

# Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

## Designation Application

### General Section

Designation Application #: 14-010D      Date Submitted: 08/20/2015

Park or Trail Name: Bertram Park

District #: 4      Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 45.2906 Longitude: -93.8548

#### Location Description:

Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park is located in Wright County (Monticello Township) on the western edge of the City of Monticello, 25 miles east of St. Cloud and 12 miles west of Hennepin County. Interstate 94 runs within two miles of this area, making access efficient and convenient for many travelers and visitors. Park Address: 9842 Briarwood Avenue NE, Monticello, MN.

Lead Applicant Organization: Wright County

Lead Contact First Name: Marc      Last Name: Mattice

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Joint Applicant #1 Organization: Wright County

Joint Applicant #2 Organization: City of Monticello

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

#### Describe other project supporters:

The Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park has an array of partners that are working to ensure that the vision for the Bertram Chain of Lakes becomes a reality. These partners are active in funding, maintenance, promoting, programming, and planning. The following provides an overview of the partners and their roles. Friends of Bertram Lake, Advocacy, Programming, Volunteers Crow River District Boy Scouts, Volunteers, Maintenance YMCA      Twin Cities , Day Camp Programming and Facilities State of Minnesota, Funding/Grants Monticello School District School District, Planning Monticello Township, Planning Cargill Kitchen Solutions, Funding for Restoration Projects Bertram Chain of Lakes Advisory Council, Planning, Policy, Guidance, Events, Volunteers, Public Input, Advocacy Minnesota Off Road Cyclists, Assist with establishment of single-track mountain bike trails, planning, maintenance, construction, volunteer recruitment and training.

### Description Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Total proposed acreage:

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

This impressive area encompasses 1,052 acres of land, including the entire lakeshore of four completely undeveloped lakes, located in Monticello Township, Wright County, Minnesota. In 2008, Wright County and the City of Monticello were awarded funds from the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources and the Metro Greenways Grant Program to assist with the first of a series of land purchases. If Wright County and the City of Monticello are successful in securing the remaining funds to purchase this area, plans for recreational facilities include modern and primitive camping areas, a public swimming beach, public water accesses, trails including mountain biking, cross country skiing, and hiking, overlooks, a playground, picnic shelters, a sand volleyball area, fishing piers, a retreat chalet, an amphitheater, a regional athletic complex including soccer and softball fields, and a camp office and concession area. The County and City partnership has developed an agreement that partners with the YMCA to for programming in partnership with the City and County for day-camp programs and environmental education, this partnership will assist with connection youth to the outdoors. Current public use of the existing 750.4 acres includes trails for hiking, mountain biking and cross country skiing, a parking area, fishing pier, carry-in water accesses to Long Lake and Bertram Lake, a picnic area, and group camping by special permit. As Wright County's population growth continues to grow, this property has become a key element in preparations to meet the demand for public open space and outdoor recreational opportunities, as well as a key element in efforts to preserve a relatively untouched but beautiful and natural area located right in our midst. The goal over the next few years is to continue the acquisition of the remaining 302.23 acres, and begin development of the recreational facilities.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
  - Land Acquisition
    - Status: Ongoing
    - Percentage of Land Acquired: 71
  - Development Status
    - No Development
    - Some Development, but more Proposed
      - New Facilities Proposed
      - Existing Facilities to be Upgraded
    - Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park   |  |
| Existing Facility List   | Proposed Facility List   |
| Picnicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Mountain Biking Trails (natural), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Swimming, Canoeing Facilities, Fishing Piers, Visitor Center, Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Play areas, Outdoor Amphitheater, Roads and Parking Areas | Electric/water/sewer RV sites, Electric/water campsites, Electric campsites, Non-electric campsites, Group campsites, Tent only sites, Picnicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Mountain Biking Trails (natural), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Canoeing Facilities, Fishing Piers, Visitor Center, Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Play Areas, with an outdoor theme, Zip Lines, Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas |

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

The Master Plan provides information related to park goals, development cost estimates, anticipated costs for completing acquisition, estimates for operations and maintenance. The plan also indicates phasing for all aspects above..

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: Over the past eight years Wright County and the City of Monticello has made strides to their final goal of acquiring 1,052-acre (land base), acquisition of the entire land base has yet to be completed. What makes this property so unique is that there are four completely undeveloped lakes, totaling 5.75 miles of shoreline, located entirely within the borders of this property. Property of this kind is rare and hard to find, especially in areas close to development and high population density. The Concept Development Plan was adopted by the Bertram Chain of Lakes Advisory Council in June of 2011 and amended in November of 2012. The plan takes advantage of the opportunities this area has to offer while protecting the natural characteristics that make the park unique. The goals within the Concept Plan are to provide the recreating public with a host of opportunities including primitive, canoe-in, pack-in, and modern camping facilities; hiking, cross country skiing, and mountain bike trails; shore/pier fishing, swimming, and picnic facilities; and interpretive displays for environmental and cultural education. The first of two especially interesting concepts within the plan includes prohibition of the use of petroleum powered motors on the lake surface. This will assist in providing a unique experience not currently offered in Wright County. The second interesting concept is that the Bertram Lakes Regional Park, in

cooperation with the YMCA, will offer a variety of day-camp opportunities for youth in which they can experience many outdoor adventures including, but not limited to, canoeing, nature studies, swimming, fishing, outdoor living skills, and archery. Many of these activities can help instill a love of nature in our youth.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: A gravel ridge was formed between Bertram and Long Lake by a glacier event. This area is considered to be a rare geological feature called an Esker Tunnel. Esker tunnels were formed when streams of water flowed beneath glacial ice, cutting long straight courses into the drift and bedrock. As the ice thinned, the tunnels collapsed and coarse gravel was deposited in a ridge called an "esker." Eskers are generally characterized by long straight ridges composed of gravel and sandy soil. They sometimes support significant plant communities such as savannas. Eskers are not protected by law, but they are considered significant features. Plans for this area include a possible interpretive site which could be used to educate the public about this rare geological feature. Site development would be minimal and would consist of little more than a trail for non-motorized usage. Recently, a second significant geological feature was verified and is located near the east shore of Long Lake. This feature is known as a Kame and was verified by members of a Minnesota Master Naturist Class that was held throughout the Wright County Parks System. A Kame is defined as an irregularly shaped hill or mound composed of sand, gravel, and till (unsettled glacial sediment) that accumulates in a depression on a retreating glacier, and is then deposited on the land surface with further melting of the glacier. Kames are often associated with kettles, and this is referred to as kame and kettle topography.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Because of its unique attributes and proximity to the Metropolitan area, the Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park is expected to draw visitors from all around the state of Minnesota as well as from neighboring states. This regional park is located in Wright County on the western edge of the City of Monticello, 25 miles east of St. Cloud and 12 miles west of Hennepin County. Interstate 94 runs within two miles of this area, making access efficient and convenient for many travelers and visitors. The Bertram Chain of Lakes Advisory Council has held a variety of public planning events and open houses between 2009 and 2013. The regional significance of this project becomes obvious when looking at the many different points of origin of those who visited this park. Forty-three percent (43%) were from outside the Monticello area, which breaks down to 14% from Sherburne County, 12% from areas such as Rice, Watertown, Willmar, Fridley, Champlin, Sartell, Forest Lake, Rogers, Eagan, Andover, Anoka, Mound, Bemidji, and Richmond, and 17% from other areas within Wright County. In the Fall of 2013, Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park hosted its first Annual Trail Run, with over 200 participants taking part in the event. Once again, this confirms the regional nature of the park. Forty-seven percent (47%) were from outside the Monticello area, which breaks down to 16% from Sherburne County, 11% from areas within the Seven County Metropolitan Area, such as St. Louis Park, Bloomington, Edina, Savage, Minneapolis, Prior Lake, Plymouth, Champlin, 3% from Greater Minnesota or out of state including St. Cloud, Richmond, and Bismarck (North Dakota), and 17% from other areas within Wright County.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: Once complete, Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park will offer a wide variety of natural resource based recreational opportunities that

are also offered elsewhere within 20 miles of the park. These include primitive pack-in and modern camping facilities, hiking, and cross country ski trails, shore/pier fishing, swimming, and picnic facilities. In addition to those activities, the park will also offer several opportunities that are currently not available nearby. These include lake surface zoning that would restrict the use of petroleum powered watercraft, primitive lakeside canoe-in camp sites, mountain bike trails, and interpretive displays. These displays would focus on the environmental and cultural importance of an area known as Oak Savanna, which is quite different from the Big Woods that encompasses the majority of Wright County. Lastly, through a cooperative effort with the YMCA, a variety of day-camp offerings will be available for youth.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

| <b>Type</b>  | <b>Description</b>                     |
|--------------|--|
| Location Map | Location map added from general tab    |
| Master Plan  | Master plan added from master plan tab |
| Master Plan  | Master plan added from master plan tab |
| Location Map | Location map added from general tab    |
| Master Plan  | Master plan added from master plan tab |
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