

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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DATE: October 24, 2011
TO: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
FROM: Jan Youngquist, AICP; Planning Analyst-Parks (651) 602-1029
SUBJECT: (2011-xxx) Crystal Lake Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District (Referral No. 50014-1)
Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission District A (Seyon Nyanwleh) and District C (Emily Johnson Piper)

INTRODUCTION

Three Rivers Park District has submitted the Crystal Lake Regional Trail Master Plan for Metropolitan Council review and approval.

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (Chapter 2 – Planning Strategy 1), 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.

This staff report contains a review of the Crystal 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, 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*)

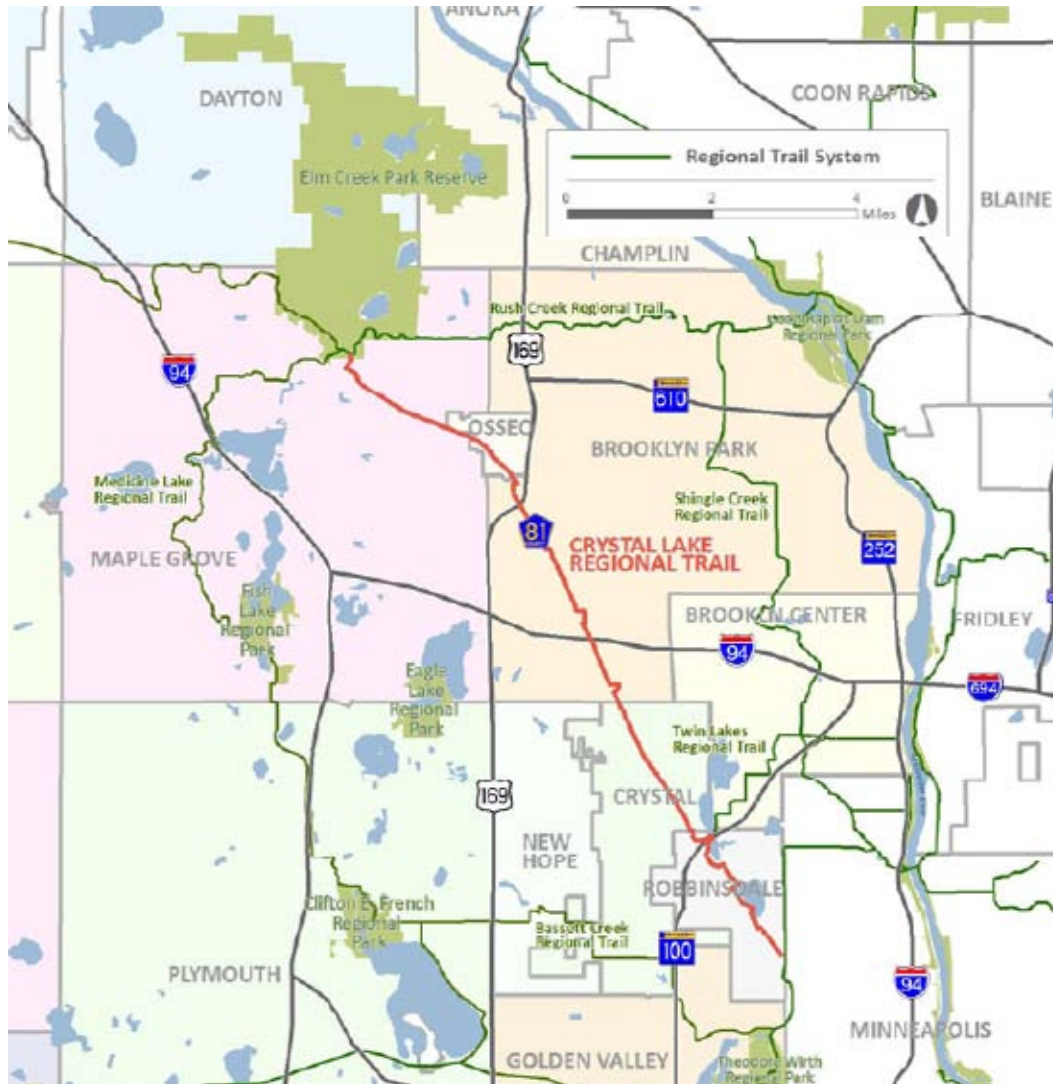
Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 2 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to review, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, master plans for the regional parks system. Plans are reviewed for their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and other Council policy plans. 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.

BACKGROUND

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* identifies a regional trail search corridor to connect Victory Memorial Parkway Regional Trail on the border of Minneapolis/Robbinsdale and Elm Creek Park Reserve in Maple Grove. The regional trail search corridor was added to the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* based on Three Rivers Park District's *First Tier Trails, Greenways and Parks Master Plan* that identified recreational and multi-modal transportation options in the first tier suburban Hennepin County communities.

The regional trail will be more than 11 miles long and will generally follow the Bottineau Boulevard/County State Aid Highway 81 (CSAH 81) corridor as it travels through the cities of Maple Grove, Osseo, Brooklyn Park, Crystal and Robbinsdale. In addition to the connections between Victory Memorial Parkway Regional Trail and Elm Creek Park Reserve, the Crystal Lake Regional Trail will also connect to the Rush Creek, Medicine Lake and Twin Lakes Regional Trails as well as to a number of local parks, schools and trails. Figure 1 depicts the location of the Crystal Lake Regional Trail.

Figure 1: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Location



MASTER PLAN REVIEW ANALYSIS

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

1. Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

The Crystal Lake Regional Trail will generally follow Bottineau Boulevard/CSAH 81, which is a designated transitway in the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*. This area is envisioned to be transformed from a primarily automobile-oriented corridor to a multi-modal corridor, including expanded transit options and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The 11.8 mile regional trail corridor consists of trail segments with the following status:

- Constructed Segments: 3 miles
- Segments Under Construction: 1.7 miles (as part of Hennepin County's CSAH 81 reconstruction)
- Unconstructed Segments—Funded: 2.7 miles (1.8 miles funded through a Federal Surface Transportation Program [STP] grant and .9 miles as part of Hennepin County's CSAH 81 reconstruction)
- Unconstructed Segments—Planned: 4.4 miles

Figures 2-4 show the specific alignments of the regional trail, the segments' construction status, as well as the local and regional trail connections.

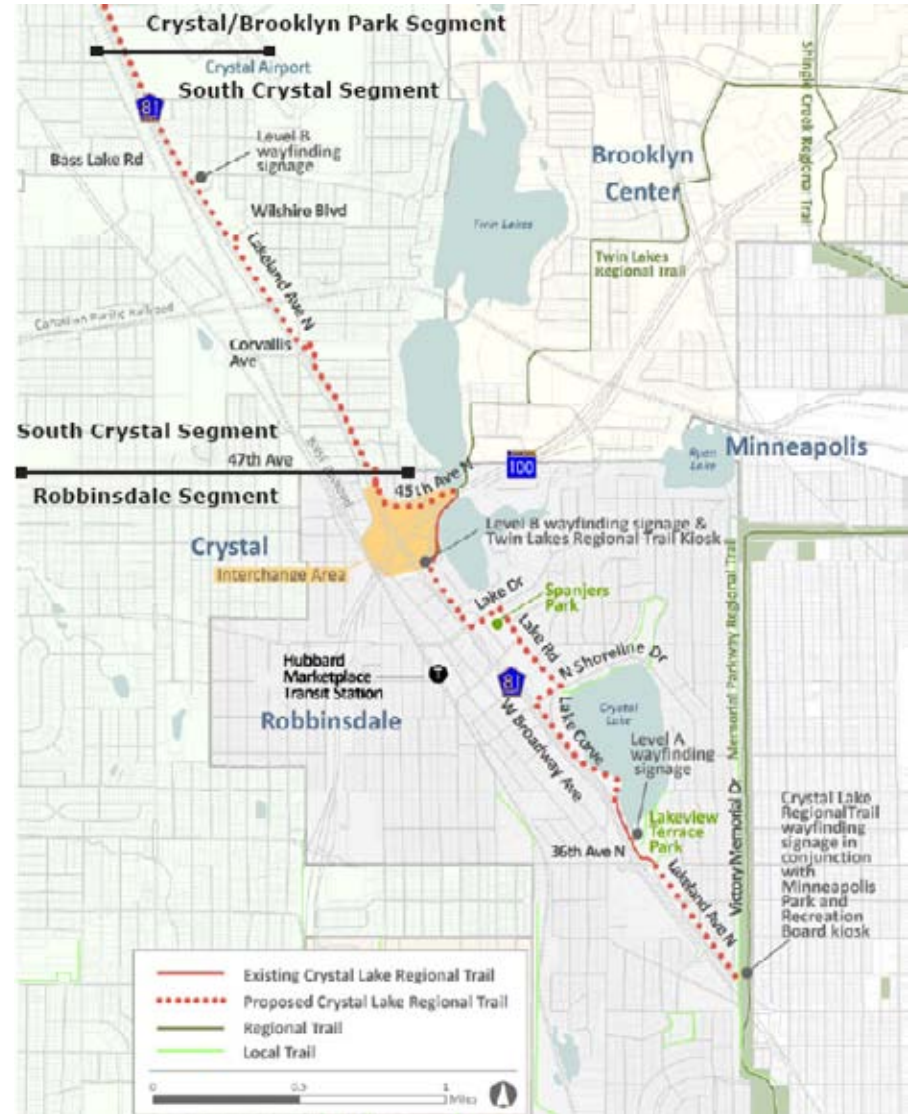
Figure 2: Crystal Lake Regional Trail: Maple Grove-Osseo-Brooklyn Park



Figure 3: Crystal Lake Regional Trail: Brooklyn Park-Crystal



Figure 4: Crystal Lake Regional Trail: Crystal-Robbinsdale



Three potential future trail routes were identified in the master plan. The existing BNSF railway corridor located north of 85th Avenue in Osseo may provide an opportunity to divert a segment of the trail away from CSAH 81, which would result in a more expedient route with fewer driveway and roadway crossings. As the design process for the regional trail progresses, Three Rivers Park District will continue to study the feasibility of this option.

The other potential future trail routes are located in Brooklyn Park at 63rd Avenue and at Broadway Avenue, where the trail alignment jogs away from the CSAH 81 alignment due to constrained right-of-way and current development conditions. Three Rivers Park District will examine developing a straight trajectory along CSAH 81 if future conditions permit.

The regional trail will be primarily located within existing street right-of-way. However, acquisition of some additional right-of-way or easements will be necessary in areas where the existing right-of-way is not sufficient or where existing trail segments do not meet Three Rivers Park District design standards.

Three Rivers Park District regional trail land acquisition process is based on a willing-seller approach. Strategies to acquire land for the regional trail include:

- Route the regional trail to utilize portions of the property with marginal development potential
- Acquire easements for the regional trail through owner or developer negotiations that may include redevelopment incentives
- Secure park dedication lands for the trail in advance of actual development
- Coordinate with City initiatives that may result in the acquisition of entire parcels, with the intent of reselling the property subject to a regional trail easement
- Acquire development rights to the property and negotiate development areas with the developer
- Accept a donation of property for the regional trail
- Obtain an easement from a property owner

Three Rivers Park District estimates that acquisition costs for the Crystal Lake Regional Trail will be \$1,913,963. Figure 5 shows a breakdown of these estimated costs.

Figure 5: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Estimated Easement/Right-of-Way Acquisition Costs

Estimated Easement/Right-of-Way Cost	Estimated Area (in square feet)	Estimated Cost/sq ft	Estimated Total Cost
Robbinsdale Segment (Victory Memorial Pkwy to TH 100)			
Commercial ROW or Easements	6,000	\$ 7.50	\$ 45,000
Residential ROW or Easements	33,175	\$ 7.50	\$ 248,813
		Subtotal	\$ 293,813
South Crystal Segment (TH 100 to Crystal Airport)			
Commercial ROW or Easements	15,500	\$ 7.50	\$ 116,250
Residential ROW or Easements	13,000	\$ 7.50	\$ 97,500
		Subtotal	\$ 213,750
Crystal/Brooklyn Park Segment (Crystal Airport to 63rd Ave)			
Commercial ROW or Easements	18,000	\$ 7.50	\$ 135,000
Residential ROW or Easements	9,120	\$ 7.50	\$ 68,400
		Subtotal	\$ 203,400
Brooklyn Park/Osseo Segment (63rd Ave to 1st Ave)			
Commercial ROW or Easements	84,500	\$ 7.50	\$ 633,750
Residential ROW or Easements	9,500	\$ 7.50	\$ 71,250
Commercial/Railroad ROW or Easements	66,400	\$ 7.50	\$ 498,000
		Subtotal	\$ 1,203,000
Total Estimated Easement/Right-of-Way Cost			\$ 1,913,963

1) 5 foot wide additional right-of-way assumed for estimating. Actual right-of-way or easement requirements should be confirmed in final design.

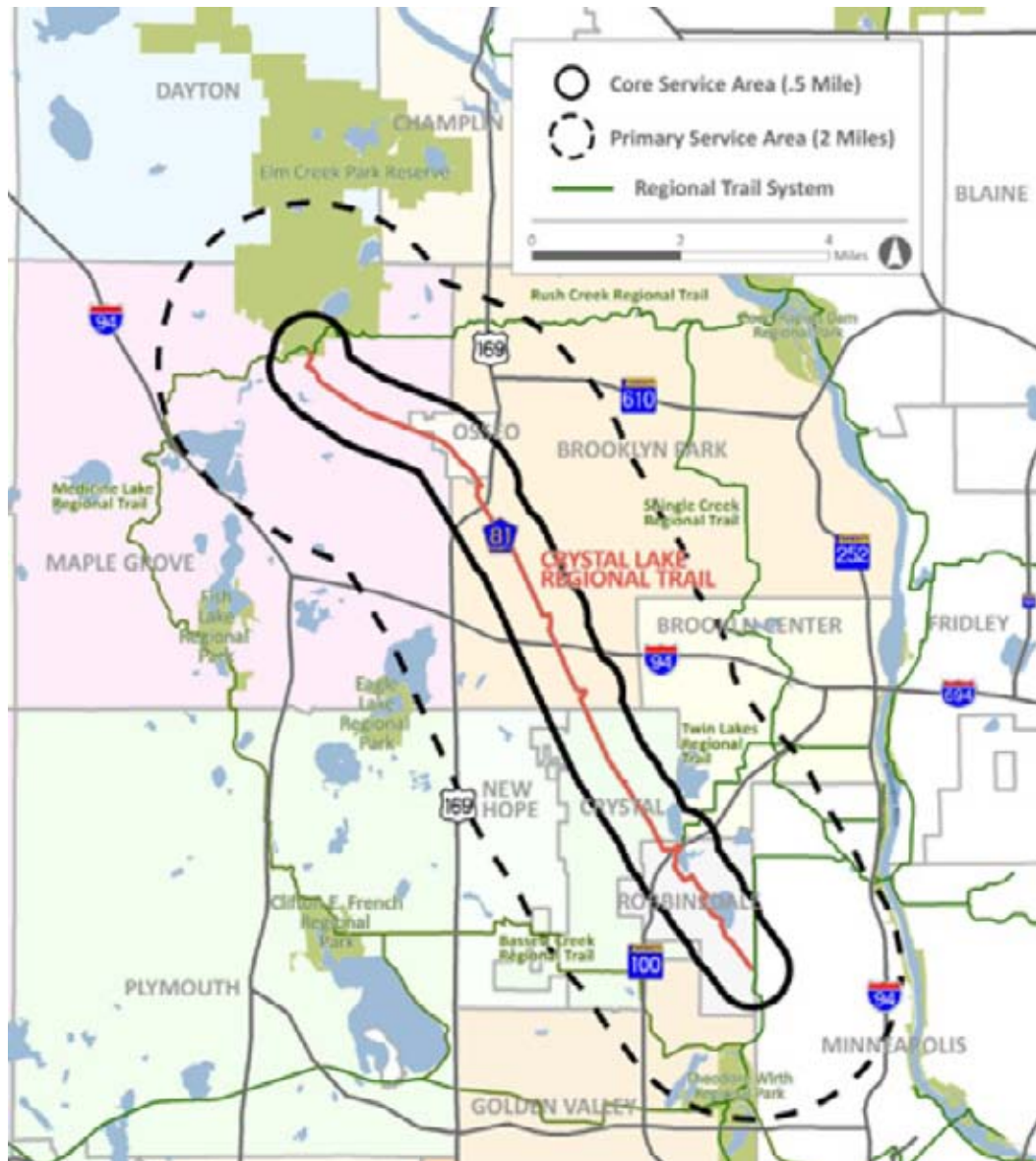
2) 16 foot width additional right-of-way or easement for potential future trail connections assumed for estimating. Actual right-of-way or easement requirements should be confirmed in final design.

2. Demand Forecast

Three Rivers Park District estimates that once fully developed, the Crystal Lake Regional Trail will generate approximately 288,000 annual visits. Significant use of the trail will occur in spring, summer and fall. Three Rivers Park District does not operate or maintain its regional trails in the winter season, which is defined as November 15 to March 31. Local communities may maintain the trails under an independent use agreement with Three Rivers Park District. Therefore, winter use of the Crystal Lake Regional Trail will depend on weather conditions as well as whether the trail is being maintained by local municipalities.

Since the regional linking trail will connect outer suburbs to fully developed communities and will provide connections to trails leading to downtown Minneapolis, it is expected that a higher percentage of trail use will be for transportation purposes than what is currently seen on other regional trails operated by Three Rivers Park District. Figure 6 depicts the core and primary service areas for the regional trail. The majority of trail users are anticipated to come from these service areas.

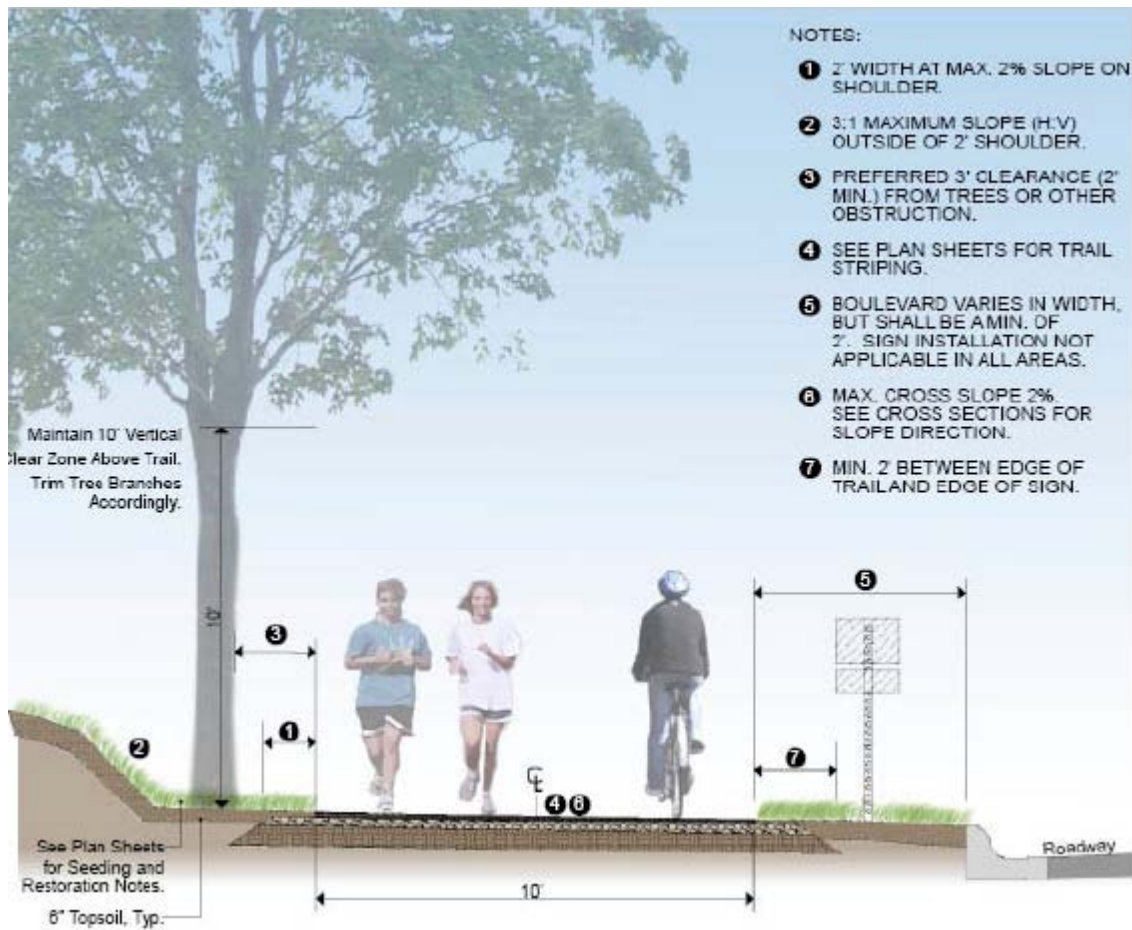
Figure 6: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Core and Primary Service Areas



3. Development Concept

The regional trail will primarily be located within existing street right-of-way and parkland owned by local municipalities and government agencies. The optimum trail entails a 10 foot wide paved surface separated from the roadway by at least a 2-foot wide clear zone to provide a buffer between trail users and vehicles. However, in some cases the trail will need to be temporarily on-street or reduced in width for short segments until additional right-of-way can be acquired. Figure 7 shows a preferred regional trail section.

Figure 7: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Preferred Typical Trail Section

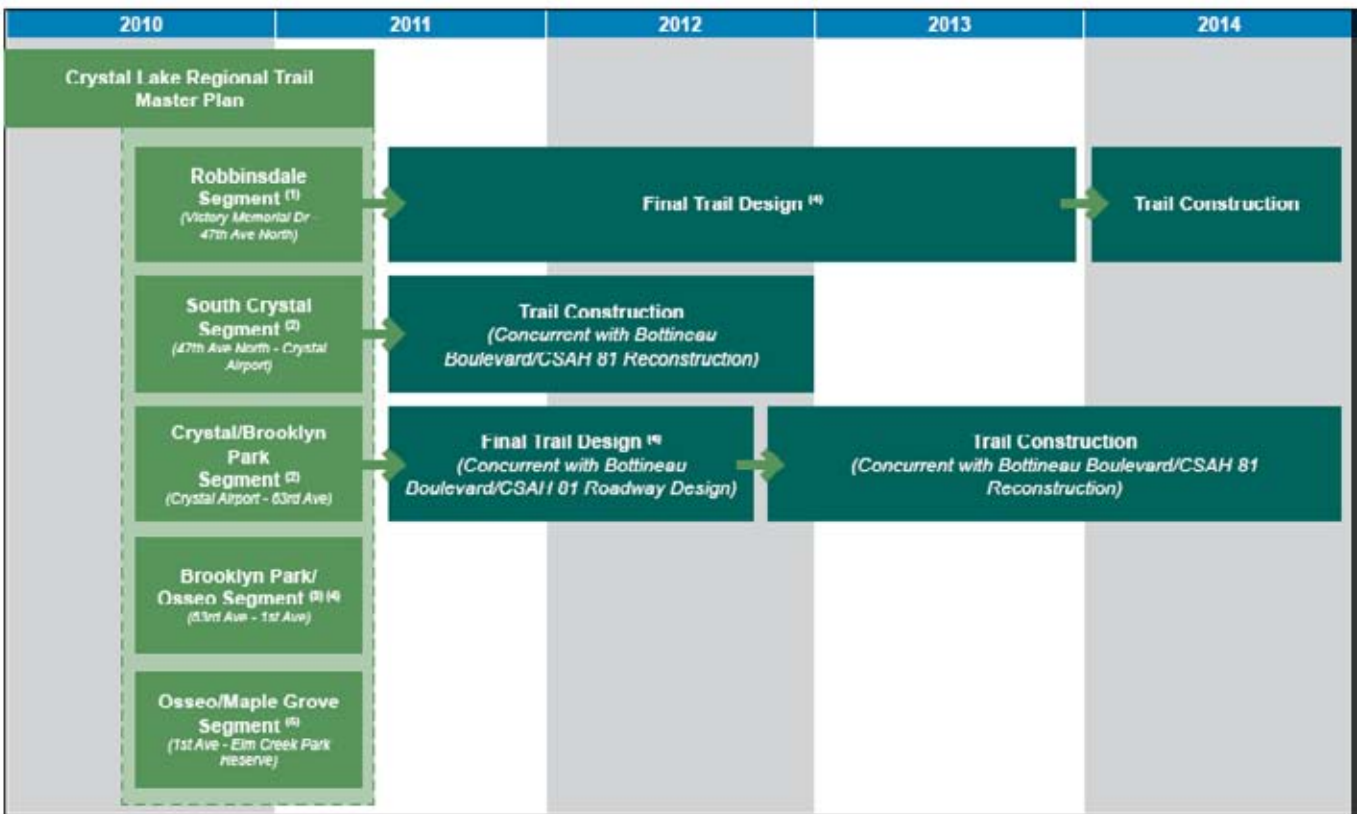


Because the regional trail will be located in an urban setting, there will be a number of locations where the trail will cross established roadways. These crossings are proposed to be marked with safety signage and surface paint to alert trail users as well as motorists.

The trail corridor will also include rest stops and wayfinding signage to provide trail users with location information along the route. The locations for the rest stops will be evaluated and incorporated into the final design of the trail.

The regional trail will be developed in stages, depending on the availability of funding and other local factors such as land availability, timing of adjacent roadway improvements, and public desire to expand the regional trail system. Until the trail corridor is fully developed, existing sidewalks or the interim use of city streets may need to be utilized. Figure 8 represents the proposed implementation schedule. Development of most of the trail is anticipated to be completed by 2014; however, the segment between 63rd Avenue in Brooklyn Park and 1st Avenue in Osseo may be developed concurrently with the CSAH 81 reconstruction. No project initiation date has been provided by Hennepin County for roadway and trail construction of this segment.

Figure 8: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Implementation Schedule



- (1) TH 100 to 47th Ave North not included in federal STP grant scope.
- (2) Park District to accept trail already designed and constructed by Hennepin County
- (3) May be constructed concurrently with Bottineau Boulevard/CSAH 81 reconstruction. Date not set for roadway or trail construction
- (4) Will include opportunities for public review and comment
- (5) Trail already constructed

Trail development includes the costs to prepare the site, reconfigure roadways as required, modify drainage patterns where necessary, pave the trail, and install signage, striping and landscaping. The estimated costs for development of the Crystal Lake Regional Trail are \$3,796,090 as delineated in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Crystal Lake Regional Trail Estimated Construction Costs

Estimated Construction Cost	Estimated Quantity	Unit of Measurement	Estimated Unit Cost	Estimated Total Cost
Robbinsdale Segment - (Victory Memorial Parkway to TH 100)				
Existing Trail or Walk Removal	6,880	Lin Ft	\$14	\$96,320
Trail Reconstruction (<i>see note 7</i>)	4,900	Lin Ft	\$55	\$269,500
Trail Construction	5,240	Lin Ft	\$55	\$288,200
Boardwalk Construction	10,500	Lin Ft	\$65	\$682,500
Adjacent Property Owner Garage Reconfiguration	2	Each	\$10,000	\$20,000
Wayfinding Signage with MPRB kiosk (<i>see note 10</i>)	1	Each	\$1,500	\$1,500
Level B Wayfinding Signage	1	Each	\$33,000	\$33,000
Regional Trail Kiosk for Twin Lakes Regional Trail	1	Each	\$18,000	\$18,000
Traffic Control Signs and Devices	1,000	Lin Ft	\$1	\$1,000
			Subtotal	\$1,410,020
South Crystal Segment - (TH 100 to Crystal Airport)				
Existing Trail or Walk Removal	6,480	Lin Ft	\$14	\$90,720
Trail Reconstruction (<i>see note 8</i>)	8,100	Lin Ft	\$55	\$445,500
Trail Construction	1,800	Lin Ft	\$55	\$99,000
Level B Wayfinding Signage	1	Each	\$33,000	\$33,000
			Subtotal	\$668,220
Crystal/Brooklyn Park Segment - (Crystal Airport to 63rd Avenue)				
Trail Construction (<i>see note 9</i>)	3,600	Lin Ft	\$55	\$198,000
Potential Future Trail Route - Trail Construction	570	Lin Ft	\$55	\$31,350
			Subtotal	\$229,350
Brooklyn Park/Osseo Segment - (63rd Avenue to 1st Avenue)				
Trail Construction	21,150	Lin Ft	\$55	\$1,163,250
Potential Future Trail Route - Trail Construction	4,150	Lin Ft	\$55	\$228,250
Level B Wayfinding Signage	2	Each	\$33,000	\$66,000
			Subtotal	\$1,457,500
Osseo/Maple Grove Segment - (1st Avenue to Elm Creek Park Reserve)				
Regional Trail Kiosk	1	Each	\$18,000	\$18,000
Traffic Control Signs and Devices	13,000	Lin Ft	\$1	\$13,000
			Subtotal	\$31,000
Total Estimated Construction Cost (see notes)				\$3,796,090

Cost Estimate Notes:

1. Estimates include a 15% construction contingency factor for unforeseen costs and an additional 20% for design and administration.
2. Estimates are based on current 2010 construction costs.
3. Cost participation between Three Rivers Park District and other agencies on improvements beyond construction of the actual trail, such as any roadway reconstruction to accommodate the regional trail, shall be reviewed as implementation is considered.
4. Existing trail removal assumes 8' wide bituminous trail or concrete walk. Actual dimensions may vary.
5. Existing trail reconstruction assumes 10' wide bituminous trail, turf establishment, and signage. Estimate does not include any retaining walls or streetscaping such as boulevard trees and decorative lighting.
6. 5' width additional right of way assumed for estimating. Actual right of way or easement requirements should be confirmed in final design.
7. Includes trail or walk constructed in Phase 1 Bottineau Boulevard Reconstruction and existing city trail along Crystal Lake in Lakeview Terrace Park. The trail cross section does not meet TRPD's regional trail design standards. In light of these segments relatively recent construction, the Park District intends to utilize the existing trail as-is until local road reconstruction projects allow upgrade to any non-conforming regional trail segments.
8. Phase 2 Bottineau Boulevard Reconstruction includes 8' wide trail. Trail is not yet constructed, but is part of the project already bid. The trail cross section does not meet TRPD's regional trail design standards. In light of this segment's relatively recent construction, the Park District intends to utilize the existing trail as-is until local road reconstruction projects allow upgrade to any non-conforming regional trail segments.
9. Phase 3 Bottineau Boulevard is currently in the design phase. Potential to construct 10' trail to TRPD standards paid as part of roadway project.
10. Signage includes (1) kiosk panel within existing MPRB kiosk including layout, artwork and associated graphic work.
11. 16' width additional right-of-way or easement for potential future trail connections assumed for estimating. Actual right of way or easement requirements should be confirmed in final design.

4. Conflicts

Three Rivers Park District indicates that the master plan is consistent with local and regional plans, land uses and area construction projects. No significant conflicts with existing or proposed projects and land uses were identified during the development of the master plan. Minor conflicts were identified and resolved during the route assessment process.

5. Public Services

The development and operation of Crystal Lake Regional Trail is not anticipated to require any non-recreational public services or facilities such as roads or sewers. Additionally, regional trail corridors do not typically require utility services such as electricity, sanitary sewer and water service.

6. Operations

Rules, regulations and ordinances

The Crystal Lake Regional Trail will be operated under Three Rivers Park District ordinances which define the rules and regulations for the use of its regional parks and trails. A copy of the ordinances is posted on the Park District website. Rules and regulations are also posted throughout the Park District's properties and facilities. Posted information includes park hours, permitted and prohibited activities, fees, maps of the park and/or trail, and emergency contact information. Three Rivers Park District Police and Park Service Officers regularly patrol park and trail property and will enforce ordinances via citations when necessary.

Operations –Public Safety

Three Rivers Park District's Safety Section consists of Park Police Officers, Park Service Officers and support staff. Specific patrol of the Crystal Lake Regional Trail will be the primary responsibility of staff assigned to French Regional Park, although all public safety staff patrol trails on an as-needed basis.

Operations –Maintenance

In order to create an efficient and cost-effective work force, Three Rivers Park District organizes and budgets maintenance services in six geographic divisions. The Elm Creek Work Cluster will provide maintenance services for the Crystal Lake Regional Trail.

Three Rivers Park District will maintain the trail between April 1 and November 14. Local municipalities that have a winter trail operations permit are responsible for operations and maintenance during the winter.

Maintenance Costs

Much of the equipment and tools for maintenance of the trail are already in place through the cost savings associated with the work cluster program. When the trail is fully developed, the annual routine maintenance costs are estimated to be \$12,000 in 2010 dollars, primarily for sign replacement and seasonal labor.

Public Safety Costs

The projected annual operating costs for public safety services for this trail also include the services for the Twin Lakes Regional Trail, which combined are estimated to be \$85,000 in 2010 dollars. This accounts for one additional Park Police Officer and up to three new seasonal staff assigned to Trail Patrol. Additional estimated costs include \$7,500 for uniforms and gear and \$30,000 for a trail patrol vehicle.

Funding Sources

Annual operating costs are funded through the Park District's general fund budget, with property taxes as the primary source of funds. Revenue is also received from the State of Minnesota as part of the Operations and Maintenance Fund allocation administered by the Metropolitan Council. Some of the annual rehabilitation costs also may be funded from the Three Rivers Park District Park Maintenance and Rehabilitation Fund, which includes revenues from the State of Minnesota as well as the Park District's general obligation bonds.

7. Citizen Participation

A task force was established to inform the planning process for this regional trail. The task force met four times between July 2010 and January 2011 to discuss master plan objectives, existing trail corridor conditions, and recommend a route for the regional trail. The task force included representatives from:

- Cities of Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, Osseo and Maple Grove
- Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
- Hennepin County Transportation
- Hennepin County Housing, Community Works and Transit
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

Three Rivers Park District hosted two public open houses for the general public to present information and gather comments. Affected agencies were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft master plan, upon which the cities of Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, Osseo and Maple Grove passed resolutions of support for the regional trail corridor. Three Rivers Park District subsequently released the draft master plan for public review. Feedback on the master plan was generally supportive of the trail corridor. Many comments stated that the recreational and commuting opportunities provided by the trail were an asset to currently underserved areas.

8. Accessibility

The Three Rivers Park District facilities associated with this master plan will be developed in accordance with ADA standards and guidelines. All unconstructed and reconstructed segments of the regional trail and trail amenities such as rest stops, parking, restrooms and water access will be designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Since the regional trail travels through urban areas, it will cross major roadways. Three Rivers Park District will investigate opportunities to modify or add signal timing, crossings and signage to ensure that the trail is safe and accessible for all users.

The trail passes through a variety of neighborhoods with varying demographics, providing access to people with diverse range of social and cultural backgrounds. Three Rivers Park District does not charge entrance fees to its regional parks, park reserves or regional trails.

REVIEW BY OTHER COUNCIL DIVISIONS:

Community Development – Environment and Surface Water Management (Jim Larsen 651-602-1159) – No concerns.

Environmental Services – Sewers (Roger Janzig 651-602-1119) – This trail project runs through the cities of Maple Grove, Osseo, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, and Robbinsdale. It crosses the following Metropolitan Council's Gravity Interceptors:

- (7015-A&B) in Brooklyn Park. The interceptor was built in 1973 and is a 48-inch RCP/CIPP Liner.
- (7015-C) in Brooklyn Park. The interceptor was built in 1973 and is a 42-inch RCP/CIPP Liner.
- (4-OS-457) in Osseo. The interceptor was built in 1956 and is an 8-inch CIP.
- (9004-1) in Maple Grove. The interceptor was built in 2007 and is a 54-inch RCP/PVC Liner.

To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system, prior to initiating this project, preliminary plans should be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment.

Transportation—Aviation (Russ Owen 651-602-1721) – The Crystal Lake Regional Trail Master Plan has few impacts to the Crystal Airport and the Regional Aviation System. The trail might cross the RPZ (Runway Protection Zone) which is an acceptable land use according to the FAA. It should be noted that this area is should remain property of the airport owner, so an easement would need to be granted. The paragraph below was taken from the most recent Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) Long Term Comprehensive Plan (LTCP) for the Crystal Airport:

The County Road 81 improvements project to be completed by Hennepin County, which is anticipated to involve roadway widening to accommodate additional lanes of traffic and **trails**, is not impacted by any of the airport LTCP alternatives. The County has indicated to MAC that the roadway expansion requires very little MAC property for right-of-way. In fact, the only property the County may request of MAC lies outside of the existing security fence separating the roadway corridor from the airfield. Under this scenario, MAC would be able to work with the County to provide the needed right-of-way at fair market value or in exchange for roadway design considerations, regardless of the alternative chosen for the airport.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Crystal Lake Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District (Referral No. 50014-1) is consistent with the requirements of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
2. The estimated costs to implement the master plan are \$5,710,053, which includes \$1,913,963 in estimated easement/right-of-way costs and \$3,796,090 million in estimated construction costs.
3. The proposed parkway crosses four regional interceptors. In order to maintain the integrity of the regional sewer system, final development plans for the regional trail should be submitted to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment.
4. Approval of this master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time. Future development funding based on this master plan would be done through the Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Council action is required to approve the CIP and to approve specific grants to Three Rivers Park District.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Crystal Lake Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50014-1).
2. Require that prior to development of new trail segments, final development plans be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment to ensure the integrity of the interceptor system.