



General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Last Update: May 02, 2019 11:33:32

GMRPTC Park/Trail ID#: 19-003D

Park or Trail Name: Bluffs Traverse

Park or Trail Type: City Park

District: 6

Regional Designation Status : Regionally Designated

Evaluation Score :

Park/Trail Address: 925 West Lake Boulevard

City: Winona

Zip: 55987

Latitude: 44.041135

Longitude: -91.661551

Location Description: Southeast Minnesota along the Mississippi River. Located in and along the bluff line overlooking the city of Winona, the Mississippi River valley, and the bluffs of Wisconsin.

Maps of Park/Trail:

Description: Bluffs Traverse Overview Map

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/2019-04-30 Overall Bluffs Traverse Map_b23a51.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/2019-04-30%20Overall%20Bluffs%20Traverse%20Map_b23a51.pdf)

Facility Website: www.cityofwinona.com

Lead Applicant Organization : City of Winona

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Joint Applicant #1: n/a

Joint Applicant #2: n/a

Joint Applicant #3: n/a

Joint Applicant #4: n/a

Other project supporters : Recreation Alliance of Winona; Local IMBA Chapter- Winona Area Mountain Bikers (WAMB); Winona High School- NICA Team; Winona State University; Winona State University's Outdoor Education and Recreation Center (OERC) and Arboretum Foundation

Description

Regional Significance Statement: The Bluffs Traverse is comprised of three destination parks within the City of Winona totaling over 500 acres of blufflands offering access to rock climbing, mountain biking, ice climbing, expansive views across the Mississippi River Valley, and the large outcropping overlooking town known as Sugar Loaf an iconic symbol of Winona. Much of the land is protected by Bluffland Ordinance due to the steep slopes, and includes areas of significant biodiversity as defined by MNDNR.

Site Map uploads:

Description: Winona Parks/Facilities Overview

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/site_map_upload_1_037642.pdf

Description: Current Bluffside Park Map with Sugar Loaf and Garvin Insert

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/site_map_upload_2_f5721f.pdf

Classification: Special Recreational Feature Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail: The Bluffs Traverse is located in Winona along the north-facing blufflands overlooking the City of Winona and the Mississippi River Valley. These bluffs towering 500 over town are a defining characteristic of our community and offer a multitude of opportunities for outdoor recreation, to access nature, and to enjoy expansive views of the Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge. Bluffside, Garvin Heights, and Sugar Loaf Parks are three parks that The Bluffs Traverse will connect via a combination of public lands and acquisition.

Sugar Loaf Park is the eastern trailhead for the Traverse, the Sugar Loaf gets its name from the rock pinnacle that tops the bluff overlooking the City of Winona. Reaching nearly 85 feet into the sky, Sugar Loaf is a symbol of Winona and known by many as its most distinguishing landmark. The bluff, which stands above the junction of U.S. Route 61 and State Highway 43, towers 500 feet over Lake Winona, with the pinnacle rising more than 85 feet above the remainder of the bluff. The Loaf accessible via trail offers stunning views of the valley as well as beginner and intermediate sport

climbing. The trail continues west along the ridge to the site of the ice climbing park and multiple prairie topped vistas. From here the trail continues west along side Winona State University's 35 acre Arboretum to Garvin Heights Park which is the only overlook accessible by vehicle in the area. Garvin provides an access point to the park system for the adjacent blufftop neighborhoods as well as users unable to navigate the 500 ascent via trail.

Garvin is also a popular event space and will include expanded parking, pavilions, and restroom facilities to accommodate multiple user groups and events. At this stage the trail will continue west to Bluffside Park. Bluffside is home to an existing network of heavily used but underdeveloped and outdated hiking and mountain biking trails. These trails will be updated and expanded to include 16 miles of high quality mountain biking with additional hiking trails and overlooks. Bluffside is also home to Holzinger Lodge a full service facility and program space with utilities, restrooms, and kitchen. This area will serve as the west trailhead and a programming location. The parking area will be expanded to accommodate the use and facilities will be updated to include better access to water and restrooms. Winona's Bluff Traverse will serve a wide range of local and regional users and serve as an outdoor recreation destination for tourists throughout the Midwest.

From hiking and snowshoeing to quality mountain biking, rock climbing, and ice climbing the Traverse serves families, University students and outdoor programs, high school mountain bike teams, the Winona Area Mountain Bikers (our local IMBA chapter), and many other visitors from Chicago, Des Moines, Madison, Minneapolis, Rochester, and beyond. The Traverses diverse and unique offerings in conjunction with amazing views of the Mississippi, connection to the City and complimentary amenities/activities, and ease of access make it an attractive repeat destination.

Total Acreage or Mileage : 523

Acquisition and Development Status: Existing Park of Trail

Describe land acquisition status: Need to acquire some parcels

Percentage of land acquired: 90

Development status: Some development, but more proposed

- New facilities proposed
- Existing facilities to be upgraded

Regional Context : Trails of all kinds are highly desired by the public as reflected in Minnesota's (and nearby Wisconsin's) Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Bluffs Traverse is a vast resource adjacent to a thriving community making it an easy place to visit for a few hours or a few days. The Bluffs Traverse clearly fits within the Special Recreation Feature Regional Park designation due to its unique bluff location, and activities along, within and atop the bluffslands which will immerse visitors in nature and provide something for people of all ages and abilities. Recreational activities are already occurring at the parks within The Bluffs Traverse, so this proven destination will only grow more accessible and interesting as the plan is fully realized. Building on our proven success Winona sees an opportunity to leverage those natural assets - breathtaking bluff-top views, significant natural terrain, and high quality biodiversity to further support the Winona parks and recreation vision and goals, and to support the larger system of nearby state and county assets. There is a real opportunity to create world-class trails and experiences, in the nature of southeastern Minnesota, by building upon the assets already in place within Winona.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

Sugar Loaf already hosts ice climbing, one of only a few places in Minnesota to have such a feature. The plan for Sugar Loaf is to further develop the site as a winter park with ski, snowshoeing and ice climbing.

All three parks within the Bluffs Traverse are identified as areas of high biodiversity

significance making them interesting places for ecological study and bird watching. The sheer acreage of the The Bluffs Traverse ensures there will be plenty of space to protect sensitive areas, and explore others (whether on foot or bike).

Regional Map uploads:

Description: Regional Map

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/2019-04-30 Regional Assets Map_c9dd33.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/2019-04-30%20Regional%20Assets%20Map_c9dd33.pdf)

Site Information

This section provides an overview of existing and proposed site facilities and general site characteristics

Existing Facilities

- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Climbing (natural/man-made)
- Roads and Parking Areas

Proposed Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Tent only sites

Other camping-related facilities

Dispersed primitive sites

- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Biking Trails (paved)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Climbing (natural/man-made)
- Restrooms/sanitation building
- Roads and Parking Areas

Existing Facilities Other Information

Ice Climbing
Rental Lodge

Proposed Facilities Other Information

Ice Climbing
Rental Lodge

General Site Characteristics

The Traverse provides a sense of place within the Mississippi River Valley overlooking the City and beautiful Lake Park with long range views of the valley, surrounding bluffs, and the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge. The three parks that comprise the Traverse offer distinctly different experiences for users. Garvin Heights Overlook provides the areas only ADA accessible views of the valley, accessed by road on top of the the bluff or by trail from the neighborhood below, It has been an auto and hiking destination overlook for over 100 years, its central location overlooking the community continues to make it a popular destination for visitors and locals alike. Sugar Loaf Park is a staple of the region, overlooks the community, and is identifiable several miles from town.

The base of the iconic Sugar Loaf is accessed via trail climbing nearly 500 above the valley floor. Once at the base visitors are rewarded with expansive views of the river valley as well as multiple

valleys that make their way from the prairies above to the Mississippi. Additionally, visitors can rock climb on multiple routes around the Sugar Loaf as well as to the summit for an even more expanded view. Just to the west of the Sugar Loaf is the Ice Park offering ice climbing in the winter months, a rare opportunity for the Midwest. Bluffside Park is comprised of multiple large bluff outcroppings and, in addition to overlooks, affords visitors the opportunity to get deeper into the woods, offering a different setting. In addition, Bluffside is a mountain biking destination slated for over 15 miles of redesigned mountain bike trails. The Traverse connects these parks and different experiences so visitors can access multiple experiences from one location.

Site characteristics uploads:

Description: Sugar Loaf from Lake Park

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Sugar_Loaf_Winona_c24578.jpg

Description: Rock Climbing Sugar Loaf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Loaf_Climber_034f52.JPG

Description: Winter Sugar Loaf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Winter_Loaf_6e8f67.jpeg

Description: Trail Sunset

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/loaf_trail_sunset_111904.JPG

Description: Sugar Loaf from Traverse Overlook

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Loaf_view_east_0366f2.JPG

Description: Bluffside Park West View

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/BW_SMU_View_a09f05.JPG

Description: Bluffside Cliffs

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Bluffside_Cliff_9acb83.JPG

Description: Ice Park Overlooking Lake Park

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/1st_ice_lead_of_season_fd3408.jpg

Description: View East From Garvin Heights Overlook

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Garvin-Heights-Park-Gallery-Image_1c0b45.jpg

Trends/Public Values

Public Involvement Summary : The City of Winona hired ISG, an engineering and consulting firm, to complete the City's recently adopted Comprehensive Parks Plan. As a part of that process ISG completed a master plan for the Bluffs Traverse project. Over the course of ten months, Winona's Comprehensive Park and Recreation System Plans community engagement strategy focused on fully assessing past resources while aggressively and strategically connecting with those that live, work, and play in the City every day. At the forefront of the Plans engagement strategy was the need to sit down with key influencers, developers, partners, and the community to have one-on-one sessions regarding the shared vision for the Park and Recreation System. While surveys can provide a basic statistical overview of feedback, direct engagement within the City guided the planning process. Research focused on going to where the feedback was, whether that be events, City gatherings, or groups.

Awareness activities for the Plan focused on providing a holistic approach with varying tactics to ensure that the City's 27,000+ residents all received information and an opportunity to provide input in a way that positively aligned with their personal resource preferences. Similar to direct

engagement initiatives, such as the public open houses, was an emphasis on exposure through dynamic outreach efforts tailored to the City. Consistent messaging and communication through noted mediums were also proactively handled by ISG and the City. Through a strategic Comprehensive Plan schedule, ISG and the City, along with other stakeholders and contributors, worked to compile, assess, review, and finalize applicable Plan details through formal compilation of the Citys System Plan document. Meeting and outreach efforts included: forming a Community Taskforce, a public kickoff informational meeting, a key trail stakeholder meeting, community presentations, user group interviews, student workshops, a public open house, and an online survey. Through the in-person engagement meetings and events we reached approximately 250-300 people and we had about 50 responses to the online survey.

Core Public Values-

The core public values identified through the engagement process guided the development of the system plans principles. These principles unify the park and recreation system, across all physical and program components, through all themes and initiatives. The principles for Winonas Park and Recreation Systems Plan and this plan are: Quality, Safety/Accessibility, Flexibility and Enhance and Protect Natural Resources. These principles are the underlying framework to the entire system, and are a resource upon which to reflect as decisions are made, success is measured, and change is considered- including the development of the Bluffs Traverse Master Plan.

Quality

Quality investments are a core value of the Winona community. Programs shall be well-organized and relevant with high-quality leadership. Similarly, physical improvements to parks, trails and natural areas shall be: well designed, according to best practices, high-quality materials and built to last, planned to succeed long term, such that design, implementation and maintenance are part of the plan.

Safety / Accessibility

Winona is an inclusive community. The parks and recreation system shall be welcoming to all, complying with ADA standards and striving to exceed those standards where practicable. Park and recreation settings will balance the desire for adventure in the communitys scenic terrain with public safety. Unsafe areas shall be closed to the public, unless and until they can be stabilized or redesigned.

Flexibility

The Winona community values year-round activity within the park and recreation system. The community is resourceful and collaborative. As such, amenities within parks and open spaces shall be considered for their viability year-round and for their compatibility with other uses. Flexibility within the system may include everything from staggered scheduling to ensure programming needs are met until system expansion is warranted, to ensuring warm season trails are designed pragmatically allowing for reasonable, enjoyable, and safe winter use.

Enhance / Protect

Winonas iconic setting along the Mississippi River and within rolling blufflands is a character defining resource. As the vision statement illustrates, actions to protect and enhance those critical natural resources add real and perceived value to the community. Public parks and open spaces shall embrace the resources unique to Winona ensuring their beauty is appreciated in present day and available for future generations.

ENGAGEMENT THEMES-

Throughout the community engagement process, there was consensus that Winona has a great wealth of natural resources and a solid base of a park and recreation system from which to build upon. Some themes emerged from the surveys, comment cards and group discussions which are relevant to and inform the Bluffs Traverse plan:

CONNECTIONS AND ACCESS

There is a desire for:

More connections between park assets and trail loops in and around the City, and across major roadways.

Accessibility for all ages and abilities to use and enjoy the park and recreation system.

Collaboration with other government agencies to implement improvements

Develop beginning level mountain biking trails and separate user groups to minimize conflicts

ENVIRONMENTAL

Stakeholders recognize and value the unique character of Winonas landscape and request:

Reduced access and impacts to erosion prone areas, high quality natural resources, and rare species areas. Stabilize eroding areas that cannot be restricted.

Improved water quality.

Expanded environmental programming, including working with WSU to provide an outdoor classroom adjacent to Garvin Heights.

Consider natural resources impacts as part of each park and recreation development (also required as part of local and statewide regulations)

Conservation and management of natural resource areas, including invasive species removal and restoration of native prairie areas.

Consider permeable paver parking lots at trailhead locations.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

Stakeholders recognized the collaborative nature of their community and encourage more and improved interactions including:

Establishing and expanding partnerships with state agencies, local associations, non-profits and businesses to accomplish park and recreation goals,

Update and share more, clear information about park and recreation assets via the City website, on-site signage, in-person meetings and with all community demographics.

Provide an information hub / kiosk at each trailhead location.

Provide trailhead markers and education / rules at key locations throughout the system.

AMENITIES

A variety of facility upgrades and additional amenities were suggested:

More permanent, cleaner and (in some locations) year-round restrooms and potable water,

Work with WSU to improve the Garvin Heights overlook and stair connection.

Comfortable seating / rest area options.

Enhanced trailheads including open-air multi-use pavilions.

back country primitive camping (on a permit basis only)

MAINTENANCE

Some maintenance items included:

Litter and desire for recycling receptacles,

Interest in more staff being allocated to system maintenance,

provide safe experiences at all parks, trails, and recreation facilities,

Work with volunteers to maintain components of the system.

FUNDING

Some feedback involved the park and recreation funding and budget, specifically:

Traditional levy tax does not support the current or future improvements to the system and alternative sources should be considered,

request that analysis of user agreements to ensure the City is adequately compensated for system use,

caution that future improvements include budget allocations for long-term maintenance and staff.

Conflicts Identified-

As mentioned in the findings above possible conflicts include negative interactions between different system user groups and balancing recreational use with environmental and habitat restoration. These potential conflicts are being addressed through a number of avenues. User conflict will be mitigated through thoughtful design and trail use designation to reduce potential

conflict zones. To ensure a healthy balance between recreation and conservation we are completing a full biological assessment and natural resource stewardship plan of the area to identify high quality areas for restoration and to inform the location of trail alignments. This will build on the City's current efforts to reduce erosion and restore high quality habitat within the park system. Through these initiatives we aim to enhance the native landscape while providing recreational opportunities that connect people to and educate them about our natural environment.

Public Involvement Support Material Uploads:

Description: Public Involvement Overview

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public Involvement Support_4ca020.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public%20Involvement%20Support_4ca020.pdf)

Regional Demographic Information : Winona County has a population of nearly 51,000, the City of Winona is the county seat with a population of 27,000. The median age is 26.7 with 10,461 households roughly 52% of which are categorized as non-family, the median household income is \$41,023 with a 19.9% poverty rate. Winona has a strong history of industry balanced with a rich arts and culture history. It is home over to 100 manufacturers, several long standing festivals and annual events, and a world class art museum. Winona has 23 Public and Private Schools, including 3 Post-Secondary schools with a total enrollment of 12,769 students. Winona's 18-34 and 65-84 age cohorts are projected to increase by 4.5% and 32.3% respectively by 2031.

The Bluffs Traverse is located within Winona city limits providing immediate access for these local residents as well as regional visitors and tourists alike. Winona's base of college age students and growing population of older adults are drawn to the area for its natural beauty, arts scene, and access to outdoor recreation. The Bluffs Traverse will provide ongoing opportunities for residents to be healthy, active, and social while enjoying the natural landscape that surrounds us.

Regional Demographic Uploads:

Description: Winona Demographics

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Demographic Support Material_d7d6da.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Demographic%20Support%20Material_d7d6da.pdf)

Public Health Values:

- Promotes physical activity
- Promotes healthy lifestyle
- Connects people to the outdoors
- Enhances mental health
- Encourages social interaction

Public Health Values Additional Information : The Bluffs Traverse aims to- and can- address several public health values. The access the Traverse provides to several outdoor recreation opportunities including: hiking, rock/ice climbing, mountain biking, fat tire biking, skiing, snowshoeing, and birding promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles. In addition to participation in these activities- the multiple overlooks and pavilions, Mississippi River Valley and National Wildlife Refuge viewshed, and large tracts of interconnected and diverse natural landscapes create a sense of place and connection to the outdoors. Access to these activities and landscapes have been proven to enhance mental health and personal well-being. Further, these amenities and landscapes can be accessed directly from town providing multiple opportunities for social interaction.

Public Health Values Support Material Uploads:

Description: Winona Health Assessment

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public Health Values Support_7cfa1c.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public%20Health%20Values%20Support_7cfa1c.pdf)

Description: Why People Participate

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public Health Values Support Why_b711c2.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Public%20Health%20Values%20Support%20Why_b711c2.pdf)

Economic Development/Tourism Opportunities : The parks that make up The Bluffs Traverse: Sugar Loaf, Garvin Heights and Bluffside are categorized as Destination Parks within the Winona Parks and Recreation System. Sugar Loaf, identifiable by the iconic rock formation Winona is known for, is already well known. The park features an overlook, hiking trails and ice and rock climbing. Garvin Heights and its historic overlook draw 40,000 to 50,000 visitors annually. The Bluffs Traverse builds upon that existing interest and expands it to accommodate even more visitors and activities along the bluffs of Winona. The creation of a world class mountain bike trail and hiking trails within the scenic bluffs of Winona opens opportunities for educational programming and coordination with recreational outfitters. By adding even more recreational opportunities to the area, visits can be multi-day trips - boosting the need for local dining, retail, lodging, and camping.

Economic Development/Tourism Opportunities Support Material Uploads:

Description: Economic and Tourism Context

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Econ Development Support_257361.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Econ%20Development%20Support_257361.pdf)

Recreational Trends Information : As previously mentioned the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan highlights the need for access to the amenities the Bluffs Traverse provides. Our local National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) high school mountain biking team and the Winona Area Mountain Bikers (our local International Mountain Bicycling Association chapter) are quickly growing the demand for purpose built mountain biking trails accessible to riders of all skill levels. Winona State University's state of the art indoor climbing facility- which is open to the public- is creating a growing demand for access to outdoor climbing within the community and this seen on any given weekend at the Sugar Loaf sport climbing area. The Ice Park provides a great winter recreation opportunity and is the only access to ice climbing in the region with the next closest area at least three hours way, as a result, the park is frequently packed with local users and visitors from as far as Chicago, IL and Omaha, NE. The community's interest in outdoor recreation and sustaining our natural areas has been steadily on the rise for years, the access to and enhancement of the 500+ acres that comprise the Bluffs Traverse will be a critical asset for the region and will continue to draw visitors and tourists to the area.

Recreational Trends Support Material Uploads:

Description: Plan Trends

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec Trends Support_a3c412.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec%20Trends%20Support_a3c412.pdf)

Description: Distance People Will Travel

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec Trends Support Distance_956429.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec%20Trends%20Support%20Distance_956429.pdf)

Description: Participation in Activity By Age

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec Trends Support Age_49b2d2.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Rec%20Trends%20Support%20Age_49b2d2.pdf)

Classification Details

Special Recreational Feature Park Classification

Criteria 1: Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

The Traverse provides multiple opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation experiences with access to 16 miles of purpose built single track mountain biking of various levels of difficulty from beginner to advanced users can develop their skills and challenge themselves to progress. The iconic Sugar Loaf offers a multitude of sport climbing with over 30 bolted routes from introductory to advanced, this area is a climbing destination for families, university groups, and climbers looking to transition from indoor climbing to outdoor climbing. The Sugar Loaf provides a quality experience with amazing scenery and offers the only 360 degree view summit in this region of the Midwest. Aside from mountain biking and climbing the area offers great hiking with scenic overlooks, multiple cliffs and outcroppings, a mix of forests and prairie remnants and wildlife viewing opportunities. Winter opportunities include snowshoeing, cross country skiing, groomed fat biking, and ice climbing. Winonas Bluff Traverse is home to one of the country's only Ice Parks, and is already a significant destination unto itself drawing several visitors to the area each winter. In addition to these diverse offerings this setting provides a great backdrop for special events and races with many currently taking place or in the planning phases for future implementation. The access to these resources and multiple outdoor recreation activities is complemented by our close proximity (2 miles to the heart of downtown) to the City and our additional parks, entertainment, and lodging to create a robust opportunity for locals and visitors alike to engage in several activities in the same day with relative ease this proximity to diverse offerings also provides opportunities to engage multiple interests within a single outing or visit.

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

The blufflands that comprise the Bluff Traverse are a diverse network of mesic red/white oak (sugar maple) forest and prairie remnants with high biodiversity significance. The Bluff Traverse has multiple rock outcroppings with many opportunities to view the river valley or cliff formations. The Sugar Loaf, a former quarry site, is now a popular destination unto itself for rock climbing and the views it affords. Connected to the Bluff Traverse are multiple large parcels totaling over 500 acres of bluff land with similar characteristics. Many of these parcels are accessible to the public for recreation and also provide significant continuity of undeveloped natural landscape and habitat for the region.

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

The City of Winona is the county seat of Winona County and is an established regional center for business, entertainment, and recreation. This in conjunction with Winonas well established arts scene, two Universities, a technical college, and abundant access to public lands make Winona an established tourist destination as well. Completion of the Bluff Traverse will provide access from neighborhoods to the greater park system and establish corridors and connectivity for longer recreation opportunities. Winona is accessible via multiple trunk highways and Interstate 90 in addition, several townships fall within 10 miles of a Traverse trailhead.

The state of Minnesota has a variety of land holdings and assets in the Winona area including: the Mississippi River Trail(MRT), state (land) trails, state water trails, and seasonal state snowmobile trails. DNR managed lands include: aquatic management areas, scientific and natural areas, state forest land, state parks and wildlife management areas. The Traverse will bring us closer to connecting to a nearby state forest unit that has an additional few miles of mountain biking and cross country skiing the goal is to work with landowners to establish a connected trail experience from town to this state forest. Wisconsin is just across the river and also offers a variety of historical and environmental destinations. When local parkland is considered in conjunction with these nearby assets, Winonas city assets serve as a regional destination due to our proximity to goods and support services, year-round programming, unique recreation amenities, and partnerships and cross marketing with local commerce and events organizations.

Criteria 4: Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Winona serves as a recreation hub for the region providing quality access to natural landscapes, views of the Mississippi, and unique activities like rock and ice climbing. The Bluffs Traverse provides multiple overlooks and miles of hiking, and the regions only purpose built mountain bike trail system and access to rock and ice climbing all accessible from and overlooking the City of Winona. Local residents and visitors alike can navigate via foot or bike to access these outdoor recreation assets from within the community. There are three State Parks within 30 miles of Winona but they do not offer the access or amenities the Bluff Traverse provides. These parks offer some hiking, camping, and other amenities making the Traverse a compliment to their offerings.

Development/Acquisition

Development Plan Overview : The Bluffs Traverse Conservation and Recreation Master Plan is a comprehensive vision for creating the next generation of world-class trails and recreational amenities in the blufflands of Winona. When fully realized, The Bluffs Traverse will include: 16.25 miles of high-quality mountain biking trails with specific areas for beginners, intermediate and advanced riders.

8.65 miles of shared-use and hiking trails, 3.6 miles of which would be paved and ADA accessible
6 trailheads with parking and site amenities (pavilions/shelters, restrooms/changing rooms, access to water, etc.).

Improvements to the existing rock and ice climbing areas to improve visitor comfort, safety and protection of the natural features.

Realignment of existing trails from sensitive areas and restoration of degraded landscapes.

With an overall projected cost of \$3.37-3.65 million, trail priorities are identified as three phases.

Implementation of the Bluffs Traverse is currently in progress. The Sugar Loaf climbing area is 90% developed, the Ice Park was open for climbing last season with planned growth for next year, and the first phase of the Sugar Loaf access trail was completed in 2017. In addition, the City is currently undergoing archaeological and biological assessments of the area and designing/building the first beginner and intermediate mountain biking trails (B1/I1/I2). Further the City is working with Winona State University to initiate upgrades to the Garvin Heights Overlook area. The City aims to build on the momentum of these initial developments to continue trail development, signage/wayfinding, and trailhead facility improvements. All facilities/features will meet regional design and accessibility standards or exemptions as applicable.

Development Plan Upload

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Development Plan Overview_20878b.pdf

Acquisition Plan Overview : Acquisition for the Bluffs Traverse is actively in progress. Some parcels will be purchased fee title while others will be secured through long-term easements. Cost projections will vary but are expected to be minimal based on the small number of parcels needed and public support for the project. In addition, the Traverse is not reliant on full acquisition to be successful as alternate trail alignments are available. Further, a majority of trailhead facilities are proposed on land already acquired. Remaining fee title is currently estimated at ~\$150,000 based on the small number of parcels (~2-3) and willingness of sellers- pricing was determined through Winona county assessed market value and acquisition costs for recently acquired parcels. Long-term easement acquisition will be sought for a majority of remaining private property, costs will vary but we are estimating ~\$10,000 per easement with ~10 parcels remaining. Please see the Overview map texture layers for current acquisition status. Moving forward we will follow state standards for assessed value and acquisition as applicable.

Acquisition Plan Upload

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/2019-04-30 Overall Bluffs Traverse Map_738f78.pdf

The following item provides details about one particular item or feature listed under the "Development Plan Overview"

Development Feature 1: Purpose Built Mountain Bike Trails

The Bluffs Traverse proposes the development of over 16 miles of purpose built single track mountain biking trails of various skill levels from beginner to advanced. These trails will provide the regions only officially purpose built mountain biking trails. These trails will be set within the bluffs providing ample views and varied terrain to engage riders of all abilities. All trails will be developed to current purpose built single track mountain bike trail standards. Development of the trails in total is estimated at \$589,000- based on cost opinion from professional trail builders- Rock Solid Trail Contracting.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Mtb Trail Support Map Costs_6e3914.pdf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/MTB Trail Dvlpt Support Retain Turn_7f6477.jpg

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Mtb Support Trail_5e8274.jpg

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Mtb Support Trail 2_e09c3d.jpg

Development Feature 2: Holzinger Lodge and Trailhead

Holzinger Lodge is an existing rental facility located at the Bluffside Park Trailhead. The lodge is a popular rental location for trail related events, family gatherings, and other social events. It is located adjacent the current trailhead that is proposed to be updated to increase capacity and facilities including restrooms, drinking fountains, trail information kiosk, fix-it stations, accessible parking, and picnic area. The proposed parking area will provide nearly 100 parking spaces and will serve as the main trailhead for the mountain biking and hiking trails in the area. These proposed improvements are estimated at \$570,350 based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Holzinger Trailhead Support_34e136.pdf

Development Feature 3: Garvin Heights Overlook and Trailhead

Garvin Heights Park is within a Natural Resources zone of city, the park includes High Quality Native Plant Communities and Woodlawn Cemetery lies to the northwest. The park is accessible via East Garvin Heights Road and High Road. A three-year site restoration began in 2016 in collaboration with Winona State University, City of Winona, and others. Hiking trails and a lookout offering views of the entire community and river valley are present. There is a small picnic area near the parking lot. The park's 30 percent slopes offer expansive views of 20-30 miles at 575 feet above the Mississippi River Valley. The extensive tree cover consists of high and moderate areas of biodiversity significance rankings on the DNR's Native Plant Community (NPC) and Land Cover classification systems. The NPC considers most of the park a Southern Dry Oak Mesic Hardwood Forest with some areas a Southern Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie. The north portion of this park is host to multiple Minnesota Biological Survey sites with high biodiversity significance, and the southern portion (south of East Garvin Heights Road) of the Park is classified as moderate biodiversity significance. The park remains natural and offers breathtaking views of Lake Winona and the City of Winona that are second to none. Garvin Heights Overlook sees an estimated 40,000-50,000 visitors annually including multiple events from weddings to yoga classes. The Bluffs Traverse will update the overlook with increased parking (over 30 spaces), shelters, and trails for visitors and events. The proposed improvements to Garvin are estimated at \$733,000 based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Garvin Heights Trailhead Support_33e275.pdf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Garvin-Heights-Park-Gallery-Image_cc1e01.jpg

Development Feature 4: Sugar Loaf Overlook and Climbing Area

Sugar Loaf is a “storied symbol” of Winona. A new trail was opened in 2017 on the north side of the bluff. Parking to access the trail is designated along Lake Boulevard. The park is primarily closed canopy forest with areas of dry bedrock bluff prairie and one small area of southern dry cliff (Sugar Loaf) according to DNR Native Plant Community and Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS). MBS classifies this park as high biodiversity significance for its native red oak-sugar maple-basswood dominated forest. Sugar Loaf sets itself apart by its steep 30 percent slopes creating vast and panoramic 20-30 mile views of the city of Winona and the Mississippi River Valley. The southwest corner of the park (near Glen Mary Road) contains a small intermittent stream which is an Unnamed DNR Public Watercourse. The rock pinnacle remaining from 1880s quarrying has become a destination for local and regional rock climbers. There are several groups within the region that utilize the rock pinnacle and adjacent area on a weekly and daily basis. Local climbing and outdoor recreation groups have installed climbing connections and infrastructure to provide a safer environment with defined routes to the peak. However, there is still need for proper signage and public education. Vandalism is a frequent issue at the rock pinnacle, and natural features along the nearby outcrops are often subject to carving and painting. The area around the rock pinnacle is fairly level and provides wonderful opportunities to view the area in all directions, in particular to downtown Winona and the Mississippi River. This area could also serve as a gathering, picnic, or educational learning space if the appropriate support facilities were in place. Proposed improvements to this feature include wayfinding and educational signage/kiosks, picnic tables and benches, and continued removal of invasive species and restoration (including plantings) of the area. These proposed improvements are estimated at \$109,450 based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Sugar Loaf Climbing Cost Support_5cf4b6.pdf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Loaf Clean Up W_27f09b.JPG

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Kids Climbing_6fb98a.JPG

Development Feature 5: Sugar Loaf Overlook and Climbing Area Trailhead

The Sugar Loaf Trailhead is located near the base of the Sugar Loaf off Lake Boulevard, there is currently parking along both sides of Lake Boulevard with access to the trailhead via a short driveway. The driveway- located on City property- leads to a small parking lot shared with a real estate company. Currently, the city does not utilize parking in the lot for the trailhead. Proposed improvements for the Sugar Loaf Trailhead include improving the parking along Lake Boulevard and utilizing city owned spaces in the shared lot along with signage, landscaping and, kiosk with a cost estimate of \$108,075 based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Sugar Loaf Trailhead Support_cf5c30.pdf

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Loaf View SE_eccf77.JPG

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/loaf belay_b63387.JPG

Development Feature 6: Winona Ice Park

The Ice Park is located just west of the Sugar Loaf and is accessed via the Sugar Loaf Trailhead and trail. The Ice Park was developed on an old quarry site and utilizes the quarried faces and bench to develop the ice features for climbing. In addition to local and regional use, the ice park draws visitors from as far away as Chicago and Omaha on a weekly basis in the winter. During the climbing season and in the non-ice climbing months the ice park area is a destination for hiking/snowshoeing/etc. as it is a unique feature and provides multiple views of the cliffs and river

valley below. A majority of the ice park is developed through volunteer capacity and donations. Proposed improvements include increased capacity with the creation of beginner climbing areas to support developing climbers. Cost estimates for this development are dependent on volunteer involvement and donations with an expected City contribution of roughly \$20,000 based on previous infrastructure purchases and staff time.

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/1st visit tr_584ad8.jpg](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/1st%20visit%20tr_584ad8.jpg)

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/ice tools_df4749.jpg](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/ice%20tools_df4749.jpg)

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/ice visit tr_e144fa.jpg](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/ice%20visit%20tr_e144fa.jpg)

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/1st ice lead of season_4d1e6c.jpg](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/1st%20ice%20lead%20of%20season_4d1e6c.jpg)

Development Feature 7: Wincrest Drive Trailhead

The Wincrest Drive Trailhead is a neighborhood access point to Bluffside Park and its trail system. Limited parking is currently available along the cul de sac with a small undermarked trail entrance to the park. Improvements to this trailhead include water fountains, trail maps/kiosk, bike repair station, and dedicated parking including dedicated accessible parking. This trailhead has two options for parking providing either 12 spaces (with dedicated ADA parking) which includes parking within the cul de sac or 4 spaces (with dedicated ADA parking) without utilizing the cul de sac. The proposed improvements to the Wincrest Trailhead are estimated at \$103,950 - \$125,620 based on options and cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Wincrest Trailhead Support_a87360.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Wincrest%20Trailhead%20Support_a87360.pdf)

Development Feature 8: Tower Trails Trailhead

The Tower Trails are located within the far western portion of Bluffside Park. These trails will be accessible from below via the Holzinger Trailhead or above via the Tower Trails Trailhead. The Tower Trails Trailhead is the access for the neighborhoods above and is located off a cul de sac adjacent City property. There is currently no formal trailhead parking for this area, proposed improvements include a dedicated parking lot (with dedicated ADA parking), restrooms, drinking fountains, gathering plaza, trail information kiosk, fix-it station, and rain garden. The proposed improvements to the Tower Trails Trailhead are estimated at \$168,850 based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Tower Trails Trailhead Support_c610be.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Tower%20Trails%20Trailhead%20Support_c610be.pdf)

Development Feature 9: Hiking and Shared Use Trails

In addition to the purpose built mountain bike trails the Bluffs Traverse will develop or restore a total of 8.65 miles of hiking and shared use trails to connect the features that comprise the Bluffs Traverse to provide a network of trails, overlooks, natural habitat zones, and outdoor recreation activities throughout the system. The 8.65 miles will be a mix of natural surface (~3' width) and paved with 3.6 miles of ADA accessible 10' width paved trail. The proposed trail development and improvements are estimated at \$1,157,000 (paved trails are \$794,000 of that total) based on cost opinion from ISG through the master planning process.

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Hiking Shared Use Trail Map Support_e59d4f.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Hiking%20Shared%20Use%20Trail%20Map%20Support_e59d4f.pdf)

Development Feature 10: Signage and Wayfinding

Improved signage and wayfinding is proposed throughout the Bluffs Traverse and Trailhead Facilities to increase access and usage of the system as well as to increase the user experience. Eleven sign types are recommended throughout the proposed trail system to provide everything from wayfinding for vehicles to advisory messages on park policy and accessibility. Attached is an

overview of the proposed signage plan recommendations- actual signage costs are reflected in the cost estimate for each individual feature previously outlined.

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Signage and Wayfinding Support_b40943.pdf

Implementation

Implementation Plan : As previously mentioned, implementation is underway for many portions of the Bluffs Traverse. Acquisition began with key parcels for access/trail connections followed by negotiating complimentary parcels that would compliment the size/terrain but are not critical for the initial development of the Traverse. This approach allows development to begin while negotiations are happening simultaneously. In addition, priority is focused on high quality parcels that have the ability to increase continuity of and connectivity to larger tracts of natural area for preservation and restoration. Lastly, in addition to engaging landowners- if parcels become available on the open market they are considered for acquisition based on the priorities above.

Summarize Acquisition and Development Costs To-Date : Momentum is building for the Bluffs Traverse as projects are currently underway- investments to date are all from local funding sources and include a \$12,000 donation from the Winona Area Mountain Bikers (our local IMBA chapter). The following is a list of estimated expenditures to date including funding allocated for projects currently being developed:

~2014 - Present- Sugar Loaf Climbing Area Development- \$4,000
Fall 2016 - Fall 2018- Ice Park Equipment/Site Prep/Infrastructure- \$10,000
Fall 2017- Sugar Loaf Trail (s1- initial development- needs refined)- \$9,040
Spring 2019- Property Acquisition- \$52,500
Spring 2019- Woodlawn Easement Area Survey- \$3,820

Allocated Funding- Projects in Development:

May/June 2019- Archaeological and Biological Assessments- \$43,287
May 2019 - May 2020- Purpose Built Mountain Bike Trail Design/Build - \$375,000

Parks and Trails Legacy Funding

Acquisition	Development	Total
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Non-Parks and Trails Legacy Funding

Arts & Cultural Heritage Legacy

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
-------------	-------------	----------

Clean Water Legacy Funding

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
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Outdoor Heritage Legacy Funding

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
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Local and Other Funding Sources

Local Funding

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
\$56,320	\$441,327	\$497,647

Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
-------------	-------------	----------

Other Funding

Acquisition	Development	Subtotal
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Total: \$497,647

Grand Total Investments to Date - All Sources Listed : 497647.00

Acquisition and Development Cost Projections : Total costs projections for the Bluffs Traverse are estimated at \$3,903,395 (\$3,653, 395 without remaining acquisition estimates). This includes all acquisition/easements, trail development, trailheads and facilities, signage, and restoration work. A table is attached outlining these cost projections for the Bluffs Traverse development. All acquisition and easement estimates are based on Winona County assessed values and are subject to change based on state acquisition appraisal practices.

Cost Estimate Support Information Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Cost Estimate Support Information_ff15b1.pdf

Acquisition and Development Phasing Plan : The initial development will include a wide variety of trail types in order to expand access across user groups, but also to establish the easiest segments. A second and third phase would expand the trail system and add trailhead amenities and expanded facilities. These phase B and C developments take increased planning and funding, so their timing is intended to move in parallel with initial phase development. Some trails in phase B and C will also require partnerships with local landowners and time will be needed to establish partnerships.

Phasing Plan Support Information Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Phasing Plan Support Information_fa2eb1.pdf

Cost Projections for Implementation Plan

Acquisition: 250000

Development: 3653395

Projected Total: 3903395.00

Operational

Joint Organizations Responsibilities : N/A

Maintenance/Operations Plan : The City of Winona has a dedicated Park Maintenance Department that maintains 27 parks, including all facilities contained within those parks. The annual Park Maintenance budget is between \$1.5 and \$1.6 million annually. The Park Maintenance Department currently has 13 FTE. The Park Maintenance Department will conduct routine maintenance including but not limited to mowing, weeding, grading, repair to damaged areas, and inspection and repair of any structures. The Park Maintenance Department will also handle tree falls that affect the trail system.

Staff will propose a 3% annual increase to the Park Maintenance budget to cover the additional maintenance costs associated with the trail system, including additional staff time and equipment. This increase equates to approximately \$48,000 annually. Due to the expanse of the Park System in which the trails reside, annual budget dollars are allocated to the parks and facilities within the Bluff Traverse Plan. This has been a common practice for the City of Winona for nearly the past 60 years. In addition, parks staff and volunteers will be trained on trail maintenance standards for purpose built mountain bike trails through a professional trail building organization such as IMBA.

As far as direct costs the city is currently undergoing a phase 1 archaeological assessment as well as a biological assessment/resource inventory and stewardship plan. We anticipate spending \$32,500 on the natural resources inventory and development of a natural area stewardship plan. We also anticipate spending \$11,000 on the Phase I archaeological survey of the Bluff Traverse. We do anticipate a robust signage plan to promote and market the area. Each segment of the trail is anticipated to cost approximately \$10,700 in additional direct costs. The funding for the operations and maintenance will be the local tax levy.

M/O Support Material Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/M_and_O_Support_Material_d68af4.pdf

Ecological/Land Resources Plan : Finding the right balance between human use of the Park, and its ecological preservation and protection, was an important and consistent public concern throughout the planning process. Since regional parks place significant emphasis on preserving natural values, the planning process included extensive lengths to ensure that the natural qualities present within The Bluffs would be preserved. In addition to its intrinsic values, stewardship of the Parks natural landscape will also enrich the human, or cultural, experience for those visiting the area. The Bluff Traverse includes reclamation of some old trails and paths to stabilize erosion and increase habitat. In addition, the plan aims to manage invasive species and restore habitat. Restoration is already underway in some prairie sections- moving forward, priorities will be guided by the newly established stewardship plan. Larger scale restoration sites will be coordinated through organizations such as the Conservation Corps while smaller projects and ongoing maintenance will be managed through park staff and community volunteer groups.

Ecological/Land Resources Support Material

Annual Routine Maintenance and Operations Cost Total : 117000

Programming

Programming Plan : Through the Bluffs Traverse Master Plan a review of current programming was conducted and future programming opportunities were proposed.

EXISTING PROGRAMMING

Winona Parks and Recreation currently supports successful programming within the parks of The Bluffs Traverse. All trails are self guided and formal program offerings at the Park are focused at Holzinger Lodge.

PROPOSED PROGRAMMING

Proposed programming at The Bluffs Traverse is based off of the highly successful events provided at nearby Lake Lodge but tailored to the specific natural features of the Park. Some programs may include fat tire biking on dedicated trails, tree identification, geocaching, bird watching, summer day camps, continued snowshoeing and skiing events, as well as others that include children and adults. As a programming plan and schedule are developed, it will be necessary to promote the offerings to visitors and potential visitors to grow the number of users at the Park. Each of the offerings should be promoted in a variety of ways and identified within the marketing plan. The following events and activities have been identified as possible programming additions to the Park. Develop and promote outdoor recreation and tourism to The Bluffs Traverse by providing the following amenities, activities, and programs:

1. Natural and paved multi-use trails for a variety of users and activities.
2. Year round use of trails including dedicated snowshoe trails and cross country ski trails.
3. Select weekends for themed camping with appropriate staff or vendors brought in to run programs.
4. Family Weekend: Work with local destinations like The National Eagle Center in Wabasha, and other organizations and vendors to create a variety of activities that appeal to an entire family for a weekend.
5. Outdoor Skills and Survival Camping: Work with local partners to provide an outdoor survival and skills program that is suitable to children and families..
6. Develop relationships with instructors who provide fitness programs and classes, then offer select weekends dedicated to fitness for Park guests. Programs could include sunrise or sunset yoga, Fitness in the Parks, Group Trail Runs, or a number of other programs or topics.
7. Establish relationships with area groups or businesses looking to fund raise or sponsor events that could become annual activities. Ideas would include hosting 5Ks within the Park, youth or family biking events.
8. Work with outside vendors to bring in equipment for family activities; possibilities include bike or climbing rentals and demonstrations.
9. Continue developing relationships with schools, environmental groups, non-profits, and other organizations to host celebrations, fun days, service learning days, and other activities within the Park.
10. Offer environmental education programs with partners including themed hikes such as bird or tree identification, geocaching, snowshoeing; youth or family programs dedicated towards things like maple syrup, archery, kayaking, and exploring nature.

Programming Support Material Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Program Plan Support_1283e1.pdf

Annual Programming Cost : 0

Annual Revenues from Programming and Fees/Charges Total : 22800

Outreach and Marketing Plan : The parks system master plan recommends updating the city website to include more information about park assets. Including and highlighting The Bluffs Traverse specifically is recommended. A robust marketing plan with specific tactical elements and schedule is also recommended for The Bluffs Traverse including media, social media, and community engagement strategies. Public presence in the community and at regional events sharing the story of The Bluffs Traverse including information booths with interactive public programming at the Winona County Fair and other events is a logical first step.

BRANDING/WAYFINDING

Develop and build a brand around The Bluffs Traverse including a style list for print materials. Consistent branding and graphics on all signage is essential.

PRINT MATERIALS

Print materials will also need to be apart of the marketing plan. These can be used as images on the website. A simple brochure should be designed with basic information about the Park and include photos of the views and other features. These print materials can be distributed to travel centers and other area attractions.

NETWORKING

By networking with other regional and area parks, especially those that offer hiking and biking, Winona Parks and Recreation can maximize its reach to visitors. This is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to market The Bluffs Traverse. Leveraging a partnership with Winona County Parks would benefit both parties as, regional visitors often desire a series of local attractions to create a full weekend of activity. Identifying other partnerships especially ones that bolster program opportunities within the park will help market the facilities and natural resources.

WEBSITE + SOCIAL MEDIA

Keeping an updated website with photographs and information is key in todays world of instant communication. The Park facilities and amenities offer an opportunity for wonderful photography that could easily be shared through these resources allowing potential campers and visitors to visualize the Park, setting, campsites, and other amenities. Additional social media platforms include Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook all of which offer unique ways to market the facilities. The marketing plan will identify the platforms that will best serve the Park. Ongoing management of these accounts is something that should be given careful consideration.

Visitors to the Park are provided access to natural beauty, history, and wealth of recreational possibilities. There are many opportunities to promote these amenities to current and potential users both within the region and beyond. A marketing plan should be developed that incorporates short and long term Improvements for promoting the Park and its year-round amenities. The marketing plan will outline tactics and general approach needed to achieve Park Improvements as well as ensure awareness and user growth. The plan will define specific Improvements, messages and supportive marketing tactics.

GOALS

Build and maintain Park awareness, visitor attendance, and participation in programming and events with the community and region.

Create excitement and sense of ownership in the Park and its recreational experiences.

Create a long-lasting engagement cycle for Park audience that carries through after marketing tactics are initiated.

APPROACH

The key elements to a successful strategic marketing plan are: presence, persistence, and personalization. Awareness activities will focus on a holistic approach with complementary yet diverse strategies that are consistently communicated and marketed to an inclusive target audience and community.

Outreach and Marketing Support Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/Outreach and Marketing Support_8e3803.pdf

User Metrics and Research Plan : One of the goals of the recently completed Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan is to maintain and collect data about the park and recreation system to ensure assets are well managed and decisions well-informed. A big part of that will be focused on collection of participation and economic impact data on the Bluffs Traverse. To accomplish this the City will look to partner with other community organizations such as Winona State University and Visit Winona (our local tourism board) to collect user numbers, economic impact data, and facility usage data. In addition, the City will participate in Commission research initiatives as they are initiated.

User Metrics and Research Support Uploads

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/19-003D/User Metrics and Research Plan Support_48c355.pdf

Attachments

Document	Description	Filename
Existing Master Plan	Bluffs Traverse Master Plan	2018 The Bluffs Traverse Master Plan (1)_c06807.pdf
Additional Information Upload	Complete Streets Policy and Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan	Complete-Streets-Layout-ADOPTED_969ed9.pdf
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	DNR Biodiversity Map	Biodiversity Map_371bab.pdf
Natural Resource Based3 Upload	Regional Setting Map	Commission Regional Map_f9c7e2.pdf
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Valley Overlook	loaf w overlook_0091ce.JPG
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Sugar Loaf Trail Upper	loaf trail outcrop_bab4da.JPG
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Sugar Loaf Summit View	loaf summit view_85d8ed.JPG
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Sugar Loaf Trail Lower	loaf trail east_d097a2.JPG
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Winter Loaf View	winter traverse loaf view_8fbeee.jpeg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Traverse Trail Winter	Traverse westward_c6bb03.jpeg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Bluffside Forest	bside fern deer (1)_dcb3ad.JPG
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Bluffside Trail	Bluffside W Overlook_285e57.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Sugar Loaf Prairie Restoration	Loaf Prairie Rest_dbf497.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Sugar Loaf Trail Restoration	Loaf up trail rest_f6646d.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Sugar Loaf Morel	Loaf Morel_bd2f3d.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffs Traverse Trail Overlook	traverse west pr over_9a9db0.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside Forest	Bluffside fog glen_1bef59.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside Wooded	Bluffside Moss_2d90b3.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside Western Prairie	Bluffside W goat prairie_97d534.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside SW Overlook	Bluffside West - SW Overlook_5e9072.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside West View South	BW Prairie South_cceee5.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Bluffside Bluff	Bluffside Hillside_22d06f.JPG
Natural Resource Based3 Upload	Sugar Loaf Volunteer Cleanup	Loaf Clean Groups18_a3d458.JPG
Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Sugar Loaf Rock Climbing	Loaf Lead_86c9e2.JPG
Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Sugar Loaf Trail	Loaf trail switchback_c8b29d.JPG
Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Sugar Loaf Trail Youth Corps Work	loaf ycc trail_30abf8.JPG

Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Hiking to Ice Park	traverse trail snow_34b93a.jpeg
Natural Resource Based4 Upload	Ice Park - Climbing	ice leading_2ee8fc.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload	Sugar Loaf from Lake Park	Sugar_Loaf_Winona_c24578.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Rock Climbing Sugar Loaf	Loaf Climber_034f52.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload	Winter Sugar Loaf	Winter Loaf_6e8f67.jpeg
Site Characteristics Upload	Trail Sunset	loaf trail sunset_111904.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload	Sugar Loaf from Traverse Overlook	Loaf view east_0366f2.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload	Bluffside Park West View	BW SMU View_a09f05.JPG
Ad Phasing Plan Upload	PROPOSED TRAIL AND TRAILHEAD PHASING PLAN	Phasing Plan Support Information_fa2eb1.pdf
Site Characteristics Upload	Bluffside Cliffs	Bluffside Cliff_9acb83.JPG
Natural Resource Based3 Upload	Sugar Loaf Parking Demand	Loaf Parking_6b298a.JPG
Maintenance Operations Plan Upload	Operations and Management Plan	M and O Support Material_d68af4.pdf
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Natural Resource Stewardship Plan	Eco Land Resources Support_a20e69.pdf
Programming Plan Upload	Programming Plan	Program Plan Support_1283e1.pdf
Outreach Marketing Plan Upload	Marketing Support from Master Plan	Outreach and Marketing Support_8e3803.pdf
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	DEVELOPMENT RELATED COST PROJECTIONS	Cost Estimate Support Information_ff15b1.pdf
Site Map Upload	Winona Parks/Facilities Overview	site map upload 1_037642.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Regional Map	2019-04-30 Regional Assets Map_c9dd33.pdf
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Public Involvement Overview	Public Involvement Support_4ca020.pdf
Regional Demographic Upload	Winona Demographics	Demographic Support Material_d7d6da.pdf
Public Health Values Upload	Winona Health Assessment	Public Health Values Support_7cfa1c.pdf
Economic Development Tourism Upload	Economic and Tourism Context	Econ Development Support_257361.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Development Overview	Development Plan Overview_20878b.pdf
Acquisition Plan Overview Upload	Acquisition Plan/Status	2019-04-30 Overall Bluffs Traverse Map_738f78.pdf
User Metrics Research Plan Upload	Research Support	User Metrics and Research Plan Support_48c355.pdf
Site Map Upload	Current Bluffside Park Map with Sugar Loaf and Garvin Insert	site map upload 2_f5721f.pdf
Park Trail Map	Bluffs Traverse Overview Map	2019-04-30 Overall Bluffs Traverse Map_b23a51.pdf
Recreational Trends Upload	Plan Trends	Rec Trends Support_a3c412.pdf
Recreational Trends Upload	Distance People Will Travel	Rec Trends Support Distance_956429.pdf
Recreational Trends Upload	Participation in Activity By Age	Rec Trends Support Age_49b2d2.pdf
Public Health Values Upload	Why People Participate	Public Health Values Support Why_b711c2.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Mtb Trail Support Map Costs_6e3914.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Holzinger Trailhead Support_34e136.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Garvin Heights Trailhead Support_33e275.pdf

Development Feature Upload		Sugar Loaf Trailhead Support_cf5c30.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Wincrest Trailhead Support_a87360.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Tower Trails Trailhead Support_c610be.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Signage and Wayfinding Support_b40943.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Hiking Shared Use Trail Map Support_e59d4f.pdf
Development Feature Upload		Sugar Loaf Climbing Cost Support_5cf4b6.pdf
Site Characteristics Upload	Ice Park Overlooking Lake Park	1st ice lead of season_fd3408.jpg
Development Feature Upload		MTB Trail Dvlpt Support Retain Turn_7f6477.jpg
Development Feature Upload		Mtb Support Trail_5e8274.jpg
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Development Feature Upload		ice visit tr_e144fa.jpg
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