

PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE AND LOCATION

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Kaposia Landing City Park
800 Bryant Ave
South St. Paul, MN 55075
Thursday, July 24, 2025
6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Agenda

- I.

Call to Order
- II.

Pledge of Allegiance
- III.

Public Comments:
Anyone wishing to address the Planning Commission on an item not on the agenda may address the Planning Commission at this time (comments are limited to 5 minutes).
- IV.

Approval of the Agenda
- V.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes of Meeting Held on June 26, 2025
- VI.

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions
 - Authorized design contract for Mississippi River boat launch at Spring Lake Park Reserve
- VII.

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

| | |
|--|---|
| CSAH 86 Roundabouts on Hwy 3, and on Hwy 56 - Design | Monday, August 11, from 4:30-6:30 pm Saint Mark’s Lutheran Church 28595 Randolph Blvd |
| Open house | |
| Hwy 42 and US 52 Interchange | Monday, August 25, 4pm-6pm |
| Open House | Rosemount Public Works Building, 14041 Biscane Avenue |
- VIII.

Tour of Mississippi River Greenway - Information
(John Mertens– Planning Office)
 - Kaposia Landing
 - Swing Bridge Park
 - Pine Bend Bluffs
- IX.

Topics for Next Meeting (Thursday, August 28, 2025 – 7 p.m., Western Service Center, L139)
 - None at this time
- X.

Planning Commissioner Announcements/UpdatesAdjourn



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Planning Commission Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes-DRAFT

Date: 6/26/2025

Minutes prepared by Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center

Attendance

Members Present

- Amy Hunting
- James Guttman
- Tony Nelson
- Dennis Peine
- Jill Smith
- Paul Nasvik
- Barry Graham
- Ibrahim Abdinasir
- Kelly Kausel
- Steve Shurts

Member(s) Absent:

- Jerry Rich
- Lori Hansen

Dakota County staff members attending:

- Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Niki Geisler, Parks Director
- Lil Leatham, Principal Planner
- Tom Lewanski, Natural Resources Manager
- Laura Domyancich-Lee, Friends of the Mississippi River
- Leah Weston, Friends of the Mississippi River

Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:00 p.m.
- By Chair, Jim Guttman

Pledge of Allegiance

- The Planning Commission opened the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

- Comments/Notes: No audience member wished to address an item not on the agenda.

Chair Guttmann clarified voting procedures for meeting minutes, stating that it is an accepted practice for Planning Commissioners to vote to approve the minutes for meetings where they were not in attendance. He also noted that if an individual Planning Commissioner is uncomfortable voting on minutes for meetings where they were not present that they always have the option to abstain, but Robert's Rules of Order does not preclude a previously absent member from voting to approve the minutes.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Guttmann asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Kausel, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (from March 27, 2025)

Chair Guttmann asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting's minutes.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Hunting, approving the previous meeting's minutes. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Release Draft Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan – Action (Tom Lewanski – Parks)

The Planning Commission received an update on the Draft Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan. Tom Lewanski, Natural Resources Manager, Laura Domyancich-Lee, and Leah Weston, Friends of the Mississippi River, presented this topic and responded to questions.

Questions and comments by the Commissioners, along with responses from staff (*italics*):

Have the Friends of the Mississippi River prepared other Natural Resource Management Plans? *Staff responded that yes, FMR has a team of natural resource experts who have experience preparing natural resource management plans, as well as implementation.*

Planning Commissioners responded favorably to the organization of the plan and the use of “nodes” to designate existing natural communities and areas that are candidates for natural resource restoration. Several Commissioners mentioned that the plan was prepared in a way that is user-friendly.

A question was asked about whether there is any advantage to having additional input about the restoration of the natural area nodes besides that from the consultant and Dakota County staff. *Staff responded that many of the sites are well known, and some have been managed for over 20 years. However, the consultant and staff were in contact with landowners, the cities, DNR staff, and others to gather information and perspective about how these sites should be protected and managed moving forward. Dakota County will work in partnership with these agencies, so their input is very important.*

A statement was made that a few language changes could be made in the plan to emphasize that the plan is doing more than describing current conditions, but also makes recommendations about how natural communities should be restored and managed moving forward.

In the acknowledgement and contact section of the plan, the plan should be updated to acknowledge the work of past staff, but also include updated contact information for current staff.

How will public comments be collected and in what format? *Staff responded that a webpage exists to view the document with a link and provide comments. Staff are not proposing public open houses due to the technical nature of the plan and the general lack of interest in the details of these Natural Resource Management Plans from members of the general public.*

A statement was asked about whether the County is able to identify how many people are looking at the draft plan online. *Staff responded that they will work with the IT department to measure site visits.*

A comment was made that it may be useful, once natural areas have been restored, to identify some of the restored native plants using signage. *Staff responded that it is the County’s practice to use interpretive signage to provide information about natural communities, although not necessarily about individual plants. The Planning Commission will have the opportunity to discuss the role of interpretive signage as part of the upcoming update of the Mississippi River Long Range Plan.*

MOTION: Commissioner Kausel moved, seconded by Commissioner Nasvik, recommending that the Physical Development Committee of the Whole release the Draft Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan for public review. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Approved

Adoption of 2050 Parks, Greenways, and Natural Areas Plan – Action (Lil Leatham – Planning)

The Planning Commission received an update on the 2050 Parks, Greenways, and Natural Areas Plan. Lil Leatham, Principal Planner, presented this topic and responded to questions.

A Planning Commissioner asked if it would be possible to promote the new plan with a brochure that could be used for public events such as the National Night Out. *Staff responded in agreement to make promotional materials.*

A comment was made in support of the Forever Wild tagline.

A Commissioner pointed out that a table within the plan that references paved trail connections to trailheads should be modified to be consistent with other sections of the plan.

A suggestion was made to add language to specifically mention seeking out partnerships with natural resource-based non-profits, in addition to other partnerships.

A Planning Commissioner thanked staff for engaging the Dakota County Disability Advisory Council and making changes to the plan to improve accessibility.

A question was asked about whether the County's all-terrain wheelchairs are ready to enter service. *Staff responded that the wheelchairs are nearly ready and are anticipated to be in service this fall.*

MOTION: Commissioner Kausel moved, seconded by Commissioner Hunting, recommending that the Physical Development Committee of the Whole adopt the 2050 Vision Plan for Parks, Greenways, and Natural Systems. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Approved

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following County Board Actions:

- Provided direction on CSAH 54 and Mississippi River Greenway design process
- Provided direction on the Vance Grannis Trust property (potential nature center) at Marcott Lakes
- Authorized agreement with Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad for Veterans Memorial Greenway bridge

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

| | |
|---|---|
| Burnsville Library Renovation Open House | June 25, 4pm – 7pm Burnsville Library |
| Hwy 50 and I-35 interchange CP 50-33 Public open house #3 | Wed June 18, 2025, 4:30–6:30 p.m. - Central Pavilion at Antlers Park; 20141 Ipava Ave., Lakeville County Road 50/County Road 5 Interchange at Interstate 35, Lakeville Dakota County |
| Hwy 42 and US 52 Interchange Open House | Mon, August 25, 4pm-6pm Rosemount Public Works Building, 14041 Biscane Avenue |

Topics for next meeting (Thursday, July 24, 2025)

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, proposed a tour of the Mississippi River Greenway for July's Planning Commission Meeting. The Planning Commission agreed to the proposal and requested an earlier start time of 6:30 p.m.

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

The Planning Commission discussed with staff the use of public home addresses and whether Planning Commissioners can obtain a Dakota County email address to use for Planning Commission purposes. *Staff responded that they would investigate this and get back to those inquiring.*

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, announced that there is now an additional vacancy on the Planning Commission for District 5. Staff are optimistic about that vacancy being filled in the near future.

Adjournment

Chair Guttmann asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Commissioner Ibrahim moved, seconded by Commissioner Kausel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 6:30 p.m., Kaposia Landing Park, South St. Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: 07/24/2025

AGENDA ITEM: Mississippi River Greenway – Long Range Plan

PREPARED BY: JOHN MERTENS

PURPOSE

Provide Planning Commission:

1. *Update/Introduction to the Mississippi River Greenway – Long Range Plan*
2. *Receive input and comments that improve the greenway.*

BACKGROUND

Since the adoption of the current Mississippi River Greenway Plan in 1998, Dakota County has completed the trail component of the greenway from South St. Paul to Hastings and is in preliminary design for a six-mile connection between Hastings and Prairie Island Indian Community. The overall goal of the plan is to create a contemporary plan that meets the County's current greenway vision. The plan will include a public participation process and project management team (PMT) composed of key city and County staff. The new plan will provide basis for external funding requests and a framework for ongoing partnerships with communities along the Mississippi River.

Other plan goals include:

- *Add improvements to and along greenway to enhance visitor experiences.*
- *Improve quality of open spaces along greenway through partnership.*
- *Update interpretative themes along the greenway.*
- *Collect and explore "Big Ideas" to transform the Mississippi River Greenway into a vibrant year-round experience, attracting visitors beyond the region.*

ATTACHMENTS

- *MRG Plan Purpose and Outline*
- *Draft Corridor Inventory Maps.*

QUESTIONS

The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

1. *What are the challenges along the greenway?*
2. *What are the opportunities along greenway?*
3. *What are the most important elements in the plan?*
 - *Natural Resource Restoration*
 - *Water Quality*
 - *User Experience*
 - *Economic Development/Tourism*
 - *Art and Interpretation*
 - *other*



Dakota County Mississippi River Greenway Long-term Plan

Draft outline

July 16, 2025

Plan Purpose

Dakota County's Mississippi River Greenway is a local, regional, and nationally-significant recreation amenity. Over the past two decades, Dakota County has developed a visionary network of greenways that provide habitat, water quality, linear recreation, and non-motorized transportation benefits. The greenways serve as regional trails according to the Metropolitan Council's definition, and, as such, are required to have up to date master plans as described in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. This plan document will include all the necessary requirements of the MetCouncil along with plans to complete the trail to the Goodhue County border and enhance the trail with amenities, local connections, events, and programming.

Most of the Mississippi River Greenway trail corridor is developed with a paved trail, and the purpose of this long-range plan is to incorporate the Met Council regional trail requirements along with the Dakota County Greenway Guidebook standards to provide a consistent plan and set of implementation projects that will help to complete development of the greenway. In addition, big ideas for enhancement of the greenway through interpretation, unique amenities, programming, events, and attractions will be considered and planned for future implementation. The planning process proposed will acknowledge and document the myriad planning efforts that have already been completed, while allowing space for additional big ideas and interpretation and enhancement of previous ideas. A process to engage stakeholders, agencies, and residents along the corridor will include in-person meetings and online surveys and information.



Draft Plan Outline

1. Executive Summary

2. Introduction & Overview

- a. County map and location of MRG
- b. Greenway network map and description
- c. How to use this plan
 - i. Overview
 - ii. Goals
- d. Thumbnail maps and descriptions
 - i. National Park Service-MNRRRA
 - ii. Mississippi River Trail (State of MN and National routes)
- e. Background documents (projects and plans) diagram/timeline of planning and years
 - i. 1998 Mississippi River Regional Trail plan
 - ii. Hastings to Red Wing Trail Plan-2009
 - iii. Mississippi River Trail – Interpretative + Experience Design-2014
 - iv. Connecting People to the Mississippi River-2018
 - v. Unity Trail
 - vi. Fischer Ave trailhead-under construction
 - vii. CR56
 - viii. Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan-draft
 - ix. 2050 Dakota County Parks and Natural System Vision Plan

3. Existing Conditions and Context

- a. Maps and descriptions
 - i. Existing trail
 - ii. Connecting trails
 - iii. Facilities (trailheads, parking, restrooms)
 - iv. Include all ongoing projects to be installed/funded
- b. Site photos
- c. Resource inventory
- d. Agency overlay map and descriptions (NPS, Lower Miss WD, Vermillion WD, N Cannon River WD, USACE, MNDNR, MRT (MNDOT), Dakota County, Cities-comp plans, SHPO)

4. Corridor Issues & Needs

- a. Community Engagement Process and Summary of Input
- b. Statement of need
- c. Trends in recreation
- d. Demand forecast
- e. MetCouncil Parks and Policy Plan Regional Trail requirements
- f. Public awareness (wayfinding, online maps, info)
- g. Equity analysis

5. Development Plan

- a. Overall corridor map with overlay information:
 - i. Trail-existing and planned
 - ii. Access points
 - iii. Bridges
 - iv. Crossings – at-grade and grade separation
 - v. Trailheads-parking, restrooms, water, bike racks
 - vi. Picnic areas
 - vii. Parks and natural areas
 - viii. Experiences/play areas
 - ix. Retail areas/restaurants
 - x. Lighting
 - xi. Views
 - xii. Birding
 - xiii. Overlooks
 - xiv. Wayfinding
 - xv. Interpretive points
- b. Corridor segment enlargements (6)—include specific projects along the corridor
 - i. SSP
 - ii. IGH
 - iii. Rosemount
 - iv. Nininger
 - 1. Supplement Spring Lake Park Reserve plan
 - v. Hastings
 - vi. Ravenna/to Goodhue County
 - 1. Supplement Hastings to Red Wing Trail plan
- c. Boundaries map

- d. Simple map with existing and proposed program/experiential overlays (birding, weddings/event locations, support facilities, overlooks)
- e. Big ideas – Physical sites to host runs/bike rides, river events (parking and physical support areas)
- f. Cross section graphic 3-4 images of typical corridor types
- g. Wayfinding + signage plan

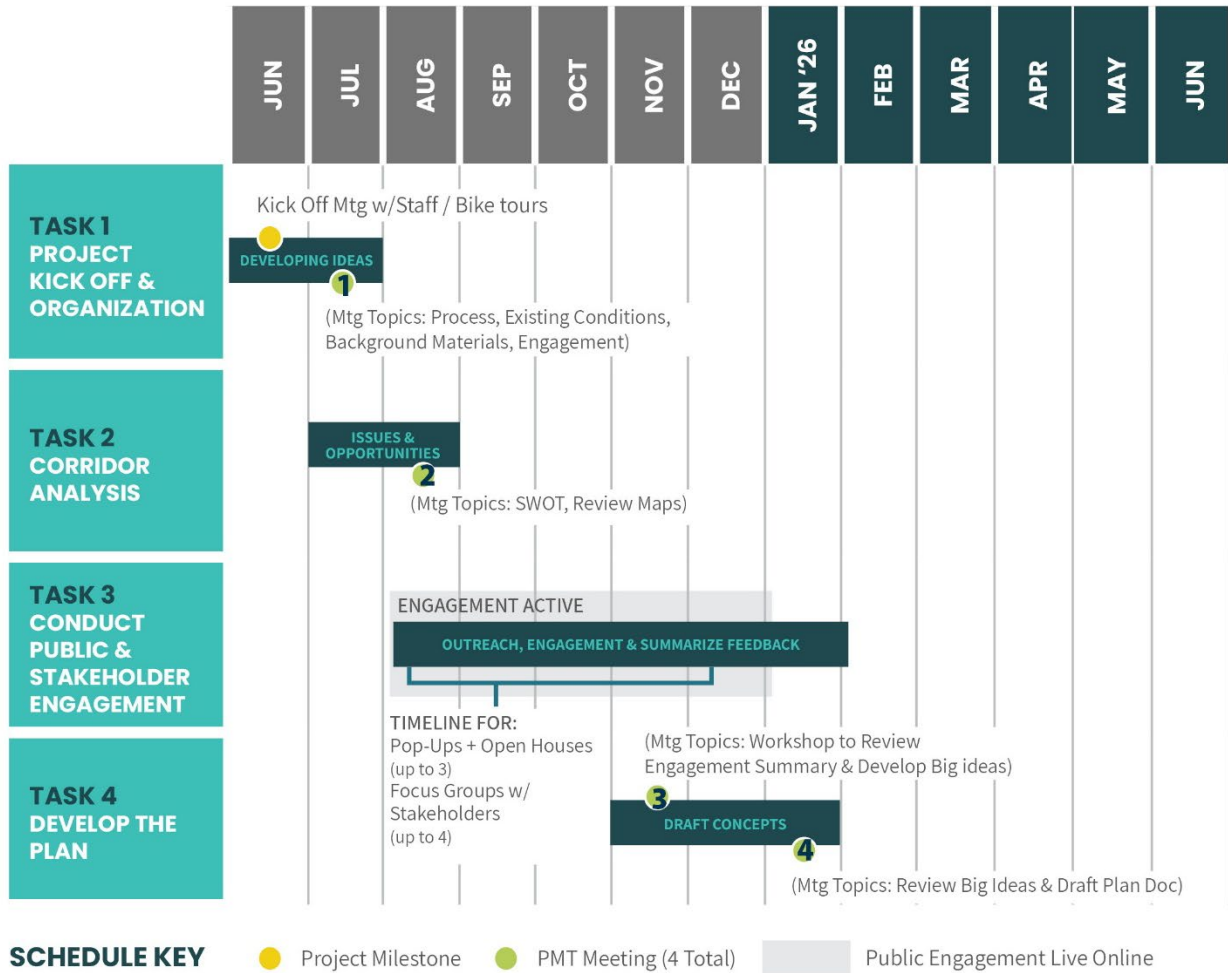
6. Landscape Management

- a. Landscape management
- b. Water resource protection
- c. MRCCA
 - i. Map
 - ii. Statutes
 - iii. Future design considerations

7. Operations & Implementation

- a. Implementation priorities and timeline
- b. Operations and maintenance
- c. Interpretive themes
- d. Programming ideas (events, partnerships, marketing and promotion, tourism opportunities)
- e. Cost estimate
- f. Acquisition map
- g. Public services (restrooms, ADA access)

Draft Plan Schedule



TRAIL CONTEXT

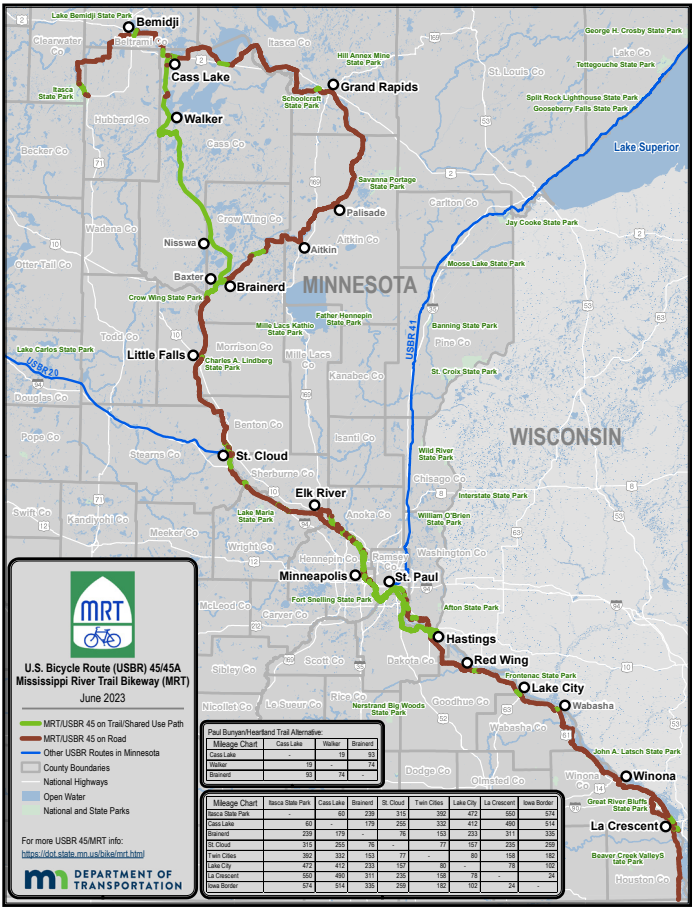
The Mississippi River Greenway sits at the confluence of many greater transportation and recreation networks. It makes up a portion of the Mississippi River Trail (U.S. Bicycle Route 45), a bicycle route that follows the Mississippi River from its source at Itasca State Park to the Minnesota-Iowa border. This route makes up a segment of the larger bicycle route that continues along the Mississippi River, through ten states, to the Gulf of Mexico. Many portions of the Mississippi River trail have cyclists sharing the road with cars, but the Dakota County section provides 27 miles of off road bike trail.

It's also a part of the greater Dakota County greenway system which weaves together over 100 miles throughout the county. This bike system connects miles of scenic river-ways, local and regional parks, residential neighborhoods, and retail districts.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER BIKE TRAIL



National Mississippi River Trail



MN DOT Mississippi River Trail Route

DAKOTA COUNTY GREENWAY SYSTEM



* Please refer to the 2017 Dakota County Central Greenway Connectivity Study for more information on short-term (purple dashed line) and long-term linking routes.

Dakota County Greenway system

MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL RIVER & RECREATION AREA

The Mississippi River Greenway travels along a significant stretch of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), a 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River that is managed by the National Park Service. Established in 1988, the MNRRA is a unique type of national park known as a partnership park.

In this model, the National Park Service owns very little land in the corridor. They provide leadership and coordination to a wide range of partners including local, state, and federal governments, nonprofits, businesses, educational institutions, and individuals who own land or have interest in the corridor. The parks management is guided by a comprehensive management plan established in 1995 as part of Public Law 100-696.

The purposes of the MNRRA are:

- Protect, preserve, and enhance the significant values of the waters and land of the Mississippi River corridor within the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area.
- Protect and enhance the nationally significant historical, recreational, scenic, cultural, natural, economic, and scientific resources of this 72-mile stretch of the river.
- Provide a framework for coordinated resource management within the corridor.
- Share the history and science of the river itself, making it the only national park specifically dedicated to this purpose.

For more information about the MNRRA, visit this website: <https://www.nps.gov/miss/index.htm>

MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR CRITICAL AREA

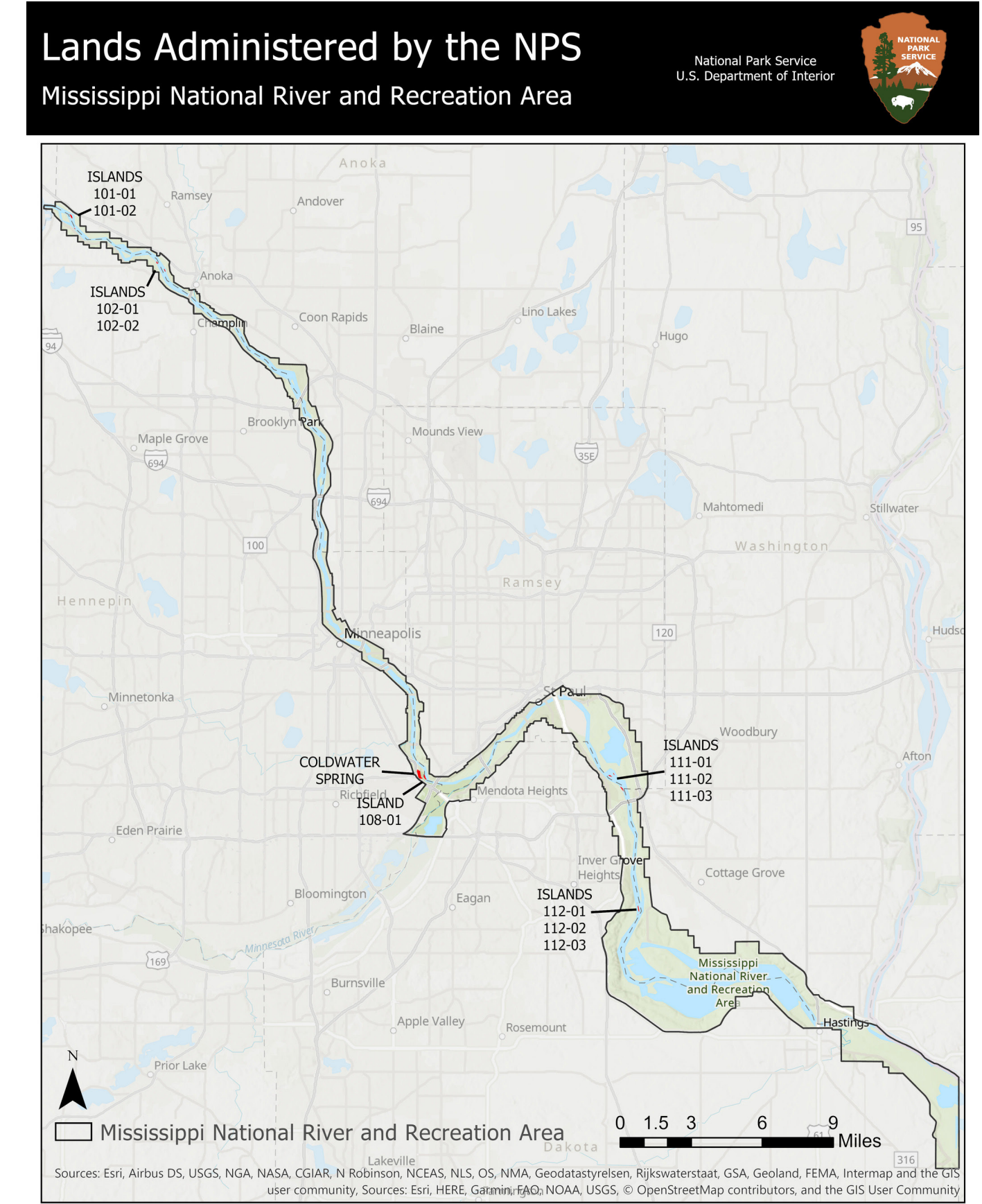
A large portion of this trail falls within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) designation as detailed in the Minnesota Statutes, section 116G.15, subd. 1, which are as follows:

This master plan recognizes the purposes of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) designation as detailed in Minnesota Statutes, section 116G.15, subd. 1, which are as follows:

- (1) protect and preserve the Mississippi River and adjacent lands that the legislature finds to be unique and valuable state and regional resources for the benefit of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the state, region, and nation;
- (2) prevent and mitigate irreversible damages to these state, regional, and natural resources;
- (3) preserve and enhance the natural, aesthetic, cultural, and historical values of the Mississippi River and adjacent lands for public use and benefit;
- (4) protect and preserve the Mississippi River as an essential element in the national, state, and regional transportation, sewer and water, and recreational systems; and
- (5) protect and preserve the biological and ecological functions of the Mississippi River corridor.

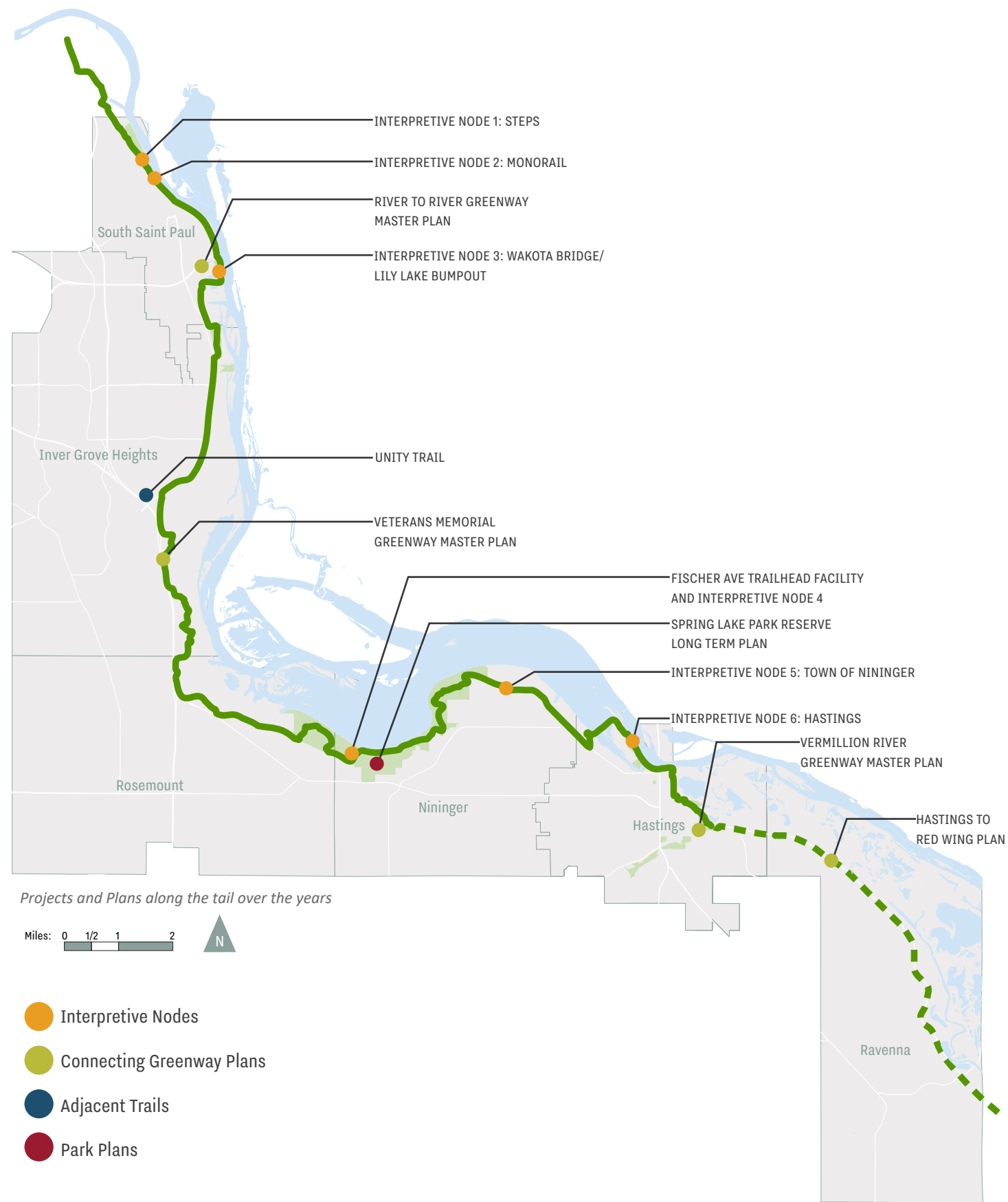
This master plan also acknowledges the standards and criteria set forth in the State Statute that establish guidelines for the preservation, protection, and management of lands within the MRCCA. These standards apply to public facilities, private facilities, vegetation management, land alteration and storm water management, subdivision and land development, and exemptions.

For more information about the MRCCA, see this website: https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/critical_area/index.html



MNRRA & MRCCA Boundary

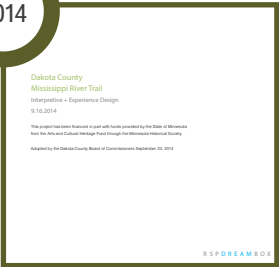
PROJECTS AND PLANS



1998

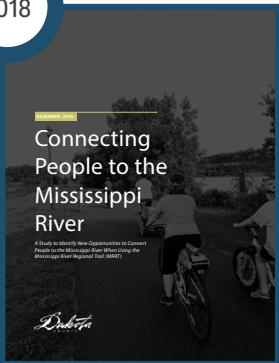
Mississippi River Regional Trail Plan
Original trail plan for the Mississippi River Regional Trail.

2014



Mississippi River Trail Interpretive + Experience Design
A plan outlining 10 locations for interpretive nodes, content, and visual language for the Mississippi River Greenway.

2018



Connecting People to the Mississippi River
A study by Dakota County identifying new opportunities to connect people to the Mississippi River while using the Mississippi River Greenway. This plan details current, planned, and future nodes for recreation, overlooks, interpretive elements, and more.

Now



2050 Dakota County Parks and Natural Systems Vision Plan
A plan on shaping Dakota County's park system, greenway system, and natural system over the next 25 years in accordance with community values.

Now

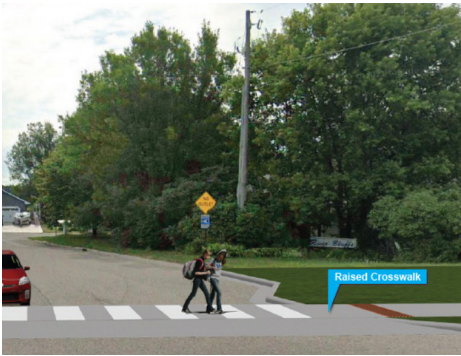


Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan
A developing natural resource management plan for the Mississippi River Greenway describing geology, water resources, soils, vegetation, and wildlife. It will develop approaches to providing community assets, controlling invasive species, connecting natural areas, and improving habitat.

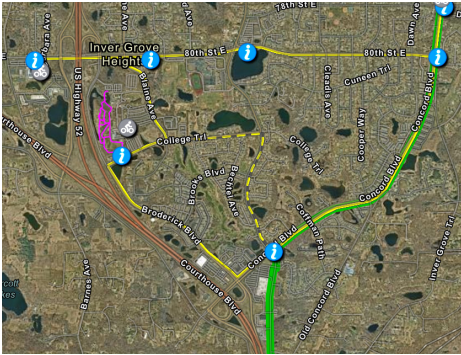
ONGOING PROJECTS TO BE INSTALLED



Digital rendering of Fischer Ave Trailhead



Digital Rendering of proposed pedestrian improvements along Concord Blvd



Map of proposed Unity trail with interpretive nodes



Digital rendering of proposed river access interpretive node in Kaposia Landing

FISCHER AVENUE TRAILHEAD

A new trailhead at 13580 Fischer Ave, Nininger Township in Spring Lake Park is slated to be constructed in 2025/2026. This trailhead will include a picnic shelter, parking lot, upgraded roadway, bathroom, outdoor classroom, and a new paved trail that will connect to the existing trail and form a loop around the bison enclosure. There is also potential for an overlook near this site.

COUNTY ROAD 56 IMPROVEMENTS

Dakota County project that will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along County Road 56 (Concord Boulevard). Improvements will include raised crosswalks, truck aprons, medians, curb extensions, rapid flashing beacons, and crosswalk lighting.

UNITY TRAIL

The Unity Trail will be a 5-mile loop along existing walkways in Inver Grove Heights with multiple interpretive nodes highlighting the contributions of Dakota County’s diverse community. The project also includes activities that highlight the themes of the Unity Trail and bike lending stations.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 1: KAPOSIA LANDING RIVER ACCESS

Two interpretive nodes have been developed in Kaposia Landing park. The northern node is a Levee Get Down, which will provide an accessible route to a river overlook, stairs that will access the water, benches, and trail access to the river and parking lot.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 2: KAPOSIA LANDING

The second interpretive node in Kaposia Landing is an homage to a monorail that carried people up the bluff in this location. It includes a monorail-inspired pergola, swing benches, picnic tables, a river overlook, and native plantings.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 3: LILY LAKE BUMP OUT

This interpretive node sits just south of the Wakota bridge and is inspired by the G.M. Good Ferry that provided transportation between the east and west bank of the Mississippi River before the bridge was constructed. It will feature a shaded seating area, native planting, interactive interpretive elements, and accessible binoculars.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 4: FISCHER AVE TRAILHEAD

An interpretive site that will add an outdoor classroom near the site of the new Fischer Avenue trailhead.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 5: TOWN OF NININGER

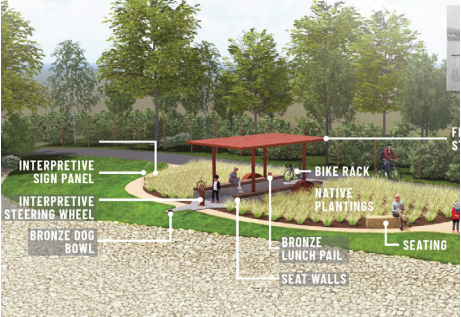
The town of Nininger is known as the birthplace of town ball in Minnesota. This interpretive node will take inspiration from that legacy and will include a shaded seating area, ballpark themed bases, a baseball ‘bleacher’ looking over the field, and ballpark themed artifacts.

INTERPRETIVE NODE 6: HASTINGS

The sixth planned interpretive node will pay homage to the spiral bridge that once connected residents of Hastings to the east bank of the Mississippi and will use salvaged parts of the ‘blue bridge’ that took its place. It will include native plantings, bike racks, pathways, and seat walls.



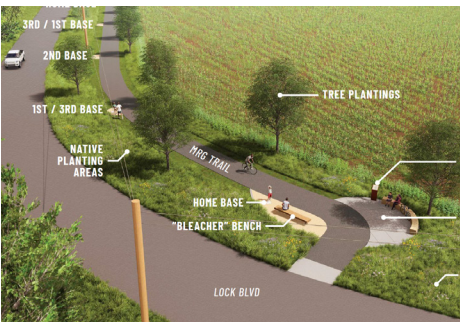
Rendering of Kaposia Landing Monorail interpretive node



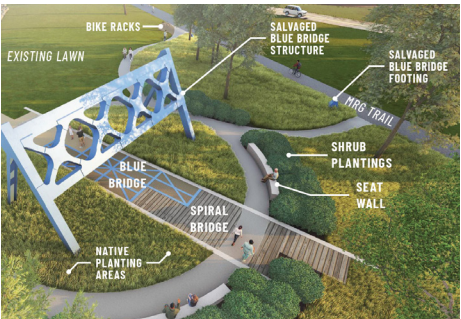
Digital rendering of proposed interpretive node south of the Wakota Bridge



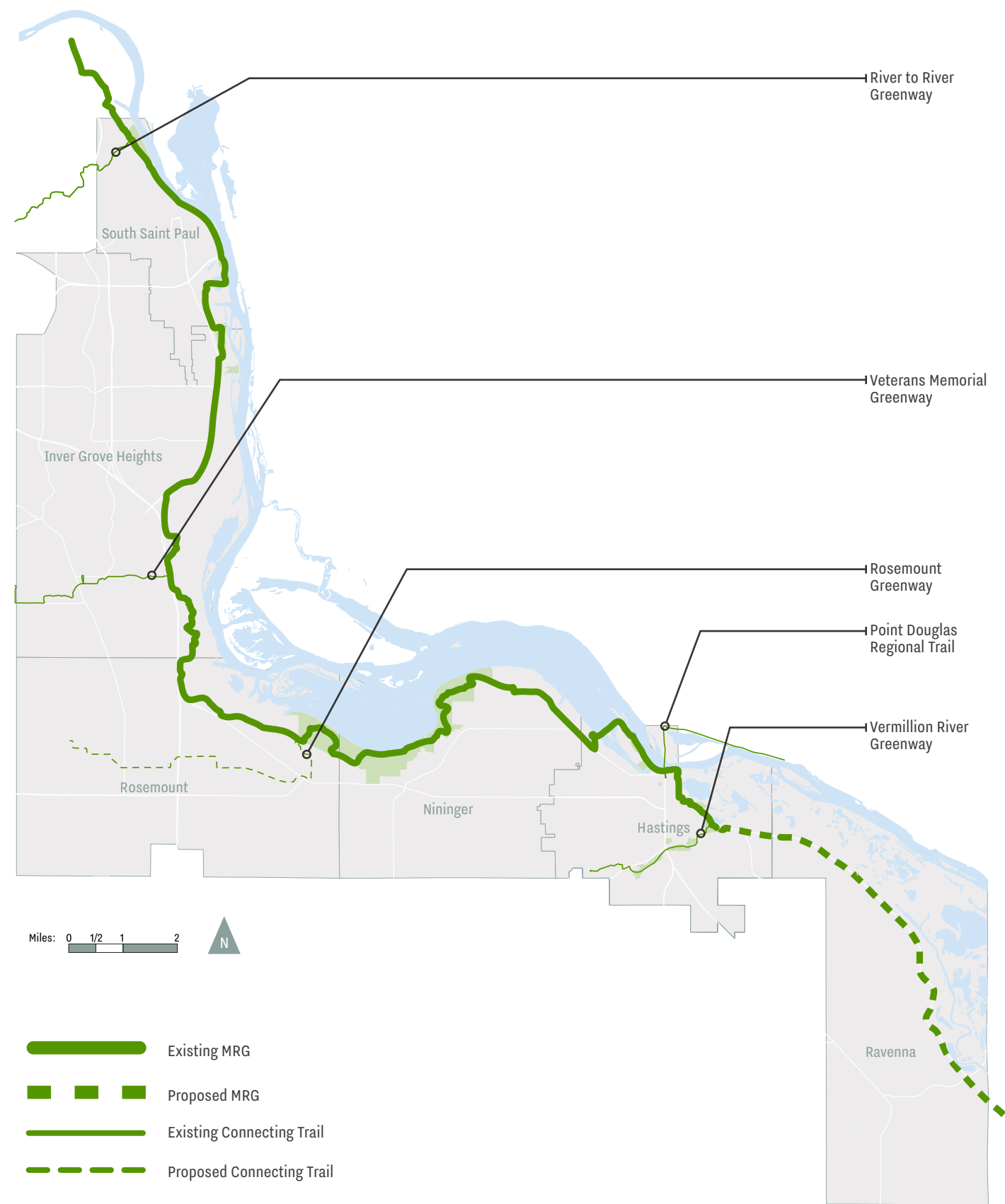
Rendering of future Fischer Ave interpretive node



Rendering of Nininger interpretive node



Rendering of Hastings interpretive node



River to River Greenway connection

RIVER TO RIVER GREENWAY

This trail connects the Mississippi River Greenway in Kaposia Landing to the Big Rivers Regional Trail in Lilydale. Its 7.7 mile corridor links many public spaces including schools, parks, libraries, community centers, and more.



View from MRG near proposed Veterans Memorial Greenway Connection

VETERANS MEMORIAL GREENWAY

Trail connecting the Mississippi River Greenway to Lebanon Hills Regional Park through Eagan and Inver Grove Heights. This trail is a five mile east to west corridor through traversing open rural space and residential neighborhoods with eight different interpretive nodes.



Spring Lake Park near proposed Rosemount Greenway connection

ROSEMOUNT GREENWAY

This proposed trail would connect downtown Rosemount to the Mississippi River Greenway at Spring Lake Park Reserve. It is a 13 mile route almost entirely within the City of Rosemount that links various regionals parks to the MRG and the Vermillion Highlands Greenway.

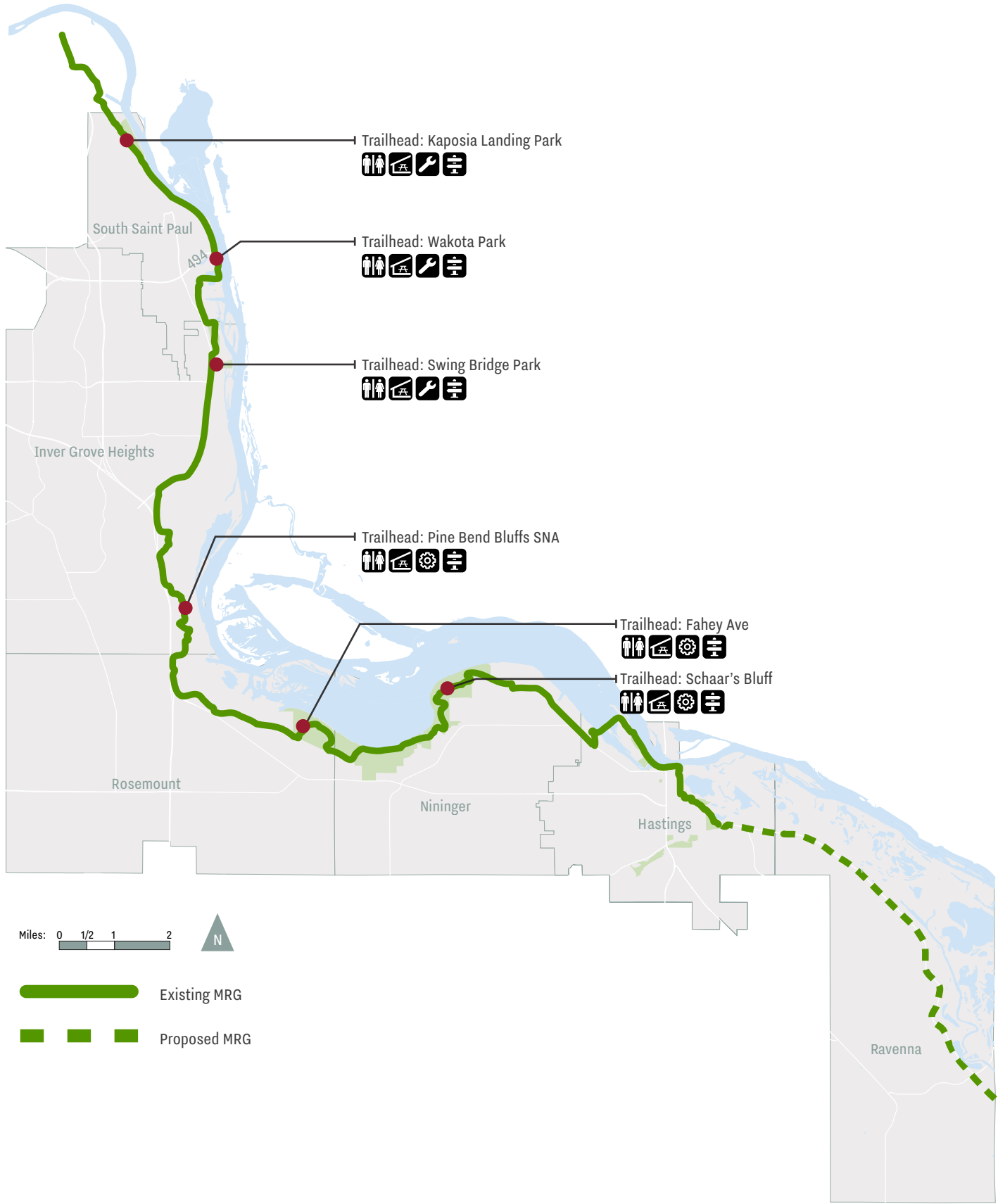


Vermillion Falls

VERMILLION RIVER GREENWAY

This trail links the Mississippi River Greenway from Ravenna trail to Vermillion Falls Park through Hastings. There is also a search corridor to extend this greenway west to connect it to the Vermillion Highlands Greenway.

FACILITIES



TRAILHEADS AND NEIGHBORHOOD GATEWAYS

Frequent access is a priority for the Minnesota River Greenway. Two generalized types of greenway and trail access points are recommended: Trailheads are intended for regional and local access; neighborhood gateways primarily are for local access at opportune locations. Typically, access points will be at recreation destinations, activity centers and trail intersections. Here trail users will find support facilities such as water and restrooms as well as greenway information. Trailheads are the primary greenway access points and will serve people who drive, walk, bike or take transit to the greenway. They will occur every 3 to 5 miles and share facilities such as parking and restrooms with other facilities.

TRAILHEADS WILL INCLUDE:

- Water
- Motor vehicle parking
- Secure bicycle parking
- Picnic areas and/or facilities
- Wayfinding and traffic control
- Restrooms
- Interpretation
- Benches
- Food where opportune
- Shelter and shade
- Local and/or regional trail connections



Pine Bend Bluffs Trailhead



Wakota Bridge Park Trailhead



Swing Bridge Park Trailhead



Fahey Ave Trailhead



Heritage Village Park



Schaar's Bluff Trailhead

MRG AGENCIES & ORGANIZATIONS

The following agencies and organizations have jurisdiction and operational responsibilities for portions of the Mississippi River Greenway.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service (NPS) plays an important role in managing the recreational on the Mississippi River along a 72 mile stretch through the Twin Cities area, including the area along the Mississippi River Greenway. As a ‘partnership park’ the NPS works with local governments and organizations to protect and enhance the rivers resources, rather than directly manage the land.



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for maintaining a 9-foot navigation channel on the Mississippi River, operating locks and dams, mitigating flood risk, and working on environmental restoration efforts along the Upper Mississippi River. The Mississippi River Greenway traverses Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings.



MN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) has jurisdiction over the Mississippi River through many programs and regulations including the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), the Minnesota Wild and Scenic Rivers System, Fisheries management, ordinary high water line, Recreation, and more. The Mississippi River Greenway runs through Pine Bend Scientific Natural Area which is managed by the MN DNR.



MN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN DOT) oversees commercial navigation along the Mississippi River and manages U.S. Bicycle Route 45, the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), of which the Mississippi River Greenway makes up a portion. MRT wayfinding is visible along the Greenway.



MN STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MN SHPO) is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and protecting historic and archaeological Resources. Projects in historically or archaeologically significant locations must consult with MN SHPO to ensure the preservation of historic Resources.

DAKOTA COUNTY

Dakota County is a county is the south east metropolitan area of the Twin Cities. It has a population of roughly 440,000 people and is home to a robust parks and trails system. Dakota county's bold greenway system vision identifies 200 miles of regional greenways that would connect Pakrs, rivers, activity centers, wetlands, and other resources.



LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

The Lower Mississippi Watershed District (LMRWMO) addresses storm water, environmental, and drainage issues within northern Dakota County.



VERMILLION WATERSHED DISTRICT

The Vermillion Watershed District is responsible for protecting, managing, and improving the water resources Rosemount, Nininger, Hastings, and other parts of central Dakota County.



NORTH CANNON RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

The North Cannon River Watershed District is responsible for protecting, managing, and improving the water resources in southern Dakota County.



CITY OF SOUTH SAINT PAUL

South St. Paul is the city on the northernmost part of the Mississippi River Greenway. With a population of about 20,000, the city values its vibrant, close-knit community, rich history, and strong sense of pride.





CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

The City of Inver Grove Heights is home to approximately 35,000 residents and has a mix of quiet residential areas and busy commercial districts. The city is proud of its excellent schools, parks, and development opportunities.



CITY OF ROSEMOUNT

Rosemount is a city that prides itself on its small town feel and proximity to the metropolitan atmosphere. It is rapidly developing and expected to continue growing for years to come.

NININGER TOWNSHIP

NININGER TOWNSHIP

Nininger Township is self-described “Rural living at its finest.” Once an immigration hub in Minnesota, this quiet town neighboring Hastings has lots of interesting history including being the birthplace of Town-ball.



CITY OF HASTINGS

Hastings is a historic river town with a population of 22,000. It’s known for its location at the confluence of the Mississippi, St. Croix, and Vermillion Rivers.



RAVENNA TOWNSHIP

Ravenna Township is a small community that prides itself in the rolling hills, bluffs, and river valleys that make up its landscape.

TRAIL EXPERIENCES AND LANDMARKS

