

# City of Fridley: Regional Park Implementing Agency Brief

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For 4 miles of Rice Creek West Regional Trail

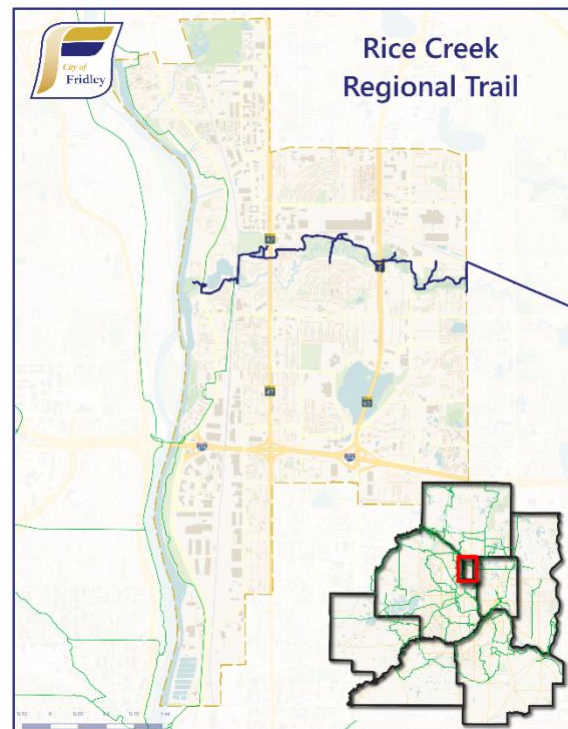
## Background

The Rice Creek West Regional Trail (RCWRT) runs 6 miles from Rush Lake and Long Lake Regional Park in Ramsey County to the Mississippi River in Anoka County. Two miles of the trail are located in Ramsey County. The remaining 4 miles are in Anoka County, in the City of Fridley. A 1.4 mile portion of the trail located in the City of Fridley is within three City Parks (Locke Park, Plaza Park and Locke Lake Park).

## History

Since the Rice Creek West Regional Trail was established in 1980, Anoka County has maintained the portions of the trail located in Anoka County, including the portions within the three City of Fridley Parks. This was done through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA). On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, this agreement will expire. Consequently, Anoka County will not have the responsibility to manage the RCWRT within the three City Parks. ***The City of Fridley desires to take responsibility for planning and maintaining the regional trail portions located in its three Parks.***

The City of Fridley is capable of this task. It owns and maintains 295 acres of park land across 37 parks. It is in the midst of a \$30 million, 8-year comprehensive park rehabilitation plan. The City's Park system includes the RCWRT as a central feature within the community. The City desires the Regional Trail to flourish and envisions the associated local park lands as being a part of the regional plan. In order for this to be done properly, providing the most benefit to the region's residents, the City should have Implementing Agency status.



Minnesota Statute 473.351 grants Implementing Agency Status to specific cities and park districts. These ten agencies have in common the fact they own the underlying property for which a regional park or trail is located. The City of Fridley is not included because until now Anoka County maintained the trail and undertook the responsibilities and privileges of an Implementing Agency.

Implementing Agencies:

Anoka County, Bloomington, Carver County, Dakota County, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Ramsey County, St. Paul, Scott County, Three Rivers Park District, Washington County

Combined, the parks contribute 100 acres to the Regional Trail System. The City has owned the three parks for over 50 years, with no reimbursement or compensation for the regional trail's establishment or operation. The City acquired the property for parkland and has no desire to change the use. A Master Plan, approved by the Metropolitan Council, controls the parks' use and future development. And the City supports the RCWRT Master Plan and will continue to abide by its regulations and implement its vision.

Fridley's Park system will increase the wellbeing of our region by providing people of all ages and abilities with opportunities for active living, social connections, wellness, and nature.

Locke Park, at 95 acres, provides critical amenities to the regional trail in the form of pavilions and bathrooms. The City will assure these amenities continue. Beyond that, Implementing Agency Status will achieve the City's and Park System's overall vision by providing persons of all abilities and ages the opportunity for enjoyment within a nature-based environment. Specifically, this will be achieved:

- Actively through accessible trails, maintenance of Rice Creek, expanded nature-based programs and gathering places.
- Passively through the natural amenities of the forest, trails, creek, and interpretive opportunities.

## Summary

- Regional Trail Located on 100 acres of Fridley park property
- Park property purchased at City sole expense
- A Master Plan controls the property in conformance with the Open Space Commission
- The City supports and will continue to support the Master Plan
- Anoka County has maintained the trail but at the end of, 2023, the City of Fridley will take over
- City of Fridley wants to advocate for and maintain the 1.4 miles of the Regional trail located in its parks
- To properly advocate and maintain the City should be included as an Implementing Agency within Minn Stat. 473.351
- City of Fridley would be eligible for any maintenance reimbursements currently made available to Anoka County including Capital programs