

Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails Share of Parks and Trails Legacy Fund



Washington County supports an equitable and fair allocation of the Parks and Trail Legacy Fund resulting in no less than 40% being allocated to the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails system.

Issue At-A-Glance

- In order to continue providing high-quality amenities and services for all residents, the county must plan for future park improvements, recreation facilities, and conservation protections.
- Washington County receives roughly \$950,000 a year from the Parks and Trail Legacy Fund (PTLF), which accounts for up to 50% of the county's Parks and Land Capital Improvement Plan every year.
- Previous negotiations resulted in funding allocation being: 40% for Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails; 40% for Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR); 20% for Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails (GMRPT). This allocation continued through 2019, when a new workgroup was commissioned to recommend a funding formula. Although no funding formula was agreed to during this process, the metrics used previously to determine this allocation illustrated the impact and need for significant Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails funding.

Support

Metropolitan Council and the 10 partnering park implementing agencies that make up the regional park system.

Previous Consideration

In 2012, a work group arrived at the current PTLF allocation formula for fiscal years 2014-2019.

In 2019, the PTLF allocation formula was extended and another Legacy Funding workgroup was sanctioned to reevaluate the allocation formula. The work-group was not able to agree on a recommended funding formula.

No Action

No action will result in delaying or discontinuing projects.

Financial Implications

Washington County depends on PTLF for ongoing acquisition, capital improvements, and parks operations and maintenance.

Impact of Decrease in Funding

If the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund allocation formula is altered to decrease the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails system's share, future projects will either not proceed, or will be scaled back significantly, including 2022-2023 proposed projects:

- Central Greenway Regional Trail
- Point Douglas Regional Trailhead
- St. Croix Bluff Regional Park Hilltop Shelter and Play Area

Washington County Parks Overview

- four regional parks
- two park reserves
- one special recreation feature
- two regional trails
- 1.7 million visits per year



Awards

In 2018, Washington County conducted a survey asking residents to assess the County's performance. Residents awarded the parks system the Top Rated County Service, Top County Characteristic, and the Services and Facilities Most Used by Older Adults.

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