



# Community Development Committee

Meeting date: April 18, 2011

Business Item  
Item: 2011-104

## ADVISORY INFORMATION

<b>Date:</b>	April 6, 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan and Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grants, Scott and Carver County
<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	Metropolitan Council District 4, Gary Van Eyll
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	MN Statute 473.313, Subd. 1 and Subd. 2; and MN Statute 473.315
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks (651-602-1360)
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development Division, Parks

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50005-1).
2. Authorize a grant of \$579,268 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Scott County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.76 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with: \$347,561 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation \$231,707 Metropolitan Council bonds
3. Authorize a grant of \$506,185 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Carver County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.56 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with: \$303,711 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation \$202,474 Metropolitan Council bonds

### Background

Scott and Carver Counties have submitted a master plan for the extension of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail and the Scott County Connection (Referral No. 50005-1) for review by the Metropolitan Council. The trail is comprised of 3.3 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor and 0.9 mile of the existing Frey Trail in the City of Carver for a total of 4.2 miles.

Scott and Carver Counties have also submitted a request for Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants to help finance the acquisition of each county's portion of the Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. Scott County requests \$579,268 for 1.76 miles (about 21 acres) and Carver County requests \$506,185 for 1.56 miles (about 19 acres) for a total of \$1,085,453.

## **Rationale**

Minnesota Statute 473.313 requires Regional Park Implementing Agencies to, prepare and submit to the Metropolitan Council a master plan and annual budget for the acquisition and development of regional recreation open space located within the district or county, consistent with the Metropolitan Council's parks policy plan. That law directs the Council to review, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission the master plans for their consistency with the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Minnesota Statute Section 473.315 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to make grants to Regional Park Implementing Agencies to cover the cost, or any portion of the cost, of acquiring or developing regional recreation open space in accordance with the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

## **Funding**

The Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50005-1) is consistent with requirements of the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

A portion of the estimated acquisition cost of \$1,447,221 and trail development costs which ranges from \$3,789,000 to \$3,965,000 are eligible for Metropolitan Council Regional Park Capital Improvement Program (CIP) consideration. Metropolitan Council approval of the master plan does not obligate future funding from the Regional Parks CIP to finance those costs. Plan approval only allows Scott and Carver Counties to seek funding for projects in the plan through the Regional Parks CIP.

Scott and Carver County's requests that total \$1,085,453 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to purchase 3.33 miles of the Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor is consistent with the rules for receiving grants from the Fund if the Metropolitan Council approves the Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan.

## **Known Support / Opposition**

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission considered this matter at its April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and unanimously approved the recommendations to approve the master plan and award the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants.

**METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**  
**390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101**  
**Phone (651) 602-1000 TDD (651) 291-0904**

**DATE:** March 29, 2011

**TO:** Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

**FROM:** Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks (651-602-1360)

**SUBJECT:** (2011-104) Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan and Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grants, Scott and Carver County

**INTRODUCTION**

Scott and Carver Counties have submitted a master plan for the extension of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail and the Scott County Connection (Referral No. 50005-1) for review by the Metropolitan Council. The trail is comprised of 3.3 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor and 0.9 mile of the existing Frey Trail in the City of Carver for a total of 4.2 miles. This memorandum analyzes the master plan against the criteria for reviewing regional park master plans. It recommends approving the master plan because it is consistent with applicable portions of the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Scott and Carver Counties have also submitted a request for Park Acquisition Opportunity Grants to help finance the acquisition of each county's portion of the Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. Scott County requests \$579,268 for 1.76 miles (about 21 acres) and Carver County requests \$506,185 for 1.56 miles (about 19 acres) for a total of \$1,085,453. (See Attachment 1 at the end of this memorandum for the grant request letter).

This memorandum analyzes their request against the rules for Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants. The memorandum recommends approving the grants. If \$1,085,453 in grants are awarded, there would be \$3,176,714 for future land acquisitions.

**AUTHORITY TO REVIEW**

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 1 requires Regional Park Implementing Agencies to, "prepare, after consultation with all affected municipalities, and submit to the Metropolitan Council, and from time to time revise and resubmit to the council, a master plan and annual budget for the acquisition and development of regional recreation open space located within the district or county, consistent with the council's policy plan." (i.e., the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 2 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to review, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, master plans for the regional park system. Plans are reviewed for their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. If a master plan is not consistent with Council policy, the Council should return the plan to the implementing agency with its comments for revision and resubmittal.

Minnesota Statute Section 473.315 authorizes the, "Metropolitan Council, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, to make grants from any funds available to it for recreation open space purposes to any municipality, county or Park District located wholly or partially within the metropolitan area to cover the cost, or any portion of the cost, of acquiring or developing regional recreation open space in accordance with the *Regional Recreation Open Space Policy Plan*".

## TRAIL MASTER PLAN ANALYSIS

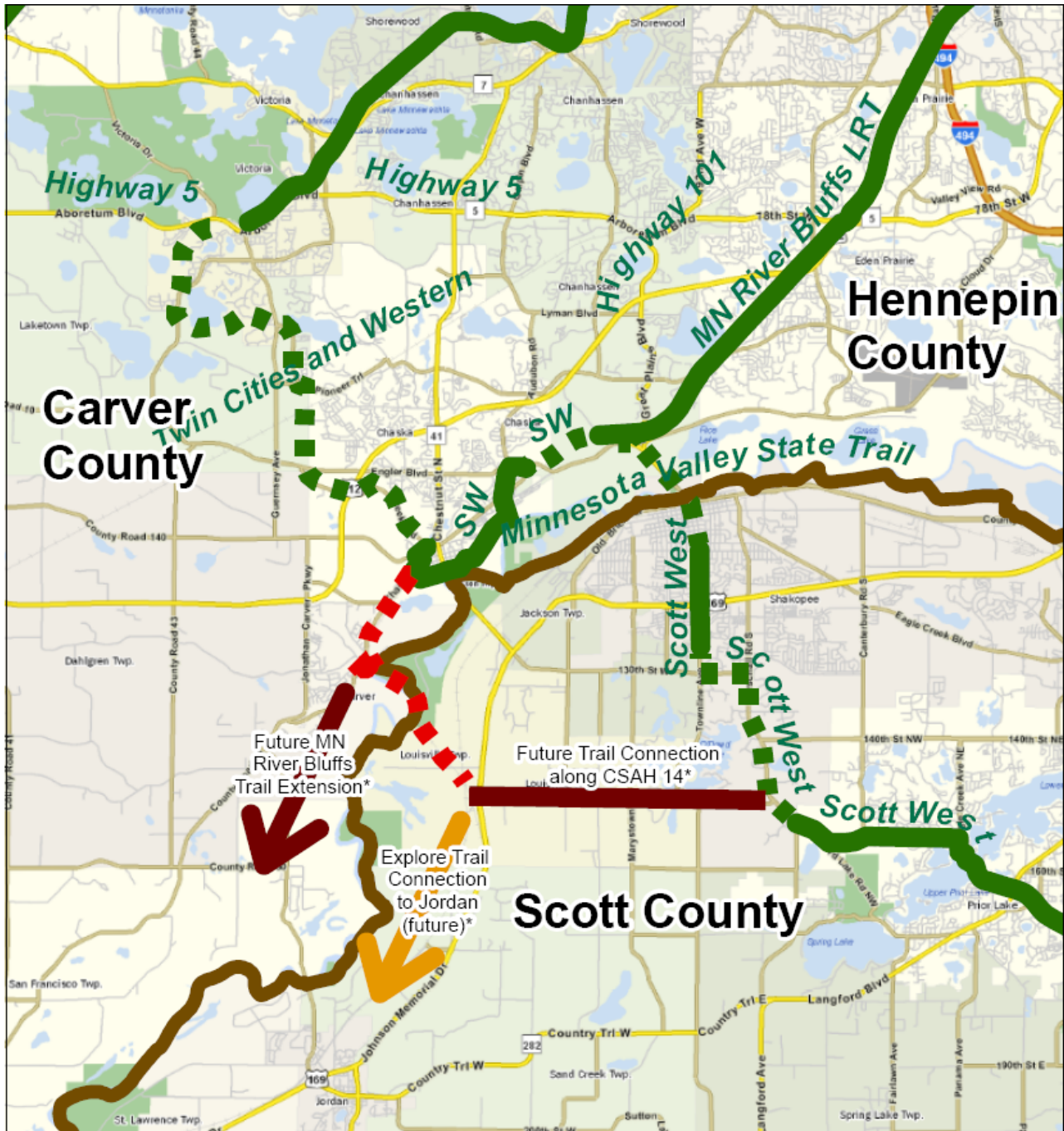
### 1. Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

The master plan proposes utilization of 3.33 miles of an abandoned section of Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way known as the Union Pacific-Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. This rail right of way plus a section of the existing Kenneth Frey Trail in the City of Carver is proposed as a regional trail that has the potential to link to other trails in Scott and Carver County. A map of the trail segment in context with other trails is shown in Map 1 on the following page. The trail corridor is consistent with the recently adopted *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, and the local comprehensive land use plans of Scott and Carver Counties. The rail corridor has a typical 100 foot width. Consequently, the total acreage for the right of way is about 40 acres.

Acquisition of the rail corridor to be used for the regional trail is a cooperative effort between Scott and Carver County, and the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division (MCES). All of these entities are providing funding towards its acquisition. On January 12, 2011 the Metropolitan Council authorized \$250,000 for the MCES to acquire a permanent easement on the right of way for sewer interceptor pipes in both counties. After deducting the easement contribution, the remaining costs to acquire the right of way for the trail is \$1,447,221. As noted in the introduction, Carver and Scott Counties are requesting Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants to help finance a portion of that cost. Analysis of their grant requests is shown later in this memorandum.

The rail corridor is being preserved through the federal rail banking "Interim Trail Use" program. Under this program, trails are supported as an interim use while the overall corridor stays intact to accommodate a return to rail service (public or private), should the need or demand return in the future. The master plan states, "Should conversion to rail service occur, the financial investment for the regional trail will be reimbursed through sale of the land. The useful life of all trail infrastructure is also expected to be met before any return to rail service will occur." The master plan also considered alternative routes for the trail should there ever be a conflict with rail and trail uses—specifically for a Minnesota River crossing. An alternative route is shown below called the "Jordan Connection" that would use the CSAH 9/45 bridge.





# Study Area and Overview

## MN River Bluffs Regional Trail Extension & Scott County Connection

### Map 1

#### Legend

- Existing Regional Trails
- Planned Regional Trails
- Study Area
- Existing State Trail

\*Future trail connections are not part of this study.



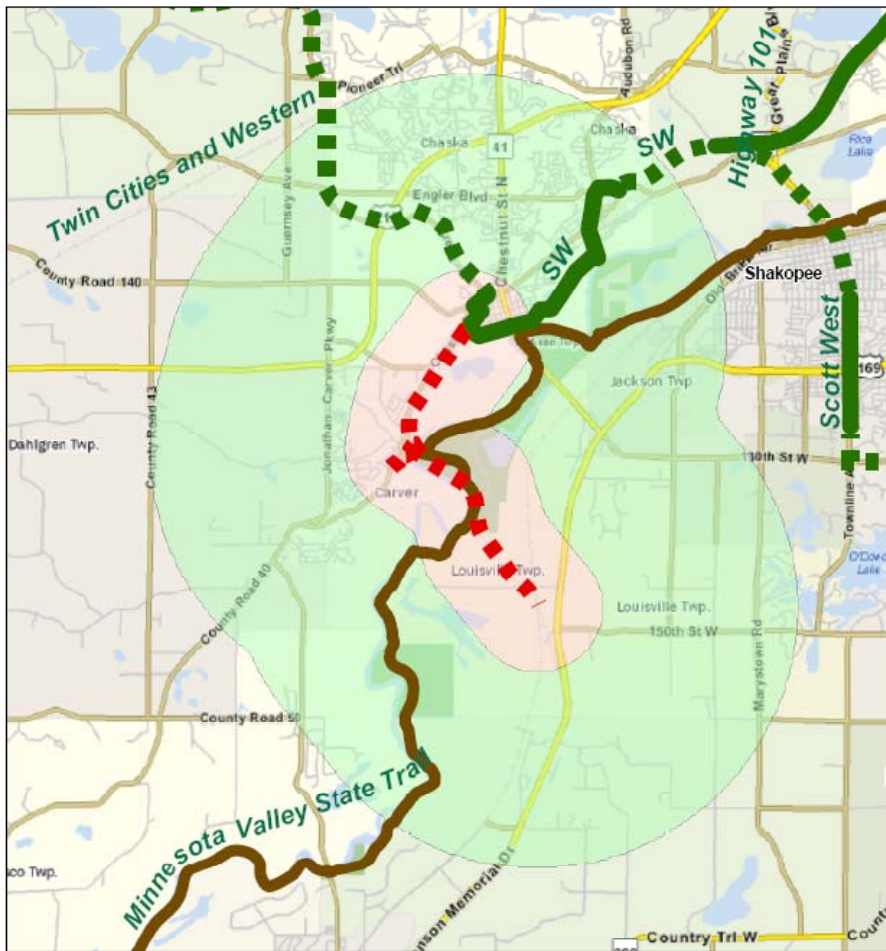


## Stewardship Plan

The railroad rails, ties and main Minnesota River bridge will be removed by the Union Pacific Railroad as part of the sale of the right of way. The entire corridor will be posted as closed to public use until the trail is developed. Both counties will perform weed control, brush removal, diseased tree removal as needed prior to the trail's development. The counties will also work collaboratively with neighboring public landowners (MN Dept. of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) on management of vegetation and invasive species in the trail corridor.

### 2. Needs Analysis

The master plan indicates that the population within the core service areas of the trail (0.75 mile on either side) has a population of 28,500. The core service area is where 50% of the visitors to the trail come from. The primary service area of the trail (3 miles either side) is where 75% of the visitors to the trail come from. Long-term population forecasts assume that the trail will serve 150,000 residents within the primary service area including parts of communities just outside this area. Map 2 below illustrates the core and primary service area of the trail.



## Primary Service Area MN River Bluffs Regional Trail Extension & Scott County Connection

**Map 2**



### Legend

- Core Service Area 0.75 Miles
- Primary Service Area 3 Miles
- Existing Regional Trails
- Planned Regional Trails
- Study Area
- Existing State Trail

### 3. Development

The master plan calls for developing a 10 foot wide paved trail with 2 foot wide shoulders for a total width of 14 feet in the former location of the rail ballast on the rail right of way. Currently the railroad grade ballast where the rails were located was approximately 10 feet wide. In order to accommodate the 14 foot wide trail section, the ballast and a portion of the sub ballast under the rail ties would be removed, crushed or regraded. Some of the removed material would be used for fill required to raise the trail's elevation for bridge access points above the year 100 year flood plain.

The master plan also proposes use of the existing Kenneth Frey City of Carver trail as part of this trail to take advantage of its existing infrastructure and extend the Minnesota River Bluffs Trail further to the southwest. The plan calls for a bridge over Spring Creek as an alternative to where the trail currently crosses the creek on the Main Street West bridge. Figure 1 shows the trail in context with the UP Corridor.

**Figure 1: Kenneth Frey Trail in relation to UP Corridor**





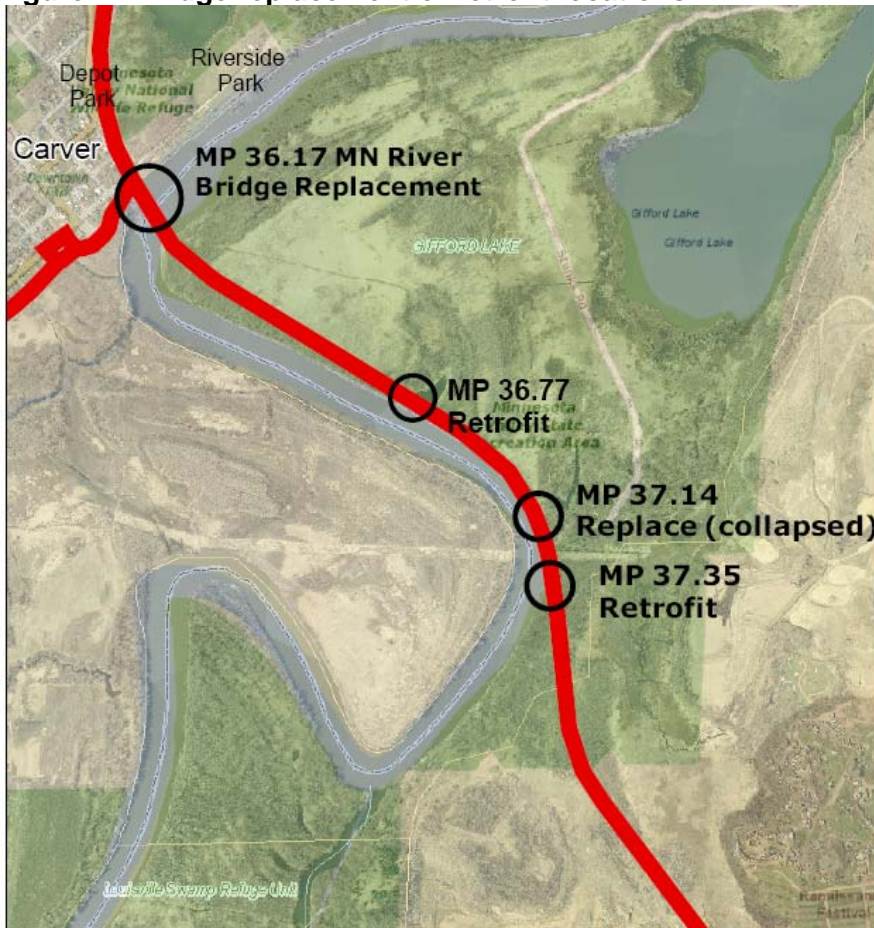
Full development of the portion of the rail right of way into a multi-use trail will cost range from \$3,789,000 to \$3,965,000 as detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Estimated Development Costs for Trail**

<b>Scott County portion</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Bridge replacement at MP37.14 and channel protection	\$ 670,000
Bridge repair and retrofit at MP 36.77	\$ 320,000
Bridge repair and retrofit at MP 37.35	\$ 100,000
Road crossing, signing and striping at 145th Street	\$ 7,000
Rail retrofit, embankment improvements and trail construction	\$ 253,000
<b>Carver County portion</b>	
Road crossings, signing and striping at First Street and Main Street East	\$ 14,000
Rail retrofit, embankment improvements and trail construction	\$ 165,000
New bridge at Spring Creek (alternative alignment on Kenneth Frey trail)	\$ 176,000
Trail reconstruction on levee at City of Carver	\$ 25,000
<b>Minnesota River main channel bridge at MP 36.17</b>	<b>\$ 2,235,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,965,000</b>
<b>Total if Spring Creek bridge is not built</b>	<b>\$ 3,789,000</b>

The locations of the bridges mentioned in the table are shown in Figure 2.

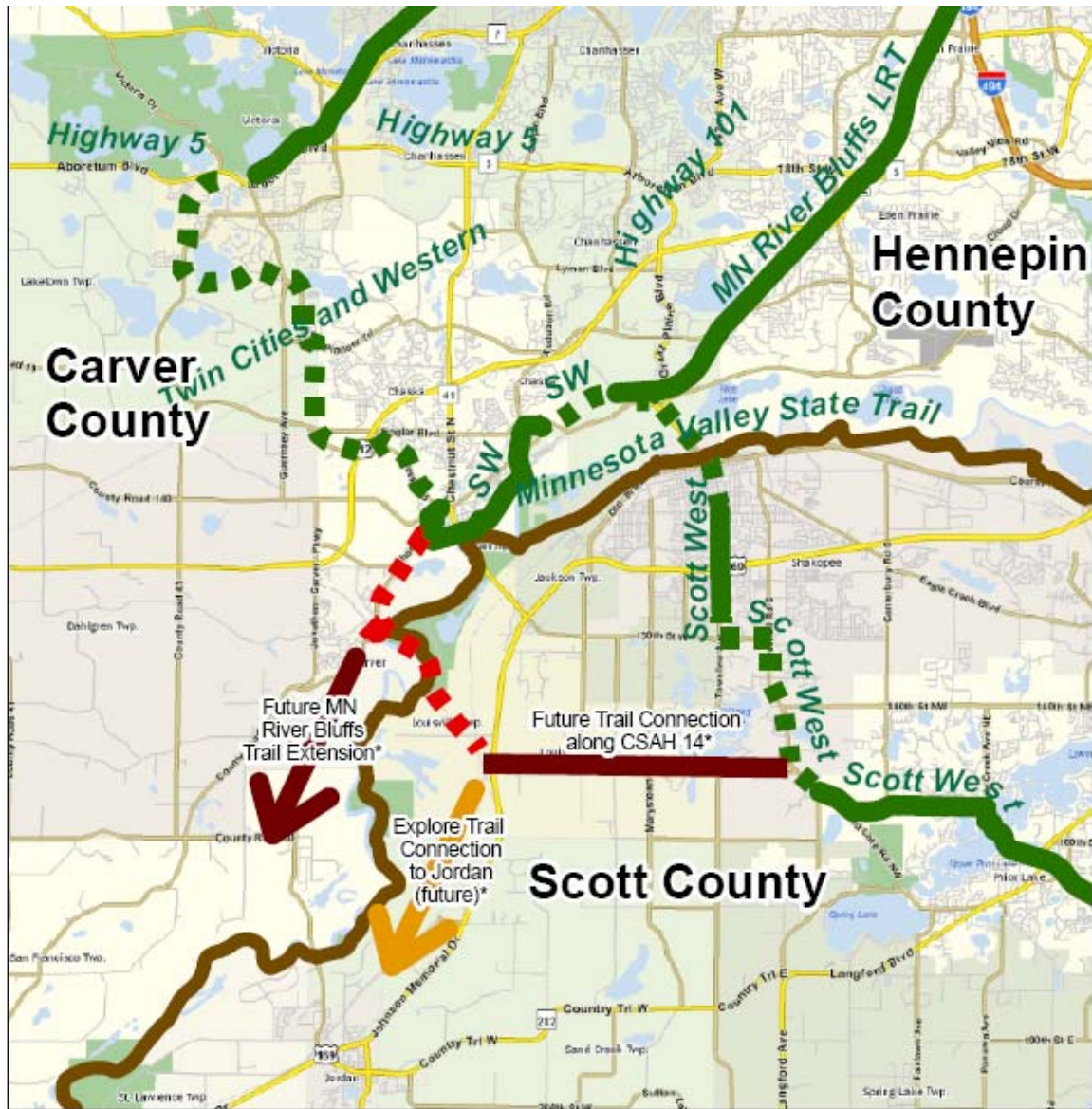
**Figure 2: Bridge replacement or retrofit locations**





The timing of development for Carver County section, which links to the Minnesota River Bluffs Trail to the northeast and a planned trail to the northwest, is dependent on funding for trail construction. Carver County will pursue transportation and recreation funds from federal, state and regional sources plus utilize local funding.

The timing of development for the Scott County is dependent on linking to a trail to the southwest (Connection to Jordan) and to the east (Future Trail Connection along CSAH 14). Map 1 from the master plan illustrates the Union Pacific corridor (Study Area) in context with these existing and planned trails.



## Study Area and Overview

### MN River Bluffs Regional Trail Extension & Scott County Connection

#### Map 1

#### Legend

- █ Existing Regional Trails
- █ Planned Regional Trails
- █ Study Area
- █ Existing State Trail

\*Future trail connections are not part of this study.



#### **4. Conflicts**

The Union Pacific Rail corridor will be rail banked under the “Interim Trail Use” condition by the Surface Transportation Board until such time as it is determined that future rail transportation is not a consideration. Neither Scott nor Carver County Rail Authority has plans at this time to reestablish rail transportation. However, if rail or another form of transportation is established it is planned that the trail would remain in the rail corridor. Within the 100 foot width, the rail authorities will permit or issue easement for utility lines and trails. When other utilities are authorized in the rail corridor, agreements for these utilities will protect the trail or require that the trail be repaired if it is disturbed.

Uses for this trail are proposed to be pedestrian and bicycling. Equestrian and snowmobile trails in the area provide for those other trail uses.

#### **5. Public Services**

The trail is located adjacent to existing developed public lands which can provide access to the trail and have services for parking, information and water. No additional services are needed for the trail to become operational.

Police, fire and emergency medical services are provided in both counties and cities the trail passes through.

#### **6. Operations and Maintenance**

The estimated cost to operate and maintain the trail is \$5,000 per year (2010 dollars) in each County. Activities include vegetation management, trash removal, trail surface sweeping, trail surface repair and seal coating, over/underpass structure inspections, culvert cleaning and signage/lane striping maintenance.

#### **7. Citizen Participation**

Both counties carried out extensive communication with local officials, affected federal and state agencies with lands adjacent to the rail corridor as well as adjacent private landowners when the rail corridor was proposed to be abandoned in 2007.

The master plan has been reviewed and approved by the following entities:

##### Scott County

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Louisville Township  
Scott County Parks Advisory Committee  
Scott County Board of Commissioners

##### Carver County

City of Chaska has submitted documents supporting the trail.

#### **8. Public Awareness**

Once the regional trail or portions of it are completed that can accommodate public use, it will be promoted and marketed through press releases, publications produced by both counties, websites of both counties with links to other websites. Plus publications and websites by regional and state entities will include information about the trail.

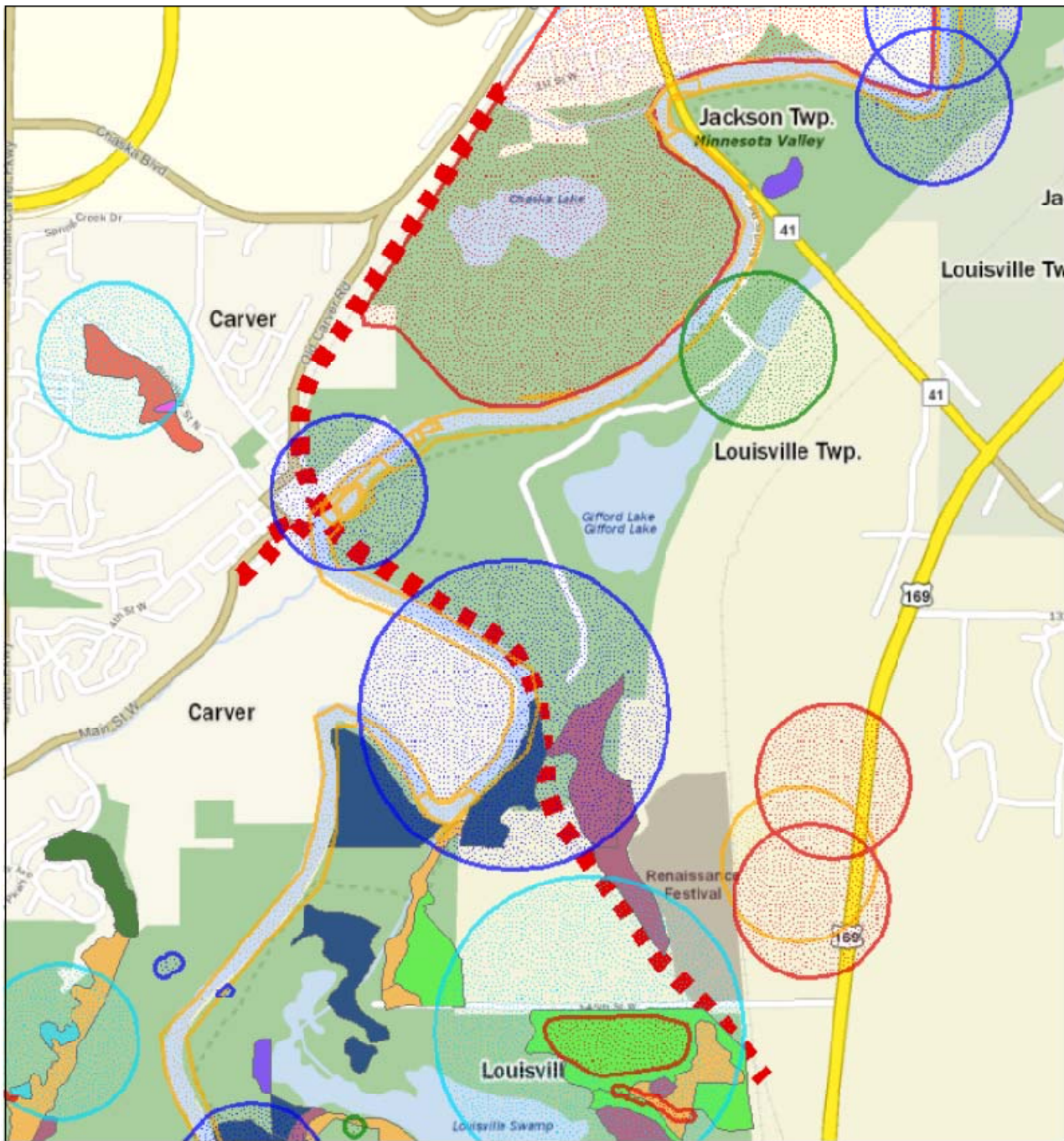
## **9. Special Needs**

In addition to trail and support facility construction that meets Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, there is no proposal for a trail fee, so this facility will have no financial barrier for using it.

## **10. Natural Resources**

The master plan includes an inventory of the natural resource features within and adjacent to the trail corridor (See Map 4 on following page). Many of the mapped sensitive features are located within existing MN Dept. of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service lands adjacent to the trail corridor. Both counties will explore collaboration and cost-sharing opportunities with these agencies to provide consistent management of vegetation to enhance native plant communities and habitats within the trail corridor and the adjacent public lands.





## Natural Resource Inventory



### MN River Bluffs Regional Trail Extension & Scott County Connection

#### Map 4

#### Legend

Rare Natural Features (NHIS)	
	Vertebrate Animal
	Community
	Invertebrate Animal
	Nonvascular Plant, Fungus
	Vascular Plant
	Animal Assemblage
	Geologic

Native Plant Communities (MCBS)	
	Bulrush Marsh (Northern)
	Dry Sand - Gravel Oak Savanna (Southern)
	Dry Sand - Gravel Prairie (Southern)
	Other Water Body
	Pin Oak - Dur Oak Woodland
	Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest
	Silver Maple - (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest
	Southern Mesic Maple-Basswood Forest
	Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest

Sources: Natural Heritage Information System & Minnesota County Ecological Survey



## **REVIEW BY OTHER COUNCIL DIVISIONS:**

### **Environmental Services (Kyle Colvin)**

Northern portions of the proposed trail/RR alignment correspond to a proposed interceptor alignment (Carver Interceptor) which is scheduled to be bid and construction initiated later in 2011. It is anticipated that construction for this interceptor will be completed by the end of 2012. Any trail improvements made in this area should be scheduled to coordinate with the construction of the interceptor. A future project will utilize a portion of the proposed trail/RR alignment within Scott County. This project shall consist of the construction of an interceptor/outfall pipeline (post 2030).

Interceptor facilities and trail corridors are compatible uses. The Metropolitan Council, Carver and Scott Counties and the Cities of Carver and Chaska have negotiated with Union Pacific railroad for the acquisition of the rail corridor. By Metropolitan Council action on January 12, 2011, the Regional Administrator was authorized to acquire wastewater pipeline (interceptor) easements on the Chaska Industrial lead, Union Pacific Railroad in conjunction with its acquisition by Carver and Scott Counties for interim trail use. The authorized cost of the corridor acquisition was \$250,000 and would be included as one of the funding sources for the rail corridor acquisition. The permanent easement requirement for the northern project (Carver Interceptor) shall consist of a 35 foot (as measured from the west right-of-way line) easement within the railroad right-of-way. The full width of the right-of-way may be utilized for the construction of the interceptor. It is anticipated that easement requirements would be similar on that portion of the trail in Scott County.

The Master Plan appears to be consistent with Metropolitan Council Environmental Services' understanding and therefore, no objections or additional comments are offered.

### **Environmental Services (Jim Larsen) – No impacts**

### **Metropolitan Council Transportation (James Andrew)**

The proposed trail would make a valuable extension to the region's non-motorized system. However, the agencies should be aware that demolition of the bridge over the Minnesota River, as is proposed, may face obstacles to being approved if the counties are looking to use federal transportation funds. It does not appear that the bridge study that was done examined the cost and feasibility of rehabilitation of the parts of the bridge that are proposed to be replaced. Replacement of a bridge on another crossing of the Minnesota River between Bloomington and Eagan was unable to proceed because the bridge was deemed historic.

## PARK ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITY FUND GRANTS ANALYSIS

### Acquisition cost analysis

In 2001, the Metropolitan Council established a Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grant program to assist regional park agencies in acquiring land for the Metropolitan Regional Park System. Land that is acquired must be within Metropolitan Council approved master plan boundaries for that particular park or trail unit. To-date, about \$20.3 million has been granted for the acquisition of 1,822 acres. The total related acquisition costs and market value of this land is about \$59.2 million. (See Attachment 2 at the end of this memorandum for a list of all grants awarded).

As noted above, Metro Council Environmental Services (MCES) is acquiring an easement on a portion of the trail right of way for a sewer interceptor at a cost of \$250,000. And a portion of the rail corridor is not being used as part of the regional trail. After deducting the easement and non-trail costs, the net total costs to acquire the Scott and Carver County portions of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor parcel for the regional trail including associated costs that are grant eligible totals \$772,357 for Scott County and \$674,914 for Carver County as shown in Table 2:

**Table 2: Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor Acquisition Costs**

<b>Corridor Cost Allocation Purchase Price</b>	<b>Non Regional Trail</b>	<b>Regional Trail Scott County</b>	<b>Regional Trail Carver County</b>	<b>Total</b>
Corridor Length (linear feet)	7,694	9,306	8,251	25,251
Corridor Assignment (percent)	30.47%	36.85%	32.68%	100.00%
Purchase Price linear foot allocation, including closing cost estimates (\$2,334,000) <sup>1</sup>	711,172	860,172	762,656	2,334,000
MCES easement payment	0	(125,000)	(125,000)	(250,000)
<b>Net Purchase Price</b>	<b>711,172</b>	<b>735,172</b>	<b>637,656</b>	<b>2,084,000</b>
<b>Additional Grant Eligible Expenditures</b>				
Pro-rated share of Local Property Taxes for Each County's portion of Trail <sup>2</sup>	0	395	3,227	3,622
Phase I Environmental Assessment (Scott County for regional trail corridor; Carver Co. segments paid from grant funds)	0	2,500	0	2,500
Estimated Stewardship Costs (estimated \$30,000, regional trail corridor segment only)	0	15,000	15,000	30,000
Attorney - outside counsel (\$6,214 for entire corridor)	1,893	2,290	2,030	6,214
Bridge feasibility study (\$34,000, regional trail corridor segment only)	0	17,000	17,000	34,000
<b>Grand Total Grant Eligible Costs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>772,357</b>	<b>674,914</b>	<b>1,447,271</b>

Scott and Carver Counties request that the acquisition be financed with the following revenue sources shown in Table 2:

**Table 2: Revenue Sources for Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor Acquisition**

Revenue Sources	Scott County	Carver County	Total
Acquisition Opportunity Grant (75%)	579,268	506,185	1,085,453
Acquisition Opportunity Grant Local Match (25%)	193,089	168,729	361,818
<b>Total</b>	<b>772,357</b>	<b>674,914</b>	<b>1,447,271</b>

The 3.3 mile abandoned rail corridor qualifies for funding from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account because the land includes man-made structures and has been disturbed. The Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants would be financed as shown in Table 3:

**Table 3: Park Acquisition Opportunity Grant Revenue Sources**

Revenue Sources	Scott County	Carver County
FY 2011 Parks & Trails Legacy Fund (60%)	\$ 347,561	\$ 303,711
Metropolitan Council bonds (40%)	\$ 231,707	\$ 202,474
<b>Total Grant</b>	<b>\$ 579,268</b>	<b>\$ 506,185</b>

**Rules for distributing grants from Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund**

On June 24, 2009 the Metropolitan Council adopted rules that govern the distribution of grants from the Fund on a yearly basis--July 1 to June 30. Those rules are indicated below in italic font. The following findings indicate that these rules have been met for Scott and Carver County's grant requests

*A. Grants from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund may only be awarded to finance a portion of the cost to acquire land within Metropolitan Council-approved master plan boundaries, and only after the requesting regional park implementing agency has used available acquisition grant funds previously provided by the Metropolitan Council.*

If the Metropolitan Council approves the trail master plan, Scott and Carver County's request is consistent with this rule because the parcel is within the Metropolitan Council-approved master plan for the trail. Plus, neither park agency has acquisition grant funds previously provided by the Metropolitan Council to finance this acquisition.

*B. Any interest cost on a contract for deed or other timed payment plan is not eligible for grant funding. The value of a discounted sale (i.e. the difference between the appraised value and a reduced sale price) is not counted as part of the cost to acquire land and is not included as part of a local match to the grant.*

The grants proposed here would be the only transaction for the parcel. The purchase price is the negotiated price based on a certified appraisal for the land.

*C. Grants from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund may finance a portion of the actual cost to acquire land after deducting any Metropolitan Council grants and other grants used to finance a portion of the cost as follows:*

*The Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant finances 75% of the net cost of acquiring the land which is defined as the purchase price—not the appraised value; legal fees, appraisal costs and*

*other closing costs incurred by the park agency; the property tax equivalency payment due to the city or township; and stewardship costs.*

*A contribution of 25% of the net cost of acquiring the land up to \$567,000 that is financed by regional park implementing agency funds or other sources is not eligible for reimbursement consideration by the Metropolitan Council. Seventy-five percent (75%) of a contribution above \$567,000 that is financed with regional park implementing agency funds only is eligible for reimbursement consideration by the Metropolitan Council.*

The Counties' requests are 75% of their net costs to acquire their portion of the railroad for the trail as shown on the previous page. The Counties will provide a 25% non-reimbursable match to the Council's grants. The grant request and match to the Council's grant is consistent with this rule.

*The maximum grant(s) available to a park agency is \$1.7 million during the July 1 to June 30 time period.*

Both grants are within the \$1.7 million limit for each park agency during this time period.

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

1. The Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50005-1) is consistent with requirements of the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
2. A portion of the estimated acquisition cost of \$1,447,221 and trail development costs which ranges from \$3,789,000 to \$3,965,000 are eligible for Metropolitan Council Regional Park Capital Improvement Program (CIP) consideration. Metropolitan Council approval of the master plan does not obligate future funding from the Regional Parks CIP to finance those costs. Plan approval only allows Scott and Carver Counties to seek funding for projects in the plan through the Regional Parks CIP.
3. Scott and Carver County's request from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to purchase 3.33 miles of the Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor is consistent with the rules for receiving grants from the Fund if the Metropolitan Council approves the Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan
4. The Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund should be used to finance these grants because it is consistent with the utilization of this account.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Metropolitan Council:

4. Approve the Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50005-1).
5. Authorize a grant of \$579,268 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Scott County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.76 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with:  
\$347,561 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation  
\$231,707 Metropolitan Council bonds
6. Authorize a grant of \$506,185 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Carver County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.56 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with:  
\$303,711 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation  
\$202,474 Metropolitan Council bonds



**Attachment 1: Master Plan and Grant Request Submittal Letter—Scott and Carver Counties**



**SCOTT COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS PROGRAM**

A Partnership between Scott County and Three Rivers Park District

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

March 2, 2011

Arne Stefferud  
Planning Analyst-Parks  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

**Subject: Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail  
Master Plan Submittal  
Regional Parks Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant Request**

Dear Mr. Stefferud,

On behalf of Scott County and Carver County, I am pleased to submit the proposed Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection regional trail master plan for consideration by the Metropolitan Council, along with an Acquisition Opportunity Grant request.

**Master Plan**

Scott and Carver counties, through their Regional Rail Authorities, have worked for over two years with the cities of Carver and Chaska and the Metropolitan Council to evaluate reuse opportunities and acquisition strategies for the Union Pacific-Chaska Industrial Lead rail corridor that spans both Carver and Scott counties. The outcome of this work is a proposed regional trail corridor that will link Scott and Carver counties across the Minnesota River and provide connections to the expanding regional trail network.

We believe the enclosed master plan is consistent with the regional trail corridor search area that was incorporated in the 2030 Regional Park System Policy Plan and complies with the 11 components required for a regional trail master plan. In addition, the master plan complies with each County's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, and both County Boards adopted the master plan at their respective December 21<sup>st</sup> Board meeting and authorized submittal to Metropolitan Council.

**Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant Request**

In addition to review of the master plan, Scott County and Carver County request consideration of funding assistance for purchase of the Union Pacific railroad corridor through the Regional Parks Acquisition Opportunity Fund grant program. The counties have reached an agreement with Union Pacific to purchase a 4.8-mile corridor (25,206 linear feet, or 2,520,602 square feet) for \$2 million under the Federal Rail Banking Interim Trail Use program.

3.33 miles (17,557 linear feet) of the corridor are proposed for use as the regional trail, with the remaining balance (primarily located in Chaska) being preserved for transportation, utility, and other purposes (7,649 linear feet). We are approaching this acquisition under a collaborative approach where the entire corridor is viewed as a single acquisition exclusive of the county, city, or

township boundary. As a result, we have pro-rated the purchase price for the regional trail corridor segment as follows:

<b>Corridor Cost Allocation Purchase Price</b>	<b>Non Regional Trail</b>	<b>Regional Trail Scott County</b>	<b>Regional Trail Carver County</b>	<b>Total</b>
Corridor Length (linear feet)	7,694	9,306	8,251	25,251
Corridor Assignment (percent)	30.47%	36.85%	32.68%	100.00%
Purchase Price linear foot allocation, including closing cost estimates (\$2,334,000) <sup>1</sup>	711,172	860,172	762,656	2,334,000
MCES easement payment	0	(125,000)	(125,000)	(250,000)
<b>Net Purchase Price</b>	<b>711,172</b>	<b>735,172</b>	<b>637,656</b>	<b>2,084,000</b>
<b>Additional Grant Eligible Expenditures</b>				
Pro-rated share of Local Property Taxes for Each County's portion of Trail <sup>2</sup>	0	395	3,227	3,622
Phase I Environmental Assessment (Scott County for regional trail corridor; Carver Co. segments paid from grant funds)	0	2,500	0	2,500
Estimated Stewardship Costs (estimated \$30,000, regional trail corridor segment only)	0	15,000	15,000	30,000
Attorney - outside counsel (\$6,214 for entire corridor)	1,893	2,290	2,030	6,214
Bridge feasibility study (\$34,000, regional trail corridor segment only)	0	17,000	17,000	34,000
<b>Grand Total Grant Eligible Costs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>772,357</b>	<b>674,914</b>	<b>1,447,271</b>
<b>Acquisition Opportunity Grant Request</b>				
Acquisition Opportunity Grant	0	579,268	506,185	1,085,453
Acquisition Opportunity Grant Local Match	0	193,089	168,729	361,818
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>772,357</b>	<b>674,914</b>	<b>1,447,271</b>

1. Estimated closing costs, including title insurance, utility license, and contingency.
2. Since 2011 tax statements have not been released, 2010 taxes were used: \$15,916 for railroad parcels in Scott County and \$19,944 in Carver County. Combined 2010 city and township taxes (times 1.8) are \$3,621.65. City and township taxes (times 1.8) are \$395 in Scott County and \$3,227 in Carver County.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact either Marty Walsh at 952-466-5252 or me at 952-496-8783 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Mark Themig  
Parks & Trails Program Manager

cc: Marty Walsh, Carver County Parks  
Andy Hingeveld, Scott County Parks

**Attachment 2: Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grants approved  
as of March 29, 2011**

<b>Amount Granted</b>	<b>Park Agency</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
\$99,966	Dakota County	Acquire Wasserman and Klink parcels at Spring Lake Park Reserve. Dakota County eligible for reimbursement consideration up to \$180,882 in a future regional parks CIP. Approved November 15, 2001.
\$521,000	Mpls. Park & Rec. Board	Acquire 3.3 acres (Parcel B of Riverview Supper Club site) as part of "Above the Falls—Master Plan for the Upper River in Minneapolis". Other matching funds were from federal grant and watershed district. Approved April 24, 2002.
\$731,200	Three Rivers Park District	Fund a portion of the costs to acquire Silver Lake SRF, which was acquired in September 2001 after 2002-03 CIP was adopted. Remaining costs eligible for reimbursement consideration in future regional parks CIP. Approved April 24, 2002.
\$140,000	Ramsey County	Acquire permanent trail easement on Burlington Northern/Santa Fe railroad right of way for the Bruce Vento Regional Trail. Ramsey County eligible for reimbursement consideration up to \$35,000 in a future regional parks CIP. That reimbursement was part of the funded 2004-05 CIP. Approved August 14, 2002.
\$500,000	Washington County	Acquire three parcels totaling 27.4 acres at an estimated cost of \$1.87 million in Big Marine PR. Grant is 40% of the projected \$1.25 million gaps after other Council acquisition grants were spent. Washington County eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$750,000 in a future regional parks CIP. Approved December 12, 2002.
\$126,638	Dakota County	Acquire 1.1-acre Medin parcel in Lebanon Hills RP. Dakota County eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$189,957 in a future regional parks CIP. Approved January 29, 2003.
\$135,200	Anoka County	Acquire 579 acres from St. Paul Water Utility for addition to Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve. Grant financed 40% of market value (not sale price) of land. Water Utility discounted the sale price, which was counted as part of the 60% match to this grant. Approved April 23, 2003.
\$153,703	Three Rivers Park District	Acquire 5 acre Rask parcel in Lake Rebecca Park Reserve. Park District eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$235,200 in a future regional park CIP. Approved Dec. 17, 2003.
\$26,479	Anoka County	Acquire 80-acre Birkeland parcel in Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve. Balance of costs financed with watershed district grant and partial donation. Approved February 2004.
\$370,000	Three Rivers Park District	Acquire 17-acre Brakemeier parcel in Lake Minnetonka Regional Park. Balance of funds (\$810,000) provided by MN Dept. of Transportation. Approved May 12, 2004.
\$83,060	Carver County	Acquire 39.04 acres related to Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park. Grant finances 40% of the \$207,649 funding gap remaining to buy the land. Rest of the costs financed with a previously authorized Metro Council grant (\$456,130) and City funds (\$124,589). City amount eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Approved August 11, 2004.



<b>Amount Granted</b>	<b>Park Agency</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
\$184,109	City of Bloomington	Acquire .5 acre residential lot 9625 E. Bush Lake Road for Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve. Bloomington and Three Rivers Park District eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$138,081 each in a future regional park CIP. Approved September 22, 2004
\$49,435	Washington County	Acquire 0.81 acre parcel within the boundary of Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$74,152 in a future regional park CIP. Approved September 22, 2004.
\$433,333	Scott County	Acquire 80 acres within the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park as a match to a DNR Metro Greenways grant of \$650,000. Approved Nov. 10, 2004.
\$950,000	Anoka County	Acquire 115 acres within Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve from St. Paul Water Utility. Land cost discounted 79% from market value and thus grant finances remaining 21%. Approved April 13, 2005.
\$41,080	Ramsey County	Acquire 3.5 acre Duell parcel in Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$61,620 in a future regional park CIP. Approved May 25, 2005
\$279,431	Dakota County	Acquire 2.5 acre Pryor parcel in Lebanon Hills Regional Park. Dakota County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$419,146 in a future regional park CIP. Approved June 29, 2005.
\$154,124	Washington County	Acquire 5 acre Goossen parcel in Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$231,185 in a future regional park CIP. Approved July 27, 2005
\$151,093	Dakota County	Acquire 0.68 acre Skoglund parcel in Lebanon Hills Regional Park. Dakota County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$226,639 in a future regional park CIP. Approved September 28, 2005
\$149,069	Washington County	Acquire 5-acre Melbostad parcel in Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$223,603 in a future regional park CIP. Approved October 26, 2005.
\$20,953	Washington County	Acquire .45-acre Taylor parcel in Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$31,430 in a future regional park CIP. Approved August 23, 2006.
\$354,799	Three Rivers Park District	Acquire 20-acre Weinkauff parcel in Lake Rebecca Park Reserve. Three Rivers Park District would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$532,199 in a future regional park CIP. Approved May 23, 2007.
\$9,023	Washington County	Acquire 1.5 acre Hohlt parcel in Big Marine Park Reserve. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$13,534 in a future regional park CIP. Approved April 25, 2007.
\$1,000,000	Scott County	Acquire 61-acre Cedar Lake Farm Resort parcel in Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. Scott County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$3,526,192 in a future regional park CIP. Approved May 23, 2007.
\$400,841	City of St. Paul	Partially finance acquisition of 43.94 acres for Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park. City of St. Paul would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$601,263 in a future regional park CIP. Approved August 8, 2007

<b>Amount Granted</b>	<b>Park Agency</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
\$182,094	Washington County	Partially finance acquisition of 8.19 acre Katarik parcel for Grey Cloud Island Regional Park. Washington County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$273,141 in a future regional park CIP. Approved October 24, 2007.
\$116,609	Ramsey County	Partially finance acquisition of 3 acre Parcel #6 for Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$174,913 in a future regional park CIP. Approved December 12, 2007.
\$1,000,000	Carver County	Partially finance acquisition of 2.94 acres of lakeshore land associated with Lakeside Ballroom in Lake Waconia Regional Park. Carver County would be eligible for reimbursement consideration of up to \$1,530,000 minus lease revenue from parcel in a future regional park CIP. Approved February 27, 2008.
\$122,726	City of St. Paul	Partially finance acquisition of 0.74 acre at 350 Water Street for Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park. Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by City of St. Paul (\$40,909) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Approved February 27, 2008
\$316,135	City of Bloomington	Partially finance acquisition of 0.568 acre at 9633 East Bush Lake Road for Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve. Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% (\$105,378) financed by City of Bloomington and Three Rivers Park District is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional parks CIP. Approved on April 9, 2008. Actual amount expended shown which was less than the grant award.
\$1,700,000	Dakota County	Partially finance acquisition of 456-acre Empire Wetlands Regional Park. Grant financed 14.2% of the \$11.94 million acquisition cost. Rest of costs financed with \$800,000 Metro Council grant SG-2006-123, \$6 million from 2006 State bond pass through grant, and \$3,440,000 of Dakota County funds of which \$2,155,000 is eligible for reimbursement in a future regional parks CIP. Grant approved on April 23, 2008. Reimbursement approved for consideration on May 28, 2008.
\$572,469	City of St. Paul	Partially finance acquisition of 1.85 acre for Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary as part of Bruce Vento Regional Trail. Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by City of St. Paul (\$190,823) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 11, 2008
\$848,369	Scott County	Partially finance acquisition of 47.08 acres for Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park (Adelmann parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Scott County (\$282,789) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 25, 2008
\$337,124	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 6.46 acres for Baker Park Reserve (Laidlaw parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$112,656) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 25, 2008. Actual amount expended shown which was less than grant award.
\$416,297	Washington County	Partially finance acquisition of 19 acres for Big Marine Park Reserve (Grundhofer parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Washington County (\$138,766) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved August 27, 2008

<b>Amount Granted</b>	<b>Park Agency</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
\$299,887	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 1.5 acres for Lake Rebecca Park Reserve (Bauduin parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$101,575) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved November 12, 2008. Actual amount expended shown which was less than grant award.
\$487,994	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 9.5 acres for Lake Rebecca Park Reserve (Westerlund parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$164,250) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved November 12, 2008. Actual amount expended shown which was less than grant award.
\$135,654	Mpls. Park & Rec. Bd.	Partially finance acquisition of 0.5 acres for Above the Falls Regional Park (Galka parcels). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Mpls. Park & Rec. Bd. (\$45,216) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved December 10, 2008. Actual amount expended shown which was less than grant award.
\$411,422	Ramsey County	Partially finance acquisition of 1.83 acres for Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park (1466 East Co. Rd. H-2). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Ramsey County (\$137,141) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 24, 2009.
\$281,528	Ramsey County	Partially finance acquisition of 1.27 acres for Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park (1700 North County Line Rd.). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Ramsey County (\$93,843) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 24, 2009.
\$396,968	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 9.44 acre parcel for Rush Creek Regional Trail (Ganzer parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$132,233) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 24, 2009. Actual amount expended shown which was less than grant award.
\$719,400	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 8.89 acre parcel for Carver Park Reserve (Hedtke parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$135,800) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved October 14, 2009.
\$369,683	Scott County	Partially finance acquisition of 7.05 acre parcel for Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park (Novotny parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Scott County (\$123,228) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved October 28, 2009.
\$657,572	Carver County	Partially finance acquisition of 1.28 acre parcel for Lake Waconia Regional Park (Country Store parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Carver County (\$219,191) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved December 9, 2009.
\$1,470,253	Washington County	Partially finance acquisition of 43 acre parcel for Grey Cloud Island Regional Park (Appert parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Washington County (\$490,084) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved April 28, 2010.
\$1,699,992	Mpls. Park & Rec. Bd.	Partially finance acquisition of 3.57 acres for Above the Falls Regional Park (Scherer Lumber parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Mpls. Park & Rec. Bd. (\$566,664) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved April 28, 2010.

<b>Amount Granted</b>	<b>Park Agency</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
\$198,436	Washington County	Partially finance acquisition of 1.8 acres for St. Croix Valley Regional Trail (Pontius parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Washington County (\$66,145) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 23, 2010.
\$198,750	Three Rivers Park District	Partially finance acquisition of 1.4 acres for Elm Creek Park Reserve (Zopfi parcel). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$66,250) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved June 23, 2010.
\$282,450	Mpls. Park & Rec. Bd.	Partially finance acquisition of 0.4 acre for Above the Falls Regional Park (2220 Marshall St. NE). Grant financed 75% of acquisition cost. The remaining 25% financed by Three Rivers Park District (\$66,250) is not eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. Grant approved August 25, 2010.
<b>\$20,286,346</b>	<b>Total funds granted as of March 29, 2011</b>	