

TO: Park & Recreation Commission Members
FROM: Bill Waller, City Administrator
Chris Fortsch, Administrative Assistant
Jon Steffes, Summer Recreation Director
DATE: June 13, 2022
RE: Meeting Notice
Tuesday, June 28, 2022
5:30 p.m., La Crescent City Hall
315 Main Street

AGENDA

1. Consideration of meeting minutes – March 29, 2022 & April 20, 2022.
2. Representatives from MSA will attend the meeting via zoom to review the preliminary recommendations, discuss feedback from the April 20, 2022 Park & Recreation Commission meeting, and discuss the next steps in the planning process. Information from MSA regarding these items will be e-mailed out separately in a few days.
3. Natural Resource Advisory Group – A visual representation of the recommendations for Vetsch and Stoney Point. Information included.
4. Review of correspondence received related to the update to the City's Comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan.
5. Update on current and future Park & Recreation related projects:
 - a. Review of 2022 summer recreation programming.
 - b. Wagon Wheel project phase 1 paving completed - \$86,210 grant.
 - c. Wagon Wheel project bicycle/pedestrian bridge update – information included.
 - d. Wagon Wheel project – trail head including cultural recognition. Information included.
 - e. Sportsman Road Landing Improvements - \$128,105.83 grant. Information included.
 - f. Wagon Wheel project phase 4 planning – information included.
 - g. Root River Trail Extension – Joint Cooperative Agreement. Draft copy included.
 - h. MnDOT Corridor Study Planning Grant application – Bicycle/pedestrian bridge to Miller's Corner. Information included.
 - i. Walnut Street Improvement project – 2024. Develop connection from bicycle/pedestrian bridge to the Central Business District and the hotel/event center. Information included.
 - j. Preliminary design for new park shelter at Wieser Park – information included.
 - k. Safe Routes to School project – crossing improvements on Elm Street at South 4th and South 6th Streets. Information included.

- l. Regional Sustainable Development Partnership Project proposal, information included.
- m. Trail easement – information included.
- 6. Future meeting dates.
- 7. Adjournment.

Please call either Chris or Bill at 895-2595, or e-mail us at cfortsch@cityoflacscent-mn.gov or bwaller@cityoflacscent-mn.gov, if you will not be able to attend, have questions, or need more information.

Thank you.

#1

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
Park and Recreation Commission Members
FROM: Bill Waller, City Administrator
DATE: March 31, 2022
RE: Meeting Minutes
March 29, 2022

The La Crescent Park and Recreation Commission met at 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, March 29, 2022, in the City Council Chambers at the La Crescent City Hall. The following members were present: Jon Steffes, Paul McLellan, Sarah Wetterlin, Diana Adamski, Maseray Bangura, Patti Martell, and Marge Loch-Wouters. Also in attendance were Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, Chris Fortsch and Bill Waller.

1. Commission members and staff conducted introductions that included how long they have served on the Park & Recreation Commission, what they do or did for employment, and a memorable moment from serving on the Park & Recreation Commission.
2. It was the consensus of the Commission to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2022 Park and Recreation Commission meeting as presented.
3. The Park & Recreation Commission's duties and objectives, their decision-making authority, and the relevant section of the City Code was reviewed at the meeting. This included a review of the open meeting law requirements as it pertains to the Park & Recreation meetings and members of the Park & Recreation Commission.
4. The Park & Recreation Commission considered a request to install lights at the sand volleyball courts at Old Hickory Park. Discussion followed, including the possibility of obtaining feedback from neighbors in the area about the request, along with developing a basis for considering the impact of the proposed lighting. MSA will work to incorporate recommendations in the Comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan regarding the installation of lighting in City parks.
5. The Park & Recreation Commission reviewed the revised project schedule for the update to the City's Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan, including the addition of a Park & Recreation Commission meeting in April that will be an open-house format in order for the public to provide comments on the draft Plan. It was agreed that the Park & Recreation Commission would meet on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, at 5:30 pm, at the La Crescent Community Building for the purpose of holding a public informational meeting on the update to the City's Comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan.

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
Park and Recreation Commission Members
FROM: Bill Waller, City Administrator
DATE: April 25, 2022
RE: Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2022

The La Crescent Park and Recreation Commission met at 5:30 p.m., on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, in the La Crescent Community Building. The following members were present: Jon Steffes, Sarah Wetterlin, Diana Adamski, Maseray Bangura, Patti Martell, and Marge Loch-Wouters. Commission member Paul McLellan was not in attendance. Also in attendance were Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, Chris Fortsch and Bill Waller.

1. Introductions were done, and an overview of the schedule for the evening was presented.
2. Becky Binz from MSA was in attendance at the meeting in person and gave a presentation summarizing the steps taken to date to update the City's Comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan, reviewed preliminary recommendations, and the next steps in the planning process.
3. The meeting then moved to an open house format, with tables, displays, and boards that provided the opportunity for the public to review and comment on the content of the current draft of the update to the City's Comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan.
4. There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:50 pm.



Growing from
River to Ridge

Open House – obtain feedback on draft recommendations for the park system and master plans for Eagles Bluff, Vetsch/Vollenweider/Stoney Point, Horsetrack Meadows, and Wieser Park.

Wednesday, April 20, 2022 - 5:30 p.m. / La Crescent Community Building

Thank you for attending and helping shape the future of La Crescent!

NAME	ADDRESS
Cathy Klug	539 South 5th LaCrescent
John Klug	539 S. 5th LaCrescent
Gregory J Wolf	610 Royal Court LaCrescent
Terry Dahlby	728 S 2nd
Mike + Barb Meythaler	717 S 2nd
Gunt Murray	574 Hickory Lane
Paula Krenke	708 S. 4th St., LaCrescent
Bonnie Lyman	413 N. Hill St. LaCrescent
Patty McAllister	501 N. Hill St. LaCrescent
Jon Steffes	139 McIntosh East
Diana Adamski	104 Haraldson Ln LaCrescent
Greg Watson	404 N. 14th St, LaCrescent
Deem Bergstrom	181 McIntosh East LaCrescent
Cherry Tostad	117 Hillview Blvd LaC
Sandy Grunwald	1485 Valley Ln LaCrescent
Kurt Grunwald	" "
Betsy Knowles	1540 Valley Lane LaCrescent
Kurt Nissen	1214 Poplar St. LaCrescent
BOB + DIANE ALSENS	303 S MAPLE LACRESCENT
Daniel Krage	1426 Willow St LaCrescent
Don + Jackie Schroeder	1400 Crescent Hills Drive
Don + Kathy Hill	1665 Crescent Hills Dr
Paul Hattem	520 August Hills
GRETCHEN BOOK	512 N. 3rd
Mike Cunningham	24 McIntosh E

Mike Rader / Teri Wildt

1331 Valley Ln., LaCrescent

[illegible]

3

A Visual Representation of
the Recommendations for
Vetsch and Stoney Point
Parks from the Natural
Resource Advisory Group

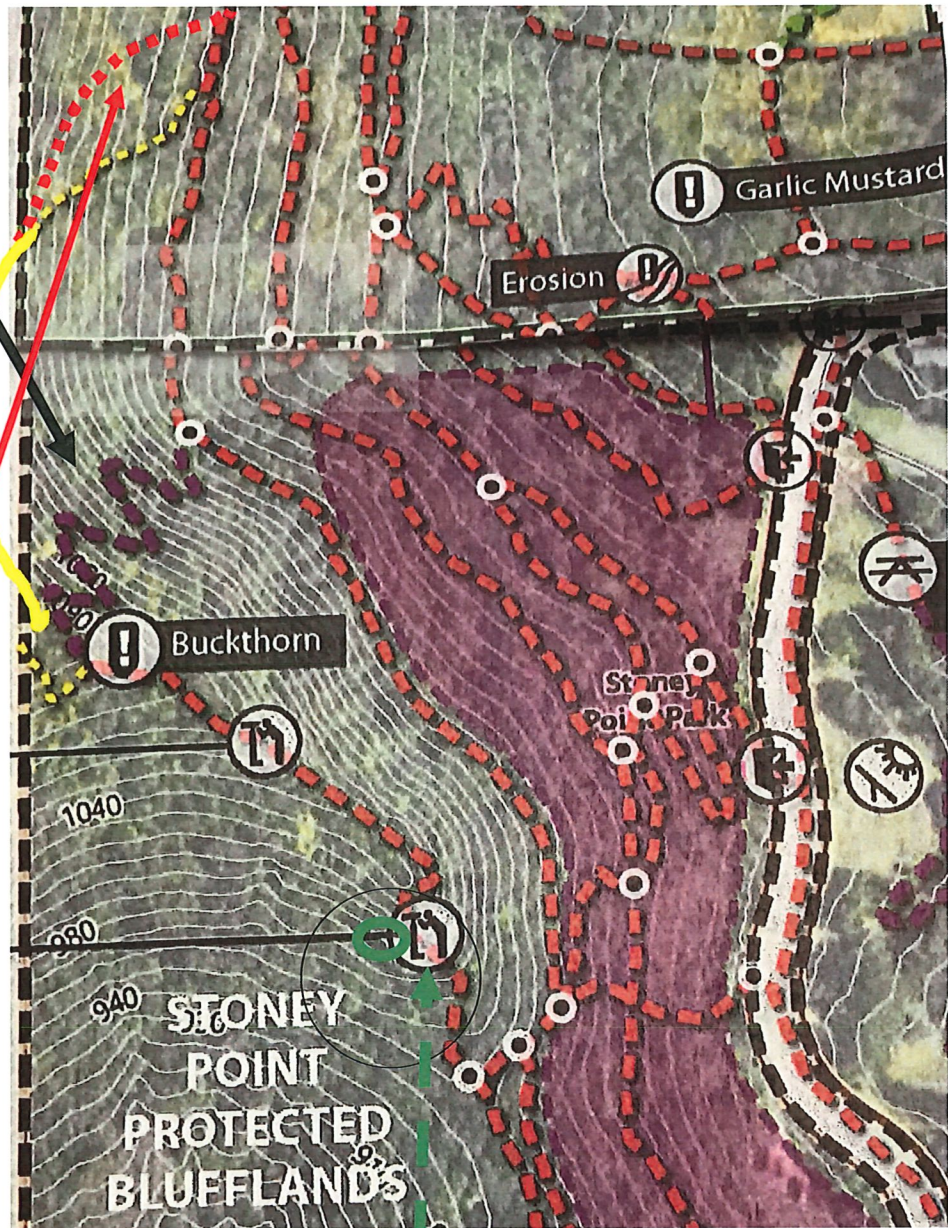
4/26/2022

Issue: Erosion

The slope is much steeper on the new trail proposed than the original trail.

Preferred alternative

1. Obtain an easement from the private landowner for this section. →
2. Add a switchback if necessary to the original trail or realign and lengthen the original steep part of the trail to where the contours are more gradual to reduce erosion.

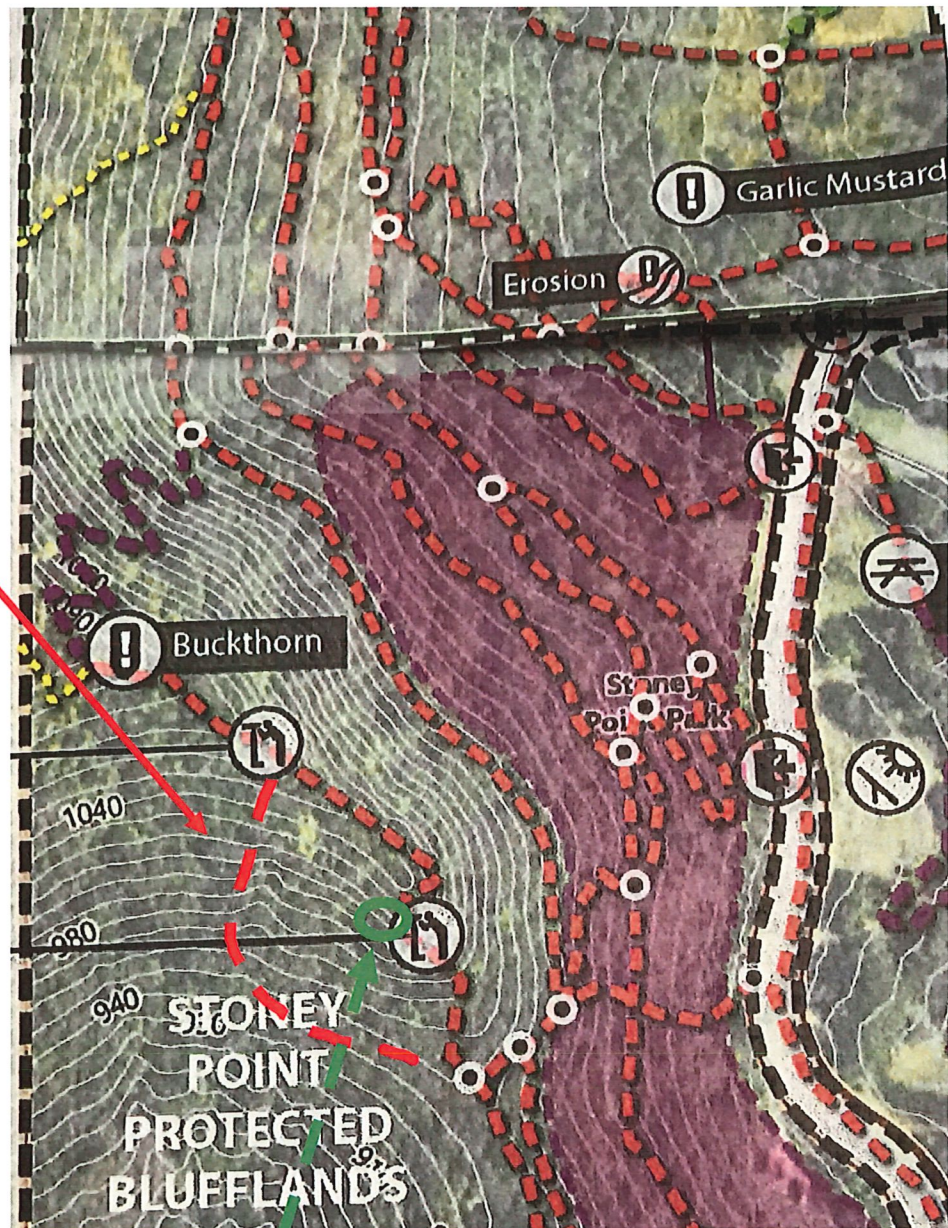


If an easement isn't possible – consider realigning the existing trail to follow the contour curve along the property border until it joins the new proposed purple zig zag route.

Goat Prairie

Issue: Erosion of the sandstone layer on the face of Stoney Point

Explore a possible re-route of trail to the west of Stoney Point to connect to the existing ridge trail so that the overlook on Stony Point could be reached without the climb up the sandstone face. This could provide a more easily accessible route to the lookout while reducing traffic where sandstone erosion currently exists.



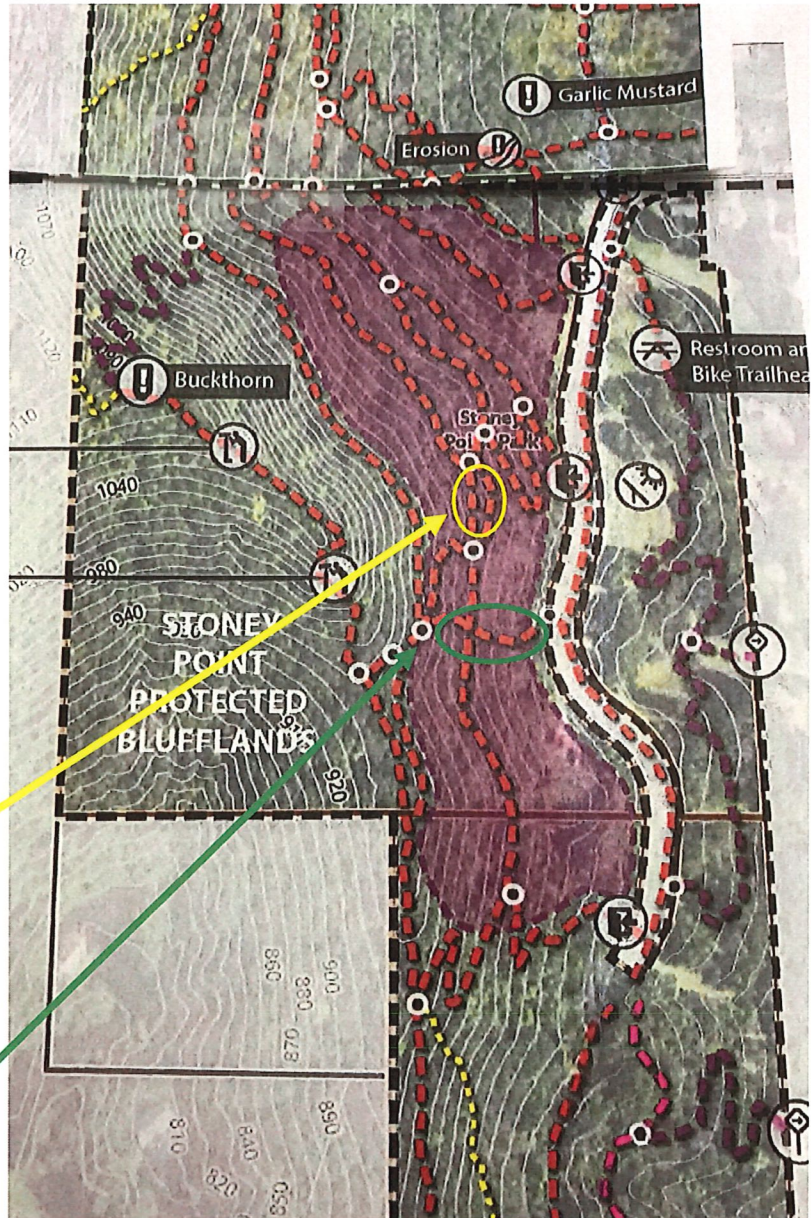
Goat Prairie

Issue: Reduce the number of trails

Vetsch Park—Most of the forest is in good shape with few invasive exotics (except where marked). Therefore keep the trails narrow and limited in number to limit sunlight and discourage the exotics. Maintain the main trails but let foot traffic determine which of the smaller cross trails and shortcuts will ultimately grow shut.

Explore the possibility of eliminating one or the other of these two segments of trails. They are redundant.

Eliminate this trail – it is overgrown and no longer used.



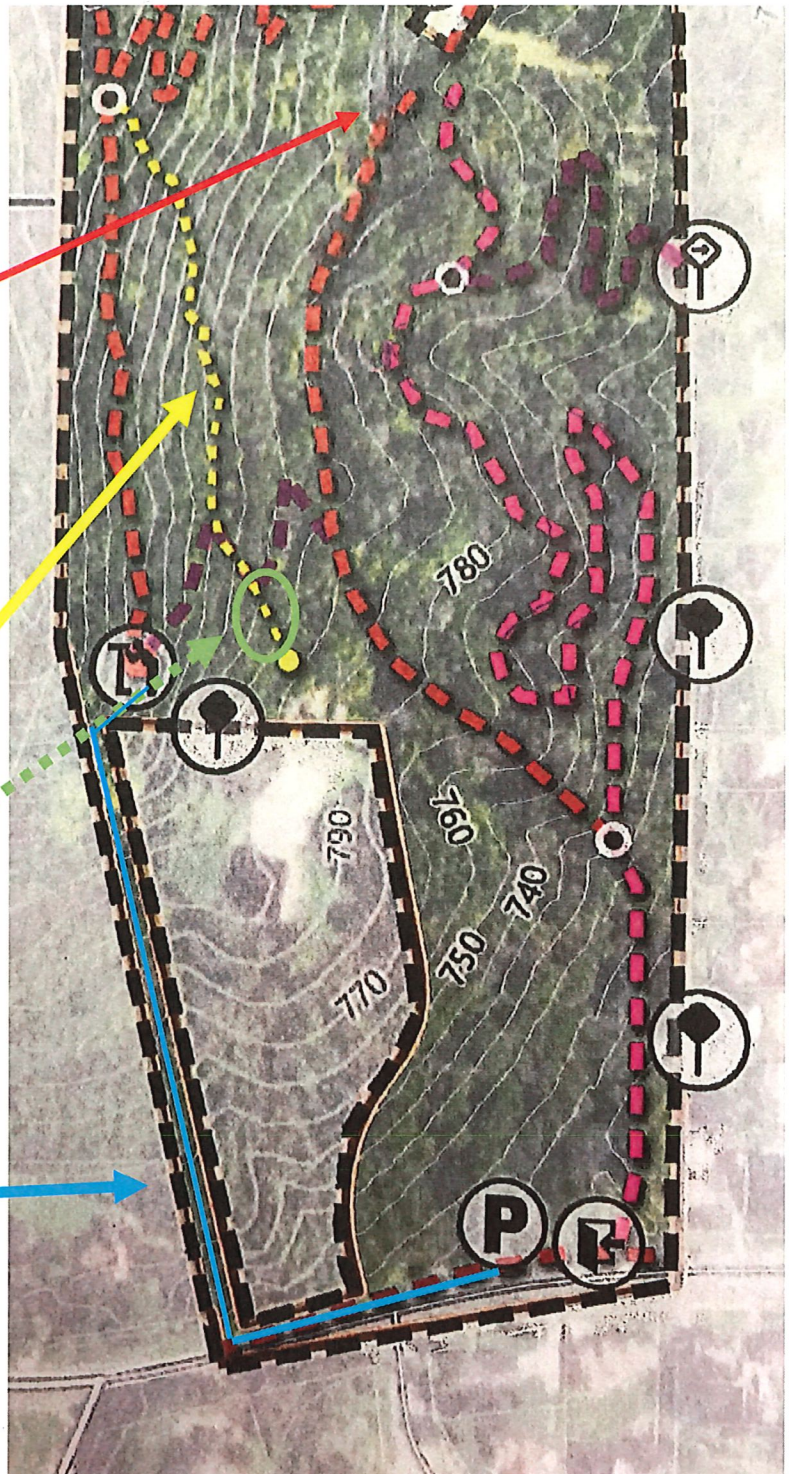
Other suggestions and questions

Is this red trail the private access road as marked on the sign? Is the entire length a graveled driveway and is it open to the public?



1. Keep this part of the yellow trail to make a loop.
2. Eliminate this part

Put in a new trail on the outside of the inholding if possible to make a loop.



4

Gregory Watson
404 N. 14th St.
La Crescent, MN 55947
507-500-0166
jigamaree@acegroup.cc

May 2, 2022

Name,

I am a co-founder of the La Crescent-Hokah Community Education Hiking Group.

It was brought to my attention that unauthorized trail maintenance has occurred on the trails within Vetsch Park and Stoney Point here in La Crescent recently.

I hesitate to call it maintenance because of the nature of what was done to the trails.

1. Leaves were blown off the trails covering newly emerged vegetation.
2. Rocks were removed from the trail surface leaving holes in the trails which are trip hazards to hikers.
3. Some holes were filled in with soil from the sides of the trails. This action disturbs vegetation and mosses that were helping to prevent erosion.
4. Roots were cut which isn't helpful to the plants and increases erosion.
5. Small trees were cut about 5 feet above ground level.

My assumption is that the damage to the trails was done by individuals who wanted to make the trails more mountain bike friendly.

Add all of this to the damage that was done last year when individuals tried to create a goat prairie at Stoney Point, as well as cutting trees in Eagles Bluff Park. The trees were cut 6 inches or so from ground level creating "spikes".

Something needs to be done to prevent this from happening to our lovely parks which should be maintained by La Crescent City personnel, not others.

Respectfully,
Gregory Watson

My name is Greg Watson, and this is a follow up to a letter that I hand delivered to City Hall on May 2, 2022, concerning unauthorized trail maintenance that was done in Vetsch Park and Stoney Point. I have included the contents of that letter at the end of this email.

Yesterday, May 10, the La Crescent-Hokah Community Education Hiking Group, which I helped co-found, was hiking in Vetsch Park.

On that hike, while looking at a patch of plants, a man came down the trail. The initial conversation revolved around the plants and what they might be. During that discussion, he mentioned that he used to teach a class on edible plants. I then told him that he might like to join our group.

Shortly after that, I mentioned that the group was concerned that unauthorized trail maintenance was being done on the trails which included blowing leaves off the trails, removing rocks, cutting roots, and using soil from the sides of the trails to fill in the holes left by rock removal. The hiking group feels that all these activities will cause increased erosion. He told us, rather emphatically I might add, that there was no erosion on the trails and repeated this numerous times. He stated that he himself, had removed the rocks and did the root cutting and leaf blowing to make the trails safer because one time he stubbed his toe which gave him "turf toe". I had to look that term up. It is a sprain of the ligaments around the big toe and is common to football players.

This person then told us that he and two others, Jerry and Terry, have been working on the trails for 4 years and they have asked the city for help, and they have never gotten any, and "that is why we need \$50,000". I have no idea how he came up with that amount. He stated that he asked on Facebook that help was needed and did not receive any help.

During our discussion, his voice got louder and louder, and stated there was no erosion on the trail. At that point, we decided it was best to end the discussion by saying that everyone has their own opinion on what erosion is and we walked away.

I was told by another member of the group that this person's name is Mike Meythaler.

I, as well as the hiking group, have concerns that a non-city employee is doing unauthorized trail maintenance within the city parks. Is what he is doing within generally accepted guidelines for maintenance of trails? Could the city be liable for accidents that were directly the result of his actions? For example, someone trips in a hole left by a rock that he removed from a trail.

I feel that trail maintenance should be done by city employees with the necessary training and experience so that Vetsch and Stoney, as well as other parks, like Eagles Bluff trails, will be enjoyed by residents of La Crescent for generations to come.

Thank you for your time.

Greg Watson

Cell 507-500-0166 or Home 507-895-2855

jigamaree@acegroup.cc

My name is Greg Watson and I am a co-founder of the La Crescent-Hokah Community Ed Hiking Group. I have written and emailed to you before.

In my last email, I mentioned that Mike Meythaler, who I met on the trails in Stoney Point and Vetsch Parks, said that there was \$50,000 allocated for trail maintenance, but the City has not provided it. He said that he has done leaf blowing, rock pulling, and root cutting with the help of persons named Terry and Jerry.

Having never heard mentioned the \$50,000, I started to wonder why that amount came up. My intuition tells me that he had inside information. I'm guessing the \$50,000 is from private group(s) in negotiations with City official(s) which the public has not been invited to. If this is the case, then I am saddened because elected officials will have lost my trust in them. Please tell me this is not so!

If there are private deals being made, my guess is that they involve mountain biking organizations which most likely want multi-use trails in Stoney Point. Organizations, such as O.R.A., are strongly pro-mountain biking and get funding by sponsoring bike races and bike clothing sales. If they were to start maintaining as well as designing and making new trails in La Crescent, they would be doing so for mountain bikers and not for hikers.

My experience with multi-use trails is mostly from hiking on the trails in and around Apache Junction, AZ where I live during the winter months, but also on some of the trails in La Crosse and La Crescent. Designated multi-use trails in Arizona are wide, at least 5 feet or more with the trail's line of sight visibility at least 75 feet. Sometimes those trails are also used by horses, thankfully not in La Crescent. Horses can tear up a trail very easily, especially the soft soils that we have here.

The wider trails are necessary to accommodate passing of horses, bikers, runners, and hikers. In Arizona, the guidance is that horses have the right of way, all the time. Next, are hikers, and finally bikers. The problem is that bikers are so focused on the trails immediately in front of them, they don't look far enough ahead to see what might be on the trail further ahead. Hikers, being more aware of their surroundings, will see or hear them long before the mountain bikers will see the hikers. What happens is that the bikers will come upon the hikers too quickly to prevent accidents. To prevent accidents, the hikers will pull off the trail early enough to safely allow bikers to pass and most of the time, the bikers hardly acknowledge the courtesy of the hikers.

I have encountered bicyclists on the Wagon Wheel Trail here in La Crescent. That trail is okay for multi-use because it is wide, and visibility is very good along the trail. The bikers on this trail are mainly families out for a ride or commuters. I have never had any problems with them.

When I look at the Stoney Point trails, I have a hard time imagining how they could be widened that much. It will take a lot of work to cut into the banks of the trails to accommodate this. In my opinion, this would seriously degrade the hillside and increase erosion. Another concern is that there are abundant flowers that grow along the trail; these will be destroyed during a widening process. When one factors in visibility, I have an even harder time imagining it. The trails I hike in Arizona have very little tree cover, so visibility is greater, unlike here in La Crescent with trees fully leafed out. How can hikers and runners be kept from being hit by mountain bikers with conditions like these? If new mountain bike trails were established in Stoney Point, they would be very detrimental to the park.

Another thing I see on the Arizona trails are mountain bikers veering off the main trails and starting new ones. I've seen lots of barriers erected to prevent this from happening, but the bikers are persistent and continue to try to make new trails. I have seen evidence of this on the La Crosse trails. This could be an issue if mountain biking increases in Stoney Point, Vetsch Park and elsewhere.

Another item I want to mention is the survey that was done last Fall. The chart stating what improvements would you like to see at Stoney Point, Vetsch and Eagles Bluff doesn't even have mountain biking listed. That particular chart, page 24 of 52 of the Park and Recreation Commission Agenda for November 8, 2011, has a summary stating that and I quote "many were split as to whether this is an appropriate place for mountain biking, or whether it would affect safety on hiking trails." I went through the comments made by survey respondents, and I noted that pro-hiking comments

outnumber pro-biking comments by 2 to 1. That isn't an even split. If there is no interest in making mountain bike trails, then why would the City have mountain bike trails made at Stoney Point and elsewhere? Why would the City go against the wishes of its residents? It makes no sense to me.

Hopefully, at the next Park and Recreation Commission meeting, there will be open discussion on concerns that I have mentioned in this email, as well as concerns of others present at that meeting as well as at future meetings.

Greg Watson

507-500-0166

jigamaree@acegroup.cc

Christina Fortsch

From: jigamaree@acegroup.cc
Sent: Thursday, May 26, 2022 9:03 PM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: thoughts on mountain biking in La Crescent

Chris, could you please forward this to the Park and Recreation Commission members. Thank you. Greg Watson

To the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator and the Park and Recreation Commission members.

I have been reading the Park and Recreation Plan and the La Crosse/La Crescent Bluffland Plan. In my opinion, both documents are strongly influenced by La Crosse and its mountain biking community.

Most charts overwhelmingly show that hiking is the number one activity. For instance, on page 15 of the Bluffland Plan, it has a chart showing that about 95% of the respondents of a survey hike while only about 40% are mountain bikers. Also on this page, the top response for more recreational opportunities is that the region needs are hiking related.

On page 53, it mentions that O.R.A., Outdoor Recreational Alliance, should be included when considering adding parcels for development. O.R.A. is strongly pro-mountain biking. O.R.A. has a goal of expanding mountain biking trails in the area. With them involved, any trails they make would be either mountain biking or multi-use, not hiking only. The organization is strongly biased. No feasibility study should be conducted by them. The same goes for IMBA, International Mountain Biking Association. MSA mentioned that they could do a feasibility study. IMBA should not be used for any study as well.

On the prior page, 52 of the Bluffland Plan, it states that downhill and freeride cycling should be in areas of lesser ecological importance. The reason for this is that these types of activities are very difficult to maintain and cause erosion. I looked up the definitions of both downhill and freeride cycling. Downhill biking is a genre of mountain biking practiced on steep, rough terrain that often features jumps, drops, rock gardens and other obstacles. Freeride biking is a discipline of mountain biking closely related to downhill biking and dirt jumping focused on tricks, style, and technical trail features. Do we want these activities in our parks? How much of limited resources would be used to maintain these types of trails?

On page 14 of the Park and Recreation Plan, (the Plan) there is a chart showing that 54% of respondents prefer hiking while only 29% prefer biking.

Principal 3.1 of the Plan is to "Protect the scenic beauty and natural resources in La Crescent by creating a system of parks, open spaces and trails that respect natural terrain, preserve native vegetation, and take advantage of views."

Use of the north end parks for anything other than open space will be challenging, as it says on page 50 of the Plan.

Another document that I have been reading is the recent survey done by MSA. I would be interested to know how many of the pro-mountain biking responses were from those not living in La Crescent. For instance, one person wrote that they want mountain biking trails in Wieser Park. Really? This response just goes to show that one needs to be cautious in interpreting the results of the survey. Frequent remarks to Question 28 questioned why the survey was open to non-La Crescent residents.

Also, in the MSA survey, mountain biking doesn't even hit the top 5 uses of our parks.

One of the comments in the survey was that the City should start a mountain bike club. If they want one, they should start one by themselves. Just for the record, I started the La Crescent-Hokah Community Education Hiking Group in June of 2021. We meet once per week. In the short time of its existence, the group has grown from 3 individuals to over 45! We are continually adding new hikers to the group. It started as a 4-week activity through Community Ed and increased to 8 weeks in the Fall of 2021. During the off times in between the scheduled times, the group continued to hike together. During the winter of 2021-2022, the group continued to hike, sometimes on snowshoes! We are now registered through Community Ed as a yearlong program. To me, this shows the need for more hiking trails, not mountain biking trails.

I also read the minutes of the March 28, 2022 Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Item 7 of the minutes said there were 7 individuals who commented on the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan. The minutes omit what they talked about? Why? All seven of them were in opposition to mountain biking in our parks.

My conclusion is that the residents of the city of La Crescent do not want, nor need, mountain biking in Vollenweider, Vetsch and Eagles Bluff parks, as well as Stoney Point. If mountain bike trails were developed in La Crescent, they would cause serious degradation of the parks overtime and cost more money and manpower to maintain those trails. Mountain bike trails also pose a safety risk to hikers who use those parks.

Greg Watson

jigamaree@acegroup.cc

507-500-0166

Christina Fortsch

From: Kris Lawson <krislawson96@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 6:00 AM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: Fwd: Park and Recreation Commission Comprehensive Plan for Stoney Point Trails

Hi! Chris, I sent this email to the La Crescent City Council, Bill Waller and you. I forgot to ask you if you could forward this email to the Park and Recreation Commissioners as they don't have emails listed. Would you be able to send my email to them? Thank you so much. Kris Lawson

My name is Kris Lawson. I am a co-leader of the La Crescent-Hokah Community Education Hiking Club. I have had the pleasure of meeting many La Crescent and surrounding Driftless Area hikers in this group. I was introduced to Vetsch Park, Stoney Point and Vollenweider trails through our hiking club and this area is beautiful and needs to be preserved. I am an avid hiker, birder, snowshoer and nature lover. I hike many trails in the Driftless Area and La Crescent has the above-mentioned amazing gem of a park and trails. I hike a lot in the La Crosse area. Specifically, the Mississippi Valley Conservancy lands/trails, the lower and upper Hixon Forest trails, and just recently the new Gateway Trails on Grandad Bluff. I have seen the erosion and rockfalls on the Lower Hixon and Upper Hixon trails and Gateway Trails from the expansion of mountain biking trails. I am writing to you today to express my concerns about the "Comprehensive Plan " that is before the Parks and Recreation Commission for Stoney Point trails that includes a proposed feasibility study for mountain biking trails.

I was present during the March 28th, 2022 meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission with the MSA group. During the public comment time, seven people (four hikers from our group and 3 natural resource board members) spoke up about their concerns of widening/altering the trails that would cause erosion and irreparable damage to the tranquil scenic landscape of the Stoney Point Trails. From my observations and talking with La Crescent residents who use the trails, this area is primarily used by the people who enjoy the peace and quiet of walking, hiking, running, birding, snowshoeing and observing nature. I have 2 friends that hike the trails every day and they report they may see 1 person biking on the trails. As an avid hiker, I am very concerned that the Parks and Recreation Commission is being influenced by a minority of people.

I believe there is a lack of transparency by the Parks and Recreation Commission and with that comes distrust by the community. For example: An on-line survey was conducted in regards to the usage of the parks. After I read the survey, hiking and a dog park were the top concerns for usage, mountain biking was barely mentioned. During the public comment time, a question was asked as to why proposed mountain biking trails were on the plan when it had a very low response on the survey from the community. City Council member, Teresa O'Donnell, replied that the survey was not meant to determine everything and that "some people" had told her privately that they want mountain biking. Another example came from a comment that Mike Meythayler made to me and my co-leader of the La Crescent-Hokah Hiking Club, Greg Watson on May 10th during our hike on the Stoney Point trails. During this interaction Mike admitted to doing "trail maintenance" by blowing leaves, removing rocks and cutting roots off the trails for the past 4 years and shared that he has been asking the City of La Crescent for help and then shared that \$50,000 was available for trail maintenance. I find his comment curious. During the March meeting, a new member of the commission, asked how the city was going to pay for the Comprehensive Plan. Bill Waller, City Administrator, responded that different citizen groups raise money for structures and gave the example of the Lions Club raising money for the shelter at Old Hickory park. Bill never mentioned that \$50,000 was already available for trail maintenance. My questions to all of you are: 1. How does Mike know about this money? 2. What is the source of the money. Due to this lack of transparency, questions are arising from our group as to where this money is coming from and is the commission being influenced by this amount of money from organizations/private citizens who want mountain biking for the Stoney Point trails.

I understand that one of the commissioners on the Park and Recreation Commission is a mountain biker and is a board member of Outdoor Recreation Alliance (ORA). ORA advocates for mountain bike trails and multi use trails in La Crosse and the surrounding Driftless Area. I realize that a commissioner has every right to share what they would like during the initial stages of planning, my concern is that mountain biking is over represented by a minority of La Crescent residents who already use the trails and want groomed trails specifically for mountain biking and/or multi-use trails. It seems that the commission is not listening to the majority of the citizens but are listening only to a few citizens who want mountain biking. And that is exactly what turns people off from the government.

My questions to all of you: 1. Who are you marketing this comprehensive plan too? The majority of the citizens or a few citizens?

2. Will the City of La Crescent listen to the majority of citizens/neighbors that live near the Stoney Point trails and leave the trails alone except for adding navigation signs? 3. Do you want to be good stewards of this precious bluff area and attract people in La Crescent and surrounding areas who enjoy nature by walking, hiking, birding, solitude, wildlife observation and nature preservation to come to this area? If you want to preserve this special area then I would ask that specialists who are trained in Bluffland

preservation be consulted and professionally trained individuals provide trail maintenance.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Kris Lawson, Co-Leader of La Crescent-Hokah Hiking Club

"It is not the critic who counts"— Theodore Roosevelt

Bill Waller

From: jon cowan <jrcow149@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 6:15 PM
To: Bill Waller
Subject: trail maintenance at Vetch park

Hello, While hiking with a Lacrescent adult rec group on the Vetch Park trails recently, we came across many trees whose roots were cut away adjacent to the trail leaving the trails open to erosion and damaging these trees. It is my understanding that this was undertaken by a volunteer not sanctioned by the Lacrescent Parks dept. May I respectfully suggest that the city contact professionals who do this work on a routine basis for suggestions on needed trails work. Such an organization exists just across the river in La Crosse; Wiscorps Conservation Corp, Inc . They do trail maintenance for the US National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service properties ,MN DNR parks and WIs DNR parks. Having volunteers who do not know what they are doing can damage these valuable resources not to mention possible liability issues, Sincerely, JR Cowan (ret. US National Park Service and WIS DNR).

Christina Fortsch

From: Catherine Klug <cathylou.k@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 8:39 AM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: To: Members of the Park and Recreation Commission

Hi Chris,
Would you please forward this to the members of The Park and Recreation Commission?
Thank you, Cathy Klug

To: Members of the Park and Recreation Commission
From: Cathy Klug

I attended the Park and Rec open house on 4/20/22 and saw the plans for all the parks. I had previously attended a Park and Rec meeting where I heard discussion prioritizing the improvements to the parks. I came away from both of these feeling excited about the beautiful parks in La Crescent. This letter is specifically about Stoney Point Park. I want to encourage the city to keep the trails in Stoney Point Park as hiking only trails.

Mountain bikers and hikers on the same trail are dangerous. Not all people on mountain bikes ride fast but many do. I used to ride a mountain bike and my goal was to ride fast. As I was coming down the hills I can't imagine having a hiker on the trail as I rounded a turn on the trail. I have heard people say they wouldn't ride fast but my point is that many people do ride fast. And I have heard people say they would get off their bike if they encountered a hiker. Because of speed and twisting and turning trails it doesn't always work that way.

I do not think they should be mountain bike only trails either. Mountain bike trails are not a priority in the Park and Rec survey results.

Please keep the Stoney Point Park trails as hiking only trails.

Thank you,

Cathy Klug
539 South 5th St
La Crescent, MN 55947

Sent from my iPad

Christina Fortsch

From: Paula Krenzke <specialk@acegroup.cc>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:13 PM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: Fwd: Stoney Point Trails

Chris,

Would you please forward a copy of our letter to all Park and Rec Commission members? Thank you,
Stephen and Paula Krenzke

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Paula Krenzke <specialk@acegroup.cc>
Date: May 19, 2022 at 4:45:32 PM CDT
To: bwaller@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
Subject: Stoney Point Trails

Hi Bill,

We wanted to express our views on the plans for Stoney Point Trails. We have viewed the proposed plans at the Open House and would like the trails left as hiking ONLY. We are distressed at the individuals who have taken it upon themselves to alter and damage trails for their own personal desires. This includes tree cutting, leaf blowing, rock removal and damage to tree roots by cutting and removing them. Whether for personal preference or in preparation for their wishes for mountain bike trail preparation, this should not be allowed or tolerated.

Residents (or non-residents) do not have the right to help themselves to modify public/city property. This is like someone deciding to put in a personal garden plot in Old Hickory Park!

Please pay attention to what our residents wanted when they completed the survey for their future vision for LaCrescent. If this information gathered is going to be dismissed, then we're not sure why the money was spent....

Again, please represent the majority when finalizing future plans and leave Stoney Point (and Vetsch Park, too) as they are, as safe hiking only trails for all.

Sincerely,
Stephen and Paula Krenzke

Sent from my iPad

Christina Fortsch

From: Paula Krenzke <specialk@acegroup.cc>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 5:16 PM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: Fwd: Stoney Point Trails

Hi Chris,

Could you please forward this e-mail to all Park and Rec Commission members for us, too. Thanks, Stephen and Paula Krenzke

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Paula Krenzke <specialk@acegroup.cc>
Date: May 19, 2022 at 3:38:10 PM CDT
To: todonnell@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov, cjustad@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov, dwilliams@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov, mpoellinger@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov, rhutchinson@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
Subject: Stoney Point Trails

To Mayor Poellinger and City Council members,

I grew up in LaCrescent, as have all 4 of my children. Stoney Point has been a constant in our lives, and now our grandchildren have been introduced to this treasure for hiking and sightseeing. Our family is requesting that you all ensure that the trails remain as hiking ONLY for the safety and enjoyment of all. This appears to be a priority of many that attended the Open House to review the Park and Rec plans.

The residents of LaCrescent deserve to have their wishes heard and carried out.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Stephen and Paula Krenzke and family

Sent from my iPad

Christina Fortsch

From: Gaia Peregrine Rougeux <gaiarougeux@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 8:33 AM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: Fwd: Vetsch Park

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gaia Peregrine Rougeux** <gaiarougeux@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, May 2, 2022, 7:27 PM

Subject: Vetsch Park

To: <todonnell@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov>, <cjostad@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov>, <dwilliams@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov>, <mpoellinger@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov>, <rhutchinson@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov>

1) Rogue trail workers were leaf blowing and moving rocks that cause more erosion on trails in La Crescent (I hear from a little Birdy someone was spraying one of the trails with herbicide last year). I have hiked these trails for the 17 years I have lived here. They were hidden gems that were rarely used by the wider community (La Crosse County residents). And while I appreciate people getting out into nature, they have no right to alter it without consensus, especially when they aren't even people who live in La Crescent. Are there repercussions for their selfish actions? I understand they may think they're doing something good for people, but they need to be educated and reprimanded for these unauthorized actions.

2) Please don't promote our trails to La Crosse or their county, which seems to be the only reason Stoney is being turned into a mountain biking destination. What La Crosse wants doesn't matter. They don't live here. The occasional mountain biker I've come across on the trails has been great. They're polite and I have felt seen and safe with my kids out there. But I do not trust the wider mountain biking community to take into account that young children are on those trails with their parents. Or that our trails aren't just for them. The mountain bikers on La Crosse trails are terrible. I have essentially stopped hiking some of my favorite trails over there because of some of them. And those few will make their way here, too, to ruin ours as well.

With young children and a husband who travels for work I do not have time to go to council meetings. I hope to remedy that in the coming years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Gaia Rougeux

May 21, 2022

Dear Mr. Waller,

As a resident of La Crescent, I use the parks in La Crescent. I like the trails in Velach Park / Stoney Point and would like our community to keep the integrity of our beautiful area. We are in God's country and want to keep our natural resources intact for all residents and visitors that hike our trails.

It is sad to see individuals doing destruction to our trails. Unauthorized individuals should be fined for damages.

If companies are invited to assess our trails, they should be non-biased and report back to our community and city council.

Sincerely,
Mae Bubbers

Bill Waller

From: Diane <dcpalm67@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 22, 2022 8:25 PM
To: Bill Waller
Subject: La crescent Parks

To Bill Waller

I am a LaCrescent city resident writing to express concern about unwarranted and unsupervised trail work being done on Stoney Point and Vetsch Park trails. These are public trails and any improvements should be done under city supervision. These "improvements" include leaf blowing to bare dirt on the trails, tree roots being cut from living trees, rocks removed from trails and the holes filled with dirt and moss from the surrounding banks, leading to erosion of the trails.

The city of LaCrescent is so fortunate to have amazing hiking and walking trails available and easily accessible to its residents. The proposed parks plan has many wonderful, exciting improvements to the existing parks. As a hiker, birder and nature enthusiast, I would like to keep the trails as primarily hiking trails and not develop them further for mountain biking. My experiences with "shared trails" in Hixon Forest has been that it is very hard to have trails used by both hikers and bikers safely. From the survey done by the city, it seems that the majority of residents would like to keep the trails for hiking.

I hope that you will share my concerns with the City Council and the Parks Commission members.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diane Palm

HCP secretary, La crescent Community Garden program manager.

Sent from my iPad

Christina Fortsch

From: James Lyman <lymanjb@acegroup.cc>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 10:01 AM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: FW: Stoney Point Development/Maintenance

Chris, Could you please forward this letter to all Park and Rec Commissioners. Thank you so much! I think I accidentally sent this twice. Bonnie

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: James Lyman
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 9:58 AM
To: cfortsch@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
Subject: FW: Stoney Point Development/Maintenance

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: James Lyman
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 9:53 AM
To: Teresa O'Donnell; cjostad@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov; dwilliams@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov; rhutchinson@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov; mpoellinger@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov; bwaller@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
Subject: Stoney Point Development/Maintenance

I am writing to ask a few questions that have been presented time and time again with the answer remaining elusive. The Stoney Point Trails are slated to become designated mountain bike trails and/or multi-use, according to the new park plans presented. When a city alters an entire park, taking away what it is currently used for, I would reason to believe there is a root cause, an action that set this plan in motion. Attendees of Park and Rec meetings for 2 years have not witnessed a single mountain biker lobby for trails. As an avid hiker of the trails, I rarely encounter any mountain bikers. In fact, the date today is May 23rd and I have so far this year witnessed ONE man up by the gazebo, and he is the gentleman who I will later address regarding his trail work. I frequently hike the trails twice a day, almost every day of the year. Last year, I saw only the gentleman previously referred to and twice a man with loud music coming from his helmet. That's it for me and I hear the same story from every hiker I see on the trails. The city survey did not indicate any citizen desire for mountain bike trails. It does not show up on any graph and if you look at the comments, you will read why citizens frequent the trails. Serenity, quiet, solitude, nature, peace, wildlife, reflection, etc. So again I ask, where is the source that put this plan in motion? It is a simple question that the citizens currently utilizing the park want to know. Could you tell me what the motivation is for the feasibility study proposed for Stoney Point Trails and why is it being executed by a mountain bike organization? Who asked MSA to conduct this study? That is the question we cannot get answered.

As an avid hiker of the trails, I have encountered trail "maintenance" for several years. This "maintenance" is carried out for the most part by Mike Meythaler. I have always had a cordial relationship with Mike out in the forest. During our past conversations, he indicated he has city permission for this trail work granted by a member of the Park and Rec Commission. I assumed this was true, and although irritated as well as puzzled, I did not vocalize any concern. As a hiker of long distance backpack trails, State Park and National Park trails, this "maintenance" is something I have never witnessed before. With the exception of trees across trails, invasive removal or erosion issues, trails for the most part, maintain themselves from usage. You will not see leaf blowing, weed whacking, extensive root and rock removal from

trails in other parks. Pathways through the forest are meant to be in their natural state. Last October my best guess would be a hundred roots were sawed out of the trails. The trail was also leaf blown right before the first snow. This spring, just as the trails had become okay to hike, they were leaf blown again, root cut and rock removed, right before a heavy rain, rendering them a muddy, dangerous mess. The rock removal left holes that would surely twist an ankle, the leaves were piled up on newly emerging wildflowers and once again, more root cutting. In the past, Mike has indicated to me multiple times that these trails were to become mountain bike trails. He also vocalized exactly what the future was for Stoney Point Trails on the community hike last year to 3 participants. And now, our hiking club has an encounter with him where he proclaims he carried out the trail work for mountain biking and because he has a condition known as turf toe. He also has inside knowledge of \$50,000 available for trail work. Why does this citizen have knowledge of \$50,000? From whom did he obtain this knowledge? And who is giving him permission for such unsupervised, unskilled, unnecessary, self serving trail work?

I have hiked the trails of Stoney Point for 40 years. My children played out there on the trails. I now take my grandchildren on the trails. I see evidence along the trails of little forts the kids across the street from me built 25 years ago. These trails have been traversed and enjoyed by so many different generations. Stoney Point is engrained in the history of our town and the stories are plentiful. It is a city treasure to be conserved with careful management for future generations. We are so lucky to have this amazing piece of land right here in our backyard. Please safeguard this fragile wonderland we are privileged to have access to. This area needs protection and preservation.

Thank you,

Bonnie

"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks" John Muir



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

Christina Fortsch

From: Peggy Derrick <peggyderrick@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 23, 2022 7:33 AM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: A request and a letter
Attachments: letter to P&R Commissioner.docx

Hello,
I have a letter I would like to share with members of the La Crescent Parks & Rec Commission, and I have been told that sending it to you is the best way to have it forwarded to all. The letter is attached; thank you for your help.
I have a query about a couple of documents I have seen but cannot locate on your website. One is the proposed development plan for the city parks, and the other is the results of the study on park usage that the commissioners had done last year. I know I have seen them both but am not locating them now. I'd be grateful if you could either send them to or share the links where they are available online.
Thank you,

Peggy Derrick
275 Cornforth Road
La Crescent, MN 55947
507-551-2109 home
608-799-0033 cell

May 23, 2022

To the La Crescent Parks & Rec Commissioners,

As a La Crescent Township resident and frequent hiker in Vetsch Park, I feel I need to speak up in favor of maintaining the park's present status as a hiker-friendly piece of wilderness within city limits. Rather than take it for granted or see this "underutilized" resource (because hikers don't count?) as something to be economically developed, I believe we can recognize the value it already has and seek to protect it.

The research that you had done last year came back with a clear preference among respondents for hiking, and yet your plan for the park is to turn it into a mountain biking destination: why? Why are you ignoring the results of your own report?

In many parts of the country park management has moved to dedicated trails for bikes and hikers; mountain bike organizations also support this. But because the Outdoor Recreation Association in La Crosse does not adhere to this industry standard, and because members of the ORA are on this commission, we are looking at turning Vetsch Park into a destination that designates the majority of its trails for bikes.

There is a perception that bikes and pedestrians can safely exist on the same trails. No matter how "green" mountain bikes claim to be, nothing is greener than walking on your own two feet. And no matter how it is powered, a bike is bigger, faster, and heavier than a pedestrian.

If the biking enthusiasts get their way and the park becomes a destination for (largely out of town) bicyclists, there will be the risk of accidents, and hikers will stop visiting the park. This is happening now in La Crosse.

If you are attracted to the thought of the revenue this business can bring, I would refer you back to the results of your study, which shows that residents, *who pay property taxes*, overwhelmingly favor protecting more of the park for hiking.

Sincerely,

Peggy Derrick

275 Cornforth Rd.

La Crescent, MN 55947

608-799-0033

Christina Fortsch

From: Anne Falken <falken@umn.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 7:13 PM
To: Christina Fortsch
Subject: La Crescent Hiking Trails

I'm writing to endorse the idea of keeping La Crescent hiking trails as they are and not opening them up to mountain biking.

La Crescent Community Ed offered a hiking opportunity last year, and around 75 of us signed up. Every Tuesday we view and identify plants, flowers, and hike to appreciate all the living, preserved species in these parks. Some in the group lead and educate, since they have hiked these trails for many years. A change by the City to a multi-use park format would bring damage to these species, erosion of the trails, and would also endanger the hikers. Hikers and mountain bikes don't see and appreciate the trails in the same way. Some uses work together—this isn't one of those.

Land preservation is a goal of most hikers. Most likely, it was a goal when these lands were set aside. Bikers can use other, more rural lands, that have not been donated for city residents to enjoy. Please think long-term as you plan. Envision what these parks will look like in the future, depending upon the use that's allowed.

Anne Falken
Jefferson Township Houston County

Would you please forward this note to the Park and Rec Commissioners, and to the City Council? Thank you.

--

Anne Falken Neumann Rd Caledonia MN

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bill Waller, City Administrator

FROM: Tim Hruska, P.E., L.S.

DATE: June 9, 2022

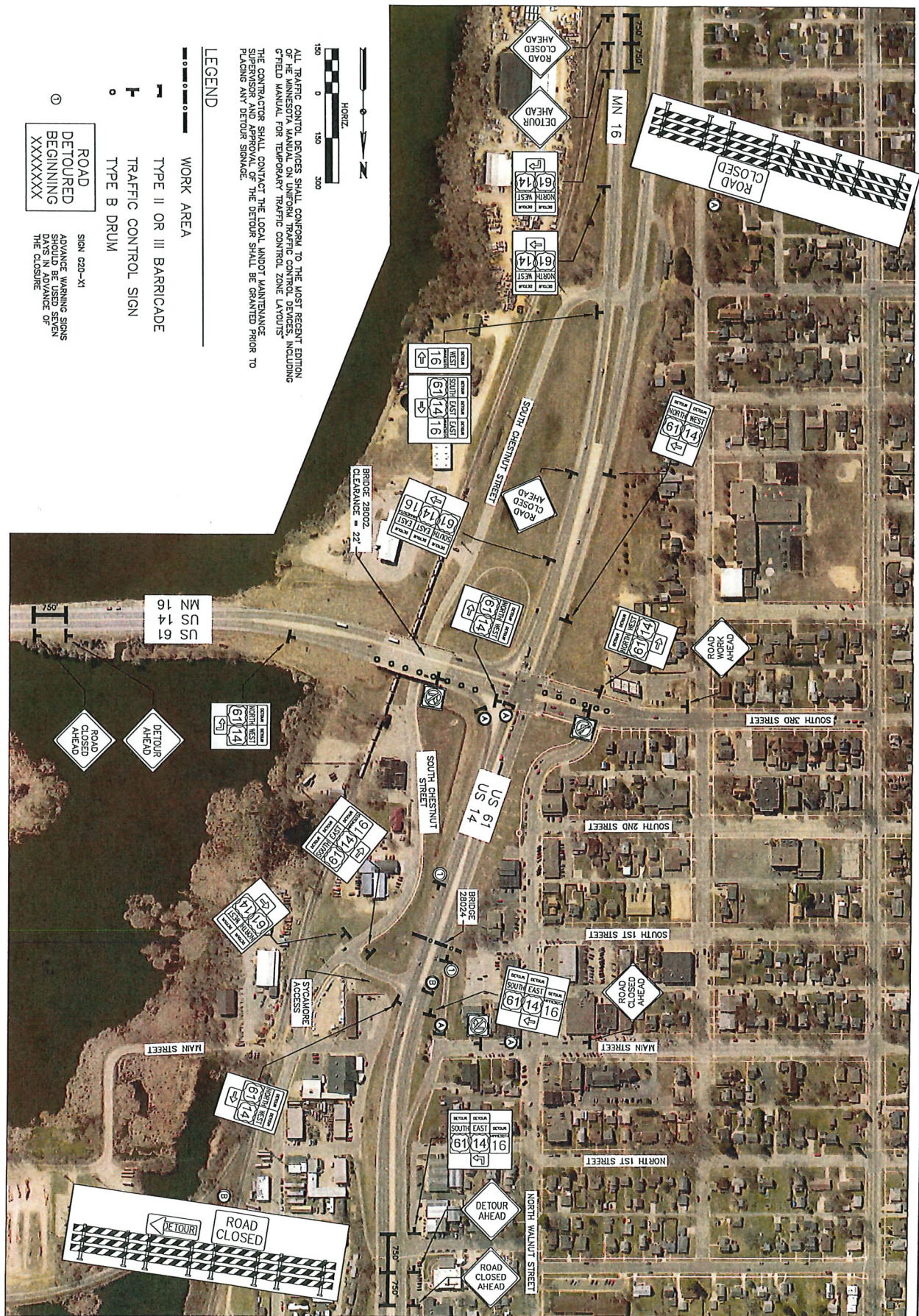
RE: Wagon Wheel Phase 3, Bridge Construction Update

Construction is progressing on the above referenced project. The Contractor will be removing forms and supports this week. They are scheduled to begin painting the structure in July. 1st Street South continues to progress with concrete work expected to be next week.

The bridge and truss structure that will span the highway is expected to be delivered at the end of July. An exact date is not known at this time. We have coordinated the assembly and installation of the bridge for the week of delivery with the contractor, crane operator, traffic control, Public Works Staff, Police Department, and MnDOT. The bridge will be delivered on a Monday. Below is the expected timing for that week (exact date to be determined).

Monday morning at 8 am	Setup lane/shoulder closure for northbound lanes.
Monday at 9am	Delivery of bridge. Plan is to come from north, turn around at South 14 th Street intersection. Local Public Works and Police Department plan to assist with any temporary traffic control to facilitate the turning movement of all three trucks at one time. Two trucks will stage along the east side of Highway 16 until previous truck has been unloaded at the construction site.
Monday PM – Thursday	Assemble bridge and arch on shoulder of highway.
Thursday 8pm	Close north bound highway and implement detour for north bound traffic only. Begin crane setup. Scheduled for 3 hours to setup.
Thursday 11pm	Close both directions of traffic and detour. Lift and install bridge. Disconnect all rigging. Anticipate this to take 2 hours.
Friday 1am	Open south bound traffic. Begin teardown of crane. Scheduled for 3 hours.
Friday 4am	Open north bound traffic.

A copy of the detour plan and a schematic of the crane location is included for reference. After the bridge is installed, the Contractor will begin forming for the bridge deck. This will be poured concrete after installation is completed.



TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN		REVISIONS		I hereby certify that this plan, specification or report was prepared by me or under my direct personal supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Professional Engineer under the laws of the State of Minnesota. Timothy A. Hruska Date: _____ License No. 44930
NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION		

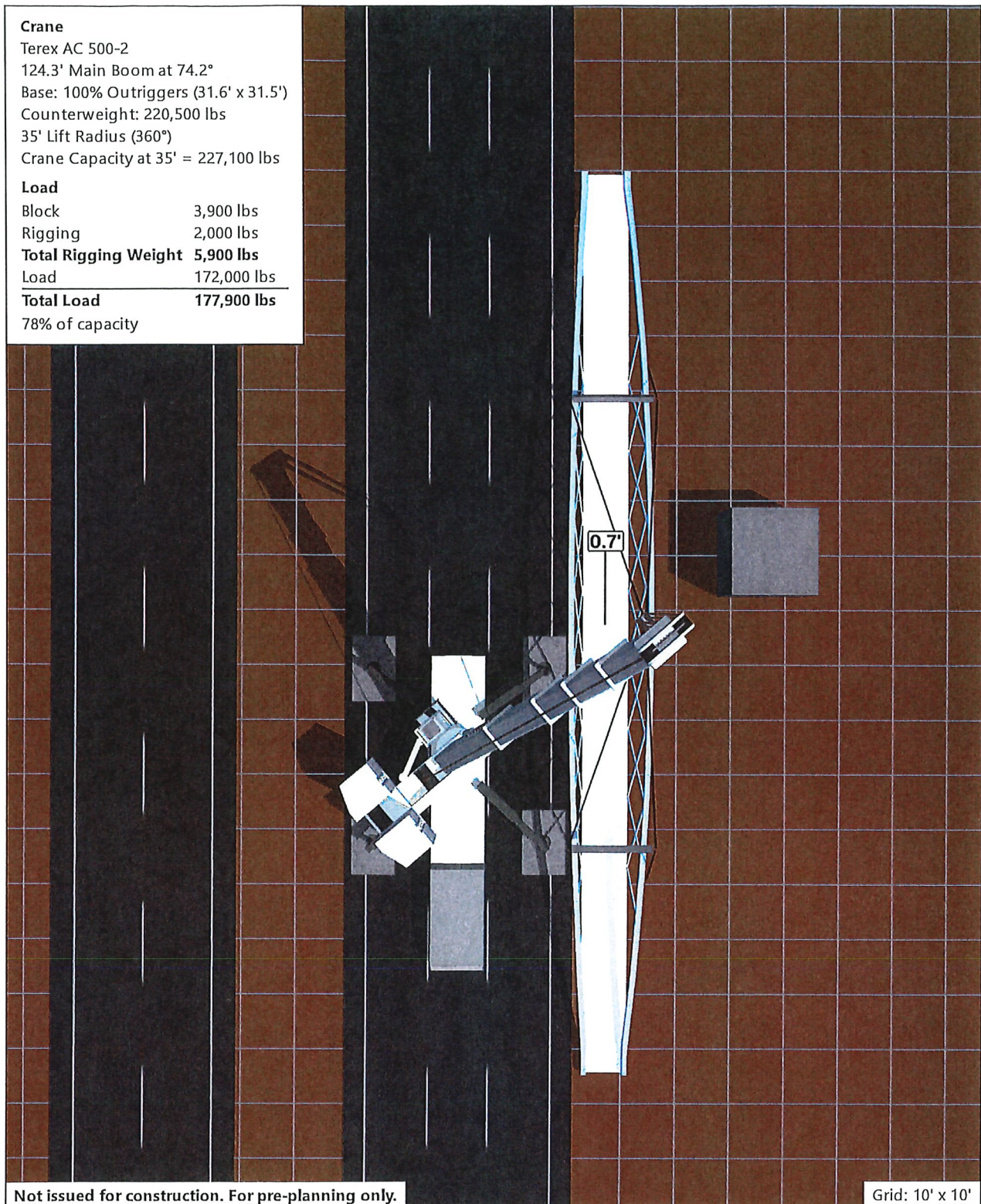
WAGON WHEEL TRAIL - PHASE 3
LA CRESCENT, MN
2021

STATE PROJECT NO. SP 280-000-003
DRAWN BY: 7713.05
CHECKED BY: SMH
SHEET: 27 OF 28

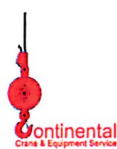
whks
engineers • planners • land surveyors

Terex AC 500-2
124.3' Main Boom at 74.2°
Base: 100% Outriggers (31.6' x 31.5')
Counterweight: 220,500 lbs
35' Lift Radius (360°)
Crane Capacity at 35' = 227,100 lbs

Block	3,900 lbs
Rigging	2,000 lbs
Total Rigging Weight	5,900 lbs
Load	172,000 lbs
Total Load	177,900 lbs
78% of capacity	



Grid: 10' x 10'



Title	Lift Plan	
Project	Pedestrian Bridge Set	
Customer	Icon	
Description	Bridge	
Drawn By	Shawn Cochran	5/26/2022

5.d

1. Provide a brief description of the project (max 50 words). Make sure to include the name of community or communities where the project will take place.

The City of La Crescent desires to educate residents and visitors and celebrate our rich Indigenous history by installing monuments, kiosks, seating, and plantings at the City's new Overlook Plaza in downtown La Crescent at the terminus of the new Wagon Wheel Trail bicycle/pedestrian connector bridge over U.S. Highway 14/61.

2. Identify what you hope this project will accomplish.

La Crescent's Indigenous past is rich but largely unknown to the community. This project will build on the Neutral Ground project recently completed by the La Crescent Area Historical Society and funded by the Minnesota Historical Society. Commemorative markers were installed along the Wagon Wheel Trail and on Skunk Hollow Road noting the northeast boundaries of the "Neutral Ground" - a large area of land identified in an 1830 U.S. treaty to separate the hunting grounds of local tribes.

Overlook Plaza can become the "next in a series" of kiosks and focal points that celebrate the Indigenous peoples who called this part of the Driftless Region home. This overlook site was the center of a thriving Native American community and this project can be a catalyst to share that vibrant history.

3. Describe who is involved in this project and how.

The City of La Crescent will take the lead role and collaborate with the La Crescent Historical Society, Minnesota Historical Society, Ho-Chunk Nation and other tribal communities, Rotary and Lions clubs, Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants, Houston County Historical Society, and three elementary schools near the site. These groups will enrich the project by providing historically accurate content or other project support to accomplish an on-going commitment to educate youth and the entire community about our Indigenous history.

Members of La Crescent's two Blandin Leadership Alumni groups (2011 & 2017) will be part of the leadership team and actively assist in promoting the project and building community support.

4. Share the ways this project contributes to a larger vision for your community.

Many community members participated in the implementation and ongoing updating of several strategic plans: a Comprehensive Plan, a Downtown Master Plan, a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and a Park and Open Space plan. An Indigenous

history kiosk at Overlook Plaza is highlighted in the 2017 Downtown Master Plan. This project can be a springboard for additional projects and programs celebrating the Indigenous peoples. Another future focal point project could be a “Council Circle” at Vetch Park at the base of the bluffs.

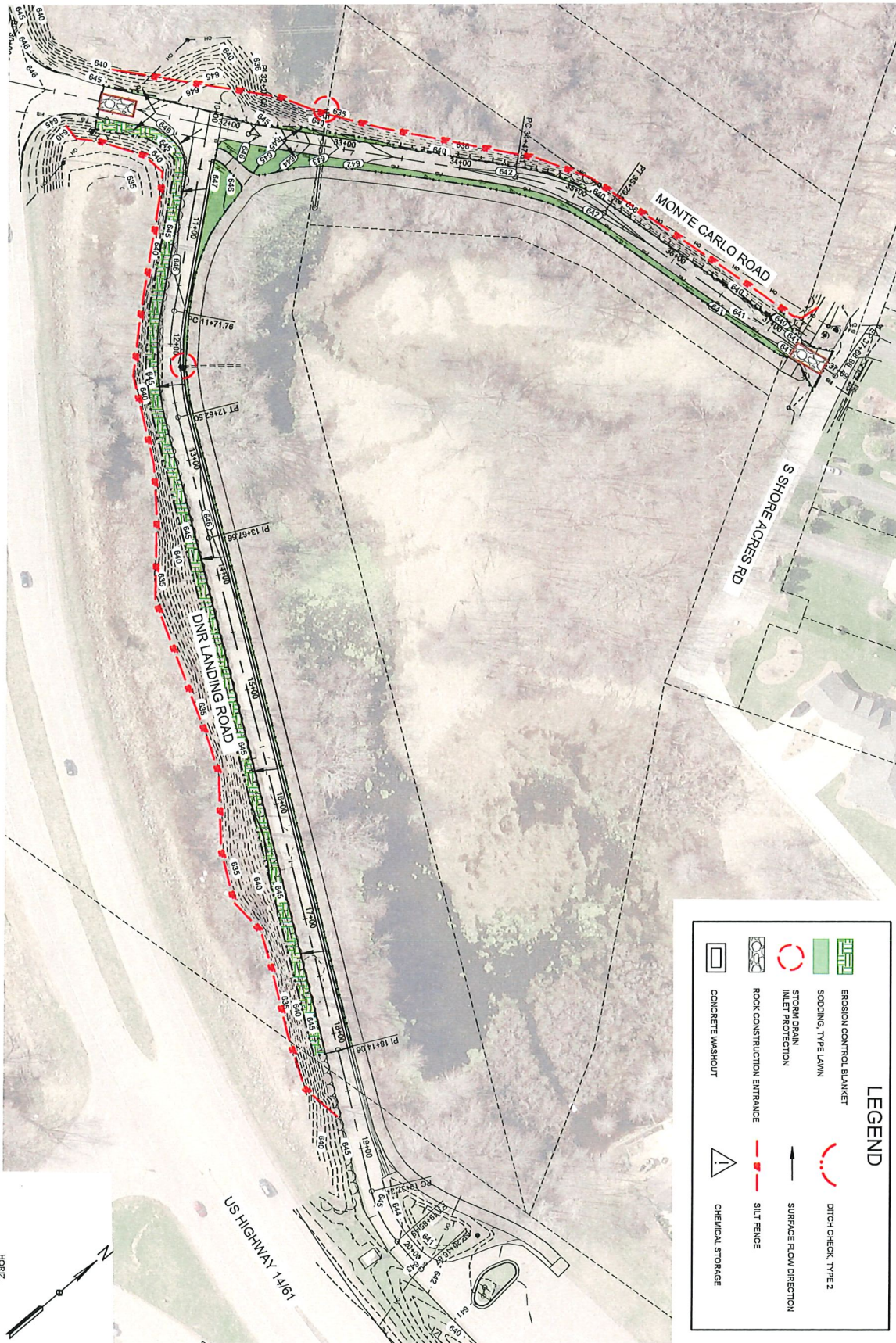
Our new tagline for La Crescent is “Growing from River to Ridge”. A series of historical markers and contemplation areas can provide “History from River to Ridge” from the Mississippi River, to the location of the ancient village, and up into our beautiful bluffs.

5.What is the amount requested and how will the funds be used?

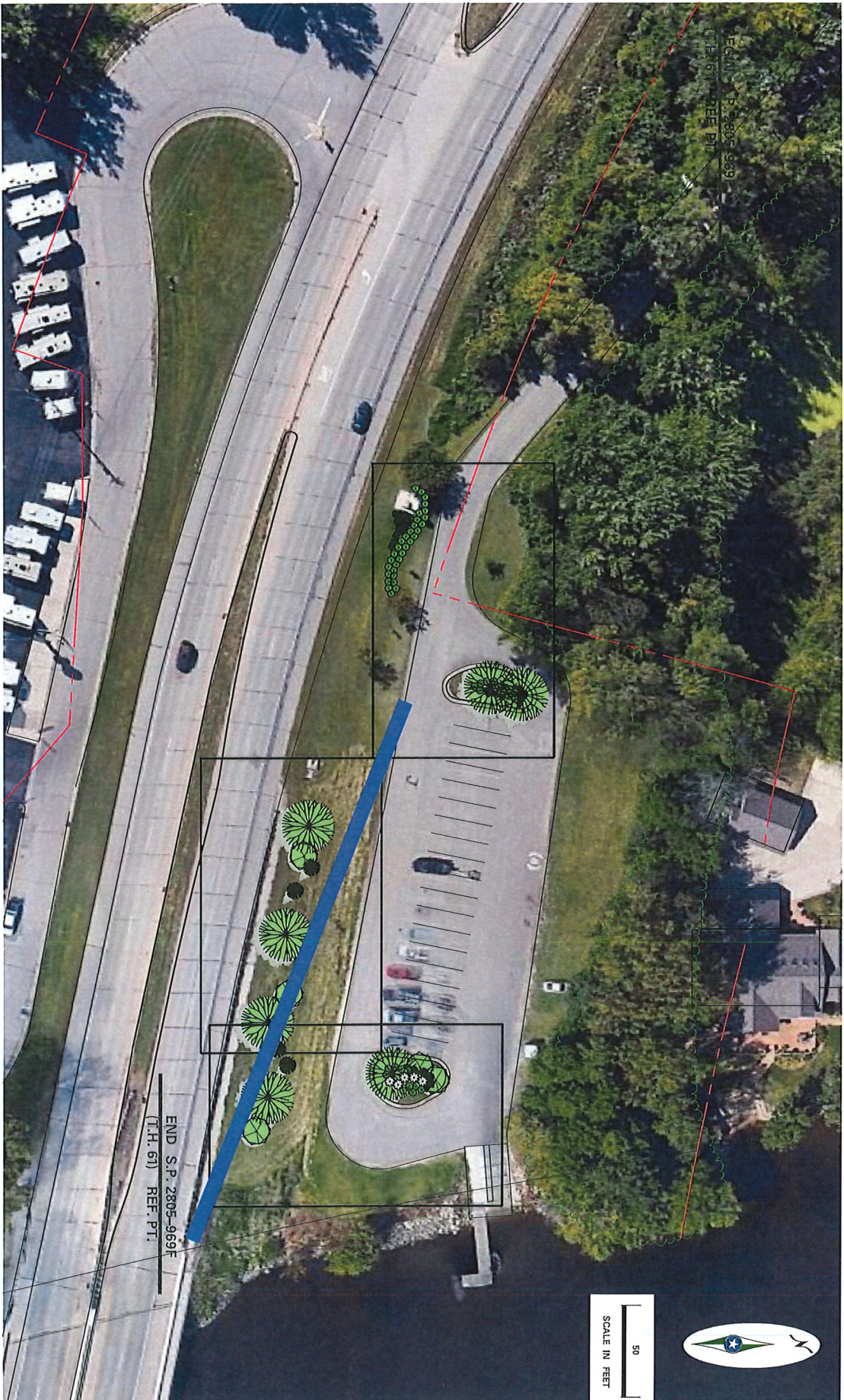
The city is requesting \$52,500 for the following purposes:

Historical research, consultation with tribal leaders, project design, preparation of engineering drawings, bidding documents, and project administration. The city will provide matching funds, staff resources from several departments and will seek additional funding from the partners listed above. It is estimated that the total project will reach \$250,000 to \$300,000.

5.e



#5.f



50
SCALE IN FEET

DATE PRINTED: 4/23/2022	TIME PRINTED: 3:45:58 PM	PROJECT MANAGER TODD CARROLL	DRAWN BY	LC NO. 2551	OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND DESIGN UNIT TRANSPORTATION BUILDING ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55155-1099	GENERAL LAYOUT		
			CHECKED BY	SIGNATURE: _____ LEAH M. HOFFMAN, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT		STATE PROJECT 2805-969F	(T.H. 67)	SHEET NO. 2 OF 10 SHEETS

#5.9

" DRAFT "
6/14/2022

**ROOT RIVER TRAIL DEVELOPMENT
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
TO JOINTLY COOPERATE**

This AGREEMENT is entered into by and between the County of Houston, the City of La Crescent, the City of Houston, and the City of Hokah, through their respective governing bodies, hereinafter individually referred to as (" MEMBER ENTITY") and collectively as ("MEMBER ENTITIES").

WHEREAS, MEMBER ENTITIES are political subdivisions of the State of Minnesota, as defined by Minn. Stat. §2.01 and §410.01; and

WHEREAS, MEMBER ENTITIES are committed to the development of a trail system from their respective communities to common points between MEMBER ENTITY communities; and

WHEREAS, MEMBER ENTITIES have formed this AGREEMENT for the specific goal of supporting the development of such a trail system for public use as a recreational bicycling and walking trail; and

WHEREAS, MEMBER ENTITIES recognize there are economic and operational advantages to cooperate in the planning, development, and seeking funding for such trail system; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minn. Stat. §471.59, MEMBER ENTITIES possess the statutory authority to jointly collaborate for the purpose of furthering the development and the completion of a recreational trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, MEMBER ENTITIES hereto agree as follows:

- 1. Term:** This AGREEMENT is effective upon the signatures of the authorized representatives of all MEMBER ENTITIES in consideration of the benefits to their respective residents and communities; and will remain in effect until the completion of a connected trail system, unless canceled according to the provisions of this AGREEMENT or terminated by law.
- 2. Withdrawal of MEMBER ENTITY:** A MEMBER ENTITY desiring to leave this AGREEMENT shall indicate its intent to do so in writing to the other MEMBER ENTITIES in the form of an official board resolution of their governing body. Notice must be delivered a minimum of 90 days in advance of leaving the AGREEMENT and provided to the authorized representatives listed paragraph 6. below.

3. General Provisions:

- a. **Compliance with Laws/Standards:** MEMBER ENTITIES agree to abide by all State of Minnesota, federal, and local laws; statutes, ordinances, rules, and regulations now in effect or hereafter adopted pertaining to this AGREEMENT.
- b. **Indemnification:** Each MEMBER ENTITY to this AGREEMENT shall be liable for the acts of its officers, employees, or agents and the results thereof to the extent authorized or limited by law and shall not be responsible for the acts of the other MEMBER ENTITIES, its officers, employees or agents. The provisions of the Municipal Tort Claims Act, Minnesota Statute Chapter 466 and other applicable laws govern liability of the MEMBER ENTITIES. To the full extent permitted by law, actions by the MEMBER ENTITIES, their respective officers, employees, and agents, pursuant to this AGREEMENT are intended to be and shall be construed as a “cooperative activity”. It is not the intent of the MEMBER ENTITIES that they be deemed a “single governmental unit” for the purpose of liability. For purposes of Minn. Stat. § 471.59, Subd. 1a(a), it is the intent of each MEMBER ENTITY that this AGREEMENT does not create any liability or exposure of one MEMBER ENTITY for the acts or omissions of another.
- c. **Records Retention and Data Practices:** MEMBER ENTITIES agree that records created pursuant to the terms of this AGREEMENT will be retained in a manner that meets their respective governmental entity’s records retention schedules and in accordance with Minn. Stat. §138.17. MEMBER ENTITIES further agree that records prepared or maintained in furtherance of this AGREEMENT shall be subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
- d. **Termination:** This AGREEMENT will remain in full force and effect until the completion of the trail system including the transfer of easements and property required for trail construction to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or upon all but one MEMBER ENTITY has withdrawn. The MEMBER ENTITIES acknowledge their respective and applicable obligations, if any, under Minn. Stat. Section §471.59, Subd. 5 after the purpose of this AGREEMENT has been completed.
- e. **Amendment:** Amendment to this AGREEMENT shall be in writing, adopted by each MEMBER ENTITY in the same manner as the original AGREEMENT.

3. Administration:

- a. **Establishment of a Committee for Development and Implementation of a Plan.** MEMBER ENTITIES agree to designate two representative Committee members, in support of the development of the connected trail.
 - i. Committee members will meet monthly, or as needed to collaborate and determine committee efforts in support of the trail system development,

serve as liaisons to their respective MEMBER ENTITIES, and act on behalf of the MEMBER ENTITIES governing boards as directed.

- i i . Each MEMBER ENTITY Committee representative shall have one vote on matters before the Committee.
- iii. Committee by-laws may be adopted as an amendment to this AGREEMENT.
- iv. Committee members will ensure that minutes of all Committee meetings are recorded and made available in a timely manner to Committee members, and maintain a file of all approved minutes including corrections and changes.
- v. Committee members will perform obligations under this AGREEMENT in a timely manner and inform each other about opportunities, achievements, and delays so that information can be timely relayed to MEMBER ENTITIES.
- vi. Committee members shall retain records consistent with the Minnesota General Records Retention Schedules until the expiration of this AGREEMENT at which time, records shall promptly be delivered to the Fiscal Agent.

b. Budget.

The Committee shall adopt an annual budget on or before January 1 of each calendar year of operation.

c. Grants.

The Committee will seek grant opportunities and assist the Fiscal Agent in the preparation of grant applications.

d. Public Relations.

The Committee is responsible for promoting the trail system to land owners and to the general public. This includes overseeing the development of public information sessions as well as meeting with individual land owners whose properties could potentially contribute to the successful completion of a DNR owned trail system.

4. Fiscal Agent/Grant Administration: The City of La Crescent agrees to act as the fiscal agent for the purposes of this AGREEMENT and agrees to the following:

- a. Accept the responsibility to perform all functions and duties associated with the application for grant funding and the implementation of all future grant agreement(s) awarded for the development the recreational trail system;
- b. Accept all fiscal responsibilities and perform financial transactions associated with the implementation of this AGREEMENT and for grant

reporting requirements set forth in future grant award agreements;

- c. Annually provide fiscal reports to MEMBER ENTITIES;
- d. Provide Committee members with financial status reports at regular intervals that describe the overall condition of this project, specifying of any future grant funding and vendor payment obligations. Such financial status reports shall be delivered no less than once each quarter;
- e. Retain fiscal records consistent with the State of Minnesota Records Retention Schedule;
- f. Pay for expenses and services consistent with funding agreements and approved by the Committee; and
- g. Effectuate or assist in effectuating the transfer of land purchases or right-of-way easements obtained through grant funding in the furtherance of this AGREEMENT to the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- h. Accept and assume the sole responsibility for its acts and omissions related to the performance of Fiscal Agent duties for the purpose of this AGREEMENT.

5. Contract for Services: Upon a resolution by each MEMBER ENTITY governing board in support of a coordinated effort to develop a public recreational trail system through and between MEMBER ENTITY communities, the Fiscal Agent will have the power to enter grant funding agreements and contracts for professional and technical services necessary for the friendly acquisition of land purchases and right-of-way easements in furtherance of the completion of the public recreation trail.

The Fiscal Agent agrees to coordinate its efforts with the DNR for efficiency and consistency DNR guidelines and regulations the with the Root River State Trail Extension Houston to La Crescent Master Plan.

https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/rootriver/root_river_extension_final_1211.pdf

6. Authorized Representatives: All official notifications regarding this AGREEMENT shall be sent to other MEMBER ENTITIES via the authorized representatives listed below:

Houston County

Title: Auditor/Treasurer

Address: 304 S. Marshall Street, Caledonia MN 55921

Telephone: 507-725-5803
E-Mail: donna.trehus@co.houston.mn.us

City of La Crescent City
Title: City Administrator
Address: 315 Main Street, La Crescent MN 55947
Telephone: 507-895-2595
E-Mail: bwaller@cityoflacrescnet-mn.gov

City of Houston
Title: City Clerk/Administrator
Address: PO Box 667, 105 W. Maple Street, Houston MN 55943
Telephone: 507-896-4033
E-Mail: mquinn@houstonmn.us

City of Hokah
Title: City Clerk
Address: PO Box 311, 211 Main Street, Suite 1, Hokah MN 55941
Telephone: 507-894-4990
E-Mail: cityclerk@acegroup.cc

The above representatives have the authority for acceptance on behalf of the respective the MEMBER ENTITY.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF MEMBER ENTITIES have executed this AGREEMENT by their duly authorized representatives.

HOUSTON COUNTY

Greg Myhre, County Board Chair

Date _____

Donna Trehus, County Auditor/Treasurer

Date _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND EXECUTION

Samuel Jandt, County Attorney

Date _____

CITY OF LA CRESCENT

Mike Poellinger, Mayor

Date _____

Bill Waller, City Administrator

Date _____

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND EXECUTION

Skip Wieser, City Attorney

Date _____

CITY OF HOUSTON

David Olson, Mayor

Date _____

Michelle Quinn, City Clerk/Administrator

Date _____

CITY OF HOKAH

Lee Tippery, Mayor

Date _____

Lindsey Martell, City Clerk

Date _____



Active Transportation Program

2022 Planning Assistance Grant Application

This document is provided for offline use in developing answers to grant application questions. **Final applications must be [submitted online](#) by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 10, 2022.**

Please see the application guide on [MnDOT Active Transportation grants page](#) for instructions and resources to fill out this application. Portions marked with “*” indicate that a section is required.

Part 1: Project Lead Contact Information*

Contact Name: Larry Kirch

Contact Title: Community Development Director

Project Lead Organization Name: City of La Crescent, Minnesota

Project Lead Organization Type: City

Street Address: 315 Main Street P.O. Box 142

City, State, ZIP: La Crescent, MN, 55947

Phone: (507) 895-4096

Email Address: lkirch@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov

Applicant Organization Name: City of La Crescent

Applicant Organization Type: Local Government-City

Part 2: Planning Assistance Requested*

Please review the following types of planning assistance available in the application guide. Select the type of planning assistance you are interested in from the following types of planning assistance.

___ Active Transportation Plan (combined plan focused on walking, bicycling, and other types of human-powered or human-speed mobility)

___ Bike Plan or Bicycle Master Plan (plan focused on bicycling)

☐ Pedestrian Plan (plan focused on walking)

☒ Active Transportation Corridor Plan (plan focused on active transportation modes within one transportation corridor)

☐ Parks and Trails Master Plan (plan focused on active transportation related to parks and trails)

☐ Active Transportation plan update (if requesting an update, please explain why this is needed below)

☐ Other plan update (Please enter type of plan)

Where would the planning efforts be focused on?

☐ Citywide

☐ Countywide

☒ Corridor

☐ Regional or multi-county

☐ Other

Explain Why you are requesting the planning assistance ranked above and the need for this type of Planning Support for Your Community. (City, County, Multi-County, corridor, regional/multi County, or Plan update):

The lack of a Root River Trail Connection between La Crescent (Wagon Wheel Trail (WWT) terminus) and the cities of Hokah and Houston has been seemingly unsolvable for nearly 30 years. Houston County and the three cities are in the process of entering into a formal agreement to complete the trail. The Wagon Wheel Trail bike/ped bridge is being completed over U.S. Highway 14/61 this summer into downtown La Crescent. Connecting the Wagon Wheel Trail, the MRT/USBR 45 and the Root River Trail has been a long-term goal of the cities and county. The La Crescent Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update (2017) identifies the connection from downtown La Crescent to Miller's Corner as a critical link but lacks an implementable corridor plan (p. 59). The cities and region are in need to define a safe corridor between Walnut Street (WWT bridge terminus) and Miller's Corner (Mn 16/26).

Are there any policies in the communities that affect people walking or biking? (e.g. complete streets policy, no biking policies, etc.):

The city adopted a complete streets ordinance in 2020 (Ordinance 536), Safe Routes to School Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update (2017) and is currently updating the Park and Open Space and Trails Plan.

Part 3: Community Information*

The following demographic information is **REQUIRED** for each City applying for planning assistance. Please be thorough, applications with answers such as Unknown or N/A will not be considered. If more than 5 Cities are included, use an additional spreadsheet to complete the data for all Cities that will be included in the plan.

City Name #1: La Crescent

City Population #1 5,276

City Name #2: Hokah

City Population #2: 547

City Name #3: Houston

City Population #3: 961

City Name #4: Click here to enter text.

City Population #4: Click here to enter text.

City Name #5: Click here to enter text.

City Population #5: Click here to enter text.

Part 4: Equity – Reaching Priority Populations

A) MnDOT’s Active Transportation Program aims to achieve equitable outcomes by funding initiatives that prioritize communities who are more likely to rely on active transportation, are more vulnerable to unsafe traffic conditions, or have experienced historic disinvestment. (30 points)

The Active Transportation Equity Score uses 15 indicators to identify locations in Minnesota that likely have a greater need for Active Transportation investment. Points will be awarded to applicants proportionally based on equity scores as part of the program’s goals to advance transportation equity in Minnesota.

Calculations of equity scores will be conducted by MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation staff. The scores to be used can be viewed on [MnDOT’s Active Transportation Equity Score Web App](#). This app allows viewers to preview scores throughout the state and develop an understanding of how scores will be calculated. See the Planning Assistance Application Guide for more information about how your score will be calculated.

B) How will this project advance equity in your community? (10 points)*

A corridor plan project addresses the four (4) equity considerations of the Active Transportation Program. Important destinations include: Dresbach, Dakota, Winona, etc., (north), downtown La Crescent, Hokah, Brownsville, New Albin, IA (south) and Houston and the Root River Trail (west), three scenic byways, La Crosse, Wisconsin and the city and state trail system (east). Addressing an existing barrier: Completing a viable corridor plan in cooperation with the Minnesota DOT along the Great River Road (U.S. 14/61/Minnesota 16 to Minnesota 26) where two National Scenic Byways and one State Scenic Byway intersect that is also the MRT and USBR 45 and that connects to the incomplete Root River Trail is a long-standing regional and community goal. Significant bicycle investments have been made at the I-90/U.S. 14/61 interchange that continue into La Crescent and now intersect with the Wagon Wheel Trail but there is a critical gap south of the city of La Crescent to create a safe

connection to the extension of the Root River Trail at Miller's Corner. Bringing communities together: The cities of Houston, Hokah, La Crescent and Houston County are finalizing an intergovernmental agreement to cooperate on the completion of the Root River Trail. The county and the three cities will work closely with the Minnesota DNR, Minnesota DOT, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife to acquire the necessary right-of-way or easements for the construction of a multi-use trail. The trail will bring many SE Minnesota Trail towns together paralleling the Bluff Country Scenic Byway (MN 16). Investing in previously disinvested communities: Houston County and Hokah have been losing population for over a decade. The lack of a complete Root River Trail has transferred economic opportunity further west to Rushford, Peterson, Whalen, and Lanesboro. Residents of La Crosse routinely shuttle bikes past La Crescent and Hokah and even Houston to bicycle the RRT from Rushford to Lanesboro and further west and south.

Part 5: Project Need

A) Please describe the barriers and community need for this planning effort? How will this plan advance Active Transportation infrastructure and get more people walking and biking? (15 points)*

The city of La Crescent has undergone a 20-year process to implement the Wagon Wheel Trail from the West Channel of the Mississippi River to the soon to be completed \$4.5 million dollar connector bridge over U.S. 14/61 into the downtown. The extension of the Root River Trail has been even more challenging starting with the transfer of the rail bed to the property owners and the corridor issue along Minnesota 16 with the bluff and the railroad and wetlands constraining the corridor. The county and three cities are now, more than ever, galvanized to make the Root River Trail connection a reality. The lack of a viable and safe corridor to Miller's corner is part of the missing middle of infrastructure needed to complete a RRT connection. The three cities and county, working together in an intergovernmental agreement can jointly work with property owners, the DNR and DOT and the US Fish and Wildlife to secure the corridor from Miller's corner to Hokah and Houston. A complete corridor will bring residents, commuters, through bikers, and recreational riders in both directions along the entire corridor. The off-road portions of the trail network will provide a safe and comfortable setting for bikers, walkers, strollers of differing ages and abilities. Completing both an in-town route and a safe route along Minnesota 16 will undoubtedly get more people walking and biking. The corridor is used now for the fearless riders but will bring out more recreational and casual riders if done appropriately. The lack of a clear, viable and implementable plan for the section between downtown La Crescent to Miller's Corner has held back the larger effort to connect the RRT to Miller's corner.

B) Active Transportation Planning is a strategy that supports healthy and safe communities. Describe how this plan fits into and/or supports larger community goals? (5 points)*

La Crescent residents and staff have been part of larger coalitions for healthy communities for many many years. The city has a very active Safe Routes to School program and continually implements projects outlined in the SF2S plan. La Crescent, although a small community itself, will assist the county and the cities Hokah and Houston with this project and ensure that project enhances the health and safety of its residents and visitors. The county and the three cities have been frustrated for years in seeing how the RRT has made the communities along the western end of the trail more healthy and vibrant communities. From an economic standpoint, the completion of a connection will open the area to an additional population base from the Wisconsin communities

who are now bypassing two of the three cities. The goal of the county and cities is to build on the vibrancy created by connecting all the towns in SE Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. The corridor from La Crescent to Hokah is now only utilized by the most avid cyclists and the general population is not served at all.

Part 6: AT Team Members and Local Support

A) Stakeholders or Active Transportation Team

Members of a local AT team should be involved before, during, and after the AT planning process in your community. Please mark the following individuals currently on your AT team. Please provide names where available.

Is your AT committee established?*

☒ Yes, we have a team pulled together who has met about AT

☐ No, the list below is proposed partners for this project

Name and Title of Team Leader: Larry Kirch, AICP, CTP, PTP, Community Development Director

B) Active Transportation Team Roster (20 points)*

Team Members:	Please list name and title:	How will this team member contribute to plan development and implementation with their organizing or unique perspective?
City staff (planners, public works, city manager)	Bill Waller, City Administrator Larry Kirch, Community Development Director	Project Liaison with City Council, County, Hokah, Houston Official's Project Lead
Bicycling or walking group representative	Jason Larson	City Sustainability Coordinator and BPAC Member from the 2017 Bike Ped Plan Update
Safe Routes to School or School representation		
Toward Zero Deaths representative	Jackie Eastwood, La Crosse Area Planning Committee (MPO)	Bring regional transportation planning perspective via the MPO

Team Members:	Please list name and title:	How will this team member contribute to plan development and implementation with their organizing or unique perspective?
SHIP/public health practitioners	Linda Larson	Community Health Professional (retired)
Elected Officials	Cheryl Jolstad	Council Member and BPAC Member from the 2017 Bike Ped Plan Update
Community Members		
Priority Populations (Seniors, Youth, People of Color, People with Disabilities, etc)		
Other team members (write-in):		
Other team members (write-in):		

Part 7: Existing Conditions and Implementation Support

A) Using the 6Es (equity, education, encouragement, engagement, engineering and evaluation) briefly discuss the activities related to AT that are currently underway (or happened within the last two years) in your community, city or county. (5 points)*

Click here to enter text.

B) What is your Team's vision for a successful AT plan Outcome? What do You Expect to accomplish after the planning process? How will you ensure implementation of the plan and who will be involved? (10 points)*

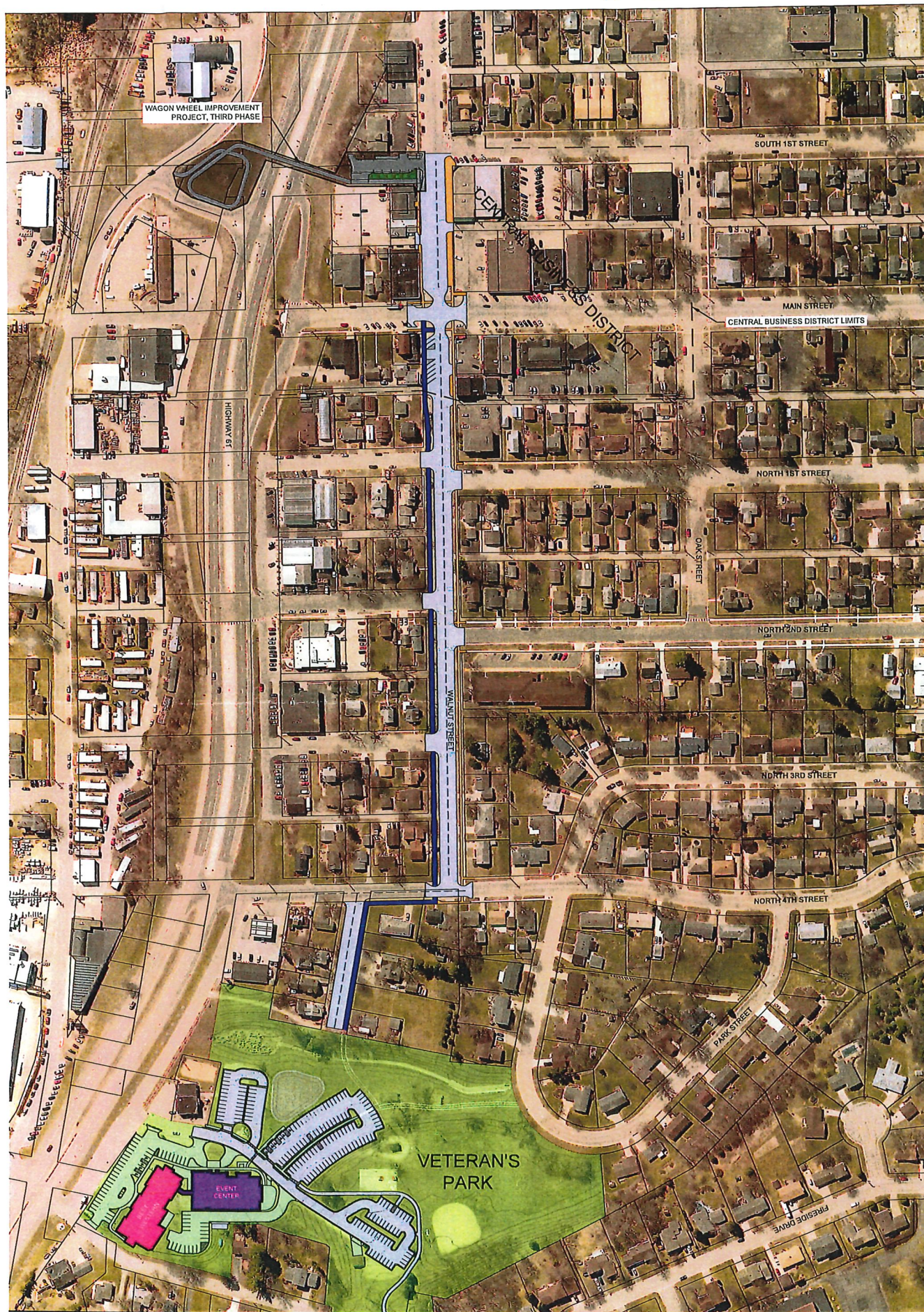
A recommended alternative for a safe and complete bicycle and pedestrian route from downtown La Crescent to Miller's Corner. Once the planning process is complete, the city of La Crescent will seek funding at the state and federal level to complete the design and construction documents and then funding for construction. The plan can only be implemented if there is ultimately a design that has the support of the Minnesota DOT and equally from the county and the three communities, the La Crosse Area Planning Committee, travelling public, bicyclists and walkers and area elected officials and legislators. Implementation depends on funding for a project that all can support.

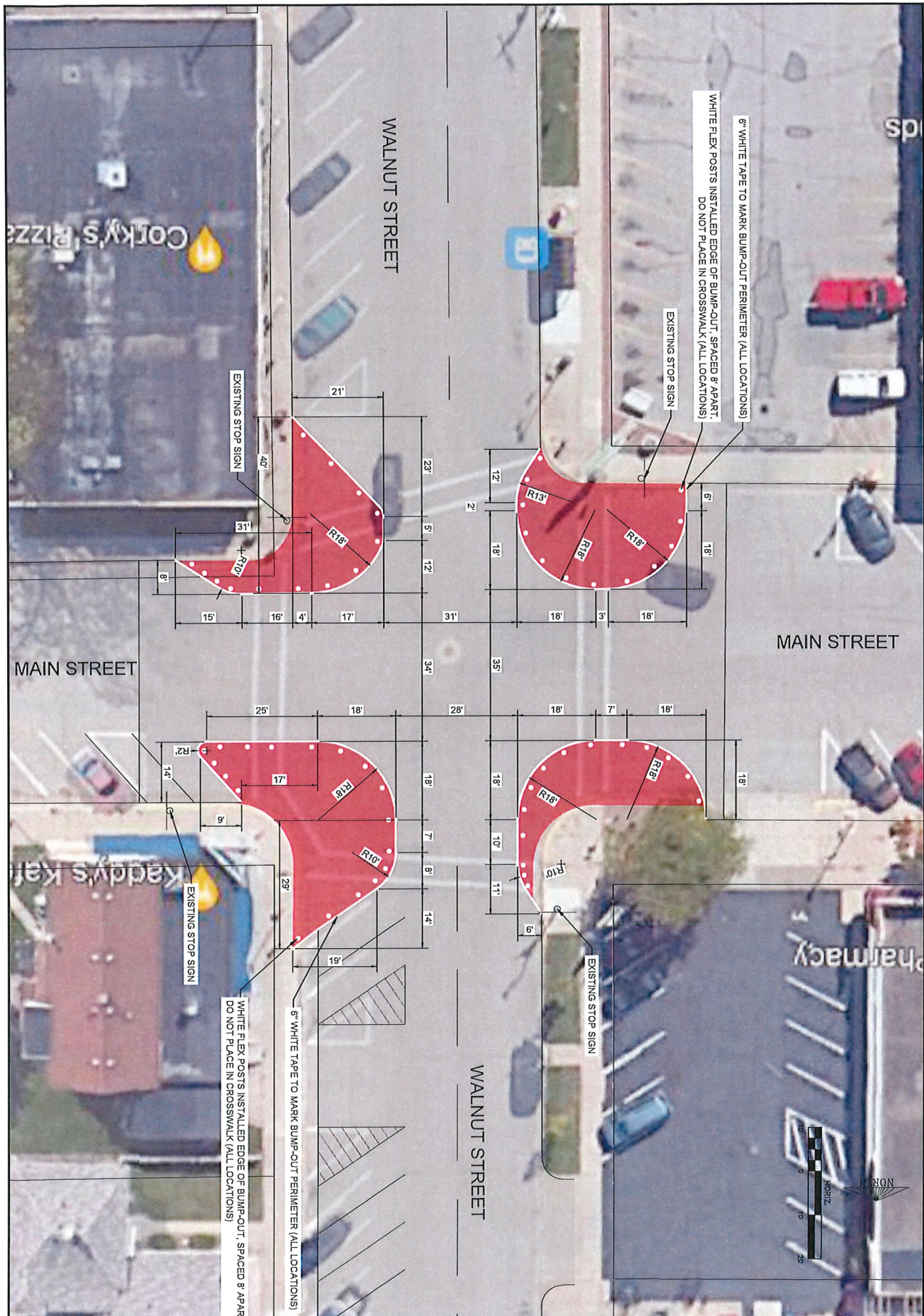
Part 8: Letters of Support

Please attach the following letters of support (5 points):

1. City staff or City administrator letter of support from each City that will be covered in the plan and/or a County official letter if this will be a County or Regional level plan.*
2. Letter of support from the local partner (Pedestrian/Bicycle group, Local Public Health, SRTS (Safe Routes to School) or TZD (Toward Zero Deaths) committee, etc.)

5.1





Wagon Wheel Trail



Providing Connections and Opportunities in Minnesota's Apple Capital!

About the Wagon Wheel Trail System

The City of La Crescent and the State of Minnesota have invested significant resources in developing the Wagon Wheel Trail, a critical link in the regional trail system.

The project is being completed in multiple phases:

Phase 1: City to Shore Acres (2015)

Phase 2: Phase 1 to West Channel Bridge (2019)

Phase 3: Pedestrian Bridge over TH 14 (Underway)



Phases 1 and 2 required extensive coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Services to facilitate the trail's construction adjacent to the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

Phase 3 connects the City of La Crescent to the trail system and provides a Safe Routes to School Alternative.

The project was funded by the following sources:

Phase 1: ATP, DNR, and MnDOT Grants

Phase 2: ATP and State Bonding Grants

Phase 3: \$1 M - TAP; \$2.5 M - State Bonding Bill



Growing from River to Ridge

Need More Information? Please Contact:

Bill Waller
City Administrator
bwaller@cityoflacscent-mn.gov
(507) 895-4668

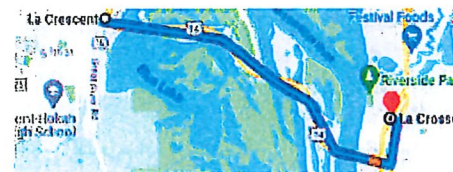
Benefits to the Community



Safe crossing of Highway 14/61



Provides public access to Grade A wetlands and offers health and wellness opportunities



Connects La Crescent to La Crosse



Connectivity from a residential area and underserved populations to schools and downtown

WALNUT STREET IMPROVEMENTS



DEMONSTRATION PROJECT WILL RUN: JUNE 1 - OCTOBER 1, 2022 | LA CRESCENT, MN

About the Proposed Improvements

The City of La Crescent intends to reconstruct Walnut Street to improve the connection between the new Wagon Wheel Trail Pedestrian Bridge, the City's central business district, and the hotel/event center. The project is tentatively planned for 2024.

Soliciting input from the public is one of the first steps for initiating the proposed improvements.

About the Walnut Street Demonstration Project

The City of La Crescent is performing a demonstration project that includes the installation of bump outs at all four quadrants of the intersection of Walnut Street and Main Street.

These bump outs have several benefits to the public including:

- » Shortening pedestrian crossing distance
- » Improved visibility of pedestrians for drivers and for pedestrians to make safe crossings
- » Traffic calming
- » Create space for aesthetic components such as:
 - Bicycle racks
 - Charging stations
 - Benches
 - Water fountains
 - Planters
 - Decorative street lights
 - Public art
 - Historic markers
 - Outdoor dining for local restaurants

A demonstration project is a short-term, low-cost, temporary roadway project used to pilot long-term design solutions. The intent of the demonstration project is to gather public opinion about the potential project before investing in hard infrastructure.

Project Contacts:

WHKS & Co.

Tim Hruska, P.E.
City Engineer/City Representative
thruska@whks.com
(507) 288-3923

City of La Crescent, MN

Bill Waller
City Administrator
bwaller@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
(507) 895-4668

We Want to Hear from You!

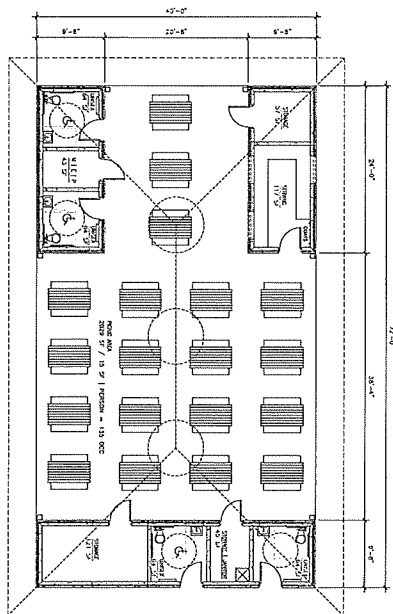
Scan the QR code or visit
<https://clients.whks.com/la-crescent-mn/>
to view the project website to learn more
as well as provide your thoughts and
feedback on the demonstration project.



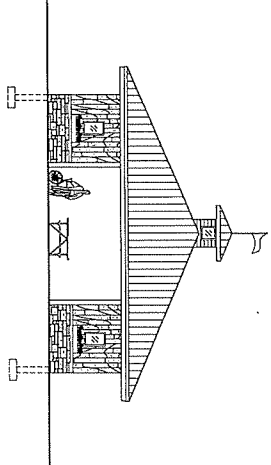
Growing from River to Ridge



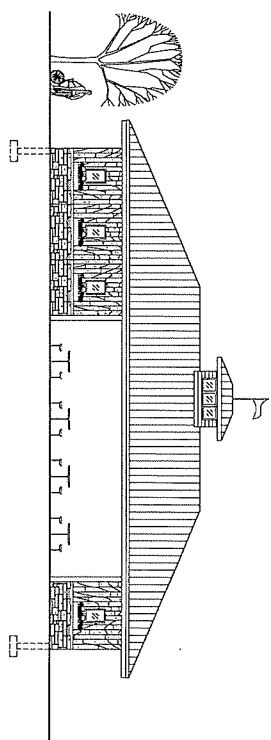
5. J



1 FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 SOUTH ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 EAST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"

EcoGreen
Architects LLC
2100 S. GARDEN AVENUE
SUITE 200
DENVER, CO 80222
(303) 317-1333

WIESER MEMORIAL FAMILY PARK SHELTER
TRIFECTA AVENUE
LA CRESCENT, MN 55947

NOTES:
1. SEE ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATIONS FOR MATERIALS AND FINISHES.
2. SEE ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATIONS FOR EQUIPMENT AND FIXTURES.
3. SEE ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATIONS FOR LIGHTING AND ELECTRICAL.
4. SEE ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATIONS FOR MECHANICAL AND PLUMBING.
5. SEE ARCHITECT'S SPECIFICATIONS FOR STRUCTURAL AND FOUNDATION.

DATE: 01/15/2021
DRAWN BY: J. J. JENSEN
CHECKED BY: J. J. JENSEN
APPROVED BY: J. J. JENSEN

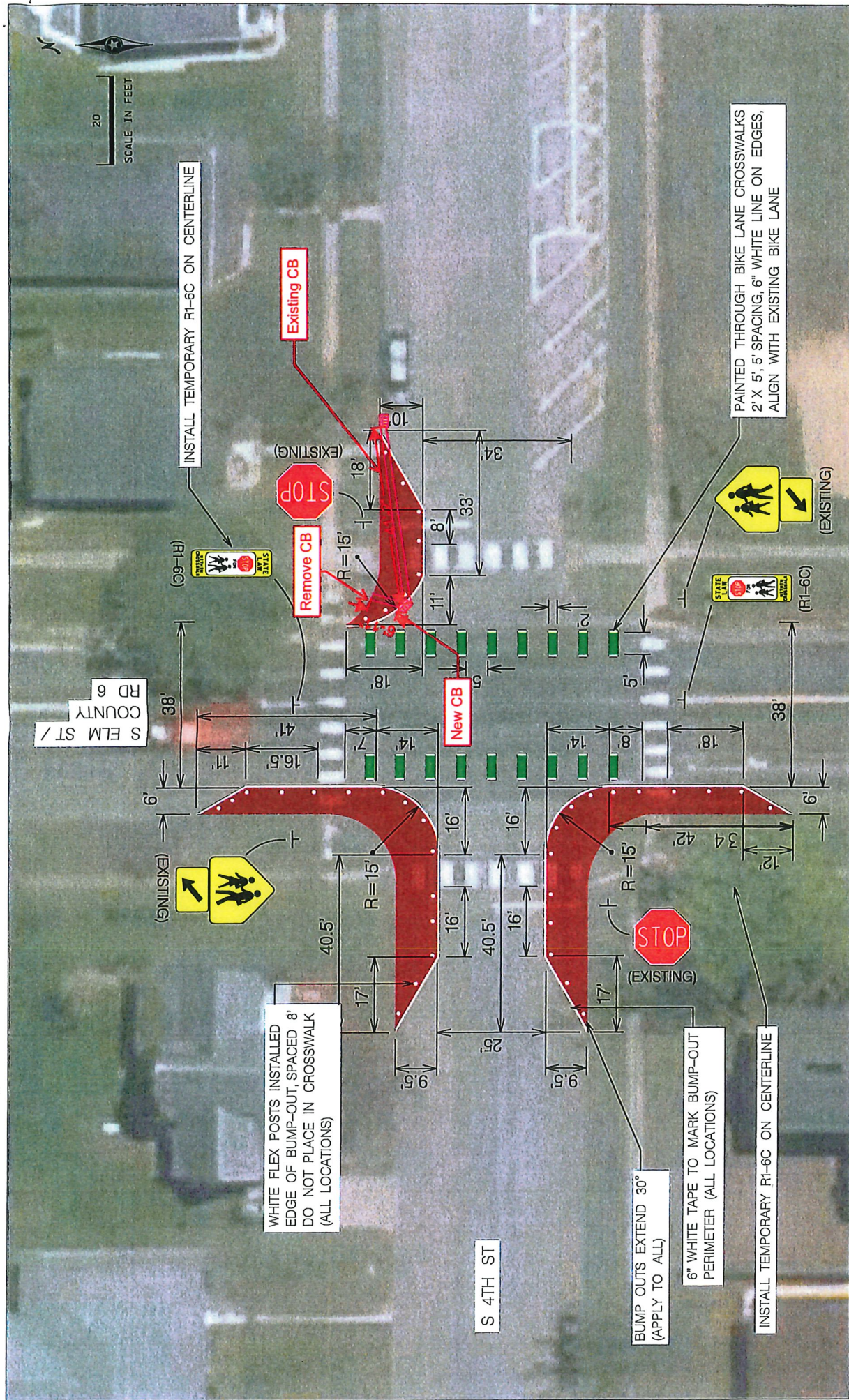
JOB # 202201
DATE: JAN 7, 2022
REVISIONS:

PLAT 1/8" = 1'-0"

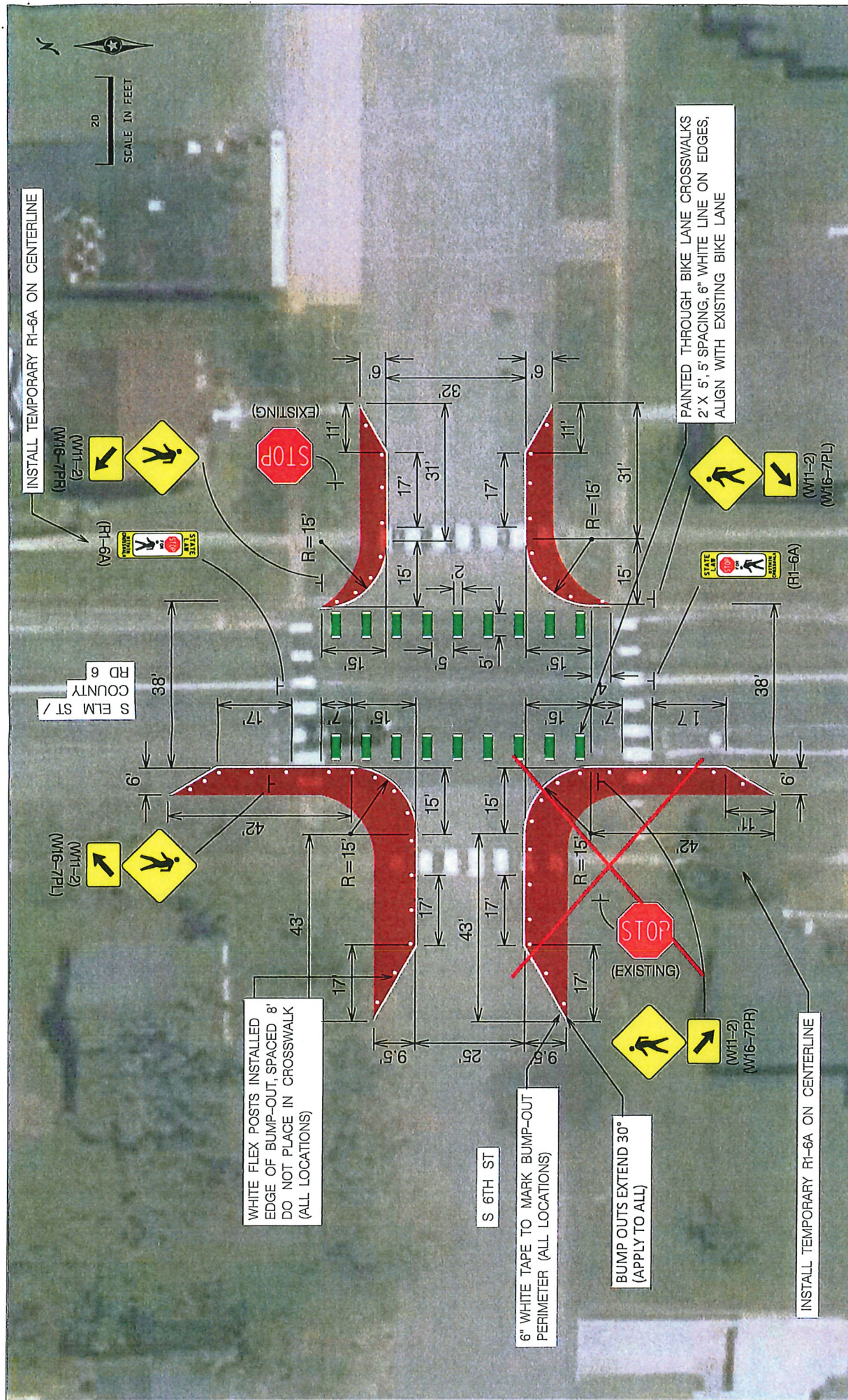
FLOOR PLAN
BLDG ELEVATIONS

A100

#5.K



SITE 1	COUNTY ROAD 6 (S ELM STREET) AT S 4TH STREET LA CRESCENT-HOKAH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA	SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT CONCEPT PLAN	<p>I hereby certify that this plan was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a Licensed Professional Engineer under the laws of the State of Minnesota.</p> <p>Certified By: _____ Lic. No. _____ Printed Name: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Approved By: _____ Printed Name: _____ Date: _____</p>
--------	---	--	---



RSDP Project Proposal

Regional Sustainable
Development Partnerships

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
EXTENSION

#5.1

1. Applicant information.

Name (first and last): Jason Ludwigson

Organization (if applicable): City of La Crescent

Address (street, city, state, zip): 315 Main Street, La Crescent, Minnesota, 55947

Email: jludwigson@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov
313-9633

Phone: 507-

Community/ies where project would take place: La Crescent

Region: ☐ Central ☐ Northeast ☐ Northwest ☒ Southeast ☐ Southwest

2a. Which of RSDP's focus areas does your project primarily address? Select one.

X Agriculture & food systems ☐ Clean energy ☐ Natural resources ☐ Resilient communities

2b. What, if any, additional focus areas does your project address? Select all that apply.

X Agriculture & food systems ☐ Clean energy ☒ Natural resources ☒ Resilient communities

Project Title: Community engagement of food forest project

Project Summary:

The City of La Crescent has a long history with apple production. Often known as the Apple Capital of Minnesota this project would create a space to learn about apple production, education, and community connections through shared use spaces. We would like to design a community food forest that could be planted in one of the community parks. The City of La Crescent Comprehensive plan outlines a project of similar scope in the action steps section which states "Create a community garden and/or apple orchard in one of the City parks to celebrate the City's history and encourage local food production". The funds from an RSDP grant would enable the city to partner with the University of Minnesota Center for Sustainable Building Research . A part of the partnership with the University of Minnesota

would help execute public outreach and planning. The input from the public meetings would be used to create the plan.

3. Project activities and goals. Describe the specific **goals** of your project and the **activities** you will do to accomplish them. For each activity, include the **month(s)** it is expected to take place. [[Click here for an example.](#)]

Goal 1: Develop plans for a community-designed food forest.

Activities	Month(s)
Kickoff and project organization	January 2023
Discovery phase - First community meeting	February 2023
Research and Design	Feb-April 2023
Second community meeting	April 2023
Design synthesis and wrap up	May 2023

Goal 2: Deepen partnerships among local service groups, business and nonprofits

Activities	Month(s)
Engage community partners - kick off meeting	January 2023
Collaborate with partners to bring residents to community meeting	February 2023
Collaborate with partners to bring residents to second community meeting	April 2023
Explore proposals for funding with community partners to implement the planned food forest	May-June 2023

Do you have more goals to add? (Yes/No)

No

4. Who will benefit from the project, and how will they benefit?

This specific project entails engaging the community in the design of an educational food forest, and then synthesizing that input into a schematic plan. The plans would then be used to steer overall project efforts, garner further community support and seek project funding.

The end result (a completed, community-designed food forest) will benefit the entire community. Access to local food is a benefit for all residents. Specifically students in each of the three schools in the community would benefit. The school district has a partnership with GROW for garden education. Developing plans for a food forest would enhance and expand student learning opportunities. Members of the community will benefit by being a part of the public engagement process to garner ideas for the community food forest. The food forest will be planned for public property, increasing access to fresh food for some residents. The project will help create a plan that would improve food access, educational opportunities, and expand community partnerships while building on the community's natural resources. The design of the community food forest will also help to increase the resilience of our community as it relates to food security.

5. Preference is given to projects that are from, led by or include meaningful participation of historically underrepresented communities. If applicable, please describe how this relates to your project.

Historically our community has seen participation from members of our community over the age of 50. By hosting the planning process in the Elementary school we are gathering meaningful participation from students and parents. While students may not be historically underrepresented in terms of demographics, they have been underrepresented in community planning. Our list of project partners is quite diverse and will be beneficial in outreach to all members of our community.

6. What known community partners are or might be involved in this project? This includes nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, businesses, individuals, and other community groups.

First and last name (if known)	Organization	Describe project contribution/role.	Partner status
			<p>[Online form offers dropdown list with the following options:]</p> <p>--Committed: This partner is on board and could be asked to provide a letter of support (letters are not required unless requested).</p> <p>--Likely: This partner is aware of the project but does not yet have a formal role.</p>
Sandy Graves	HCP	La Crescent food share program to support local food production	Committed
Theresa Ebner	Rotary	Assist with planning community input sessions. Future partnership to plant the food forest.	Committed
Lions (Bob Spencer)	Lions	Assist with planning community input sessions. Future partnership to plant the food forest.	Committed
Beth Theede and Jeff Copp	ISD 300	Community education	Committed

		collaboration for community programming with the food forest	
Bill Waller	City of La Crescent	Project support from public works staff and financial contribution to the project	Committed
Julie Hatlem	Chamber of Commerce	Contribute marketing opportunities.	Committed
Audrey Staggemeyer	Houston County Public Health	Funding from State Health Improvement Partnership	Committed

7. What specific University of Minnesota partners are or might be involved in this project, if known? Please include any role you are asking your RSDP regional executive director to play.

Name	UMN Department	Describe project contribution/role.	Partner status
Daniel Handeen	Center for Sustainable Building Research	Design guidance, meeting facilitation, student supervision	Committed
Graduate student RA	Architecture or Landscape Arch.	Research, Meeting support, Design visualization	Likely
Andi Sutton	Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership	Project support, network-building, UMN inreach	Committed

8. Budget: Please provide as much information as you can about the anticipated budget for this project. Please include personnel, supplies, and any other expenses in your estimate. Use this link to access our Google sheets [Budget Spreadsheet Template](#). You will need to click the blue button "Make a copy". If Google is not accessible to you, use this link to access our Excel

Budget Spreadsheet Template. A pdf version is available if Google or Excel are not accessible.

9. Based on the budget you prepared using our spreadsheet template, what is the dollar amount of support you are requesting from RSDP?

Year 1 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023):\$11,355.83 (REQUIRED)

Year 2 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024):_____ (if needed)

Year 3 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025):_____ (if needed)

10. Student information. Please provide this information **only** if the project will involve a student.

Supervisor name	Daniel Handeen
Supervisor organization	UMN CSBR
Supervisor phone number	612-626-2284
Supervisor email	hande020@umn.edu
What skills, experience and qualifications will be required of a student?	Facility with design software (GIS, SketchUp, REVIT, Rhino, InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop); Experience with community engaged design preferred
Will this project involve interviews, focus groups or surveys of people? If so, please explain.	Yes. In-person meetings and remote surveys will be used to gather input on community needs and desires for the design of the project. All data will be anonymized.

Please complete and submit this form online at z.umn.edu/RSDPproposal. If you prefer to complete your project proposal in a different format, please talk with your regional RSDP Executive Director.

BUDGET: Please provide as much information as you can about the anticipated budget for this project. Please include personnel, supplies, and any other expenses in your estimate. It may be helpful to list any funds requested from RSDP in rows next to each other because you will be asked to tally those separately.

Please use this as a budget worksheet while you are preparing your RSDP project proposal. At the time you submit your project proposal, attach a copy of this budget spreadsheet in the appropriate location of the online form. Please type your name in column F when your budget is complete.

personnel costs, then travel and	the other entity funding that budget item.)	source	kind services or	\$ Amount
Example: Graduate Research Assistant	Center for Urban and Regional Affairs	Pending	Cash	\$9,000.00
Example: Event and venue expenses UWIN Center for Sustainable	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$800.00
Building Research - senior research fellow (partial salary and fringe) - 15% time, 20 weeks: Research, design, facilitation	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$5,732.63
UWIN Center for Sustainable Building Research - coordinator (partial salary and fringe) - Project Coordination	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$271.20
Graduate Research Assistant - Spring term 2023 (salary and fringe) Research, Design, Graphic Production	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$4,524.00
Graduate Research Assistant - Spring term 2023 (salary and fringe) Research, Design, Graphic Production	MDH SHIP	Confirmed	Cash	\$4,978.00
Travel expenses: 2 trips to LaCrescent	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$728.00
Printing (Poster-sized designs for community convenings)	RSDP	Pending	Cash	\$100.00
City of La Crescent In-Kind Contribution	City of La Crescent	Confirmed	In-kind	\$1,000.00
City of La Crescent Monetary Contribution	City of La Crescent	Pending	Cash	\$1,000.00

RSDP Ask = \$11,355.83

Completed (enter name):

[illegible]

3.2

5-m

TO: City Council

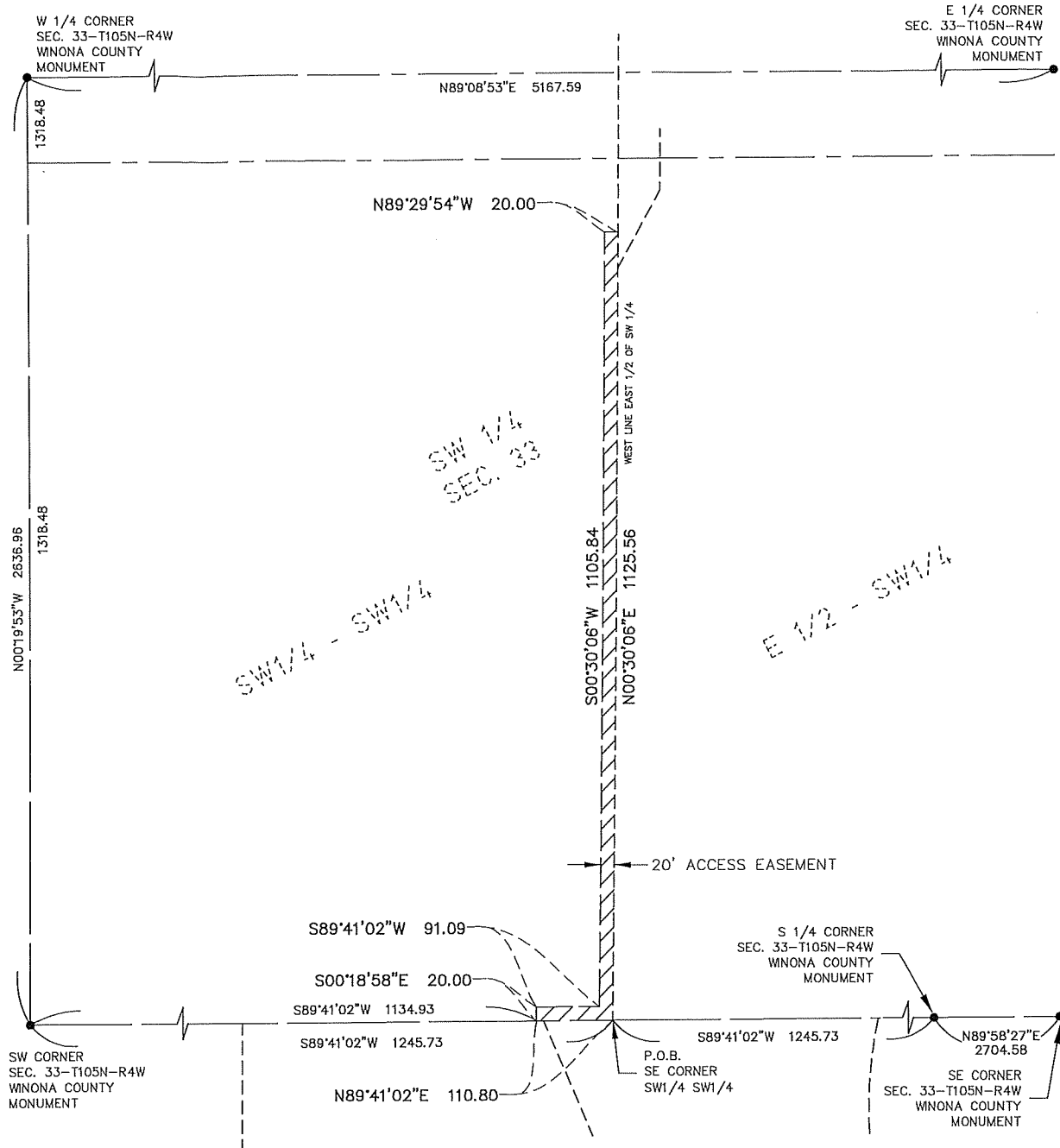
FROM: Jason Ludwigson, Sustainability Coordinator

DATE: June 9th 2022

RE: Nigosyan Easement

Attached you will find a proposed easement for property owned by Mr. Mark Nigosyan. This easement agreement is in alignment with the Blufflands Plan which was adopted by the city in November of 2017. The Blufflands Plan outlines future trail connections to expand the network of trails in the city available for public use. The easement agreement included is an integral part of the connection to a future rim of the city trail that could ultimately connect a continuous trail from 7th street near the pool to the Event Center in Veterans Park. Attached are pages from the Blufflands Plan that demonstrate the ideas behind the regional conservation and recreation network. The regional plan helped to inform the Blufflands Plan developed for the City of La Crescen in 2017. The second page discusses the use of acquisitions and easements for improving trail connections. It is note that respect for property rights is an essential element of future easements. With regard to the respect for property rights Mr. Nigosyan has been informed of the proposed easement from the start of the process and is in support of granting the easement to the city for possible future trail connections.

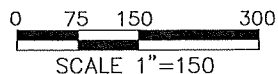
EASEMENT EXHIBIT



LEGEND

- ROW
- LOT LINE
- SECTION LINE
- PROPOSED ACCESS EASEMENT

BEARING SYSTEM USED:
WINONA COUNTY COORDINATE
SYSTEM NAD 83, ADJUSTMENT-2011



EASEMENT DESCRIPTION:

That part of the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 33, Township 105 North, Range 4 West, Winona County Minnesota, described as follows.

Beginning at the Southeast corner of said SW 1/4 SW 1/4, thence North 00 degrees 30 minutes 06 seconds East along the Easterly line of said SW 1/4 SW 1/4, 1125.56 feet; thence North 89 degrees 29 minutes 54 seconds West, 20.00 feet; thence South 00 degrees 30 minutes 06 seconds West, 1105.84 feet; thence South 89 degrees 41 minutes 02 seconds West, 91.09 feet; thence South 00 degrees 18 minutes 58 seconds East, 20.00 feet to the south line of said SW 1/4 SW 1/4; thence North 89 degrees 41 minutes 02 seconds East along said South line, 110.80 feet to the Point of Beginning.

Containing 0.56 Acres, more or less and subject to any easements and restrictions of record.

SCALE: 1" = 150'

DRAWN BY: DAM

DATE: 5/13/22

PROJECT NO. 7319.22

CADD NO.: 7319.22/APPLEBLOSSOMPOINTEIDWGS

FOR:

CITY OF LA CRESCENT

W 1/2 - SW 1/4 SEC. 33,

TOWNSHIP 105N., RNG. 4W

WINONA COUNTY, MINNESOTA



Regional Bluffland Planning Effort



THE BLUFFLANDS: A Plan For Conservation and Recreation Throughout the La Crosse - La Crescent Region (completed 2016)

THE BLUFFLANDS plan was an initiative of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) to organize a regional approach to the conservation and recreational use of our blufflands. The LAPC assembled for this planning effort a steering committee representing key City, County and Town/Township communities, plus the Seven Rivers Regions Outdoor Recreation Alliance and Mississippi Valley Conservancy. It was developed to be used by public and private stakeholders throughout the region to guide the acquisition

of conservation land and easements, coordinate restoration activities and recreation access improvements such as trailheads and trails, and establish an organizational structure for continued regional coordination and action.

A broad Coalition was recommended in the plan, to ensure the continued engagement and coordination of all parties that have a stake in the success of The Blufflands. Two types of membership were suggested - Charter Members and Associate Members. It is a central function of the proposed Coalition to facilitate discussion among core stakeholders whenever a potential acquisition is to be considered. The purposes of this discussion are to evaluate the importance of the land as suggested by this plan, to determine likely recreational uses (again with guidance from this plan), and to identify which entities should be involved in the acquisition process. After the initial discussion about the parcel, a land trust may or may not be involved in the acquisition, depending upon the need to establish

a conservation easement (as is the case for lands acquired with the more conservation-oriented funding sources) and whether the acquisition fits the mission, priorities and interest of a land trust.

Per this completed regional plan, La Crescent could be either a Charter Member or Associate Member, for purposes of funding, coordination and participation. Charter Members would make specific funding commitments (most of that to be spent locally) and have a greater opportunity to benefit from that Coalition, including access to regionalized funding assistance for specific improvement projects.

See the 2016 LAPC Blufflands Plan for more detail.

If a Bi-State "Blufflands" Coalition is not formed, the City of La Crescent should work to establish a group representing municipalities and counties from Winona to the Iowa border.

ACQUISITIONS & EASEMENTS

IMPROVEMENTS

This section offers guidelines for the protection of additional lands not currently protected from development.

Respect for Property Rights

This plan is a vision for the future of the La Crescent-area Blufflands, as lands to be protected from further urban development, and also to enhance public access for recreation and enjoyment of this resource. But it is important to point out the central role of property owners as collaborators in pursuit of this vision. The protection of lands not currently in public ownership will occur only with the consultation and support of willing property owners.

Design to the Site

Every site is unique and each should be evaluated for both natural resource value and recreation suitability. Many sites have areas deserving protection from recreational use,

such as dry bluff prairies or steep, erodible slopes, and also areas that are suitable for recreation use. The siting and design of trails should be based on evaluation of the site and should involve a trail design specialist.

Who Should Acquire the Land or Easement?

The regional Blufflands Plan (see page 6), proposes a case-by-case discussion

among key local partners to determine which entity has the capacity to take a lead role in acquiring land and/or easements. In La Crescent, the City of La Crescent and Minnesota Land Trust will be the active participants in most land or easement acquisitions.

Priority Tiers

There are, across the wider region, thousands of acres of land that could be added

Ecological Resources

The Blufflands are a critical migratory corridor for forest songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl, such as Henslow's sparrows, prothonotary warblers, red-shouldered hawks, Louisiana waterthrushes, and peregrine falcons. It is also important reptile habitat.

Many bluff tops and slopes contain steep "goat prairies", "oak savanna" and "american chestnut forest" communities. All three are incredibly rare natural communities. These remaining natural communities, although relatively small in area, are known or are predicted to have over 150 Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), including 82 species that are federal or state endangered, threatened, or of special concern.