



Three Rivers

PARK DISTRICT

Brooklyn Park 

Unique. United. Undiscovered.



Mississippi Gateway Regional Park master plan

September 20, 2018

The **mission** of Three Rivers Park District is to **promote environmental stewardship** **through recreation and education** in a natural resources-based park system.

Three Rivers Park District was established in 1957 after legislation was enacted in 1955 allowing for the activation of park districts whose primary duties are “acquisition, development and maintenance of large parks, wildlife sanctuaries, forest and other reservations, and means for public access to historic sites and to lakes, rivers and streams and to other natural phenomena” (Minnesota State Statutes, Chapter 398.07).

There are more than 10 million annual visits to more than 26,500 acres of park reserves, regional parks and special-use areas in Hennepin and five adjoining counties and 140 miles of regional trails. Current outdoor-recreation activities in regional parks and trails include camping, hiking, cross-country and downhill skiing, tubing, bicycling, in-line skating, horseback riding, nature interpretation, golfing, fishing and swimming. Three Rivers Park District also operates a natural resources management program, which administers the restoration and perpetuation of both native wildlife and plants in order to provide park and trail visitors opportunities for high-quality recreational experiences.

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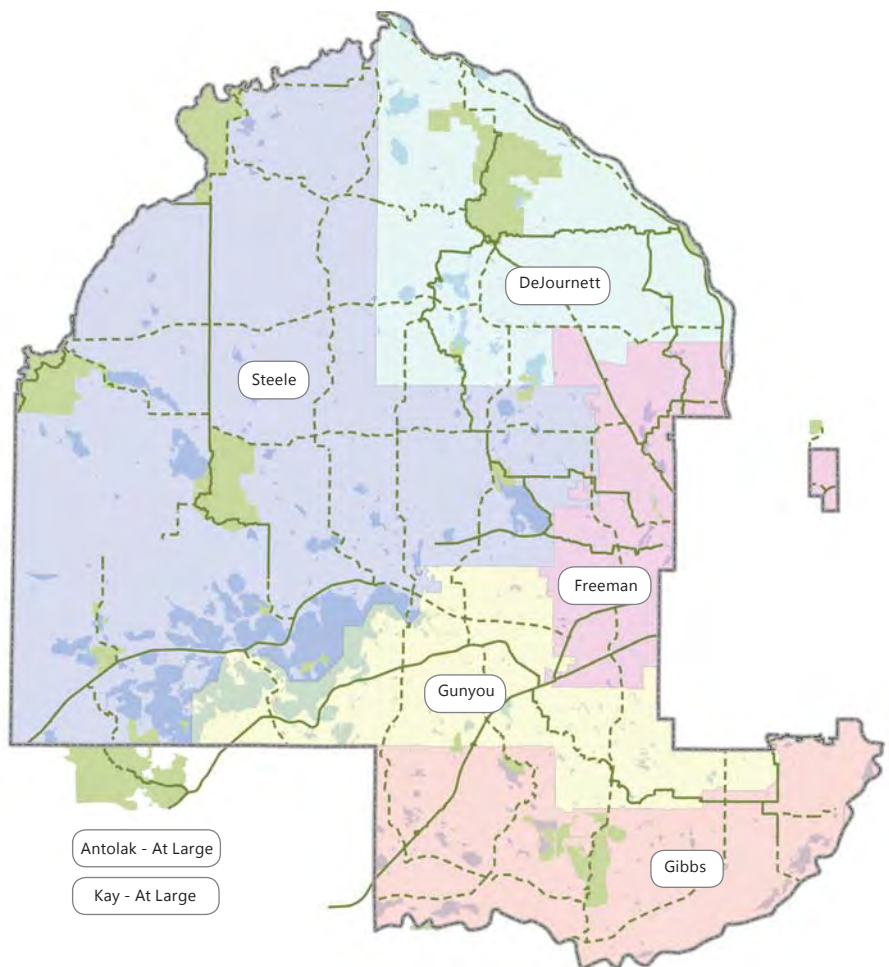
John Gunyou, Term Expires 12/31/18
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Hennepin County Appointee - serves at large

Gene Kay, Term Expires 12/31/18
Hennepin County Appointee - serves at large



Cover Photo

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park education programming.
Photo Credit: Three Rivers Park District



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTORS

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Fishing near the base of Coon Rapids Dam.
Image Credit: Three Rivers Park District

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MISSISSIPPI GATEWAY REGIONAL PARK

This master plan represents the long-term vision, development, operation and maintenance of two parks near and adjacent to the Mississippi River in the City of Brooklyn Park, that naturally function as one larger natural resource-based park unit: Mississippi Gateway Regional Park.

Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park, referred to as the East Unit, is owned and operated by Three Rivers Park District and Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area, referred to as the West Unit, is owned and operated by Brooklyn Park.

The master plan reflects the guidance of existing park users, the general public, underrepresented community sectors and public agencies with a vested interest in this parkland.

VISION STATEMENT

The Mississippi River is the heart of this park. People connect to it in different ways and for different reasons. Some are in awe of its immense power, some are spiritually connected, some utilize the river for its resource value and some use the river as a means to escape, unplug and reconnect all at the same time. In recognition of the river's significance to us as individuals, a Nation and State, the master plan calls for it to be publicly accessible and protected for everyone to enjoy and experience.

Much of the river shoreline in suburban Hennepin County is privately held – making this publicly held parkland absolutely critical to providing access and opportunity to see, touch, hear and smell the river for all people. In light of this, the park's Vision Statement is as follows:

A gateway for everyone to connect with the Mississippi River and its dynamic environment.

The following Action Goals will help realize the Vision Statement's intent:

- Be welcoming and engaging to everyone.
- Celebrate the Mississippi River as the heart of the park.
- Introduce people to nature and outdoor recreation.
- Provide activity and purpose year-round.

PARK DEVELOPMENT & PROGRAMMING CONCEPT

People have a strong desire to connect with the river, but many lack the awareness, skill, equipment, knowledge and sometimes confidence to fully connect with and appreciate the river and its dynamic environment.

To meet these needs, the park is envisioned as a stepping stone into nature. Portions of the park will be more developed and comfortable for people with limited experience or exposure to nature, and portions will be minimally developed to better serve people looking for a more 'off the beaten path' experience. The intent is that this park will connect people to nature in a manner that they are comfortable ultimately transforming novice park visitors into environmental stewards.

Park-Wide Development Plan

Source: Three Rivers Park District



Recreation Development

The main recreation development area of the East Unit will be a highly developed and vibrant space centered around the new Mississippi Gateway Center. This area will include picnicking, Nature's Highline and Tree House (an elevated tree canopy walk), nature-based play area, a mini-Mississippi River play and education feature and areas to gather and socialize adjacent to the new building.

The River Flats Area (located in the East Unit, along river's edge) will offer improved picnicking, a non-motorized boat launch, fishing improvements and ADA access directly to the Mississippi River shoreline. The main recreation of the West Unit will include reservation picnicking, nature-based dog off-leash area and archery.

Beyond these spaces, the park becomes less and less developed. Field learning stations and nature interpretation nodes located throughout the park will provide designated spaces to interpret and experience nature first hand. The field learning stations will be designed to accommodate group education with teaching shelters and storage space and the nature interpretation nodes will likely be lighter touches on the landscape that can accommodate instructor led, group education as well as individual, self-guided experiences.

A new education classroom is planned for the most southerly area of the park providing opportunities to learn about nature in nature. This space will also serve as a warming hut in the winter season.

A trail system comprised of both paved and non-paved trails, new bathroom facilities and enhanced wayfinding will allow improved access and service throughout the park. A new beginner cross-country ski loop, area for snow-shoeing and maintained paved trail loop will support winter park use.

Education Programming

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is planned to be one of the core education programming centers at Three Rivers. Programming will be offered multiple times a day including evenings and weekends to meet the community's needs. Instructor led programming will include teaching outdoor recreation such as cross-country skiing, fishing, kayaking, rafting and more as well as nature-based education focused on the Mississippi River and its dynamic ecosystem. Programming will also be offered off-site to better serve the needs of the greater community.

Natural Resource Plan

As Three Rivers' main park on the Mississippi River, this park is planned to receive a higher level of natural resource restoration than typically provided in regional parks. When complete, the park will be comprised of floodplain forest, prairie, oak savannah and wetland. Natural resource management including invasive species removal and controlled burns will be ongoing.



Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is envisioned as a stepping stone into nature. The intent is that the park will connect people to nature in a manner that they are comfortable ultimately transforming novice park visitors into environmental stewards.
Source: Three Rivers Park District

VISITATION

Annual visitation is projected to reach 600,000 when fully developed. Park visitor make up is anticipated to be similar to the demographics of the area within a 15-minute drive time of the park, as well as Suburban Hennepin County.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The master plan calls for the park to be operated and maintained as one cohesive park unit and consistent with the greater Three Rivers Park System. The annual operation and maintenance cost when fully complete is \$1.8 Million.

IMPLEMENTATION

Three Rivers and Brooklyn Park intend to work together to secure funding for this park through their respective capital improvement programs, grants, fundraising and partnerships.

Implementation will ultimately occur as funds are secured and at the discretion of Three Rivers Board of Commissioners and Brooklyn Park City Council. The total estimated cost for capital improvements including natural resource restoration and recreation development projects is \$25.5 Million.



Students preparing for river-based programming, launching from Mississippi Gateway Regional Park.
Image Credit: Three Rivers Park District

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Coon Rapids Dam walkway over the Mississippi River.
Image Credit: Three Rivers Park District

PARTNERSHIP STAKEHOLDER FOUNDATIONS

This master plan represents the long-term vision, development, operation and maintenance of two parks near and adjacent to the Mississippi River in the City of Brooklyn Park, that naturally function as one larger park unit. Currently referred to as Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park and Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area, both parks are natural resource focused, are located directly across West River Road from each other and are connected via the Rush Creek Regional Trail. Thus, the intent of these parks is to seamlessly function as one: namely Mississippi Gateway Regional Park (Figure 1, following page).

Three Rivers owns and operates Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park (East Unit) and the City of Brooklyn Park (Brooklyn Park) owns and operates Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area (West Unit) (Figure 2, following page). Brooklyn Park also operates a small Hennepin County forfeited parcel and park easement area that functions as part of the East Unit.

By combining the planning processes for both parks into one, the end result lays out a park plan that best utilizes public land and funding resources, and is both comprehensive and non-duplicative.

PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS

Three Rivers and Brooklyn Park formed a partnership to develop one master plan that incorporates and addresses the needs of both park units and meets long-term goals of both agencies. The end product reflects the guidance of existing park users, the general public, underrepresented community sectors and public agencies with a vested interest in this parkland.

One of the biggest benefits in approaching the planning process in this manner is that it allows for the highest and best use of parkland regardless of ownership and jurisdictional role (local versus regional park). This approach allows for flexibility where public and administrative facilities are located.

For example, it is imperative that a maintenance facility be located on-site. When looking at both parks as one park unit, it becomes clear that the best use of parkland is for this facility to be located on

land owned by Brooklyn Park. This provides a greater public benefit by preserving as much parkland along the Mississippi River for direct public use and enjoyment, rather than for administrative type functions. It also places the maintenance facility adjacent to more compatible land uses – existing storm/compost/material storage, West River Road and a potential future water treatment facility.

PARTNERSHIPS MOVING FORWARD

Three Rivers and the City of Brooklyn Park will continue to collaborate on funding, development and operations for the park, with the intent to have all areas of the park function seamlessly for the public.

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park provides amenities and opportunities at the regional, state and national level due to its location within the Mississippi National River Recreation Area. Three Rivers and Brooklyn Park will explore partnership opportunities which support implementation of the master plan. Potential partners include the National Park Service; the US Fish and Wildlife Service; the Federal Transportation Administration; the State of Minnesota; the Metropolitan Council; the West Mississippi Watershed Management Commission; Hennepin County; Anoka County; Anoka-Hennepin School District; local municipalities; non-profits; community groups; businesses and other partners.

Figure 1: Park Location

Source: Three Rivers Park District

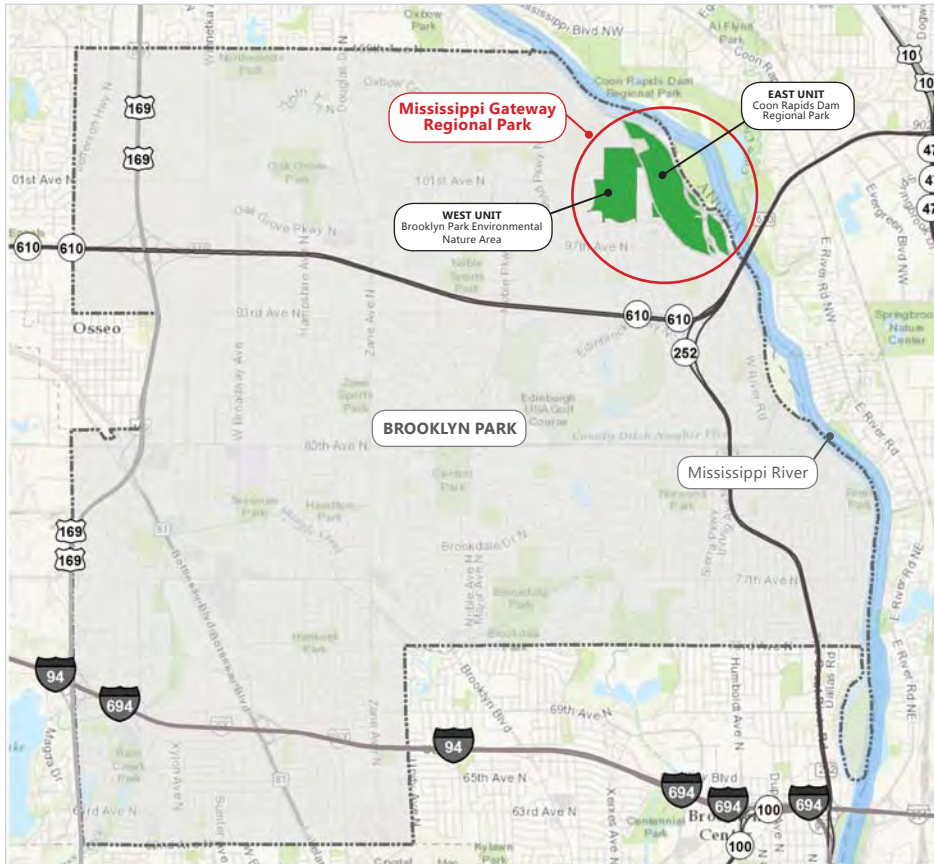


Figure 2: Current Park Ownership & Operation

Source: Three Rivers Park District





Brisk winter morning on the Mississippi River downstream of Coon Rapids Dam.
Image Credit: Three Rivers Park District

INTRODUCTION VISION & ACTION GOALS

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is located on one of our Nation's and State's most important natural and cultural treasures: the Mississippi River. People connect to the river in different ways and for different reasons. Some are in awe of its immense power, some are spiritually connected, some utilize the river for its resource value and some use the river as a means to escape, unplug and reconnect all at the same time. In recognition of the river's significance to us as individuals, a Nation and State, it should be publicly accessible and protected for everyone to enjoy and experience.

Much of the river's shoreline in suburban Hennepin County is privately held – making this publicly held parkland absolutely critical to providing access and opportunity to see, touch, hear and smell the river for all people.

VISION STATEMENT

To ensure that the long-term development, operation and maintenance of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park fully embraces the River as a public amenity which should be protected and available for the good of the public, the park's Vision Statement is as follows:

A gateway for everyone to connect with the Mississippi River and its dynamic environment.

This Vision Statement was created as part of a robust public engagement process to better understand the opportunities and challenges of the park. This process reaffirmed that the river, Coon Rapids Dam and the wilderness (undeveloped natural areas of the park), are what makes this park special. People have a strong desire to connect with the river, but many find barriers such as lack the awareness, skill, equipment, knowledge and sometimes confidence to fully connect with and appreciate the river and its dynamic environment.

To meet these needs, the park is envisioned as a stepping stone into nature. Portions of the park will be more developed and comfortable for people with limited experience or exposure to nature and portions will be minimally developed to better serve people looking for a more 'off the beaten path' experience. The intent is that this park introduces people to nature in a very gradual manner and that over time, they become comfortable in natural environments and environmental stewards.

ACTION GOALS

These Action Goals provide the framework for addressing the common themes heard throughout the engagement process: park does not feel welcoming, limited awareness about the park and river, difficulty accessing the river, desire for a greater level of support to learn about nature and try nature-based recreation and interest in more events, programs and gatherings which invite the community into the park and provide a more meaningful experience to community members. To better serve the public, this park has to be more than just public land on the river, it needs to serve as a gateway and its recreation development, natural and cultural resource management plans, program offerings and over-arching operation plan must focus on actively serving the community.

While there are many strategies and tools to do this, implementing the following Action Goals will overcome the identified barriers themes and successfully realize the Vision Statement's intent:

- Be welcoming and engaging to everyone.
- Celebrate the Mississippi River as the heart of the park.
- Introduce people to nature and outdoor recreation.
- Provide activity and purpose year-round.

All significant development, operation and maintenance decisions for this park are intended to support fulfillment of these Action Goals.

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Children participating in nature-based education along the Mississippi River shoreline.
Image Credit: Three Rivers Park District

3

CONTEXT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The role of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is defined within the greater national, regional and local systems. Long-term planning, development and operational frameworks for the two park units are subject to adherence to several planning documents, policies and projects. This section outlines the role of Mississippi Regional Park within the greater park system framework.

ROLE WITHIN THE GREATER PARKS SYSTEM

While the Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park (East Unit) and Environmental Nature Area (West Unit) will be ultimately developed and operated as one unified park unit: Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, they do not exist in isolation. They are both part of larger national, regional and local park systems and must be planned in accordance with many existing initiatives.

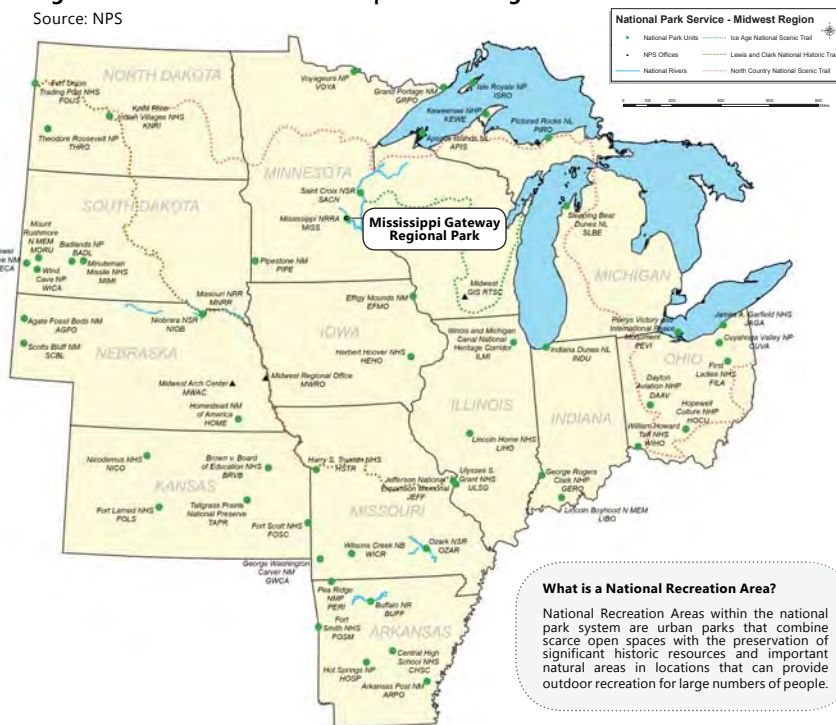
National Park System

The National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for the long-term planning, acquisition, development and protection of the national park system - which includes 413 park units covering more than 84-million acres and attracting more than 307 million annual visits. The NPS provides resource stewardship and management to the nation's greatest treasures, such as the Mississippi River, to ensure the protection and enjoyment of these treasures in perpetuity. Units within the national park system include national parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails and the White House.

One of these units is the 72-mile Mississippi National River Recreation Area (Mississippi NRRRA) located in the Midwest Region of the

Figure 3: National Park Service | Midwest Region

Source: NPS



What is a National Recreation Area?
National Recreation Areas within the national park system are urban parks that combine scarce open spaces with the preservation of significant historic resources and important natural areas in locations that can provide outdoor recreation for large numbers of people.

national park system and spanning from Ramsey to Hastings, MN. Mississippi NRRRA covers the entire stretch of the Mississippi River within the Twin Cities metropolitan area including Mississippi Gateway Regional Park (Figure 3).

Since the NPS owns and operates very little land and resources within the Mississippi NRRRA, it relies on partnerships to protect, preserve and enhance the Mississippi NRRRA's nationally significant historic, cultural, natural, scenic, recreational, scientific and economic resources.

While the majority of Mississippi NRRRA funding comes from its partners - which own and operate most of the public lands and resources within the Mississippi NRRRA boundary - the NPS does provide some grant funding to Mississippi NRRRA partners primarily for non-operational expenses such as capital improvements, signage and similar.

Regional Parks System

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is one of 42 regional parks, 12 park reserves, 40 regional trails and 8 special recreation features which comprise the Twin Cities metropolitan area's Regional Parks System (Figure 4). In total, the Regional Park System includes over 54,000 acres of land, more than 340 miles of regional trails, and more than 47.3 million annual visits - significantly contributing to the area's high quality of life. Citizens of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area and the State of Minnesota, benefit from this nationally renowned regional park system.

The Metropolitan Council, a regional planning agency, provides policy guidance through the Regional Parks Policy Plan and partial acquisition, development and operation funding through several funding programs. However, the Metropolitan Council does not own, operate, develop or maintain the Regional Park System. This responsibility falls upon ten implementing agencies consisting of six county park departments, three city park departments and Three Rivers - the owner and operator of the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: East Unit (Figure 5).

Unlike the other implementing agencies, Three Rivers was established in 1957 by the Minnesota State Legislature under Chapter 398 as a special park district. It remains the only special park district in the State of Minnesota and its primary focus reflects its taxing jurisdiction: suburban Hennepin County.

Today there are almost 10.4 million annual visits to Three Rivers' 26,500 acres of 7 park reserves, 12 regional parks, 5 special recreation features and 16 regional trails consisting of 140 miles (Figure 6, following page).

What is a Regional Park?

Regional parks provide a diversity of resources, contiguous to or including water resources, which can accommodate a wide variety of compatible outdoor-recreation uses. The minimum size is 100 acres, with a preferable size of 200 or more acres. Active-recreation areas in regional parks are developed in a manner to maintain sufficient natural areas to ensure high-quality outdoor-recreation experiences in a natural resource setting.

Figure 4: 2040 Regional Park System

Source: Metropolitan Council

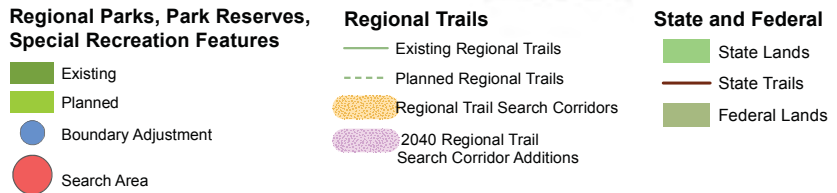
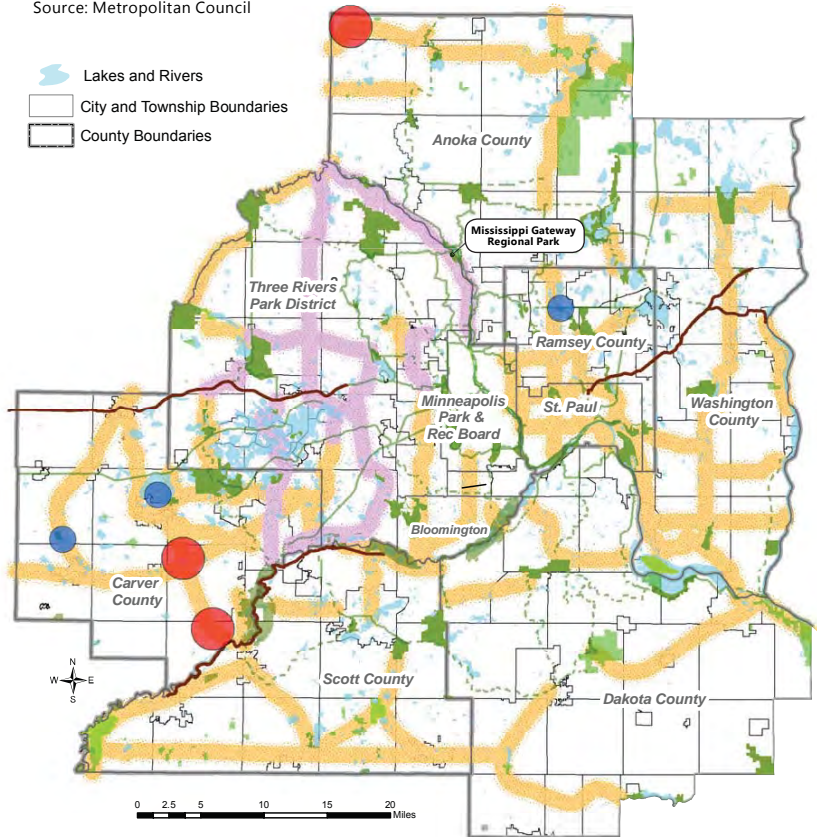
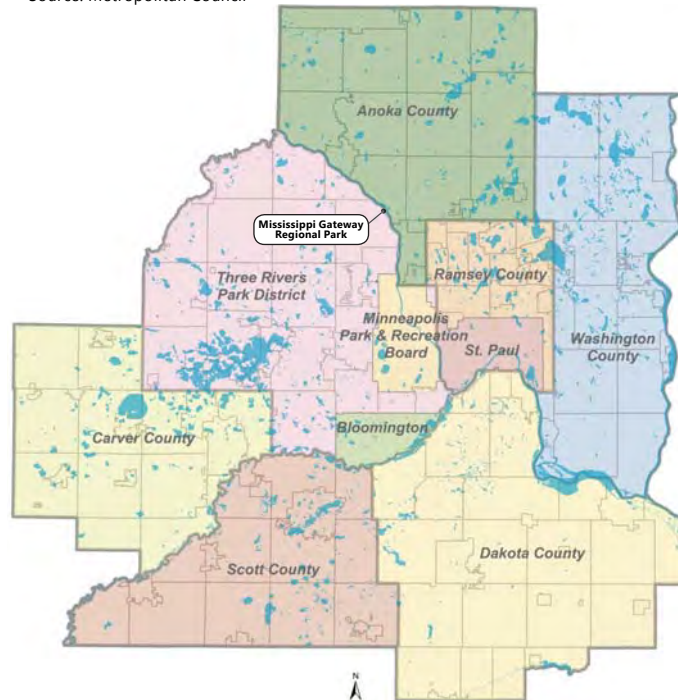


Figure 5: Implementing Agency Jurisdiction ¹

Source: Metropolitan Council



1. Three Rivers' boundary includes all of Suburban Hennepin County, including the City of Bloomington.

Local Park System

The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: West Unit is part of Brooklyn Park's local park system as a natural area. The local park system is comprised of 8 mini parks, 28 neighborhood parks, 9 large neighborhood parks, 3 sport parks, 4 community parks, 4 special facilities and 4 natural areas (Figure 7).

Parks within the local park system are intended to primarily serve local residents and often provide for more active recreation than passive recreation opportunities. To this point, Brooklyn Park's local park system includes multiple athletic complexes and activity buildings; 100 city-wide athletic fields and game courts; over 10 outdoor ice rinks; and two municipally owned golf courses. The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: West Unit provides a nice complement to these facilities and, because of its natural resource focus, provides a unique offering within the local park system.

Brooklyn Park is typically the primary party responsible to own, plan, develop, operate and fund its local park system; however, such as the case with Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, there are situations where a more creative arrangement with partners may be appropriate.

Figure 6: Three Rivers Park District System

Source: Three Rivers Park District

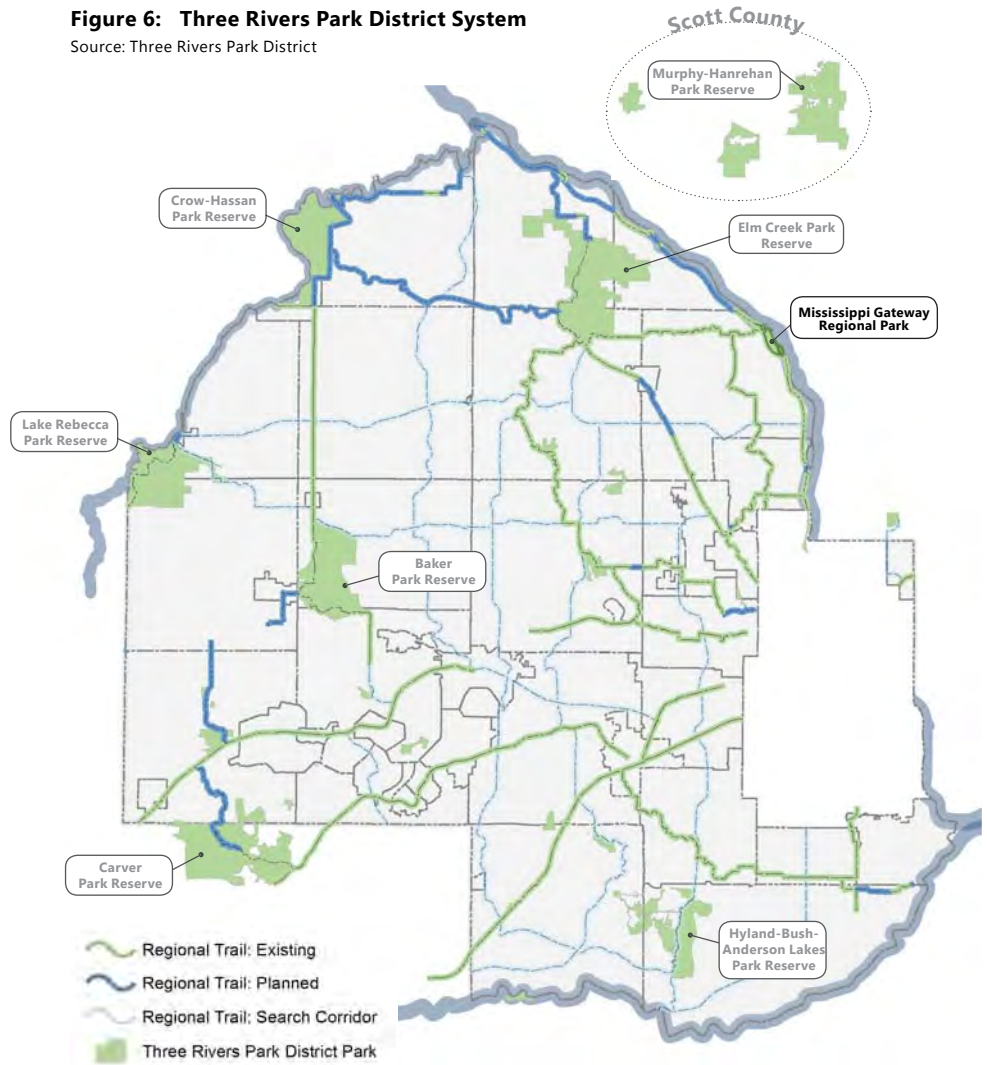
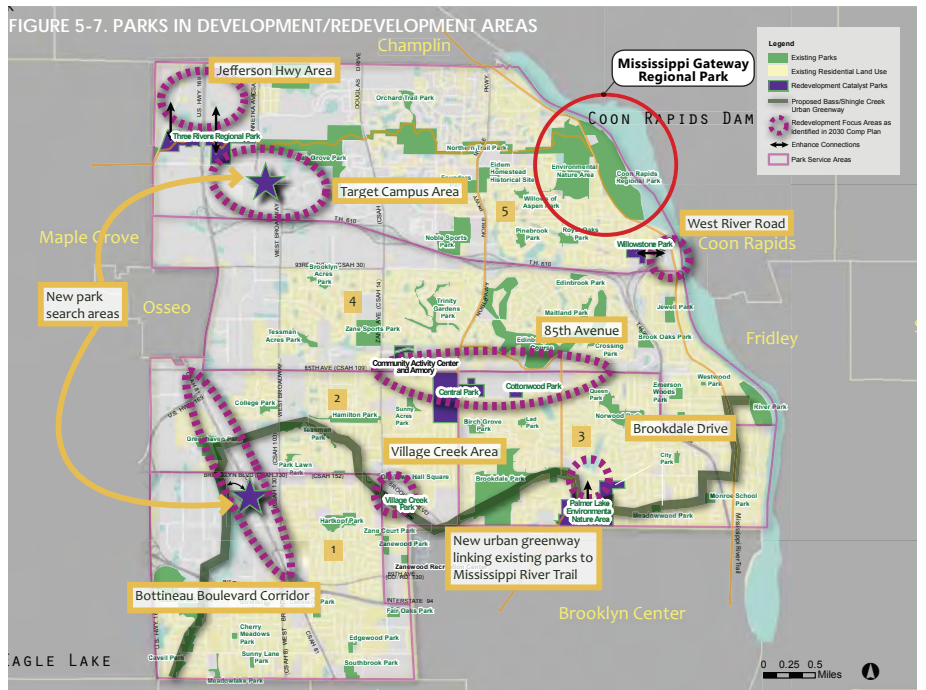


Figure 7: Brooklyn Park System Plan

Source: City of Brooklyn Park

What is a Natural Area?
 Natural Areas are zones focused on the provision of natural environment, passive recreation and ecological function. These areas have a community and regional draw, may be any size and area, and centered around natural resources and amenities.



RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan was developed under the guidance of several existing plans and policies. The most significant guidance comes from plans and policies adopted by the National Park Service, Metropolitan Council, Three Rivers and Brooklyn Park.

National Park System

The NPS has several over-arching planning and management documents which provide guidance to Mississippi NRRA. The purpose of Mississippi NRRA is to promote the protection, preservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the nationally significant resources and values of the Mississippi NRRA through cooperative federal, state and local comprehensive planning, management and coordination. The two most notable documents are:

- **2014 Foundation Document**, includes the park purpose statement, as well as brief descriptions of the park’s significance, fundamental resources and values and interpretative theme.
- **1994 Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP)**, lays out the management framework for land and water use, resource management, visitor use and interpretation, general development needs, park operations and plan implementation strategies. The most applicable information from this document with respect to the long-term planning and operation of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park are summarized in Table 1.

Metropolitan Council

The Metropolitan Council is responsible to develop a shared vision for the region. This vision is captured in the Metropolitan Council’s Thrive MSP 2040 Plan and is best described by the five desired outcomes: stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability and sustainability. This plan guides the individual system and policy plans for transportation, water resources, housing and regional parks. Each of these policy plans are written to ensure integration among the systems and incorporates regional priorities. A diagram illustrating how Metropolitan Council, Three Rivers and Brooklyn Park policies and plans work together is shown within Figure 8.

The Regional Park Policy Plan, which provides guidance to the Regional Park System, acknowledges the following regional priorities – all of which are applicable to this park.

- Expand the Regional Park System to conserve, maintain and connect natural resources identified as being high quality or having regional importance.
- Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high-quality natural resources, increases climate resiliency, fosters healthy outcomes, connects communities and enhances quality of life in the region.
- Promote expanded multi-modal access to regional parks, regional trails and the transit network, where appropriate.
- Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all the region’s residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin and ability.

Table 1: NPS 1994 Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP)

Source: NPS

ISSUE	ACTION
General concept	Balance and integrate sustainable use and resource preservation needs
Land use/landscape character	Preserve and restore natural appearance of shorelines and bluffs; protect habitat; protect historic areas; preserve economic resources; provide setbacks and screen new uses with vegetation
Riverfront area land use (within 300 feet of shore or the floodplain)	Emphasize river-related and river-enhancing uses; minimal change to existing development (i.e. some riverfront improvement)
Open space/trails	Provide a continuous linear open space and trail where practical; acquire sensitive areas and emphasize resource protection
Park land ownership	Minimal NPS land; additional local park land
Resource management	Balance resource protection and use; increase pollution reduction efforts; preserve biological diversity; protect cultural and economic resources; facilitate and coordinate research
Visitor use	Provide broad range of activities in appropriate areas
Park Service development/cooperative interpretive facilities	NPS interpretive/administrative facility in St. Paul and major cooperative interpretive center in Minneapolis; small cooperative centers at Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park, Fort Snelling State Park and Hastings area
General management strategy	Extensive partnerships

Figure 8: Plan & Policy Guidance Diagram

Source: Three Rivers Park District

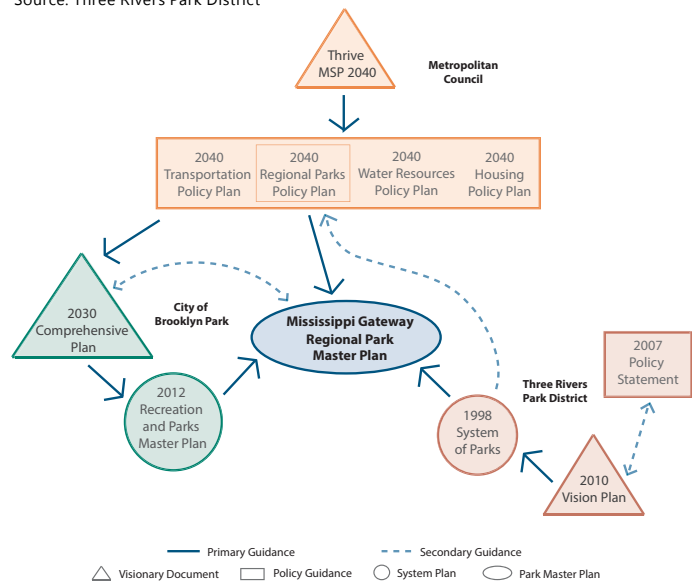


Table 2: Required Master Plan Components

Source: Three Rivers Park District

REQUIRED COMPONENT	RELEVANT SECTION	PAGE #s
Boundaries & Acquisition Costs	Sections 5 & 8	18 & 42
Stewardship Plan	Section 6	25 - 34
Demand Forecast	Section 7	35 - 36
Development Concept	Section 6	25 - 34
Conflicts	Section 4 & 5	13, 16 & 19
Public Service	Section 6	25 - 34
Operations	Section 8	37 - 40
Public Engagement & Participation	Section 4	11 - 16
Public Awareness	Section 8	40
Natural Resources	Sections 5 & 6	17 - 34

The most significant component of the Regional Parks Policy Plan in respect to Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, is that it is an identified unit of the system making it eligible for partial funding for acquisition, development and operations – pending master plan approval by the Metropolitan Council.

In the case of a regional park, the master plan must include the following information prior to approval: boundaries and acquisition costs, stewardship plan, demand forecast, development concept, conflicts, public services, operations, public engagement and participation, public awareness, accessibility and natural resources (Table 2, previous page). This master plan was approved by the Metropolitan Council on the following dates:

- Open Space Commission, August 7, 2018
- Community Development Commission, August 20, 2018
- Metropolitan Council, September 12, 2018

The Regional Park Policy Plan also includes the Regional Park System Plan, policies and strategies, finance information and associated management procedures. Policies and strategies which most directly affect and guide the long-term planning and development of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park are summarized in Appendix A.

Three Rivers Park District

Three Rivers is charged with preparing a master plan for each of its park and trail units which adheres to the Regional Parks Policy Plan, as well as other local, county, regional, state and national plans. In addition, each master plan is developed to be consistent with Three Rivers’ Mission, Vision Plan, Policy Statement and System Plan and existing projects. The most significant components of these guiding documents in respect to Mississippi Gateway Regional Park are outlined in Table 3, with the exception of components of the Policy Statement, which are outlined in Appendix B.

City of Brooklyn Park

There are several plan and policy documents that provide guidance for the long-term planning, development and operation of the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: West Unit. A summary from each plan is provided in Table 4.

Other Related Policies, Plans & Projects

A brief overview of additional plans which were reviewed and considered as part of the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan are outline in Table 5, following page.

Table 3: Three Rivers Relevant Policies, Plans & Projects

Source: Three Rivers Park District

	Description
Mission Statement	Promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resource-based park system.
Vision Plan, 2010 Actionable Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect people to nature • Inspire people to recreate • Create vibrant places • Collaborate across boundaries • Protect the region’s water & natural resources
Policy Statement, 2007 Policy VI	Every Board approved master plan will establish the appropriate parkland classification, natural resource management zones and objectives and outdoor recreation development and operation concepts.
System Plan, 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize regional needs identified in the service area of the park. • Implementation should establish and maintain carrying capacities to maximize the quality of visitor experience and prevent degradation of the natural and artificial resources on the site. • As resources permit, development and management must promote use and enjoyment by all segments of the population. • Facilities should be constructed to provide a high level of service for at least 40 years and should meet standards for construction and operation specified by the state, region and municipality.
West Mississippi River Regional Trail Master Plan (2018)	The West Mississippi River Regional Trail (also dedicated as MnDOT’s US Bikeway 45/ MRT alignment) is designated along the western boundary of the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: East Unit and connects the Minneapolis Grand Rounds to the Crow River Regional Trail (at confluence of the Mississippi/Crow Rivers) through the communities of Dayton, Champlin, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center.
Rush Creek Regional Trail Master Plan, 2010	The Rush Creek Regional Trail bisects the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park and connects west to Elm Creek Park Reserve. The master plan calls for the extension/ completion of Rush Creek Regional Trail through Mississippi Gateway Regional Park to the Coon Rapids Dam walkway over the Mississippi River.
Pavement Management Project, 2018-19	Extension/completion of the Rush Creek Regional Trail through Mississippi Gateway Regional Park will occur as part of the 2018-19 pavement reconstruction project. The main parking lot and entry drive in the East Unit will be replaced.

Table 4: Brooklyn Park Relevant Policies, Plans & Projects

Source: City of Brooklyn Park

	Description
Comprehensive Plan, 2030 Public Facilities & Recreation Opportunities	<p>Goal 1: Ensure consistent and compatible land use and physical design goals structured to meet current and future community demands for parkland and public facilities.</p> <p>Goal 2: Ensure variety and diversity in design of public facilities, parkland & open spaces.</p> <p>Goal 3: Promote and encourage citizen interest in current recreational programs and services and strive to develop future recreational programs and services that seek to accommodate a changing population and cater to emerging recreational trends.</p> <p>Goal 4: Continue to cooperate, collaborate and provide appropriate levels of assistance in the development of joint public facilities in association with the Community School Program.</p> <p>Goal 5: Ensure a coordinated, convenient and safe pedestrian facility city-wide network that emphasizes connectivity between residential neighborhoods, public schools, parkland and areas of open space.</p>
Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan, 2016	<p>This plan envisions a citywide pedestrian and bicycle network. This plan identifies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommendations to expand the to pedestrian and bicycle network, address gaps and enhance connectivity; 2. Safe routes to school zone improvements; and 3. Policy and programming improvements, including wayfinding, bicycle parking and educational, encouragement and enforcement programs.
Recreation and Parks Master Plan, 2012	The 2012 Recreation and Parks Master Plan includes an overview of planning context for the city’s 60 parks system, including an overview of recreation trends, a summary of existing conditions, a needs assessment, focus areas and goals for recreation and parks and priority objectives to attain stated goals and priorities.
Park System Plan, 2017-2018 (in progress)	<p>The 2018 Recreation and Park System Plan will provide the future road map for future investment in the Park System by identifying community priorities; needed investment and/ or reinvestment in 60 parks; specific areas/parks that could best accommodate specific priority amenities; land for acquisition and natural areas to be proactively managed. The community engagement outcomes of this planning effort include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of new or expanded special use facilities (i.e. Aquatic facility, field house, teen center, senior center, performing arts center, large picnic/gathering spaces and gymnasiums) 2. Increased connectivity of trail system (fill existing gaps in system, connections to key destinations and incorporate wayfinding) 3. Add/improve athletic fields/court facilities (i.e. lighting, synthetic turf, indoor sports courts and cricket pitch) 4. Improve access and connections to natural resource amenities (connections to the Mississippi River, nature play areas and watershed creeks) 5. Improve safety/convenience for park users (lighting on trails, access to drinking water and bathroom facilities, kitchens within shelters and park patrol)

Table 5: Other Related Policies, Plans & Projects

Source: Three Rivers Park District

National Park Service	
Water Trail Plan, 2017 Mississippi National River and Recreation Area	This plan includes a mission statement and goals, an assessment of existing access points and facilities, an inventory of known stretches without access points and with other needs and concludes with a section on planned improvements and recommendations for future development and enjoyment. The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is identified throughout the plan as an integral touchpoint to the river.
5 Year Alternative Transportation Plan	The visitor center at Anoka County's Coon Rapids Park Regional Park is identified as an alternative transportation node. Trail and transit connectivity through/to Mississippi Gateway Regional Park to this location is desired.
Mississippi River Paddle/Peddle Project	Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is part of the long-term paddle/peddle share initiative.
Departments of Transportation - UsDOT MnDOT	
Great River Road National Scenic Byway Minnesota Great River Road	The Great River Road National Scenic Byway follows the course of the Mississippi River through ten states. Minnesota's Great River Road is a network of roadways offering a bounty of river experiences in a parkway setting. It spans 565 miles, 43 communities, 20 counties, three tribes and six unique destination areas, providing public access to and promoting America's Great River - including West River Road, adjacent to Mississippi Gateway Regional Park.
US Bikeway 45/Mississippi River Trail (MRT)	US Bikeway 45/MRT is a bike route along the entire Mississippi River spanning from Lake Itasca State Park to the Gulf of Mexico. Through the Twin Cities areas, there are several sections of this route located on both the eastern and western sides of the river. The section through Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is shared with the West Mississippi River Regional Trail's designation.
Department of Natural Resources - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR)	
Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program (1976), Rules (2016 Update) and Plans (Ongoing)	<p>This is a set of rules established to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve protections for water quality, habitat and scenic views; • Protect existing development and allow redevelopment while protecting key resources; and • Provide clear standards for landowners and simplify local government administration. <p>While these rules do not prohibit the plans for Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, they will need to be consulted as part of future design and development work within the park.</p>
Mississippi River State Water Trail	The Mississippi River State Water Trail Plan designates Mississippi Gateway Regional Park as a major access point with support facilities.
Coon Rapids Dam: Invasive Species Barrier	The Coon Rapids Dam – a major feature of Mississippi River Regional Park, was recently reconstructed to function as an invasive species barrier protecting water bodies upstream from invasive species downstream.
Water Treatment Facility	The recreation pool just north of the dam has been identified as a potential future water treatment facility site. This may require some type of utility access across the northern portion of the park if ever implemented.
Metropolitan Council	
2040 Regional Bikeway Plan	The plan includes the West Mississippi River Regional Trail (Tier 2 Corridor) along the western boundary of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park: East Unit and Rush Creek Regional Trail (Tier 2 Alignment) through the center of the park – making them higher priorities for regional transportation funding.
Hennepin County	
2040 Bicycle Transportation Plan	Both the West Mississippi River Regional Trail (north-south route) and Rush Creek Regional Trail (east-west route) through the park are included in the County's Bicycle Transportation Plan making them eligible for County funding assistance in the event improvements are needed.
Anoka County	
Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park Master Plan, 2002	The East Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park master plan includes trails for biking, walking and cross-country skiing, a boat launch, small boat accessible riverside picnic areas, a play area, performance pavilion, several picnic shelters, fishing docks and platforms and visitor center. Much of this development is already in place.

