

Chair Evenrud and Park Board members -

With full apologies for my failure to request a speaking spot at tonight's meeting, I am sending this last-minute message in regards to the subject. I hope it reaches you in time for consideration before the meeting.

The CROW Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic lists Directness as one of five design principles for bikeways (it lists Cohesion, too, but more on that later). Since the suggested swap of the currently planned Minnetonka Blvd trail segment from The Marsh to Fairchild Ave would result in approximately 0.5 miles being added to a trip between the Minnetonka civic campus and Groveland Elementary (or Lakewinds, etc) by diverting onto the existing Lake Minnetonka trail and then back north to Minnetonka Blvd along Steele St, it seems this swap isn't the best. An increase in distance like this could easily add 5 or more minutes to a trip between these two points (assuming a travel speed of 6-8 miles per hour which is fairly typical for children).

However.

Executing this swap would take excellent advantage of existing infrastructure (the Lake Minnetonka trail). In addition to that benefit and the benefits discussed in the minutes from the last Park Board meeting, it also offers several additional opportunities:

- An opportunity to extend from Fairchild to Steele (the proposed route of connection to the Lake Minnetonka trail) now rather than waiting for the "swapped" segment to be constructed
- An opportunity to get an enhanced crossing of Minnetonka Blvd built sooner, wherever the Park Board decides to connect between Minnetonka Blvd and the Lake Minnetonka trail
- The opportunity to extend beyond Steele to Tonkawood (which is also on the City's trail plan) with an associated opportunity to build the segment connecting the Lake Minnetonka trail to Minnetonka Blvd along Tonkawood NOW rather than at some point in the future. Doing this would be an appreciable improvement in Cohesion in that the network of bike travel would be more connected instead of having an isolated segment along Minnetonka Blvd.

Even though these opportunities would likely increase the near-term cost, and maybe don't strictly follow recommended design best practices, it seems wise overall to strongly consider this swap if additional options can be exercised. Despite the increased travel distance between the City civic campus and Groveland resulting from this proposed swap, I feel the possibilities I've outlined (if included in the swap) make the swap a good idea and I support it. I hope you will too!

Luke Van Santen
2148 Sheridan Hills Road

From: ABHAY PARNERKAR
Sent: Wednesday, August 5, 2020 8:17 AM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Minnetonka Trail/ Side walk prioritization

I support trail connecting to Groveland school and specially on both side of the road. Road narrows at groveland pond and makes it difficult to walk or bike if two people approaching specially bicyclists. I live in Rainbow/Groveland neighborhood and my daughter has many friends on other side of the neighborhood.

Thanks for considering safe passage.

is there any idea to have a cross walk or foot bridge or tunnel to cross Minnetonka Blvd regds

Abhay Parnerkar

Sent from my iPhone

From: Kyle Fields
Sent: Tuesday, August 4, 2020 7:05 PM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Make Blvd trail project

I just found out about this project and love that this is being done. The project plan shows that this is being done from the marsh to Fairchild however I am more interested to see this trail go in from Groveland to Fairchild. The reason for this is i know of two people, one on a bike and one on a skateboard, that were hit by cars on this stretch of roadway in recent years. I'm assuming there have been more people that were hit or had near misses. Can a trail be prioritized between Groveland and Fairchild? Will crosswalks be included as part of the project? My one son is 13 and we still will not let him cross the Blvd because it is terribly unsafe.

Best Regards,
Kyle Fields
17019 The Strand
[REDACTED]

From: Christy J Van House
Sent: Tuesday, August 4, 2020 1:50 PM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Minnetonka Boulevard Trail Project

Hi Kathy,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing in response to the proposed change to the Minnetonka Boulevard Trail Project.

My Husband and I reside at 16116 Minnetonka Blvd., which is along the originally-planned path of "Ward 3 Trail Ranking #4 The Marsh to Fairchild". We were greatly disappointed to hear that the project may not happen as planned.

While we certainly understand the desire for additional safe options for children to get to and from school, and that "Ward 3 Trail Ranking #10 Fairchild to Woodlawn" should be considered for the future, I implore you to consider keeping the original plan in place:

- Cars travel at a much higher speed between The Marsh and Fairchild, where there is also a sharp bend that complicates things.
- We see a large amount of foot and bike traffic on the shoulder of the road, and we are terrified to check our mail or walk along the road when we need to get to a neighboring street.
- Overhead electrical is desperately outdated (and frankly I fear a fire hazard for the unkempt woods along Minnetonka Blvd.)
- Pathway access to the Park & Ride is as important. Maintenance issues need to be addressed here, too.
- Drainage solutions need to be addressed
- The proximity of Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail to Marsh-Fairchild may assist in connecting routes for recreational purposes, but as a daily function it is impractical. The "Ward 3 Trail Ranking #4 The Marsh to Fairchild" plan would serve to close a large gap in daily functionality for residents.
- Funds have already been spent on surveys, plans, etc. for #4.

Obviously the city, board and county found the original plan to be necessary. Please do not delay the "Ward 3 Trail Ranking #4 The Marsh to Fairchild" improvements.

Thank you,

Christy Van House

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, August 3, 2020 8:25 PM

To: Kathy Kline

Cc: Bradley Schaeppi

Subject: Park Board Comments: Item 6B (Minnetonka Blvd Trail)

Members of the Park Board & City Staff --

Thank you for your consideration of item 6B and re-evaluating the trail ranking along Minnetonka Boulevard and also considering a crosswalk at Rainbow Dr (or another nearby location) in the City's 5 year capital plan. I appreciate the fact that you both heard and read my prior comments during the June 3rd Park Board Meeting and I will not repeat those prior points today as they are also included in your packet for tonight.

In addition to the points previously made, I would offer two additional considerations:

1. Scoring. I appreciate staff's re-evaluation of the scoring of the two trails. Although technical in nature, I would ask the Park Board to consider the impact of connectivity to schools. In the trail from Fairchild to Groveland, we have a school supporting over 900 children with many living on roads connecting to Minnetonka Boulevard. In fact, residents nearly the entire length of Trail #4 are also in the Groveland Elementary School Boundary and would need the Fairchild to Woodlawn connection to connect to school.

In contrast, although Trail #4 from the Marsh to Fairchild does indeed have private schools and a New Horizon day care near its route, the impact of connection in numbers of residents & children is materially larger and the LRT Trail just a bit south - or the Jidana trail just a bit north - already provides a safe connection for most neighborhoods.

2. Consider a logical adjustment. Hennepin County owns a large tract of land between Fairchild and Tonkawood, where the Park N Ride exists. I'd recommend that both sections - whichever is chosen - connect to the Park N Ride at Steele Street (and be credited for a connection). Given Hennepin County owns the land, no easement would need to be purchased and it would be logical to adjust trail #10 to include a trail at least to the Westerly portion of the Park N Ride / Steel Street and improve connectivity if the Park Board & City Council feel the #10 route should be prioritized.

I've been a strong advocate of trail expansion along County Roads and although I support both trails on Minnetonka Boulevard, I feel strongly the trail to Groveland has a greater impact & benefit to the city's connectivity goals.

I thank you for your consideration and service to our great city.

Tony

Tony Wagner
3516 Rainbow Dr

Thanks Carol, appreciate the insight. And please know, I feel both sections of the trail on Mtka Blvd are valuable.

From: Carol Hej|Stone
Sent: Monday, August 3, 2020 1:08 PM
To: 'ANTHONY WAGNER'
Cc: Kelly ODea
Subject: RE: Trail PB Agenda Item Question

Good afternoon, Tony,

Thank you for your email. I am doing well and hope you are too.

Trail segment #4 from The Marsh to Fairchild Avenue gets credit for school access due to the locations of:

- Minnetonka Christian Academy
- Academy of Whole Learning
- New Horizon Academy
- Sleepy Tigers Chinese Immersion

While the top two schools listed above have existing sidewalk, trail segment #4 would provide a connection to that sidewalk, similar to the connection to existing sidewalk at Groveland Elementary.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions. I have cc'd Kelly O'Dea to this email and will include your email as part of an addendum to the park board packet, unless you request it not to be included. Thanks again & be well.

Cheers,



Carol HejlStone | Park & Trail Planner
City of Minnetonka | minnetonkamn.gov

14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345
Office: 952-939-8342

From: ANTHONY WAGNER
Sent: Monday, August 3, 2020 12:25 PM
To: Carol HejlStone
Subject: Trail PB Agenda Item Question

Carol —

I hope you are staying healthy and doing well!

I have one quick question prior to the Park board meeting on Wednesday. I am curious on the scoring updates related to section 4 (Marsh to Fairchild). Specifically, can you share how section 4 gets credit for school access given there is no public school in the area (except Groveland, which this section wouldn't connect to)?

I appreciate your time and insight in advance!

Tony

Sent from Xfinity Connect App

From: Kristin Baker
Sent: Sunday, August 2, 2020 4:35 PM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Swapping trail segment #4 for #10

Hello,

Thank you for your continued support of the Minnetonka trail system. My family and I enjoy using it on a daily basis. As avid trail users I am writing to urge you to keep the current proposal in place and prioritize the section of the new trail from the Marsh to Fairchild.

While a small section could, arguably, be served by the LRT on the south side of Minnetonka, it quickly veers south during this portion. The same argument could be made that the trail running from Fairchild to Cottage Grove Avenue already serves the Fairchild to Woodlawn proposal.

By creating a trail on the north side you create a safe way for residents north of Minnetonka Boulevard to not have to cross the Boulevard at all. We have small children (which is also the argument for the other section) and would love to bike with them through city hall to Jidana and all the way over to Groveland without having to cross Minnetonka Boulevard. The current proposal would make that possible using the current trail parallel to Prospect Place.

The section from the Marsh to Fairchild is particularly problematic for pedestrians and runners (of which, I am one) as there is very little shoulder on the left (where pedestrians and runners should be facing traffic) which to utilize. There is also a horrible blind curve when facing traffic, often overgrown with foliage, forcing the pedestrian further toward Minnetonka Boulevard. That is, by far, the scariest section of my regular run route; I am often afraid I will be hit by a vehicle.

Completing this section also serves to create a safe way to link trails while staying on the north side to city hall through the Jidana park paths.

I know that whatever is decided will be well thought and out discussed as to the best for all of the city's residents. We just want to express that we are partial to the proposal as it is, with the section from the Marsh to Fairchild being the first priority.

Respectfully,

Kristin Baker, 3050 Minnehaha Court, Minnetonka, MN 55391

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 2, 2020 3:45 PM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Minnetonka Blvd Trail Project change

Hi,

I am not in favor of changing priority on the trail project, and think the Board should maintain priority on the Marsh to Fairchild segment of the trail project.

The side streets along this segment, especially Jidana and Martha, are "isolated," so that pedestrian access to other roads requires walking along Minnetonka Boulevard.

While the Fairchild-to-Woodlawn would make East-West pedestrian travel easier, it's possible for those on side streets along that segment to travel in those directions currently without walking on the shoulder of Minnetonka Boulevard.

In addition, the streets on the north and south sides of Minnetonka Boulevard along the Marsh-to-Fairchild segment do not line up at all. This means that simply crossing Mkta Blvd, for example to access the Lake Minnetonka LRT Trail, still requires walking along it for a couple hundred feet.

The improvement in access and safety, with no alternatives present now, weigh in favor of keeping the current prioritization of the Marsh-to-Fairchild segment.

Sincerely,
Robert Stokes
3526 Jidana Lane

From: Adam Hoskins
Sent: Wednesday, August 5, 2020 11:33 AM
To: Kathy Kline
Subject: Comment on Potential Change to Minnetonka Boulevard Trail Project

To Whom It May Concern:

My family resides in Ward 3, near Groveland Elementary School. I write to ask that the Park Board prioritize Ward 3 Trail Ranking #10 Fairchild to Woodlawn over Ward 3 Trail Ranking #4 The Marsh to Fairchild in the 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan.

I recognize that the Park Board has compiled a clear methodology for the rankings of the individual trail segments, and appreciate the transparency to the process. That said, especially in this age of data and analytics, I believe that the Board and City need to guard against blind adherence to numerical scores at the expense of common-sense solutions.

Prioritizing Trail Ranking #10 over Trail Ranking #4 is exactly one of those common-sense solutions. The reasons supporting this re-prioritization are myriad, and I highlight a few below:

1. Trail #10 would connect many neighborhoods along Minnetonka Boulevard with the business district at Minnetonka Boulevard and 101. Several times, my family and I have wanted to walk to one of the businesses at that intersection, but are forced to either triple our walking time (by walking to the Lake Minnetonka LRT and then walking North on 101, rather than directly on Minnetonka Boulevard) or risk our safety by walking on Minnetonka Boulevard with a stroller and without sidewalks. The logical conclusion of this design is that

we make the walk less often, hurting the small local businesses that comprise this business district.

2. While Trail #4 contains some commercial businesses (Westdale Florist, The Marsh), it does not include the types of businesses that lend themselves to walking and biking errands like Trail #4 (grocery store, bakery, coffee shop, liquor store, hardware store, etc.). As a result, though both sections may score points for connection to commercial businesses, Trail #10 offers higher potential community access.

3. There is existing access to the Minnetonka Boulevard Park and Ride from the East, even in the absence of Trail #4 being built. This is due to the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, which largely runs parallel to Minnetonka Boulevard between Williston Rd. and Steele St. Indeed, the distance from Minnetonka Boulevard & Williston Rd. to Minnetonka Boulevard & Steele St. (the location of the Park & Ride) is only negligibly longer via the Minnetonka LRT than the proposed Trail #4:

- Minnetonka Blvd and Williston Rd. to Minnetonka Blvd. and Steele St (Via Minnetonka LRT): 1.3 miles
- Minnetonka Blvd and Williston Rd. to Minnetonka Blvd. and Steele St (Via Minnetonka Blvd.): 0.9 miles

Thus, to the extent that the Park Board is factoring in access to the Park and Ride to increase the score of Trail #4, it should consider the existing access from the Minnesota LRT as the relevant baseline. Trail # 4 would only marginally increase the access to the Minnetonka Blvd. Park and Ride This makes the Trail #4 section largely redundant to the Minnesota LRT in that section of Minnetonka Blvd.

4. As other commenters have mentioned, there are upcoming street reconstruction and sewer projects slated to take place in the vicinity of Trail # 10. Re-prioritizing Trail # 10 to have that project run concurrent to those existing infrastructure projects could drive financial savings and otherwise increase efficiencies.

I thank you for your attention to this important matter, and appreciate you soliciting community input.

Sincerely,

Adam Hoskins

3535 Druid Lane

From: Holly Godfrey

Sent: Wednesday, August 5, 2020 4:43 PM

To: Kathy Kline

Subject: Regarding Park Board meeting tonight

Dear Board Members,

I am writing in support for moving up the date of expansion of the trail segment and addition of a crosswalk along Minnetonka Blvd to improve pedestrian safety, especially that of school kids walking or biking to Groveland School. A driving tour of the city demonstrates crosswalks at most if not all elementary and middle schools. There is a definite need at this point on Minnetonka Blvd especially as the slight slope of the road impedes sight for drivers and crossers. It is an additional benefit for the environment and personal health in that children (with or without parents) can walk or bike to school.

Please vote to bring about these changes sooner, rather than later.

Holly Godfrey
3509 Lilac Lane