

# Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

## Designation Application

### General Section

Designation Application #: 15-027D      Date Submitted: 06/30/2015

Park or Trail Name: Cannon Valley Trail

District #: 6      Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 44.5631 Longitude: -92.7387

#### Location Description:

Located in Goodhue County, the 20-mile, paved Cannon Valley Trail winds along the banks of the Cannon River, one of Minnesota's six Wild and Scenic Rivers, connecting the communities of Cannon Falls, Welch and Red Wing. The physical address for the mid-point of the Cannon Valley Trail is: 26674 144th Avenue Way Welch, MN 55089

Lead Applicant Organization: Cannon Valley Trail Joint Powers Board

Lead Contact First Name: Scott      Last Name: Roepke

Mailing Address: 825 Cannon River Avenue

City: Cannon Falls      State: MN      Zip: 55009

Phone: 5072630508      Email: trailmanager@cannonvalleytrail.com

Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

### Description Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Total proposed length (mi):

#### Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

The Cannon Valley Trail (CVT), a 20-mile, paved trail, connects the communities of Cannon Falls, Welch and Red Wing. Following its namesake, the trail winds along the banks of the designated Wild & Scenic Cannon River. To incorporate the CVT as a part of a comprehensive regional trail/park system, the CVT Joint Power Board has approved future connections to the Goodhue County Park at Lake Byllesby, Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park as well as the Mill Towns Trail. The CVT noted as an

excellent biking, inline skating and hiking trail, offers year-round recreational use by providing for cross-country skiing during Minnesota's long winters. The CVT also offers access to a half-mile of mountain bike trails. Along the 20-mile CVT, visitors will find multiple benches, interpretive signs that describe the archaeology and geology of the river valley, a wetland observation deck, plus three dedicated rest areas equipped with drinking water, restrooms, picnic areas, and informational kiosks. The CVT offers a variety of natural resources including the state-threatened Kittentails and the federally-endangered Minnesota Dwarf Trout Lily and a refuge for the state-threatened Wood Turtle. Over the past 30 years, the CVT- Joint Powers Board has made efforts to be good stewards of the Cultural and Natural Resources of the Cannon River Valley. The CVT has established a long history of restoring natural areas, providing wildlife habitat and preserving archaeological sites. The CVT provides beautiful vantage points for experiencing the River Terrace Prairie SNA, Cannon River Turtle Preserve SNA, Tangential Wildlife Area, and the Richard Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest. The CVT manages three exceptionally rare and culturally significant archaeological sites: the Red Wing Archaeological Preserve, the Silvernale Archaeology Preserve, plus the Thompson Archaeological site, which contains 64 mounds one of which is a rectangular flat-topped mound from the Middle Mississippian era (approx. 1050-1300 AD). This mound is the ONLY one of this type in the entire state of Minnesota! The CVT is governed by a Joint Powers Board with representatives from the City of Cannon Falls, the City of Red Wing and Goodhue County. The board structure allows both of the local communities as well the county itself to be heavily involved in the management and operation of the CVT. The mission of the CVT Joint Powers Board is to manage the Cannon Valley Trail within our abilities and resources while providing for a diverse and high quality (trail) experience. It should be noted that the "Community" of the CVT extends beyond the communities and county where it is located. The CVT community also includes 100,000 annual trail users who financially support the trail through the Wheel Pass Program (User fee) and through membership in 'Friends of the Cannon Valley Trail'. The CVT has been ADA accessible since opening in 1986 and will continue to be accessible. The CVT staff continually works to offer a safe, well-maintained, high quality recreational trail.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
  - Land Acquisition
    - Status:
    - Percentage of Land Acquired:
  - 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 (less than 10 feet), Trailhead parking, Trailhead information kiosks, Trailhead restrooms, Benches along trail, Picnic shelters at trailhead, Drinking water, information kiosks, bike repair stations (July 2015), interpretive signs and access to the Cannon River, Trail Run Creek and Belle Creek.	

Master Plan Status Section

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

Describe Other Supportive Information:

Cannon Valley Trail Joint Powers Agreement and Bylaws.

Classification Details Section

Classification: Regional Trail (Non-Motorized)

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality "Destination" Trail Experience: The Cannon Valley Trail (CVT) is located along the banks of the designated Wild & Scenic Cannon River in the scenic Cannon River Valley surrounded by a variety of picturesque landscapes including; bluffs, valleys, woodlands, native prairies and river bottoms. The CVT was constructed on an abandoned railway, a rail-to-trail corridor that winds its way along the banks of the Cannon River removed from vehicular traffic with minimal road crossings. The CVT provides access to a Wildlife Management Area, State Forest and two Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA). In addition, the CVT manages three exceptionally rare and culturally significant archaeological sites. The CVT has also preserved several pieces of actual railroad history including: railway mile-markers and rail crossing signs that are still located along the trail, a flycatcher still in its original location, some of the actual rail line and the historic railroad buildings at the Welch Station Access. During the nearly 30 years of its existence, the CVT has become a popular tourist destination. According to the 2014 CVT records trail users came from not only throughout Minnesota, but also from across the U.S. as well as other parts of the world. The CVT has three main access points located in Cannon Falls, Welch and Red Wing. All three access points provide trail users with ample and secure parking areas, plus kiosk information, public restrooms and drinking water. Bike repair stations are scheduled to be installed during the summer of 2015. Additionally, other support services such as information on where to find lodging, restaurants, shops, and more are provided to trail users by the three communities.

Criteria #2 Well-located to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: The Cannon Valley Trail (CVT), located in the scenic Cannon River Valley connects the communities of Cannon Falls, Welch and Red Wing. CVT access point - Cannon Falls is located along U.S. Hwy 52 allowing the CVT to be conveniently situated between Minnesota's three most populated communities; Minneapolis-43 miles, St. Paul-35 miles and Rochester-45 miles. The 20-mile, paved CVT connects to the Goodhue Pioneer State Trail and in 2016 will connect to the Mill Towns State Trail.

Criteria #3 Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations: The CVT, part of a regional trail system, connects the communities of Cannon Falls, Welch and Red Wing. Several trail links are developed or will soon be developed that will connect to the CVT. From Red Wing, the Goodhue Pioneer State Trail heads south and will tie into the Douglas State Trail that leads into Rochester. There is also a proposed trail from Red Wing to Hastings as well as a trail from Red Wing to Lake City. From Cannon Falls, the designated Mill Towns State Trail will lead southwest out of Cannon Falls and pass through Northfield and Faribault connecting with the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail leading into Mankato. There are also plans for the Stagecoach State Trail from Faribault to Rochester. Once completed, this entire trail system will connect the communities of Cannon Falls, Red Wing, Hastings, Rochester, Faribault, Northfield, and Mankato among others, forming a loop in Southeast Minnesota that will connect to the Twin Cities metro area. The CVT connects users to several local and regional parks, recreation facilities/areas and natural resource areas such as: the Richard Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest, the Tangential Wildlife Management Area, the Gemini Aquatic Management Area, the Dakota County Regional Park - Lake Byllesby (2016), the Goodhue County Regional Park - Lake Byllesby (2016), the Scientific and Natural Area - River Terrace Prairie, the Scientific and Natural Area - Cannon River Turtle Preserve, as well as local parks in Cannon Falls and Red Wing. The CVT connects to archaeologically significant land: the Silvernale Archaeological Preserve and the Red Wing Archaeological Preserve. The CVT, along with trail systems developed by the City of Cannon Falls and the City of Red Wing, connects to local schools, work locations, tourist areas and business districts.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region: The Cannon Valley Trail (CVT) connects into the Minnesota State and Regional Trails systems. The CVT provides the essential link connecting the Goodhue Pioneer State Trail to the Mill Towns State Trail. This essential link allows the 100,000 annual CVT users greater opportunity to enhance their recreational experience on the Minnesota State and Regional Trails systems.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

Type	Description
Master Plan	Original Master Plan - 1985
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab
Location Map	Cannon Valley Trail - Location Map
Other	Cannon Valley Trail - Trail Map

Agreement	Cannon Valley Trail - Joint Powers Agreement
Agreement	Cannon Valley Trail - By Laws
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab
Location Map	Cannon Valley Trail - Location Map
Other	Cannon Valley Trail - Trail Map
Agreement	Cannon Valley Trail - Joint Powers Agreement