

# Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

## Designation Application

### General Section

Designation Application #: 14-013D      Date Submitted: 08/25/2015

Park or Trail Name: Swedish Immigrant Trail

District #: 4      Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 0.0000 Longitude: 0.0000

#### Location Description:

Chisago County, In and through communities of Taylors Falls, Shafer, Center City, Lindstrom, Chisago City and Wyoming The site includes a scenic area of the St. Croix River Valley and Interstate State Park on the east end and it traverses a rich hardwood forest area within Interstate State Park. The trail will provide accessible links with the state trail to provide a magnificent viewing deck over the National Scenic St. Croix River. The trail project continues southwesterly connecting the heavily used Wildwood Campground. Project relevance includes health benefits, tourism, environment, transportation and recreation. Additionally the trail will bring users to and from the historic Taylors Falls Railroad Depot that is planned as the trail head. From the depot the trail will depart to the west on the former rail corridor with scenic views of Interstate Park and the St. Croix River. This project supports the historical significance of the immigration through Taylors Falls to Lindstrom and the importance the railroad played in that history as well as helping to make Taylors Falls the tourism destination it became and still is today. The area is a popular daytrip area lying just 30 minutes north of the twin cities metropolitan area.

Lead Applicant Organization: Chisago County

Lead Contact First Name: Laird      Last Name: Mork

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 815

City: North Branch      State: MN      Zip: 55056

Phone: 651 674-2345      Email: Laird.Mork@chisagocounty.us

Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

Chisago County Parks and Trails Foundation and the Cities of Taylors Falls, Shafer, Center City, Lindstrom, Chisago City and Wyoming

### Description Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Total proposed length (mi):

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

The regional trail includes a 19 mile multi-use non-motorized trail that crosses Chisago County. The trail includes a scenic area of the St. Croix River valley and Interstate State Park on the east end. Within the state park and on to the east trail users will enjoy a rich hardwood forest. The trail will provide links with other trails within the park and provide a magnificent viewing deck over the National Scenic St. Croix River. The trail project continues southwesterly connecting the heavily used Wildwood Campground. Project relevance includes health benefits, tourism, environment, transportation and recreation. The trail will utilize the historic Taylors Falls Railroad Depot as the east end trail head. From the depot the trail will depart to the west on the former rail corridor with scenic views of Interstate Park and the St. Croix River. This project supports the historical significance of the immigration from Taylors Falls over to the Chisago Lakes Area and the importance the railroad played in that history. Taylors Falls has been and will continue to be a tourism destination. At full completion the trail will include a 10' wide hard surface non-motorized multi use trail. Some areas of the trail will include a separated snowmobile trail. Improvements will include parking areas and trail head amenities as appropriate along the route. The trail will make a connection with the existing Sunrise Prairie Trail at Wyoming MN. There are reportedly plans to continue the Gateway Trail north until it intersects with the Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail. This would facilitate a number of loop rides from the metropolitan area.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)

Existing Park or Trail

Land Acquisition

Status: In process

Percentage of Land Acquired: From Taylors Falls thru Chisago Lakes 50%

Development Status

No Development

Some Development, but more Proposed

New Facilities Proposed

Existing Facilities to be Upgraded

Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)	
Existing Facility List	Proposed Facility List

Asphalt paved trail (10 feet or more), Trailhead parking, Trailhead information kiosks, Benches along trail, Some land acquisition remaining	Asphalt paved trail (10 feet or more), Trailhead parking, Trailhead information kiosks, Benches along trail, Picnic shelters at trailhead
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Master Plan Status Section

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

Describe Other Supportive Information:

This project has become a central focus of the communities that it will run through. Each community has developed connections through their respective communities and awaits the planned connections. The County Board of Commissioners has identified the project as a high priority. The project is an Inter-local Cooperative project with Cities, the State of Minnesota and Chisago County. watch a 9 minute promotional video on youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDhEsYR7VLA>

Classification Details Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality "Destination" Trail Experience: The Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail project ties in with the majestic woods and views of Interstate State Park and the Scenic St. Croix River Valley on the east end (see attached photo of bluff view). The trail connects with the popular Wildwood Campground and continues west to connect the Chisago Lakes Area and City of Wyoming. As the trail is placed between Chisago Lakes and Wyoming (depending on final routing details) will traverse through or adjacent to the 23,000 acre Carlos Avery wildlife management area with 8,000 acres in Chisago County.

Criteria #2 Well-located to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: The St. Croix River Valley, Interstate State Park, Wildwood Campground and the Chisago Lakes area have well documented regional visitors history. The trail will directly connect to these visitor hubs. Additionally the Lakes Area has frequent international touring organizations that are already expressing interest in making the Swedish Immigrant Trail part of their operations. Add to this that the Lakes Area and the Scenic St. Croix Valley at Taylors Falls Minnesota is a popular daytrip lying just 30 minutes north of the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Criteria #3 Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations: The Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail connects the scenic area of the St. Croix River Valley and Interstate State Park on the east end and it traverses a rich hardwood forest area within Interstate State Park. The trail project continues southwesterly connecting the heavily used Wildwood Campground. Both the Interstate State Park and Wildwood Campground have a well documented regional visitors history. Another feature that has gained regional interest is the Franconia Sculpture Park. This is also near the trail and has expressed interest in making some culturally or historically appropriate pieces for display along the trail. All this will be connected to both the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail and the Gateway Trail coming out of or directly

connecting to the heavily populated metropolitan area. Additionally the Gateway Trail has now been connected to Stillwater MN. When you get into Taylors Falls you can cross the river to make an interstate connection over to the Gandy Dancer Trail to continue your ride north in Wisconsin. This 98-mile, "interstate" trail crosses into Minnesota and then back again into Wisconsin on its way from St. Croix Falls to its connection with the Saunders State Trail just south of Superior. In Wisconsin the trail is maintained and managed by Polk, Burnett and Douglas counties. The Minnesota DNR manages the section of the Gandy Dancer trail in Minnesota

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region: Although the area is rich in history and culture, has amazing state park facilities, camping, canoeing, boating, and fishing. The community has been interested in a multi use trail to realize all the the benefits that they bring for a community. There are currently no state or regional trails in the Taylors Falls or Chisago Lakes area. The closest regional trail is the Sunrise Prairie Trail in the Wyoming Minnesota or on the west side of Chisago County or the Gandy Dancer in St. Croix Wisconsin.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Agreement	
Photo	
null	
Other	
null	
Master Plan	Swedish Immigrant Trail Master Plan
Other	