

GMRPTC System and Criteria Tutorial

Planning for Regional Parks & Trails in Greater Minnesota

Tutorial instructions and information provided in red.

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails Commission

The GMRPTC was established in 2013 to undertake system planning for parks and trails of regional significance and provide recommendations to the legislature for grants funded by the Legacy Parks and Trails Fund to counties and cities outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

Notice that the Commission's first job is as a system planning organization. Funding recommendations flow from that plan. That's why the most important step for Cities and Counties in Greater Minnesota is to apply for Regional Designation and inclusion in the system plan.

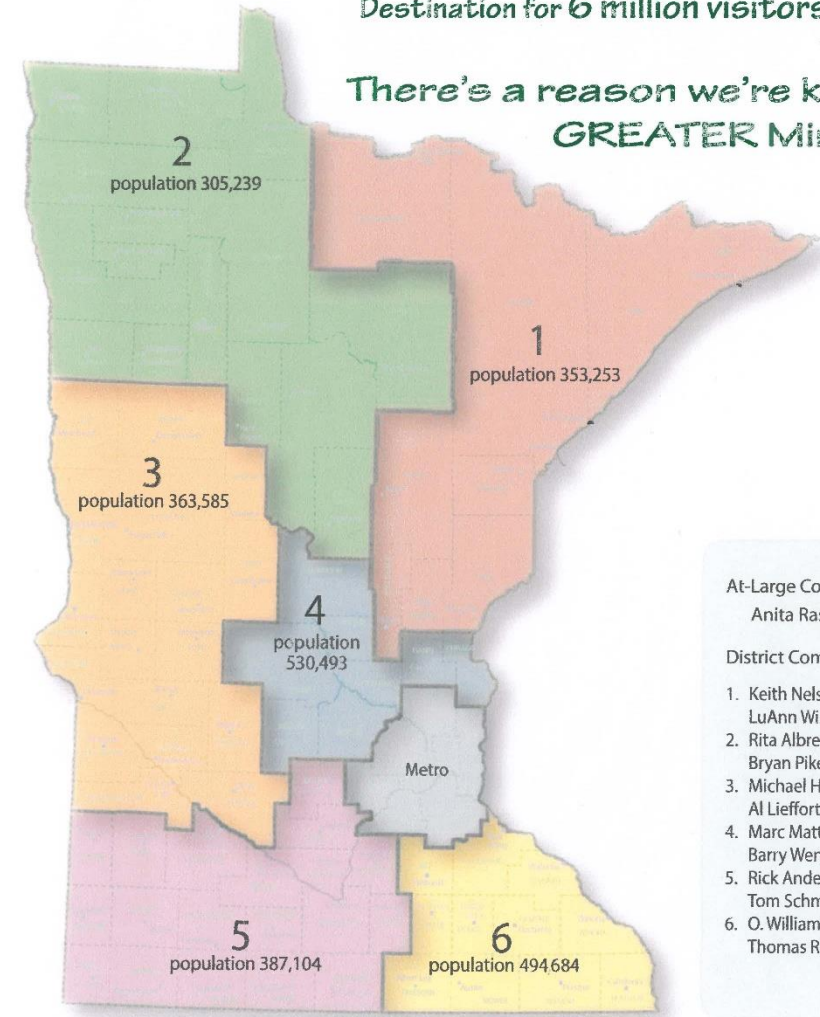
Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Serving 80 counties and 214 cities.

Home to 2.4 million residents.

Destination for 6 million visitors. Every year.

There's a reason we're known as
GREATER Minnesota



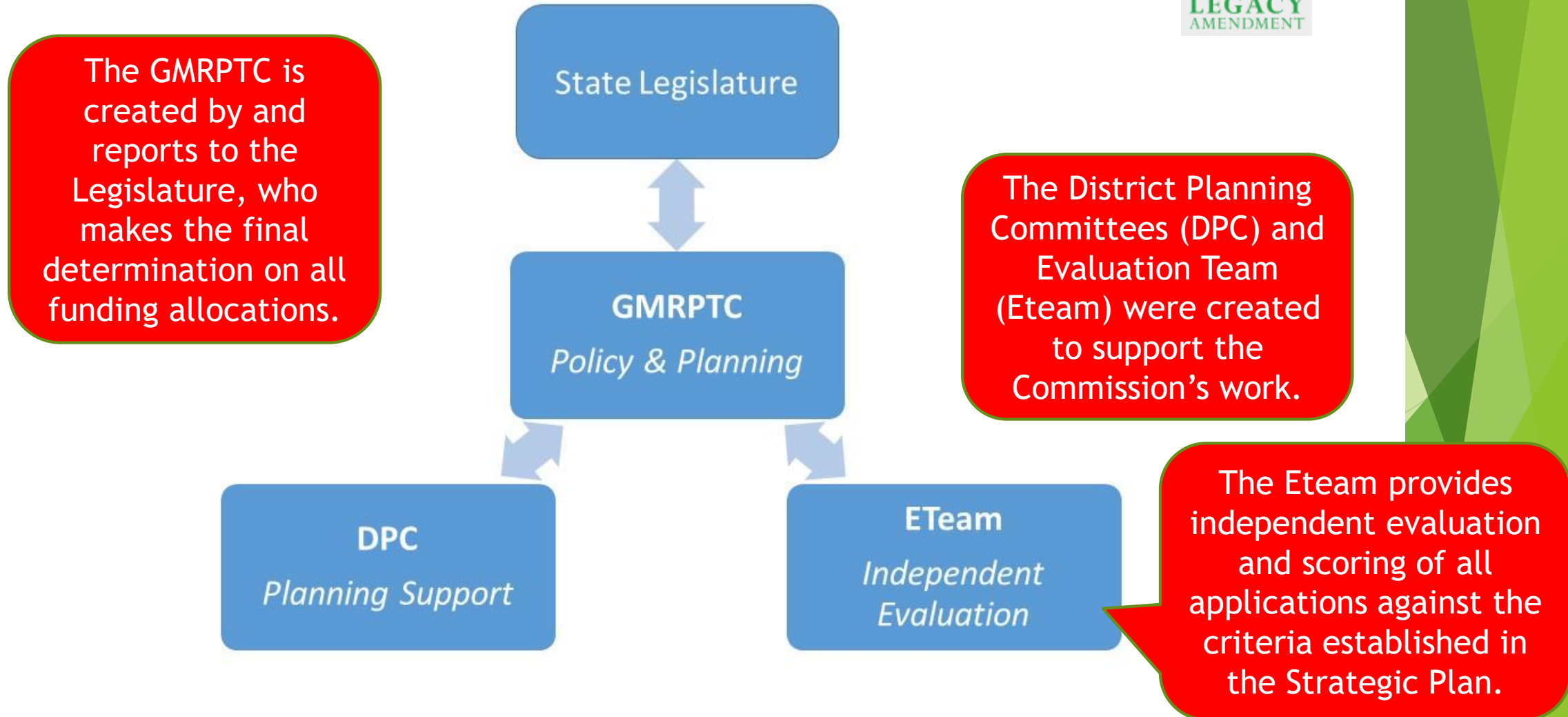
At-Large Commissioner:
Anita Rasmussen, Sartell

District Commissioners:

1. Keith Nelson, Eveleth
LuAnn Wilcox, Finlayson
2. Rita Albrecht, Bemidji
Bryan Pike, Brainerd
3. Michael Hulett, Moorhead
Al Liefkort, Alexandria
4. Marc Mattice, Eden Valley
Barry Wendorf, Cambridge
5. Rick Anderson, Balaton
Tom Schmitz, New Ulm
6. O. William Bruins, Rochester
Thomas Ryan, Byron

01/16/14

Organizational Structure



Commission Documents

- ▶ **Website: www.GMRPTCommission.org**
- ▶ **Strategic Plan 2015**
- ▶ **System Plan & Work Plan 2016**
- ▶ **DPC Discussion Outline (8/2014)**
- ▶ **ETeam Report 2014, 2015 & 2016**

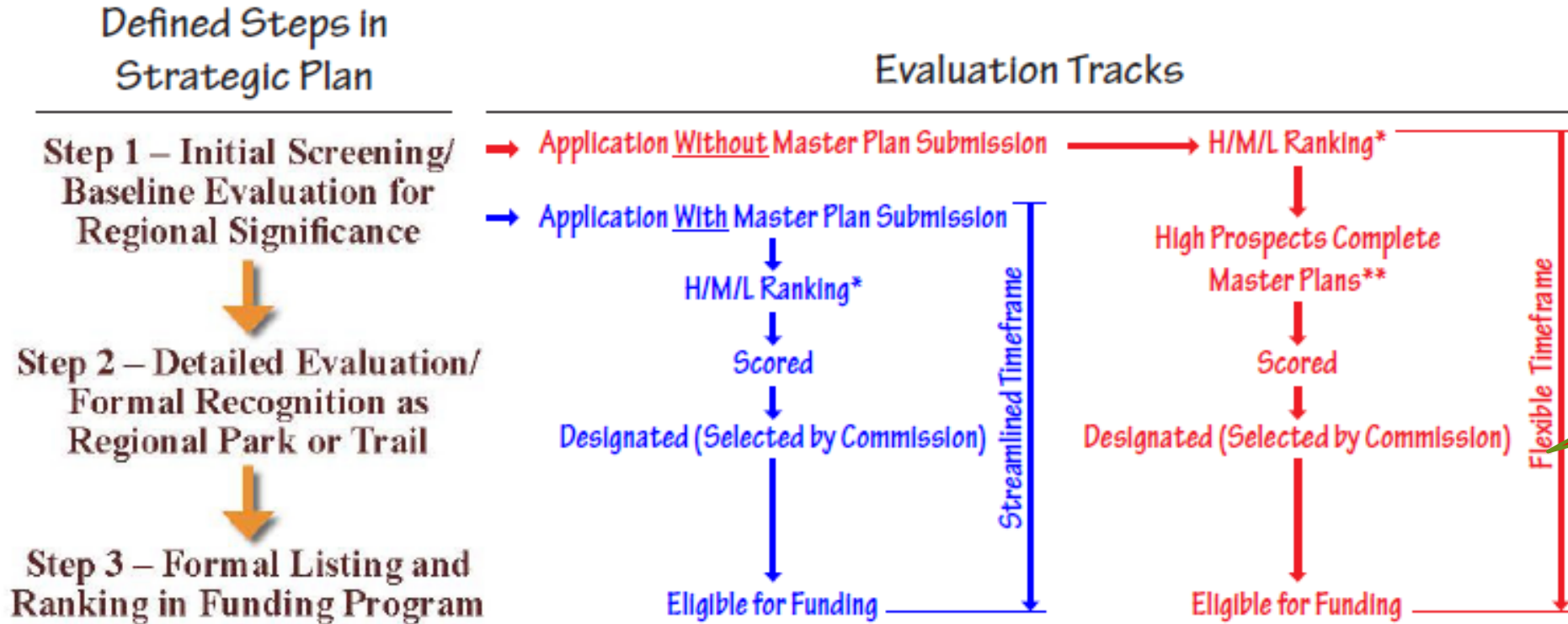
These documents, located on the Commission's website, provide potential applicants with critical information about the Commission's strategic vision and criteria.

Online Application - 2017

- ▶ GMRPTCommission.org/Applications

Click the “Application” button to begin your Designation Application or Master Plan. An array of documents in the “Toolbox” will help answer questions.

Regional Designation Application Process



All applicants will need to complete a Master Plan to be Regionally designated and become eligible for funding. Applicants without a Master Plan (Red Track) requesting Step 1 Screening/Ranking will have time to complete their Master Plan before a full evaluation is completed.

A “High” ranking and completion of a Master Plan is no guarantee that a facility will fit into the regional system and become Designated.

Master Plan requirements can be found on page 61 of the Strategic Plan. Sample plans are located on the “Applications” tab.

* Highest Ranked Applications Become Regional Park or Trail Designation Prospects. Commission Takes Active Role In Working with Top Prospects to Move Through Steps 2 and 3, with Timeframe Based on Individual Circumstances.

** Timeframe for Preparation of a Master Plan Is Flexible and Based on Individual Circumstances.

Note: Executive Director, ETeam, and Support Planners assist prospects in working through the process to ensure consistency and continuity in designation process.

Funding Program Process

- ▶ Once included in the System Plan, facilities become eligible for funding
- ▶ The facility's funding/development plan from the Unit Master Plan will be reviewed as a part of a complete Funding Application
- ▶ The ETeam and DPC reviews regional designation and funding applications and suggest priorities
- ▶ GMRPTC assembles Greater Minnesota funding program for recommendation to the legislature for funding

Only facilities that achieve “Regional” designation and are formally included in the System Plan are eligible to apply for the funding program.

Facility Classifications

All applicant facilities will fall into one of these four classifications. Use the criteria and descriptions in Section 3 of the Strategic Plan to determine which is right for you.



Regional Trail Classification (Non-Motorized)

Each classification has four criteria that are used to evaluate potential facilities in that class.

Criteria #1 – Provides a High-Quality “Destination” Trail Experience

Criteria #2 – Well-located (i.e., Convenience of Access/Adequate Length) to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Criteria #3 – Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations

Criteria #4 – Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region

Regional Trail Classification (Motorized)

Be sure to read and fully understand the criteria and supporting ranking information in your class before applying!

Criteria #1 – Provides a High-Quality “Destination” Trail Experience

Criteria #2 – Well-located (i.e., Convenience of Access/Adequate Length) to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Criteria #3 – Enhances Connectivity to Regional and State Level Trails within the Region, and Connects to Regional Destinations

Criteria #4 – Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region

Natural Resource-Based Regional Park Classification

Criteria #1 - Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

Criteria #2 - Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape

Criteria #3 - Well-located and Connected to Serve a Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Criteria #4 - Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Natural Resource-based parks are typically very large parks that can accommodate a wide variety of outdoor recreation amenities.

Special Recreational Feature Regional Park Classification

Special Rec Feature parks will typically be smaller, focusing on one or two unique natural, cultural or historic features that support outdoor recreation.

Criteria #1 - Provides a Special High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

Criteria #2 - Provides a Natural and Scenic Setting Offering a Compelling Sense of Place

Criteria #3 - Well-located to Serve a Regional Need and/or Tourist Destination

Criteria #4 - Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Sample Criteria

Each of the four criteria is described more completely by an “Overview.” A sample overview is provided here.

Natural Resource-Based Regional Park Classification

Criteria #1 - Provides a High Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

Overview: Places a priority on providing facilities/amenities that are relevant to existing/common user groups and also serve to broaden the appeal of outdoor recreation to new or expanded populations. Park serves as a destination unto itself, attracting regional users and (potentially) drawing tourists from outside the regional area. Premium is placed on quality of experience to encourage visitors to return time and again. Provided facilities/amenities must be consistent with, or expand upon, previous listing of desirable/appropriate facilities.

See Section 3 of the Strategic Plan at www.gmrptcommission.org for more detail on all of the criteria.

Rating Scale Sample - 5 Points

Each of the four criteria in your classification has a unique rating scale that will be used by the Eteam to score your proposal. The best applications will clearly speak to these points in all four criteria.

- ▶ Located in a highly scenic and natural setting that innately appeals to visitors; “standout” features are present that make the park an appealing destination unto itself.
- ▶ Provides a very robust cross-section of recreational facilities/features (consistent with the listing) that will attract a wide-range of user groups and populations.
- ▶ Well-designed facilities (relative to the most current design standards) that meet the contemporary needs of targeted user groups; examples: natural-surface trails that are purpose-built for a specific use, such as hiking or mountain biking, or campgrounds that accommodate a broad range of camper-types - tents to RV’s - with modern support facilities.
- ▶ Overall uniqueness is a “cut above” other regional parks, in terms of sense of place coupled with having many high quality recreational opportunities to choose from.

Tips for Success

- ▶ Know your story - How does your facility connect users from across the region with high-quality outdoor recreation?
- ▶ Self-analyze your potential carefully against the criteria in the Strategic Plan, Section 3.
- ▶ Address the criteria specifically in your narrative section for each criteria. Be clear. Points are *only* awarded based on how well the application describes the facility's achievement of the very specific criteria.
- ▶ Be prepared that if successful, your facility will have to have or complete a Unit Master Plan. Sample Master Plans can be found on the Applications tab of the website, along with the Master Plan requirements from page 61 of the Strategic Plan.