

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Designation Application

General Section

Designation Application #: 14-014D Date Submitted: 08/25/2015

Park or Trail Name: Sunrise Prairie Trail

District #: 4 Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 45.4123 Longitude: -92.9857

Location Description:

The Sunrise Prairie Trail runs north and south through Chisago County. The trail connects on the south end to Washington County and the City of Forest Lake. Washington County operates the Hardwood Creek Trail. The Sunrise Prairie Trail runs from Forest Lake north through the center of Wyoming, Stacy and North Branch. To the north the trail is known as the Willard Munger Trail, starting in Hinckley and connecting all the way to Duluth. The trail has recently been called the Twin Cities to Twin Ports Trail when Oberstar provided funding for planning of a connection.

Lead Applicant Organization: Chisago County

Lead Contact First Name: Laird Last Name: Mork

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Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

Chisago County Parks and Trail Foundation, citizen organization Cities of Wyoming, Stacy and North Branch American Legion Post 85, Central MN Initiative Fund, Forest Lake Rotary Club, Lent Township, North Branch Lions, Sno-Drifters Club, Chamber, Rush City Fireman, St. Paul Area Association of Realtors, Stacy Lent Fire Dept. Stacy Lions, Wyoming Lions, Wyoming Township, and many businesses and individuals throughout the cities along the trail route.

Description Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Total proposed length (mi):

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

The Sunrise Prairie Trail is currently a 15.5 mile multi-use paved trail. There are three trail head areas with parking along the trail in Chisago County. The trail connect cities, schools, residential and commercial areas, it serve as an alternative non motorized transportation corridor for the communities. The trail is used for hiking, biking and skating, however, also includes horseback riding, snowmobiling, bird watching, geocaching and socializing. Many stop and eat at the trail heads utilizing the outdoor picnic areas. The trail connects people with nature, provides accessibility for all groups, generally improves public health and provide positive economic impacts for adjacent cities. During the winter the corridors paved area is plowed and non-motorized use continues at a lower volume. Snowmobile clubs groom the adjacent trail for snowmobile use during that season.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
 - Land Acquisition
 - Status: In progress
 - Percentage of Land Acquired: 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, Trailhead restrooms, Benches along trail	

Master Plan Status Section

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

Describe Other Supportive Information:

Youtube video at grand opening 1998 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDcUQi2A5Rs>

Classification Details Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality "Destination" Trail Experience: The Sunrise Prairie Trail provides a 100' wide corridor, a 10 foot wide paved trail/outdoor recreation opportunity for both locals and visitors. Surveys document many of the trail users enjoy the escape from the metro area. The trail winds through a number landscapes, cities and townships before reaching the north terminal at North Branch. Trail users may stop to enjoy two separate crossings of the Sunrise River, the Lion's Park in Stacy or Central Park at the north end of in North Branch. The Trail serves as a regional destination through connection south with the Hardwood Creek Trail (Washington County) totaling 24 miles and also is a potential backbone corridor connection to the north with future alignment with the Willard Munger Trail (MN) and Gandy Dancer (WI) system. The Sunrise provides ease of access with 3 trail heads along the I35 corridor. As a 10 foot wide qualifying trail it provides a regional connection to the north and south with planned intersections east/west with the Swedish Immigrant Trail (to be constructed), which is also a strong regional and tourist trail candidate in a highly scenic setting.

Criteria #2 Well-located to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: This trail is located just minutes from the heavily populated metropolitan area, the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail follows the path of the former railroad grade through the heart of several cities. The trail provides great accessibility for a quality recreational trail experience in addition to health conscious daily users and commuters. The trail is readily accessible from an already populated or rapidly growing area of Minnesota. Chisago County growth projections are outlined in the attached master plan. This trail is separated from vehicular traffic. The Sunrise Prairie Trail will connect our cities with the Twin Cities, it may one day connect the Twin Cities with the Willard Munger trail. The trail aligns with a Twin Cities to Twin Ports concept and is believed to be the most efficient and likely route for this connection. In addition this trail will connect to the west end of the Swedish Immigrant Trail in Wyoming MN.

Criteria #3 Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations: The Sunrise Trail creates missing link alternatives in a number of its connecting communities. Westerly connection can grow into the Anoka County systems and easterly regional connectivity to the planned/future Swedish Immigrant Trail provides access to historic communities and regional State Park destinations. The north/south and east/west connectivity alternatives have the potential to create localized commuting in and amongst the I35 and State Highway 8 corridors (Taylors Falls, Shafer, Center City, Lindstrom, Chisago City, Wyoming, Stacy, North Branch future Harris, Rush City) and State Parks (Interstate State Park, Wisconsin). Enhanced connectivity through the Sunrise Trail also creates potential for northerly Willard Munger connection in Hinckley and the Gandy Dancer in Wisconsin. The Sunrise Prairie Trail is located just minutes from the heavily populated metropolitan area, the trail follows the path of the former railroad grade through the heart of the cities in Chisago County and to the south in Washington County as the Hardwood Creek trail. This provides great accessibility for a quality recreational trail experience, health conscious daily users and commuters. The trail is readily accessible from an already populated or rapidly growing area of Minnesota (data in master plan document). The trail aligns with a Twin Cities to Twin

Ports Concept and is believed to be the most efficient and likely route for this connection.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region: In 1997 Chisago County did not enjoy the benefits of an outdoor recreation opportunity comparable to what we were seeing around the State. With the abandonment of the Burlington Northern Rail corridor a new opportunity would arise. Now the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail provides a connection to the south with the Hardwood Creek Trail. To date no State trail development has occurred in Chisago County, however, we do enjoy two beautiful State Parks. The Interstate State Park will one day connect to the Sunrise Prairie Trail by way of the Swedish Immigrant Trail. There are limited trail opportunities within the State Parks, however, they do not intersect with the communities the way the Sunrise Prairie and Swedish Immigrant Trail will.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

Type	Description
Location Map	
Photo	
Photo	
Location Map	
Photo	
Photo	
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab