



**Minnesota Great River Road
Transportation Alternatives Local Project Summaries
December 19, 2016 (updated 12/22/16)**

**For MN-MRPC Consideration on January 5, 2017
and Potential Letters of Support**

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City of Aitkin
Tammy Lou Pfaff, City Clerk

Cuyuna Lakes Trail – Tank Trail Segment

The City of Aitkin seeks funding to construct a 1.3 mile segment of the Cuyuna Lakes Trail in the City of Aitkin as part of the Cuyuna Lakes Trail between Aitkin and Baxter. In addition to being part of the Cuyuna Lakes Trail, the segment will connect the existing segments of the Cuyuna Lakes Trail to city owned property used for biking, hiking and cross country skiing.

Sponsoring Agency – Aitkin County – John Welle, County Engineer

City of Brainerd

Heidi Peper, SEH for the Brainerd Riverfront Committee/City of Brainerd

Three Bridges Trail

After a group of citizens from the Brainerd Area taking part in the Blandin Community Leadership Program identified Mississippi Riverfront development as a priority project, the City of Brainerd commissioned the Brainerd-Baxter Mississippi Riverfront Vision Plan in 2010, which then led to the Mississippi River Partnership Plan that focused on a two mile corridor of the Mississippi River dubbed currently as the Brainerd Riverfront Park. The City received a Difference Maker grant from the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation to help efforts to analyze and implement elements of the plan. The Brainerd HRA is managing the grant and implementation of the plan for the City of Brainerd. The Brainerd Riverfront Park will provide great opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy year-round activities along or on the River. This section contains a large amount of public land with acreage on both banks. It provides significant opportunities and spaces for public and private redevelopment that engage the River and reconnects residents and visitors to its cultural and recreational amenities:

- Riverfront Trail on the east bank - "Three Bridges Trail" - linking the riverfront, Boom Lake, Buster Dog Park, Kiwanis Park and all the new and enhanced amenities described below. This trail has the potential to travel northward to the paper mill dam and St. Joseph's Medical Center (just three blocks north of Washington Street). While park-like along its entire length, the Riverfront Trail will transition in character from urban at the northern end (Washington Street/Medical Center) to more natural at its southern end, traveling through Kiwanis Park to even more natural further south at Buffalo Creek / Rotary Park.
- Identity-branding and way finding signage to the River from Downtown.
- Public art within the Riverfront park, temporary and permanent that celebrate Brainerd's cultural and artistic community.
- Riverside plaza and amenities between Washington and Laurel streets providing access to the River's edge and public open space for small gatherings and events.
- Park enhancements within Adams Field area (Brainerd School District's athletic fields).
- Park enhancements at Kiwanis Park, Buster Dog Park, and Boom Lake including picnic areas, fishing pier, and a winter warming house to support ice skating and sledding,
- Eastside floodplain forest trails and amenities.
- On the west side, DNR/Central Lakes College bluff line river overlook.
- Pedestrian bridge across river connecting east and west side river banks and facilities.
- Enhanced river access – fishing pier, canoe access, etc.
- River cultural and historical interpretive stations / environmental learning opportunities.
- Riverfront Arts and Cultural Center, preferred site on west side of river in cooperation with Brainerd School District and Central Lakes College, providing a venue for artistic and cultural performances with view and access to the River.

One of the first elements of the Plan that will be constructed is the Three Bridges Riverfront Trail as described above.

Note – the Brainerd Riverfront Committee will discuss final approval to proceed with this application on December 23...

Cass County
Laura Hadrava, Construction/Design Engineer

Cass County, in cooperation with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, is intending to apply for a Transportation Alternative Program grant for the construction of a pedestrian bridge located adjacent to Cass County State Aid Highway 8 near the Corps of Engineers recreation area in Federal Dam, MN.

County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 8 provides access to Leech Lake Tribal lands within the Chippewa National Forest and serves as the connection between the cities of Bena and Federal Dam. The existing CSAH 8 Bridge in Federal Dam is the only bridge over the Leech Lake River for 16 miles and serves as the connection between the United States Army Corp of Engineer's (USCOE) Recreation Area at the Leech Lake Dam parking lot and the picnic area. The current bridge is narrow and does not provide any shoulders for alternative transportation modes. This limitation is restricting the safe use of this crossing for pedestrian travel, fishing access, and recreational use.

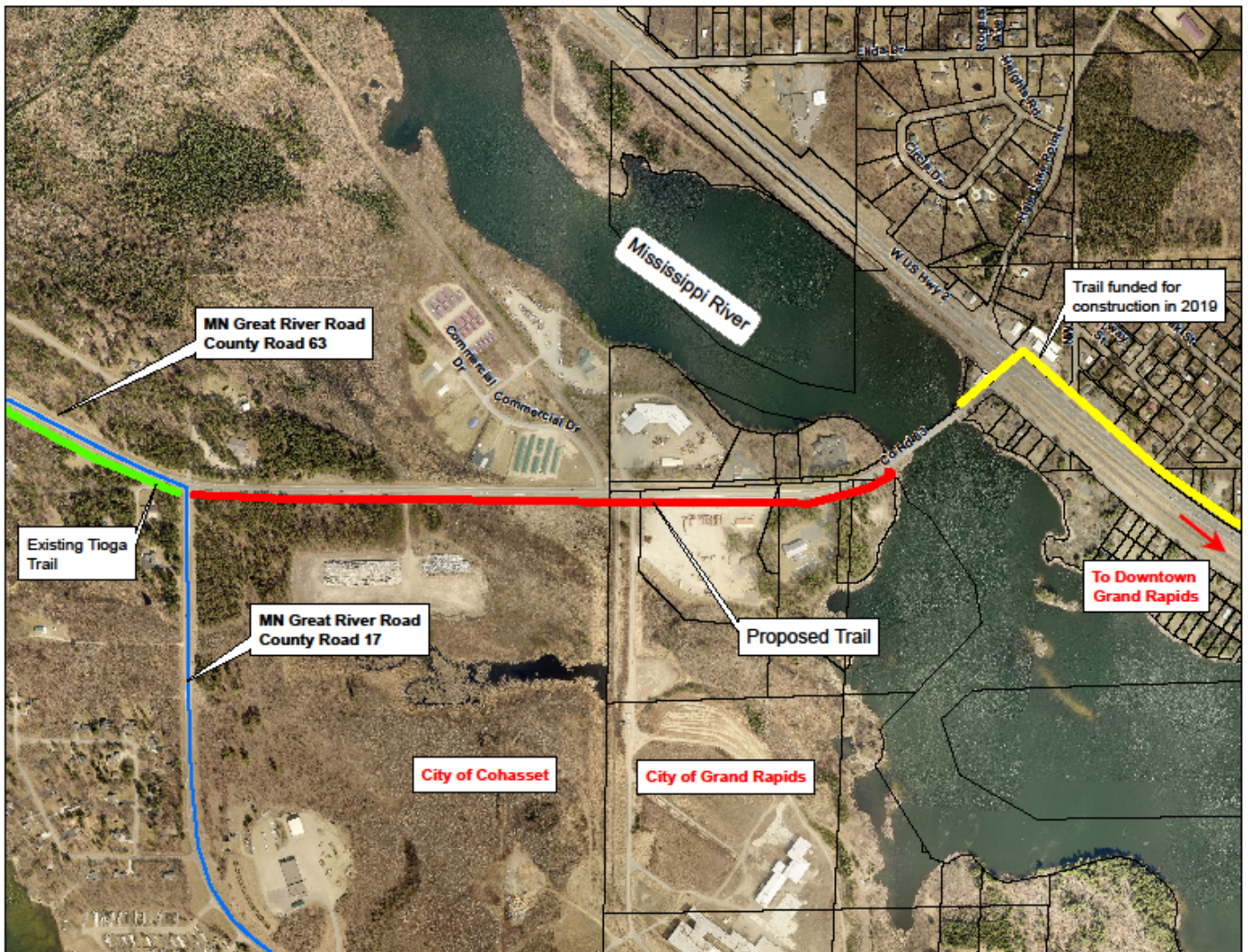
The TAP funds would be used to construct a pedestrian bridge over the Leech Lake River west of the existing CSAH 8 Bridge and will separate the pedestrian and bicycle traffic from the highway traffic. The bridge would be constructed to serve primarily as a pedestrian bridge, but if needed could serve as a one-lane bridge for vehicle traffic in the event that something happens to the existing bridge in the form of maintenance or replacement. The funds will be to construct a concrete pedestrian bridge including approaches and some additional grading to connect to existing walking paths.

As part of the application we need to include letters of support and would like to request that you provide one if you feel this project meets the vision and goals of the MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

City of Grand Rapids
Matt Wegwerth, City Engineer

The City of Grand Rapids respectfully requests a letter of support from the MN-MRPC for the proposed Grand Rapids / Cohasset Connection Trail.

The proposed trail project will run along County Road 63, from County Road ~~17~~ 76 to Us Hwy 2 within Grand Rapids and Cohasset. CR 63 and CR ~~17~~ 76 are currently part of the MN Great River Road route and the proposed project will help to connect residents and trail users to the Mississippi River and Downtown Grand Rapids. Additionally, the MN Great River Road Corridor Management Plan (4.4.1 Route Adjustments, pg 04-41) highlights this section of CR 63 as a possible area for route adjustment. Currently this section is unserved by an off-road recreational facility, which requires users to use the shoulder of the road which can create a safety hazard. The project would include the construction of 4,350 linear feet of 10 foot non-motorized bituminous trail. The proposed connection is the final link between the trail system in Grand Rapids and the trail system in Cohasset, and provides a safe route for residents to connect with the outdoors and natural amenities. The project includes a connection to the Mississippi River Trail which is located along the Great River Road Scenic Byway. (Note – map below should read County Road 76 instead of County Road 17)



City of La Crescent
Terry Erickson, Community Development Director

Please accept this request and brief summary as a request for a letter of support to the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Transportation Alternatives Program MNDOT-TAP for Phase III funding for the Wagon Wheel Project.

Summary: The City of La Crescent is seeking funding from the Transportation Alternatives Fund (MNDOT TAP) to complete Phase III of the Wagon Wheel Trail project. The Wagon Wheel Trail is a key segment to complete the linkage of four State Trails in the region. Phase I of the project was constructed in 2014 and Phase II is slated to be completed in 2017. The project will be financed through a combination of federal, state and local resources. The total project budget is \$2,671,000. The MNDOT TAP request is for \$1,000,000. The remaining match of \$1,671,000 would come from the Department of Natural Resources, Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission and the City of La Crescent. Project funding would be used to pay for road and bridge costs of \$2,671,000.

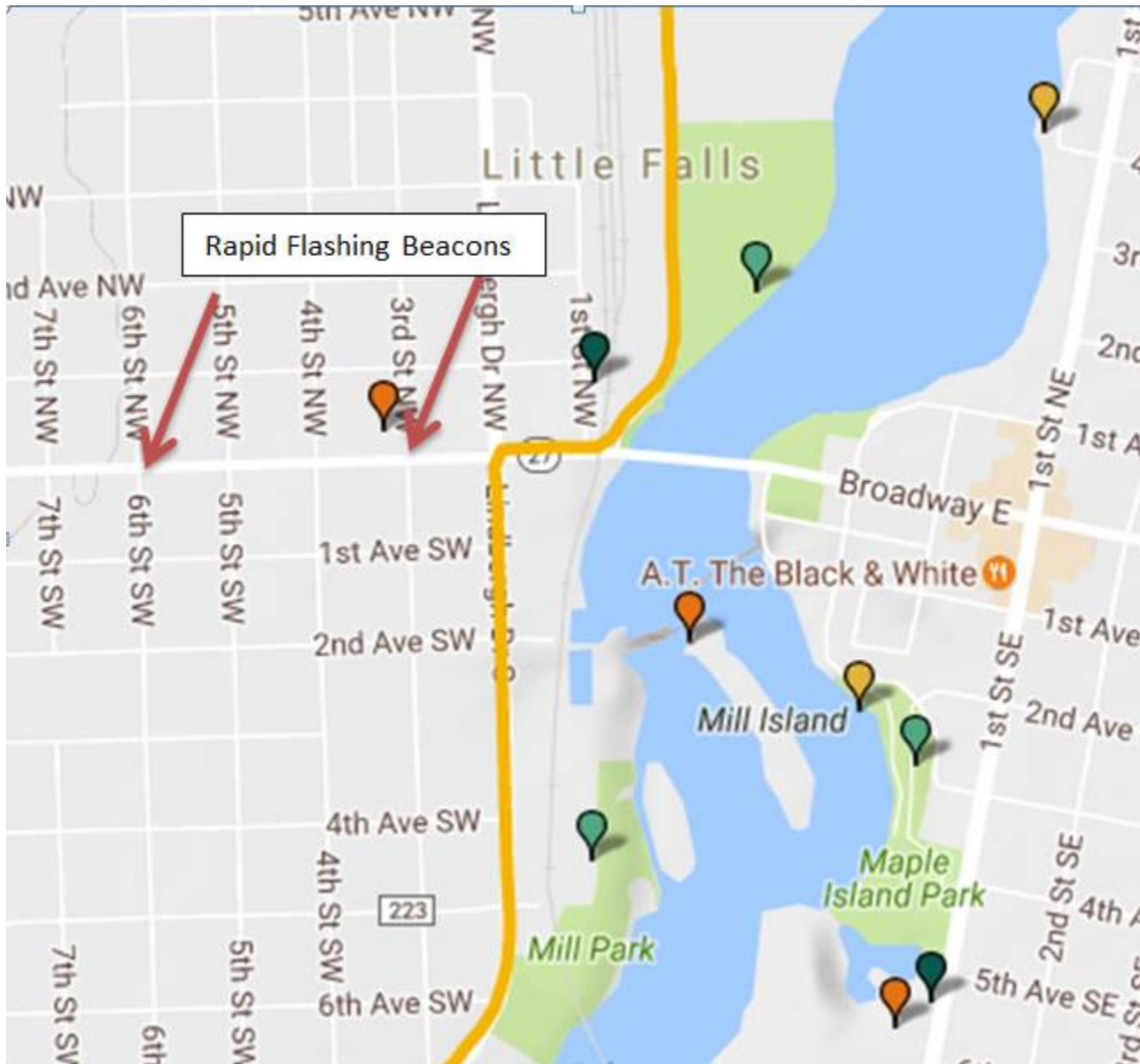
Phase III of the Wagon Wheel Trail Project consists of a grade-separated crossing of TH 14/61 near downtown La Crescent. The project will ultimately provide a safe and reliable multi-use trail for pedestrians, bicyclists and other recreation users. The trail at ultimate buildout, will connect downtown La Crescent and La Crosse and thereby connect Minnesota and Wisconsin regional trails which merge into local city limits.

The project is located along the Great River Road National Scenic Byway and could enhance the byway experience and could help implement Great River Road Corridor Management Plan strategies. Please feel free to contact my office if you should need additional information.

City of Little Falls
Greg Kimman, City Engineer

Little Falls Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Improvements

The City of Little Falls would like to request the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission's support on our Transportation Alternative Grant request. Our TA request is to construct sidewalks, trails, and rapid flashing beacons in select locations to improve the walkability of our sidewalk system. The area closest to the Great River Road, would see the addition of rapid flashing beacons at two locations. One near Our Lady of Lourdes Church by the middle school and another near Lincoln Elementary. Both would allow pedestrians to cross Trunk Highway 27 in a much safer way than currently exists.



Red Wing Riverfront Trail



Red Wing's riverfront trail idea emerged during the 1986 Red Wing Trail Plan planning process. The trail project was formally included as a capital improvement action within Red Wing's 1996 Comprehensive Plan. More recently, in the spring of 2016 the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkways Commission completed the Great River Road Corridor Management Plan (CMP). The city's Riverfront Trail project is consistent with the CMP. The CMP identifies the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), Minnesota's first statutory state bikeway route (USBR 45), as an important alternative transportation mode. We expect the Riverfront Trail system to be identified as the MRT in the future.

In addition, in September 2016 the MN DNR completed the Master Plan for the Mississippi Blufflands Trail. Red Wing's Riverfront Trail is an important segment of the legislated State Trail corridor, critical to the overall success of the future State Trail. The recently completed MN DNR Master Plan for the Mississippi Blufflands Trail can be accessed here:

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/mississippi_blufflands.html

As stated, Red Wing's 3.6 miles of designated riverfront trail lies within the Mississippi Blufflands State Trail corridor. Completing the Red Wing segments of the state trail will create the foundation for a unique, regionally significant and safe 17 mile State Trail between the communities of Red Wing and Lake City. The fully developed state trail will provide a connection to local, regional and state recreational facilities and trails along the US Highway 61 Scenic Byway corridor. The trail will be a separated transportation facility benefitting the region. The trail will provide an alternative bikeway-walkway for local, regional and long distance MRT users.

Segment one, from the Cannon Valley Trail - Goodhue Pioneer State Trail to Red Wing's Levee Park is complete. Two segments within the city, Levee Park to Barn Bluff Park (segment two), and Barn Bluff Park to Colvill Park (segment three) remain to be developed. The city is seeking \$900,000 in FY 21 TAP funding for segment three, the three-quarter mile segment between Barn Bluff Regional Park and Colvill Park. The construction of this trail segment connecting the two significant regional recreational parks, abutting TH 61 and the riverfront; establishes a unique transportation alternative, separated from Highway 61.

City of Sauk Rapids
Todd Schultz, Community Development Director

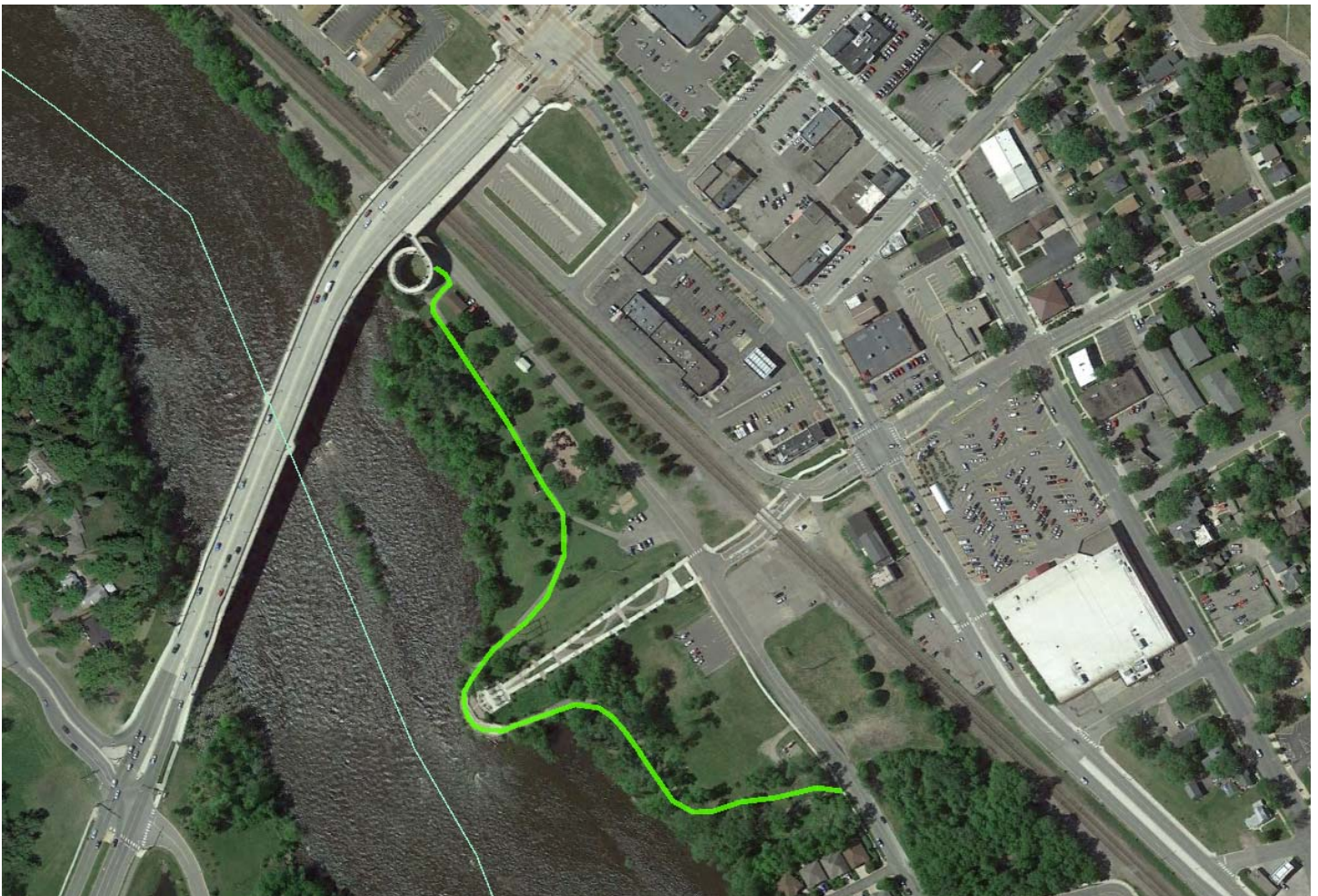
Mississippi River Trail Lighting

As you know, the City of Sauk Rapids has requested funding for a Greater Minnesota Transportation Alternatives Solicitation project.

The City has an off-road trail segment of the Mississippi River Trail that leaves River Avenue North at the foot of the Sauk Rapids Bridge, for approximately 2,000 feet as the trail meanders through Lions and Southside Parks and along the Mississippi River. The trail is completely unlit and also somewhat remote. We would like to install lighting along this trail segment to make it more user friendly and safer for both central Minnesota's and outstate bikers on the Mississippi River Trail. There are also two fishing piers just off of this trail that get used heavily in the summer. I have attached a drawing below.

The City in recent years has made a focus of becoming more multi-modal in its transportation projects. Although this segment is existing, it has become more remote as the old Mississippi River Bridge crossing has moved two blocks to the north. This trail segment is very popular with people in central Minnesota and nationally as an MRT route for walking, biking, roller-blading, etc. The City has looked at doing this project within the scope of its own park program, but due to the length of this segment, the project is very expensive. The total project budget is \$368,330.16

We would respectfully ask for the support of the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission in the form of a letter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.



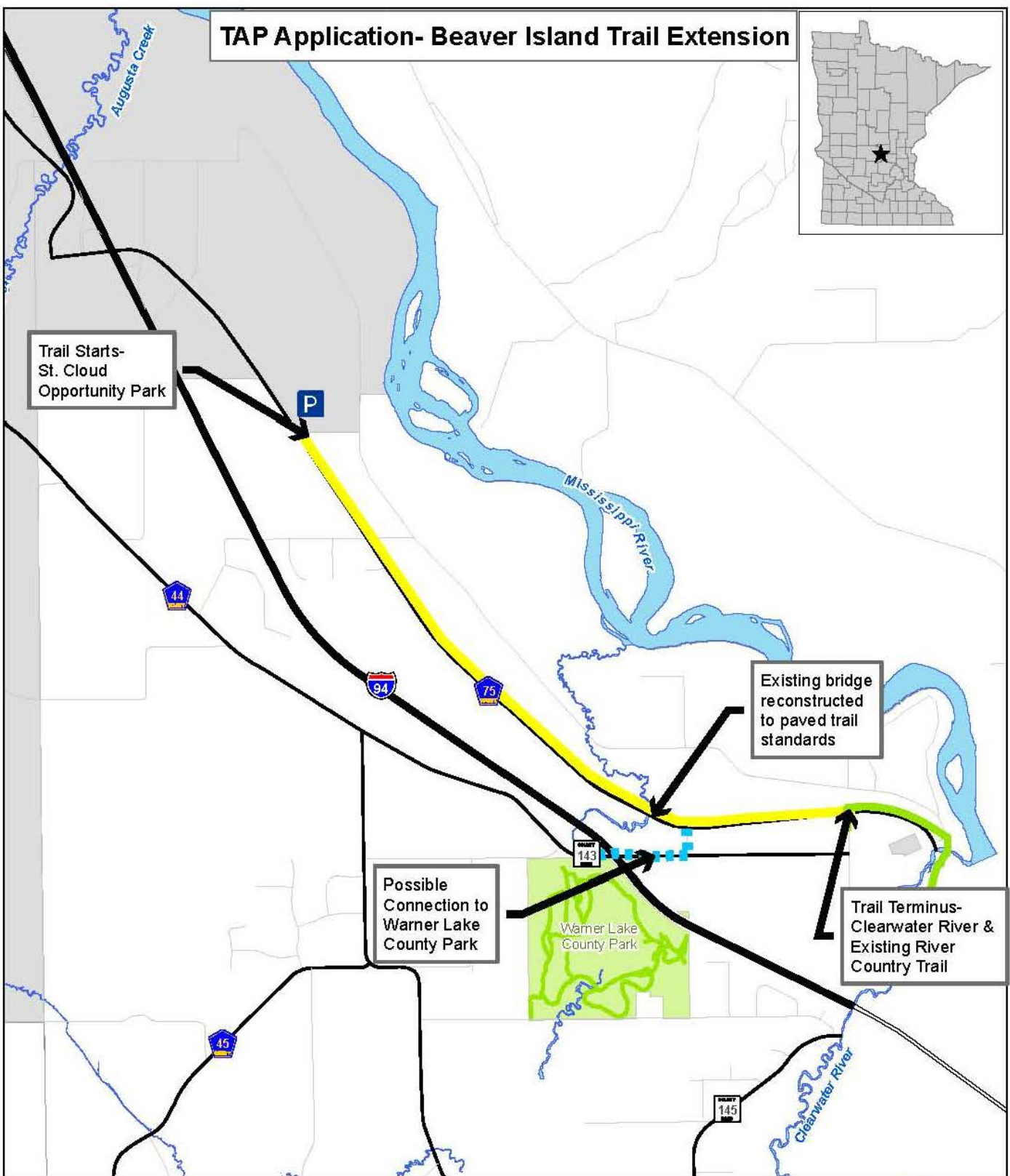
Stearns County
Ben Anderson, Operations Coordinator

Beaver Island Trail Extension

The Beaver Island Trail Extension is approximately 4.5 miles long and runs from the City limits of St. Cloud (near Opportunity Drive right off of Interstate 94) to the existing City of Clearwater's River Country Trail. The Stearns County Parks Department has been working for more than 10 years to secure the old railroad corridor where the trail will be built. The proposed trail will consist of a 10 foot wide bituminous surface and have two foot gravel shoulders. The Federal Fiscal Year 2021 cost estimates for this project is \$1.7 million. The Stearns County Parks Department is going to ask for \$800,000 from the Fiscal Year 2021 Transportation Alternatives Solicitation to assist with construction costs. If the funding is received the Stearns County Parks Department will also use the \$800,000 as a match to leverage the remaining project costs from the Minnesota Legacy Funds. As you probably already know, this trail extension would provide a great opportunity to bring the MRT trail off of the busy County Road 75 and onto a safer, separated paved trail.

See map on following page.

TAP Application- Beaver Island Trail Extension



Trail Starts-
St. Cloud
Opportunity Park

P

Existing bridge
reconstructed
to paved trail
standards

Possible
Connection to
Warner Lake
County Park

Trail Terminus-
Clearwater River &
Existing River
Country Trail

Project Site Level Map

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Beaver Island Trail Extension
- - - Warner Lake Connection Trail



Stearns County Auditor/Treasurer
Division of Land Management
1000 Stearns County Administration Center

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