

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

**DATE:** December 22, 2010

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

**FROM:** Jan Youngquist, Senior Planner-Parks (651) 602-1029

**SUBJECT:** (2010-xxx) Grand Rounds Missing Link Regional Trail Master Plan,  
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (Referral No. 20523-1)

**BACKGROUND**

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) reviewed the Grand Rounds Missing Link Regional Trail Master Plan at its meeting on December 7, 2010. A point of discussion was the way in which the amount of land that would be eligible for acquisition reimbursement using regional parks funding would be determined. The staff report proposed that future reimbursements be based on a 100 foot strip of right-of-way (ROW) through the parcels that were identified for acquisition along the preferred route for the parkway and regional trail.

The 100 foot ROW was proposed to offer a similar trail experience as St. Anthony Parkway Regional Trail, the segment of the Grand Rounds that connects to the Missing Link at its northern terminus. The proposed 100 foot ROW is narrower than other regional trail corridors in the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway, including Victory Memorial Parkway and Minnehaha Parkway. Both of these regional trails have varying widths including areas that are more than 300 feet wide.

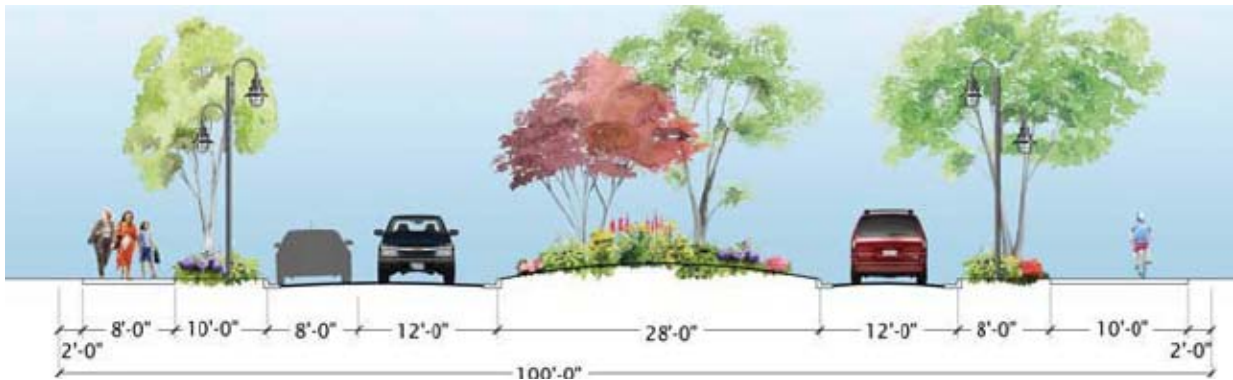
The Commission expressed concerns that the 100 foot ROW may include the parkway that is proposed in the master plan and that regional parks funding should not be spent for transportation purposes.

MPOSC tabled taking an action on the master plan until its January meeting. Staff was asked to examine options for cost sharing related to land acquisition for the regional trail corridor.

**OPTIONS**

**Option A**—Future regional parks funding for land acquisition should be related to the proportion of the site used for the regional trail, based on a strip of right-of-way not to exceed a width of 68 feet.

The master plan included a typical cross-section for a 100 foot right-of-way, assuming that the regional trail would parallel the parkway. This cross-section is depicted on the following graphic:



Within this 100 foot ROW, 32 feet is dedicated to the roadway—there are two 12 foot travel lanes and an 8 foot wide parking lane. There are separate pedestrian and biking trails, which, along with the associated greenspace, comprise 68 feet of the corridor.

**Option B**—Future regional parks funding for land acquisition should be related to the proportion of the site used for the regional trail, based on a strip of right-of-way not to exceed a width of 50 feet.

In response to the MPOSC discussions and to Option A, Councilmember Wulff suggested that the ROW eligible for regional parks funding be based on a maximum corridor width of 50 feet, since a municipality typically owns ROW outside of the paved roadway area.

The Minneapolis Park Board response to these options is included in Attachment A.

**Attachment A**



*Administrative Offices*  
2117 West River Road  
Minneapolis, MN 55411-2227

*Operations Center*  
3800 Bryant Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55409-1000

*Phone: 612-230-6400*  
*Fax: 612-230-6500*  
[www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org)

*President*  
John Erwin

*Vice President*  
M. Annie Young

*Commissioners*  
Brad Boum  
Bob Fine  
Carol A. Kummer

Jon C. Olson  
Anita Tabb  
Scott Vreeland  
Liz Wielinski

*Superintendent*  
Jayne Miller

*Secretary to the Board*  
Don Siggelkow



December 22, 2010

Jan Youngquist  
Senior Planner - Parks  
Metropolitan Council  
Parks and Open Space Committee  
390 Robert Street N.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Jan:


In response to your email dated 12/16/2010, with regard to the two proposals (68' and 50') the Park Board would favor the 68' width dedicated to the trail portion of the 100' corridor. To help clarify our position I offer the following reasons. First, the existing parkway system and proposed parkway are different than an ordinary street. Parkway systems are not considered, nor are they, street right-of-ways. A parkway is a road within a park. If one were to look at a plat book, you would see street ROW for normal city streets but for the parkways there would be just the lot lines of Park Board ownership. Thus, the width for the parkway varies according to the surrounding park. Examples include - St. Anthony Parkway with a width of 100 feet; Victory Parkway with a maximum width of 300 feet. Minnehaha Parkway has a great deal of varying width. These varying widths, along with the surrounding natural and cultural resources, give a significant character and appeal to each parkway. The amount of green space and natural surroundings identify the parkway corridor and separate the parkway from a 'typical' street ROW.

Second, the parkway system is narrower than most streets or roadways. The vehicular travel cross-section is 24', 11' bituminous travel lanes and 1' concrete gutter. The parking bays are 8' wide and are spaced minimally throughout the parkway system and are usually on only one side of the parkway. Thus a maximum cross-section is 40' but a more common width is 24 - 32'. As such, in a 100' ROW scenario, the area allowed for open space and trail use would be 68 - 76 feet.

Lastly, the regional trails along parkways are not just links between destinations; they are a destination in and of themselves. Many of our parkway trail users are using the trail system just to enjoy the surrounding open space and related amenities. The open space associated with the trail corridor is what makes the trail system so successful.

I hope this gives you and the committee a sense of our position. We are committed to bring the finest park and parkway system to the metropolitan area.

Sincerely,



Nick Eoloff  
Project Manager/RLA