



Council Agenda Item 25-0567R

MEETING DATE: 07/28/2025

SUBJECT/TITLE: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GREATER MINNESOTA LEGACY GRANT APPLICATION TO THE GREATER MINNESOTA REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION AND MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR DULUTH TRAVERSE BIKE SKILLS AREA DEVELOPMENT AND TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS.

SUBMITTED BY: Allison Brooks, Project Coordinator, Parks & Recreation

RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: N/A

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:

April 24, 2017 (17-0306R) – Approved the [Duluth Traverse Mini Master Plan](#) and authorized application to the Greater MN Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) to request regional trail designation for the Duluth Traverse.

BACKGROUND: The Duluth Traverse is a multi-use trail system linking neighborhoods and people to public green space across Duluth. It's a single-track, natural surface, mountain-bike optimized trail that stretches the entire ridgeline of Duluth from Lester Park in the east to Chambers Grove Park in the west. In 2018, the Traverse was designated as a regionally significant trail by the GMRPTC. Regional designation through GMRPTC is required to apply for this grant funding opportunity. The City of Duluth has worked closely with the Cyclists of Gitchee Gumee Shores (COGGS) for the development of the Duluth Traverse and for identification of this grant application's project scope. As a committed partner to this project, COGGS will provide match funding to support this project, too.

If awarded, this grant will support capital improvements to multi-use trailheads at Lester Park (61 Lester River Road) and the Piedmont Trail Center (2226 Hutchinson Road), whose infrastructure is inadequate for the volume of residents and visitors they serve. Improvements at Lester Park will include vault toilets, stormwater treatment, potable water access, wayfinding, and parking enhancements. Improvements at Piedmont will include portable restroom enclosure, a changing stall, and bike racks. The sites and improvements were determined in consultation with residents and nonprofits who support hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. The grant will also support creation of a bike skills area at Lester Park, which will include intentionally designed skill development features to better prepare newer riders for Duluth's trails. The bike skills area will include beginner and intermediate features that provide people with opportunities to practice skills in a controlled environment to learn body maneuvers and bike handling safely. The proposed project directly forwards the 2017 approved Duluth Traverse Mini Master Plan.

BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT: The City intends to request up to \$1.7 million and expects to provide a local match of approximately \$275,000. It is anticipated that approximately \$200,000 of the match will be contributed by nonprofit project partners, primarily by the Cyclists of Gitchee Gumee Shores (COGGS). Approximately \$75,000 will be contributed by the City sourced primarily from the Parks Division capital budget and the Stormwater Utility budget. If awarded, this project will improve services for residents and visitors without meaningfully increasing or decreasing City operating costs or staff time. There are no alternative City funding sources available for this project.

OPTIONS: Authorize the grant application to support bike skills area development and trailhead improvements or decline application authorization.

NECESSARY ACTION: Authorize the Greater MN Legacy Grant application.

ATTACHMENTS: None.