

## METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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**DATE:** November 1, 2011

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

**FROM:** Tori Dupre, Senior Planner-Parks (651-602-1621)

**SUBJECT:** (2011-XXX) **Spring Lake Regional Trail Master Plan**, Scott County  
Review File No. 50012-1  
Metropolitan Council District 4, Gary Van Eyll  
Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission District B, Robert Moeller

### INTRODUCTION

Scott County, the regional park implementing agency, submitted the Spring Lake Regional Trail master plan to the Metropolitan Council for review on October 5, 2011. The Council reviews park and trail master plans to evaluate their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and its content criteria for regional trail master plans.

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* Planning Strategy 1 (page 2-28) describes the role of the master plan in the regional park system. The policy requires that any project proposed for funding in the Metropolitan Regional Parks Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) be consistent with a Metropolitan Council-approved regional park master plan.

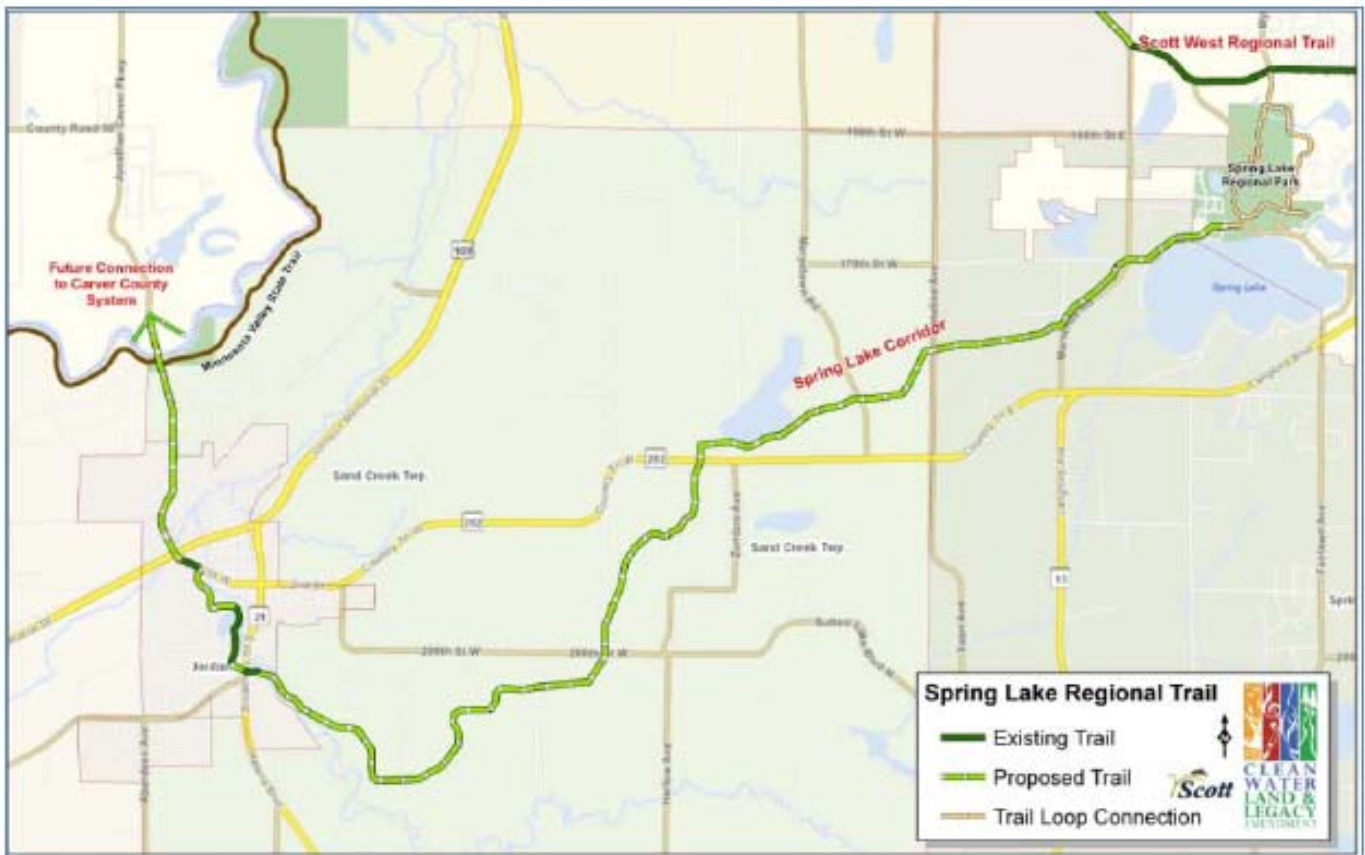
The *Policy Plan* strategy (page 2-15) addresses locating and acquiring new regional trails and specifies that new regional trails serve a regional audience based on visitor origin surveys, follow natural or linear features in areas of scenic appeal, and provide connections between the regional park system's features and facilities.

This report reviews the proposed Spring Lake Regional Trail master plan based on its consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and recommends approval of the master plan.

### AUTHORITY TO REVIEW

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subd. 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."

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subd. 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 facilities. The Council reviews plans for their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, and those plans found inconsistent with Council policy are returned to the implementing agency, along with the Council's review comments, for revision and resubmission.



**Figure 1: Planned Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor**

## BACKGROUND

The *Policy Plan* (table 3-9, completing the system) identifies a Spring Lake Regional Trail search corridor in this area of Scott County.

The Spring Lake Regional Trail is consistent with the *Policy Plan* content requirements for a regional trail. The proposed 13.5-mile corridor will be a “destination trail” connecting the Minnesota Valley State Trail and the Scott/Carver County border to the west, with the Spring Lake Regional Park to the east. Scott County intends to eventually continue the trail north from Spring Lake Regional Park to connect with the proposed Scott West Regional Trail.

## MASTER PLAN ANALYSIS

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that master plans for regional destination trails address the twelve items listed below.

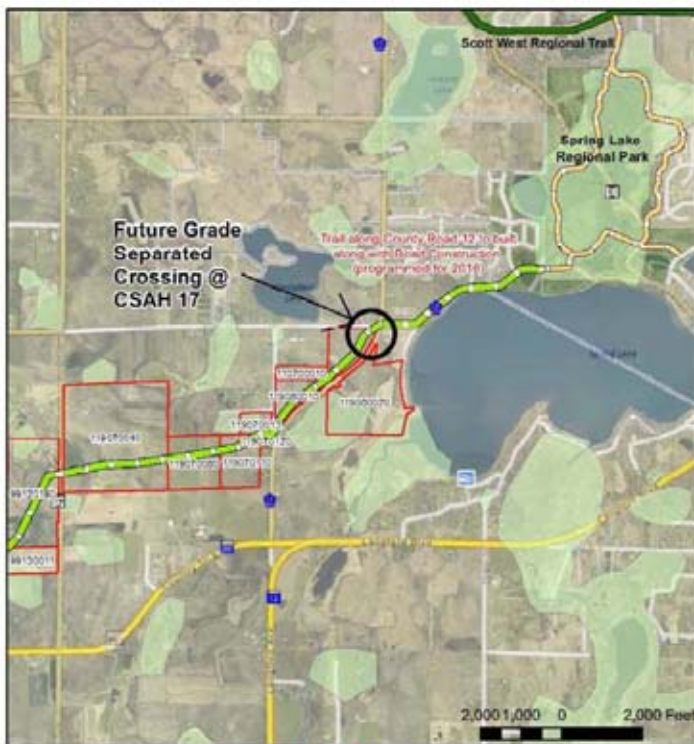
### 1. Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

The master plan addresses the parcels to be acquired, the estimated acquisition costs and schedule, the natural resources, suitability, special assessments and other acquisition considerations.

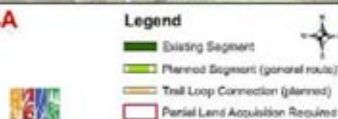
The proposed Spring Lake Regional Trail will connect Spring Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake to Lagoon Park in Jordan, a regional trail hub for the Minnesota Valley State Trail, future Carver County trails and a regional park on the Minnesota River Bluffs. Between Jordan and

Spring Lake Regional Park, the proposed trail will go cross-country, access natural features including lakes and wetlands, forests and prairies. The plan details the entire corridor in four segments, mapping the trail corridor, unique natural features, individual properties affected by the proposed trail alignment, and discusses construction plans and options.

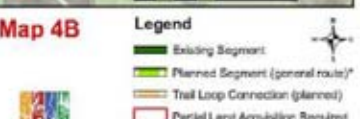
1. Corridor Map 1 (4A) – Trail from Spring Lake Regional Park west to Co Rd 17 accesses the regional park’s lakeshore development, and will eventually connect north to the proposed Scott West regional trail.
2. Corridor Map 2 (4B) – Trail from Co Rd 17 west to Co Rd 10 accesses natural areas, wetlands and woodlands. The County will encourage connections to Geis Lake, a DNR-mapped regionally significant ecological area.
3. Corridor Map 3 (4C) – Trail from Co Rd 10, west to Sawmill Road and into Jordan, crosses Co Rd 17 and provides a gradual grade down the bluffs. The trail follows Sand Creek and connects into Jordan’s Lagoon Park which currently provides paved trails, fishing access, a playground and swimming beach.
4. Corridor Map 4 (4D) – Trail from Jordan, across US Trunk Highway 169 and north to the Minnesota Valley State Trail follows local roads and will connect with a future pedestrian crossing at TH 169, north along Co Rd 9, and into the Carver County park and trail system using an existing bike/ped crossing on the Co Rd 9 river bridge.

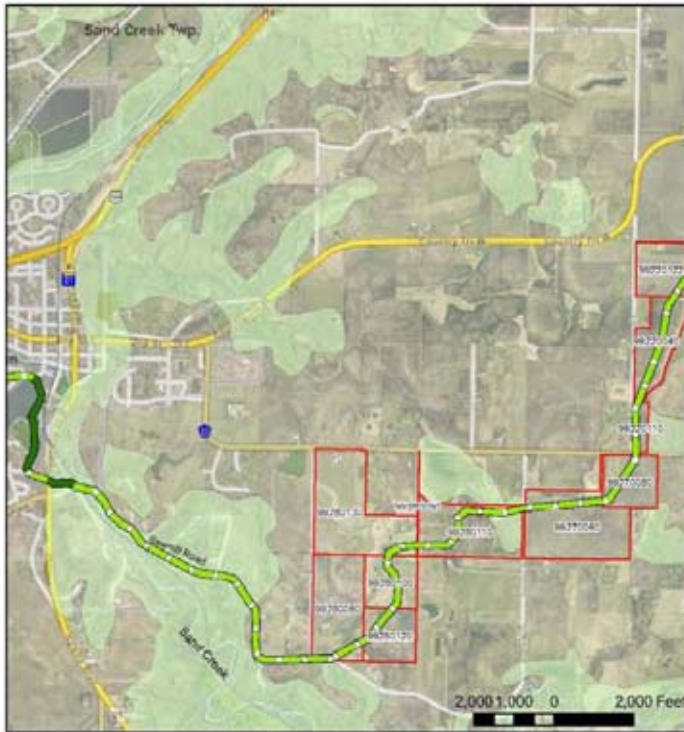


**Map 4A**  
**Corridor Map (1 of 4)**  
**Spring Lake Regional Trail**



**Map 4B**  
**Corridor Map (2 of 4)**  
**Spring Lake Regional Trail**





**Corridor Map (3 of 4)**  
Spring Lake Regional Trail

**Map 4C**



**Corridor Map (4 of 4)**  
Spring Lake Regional Trail

**Map 4D**



The plan provides the trail acquisition costs and explains how the trail will be acquired over time (schedule). The County will acquire the dedicated trail corridor as it works with local governments and individual landowners on a willing-seller basis, at the time that future development occurs. Generally, some trail segments will be completed with scheduled County road reconstruction projects within road right-of-way. Other trail segments will occur with future private land development.

The plan summarizes six acquisition methods that range from purchasing the entire property, to acquiring a trail easement, to trail donation. Therefore, the acquisition costs will vary based on the acquisition option, and land costs will be lower if the trail corridor is established as a dedicated trail through the development process.

The acquisition estimates consider two options: right-of-way, and off-road based on easement minimums of 20-feet, and 100-feet.

1. Right-of-Way – Jordan Section (Sawmill Road to MN River)  
 $20,930 \text{ Linear Ft} \times 20\text{-foot easement} = 418,600 \text{ sq ft} = 9.6 \text{ acres} @ \$80,000/\text{Acre} = \$769,000$
2. Off-Road Section (County Road 17 to Sawmill Road) - @min 20- & 100-foot easement widths  
 $41,735 \text{ Linear Feet} \times 20 \text{ foot easement} = 834,700 \text{ sq ft} / 19.2 \text{ acres} @ \$25,000/\text{Acre} = \mathbf{\$479,000}$  (assumes entire corridor is purchased)

41,735 Linear Feet x (typical) 100 foot easement = 4,173,500 sq ft/95.8 acres @ \$25,000/Acre = **\$2,395,000** (assumes entire corridor is purchased)

**Total Option 1: \$1,248,000; Total Option 2: \$3,164,000**

## 2. Demand Forecast

The plan addresses how the trail will meet the recreational demand as identified by Council and Scott County. From 2000 to 2010 Scott County's population grew 45 percent to approximately 130,000, and the County forecasts the population to increase to about 183,000 by 2020.

While the current population levels in the trail core service area (within .075 miles) and primary service area (within 3 miles) do not warrant trail construction at this time, the County will work with local governments and individual land owners to establish dedicated trail right-of-way to preserve the corridor as the future development occurs.

## 3. Development Concept

The plan addresses the trail project development schedule and cost estimates. The trail segment in Jordan exists (0.78 miles), and the segment from Spring Lake Regional Park to Co Rd 12 will be built as part of the Co Ro 12 reconstruction scheduled for 2016. The remaining segments that affect privately-owned parcels where acquisition or trail dedication is needed to establish the trail, will likely take decades to complete.

The County will define the trail alignment on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Some trail segments will be built within existing road right-of-way, while others will be built across undeveloped, private lands. The County will use regional trail corridor guidelines for width, safety and resource protection as the trail is developed. The County intends to pursue recreation and transportation grant funding for the trail development.

The trail construction costs assume an additional 11.9 miles to the 0.78 existing trail totaling 13.5 miles. The estimated trail construction cost is \$4,463,000, about \$375,000 per mile. Additional estimated costs include separated road crossings at TH 169, Co Rd 17 and TH 282 (low and high cost estimates) as well as signage and kiosks.

### Construction Cost Estimates:

Total approximate trail length = 13.5 Miles  
 Approximate existing trail length = 0.78 Mile  
 Approximate programmed trail length = 0.84 Miles (County Road 12 expansion)  
 Approximate remaining trail length = 11.9 Miles  
 Cost per foot is \$60/foot, or \$375,000 per mile  
 11.9 miles of trail x \$375,000 = **\$4,463,000**

### Bridges and Structures

	Low Cost Estimate	High Cost Estimate
Separated Crossing @ TH 169	\$703,000 Overpass (Alt. 3)	\$1,402,000 Overpass (Alt. 2)
Separated Crossing @ CR 17	\$600,000 Underpass	\$1,500,000 Overpass
Separated Crossing @TH 282	\$600,000 Underpass	\$1,500,000 Overpass

## Road Crossings Striping and Traffic/Safety Signage

Upgrades/Enhancements: \$250,000

## Directional Signage/Kiosks

Kiosks: 4 x \$15,000 = \$60,000

Directional Signage: 5 x \$5,000 = \$25,000

(Note: Estimates are based on 2011 construction costs)

**Total Construction Cost Estimate – Low: \$6,701,000; High: \$9,200,000**

## **4. Conflicts**

The plan addresses conflict with other existing land uses or proposed projects affecting the trail, including the steps necessary for resolution. The Scott County 2030 comprehensive plan guides the land around the trail corridor as long-term urban expansion, single family residential. The County will install boundary marking signage to delineate the trail corridor property from private property, to ensure public awareness of the trail corridor and limit neighborhood or adjacent property owner opposition. Properly signing the planned trail location will help facilitate future trail construction.

## **5. Public Services**

The plan addresses the public services (non-recreation services and facilities) needed to accommodate the proposed trail. Scott County will work with local public safety organizations to monitor trail use and arrange trail patrol in the future. No new non-recreational public service improvements are required to support the trail facilities.

## **6. Operations**

The plan addresses the rules, regulations or ordinances affecting the trail, including estimated operations and maintenance costs, and sources of revenue to operate and maintain the trail.

In December 2010, the Scott County Board and Three Rivers Park District Board entered into a partnership to collaboratively and efficiently operate the regional facilities within Scott County. The partnership will improve efficiencies and provide additional resources to operate and maintain the county park system. The partnership provides Three Rivers the leading role in operating and maintaining the park and trail units owned by Scott County, and continue to operate the Three Rivers facilities within Scott County. The County's existing operating resources (parks staff, trail maintenance agreements, county programs, volunteers, etc.) are available, and the County will collaborative with other local partner agencies.

## **7. Citizen Participation**

The plan addresses the citizen participation process in trail master planning process. Scott County conducted a lengthy master planning process, driven by citizen involvement and led by a county citizen design team, consisting of over forty residents. The design team met monthly from July 2010 to March 2011 to discuss different trail design concepts, park and trail system needs, and unique site features and natural resources. The design team included two groups: parks plans and trail plans. Parks plans included Blakeley Bluffs, Cedar Lake Farm and Doyle-Kennefick regional parks; Trail plans included Spring Lake and Scott West trail search areas. The County held four public workshops and a bus tour. The design team shared trail concepts with local parks commissions and township boards in November 2010

through February 2011 to gather input on the consistency with local plans, projected needs and coordination with other projects. The County also held a public open house in February 2011 where 30 residents attended. The Scott County Board of Commissioners adopted the proposed trail master plan on September 13, 2011.

## **8. Public awareness**

The plan addresses the County's approach to make the public aware of the services available when the trail is open. Scott County uses the following resources to promote its regional park and trail system: the Scott County SCENE, press releases, brochures, websites, maps (Met Council, Cyclopath.org), recreation and tourism advertisements and "GoScottGo.org" which provides interactive maps and routes.

## **9. Accessibility**

The plan addresses Scott County's commitment to provide activities, access and resources to all trail visitors, including those with disabilities and members of special population groups. Scott County's park and trail facilities are designed to ensure that they are inclusively accessible to the public.

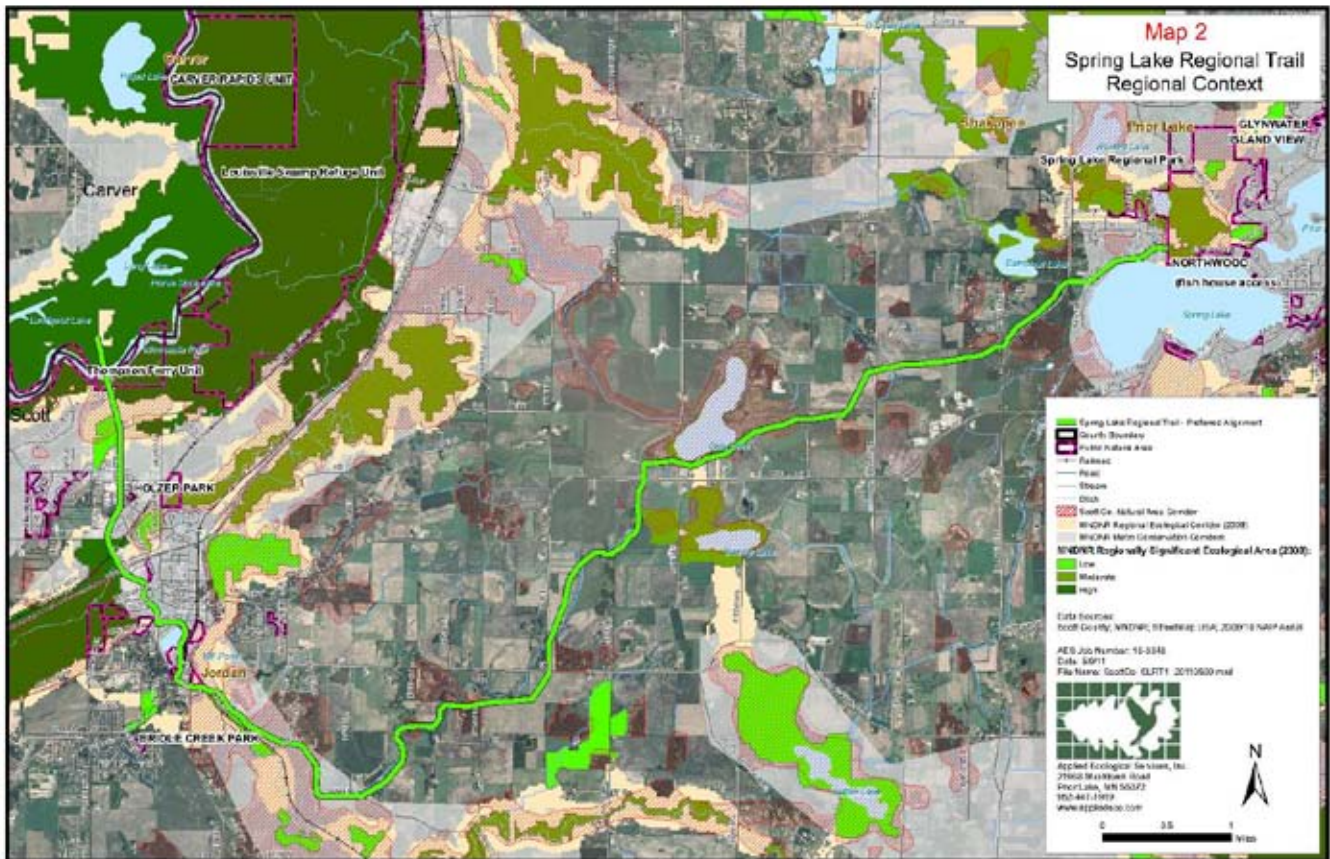
## **10. Stewardship Plan**

The plan addresses the County's program to manage the trail corridor's natural resources. The County will initiate a natural resource stewardship program once the trail is acquired and will work with landowners, the County conservation district, and the watershed district to implement projects such as wetland restoration, buckthorn removal and prairie restoration.

## **11. Natural Resources**

The plan includes a natural resource inventory (NRI) that is consistent with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Minnesota Land Cover Classification System. While the trail corridor generally intersects agricultural and rural landscapes in the east and urban development in Jordan and the west, the County citizen design team and County staff considered both the DNR-mapped regionally significant ecological areas and the County's Natural Area Corridors data to connect and protect these resource areas.

The County's Natural Area Corridors conservation plan refined the DNR resource data and helped inform and plan the trail corridor alignment. Therefore, the trail is anticipated to traverse and connect several regionally significant ecological areas and natural resource corridors. As the County acquires the future trail corridor the staff will work with the County conservation district or the watershed district to incorporate updated resource data.



## REVIEW BY OTHER COUNCIL DIVISIONS

The Metropolitan Council staff reviewed the proposed trail plan for potential issues with the other regional systems plans for water resources management, wastewater and transportation (including aviation). Staff found no issues and had no comments.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The Spring Lake Regional Trail master plan from Scott County is complete and is consistent with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
2. The estimated costs to implement the master plan include total acquisition costs ranging from (Option 1) \$1,248,000 to (Option 2) \$3,164,000; Total construction costs range from (Low) \$6,701,000 to (High) \$9,200,000.
3. The proposed regional trail is in conformance with the regional systems plans and will not impact regional facilities.
4. With the Council's action of the trail master plan, Scott County is eligible to request regional funding for the trail's acquisition, development, operations, maintenance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Spring Lake Regional Trail Master Plan.