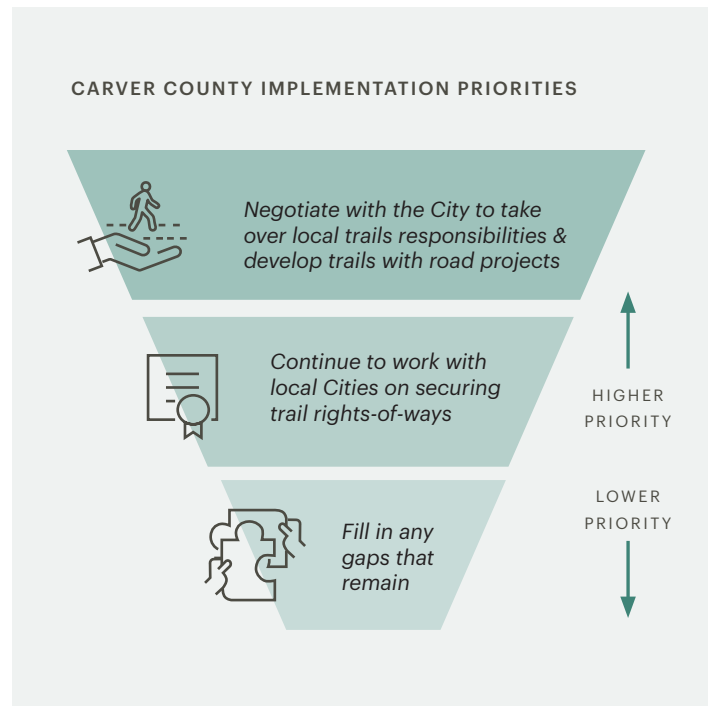


Project Phasing And Priorities

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 developing or redeveloping portions of the existing local trails that are identified as being part of this regional trail as well as develop trails in conjunction with road construction or improvement projects. Carver County's construction and operation of trails 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 continues to occur at a fairly rapid pace in order to accommodate the trail alignments as illustrated on the master plan. Ongoing collaboration between local cities and Carver County is critical during review and approval of development plans to ensure trail corridors are properly secured to avoid previous setbacks where trail route opportunities were lost.

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



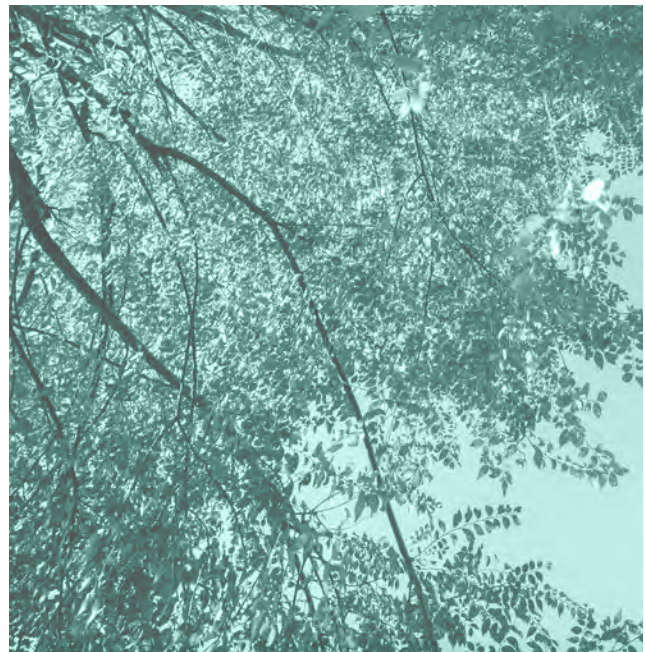
Management and Operations

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.

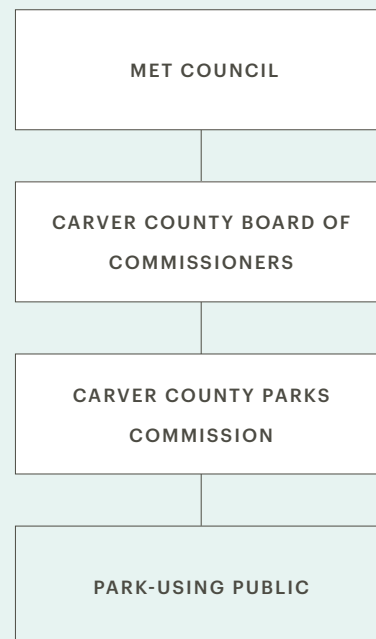
Carver County Parks is charged with the management and operation of the County's parks and trails system, including the trail defined by this master plan. The Carver County Board of Commissioners establishes policies and ordinance for the park and trail system. The County Board sets a budget for operations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



ORGANIZATION CHART



ORDINANCES

The Southwest Regional Trail will be governed by the Carver County ordinance including all amendments. The ordinance incorporates pertinent Minnesota statutes and addresses 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 is available through Carver County and online.

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 Department has an annual operations and maintenance budget of approximately \$1.4 million to operate and maintain the County's park and trail system with approximately 7 permanent employees. In addition, approximately 15 - 20 seasonal employees are hired each year for maintenance and recreation programs.

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 Department has a clearly defined maintenance program. Reporting to the Park Director is the Parks and Natural Resource Supervisor 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.





PUBLIC SERVICES

For the SWRT segment in locations that are currently undeveloped, Carver County will work with the local cities as development plans for roads are planned to identify adequate ROW for trail development.

OUTREACH & AWARENESS

Carver County continues to expand its outreach effort, in an effort to improve public awareness of its park and trail facilities and programs. 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, social media, the production of fliers and brochures and the display of information at County Service Centers, and park kiosks. The County 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.

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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Resolution No. 2021-05

*Moved by Black
Seconded by Roberts*

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE CARVER COUNTY SOUTHWEST REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN AMENDMENT.

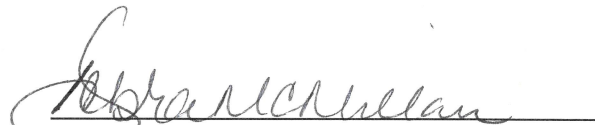
WHEREAS, Carver County is the implementing regional parks and trails agency of the Metropolitan Council and proposes an amendment to the trail alignment for the Southwest Regional Trails, and

WHEREAS, Victoria supports the proposed regional trail alignment connecting the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail and the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail, and

WHEREAS, the proposed regional trail alignment will continue to need City support to complete the trail

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Victoria hereby supports the proposed regional trail alignment for the Southwest Regional Trail

This Resolution is adopted by the City of Victoria and approved by the Mayor this 25 day of January 2021


Debra McMillan, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cindy Patnode, City Clerk

**CITY OF CHANHASSEN
CARVER AND HENNEPIN COUNTIES, MINNESOTA**

DATE: October 10, 2022 **RESOLUTION NO:** 2022-73

MOTION BY: McDonald **SECONDED BY:** Campion

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CARVER COUNTY SOUTHWEST REGIONAL
TRAIL MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, Carver County is an implementing regional park and trail agency of the Metropolitan Council; and

WHEREAS, Carver County proposes to amend and replace all of the previous Southwest Regional Trail Master Plans and amendments; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan is consistent with the City's plan for trails; and

WHEREAS, walking and biking enhances the quality of life for our residents during all four seasons.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Chanhassen hereby supports the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Chanhassen City Council this 10th day of October, 2022.

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

27A7BEAB6267418...

Kim Meuwissen, City Clerk

DocuSigned by:

D0665DC57B5943C...

Elise Ryan, Mayor

YES

NO

ABSENT

Ryan
McDonald
Campion
Rehm

Schubert

**CITY OF CHASKA
CARVER COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION

DATE: 09-19-2022

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-113

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER HUBBARD SECOND BY COUNCILMEMBER HATFIELD

A resolution finding that the proposed Carver County Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Chaska to Victoria Trail and the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail alignment is consistent with the Chaska Comprehensive Plan/Res. 2020-66

WHEREAS, Carver County has revised the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan which was originally created in 2006. This plan envisioned a trail which connected the communities of Chaska and Victoria as well as the North and South Light Rail Transit Lines; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the revision is to update the regional trail alignments to be consistent with current and proposed development, current and planned trails, ownership of the South LRT Line in Carver County, and to update the trail segments identified as the Southwest Regional Trail and Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail; and


WHEREAS, the City's Trails Plan is intended to provide City Council, Commissions, City Staff, and developers with detailed, quantifiable standards and guidelines for achieving a unified trail system, which will serve both destination and leisure-oriented users, and which will help foster an enhanced sense of community; and

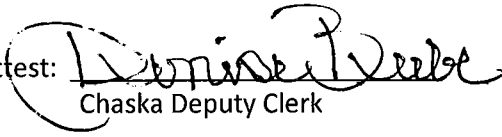
WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan includes policy statements that prioritize the implantation of its trail system, which includes a regional trail from Chaska to Victoria thereby connecting Carver Park to the Minnesota Valley State Trail and completing a loop trail system connecting Hopkins, Victoria, and Chaska; and

WHEREAS, On September 13th, 2022, Marty Walsh from Carver County Parks shared an update as well as presented to the Chaska Parks Commission the revised Carver County Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan. Walsh asked for a motion and recommendation from the Parks Commission to the Chaska City Council that the proposed Carver County Southwest Regional trail Master Plan Chaska to Victoria Trail and the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail alignment is consistent with the Chaska Comprehensive Plan/Res. 2020-66; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City Council of the City of Chaska, Minnesota, hereby finds that the proposed Carver County Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Chaska to Victoria Trail and the MN River Bluffs Regional Trail alignment is consistent with the Chaska Comprehensive Plan/Res. 2020-66.

Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Chaska, Minnesota, this 19th day of September 2022.


Mark Windschitl, Mayor

Attest: 
Chaska Deputy Clerk