

# Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail

## MASTER PLAN

October 2012



# Acknowledgments

The contributions and support of the following individuals and organizations were instrumental in the creation of this plan, and are gratefully acknowledged:

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Riverfront Corporation: Gregory Page

US Army Corps of Engineers

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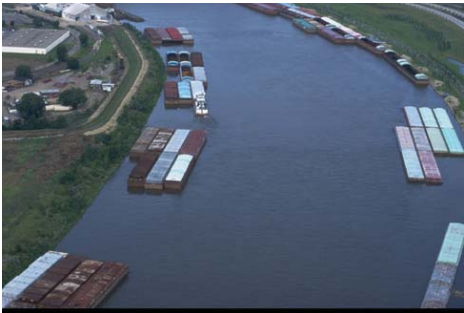
**Design & Construction Section**

**October, 2012**

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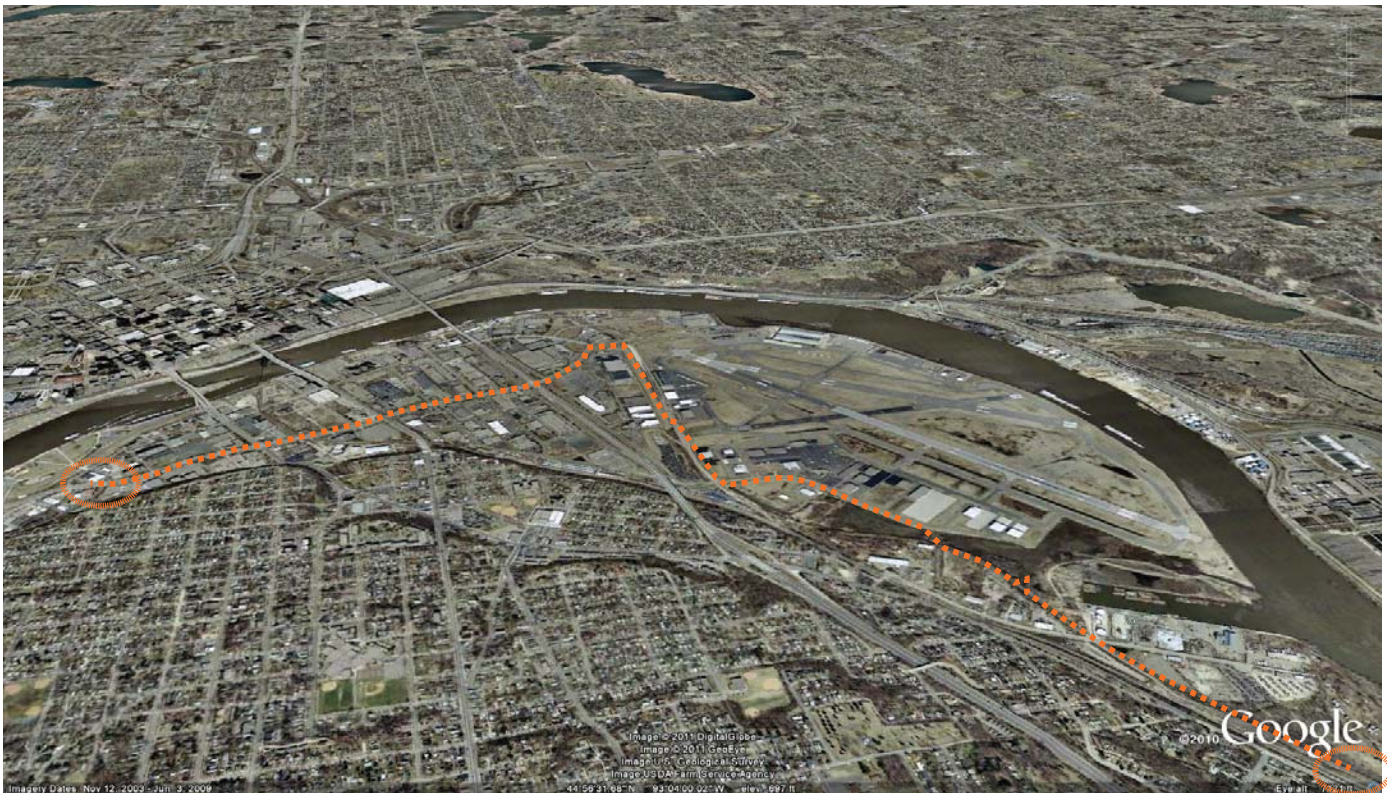
# Introduction



The Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail (HISSP) will be a public transportation and recreational trail corridor that will connect Harriet Island and Lilydale Regional Park and their trails to the south portion of the City and beyond to the City of South St. Paul. In addition to the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) in South St. Paul, the trail will become a part of four existing St. Paul systems:

1. The existing inter city trail system that provides both transportation and recreational trail connections between city public parks.
2. The Great River Passage, St. Paul's planned vision for a comprehensive riverfront park system that will synergistically connect the natural and urban ecologies of St. Paul.
3. The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA) a National Park encompassing 72 miles of Mississippi River basin.
4. The Mississippi River Trail (MRT) is a multi-state transportation and recreational trail that begins at the headwaters of the Mississippi River and extends through ten states on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. MnDOT is supporting the trail and recognizes that the goal of developing a multi-state national trail brings both quality of life and economic benefits to St. Paul and the entire metropolitan region.

Multi-State Mississippi River Trail



Aerial view of trail within the context of the City of Saint Paul.



Beginning with a connection at Harriet Island/Lilydale Regional Park the trail will, with a few notable exceptions, utilize existing public right-of-way to create a continuous off road bicycle and pedestrian trail. The trail will be built to meet current safety and accessibility standards and will provide a safe transportation route for bicyclists and pedestrians coming from South St. Paul and St. Paul's West Side neighborhood to make connections to other regional parks and trails and to Saint Paul's downtown business district. The City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared this master plan for Metropolitan Council review and approval.

The 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan describes the role of the master plan in the regional park system and requires that any project proposed for funding in the Metropolitan Regional Parks Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) be consistent with a Metropolitan Council approved regional park master plan. This master plan was prepared to identify a feasible trail alignment, present property ownership and other construction and operation issues and to identify reasonable approaches to completing the trail.

This master plan addresses the eleven content requirements for Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plans as outlined by the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* adopted December 2010. The master plan allows the City of Saint Paul to be eligible to apply for funding to implement plans for the amenities identified.

# Background



Harriet Island Regional Park  
Levee Entrance

There is currently no off-street bicycle commuter trail connection between Saint Paul and South St. Paul. The Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail will connect major sections of the existing regional bike commuter and recreational trail systems and eliminate many current and future potential safety hazards, principally bicyclist conflicts with vehicles and trains. Both cities have significant investments in their parks and trail systems and the opportunity for the development of a connection provides enhancements that serve the region as well.



Wayfinding Kiosk at Harriet Island

Discussions have been under way with planners at Dakota County and the City of South St. Paul and both parties are anxious to team with Saint Paul on the planning, construction and operation of their respective portions of the proposed regional trail.

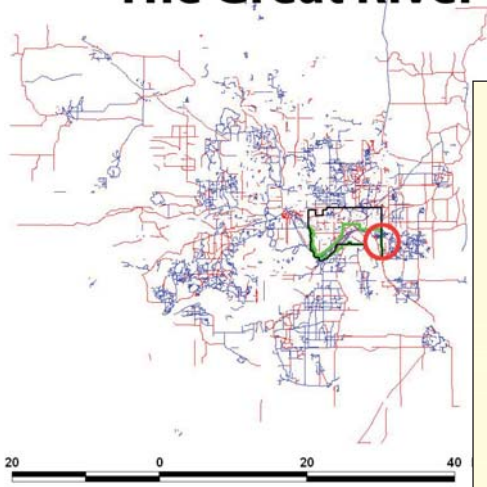
Saint Paul has researched and selected a feasible route for the trail. Beginning with a connection at Harriet Island and Lilydale, the trail will, with a few notable exceptions, utilize existing public right-of-way to create a continuous off road bicycle and pedestrian trail. The trail will be built to meet current safety and accessibility standards and will provide a safe transportation route for bicyclists and pedestrians coming from South St. Paul and the St. Paul's West Side neighborhood to make connections to other regional parks and trails and to Saint Paul's downtown business district.



Harriet Island Regional Park  
Plato Boulevard Entrance.

The proposed trail connection will be part of multiple existing long term commitments to strengthening the metro area's alternative, sustainable transportation and recreational trail system as shown on the trail system maps on the following page.

# Metro Area Trails & The Great River Passage



## Dakota County Parks, Lakes, Trails and Greenways Vision, 2030

### What's New?

- NEW COUNTY PARKS, MORE PARK ACTIVITIES:**
  - New Vermillion River Park
  - Complete park master plan improvements
  - Fill gaps in park recreation "basics"
    - Biking, bike access to greenways
    - Accessible trail loops
    - Enhanced picnicking
- INTERCONNECTED URBAN TRAIL GREENWAYS:**
  - Link public open space and destinations through multi-agency partnerships
  - Regional Trail Greenways: 100 miles of county connector trail
  - City Trail Greenways: connect local destinations to regional network
- SOUTHERN STREAM CORRIDOR GREENWAYS:**
  - Protect stream and resource corridors through public and private cooperation
  - Protect natural landmarks through partnerships



**MRT Trail Status**  
 Green segments are fully designated, signed and described in promotional material.  
 Yellow segments are under development. Riders should research the route before they ride.  
 Red segments may include dangerous areas and routing problems.  
 Purple segments mark adjacent trails.

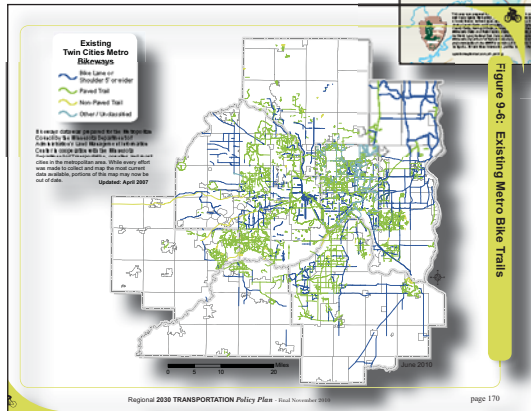
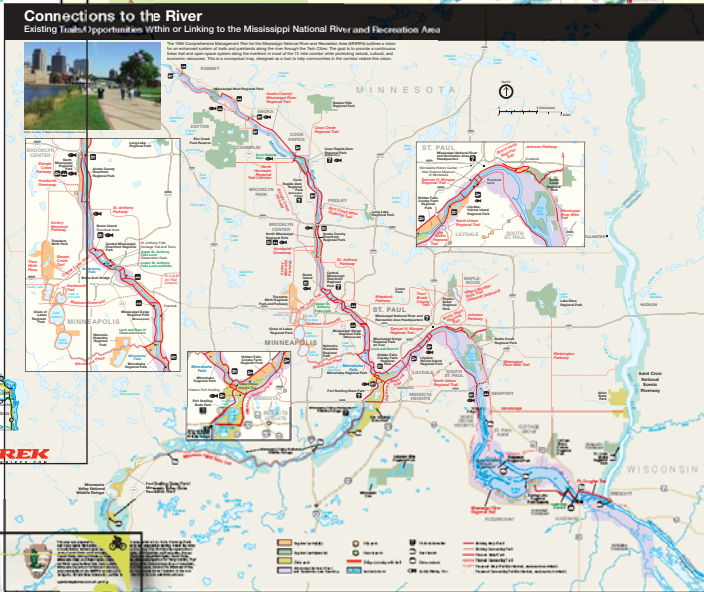
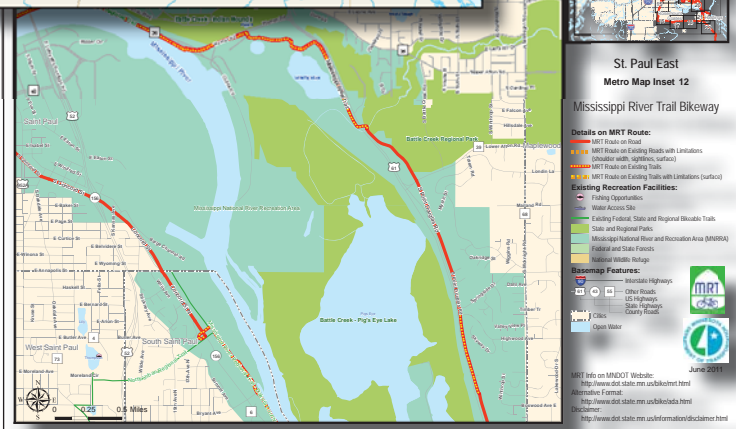


Figure 9-6: Existing Metro Bike Trails



Multiple Existing plans anticipate a trail connection from Harriet Island to South St. Paul



# 1. Property Ownership and Acquisition Costs

The selection of a feasible route for the Harriet Island to South St. Paul Trail maximizes the use of existing City Rights of Way. Additional easement requirements needed for trail construction can be acquired with low or no costs. The trail would begin at Plato Boulevard and Water Street where it will connect with the Harriet Island’s existing trail and the Cherokee Regional Park trail. We have studied the use of the Plate Boulevard Right of Way with the Public Works Traffic Planners and despite a number of difficult existing conditions there appears to be sufficient options for trail placement within this right of way.

The next section of the trail will utilize the existing flood control levee that runs north and south along Holman Field airport. This property is owned by the City of St. Paul and as part of the flood control system, is operated and maintained by the Public Works Sewer Division. There are several bike and pedestrian trail facilities that are on existing levee structures for example on Harriet Island Regional Park trail. As long as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (C.O.E.) guidelines are followed and the plans develop in collaboration with the Sewer Division, the trail placement on this City property should be straightforward.

The trail will need to cross a single track section of rail line that runs parallel to the levee. This section of track has clear sight lines and will allow development of a safe track crossing facility that will require a rail crossing easement with the rail line owner, Midwestern RR Properties Inc. Additional easements with Midwestern RR will be required for two crossings near the South St. Paul -Saint Paul border.

<b>PROPERTY OWNER</b>	<b>LENGTH OF TRAIL SEGMENT (Lineal Feet)</b>	<b>WIDTH OF EASEMENT</b>	<b>TOTAL SF..</b>
City of Saint Paul (ROW)	8,000	15’	120,000
Saint Paul Public Work Flood Control	2,800	15’	42,000
Metropolitan Airports Commission.	4,950	15’	74,250
St. Paul Port Authority	1,400	15’	21,000
Midwestern RR Properties Inc.	160	15’	2,400



Road Right of Way available for trail through MAC easement agreement.



St. Paul Port Authority Land available for trail



Trail terminous at South St. Paul's Kaposia Landing Park.



Bike & Ped Bridge in South St Paul connects to Dakota Co. Trail Systems.

## Airport Easement:

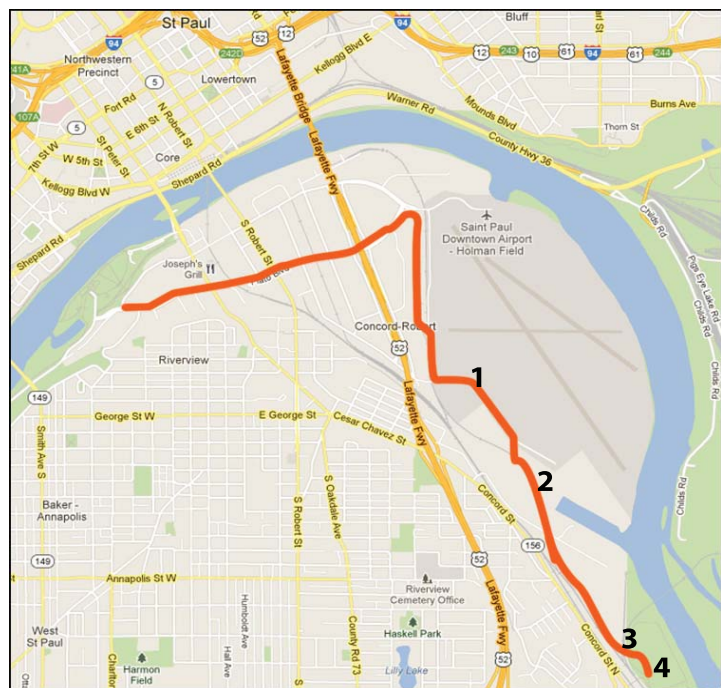
The trail will cross Airport road and require securing a trail easement with the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to use land on the east side of the road for the trail. Discussions with a MAC representative were favorable for this trail development with the stipulation that it meet all airport security requirements.

## Port Authority

The Saint Paul Port Authority owns multiple land parcels south of the airport and they have approached the St. Paul Parks Department with an offer to use portions of this land for the placement of the trail. The City's use of this land will be accomplished either by easement agreements or land ownership transfer from the Port Authority to the Saint Paul Parks Department.

## South Saint Paul

The trail will parallel the existing rail right of way through to the Saint Paul boundary. The trail will need to cross several RR tracks as it enters into Kaposia Landing park. Because of heavier train traffic on these lines, a bicycle and pedestrian bridge will be needed to provide a safe crossing. The construction of this bridge will necessitate easement agreements and collaborative design process with the Chicago & Great Western railroad representatives.



Trail Photo Key

## 2. Stewardship Plan



Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail;  
Operated and maintained by St. Paul  
Parks and Recreation.

The City of Saint Paul, the City of South Saint Paul and Dakota County own and maintain the trails at each end of the proposed new trail. They will cooperatively manage the regional trail portions that are within their respective jurisdictions. Management responsibilities will include operational management, safety, law enforcement and emergency services. Trail use will be open to the public year round with no non-residential uses or revenue collection for the use of the trail. Should such uses occur in the future, revenues collected will be utilized consistent with the adapted Recreation Open Space Development Guide/Policy plan. The completed trail will likely become part of the Multi-state Mississippi River Trail.



### 3. Demand Forecast



Based on the Metropolitan Council Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Park System for 2010, Lilydale and Harriet Island Regional Park received 822,500 visitors and Big Rivers Regional Trail received 124,600 visitors. Park use has increased in St. Paul by 5.5% and in Dakota County by 0.3%. Data for all metro parks indicates that trail visits in 2010 have increased by 18.3% from 2009.

The Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails Survey 2010 shows that walking/hiking and biking are rated as the top activities for regional parks and trails. The surveys also indicate that trails provide important access to other activities within a park such as swimming and fishing. According to MnDOT, the number of individuals using bike trails for transportation is on the rise: “In 2000, more than 10,000 people biked to work in the Twin Cities”. Minneapolis estimates that; “2.6 percent of commuting trips to work and school in Minneapolis are by bike”.



The Harriet Island to South St. Paul trail connection will become an important part of the City and region’s bicycle network. The trail is included in a Citywide Bicycle Transportation plan. The network of trails that can be accessed from the HISSP trail is extensive and expanding as the both Saint Paul and adjacent municipalities continue to implement its non-motorized transportation system. Primary connections will be made to the existing Harriet Island Lilydale Regional Park Trail and the Cherokee Regional Park trail scheduled for completion in 2012. These trails establish further connections to the Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail via the Wabasha Bridge. The re-constructed Lafayette Bridge contains bicycle and pedestrian lanes on the Northbound (East) side of the bridge. From the bridge trail, connections will be completed to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail and other trails on the east side of Saint Paul. Trail use estimates listed below are based on existing Metropolitan Council estimates from 2010.



- Harriet Island, Lilydale Cherokee Regional Parks had over 1.1 million visitors in 2010.
- The Sam Morgan Regional Trail connects directly with the Mississippi River Boulevard trail, a part of the Mississippi River Gorge Regional Park which had over 2.1 million visitors in 2010
- The South St. Paul connection leads directly into the recently completed Kaposia Landing Park where additional trail connections to other South St. Paul and Dakota County destinations can be found.
- Big Rivers Trail at the western end of the Lilydale trail had over 124,000 visitors in 2010.

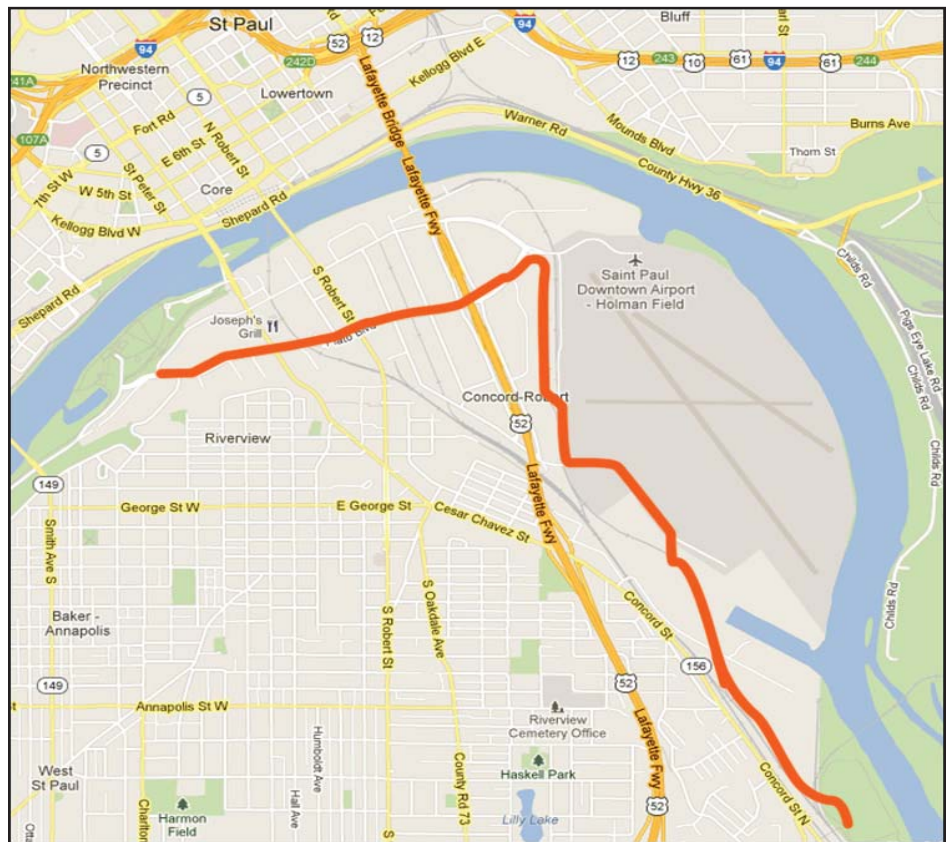
## ***Mississippi River Trail use projections***

Mississippi River Trail, (MRT) development in Minnesota is supported by MnDot as one component of their multi-modal transportation planning strategy. With its multiple connections to other riverfront trails and its close river proximity it is expected that the HISSP trail will become an important segment of the MRT. The development of the MRT is considered a long term project and with MnDot and NPS partnerships Minnesota's portion is likely to continue to be at the forefront of the trail's development and use for the near future. Appendix X

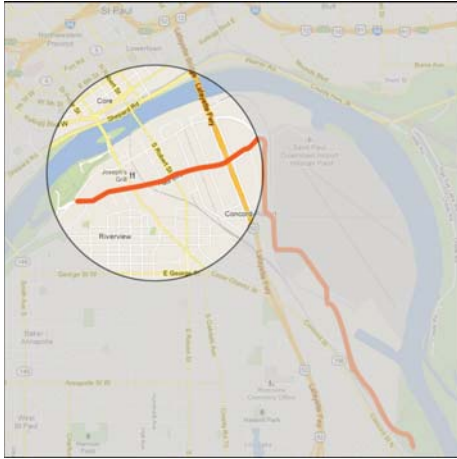
## ***National Park Service MNRRA***

The HISSP trail will be part of the network of trails that lie in close proximity to the river and within the National Park System's Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. (MNRRA) The trail will support a key NPS goal of increasing non-motorized access to the river for park visitors as part of the MNRRA Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP).

## ***Development Concept Segment Key Map***

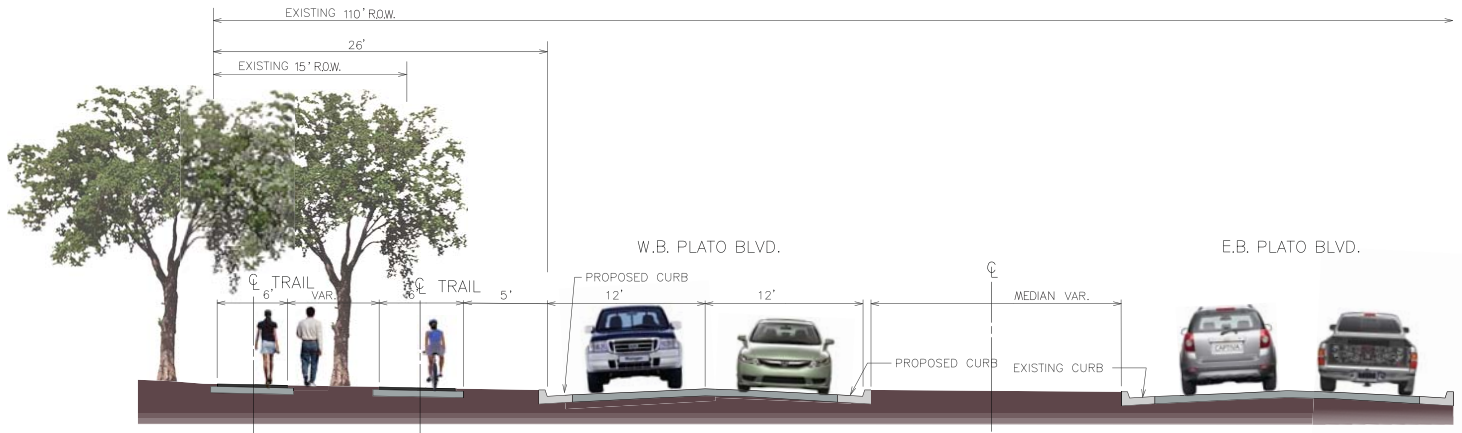


# 4. Development Concept



## Segment 1: Harriet Island to Airport Road

The overall trail alignment is illustrated in Appendix A. The development of trail segment 1 (see pages 14-15) will utilize the existing right of way along Plato Boulevard. This will require modifications to the existing road lanes at some portions of this segment. Where there is sufficient space present, it may be necessary to narrow the median and shift the north curb enough to provide a wide enough boulevard. Depending upon the details of the trail, the estimated cost for this segment is \$ 1.8 M.



PLATO BOULD. SECTION TYPE #1



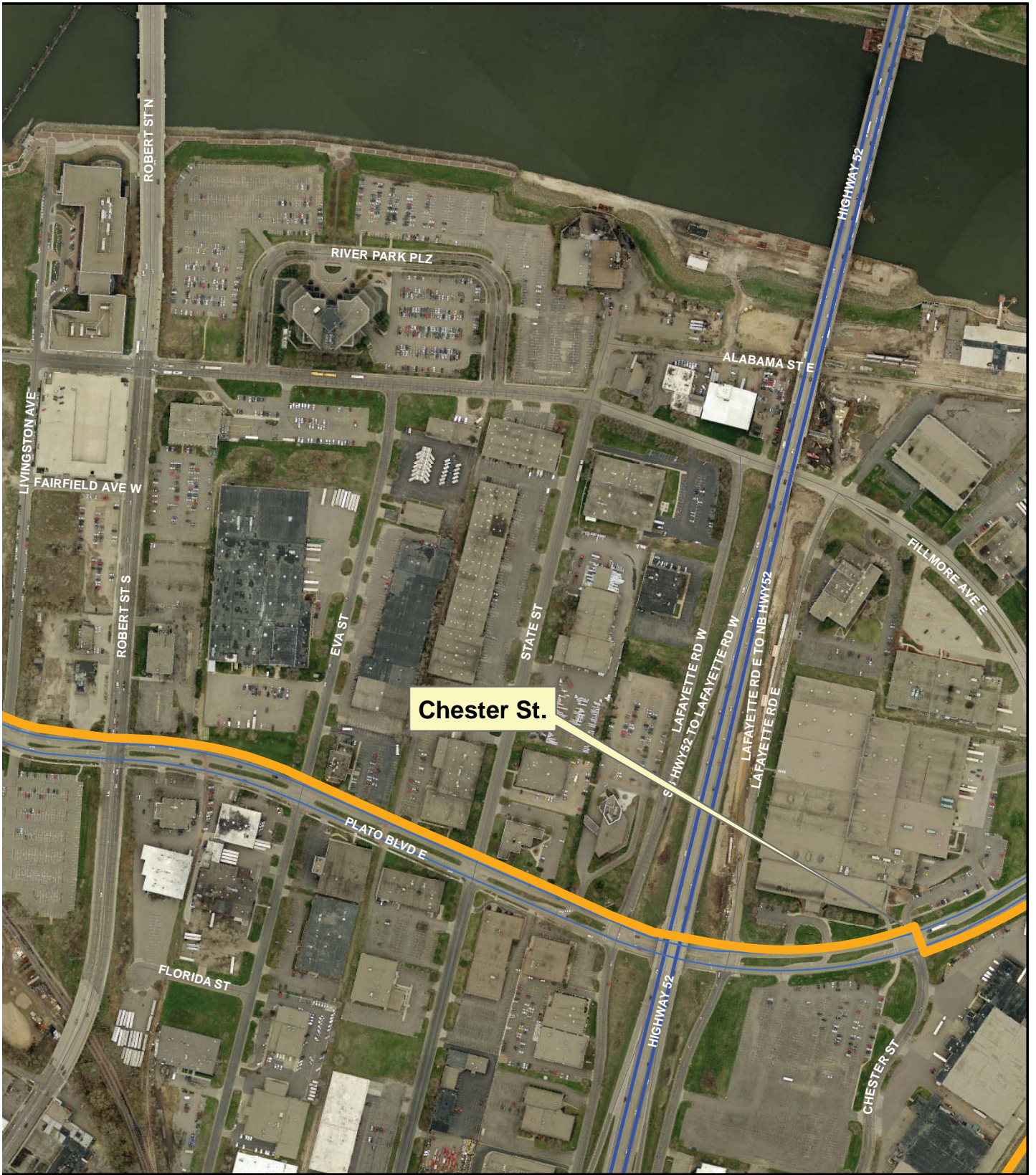
**Plato Boulevard:** Creation of a separated bike and walking trails, or a combined trail located along the west-bound right of way along Plato Avenue. Type #1 would widen the boulevard to provide space for a bike route, while the existing concrete sidewalk would remain.



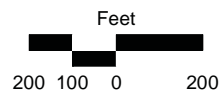


Harriet Island to Chester St. ~6,750 L.F.





Chester St.



Segment 1

Some sections of trail installation on Plato Blvd. will require different configuration strategies. One goal will be to preserve existing boulevard trees as much as possible. Options for the trail position will depend on the specific conditions within each block of the Plato Boulevard trail segment. Having sufficient right-of-way partially simplifies the trail placement. Maintaining road function requirements, preserving adjacent property

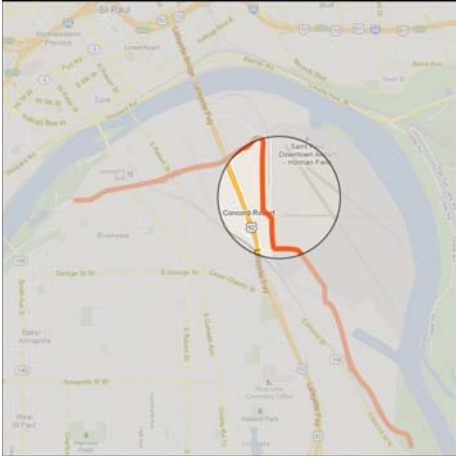


## PLATO BLVD SECTION TYPE #2

driveways, creating safe, signalized and un-signalized intersections and the railroad crossing at Plato and Starkey St. will all require careful design and engineering strategies possibly including traffic calming measures; bump-outs at intersections; raised intersections and raised crosswalks. Close collaborations between St. Paul Public Works traffic planners, adjacent property owners and railroad authorities will lead to a trail section design that meets established trail standards and coexists with other City functions.



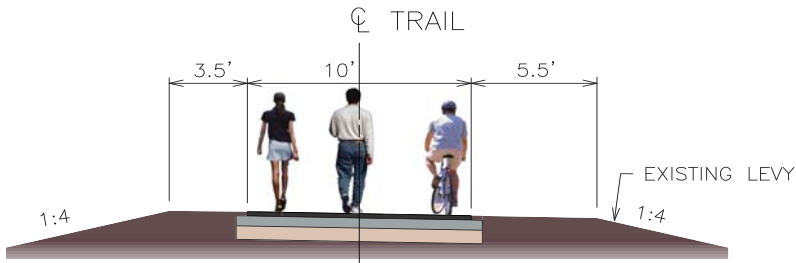
## Segment 2: Chester St. to Eaton St.



Segment 2 will utilize the top of the flood levee that runs adjacent to Airport Road. Other flood control levees have been designed and used for trails in St. Paul. The City's Public Works Department, responsible for the operation and maintenance of the levees, will allow the trails to be built on the structures as long as C.O.E. levee operations standards are met. Design of the trail will meet all necessary Public Works and Corps of Engineers requirements. The cost estimate for this segment, including a lighting system, is \$ 1.6 M.



Corps of Engineers design guidelines are well established and were used the levee trail on Harriet Island. The trail surface as well as any landscape treatment will be part of the design discussions with the C.O.E. and MAC. There are limitations to the planting options, especially for trees and shrubs which are only allowed in areas that have at least 3' of 'overburden' soil above the core of the levee prism. Grass plantings are allowed with no restrictions so there is a possibility that the levee could be converted to a fairly extensive prairie style planting. There are establishment and maintenance challenges with this option. Careful consideration will be given to the levee planting plan from both a maintenance and bird habitat perspective given its close proximity to the airport. The elevation of the levee provides possibilities for scenic views of Downtown, the river and the airport.



LEVEE SECTION



Levee view from Indain Mounds Park





Chester Street to Eaton Street ~4,900 L.F.





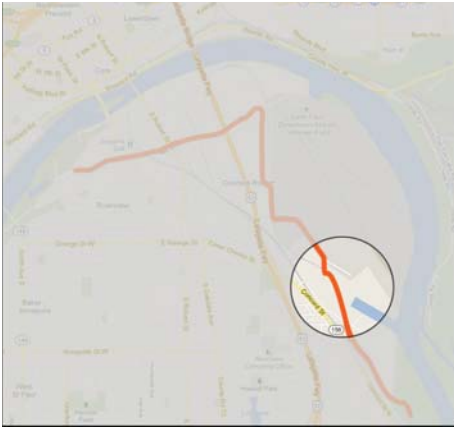
Man Field / St. Paul Downtown Airport

Proposed M.A.C. Right-of-Way Easement



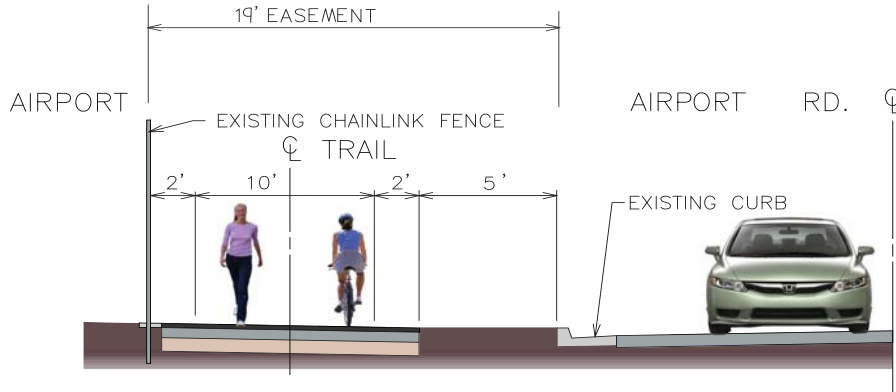
Segment 2





### Segment 3: Eaton St. to Barge Channel Rd.

Segment 3 begins with descent from the top of the levee to bypass a closure structure (#7). The trail will cross a single set of railroad tracks owned and operated by Midwest Railroad Properties. This ‘at grade’ crossing will take advantage of unobstructed sight lines up and down the track which, combined with a very low volume of low speed train traffic, will help insure a safe rail crossing.



Airport Easement Section



From this location, the trail will cross to the east side of Airport Road and utilize an easement with the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to construct the trail along the east edge of the road. This will require shifting the existing security fencing. The trail will continue off-road until it reaches Eaton St., where it will utilize an at grade rail and road crossing to the south side of Eaton St. From there, it will continue adjacent to Eaton street, again making use of MAC easement rights for the trail



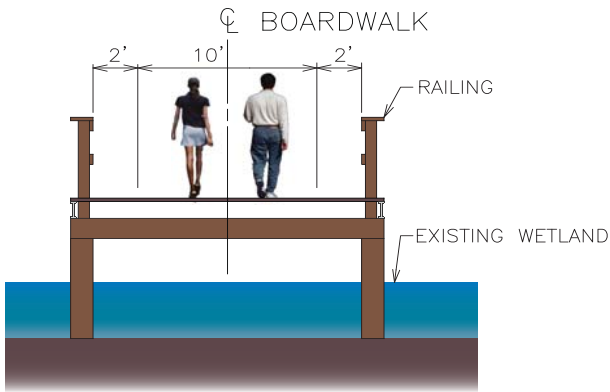
Airport Road showing proposed trail location

To make use of available easement opportunities, the remaining Saint Paul portion of the trail will continue on St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA) property, which they have agreed to either transfer to Parks Department ownership or grant easement rights, most likely, at no charge to the City. The exact trail alignment will continue to be under study while the Port Authority works with their business clients to modify circulation and property access in this area. A short segment of trail will require a boardwalk crossing of wetlands, also owned by the SPPA. This segment is estimated to cost \$ 660,000 including a boardwalk over the wetland area.



Wetland crossing Boardwalk location

**Boardwalk through Wetland:** A boardwalk will be installed to traverse the wetland as the trail departs from Eaton Street. See Appendix A3 for location. Boardwalk construction will be done in a way that meets all safety standards and minimizes or eliminates negative wetland impacts. The trail will then continue along an easement on St. Paul Port Authority property before it crosses Barge Channel Road and connects to Kaposia Landing Park in South Saint Paul.



Boardwalk through wetland area.



Barge Channel Road crossing option in study area.

**Barge Channel Road** currently has low traffic counts and is mostly used by heavy trucks. The businesses that utilize the Southport Industrial District are poised to make changes to their operations which may result in increases in both truck and rail traffic circulation at Barge Channel Rd. The entire area is under study by the SPPA so the final trail crossing location and alignment through this area will be made only after operational effects and safety considerations are considered. Trail alignment will utilize road and rail crossing standards to arrive at an optimal trail crossing configuration that provides clear sight lines and safe passage for trail users.





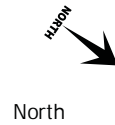
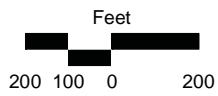
Eaton Street to Barge Channel Rd. ~5,200 L.F.





Proposed M.A.C. Right-of-Way Easement

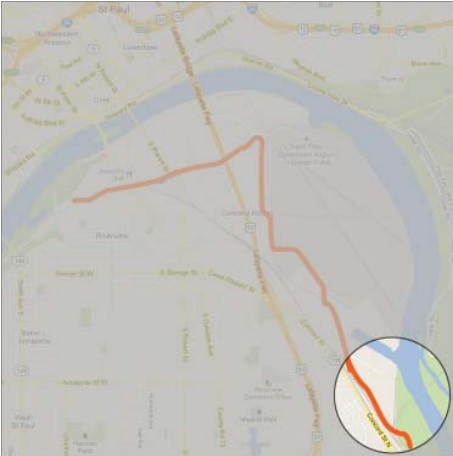
Eaton Street



Segment 3



## Segment 4: Barge Channel Rd. to Kaposia Landing Park



This section of trail (See map on pages 26-27) is outside of Saint Paul's city limits and will be completed by Dakota County / South St. Paul. Both South St. Paul and Dakota County have expressed a strong desire to work with the City of St. Paul toward their goal of connecting the City's Bicycle and park resources. A joint powers agreement between the agencies will be used to allow the two Cities and Dakota County to seeking funding for the completion of the trail as a single project. The connection to South St. Paul will require the construction of a bridge over the railroad tracks to provide a safe crossing of the high traffic freight rail line at the northern end of Kaposia Landing Park. The City of South St. Paul and Dakota county have both listed this trail connection an important priority in their park and trail system.



Dakota County has estimated the cost for the construction of the bicycle and pedestrian bridge and the trail segment within their jurisdiction to be about \$2.4 M. They have committed to work with Saint Paul on the completion of the trail segments within their jurisdiction. To avoid an interim, incomplete, dead end trail condition, Saint Paul, South Saint Paul and Dakota County will jointly seek federal construction funding for completion of the entire length of the trail, most likely through Surface Transportation Program (STP) grant funds. The remaining funding needed to match Federal Grant funds will have to come from City, County, MET Council and any other available eligible grant fund sources. (See page 7 Dakota Trail System.)





# 5. Conflicts

## Agreements needed

### MAC

Several discussions with MAC have yielded positive and supportive results. The construction and operating conditions that MAC will require for the trail to utilize their right of way should be easily met. Their primary concerns are security, lighting conflicts and vertical obstacles. As the design progresses, an agreement will clearly define the parameters and limits to the trail's alignment.

### Saint Paul Public Works

Saint Paul's Public Works department has jurisdiction and therefore significant control over several aspects of the trail's development. Preliminary discussions with the City transportation planner about the use of the Plato Boulevard right of way have concluded that there is sufficient right of way for trail development. Through careful re-configuration of the road lanes, an off road bicycle trail can be added without significant impact to the traffic flow in the vicinity. See Cross Section Type 1 on page 15.

### Port Authority

The Saint Paul Port Authority (SPPA) owns several parcels of land important for the completion of the trail. As part of the planning efforts for the Great River Passage Master Plan, the Parks Department and the SPPA discussed several key land and easement agreements that will support key objectives of the proposed GRP Master Plan including the Harriet Island to South St. Paul trail connection. Segment 3 of the proposed trail route includes several parcels that are in transition. See *Southport Alignment Feasibility Study Area* on the Segment 3 and Segment 4 alignment maps. The City will continue to work closely with the SPPA as their client/lease holder's plans develop further. Some preliminary engineering will be necessary for the easement agreements to be drawn up in detail. It is expected that trail alignment selected will be safe and compatible with the Port Authority's business development goals. At this planning stage Most important is the agreement that the trail will be an important City and regional asset that will take advantage of existing Port Authority property and avoid costly acquisitions.



Airport Road Right of Way Room for the trail will be between the fence and curb.



View of Levee from Airport Road



Eaton Street intersection





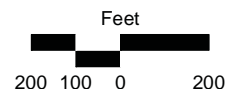
Barge Channel Road to Kaposia Landing Park (~ 2,400 L.F. South St. Paul)





St Paul / South Saint Paul Boundary

Barge Channel Road Study Area



Segment 4





Track Crossing Plato Blvd. & Starky St.

### Bridges vs. 'at grade' crossings

Safe bicycle and pedestrian crossing of railroad tracks depends on multiple factors including clear sight lines for the trail user and the railroad operating engineers, the speed and volume of the rail traffic at the crossing, and the presence of crossing arms or other signals of approaching trains. In addition, the surface conditions of the crossing can contribute to safe travel across the tracks. These conditions are determined by established railroad standards and the standard practices for trail design dictated by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). All rail-trail crossings necessary for the completion of this trail will be designed to meet the applicable standards of the railroad ownership and the MnDOT design standards. It is anticipated that only one rail crossing will require the construction of a bridge to eliminate the potential conflicts associated with an at grade crossing at Kaposia Landing Park. See following *aerial photos of existing rail crossing locations*.

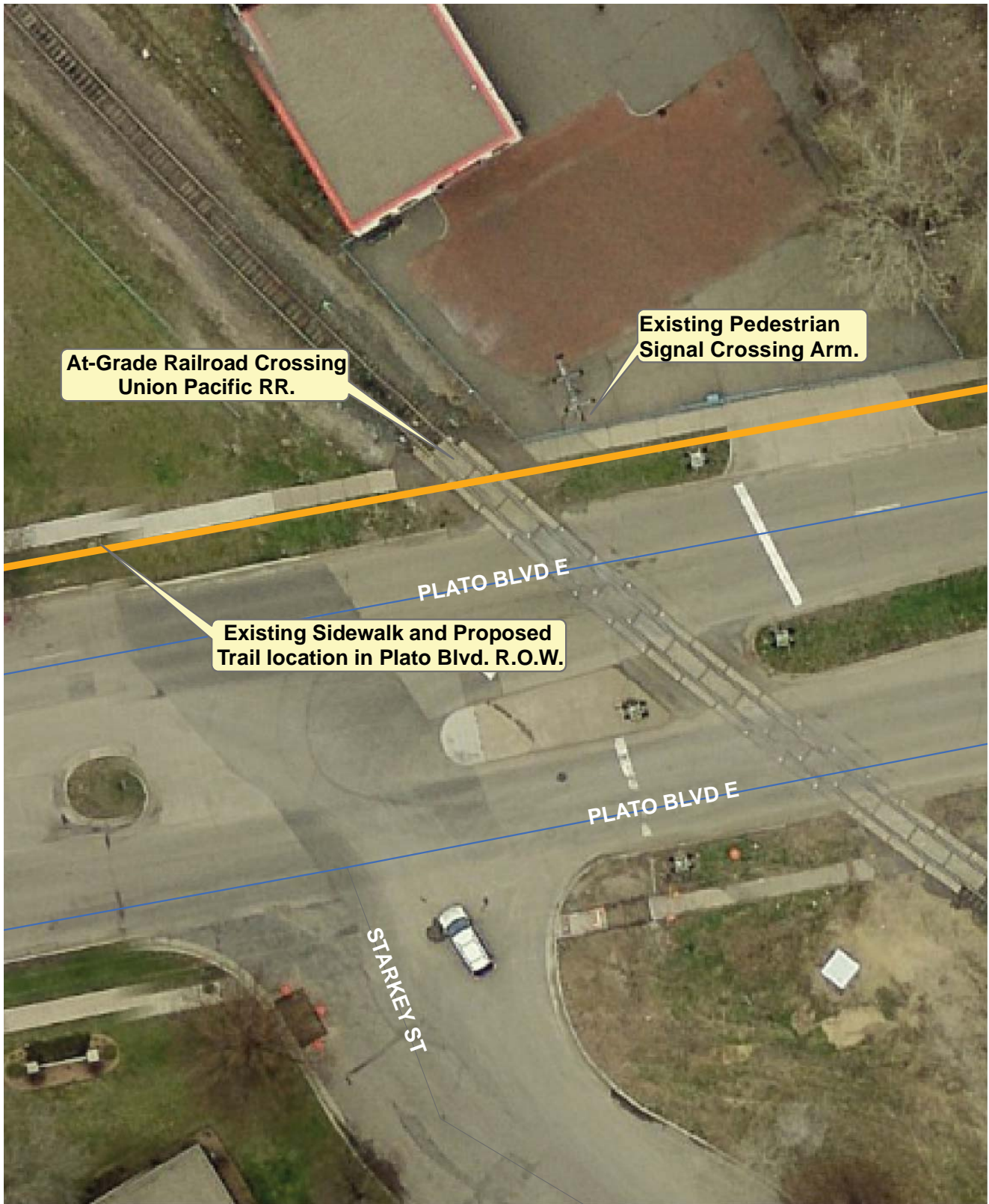


Tracks adjacent to Levee along Airport Rd.



Track Crossings at Barge Channel Rd.



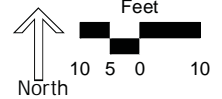


**City of Saint Paul**

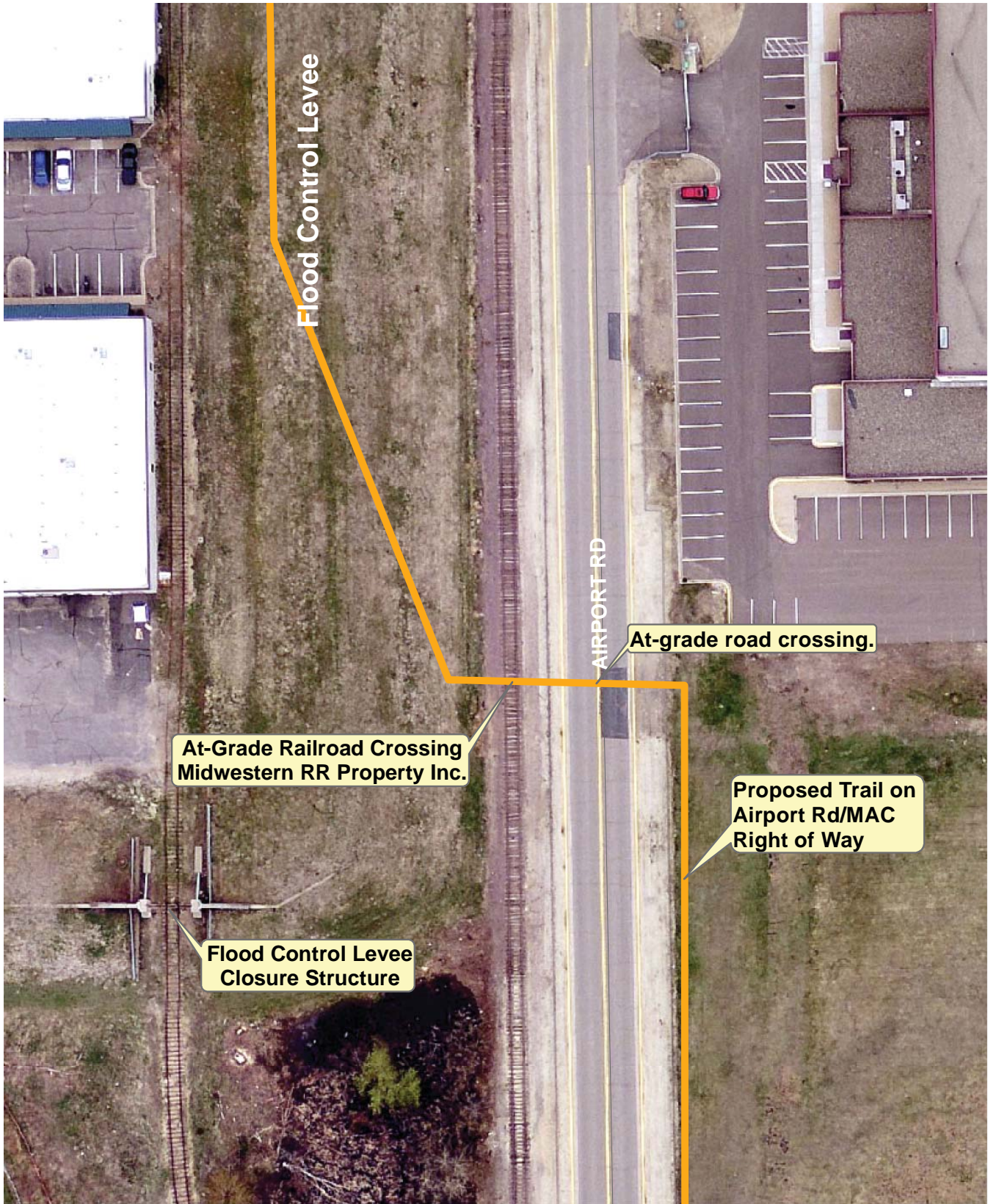
Department of Parks & Recreation  
Design Section 651-266-6400

**Plato Boulevard / Union Pacific RR Crossing**

Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan





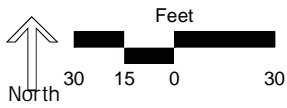


**City of Saint Paul**

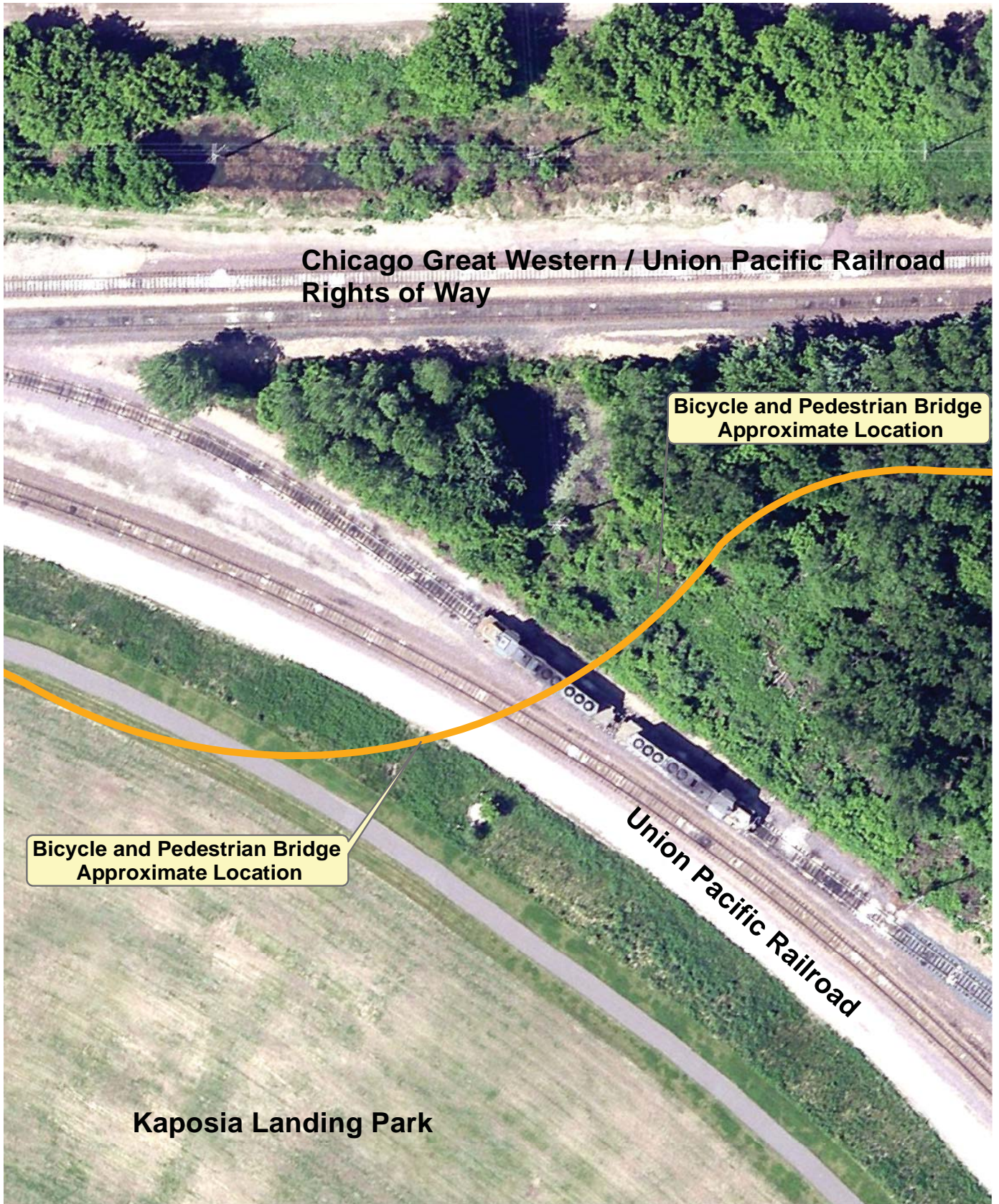
Department of Parks & Recreation  
Design Section

Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan

**Airport Road/Levee RR Crossing**



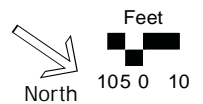




**City of Saint Paul**

Department of Parks & Recreation  
Design Section

Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan  
South St. Paul RR Crossing  
at Kaposia Landing Park





## Levee Concerns

### Corps of Engineers

The US Army Corps of Engineers (C.O.E.) provided funding, and design guidelines for the construction of the flood protection levees in St. Paul. They are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the levee design and for monitoring and regulating the structural aspects of the levee system through written construction and maintenance guidelines. The segment of the trail that is proposed to traverse the levee must meet the Corps design criteria as a *Project Modification* and therefore must be reviewed by the C.O.E. Their plan review will require a topographic survey of the levee that includes the proposed plan drawings. Design of the trail approaches will need to be carefully considered since any soil placed on the river side of the levee for construction of ramps could trigger a requirement for HEC II analysis to confirm a zero rise in the modeled flood elevation. We will work with the C.O.E. to develop plans that meet all criteria for functional, stable flood protection.



Top of levee along Airport Rd.



Back side of Levee near Holman Field.



Levee closure #7



Preparing levee closure for flood conditions

### Public Works

Final approval of the levee trail design will be done in collaboration with the Saint Paul Public Works Sewer Division, which is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the levee. When a flood event is anticipated, they prepare the levee closures by installing stop logs and provide inspection and maintenance of the levee during and following a flood event. The sewer division will review and must approve any trail elements that involve the levee flood protection system.



# 6. Public Services

## Public Services

### Wayfinding and interpretive signage

The HISSP regional trail will include wayfinding and interpretive signage. Near the trail junction at Harriet Island, there is an information kiosk that will be updated to include maps and other information about the trail and its connections to other City and regional facilities. Trail users will also be guided by ‘trail blazer’ signage through the length of the trail to help keep them apprised of their location. Use of this system will also help in understanding the trail’s multiple identities; part of city, regional, state and National (MRT) trail systems.



### Interpretive signs

Interpretive opportunities are present at multiple locations along the trail including:

- C.O.E. flood control levee interpretation.
- National Park Service MNRRA
- Airport History / Operations,
- Wetland - Natural History - River Ecology
- Existing and historic river related industrial activities
- Railroad history
- St. Paul West Side History



### Potable water availability

Currently, there is drinking water available at Harriet Island and at Kaposia Landing Park. A water service main is in close proximity near the intersection of Airport Road and Eaton St. so providing an additional drinking fountain along the trail would be a relatively simple installation. This part of the trail would benefit from a drinking fountain and is the most likely location for this feature however decisions about the final location will depend upon multiple factors.

# 7. Operations

All regional trails within St. Paul are included in the park operations maintenance budget. This includes annual assessment of the trail conditions and repair and renovation of the trail components as needed. The completed Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail will be included in the normal operations and maintenance cycle funded in part with Regional Park maintenance funds.

## SNOW PLOWING

Our Parks maintenance department will add this trail to the list of other regional bicycle and pedestrian trails that are routinely plowed. As a component in the City’s non-motorized transportation planning, snow plowing would be performed as needed following measurable snow falls.



Trail maintenance will include snow plowing.

## MOWING AND TREE CARE

Mowing adjacent turf areas will be done routinely along with other landscape maintenance activities including tree pruning. Native planting areas will be maintained using the most current accepted, sustainable practices. In areas where it is feasible, there will be periodic burning of native grass plantings to reduce the presence of invasive plant species.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

The City of Saint Paul will operate and maintain the 3.2 miles of trail within their jurisdiction. Existing City ordinances, parks and recreation rules and regulations for operation and maintenance will apply to the trail. Due to the trail’s proximity to the Holman Field Airport, additional security measures will be incorporated into the as needed to meet Metropolitan Airport Commission and Homeland security requirements.

## MAINTENANCE COSTS



Saint Paul and South St.. Paul are both staffed and equipped to maintain the trail.

Task	Annual freq,	Cost for S.St.
Paul Trail		
Plow snow (<5", two passes)	12	\$ 4,249
Broom - Winter (two passes)	12	\$ 2,602
Sand/Salt paths	6	\$ 969
Mow grass 6' on both sides	13	\$ 2,664
Broom - Summer (two passes)	6	\$ 1,301
Pick litter	52	\$ 1,815
Empty L&P trash receptacles	140	\$ 3,133
Brush back	1	\$ 613
Patching	1	\$ 1,696
Seal coating (every 7 yrs.)	0.15	
Reclaim & overlay (every 21 yrs.)	0.048	\$ 12,276
Totals =		\$ 31,318

\*The trail costs noted above are based on the current operation and maintenance costs for a typical paved section of a similar trail design.



## 8. Citizen Participation

### ***Great River Passage Planning.***

St. Paul is in the process of developing a comprehensive Master Plan (once known as the Great River Park-now called the Great River Passage) for all 17 miles of riverfront parks and trails within the Mississippi River Corridor. A number of open public planning charettes were held and a public task force was selected to represent planning districts throughout the City. One chapter of the Great River Passage Master Plan, is dedicated to improving and implementing better connectivity to the river with improvements suggested for existing and proposed trails. (See appendix A4-A6 for a summary of the public process) The Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Connection was presented at task force meetings specifically addressing the trail system and it was overwhelmingly supported as an important connection by task force members and from community members at large. With this demonstrated community understanding and support, it is clear that completing the trail connection strengthens both recreational and commuter transportation options into within the St. Paul park trail system.

### ***South St. Paul / Dakota County***

Meetings with planners in Dakota County and South St. Paul have lead to important collaborative efforts toward the completion of this trail. It is mutually understood by Saint Paul, South Saint Paul and Dakota County that a bicycle and pedestrian connection between these municipalities will augment the recreational facilities found on each end of the trail. In addition it will provide a much needed off road non-motorized transportation route that connects multiple neighborhoods. Saint Paul, South Saint Paul and Dakota County will continue to work together and make use of synergies realized with a multi-jurisdictional project. The completed trail, as a component of the MRT, will take on greater significance than a simple connecting trail between two cities. It will provide a regional and national draw that highlights the Mississippi River in addition to these two neighboring cities.

## 9. Public Awareness

### ***National Park Service, Great River Passage***

This proposed regional trail will benefit from its location within the boundaries of MNRRA. In addition to the prestige garnered with this status, it includes the nation wide marketing efforts that are part of a NPS designation. In addition, the implementation of Saint Paul's Great River Passage plan will include substantial marketing efforts to promote the Passage as a regional destination.



### ***Miss. River Trail Inc. / MnDot***

The Miss. River Trail continues to expand and efforts are ongoing to complete and improve the entire length of the trail, including the efforts strong support from MnDOT. This includes strengthened support of MRT improvement projects and the efforts to publicize the trail and market the trail as a tourist destination with MnDOT's June 2011 Publication of the Mississippi River Trail Bikeway Marketing Toolbox. A 'marketing toolbox to provide potential MRT marketers with the tools and information they need to promote the trail.'

## ***10. Accessibility***



All park facilities will be developed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Other local guidelines, such as the DNR's Trail Planning, Design and Development resource book, and the MnDOT Bicycle Facility Design Manual will be used when developing accessible bicycle and pedestrian facilities including trail surfaces, the street crossings and the bridge connection in South Saint Paul.

## ***11. Natural Resources***

### ***Existing Conditions***



The trail alignment proposed makes use of developed land where there are no documented ecologically sensitive areas. One exception to this is where the trail will traverse an existing wetland located between the airport and an industrial steel scrap recycling area. Prior to any development, the area will be reviewed for the presence of any endangered or threatened plant or animal species. Because of its close proximity to the airport flight paths, this will be an area where ecological connectivity needs to be carefully considered and enhanced only if it can be done without increasing potential wildlife - air traffic conflicts. See Appendix; Surrounding Land Cover, Regional Wetland Areas Maps.



## ***Proposed Natural Resources Plan.***

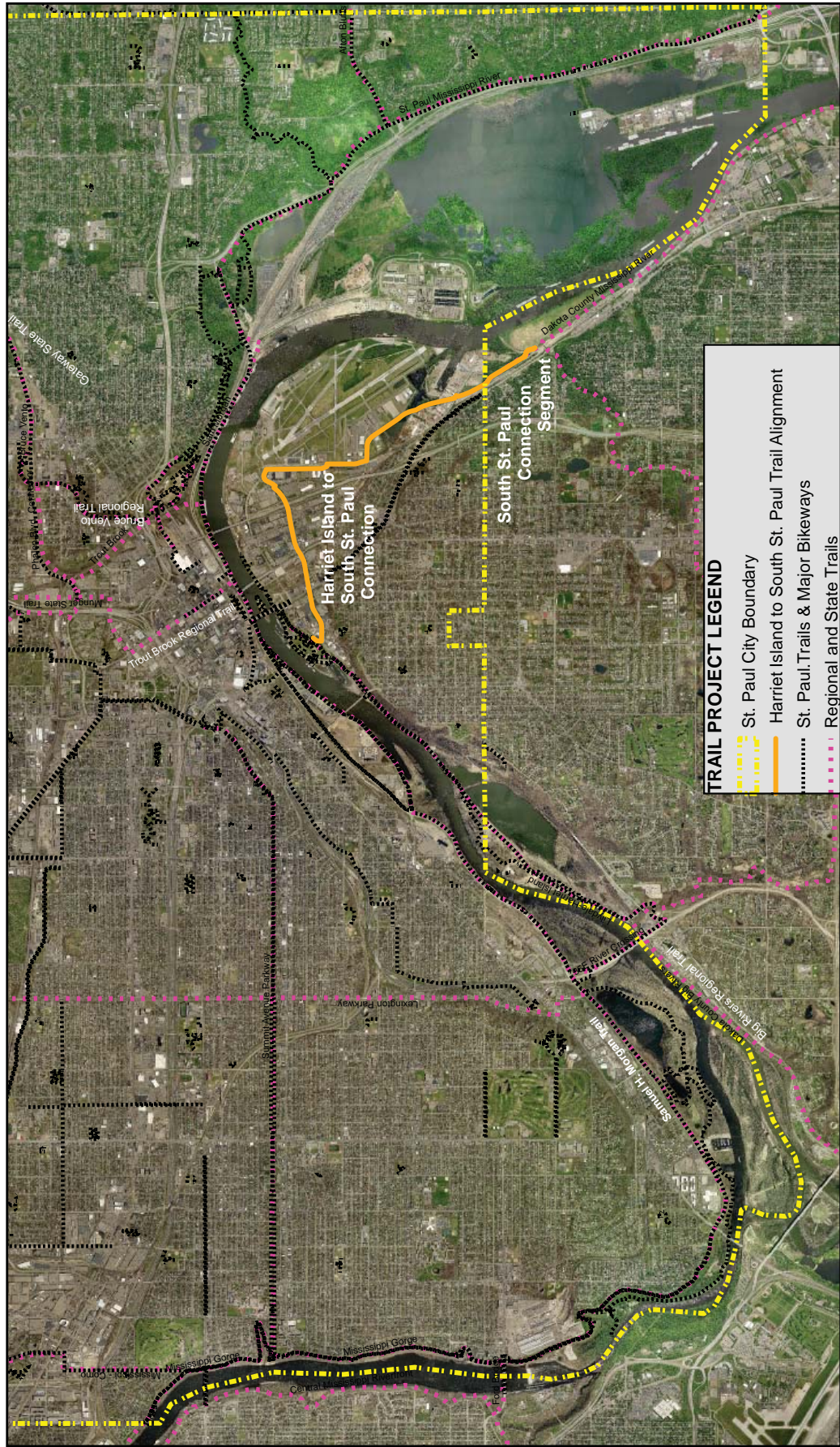
It is expected that water quality improvement measures can be incorporated in the vicinity of the wetlands as well as at other locations along the length of the trail. Landscaping will utilize sustainable practices to minimize any energy intensive maintenance operations. Use of native, drought tolerant turf grasses, trees and shrubs will be used to improve the existing wildlife habitat in areas where this is appropriate. Some areas near the airport may have to minimize rather than enhance bird habitat since the presence of birds can create safety conflicts with airport operations.

The majority of the proposed trail right of way is either existing developed right of way or it is otherwise disturbed by long-standing infrastructure development. Natural Resources mapping indicates no significant natural areas will be disturbed by this trail development. There is a wetland area adjacent to the airport that will be left undisturbed following construction of a boardwalk that will carry the trail over a short section of the wetland. The trail alignment from the Saint Paul /South Saint Paul boundary into St. Paul will again follow land previously used for industrial access roads. Within the narrow confines of the trail corridor, the opportunities for significant habitat restoration, improvements or enhancement of existing wildlife corridors will be very limited. Even given this limitation, the possibilities will be explored and where it is feasible will be included within the scope of the trail design and construction.

# Appendix

Appendix A1.....	Trail Project Context Map / Existing Trails
Appendix A2.....	Trail alignment map with adjacent land cover
Appendix A3.....	Trail alignment/proximity to wetland resources
Appendix A4-A6.....	Public Participation planning process
Appendix A7-A10.....	Letters of Support
	MnDOT / Dakota County
	St. Paul Port Authority
	City of South Saint. Paul
	M.A.C.





**TRAIL PROJECT LEGEND**

- St. Paul City Boundary
- Harriet Island to South St. Paul Trail Alignment
- ... St. Paul, Trails & Major Bikeways
- Regional and State Trails

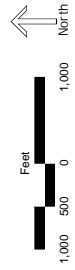
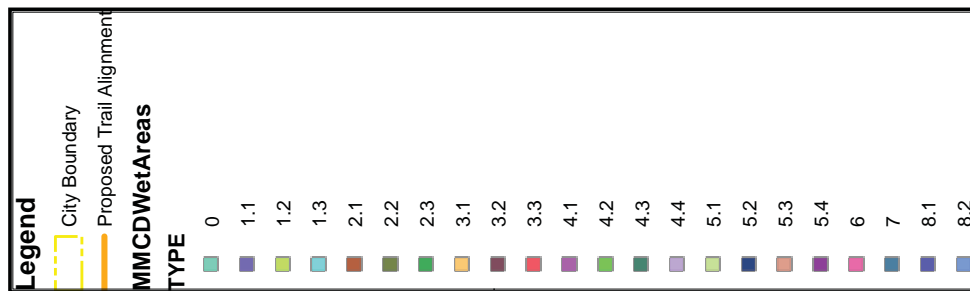
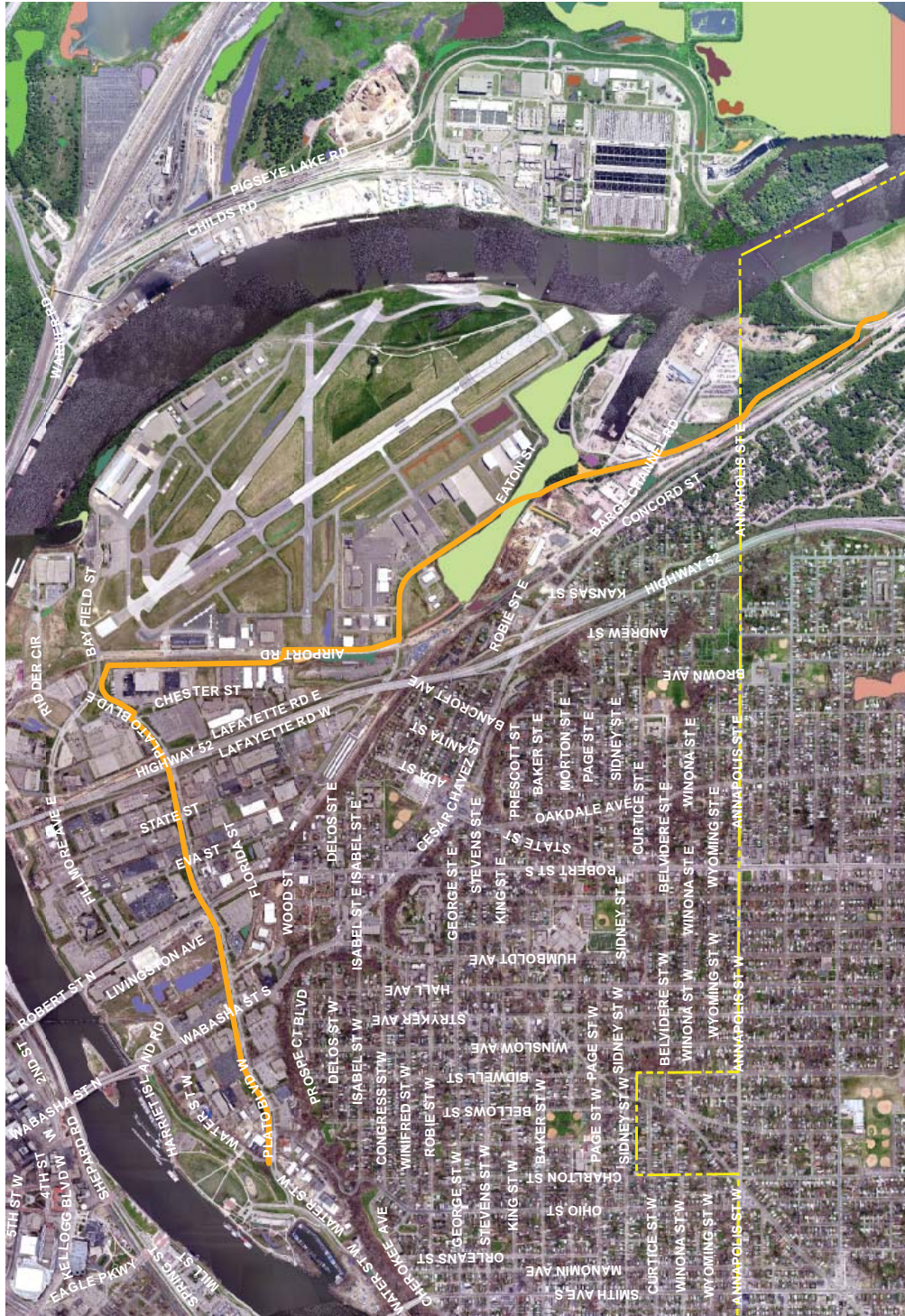


**Harriet Island. to South. St. Paul Trail & Existing Trail Systems.**









**Harriet Island to South St. Paul Regional Trail Master Plan**  
 Trail Proximity to Regional Wetland Areas.

## 2.3 Planning Process and Key Partners

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

The year-long planning process, led by the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department, was guided by a Steering Committee consisting of City department leaders and the Riverfront Corporation. A Community Task Force, that included community leaders, public agencies and key interest groups, guided the development of master plan recommendations through a series of focused work sessions.

Stakeholders and the general public participated in public meetings and community design forums, held to discuss the issues and opportunities of interest to the wide variety of communities within the City.



Public meetings were focused on issues and opportunities



The Community Task Force developed solutions and priorities



Community Design Forums facilitated the generation of ideas

## The Planning Process

A wide range of public and private planning partners participated in developing the Great River Passage Master Plan, which by its comprehensive nature, required broad community participation and development of approaches that can be implemented over a long period of time.

Beginning in May, 2010, the City launched a year-long collaborative planning process, inviting the participation of City departments, special districts, national park, state and county agencies, civic and environmental organizations, community leaders and key stakeholders.

The Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department created a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of key City departments and the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation. A Leadership Group of directors from each department represented on the Steering Committee monitored the planning process.

The Community Task Force and the Technical Resource Group included more than 60 community leaders, representing business and property owners, neighborhood organizations, public and nonprofit agencies, council and special districts, and environment and arts organizations. The Community Task Force met regularly to work with the Steering Committee and the consultant team to review proposals and develop recommendations.

The first step in the community outreach process was conducting a Cultural/Audit®, which consisted of on site interviews with a variety of community residents and visitors to the riverfront. The Cultural/Audit® outreach identified people that would not normally attend public meetings, especially those with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The results of the Cultural/Audit® can be found at the following website link: [www.greatriverpassage.org](http://www.greatriverpassage.org).

In August, 2010 more than 300 people attended the first of many public meetings and workshops. At the plan rollout in June, 2011, over 1,000 people celebrated its completion. Before each public meeting, the Steering Committee and the Community Task Force provided feedback on plan recommendations to ensure that they accurately represented the input of the community and its constituents.

The consultant team facilitated a series of community design forums, hosted by the Parks and Recreation Department, that encouraged open discussion of key issues and opportunities with stakeholders and to explore the breadth of ideas for potential river corridor projects. The forums covered a broad range of topics, including water quality and stream restoration, public art, outdoor recreation, development and redevelopment, and access to parks and to the river.

The project team organized a series of focus group meetings with representatives of environmental organizations, local watershed districts, river oriented industries, recreation and adventure sports organizations, artists and experts in specific fields, to brainstorm opportunities and critique plan proposals. City representatives and the consultant team met at key points in the planning process with individual stakeholders, community members, and agency officials to discuss and further develop issues and opportunities. Meeting notes and public comments are included in the Appendix.



## 2.4 Gap Analysis - Access and Connections



### Key Issues by Reach

#### GORGE

- An existing neighborhood street grid provides multiple travel options to access Mississippi River Blvd and trail.
- Completing proposed bicycle improvements on Marshall Ave and Highland Parkway will create three designated east/west bicycling corridors. BNSF So. Line into the Midtown Greenway— Saint Paul Extension will provide an off-road alternative and additional crossing of the Mississippi River into Minneapolis.

#### VALLEY

- Land use, topography and traffic combine to cut off this section of the river corridor and Sam Morgan Regional Trail from neighborhoods north of W. Seventh Street.
- Moderate traffic volumes and high speeds, while Seventh Street is a major thoroughfare, create a barrier to pedestrian travel.
- Land use, setbacks and building orientation add to the auto-dominated feel of Shepard Road.
- Existing pedestrian crossings lack visibility and connecting street corridors have poor quality walking environments.
- Designated bicycling connections need to be made up to Edgumbe and Jefferson Ave to connect into the citywide bicycle system.

#### DOWNTOWN

- The combination of topography, railroads, parking lots and roadways severely limits access from Downtown Saint Paul to the river corridor.
- New pedestrian infrastructure and wayfinding is desired to help bridge distances and make more direct connections from Downtown.
- Existing bridges provide access across the river, but often do not connect down to facilities along the river.
- With multi-agency coordination, new roadway and transit infrastructure projects offer opportunities to make new non-motorized connections.
- One route to the river, topography and limited access opportunities limit but top neighborhoods from lands comprising the West River Park.
- The West Side neighborhood also lacks a connection to the southeast to access both the river and the Dakota County greenway system.

#### FLOODPLAIN

- Highway 10/61 and multiple railroad lines create a significant barrier for residents living on the western edge of Saint Paul to access the Great River Park.
- Access to and around Pigs Eye Lake is limited.
- Sub-urban and rural development patterns further lengthen trip distances for persons on foot or bike.



bicycling and walking access to the Great River Park corridor needs to focus on enhancing urban environments and overcoming barriers in strategic locations

- Bicycle/Trail System**
- Existing trails, routes, shoulders, bike lanes
  - Priority projects for implementation
  - Areas with critical gaps in system
- Major Barriers**
- Railroads
  - Principal arterials
  - Water topography

### Opportunities for becoming... More Connected

#### Focus on Completing Saint Paul's Bicycle Network

- >> From an integrated bicycling system by seamlessly connecting off-road trails and on-street bicycle facilities.
- >> Complete key **missing links**. Disconnected individual projects do not provide network travel options. Focus on linking river trails with existing bikeways and corridors slated for short-term implementation.
- >> Prioritize segments that will complete primary bicycling corridors, **at least 2.5 miles long** – which is the national average bicycle trip length. Secondary corridors and neighborhood connections can be added over time to create a finer grain to the network.
- >> Implement bicycling improvements as part of multimodal, **complete streets** projects.

#### Enhance Saint Paul's Pedestrian Environments

- >> Implement key projects to **overcome barriers**. Prioritize big ticket items such as stairs, bridges, walkways and/or elevators in select locations to shorten trip distances.
- >> **Plant street trees** and add pedestrian supportive landscaping to enhance the urban environment and separate sidewalks from vehicular traffic. The presence of green streets will help extend the Great River Park into the community.
- >> Implement **widened sidewalks** within select multimodal corridors in conjunction with implementing bicycle accommodations.
- >> **Slow traffic** to move at speeds appropriate for urban settings where pedestrians are present.
- >> Create neighborhood gateways and enhance **pedestrian crossings** of major streets.

#### Link Non-Motorized Modes with Transit

- >> Holistically address **land use** and urban form to create pedestrian-supportive transit corridors.
- >> Prioritize multimodal improvements within corridors that connect to **LRT stations**
- >> Enhance routes and use **wayfinding** to direct bicyclists and pedestrians to the river corridor from transit stops.
- >> Examine the potential for transit circulators and water taxis to serve **riverfront destinations**

#### Preserve Vehicular Access and Circulation

- >> Accommodate **vehicular flow** – but at appropriate speeds – throughout the study area. Pedestrian-friendly environments can exist along corridors carrying large numbers of automobiles at moderate to slow speeds.
- >> Enhance the city's parkways and implement the vision for the **Grand Round** parkway system.
- >> Enhance circulation and access for all modes by extending streets to create a **smaller street grid** where possible.
- >> Provide adequate **parking** at trailheads and overlook areas while preserving natural environments.
- >> Explore options for **green infrastructure** leading to the Great River Passage.



**Bring Downtown and the West Side to the river's edge.**

A continuous publicly accessible edge, on both sides of the river, will be established as part of the anticipated redevelopment of key downtown and West Side properties. Each edge of the river will have a distinctly different character that reinforces the identity of each district, and is supported by complementary mixed-use development. Connections between the river, adjacent neighborhoods and business districts will provide a variety of options for walking, jogging and bicycling circuits along the riverfront.

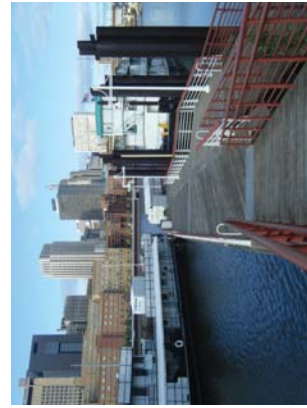
**Enhance Harriet Island Regional Park, Kellogg, Upper and Lower Landing parks as destinations for regional and neighborhood recreation and leisure.**

Expanding youth-oriented recreation and leisure attractions at Harriet Island will activate the park daily and year-round, while providing much needed regional recreation facilities.

Kellogg Park will be programmed to encourage greater lunch time and early evening activities that take advantage of its dramatic views of the River.

Lower Landing Park will be enhanced to meet the needs of a growing Lowertown neighborhood. A signature bridge connection, linking Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary to Lower Landing, will form a gateway into the Downtown from Warner Road and connect regional trails from Trout Brook and Phalen Valley to the river.

Extending the Grand Round into downtown, from Dayton's Bluff, along 4th Street to Kellogg Boulevard, by improving streetscape and signage, will allow this iconic and historic feature to be more connected, visible and integrated into the City's Park



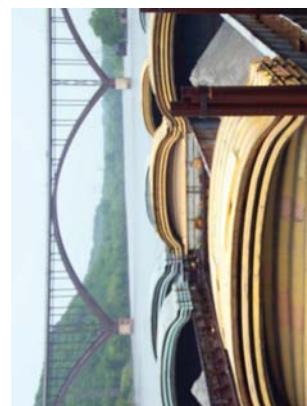
*Saint Paul's urban riverfront is an important hub for both commercial and recreational boating.*



*The river's edge must balance commerce, transportation and redevelopment with recreation and open space.*



*The river's edge is always a popular gathering place.*



*Major bridge crossings are an essential part of the City's identity.*





Minnesota Department of Transportation  
 395 John Ireland Boulevard  
 Saint Paul, MN 55155

August 19, 2011

Mr. Kevin Roggenbuck  
 Transportation Coordinator  
 Transportation Advisory Board  
 Metropolitan Council  
 390 North Robert St.  
 St. Paul, MN 55101

**Re: Support for 2015 & 2016 Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant Application:  
 Saint Paul/Dakota County Commuter Bike Trail**

Dear Mr. Roggenbuck:

This letter of support is to inform and assure you that MnDOT has identified the proposed Saint Paul/Dakota County Regional Trail Connector as an important Metro improvement to the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), a ten-state effort to provide a continuous bicycle route extending from the Mississippi River Headwaters in Minnesota all the way to the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana.

MRT development adds value to existing roads and trails that follow the river, but may not intuitively be recognized as a continuous route. Both St. Paul and Dakota County have provided key leadership and cooperation during our route planning and signing efforts in the Metro area. Further, they have each continued to develop improvements that enhance this “Masterpiece in the Making.”

Building this proposed off road facility improves both bicycle safety and the Mississippi River experience; two key goals of MnDOT’s efforts to establish the MRT statewide. The majority of the project will take cyclists off Trunk Highway right of way onto trails that are much closer to the Mississippi and connect to existing trails. In addition, the Lilydale segment will allow cyclists appropriate room under a railroad bridge and separate cyclists from road traffic. They currently must share the road within a very narrow opening. Lastly this project is developed in accordance with MnDOT’s Bicycle Modal Plan.

Sincerely,

Director of Context Sensitive Solutions  
 MnDOT Office of Environmental Stewardship  
 395 John Ireland Blvd., Mail Stop 686  
 St. Paul, MN 55155  
 651-366-3302  
[scott.bradley@state.mn.us](mailto:scott.bradley@state.mn.us)

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Fax: 651-223-5198  
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www.sppa.com

July 7, 2011

Mr. Kevin Roggenbuck  
Transportation Coordinator  
Transportation Advisory Board  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

**Subject: 2015 and 2016 Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant Application:  
Saint Paul/Dakota County Commuter Bike Trail**

Dear Mr. Roggenbuck:

This letter is to inform you that the Saint Paul Port Authority is currently actively working with the City of Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (Holman Field) and other partners to develop a commuter and recreational bike trail between Saint Paul and South St. Paul. The Saint Paul Port Authority is in the process of deeding land and assigning easements to the City of Saint Paul for the Saint Paul/Dakota County trail. The Port is also working with the City to address safety and security issues related to the trail through our South Port Industrial Park.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louis F. Jambois".

Louis F. Jambois, President  
Saint Paul Port Authority  
1900 Landmark Towers  
345 St. Peter Street  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102  
651.204.6233

55814.v





*City of South St. Paul*

*Office of Parks and Recreation*

August 11, 2011

Transportation Advisory Board  
Attn: Kevin Roggenbuck  
390 N. Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Transportation Enhancement Program Grant Application

Dear Mr. Roggenbuck,

On behalf of the City of South St. Paul, I wish to convey our support for the Dakota County and City of St. Paul Surface Transportation Program (STP) Grant Application for the Mississippi River Trail connecting South St. Paul to St. Paul, administered through the Metropolitan Council Transportation Advisory Board.

South St. Paul supports this project recognizing the importance of this connection to the transportation and recreation for this region. Many of our residents already enjoy the opportunities provided by safe, off-street trail use. This connection will provide the missing link to downtown St. Paul, Ramsey County, and beyond for both commuters and leisure users. We applaud and support this project funding application knowing its significance and scope falls well within the criteria established for successful funding.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 651.306.3692 or [chris.esser@southstpaul.org](mailto:chris.esser@southstpaul.org). Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Chris Esser  
Director of Parks and Recreation

Cc: Honorable Mayor Beth Baumann



## METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION

Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport

6040 - 28th Avenue South • Minneapolis, MN 55450-2799

Phone (612) 726-8100

August 4, 2011

Mr. Kevin Roggenbuck  
Transportation Coordinator  
Transportation Advisory Board  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert St.  
St. Paul, MN 55101

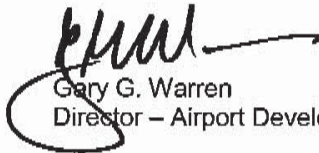
Dear Mr. Roggenbuck:

This letter is to indicate our willingness to support your 2015/2016 Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant Application for a St. Paul/Dakota County Commuter Bike Trail project connecting the Harriet Island/Lilydale Regional Park Trail to the South St. Paul's Port Crosby Park and Recreation Area, providing the final design route alignment will not impact aviation safety, operations or security at the St. Paul Downtown Airport (Holman Field) and the project is found acceptable to the Federal Aviation Administration.

MAC is very interested to continue to work with community members and organizations such as the City of St. Paul, the St. Paul Port Authority and the River Front Corporation, as we have in the past on other issues, to identify a compatible trail route for bike and pedestrian passage. We look forward to working with you towards accomplishing these goals.

Please contact Patrick Mosites at (612) 713-7499 or via e-mail at [pat.mosites@mspm.com](mailto:pat.mosites@mspm.com) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Gary G. Warren  
Director – Airport Development

ggw

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[www.mspairport.com](http://www.mspairport.com)

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