

## **METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**

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**DATE:** October 24, 2012

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

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

**SUBJECT:** (2012-xxx) Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan  
Dakota County (Referral No. 50028-1)  
Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission District H (Barbara Schmidt)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Dakota County submitted the Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan to the Metropolitan Council for review and approval on September 4, 2012. The Council reviews park and trail master plans to evaluate their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and its content criteria.

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.

The *Policy Plan* Siting and Acquisition Strategy 3 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 staff report evaluates the Rosemount Greenway 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."

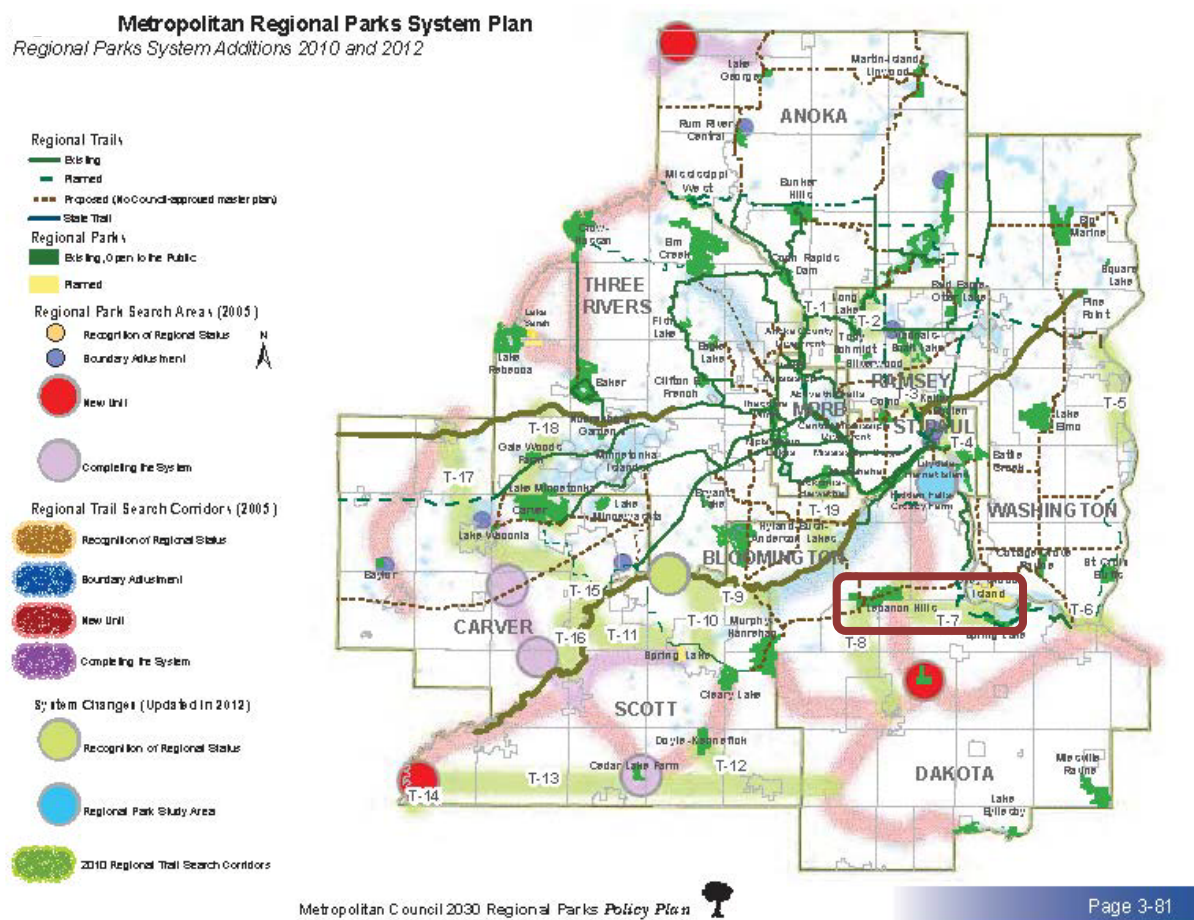
Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 2 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to review, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, master plans for the regional parks system. Plans are reviewed for their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* and other Council 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* acknowledges the Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail as regional trail search corridor (“*Rosemount River Access Trail*”) connecting Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan with the Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve and numerous local destinations including downtown Rosemount and the Mississippi River Trail. The *Policy Plan* explains that greenways are similar to regional destination trails, and should maximize the amount of high-quality natural resources within the trail corridor boundaries.

The Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail will be approximately 13 miles long and will travel entirely through the City of Rosemount. Figure 1 shows the regional trail location (outlined in red).

**Figure 1: Regional Parks Policy Plan**



This regional trail search corridor was incorporated into the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* based on Dakota County's *2030 Parks System Plan*, which developed a strong focus on greenway planning. Dakota County's greenway plan states that the County's vision is to provide multiple trail benefits of water quality, habitat, recreation and non-motorized transportation. The County's greenway priorities, once built, will total 52 miles over the next ten years.

Figure 2: Dakota County Greenway Plan



The Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail landscape character is suburban, rural, and residential, and passes through parks, near schools and residential areas in Rosemount. The greenway will connect the existing Rosemount Park and Ride at the Rosemount Community Center and the City's future park and ride. Further east, the greenway character becomes more rural and industrial as it travels near Flint Hills Resources following a refinery property buffer. The trail connects existing natural features such as ravines, ridges, wetland and woodlands, and eventually the Mississippi River Trail and the Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve.

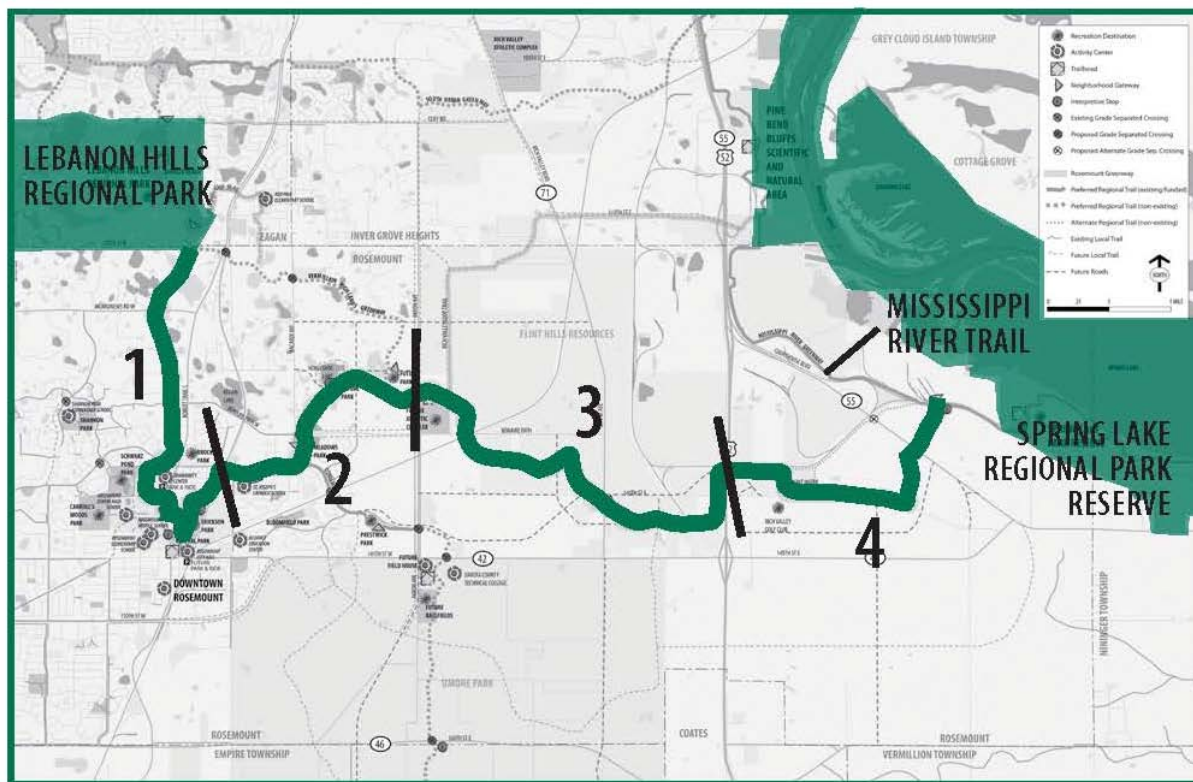
The plan describes the greenway trail in four segments showing the connections to recreation destinations such as local parks, activity centers, schools, trailheads, neighborhood gateways (local trail access points) and grade separated crossings.

Segment 1 is 4 miles from Lebanon Hills Regional Park south to downtown Rosemount. Segment 2 is 3 miles from Rosemount's Central Park, north and east to a future community athletic complex at Akron Avenue. Segment 3 is 3 miles from Akron Avenue to Highway 52, traveling through rural areas and past Flint Hills Resources property. Finally, segment 4 is 2.6 miles from Highway 52 to the Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve. Figure 3 show a map of the trail segments.

The Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail does not meet Dakota County's 80/20 goal (80 percent of the trail is off-road, with a maximum of 20 percent along adjacent roads). However, the final trail alignment will link major recreation features, the two regional parks at each end, which will improve the greenway experience.



**Figure 3: Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Segments**



**Figure 10. Rosemount Greenway Segments**

The Rosemount Greenway is framed by Lebanon Hills Regional Park on the west and the Mississippi River and Spring Lake Park Reserve on the east.

Trail Segments	Length/Miles	Along Roads	Off-Road
Segment 1	4.0	51%	49%
Segment 2	3.0	33%	
Segment 3	3.0	--	100%
Segment 4	2.6	39%	61%
Greenway Total	12.6	30%	70%

## MASTER PLAN REVIEW ANALYSIS

The 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan requires that master plans for regional destination trails address the following items.

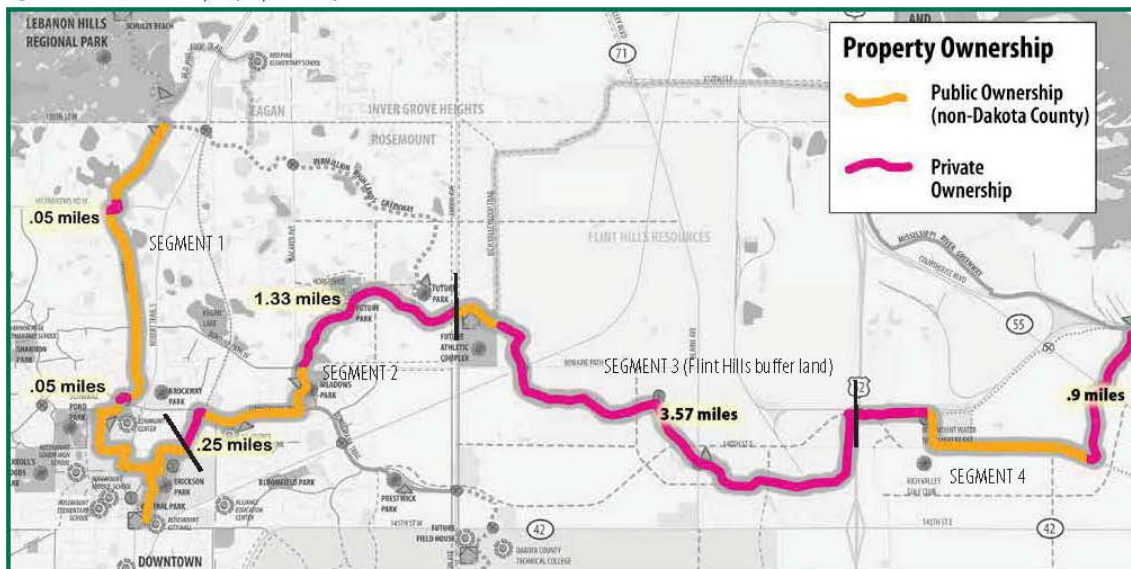
### 1. Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

The master plan addresses the parcels to be acquired, the estimated acquisition costs and the acquisition schedule. It also describes the trail corridor's natural resources, corridor suitability, special assessments and other acquisition considerations.

The Council's review evaluates the proposed regional trail component of the broader greenway corridor. Dakota County's top priority is to acquire and preserve a 30-foot wide greenway trail corridor that will accommodate the paved regional trail. The broader greenway corridor will range in width from 100 to more than 300 feet, and Dakota County will partner with other entities and agencies to acquire and manage this part of the greenway.

Figure 4, Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Ownership, illustrates that of the trail corridor's 44 total acres to be acquired for the greenway corridor, about 30 acres are privately owned. The County will explore land protection options in the acquisition phase that include park dedication, direct purchase, permanent easements, land donation, bargain sale, or life estate in negotiations with landowners, cities and developers. Dakota County estimates that the 30-foot greenway acquisition costs total approximately \$1,873,500.

SEGMENT	DAKOTA CO.	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	TOTAL
<b>1</b>	–	6.69 acres	6.79 acres	13.48 acres
<b>2</b>	–	3.42 acres	5.80 acres	9.22 acres
<b>3</b>	–	1.20 acres	11.16 acres	12.36 acres
<b>4</b>	-	3.21 acres	6.18 acres	9.39 acres



## 2. Demand Forecast

The master plan addresses how the greenway trail will meet the recreation demand in this area as identified by the Metropolitan Council and Dakota County data. The Metropolitan Council's 2030 population forecasts for the communities touching the greenway's 3-mile primary service area is expected to increase 44 percent between 2010 and 2030, from 230,000 to 331,000 people. The anticipated population increase help demonstrate the need for the new greenway.

The Metropolitan Council's 2008 parks and trails survey indicated that two-thirds of those visiting the metropolitan area's recreational facilities were using the trails primarily for hiking and walking, the most popular activities. With this demographic data, Dakota County anticipates that annual visits to the Rosemount Greenway trail may be at least 183,000 people by 2030.

## 3. Development Concept

The master plan addresses the trail development, schedule and estimated costs. The regional trail will be a continuous, bituminous trail designed for multipurpose uses in accordance with applicable Federal, State and County trail design standards. The trail will be 10 to 12 feet wide with a three-foot grass clear zone on each side to accommodate walking, jogging, inline-skating and bicycling, and will be maintained for winter use.

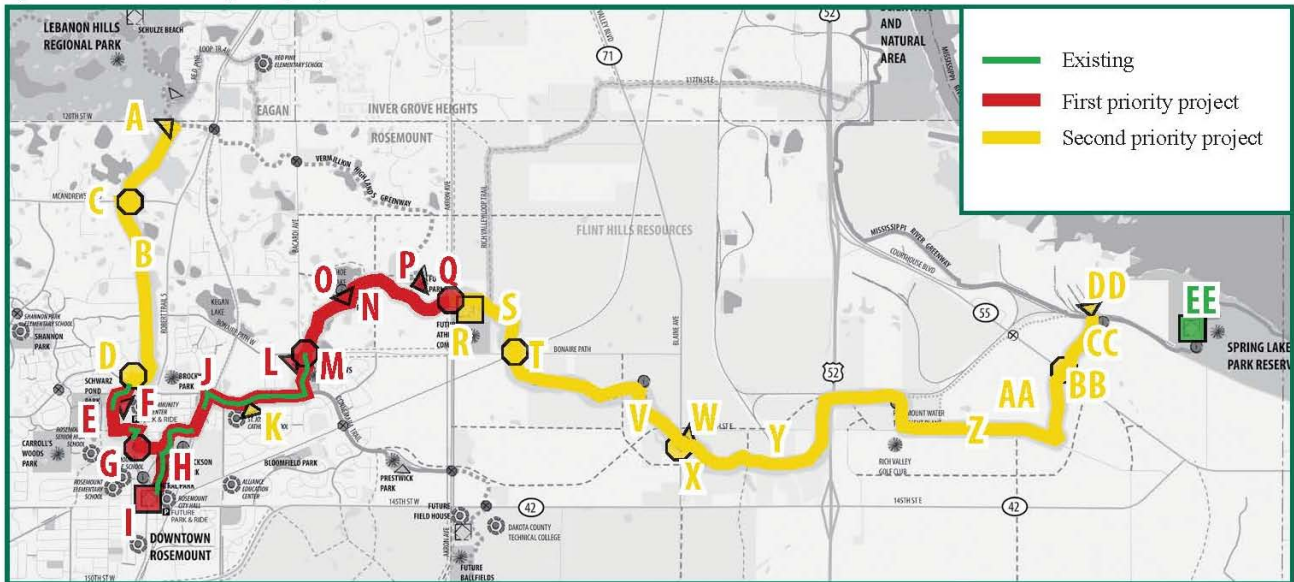
Dakota County estimates that the trail corridor's capital (construction) costs will total approximately \$14,720,336 (Figure 5). The costs include site furnishings (benches, fountains, trash containers, lights), trail and interpretation signs, landscaping, design and engineering, and underpass structures. The contingency costs (10%) are included separately. Also, the costs estimate a bituminous trail at \$60 per linear foot.

**Figure 5: Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Proposed Development Costs**

<b>Trail Component by Segment (4)</b>	<b>Estimated Development Costs</b>
1. Lebanon Hills Regional Park to Rosemount	\$ 4,300,656
2. Downtown Rosemount to Akron Avenue	\$ 2,658,487
3. Akron Avenue to Highway 52	\$ 3,429,378
4. Highway 52 to Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve	\$ 1,703,936
Contingency @10%	\$ 754,379
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$12,092,457</b>

Dakota County anticipates that trail development funding will be shared with various other partner agencies. The County will follow the greenway corridor priority projects shown in Figure 6, but will maintain flexibility if properties and funding become available.

**Figure 6: Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Development Priorities**



## 5. Conflicts

The master plan addresses the trail corridor's potential conflicts with existing land uses or proposed projects, and indicates that the surrounding land uses are generally compatible with the regional trail corridor. The County noted challenges with the trail corridor alignment along Dodd Boulevard due to private landowners' concerns. The County will continue to work with individual landowners to resolve the trail alignment issues.

## 6. Public Services

The master plan indicates that the Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail does not require non-recreational public services or facilities such as roads or sewers. The proposed trailheads and neighborhood gateways are currently serviced by the existing road network. Also, the greenway is to connect to the Minnesota Valley Transportation Authority park and ride facility in Rosemount. The County will consider options such as solar lighting if municipal utilities are not accessible at these locations.

## 7. Operations

The master plan addresses the rules, regulations and ordinances affecting the trail including the estimated costs to operate and maintain the trail. Dakota County Parks and Open Space Department is the lead agency for coordinating greenway and management operations. The County will enforce its existing park ordinance that addresses park and trail operations such as regulation of public use, user conduct and activities, property protection, and vehicle parking.

The County will implement a maintenance program and schedule for the greenway corridor to maintain and protect the public investment, enhance natural resource quality and provide a quality service. The County estimates that the greenway's maintenance and operations costs will total \$151,500 annually. Maintenance responsibilities include landscaping, habitat management, sign replacement, winter plowing and other activities.

Dakota County will fund the operations and maintenance activities through the County's general fund.

## **8. Citizen Participation**

The master plan describes the nine-month greenway master planning process that included multiple agencies and jurisdictions. The joint technical advisory group informed the County on both the Rosemount and the Vermillion Highlands Greenway master plans. The advisory group held three meetings and included representatives from the following stakeholders:

- Flint Hill Resources
- University of Minnesota and UMore Park
- City of Rosemount
- Empire Township
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
- Friends of the Mississippi River
- Dakota County Historical Society, and Departments of Planning, Transportation, and Parks and Open Space

The County established a project website for both greenways to gather public comments from March through July of 2012. The County held two open houses and more than 80 people attended and provided feedback on the projects. The County also received a resolution of support for the trail from the City of Rosemount.

## **9. Public Awareness**

The master plan discusses Dakota County's approach to informing the public about the greenway. The County promotes awareness of all its parks and greenways through websites, the press, brochures, promotions and coordinated events with cities and businesses.

## **10. Accessibility**

The County is committed to offering universal accessibility at all trail facilities. The primary paved trail and all access points described in the master plan are located and planned for accessibility for all greenway visitors, and are designed and built to meet Federal, State and County standards.

## **11. Natural Resources and Stewardship**

The master plan includes a natural resource analysis and stewardship plan to restore and preserve the greenway corridor's natural resources. The plan includes the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's land cover classification system (MLCCS) which identifies the fragmented land cover along the greenway as planted, cultivated or grassland. The greenway anchors, Lebanon Hills Regional Park on the west and Spring Lake Regional Park Reserve on the east, have the greatest expanses of contiguous native plant communities.

While the natural resource and habitat restoration component of developing the greenway corridor will be a secondary priority, the County will continue to partner with local



jurisdictions, agencies and private landowners to restore and protect the greenway's sensitive natural resource lands as opportunities and funding become available.

The stewardship plan includes capital projects totaling \$768,300 that include natural resource restoration activities such as native species plantings, wetland restoration, water quality raingarden installation and invasive species removal. The stewardship plan includes an annual cost totaling \$99,600 to cover ongoing natural resource management activities. The stewardship plan includes opportunities for resource maintenance with partner agencies such the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District.

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

### **Environmental Services – Sewers** (Roger Janzig 651-602-1119)

The Rosemount Greenway Master Plan shows trails that may have an impact on Metropolitan Council Interceptors. To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system, preliminary plans should be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment prior to initiating the project.

### **Environmental Services – Water Supply** (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803)

The Rosemount Greenway Master Plan includes an objective to improve stormwater infiltration, which is particularly important because portions of the greenway are located up-gradient of the City of Rosemount's municipal wells, and within the City of Rosemount's Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA). This DWSMA has been designated as being moderately to highly vulnerable to potential contamination by the city and the MN Department of Health. Since stormwater infiltration occurring in this area may impact public drinking water supplies, Council staff recommends the County consider the MN Department of Health document, '*Evaluating Stormwater Infiltration Practices in Vulnerable Wellhead Protection Areas*, [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/stormwater.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/stormwater.pdf).

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

1. The Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan from Dakota County is consistent with the requirements of the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
2. The estimated costs to implement the regional trail master plan total \$14,734,257, which includes cost estimates for acquisition (\$1,873,500), construction (\$12,092,457) and stewardship (\$768,300). The annual costs total \$251,100 which include operations and maintenance (\$151,500), and natural resources stewardship (\$99,600).
3. The proposed greenway trail alignment may impact the Metropolitan Council wastewater interceptors. Therefore, to assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system, the County should provide preliminary plans to the Council's Interceptor Engineering Manager to review construction documents prior to initiating any project.
4. The Metropolitan Council's approval of the master plan allows Dakota County to be eligible to request regional funding for the regional greenway trail's acquisition, construction and natural resource restoration through future regional parks capital improvement programs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Rosemount Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50028-1).
2. Require Dakota County to send the greenway trail preliminary plans to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager, to assess the potential impact to the Metropolitan Council's interceptors prior to initiating the project.
3. Request that Dakota County consider the references to infiltrating stormwater in vulnerable wellhead protection areas as noted in this memorandum.