

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Designation Application

General Section

Designation Application #: 14-018D Date Submitted: 08/12/2015

Park or Trail Name: Cascade Lake Park

District #: 6 Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 44.0277 Longitude: -92.5075

Location Description:

This park is located at the southwesterly intersection of Trunk Highway 52 and Trunk Highway 14 in Rochester Minnesota.

Lead Applicant Organization: Rochester

Lead Contact First Name: Mike Last Name: Nigbur

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Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

Description Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Total proposed acreage:

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

Cascade Lake is a master planned regional park consisting of over 225 acres created out of the reclamation of sand mining area. This park is both a natural based park and a park with regional significance. The park was first conceptualized in approximately 1969 but was more formally refined in the 1990's and again in the early 2000's. The City is currently operating from the approved 2004 master plan that has had significant public input, DNR input, and user group input along with input from other resourced based groups. Since the 1990's the City has been acquiring the necessary lands to fulfill the vision for the park and performing some park improvements in the area. Water quality, habitat,

erosion control, safety, and access have played a significant role in the park plan and has guided the improvements made to date. Projects in the park are ongoing as funding is available. This urban oasis park is at the cross-section of the southern terminus of the City's 2 mile extension of the DNR Douglas Trail and the trail extension leading into Rochester's downtown core. The Park currently has some trail development completed and has some interim open space uses. Planned or envisioned improvements for the park include both passive and active recreation some of which includes: shoreline restoration, trail development, boat launch area, creation of a beach area, playgrounds, amphitheater, fishing & wildlife habitat, shelters & picnic areas, educational features, gardens, and native planted areas.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
 - Land Acquisition
 - Status: Land has been purchased
 - Percentage of Land Acquired: 100%
 - Development Status
 - No Development
 - Some Development, but more Proposed
 - New Facilities Proposed
 - Existing Facilities to be Upgraded
 - Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park	
Existing Facility List	Proposed Facility List
Walking Trails (paved), Biking Trails (paved), Swimming	Picknicking and picnic shelters, Walking Trails (paved), Hiking Trails (natural), Biking trails (paved), Canoeing Facilities, Fishing Piers, Visitor Center, Play Areas, with an outdoor theme, Outdoor Amphitheater, Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

An updated implementation plan and cost estimates have been attached.

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: This park is within a developed area of Rochester which is close to the downtown core of the City. This park setting is unique because we are recreating a natural based park out of a former channelized creek and mining operation. This project also includes components which not only create the natural scenic area but also provides new opportunities for visitors and residents to the City. This park has had input from various user groups to help create the goals for the park. The park includes a restored and realigned creek to preserve the water quality of the larger created lake to allow clean waters for fishing, boating, swimming, etc. The facilities will include a looped trail not only around the lake but the users will be immersed within planted prairies and created wetlands. Picnicking areas, benches & fishing piers are provide throughout the park so the park can provide further enjoyment of the natural setting. The proposed beach, playgrounds, pavilion and even boat rentals allows residents different outdoor activities to enjoy this regional park. This park is also envisioned to host festivals or other outdoor activities in the more active portion of the park while still preserving the naturalized areas for respite. Because the proximity to the downtown area and Mayo Clinic it is anticipated that many visitors will utilize the adjoining trails and the park for some relaxation and outdoor enjoyment.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: Because this park is located in a developed area, recreating many of the natural components that would be normally found in the area by realigning the creek, providing a water body, and establishing natural habitats, has been a key function of the park. While the city sits in a County which has no natural lakes, the City's property ownership for the park boundary is approximately 225 acres and it includes over 120 acres of water created from mining activities. There are also 40 acres of adjoining water bodies and another 40+ acres of public drainage area upstream of Cascade Lake consisting of recreated creek & floodplain corridor. This latter project is a joint project with the DNR, City of Rochester and Olmsted County and is projected to start yet in the fall of 2014. The City's trail system which ties directly with the park opens up alternatives for walking or biking the trails along the river and elsewhere in the City.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: This park is well suited to have easy access by walking, biking, by car, and bus. All of these modes are currently available at the park. The City previously constructed a 2 mile extension to the south end of the DNR Douglas Trail which terminates at the park. Trails also connect the park to the downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods. Because this park is only blocks from the Mayo Campus and downtown Rochester walking is a viable alternative to get to the park. Additionally, with existing bus transit routes already passing the park access via bus is also very viable. If driving to the park is the alternative chosen then access is available both on the north or south ends of the park. Parking lots will be needed in the future to manage the patrons as the use grows. Rochester is already established as

a destination for visitors and guests. This park would further enhance the stay of visitors /tourists, but also enhance the resident's access to a unique park within the City's urban core. The City has and will continue to experience growth in population but additionally there is anticipated growth for people living in the downtown area where new parks are difficult to create. This park will help serve both the local and visitor need as these segments grow. The Rochester, Minnesota, MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) comprises all of Olmsted, Dodge and Wabasha Counties. The Minnesota State Demographer's Office estimated the population of the Rochester MSA at 188,842 in 2012. Rochester is one of the nation's fastest growing MSAs. The smaller cities surrounding Rochester represent rural living at its best.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: This park has been pursued for such a long time due to the importance of this type of park in the community. The location is such that providing this facility will enhance the lives of both visitors and residents alike. The varied components of the Park will make this park a destination onto itself.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

Type	Description
Location Map	Location map added from general tab
Location Map	Cascade Lake site map
Resolution	Resolution for Legacy Grant Submission
Master Plan	Cascade Lake Master Plan
Other	2015/2016 Cost estimates
Resolution	Resolution for Legacy Grant Submission
Master Plan	Cascade Lake Master Plan