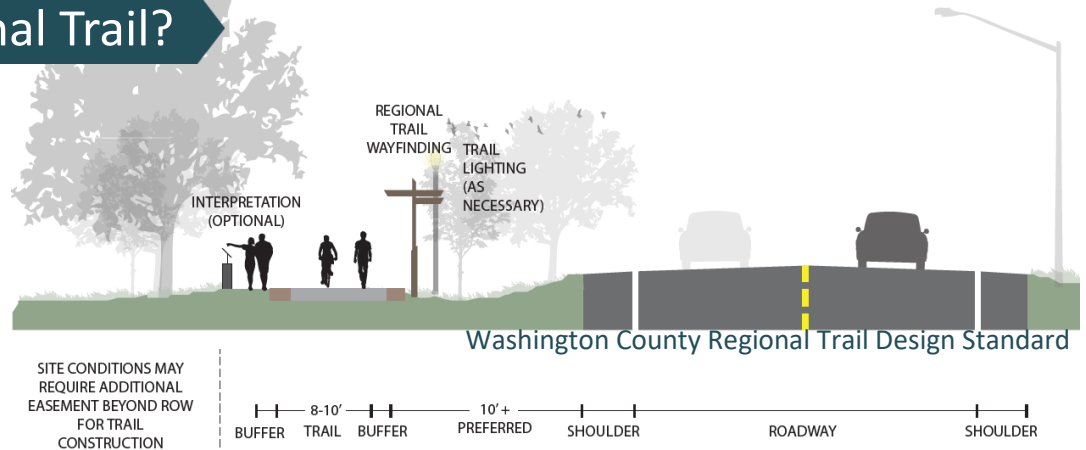


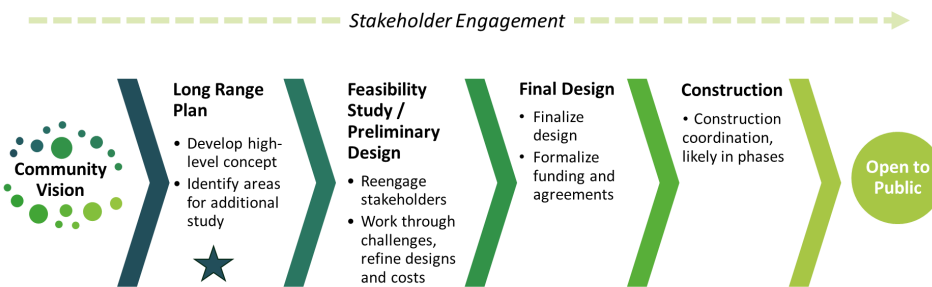
# Glacial Hills Regional Trail Long Range Plan

## What is a Regional Trail?

- Attracts regional users
- Connects regional destinations
- Multiuse and accessible
- “Tree trunks” or “highways” of trail network
- Amenities and wayfinding



## What is a Long Range Plan?



- Provide guidance on future trail route alignment—not preliminary design
- Engagement and coordination with local public agencies and residents
- Vision for trail operations, stewardship of corridor resources
- Eligibility for regional/state funding

## Project Timeline



## Public Engagement

- Attended 10+ engagement events
  - Public engagement survey—600+ responses!
- Key findings from input received:
- Scenic, off-road experience
  - Connections to natural areas
  - Loop opportunities
  - Opportunities for shade & rest



### Stay Informed:

Project information and updates will be posted on the county’s website: [washingtoncountymn.gov/GlacialHills](http://washingtoncountymn.gov/GlacialHills)



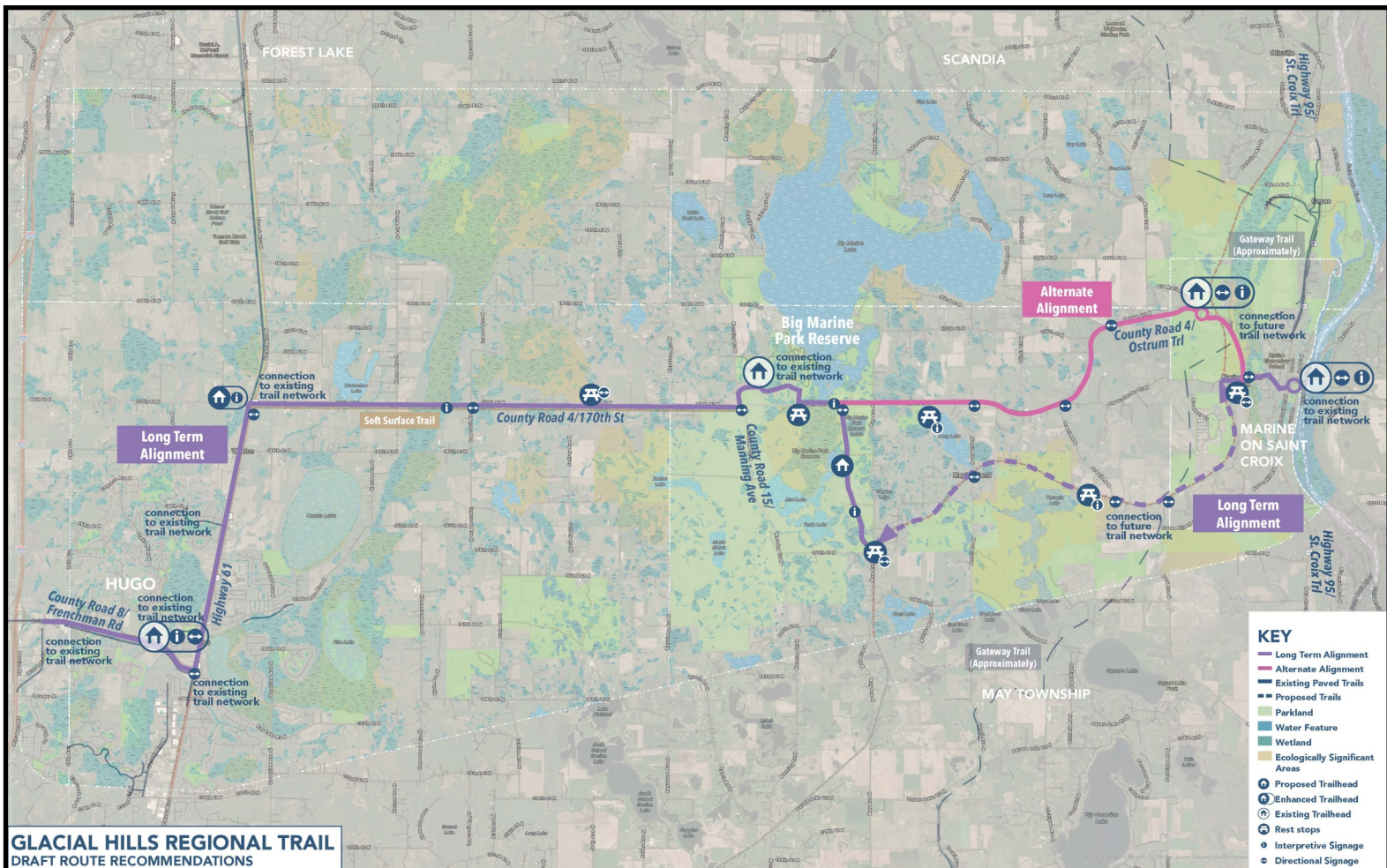
# Glacial Hills Regional Trail Long Range Plan

## Proposed Trail Alignment

The long range plan identifies a **Long Term Alignment** as the future route for the Glacial Hills Regional Trail. Many **variables and timelines could impact the development of the Long Term Alignment**, including the future plans of the railroad corridor that is currently owned and operated by Canadian National.

Because of this uncertainty, an **Alternate Alignment was also identified**. This alignment represents the recommended route *if* the Long Term Alignment proves to be impractical or unfeasible.

With future phases of the project many years away, **this approach allows Washington County to maintain flexibility**. The county will continue to engage with stakeholders and work through the details of a future project.



A future trail that uses the railroad grade (as proposed in the **Long Term Alignment**) will require additional design and review. Opportunities may include: stormwater mitigation, water quality, and natural resource management improvements. During future phases, the county will also work with neighboring private property owners to address screening and buffering opportunities.

**Project Contact:**  
Connor Schaefer, Senior Planner, Washington County Public Works  
Connor.Schaefer@co.washington.mn.us, 651-430-4303





Washington  
County


# Glacial Hills Regional Trail Long Range Plan

Hugo City Council: 3/16/26

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## Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Stakeholder Engagement
3. Route Evaluation and Recommendation
4. Implementation Considerations
5. Next Steps
6. Questions



Washington  
County

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## Project Overview



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## Regional Trail Long Range Plans

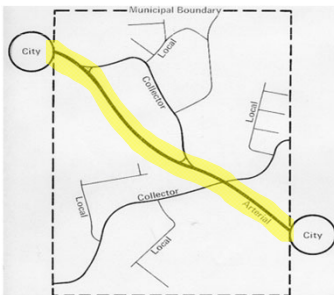


### Regional Trails

- “Tree trunks” or “highways” of system
- Standard: 10 ft wide paved trail, with 10 ft buffer
- Quality signage and amenities

### Long Range Plans

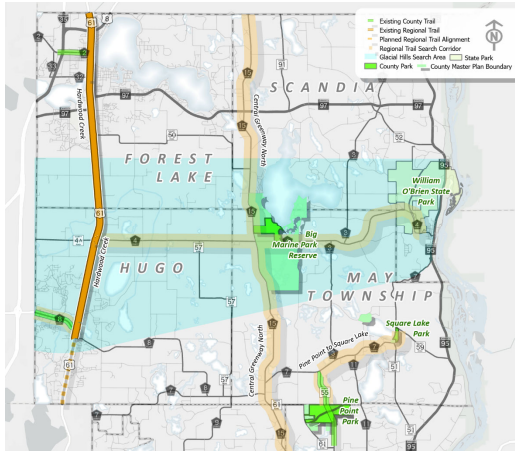
- Guidance on future alignment, development, management
- Eligible for funding
- Engagement with partners and public



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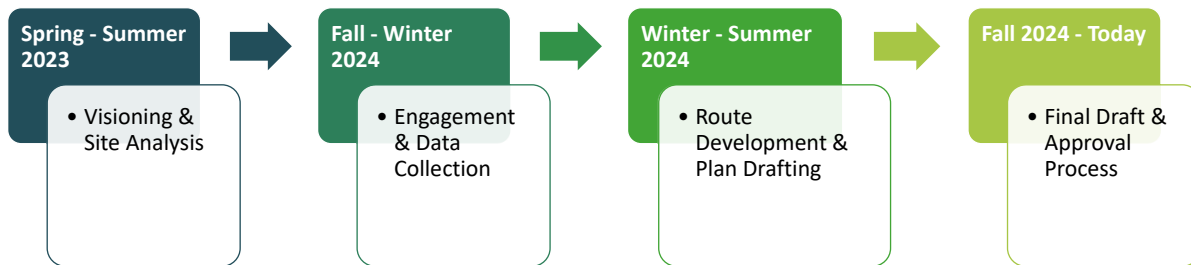
## Glacial Hills Corridor Background



- West-East arterial trail in northern Washington County
- Priority in County’s Bike / Pedestrian Plan
- Destinations:
  - Hardwood Creek Regional Trail
  - Central Greenway Regional Trail
  - Big Marine Park Reserve
  - William O’Brien State Park

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## Long Range Plan Timeline



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## Project Goals



Create a safe and comfortable recreational experience that is accessible to all abilities.



Promote equity and inclusion.



Connect users to destinations while expanding regional connectivity.



Develop a trail alignment that is implementable, responsible, and supported by the community.



Feature and steward natural resources while promoting environmental resiliency.

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## Stakeholder Engagement

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# Public Engagement

- Hugo Good Neighbor Days
- Washington County Fair
- Big Marine Park Reserve Pop-Up
- Art in the Park / Farmer’s Market (Forest Lake)
- Marine Mills Folk School Fall Festival
- Senior Expo at Forest Lake YMCA
- Community Conversation at Forest Lake YMCA
- On-line Survey
- Open Houses
  - November 2023 at Hugo City Hall
  - June 2024
  - July 2024 at Hugo City Hall



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# Public Input: Key Messages

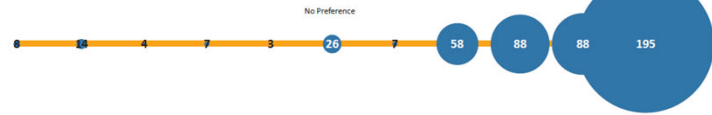
Community members prefer:

- Scenic, off-road experience
- Connections to natural areas
- Loop opportunities
- Opportunities for shade and rest

## TRAIL EXPERIENCE PREFERENCE RESULTS

### Connector / Direct Trail

Identify a direct route between predetermined destinations along the corridor. Trail would likely follow road alignments.



### Destination / Indirect Trail

Identify a distinct trail experience. Trail may deviate from direct roadway alignments to provide connections to less-direct destinations or resources.

### Utilizing Existing Trail Corridors

Prioritize designation of existing trail corridor - potential for reduced cost, expedited implementation.



### Create New Trail Corridors

Prioritize new trail connections - potential for new trail facilities connecting areas in the County without an existing trail.

### Connect With Natural Areas

Route alignment prioritizes connections to parks, open space, and providing opportunities to experience natural areas.



### Connect With Downtowns

Route alignment prioritizes convenient connections to local businesses and downtowns.



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# Route Evaluation and Recommendation

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## Initial Route Opportunities



### Phase 1: Segment Assessment

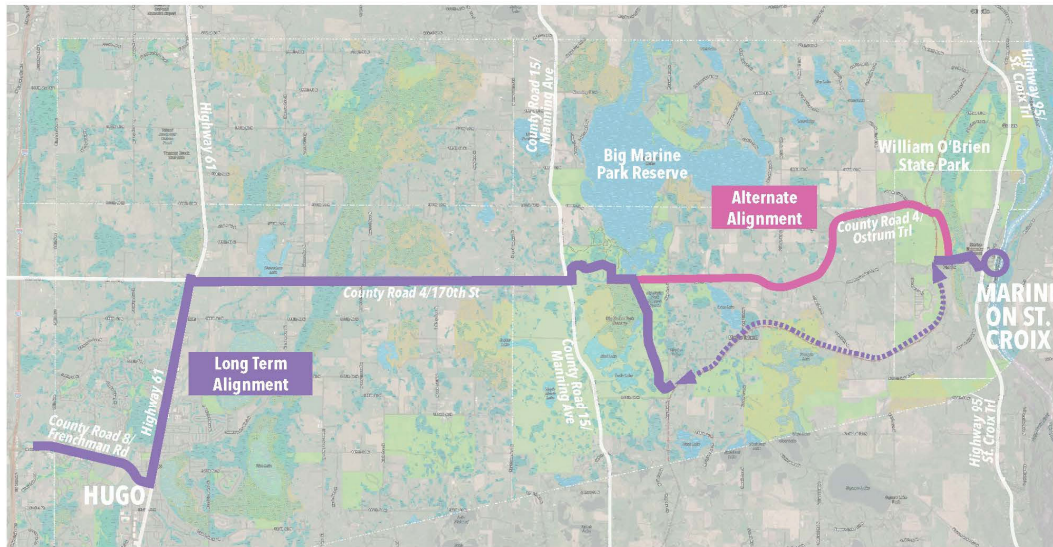
- “Spaghetti at the wall”
- Low hanging fruit

### Phase 2: Evaluation Analysis

- Data-driven, each segment scored based on Project Goals
- Evaluation Scores = used as a guide
  - Not prescriptive
  - “Boots on the ground”

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# Draft Route Recommendation



- Long Term Alignment
- Alternate Alignment

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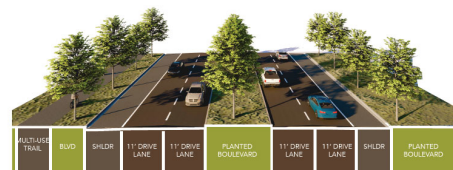
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# Route Segments in Hugo



## Long Term Alignment

County Road 8/Frenchman Road (no changes)



Existing



Proposed (no changes)

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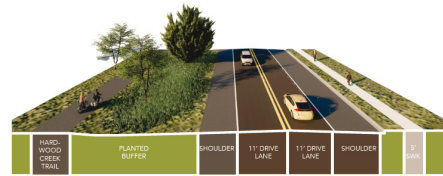
14

# Route Segments in Hugo

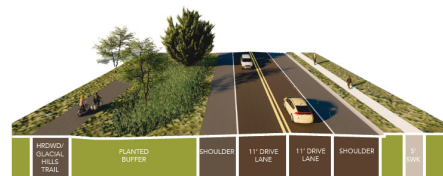


## Long Term Alignment

Highway 61/Forest Boulevard North  
(no changes)



Existing



Proposed (no changes)

15

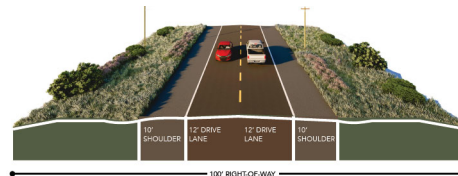
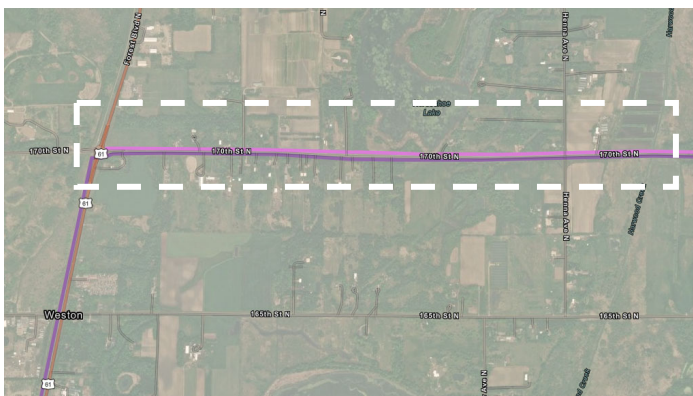
15

# Route Segments in Hugo

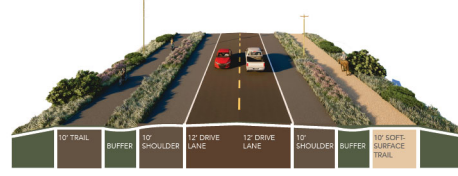


## Long Term Alignment

County Road 4/170th Street North



Existing



Proposed

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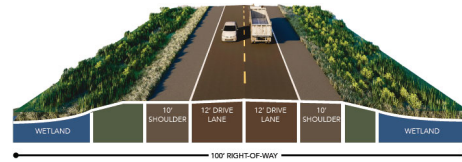
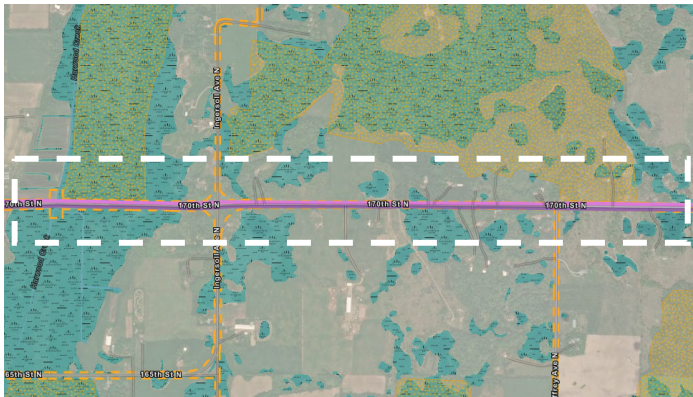
16

# Route Segments in Hugo

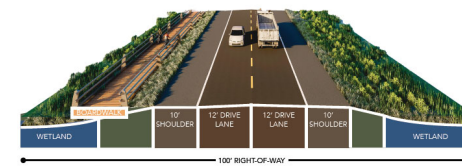


## Long Term Alignment

Wetlands along County Road 4/170th Street North



Existing



Proposed

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# Route Segments East of Hugo

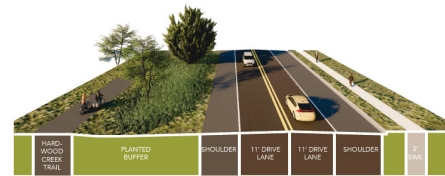
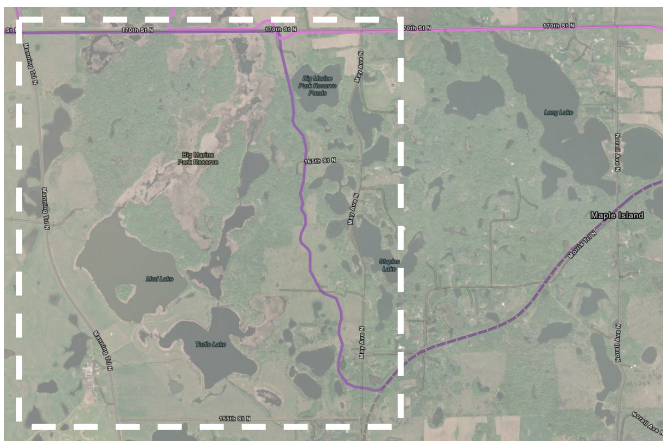


## Long Term Alignment

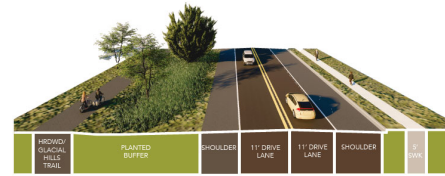
Big Marine Park Reserve

## Alternate Alignment

County Road 4



Existing



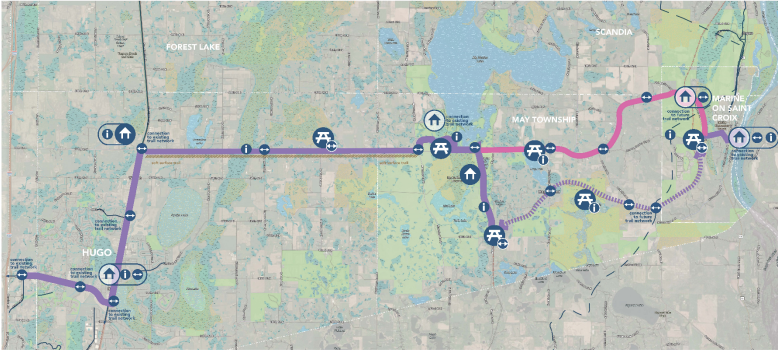
Proposed (no changes)

18

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# Trail Features

## TRAIL FEATURES & CONNECTIONS Potential Trailheads, Rest Stops, and Signage



### Trail Amenities

- Improve user experience
- Provide access, information

### Considerations within City:

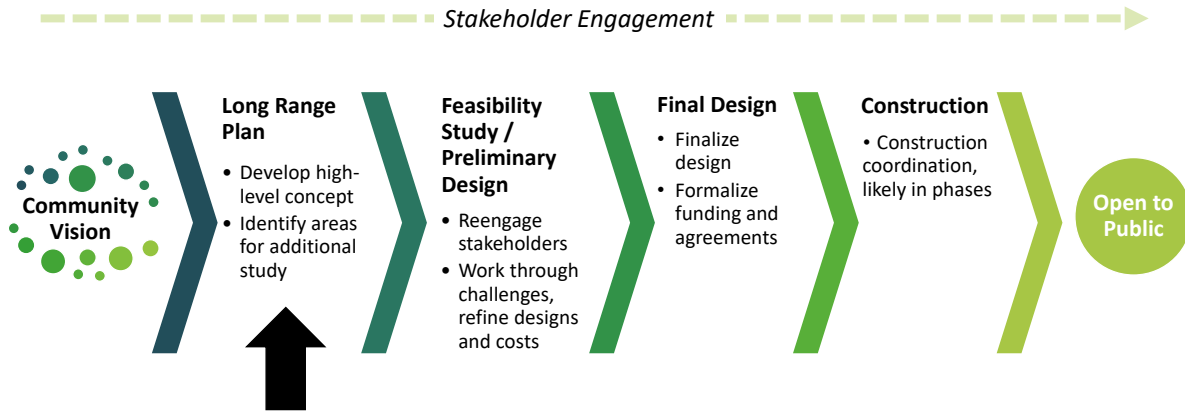
- Trailheads
- Wayfinding/interpretive signage opportunities

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# Implementation Considerations

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## Implementation Timeline



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## Washington County Policy

### Cost Share

- Initial implementation: 50% County Contribution
- Replacement/repaving: 100% County

### Operations and Maintenance

- County (on County-owned land):
  - Waste/recycle pickup
  - Trailheads, kiosks, graffiti
  - Seasonal mowing
- Local agency
  - Winter plowing (optional)
  - Minor maintenance



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## Strategies/Opportunities




- Cost/implementation: measure and account for in evaluation
- Work collaboratively to reduce costs
  - Grant opportunities – expanding options!
  - Land donations
  - Development agreements
- Planning is key
  - Future railroad corridor opportunities
  - Where is development planned?
  - Coincide with planned capital project

## Potential Funding Sources



Grant Program	Sponsor Agency	General Information
America Walks	Other - Minnesota	America Walks awards stipends to communities for projects related to creating healthy, active, and engaged places to live, work and play.
American Trails, Trails Capacity Program	American Trails Organization	Supports partners to complete trail research, design, planning, stewardship, and maintenance projects that are inclusive, foster improved trail user behavior and connect trail assets to a broader spectrum of users.
Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	The BRIC program aims to categorically shift the federal focus away from reactive disaster spending and toward research-supported proactive investment in community resilience.
Credit Enhancement Program	Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA)	Helps cities and counties reduce the costs of borrowing to build certain public facilities.
Economic Adjustment Assistance Program	US Economic Development Administration (EDA)	Grants are awarded to help communities across the nation plan, build, innovate, and put people back to work through construction or non-construction projects designed to meet local needs.
Environment and Natural Resources Trust	Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund	ENRTF aims to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.
Federal Recreational Trail Program (MN)	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Encourage the maintenance and development of motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails.
Active Transportation State Infrastructure Program	MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)	This is a new program in 2022 funded by the State of Minnesota and administered through MnDOT. The program provides funding for infrastructure that facilitates more safe and effective transportation for cyclists and pedestrians.
GreenCorps Host Site	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)	The goal of Minnesota GreenCorps is to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals.
National Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	To create or reinvigorate parks and other outdoor recreation spaces in areas with populations of 30,000 or more people.
Local Trail Connections Program	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	To provide grants to local units of government to promote short trail connections between where people live and desirable locations, not to develop significant new trails.
Regional Solicitation	Metropolitan Council	A competitive process to award federal transportation funding to projects that meet regional transportation needs within the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.
Minnesota Off Highway Vehicle Trails Assistance Program	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Facilitates development and maintenance of trails for use by All-Terrain Vehicles, Off-Highway Motorcycles, and Off-Road Vehicles.
Natural and Scenic Area Grants	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	To increase, protect and enhance natural and scenic areas.
No Child Left Inside	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Support and increase efforts to expand programming that connects youth to the outdoors.
State Park Road Account Program	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Assist local governments in improving access to public recreation facilities.

**Next Steps**



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**Next Steps**



**County Request: Municipal Support**

Final Approval Process

- Winter – partner agencies
- Spring – County Board & Met Council



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**Connor Schaefer**

Senior Planner

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**Andrea Rehm**

Planner II

651-430-4332

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14669 Fitzgerald Avenue North, Hugo, MN 55038 • (651) 762-6300 • [www.ci.hugo.mn.us](http://www.ci.hugo.mn.us)

**DATE**

Metropolitan Council Chair and Parks and Open Space Commission  
390 North Robert Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Hello Chair and Commission Members,

I am writing to express the City of Hugo's support for the Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan. The Glacial Hills Regional Trail will be an east-west trail that will run through northern Washington County. Once fully developed, it will connect pedestrians, bicyclists and trail users to regional destinations, including Hardwood Creek and Central Greenway Regional Trails, Big Marine Park Reserve and William O'Brien State Park. Guided by interagency collaboration and its public engagement process, this long range plan provides the vision and direction for the future development of this trail.

The City of Hugo has been involved in the planning process and supports the improvements proposed in Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan. This plan provides long-term planning and implementation guidance for route alignment, trail uses and facilities, and corridor natural resource management. Area trail users will benefit from additional transportation and recreational opportunities, and equally, the project area will benefit from the careful stewardship of water resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to send our support. We look forward to working with all agency partners on the implementation of the Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan.

Please contact me at 651-762-6300 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Bryan Bear*  
Administrator, City of Hugo

CC: Hugo City Council  
Hugo Parks Commission

**RESOLUTION 2026-X**

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE WASHINGTON COUNTY GLACIAL HILLS  
REGIONAL TRAIL LONG RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, the City of Hugo recognizes the Glacial Hills Regional Trail as an important component of the regional park and trail system, providing recreational and non-motorized transportation opportunities to the residents of the City and region; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan provides planning and implementation guidance for the improvements, acquisitions, and management needed to develop a regional trail that meets the needs of the public; and

WHEREAS, the planning process for the Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan included public engagement events and meetings that provided the opportunity for input from partner agencies and public stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the City of Hugo supports the acquisition, design, implementation, and operation of the Glacial Hills Regional Trail pursuant to the long range plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HUGO, that the City of Hugo supports the proposed Glacial Hills Regional Trail long range plan.

This resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Hugo on the **16th day of March 2026, by a vote of four Ayes and no Nays.**

---

Tom Weidt, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Michele Lindau, City Clerk