

**AGENDA**  
**MAPLEWOOD CITY COUNCIL**  
**MANAGER WORKSHOP**

6:15 P.M. Monday, February 23, 2026

City Hall, Council Chambers

*Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.02, one or more councilmembers may be participating remotely*

- A. CALL TO ORDER**
- B. ROLL CALL**
- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- E. NEW BUSINESS**
  - 1. Battle Creek-St. Croix River Regional Trail Long Range Plan
  - 2. Street Assessment Rate Discussion
- F. ADJOURNMENT**

**RULES OF CIVILITY FOR THE CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND OUR COMMUNITY**

Following are rules of civility the City of Maplewood expects of everyone appearing at Council Meetings - elected officials, staff and citizens. It is hoped that by following these simple rules, everyone's opinions can be heard and understood in a reasonable manner. We appreciate the fact that when appearing at Council meetings, it is understood that everyone will follow these principles:

Speak only for yourself, not for other council members or citizens - unless specifically tasked by your colleagues to speak for the group or for citizens in the form of a petition.

Show respect during comments and/or discussions, listen actively and do not interrupt or talk amongst each other.

Be respectful of the process, keeping order and decorum. Do not be critical of council members, staff or others in public.

Be respectful of each other's time keeping remarks brief, to the point and non-repetitive.

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## CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date February 23, 2026

**REPORT TO:** Michael Sable, City Manager

**REPORT FROM:** Steven Love, Public Works Director  
Audra Robbins, Parks and Natural Resources Manager

**PRESENTER:** Steven Love, Public Works Director

**AGENDA ITEM:** Battle Creek-St. Croix River Regional Trail Long Range Plan

**Action Requested:**  Motion       Discussion       Public Hearing

**Form of Action:**       Resolution       Ordinance       Contract/Agreement       Proclamation

### **Summary:**

Washington County is developing a long-range planning document that will guide the future development of a paved multi-use trail called the Battle Creek - St Croix River Regional Trail (BC-StCR Regional Trail). The BC-StCR Regional Trail Plan will provide guidance on future trail alignment; the location, development, and operation of trail facilities; and opportunities to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources within the proposed corridor.

Staff from Washington County will present on the overall planning process and are looking for feedback from the City Council on their findings and next steps for the plan.

### **Recommended Action:**

No action is required.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Is There a Fiscal Impact?     No     Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0

    Financing source(s):     Adopted Budget     Budget Modification     New Revenue Source  
    Use of Reserves     Other: n/a

### **Strategic Plan Relevance:**

Safety                      ◇ Focus Area: Expand accessibility and mobility for all residents

Sustainability            ◇ Focus Area: Cultivate a connected, engaged community

Development             ◇ Focus Area: Invest in people and placemaking

### **Background:**

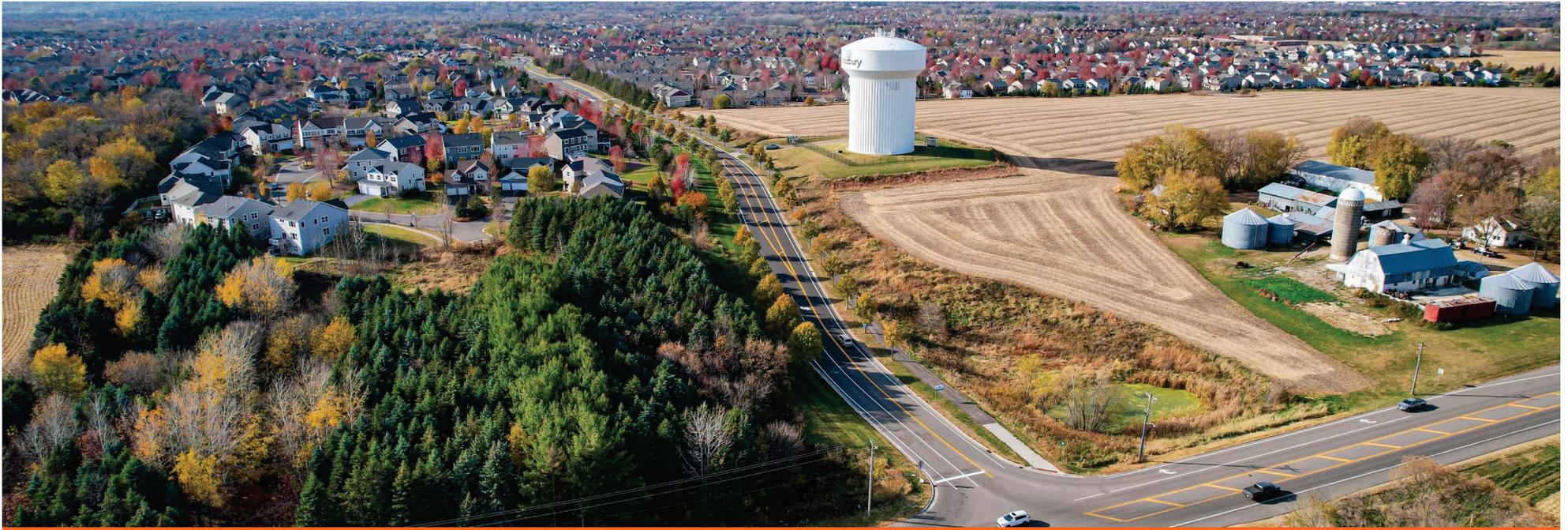
The future BC-StCR Regional Trail will be a 13 Mile east-west multiuse trail that will run through Woodbury, Afton, and Maplewood, connecting trail users to the Central Greenway, St Croix Valley Regional Trails, and Battle Creek Regional Park.

As part of the planning process, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed that included staff from the surrounding communities, including the City of Maplewood and Ramsey County. The goal for this committee is to collaborate on a shared vision of a future east-west multi-use regional trail.

By documenting project engagement, technical analysis, and conceptual recommendations, this plan prepares the project for future stages, including funding, design, and construction. Once the plan is supported by local agencies and approved by the Metropolitan Council, the trail becomes eligible for regional funding. The final draft is anticipated to be ready for consideration in spring 2026.

**Attachments:**

1. Battle Creek-St. Croix River Regional Trail Long Range Plan Presentation



# Battle Creek to St. Croix River Regional Trail Long Range Plan

Maplewood Presentation: 2/12/26



# Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Project Background
3. Trail Segment Evaluation Overview
4. Next Steps



# Project Background

# Regional Trail Long Range Plans

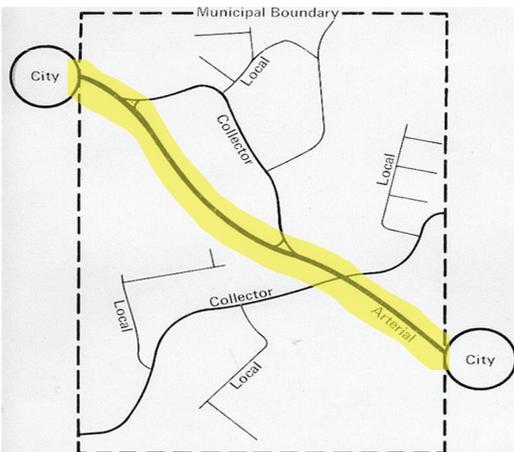


## Regional Trails

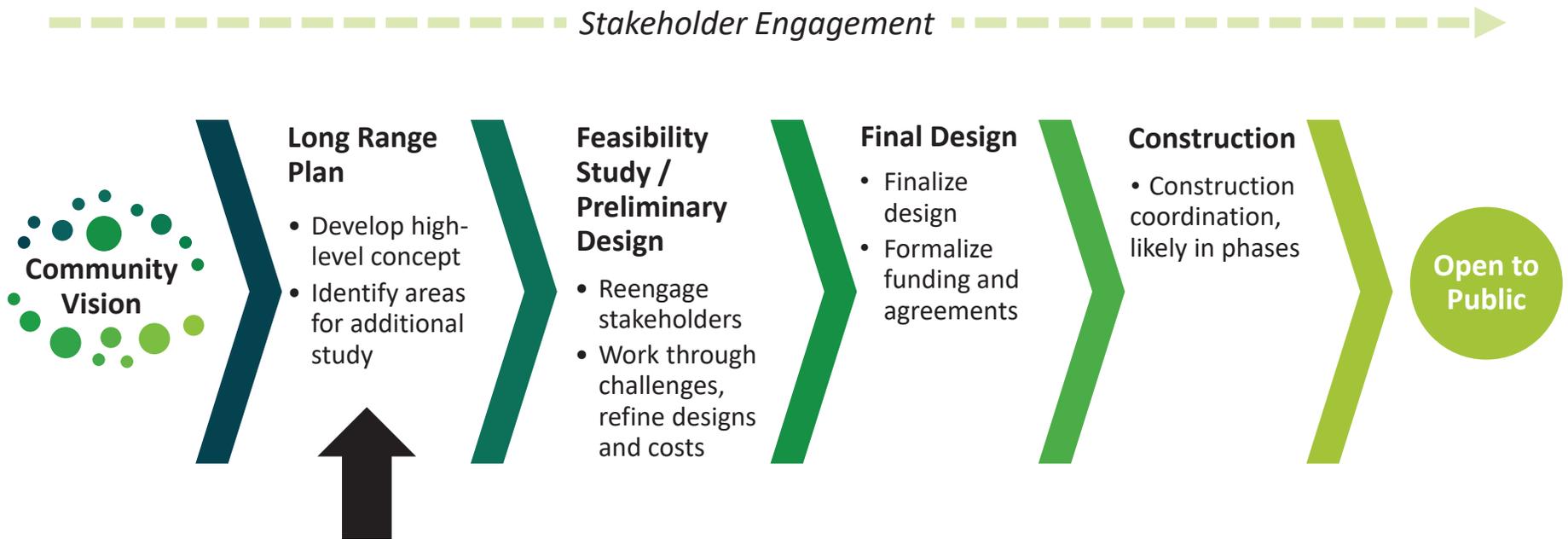
- “Tree trunks” or "highways" of system
- Standard: 10 ft wide paved trail, with 10 ft buffer
- Quality signage and amenities

## Long Range Plans

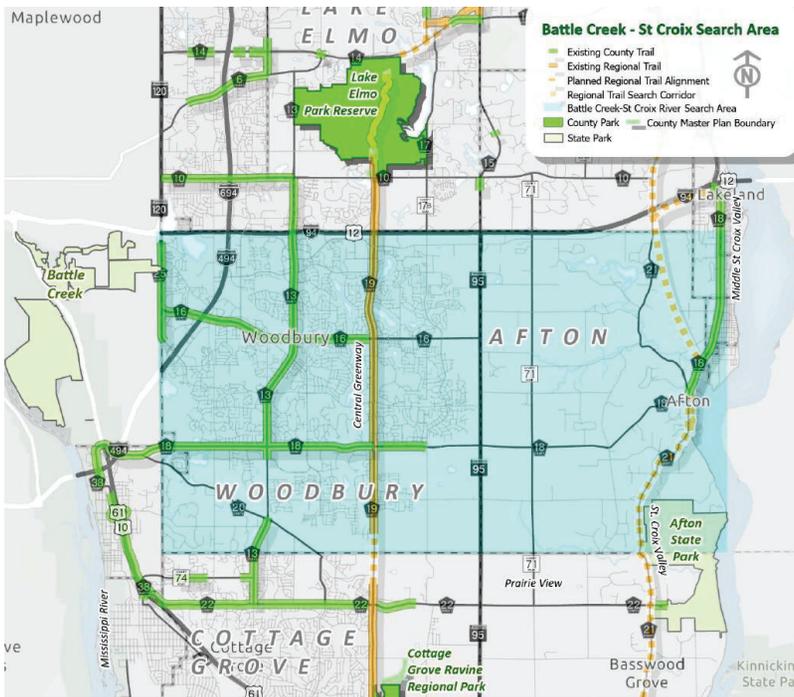
- Guidance on future alignment, development, management
- Eligible for funding
- Engagement with partners and public



# Regional Trail Project Timeline



# Corridor Background



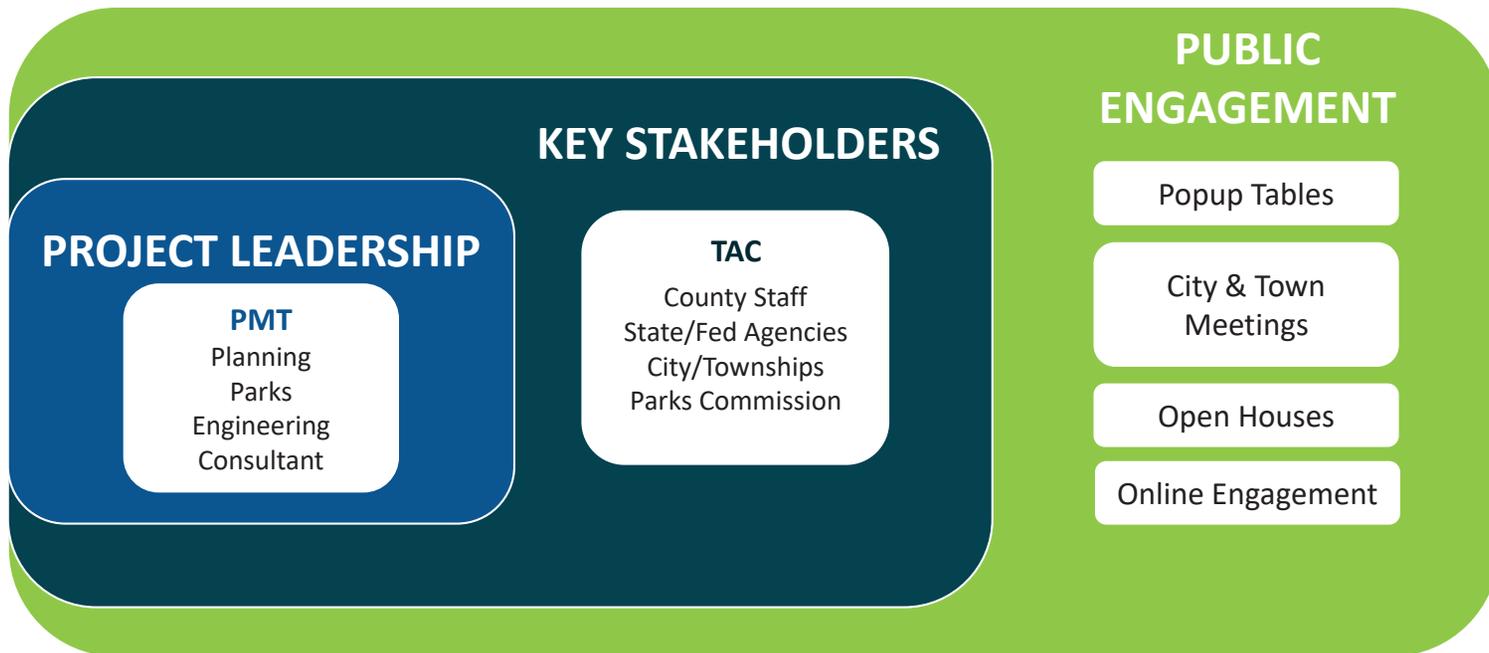
~13-mile West-East Arterial Trail

- **West:** County line
- **East:** St Croix River/Downtown Afton

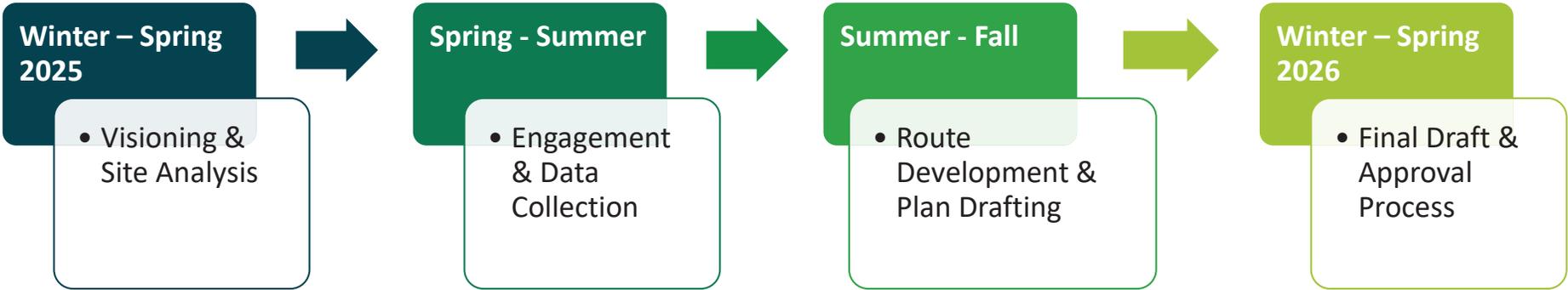
Link between Maplewood/Ramsey County -> Woodbury -> Afton

Build on existing plans/studies

# Stakeholder Engagement



# Long-Range Plan Timeline



# Engagement Opportunities



- Public Popups
  - Open House (April)
  - Gold Line Opening
  - Belwin Bison Festival Fun Run 5k
  - Afton Strawberry Festival
  - Woodbury Juneteenth
- Online Survey
- Commission engagement
- Agency staff engagement



# Engagement Takeaways



## Pop-up Comment Themes:

- Excitement for the trail
- Traffic separation, safe crossings
- Concerns about cost, impact to roads and private land

## Survey Findings:

- Factors in Trail Use - highest rated:
  - Crossings of major roadways
  - Personal safety
  - Opportunity to experience nature
  - Trail separated from vehicle traffic

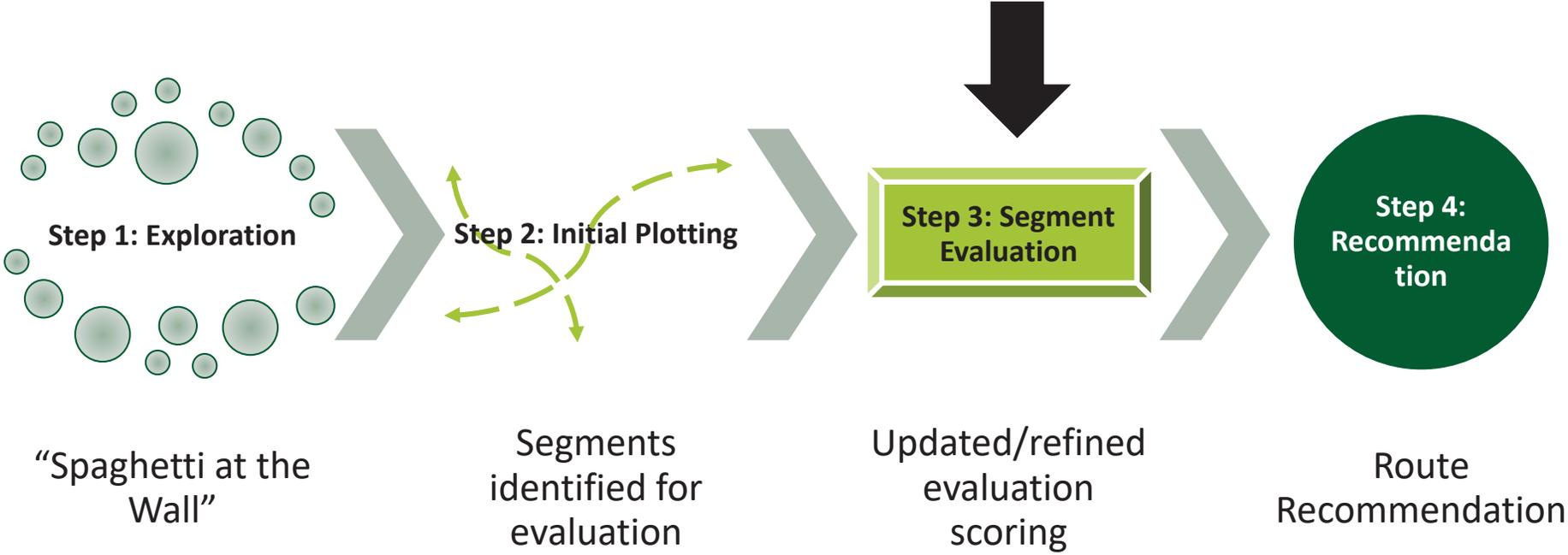
## Commission/Staff Engagements:

- Identified key opportunities and challenges
  - Future projects synergy
  - Property and engineering restrictions
  - Destinations to highlight
- Local expertise

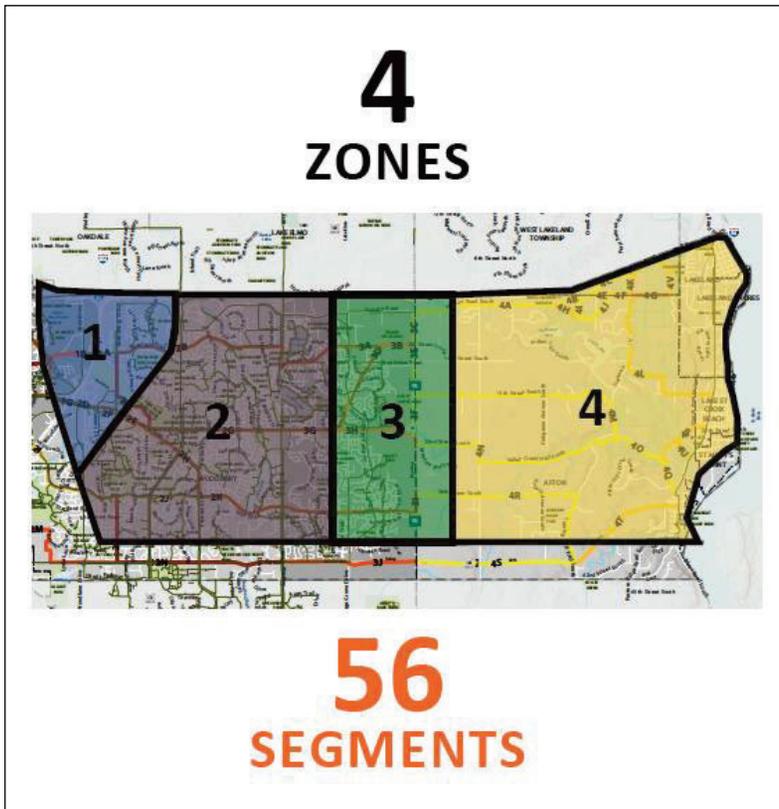


# Trail Segment Evaluation Overview

# Evaluation Process



# Introduction to Evaluation



# Evaluation Continued...

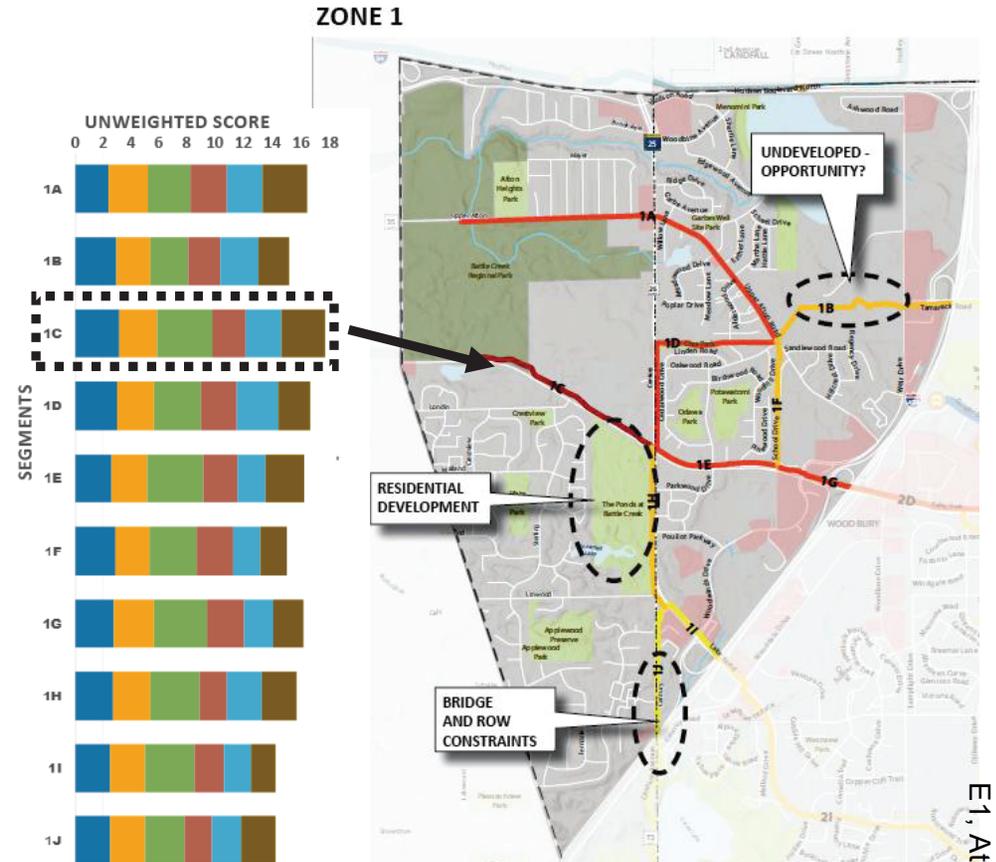


How to read the charts and maps:

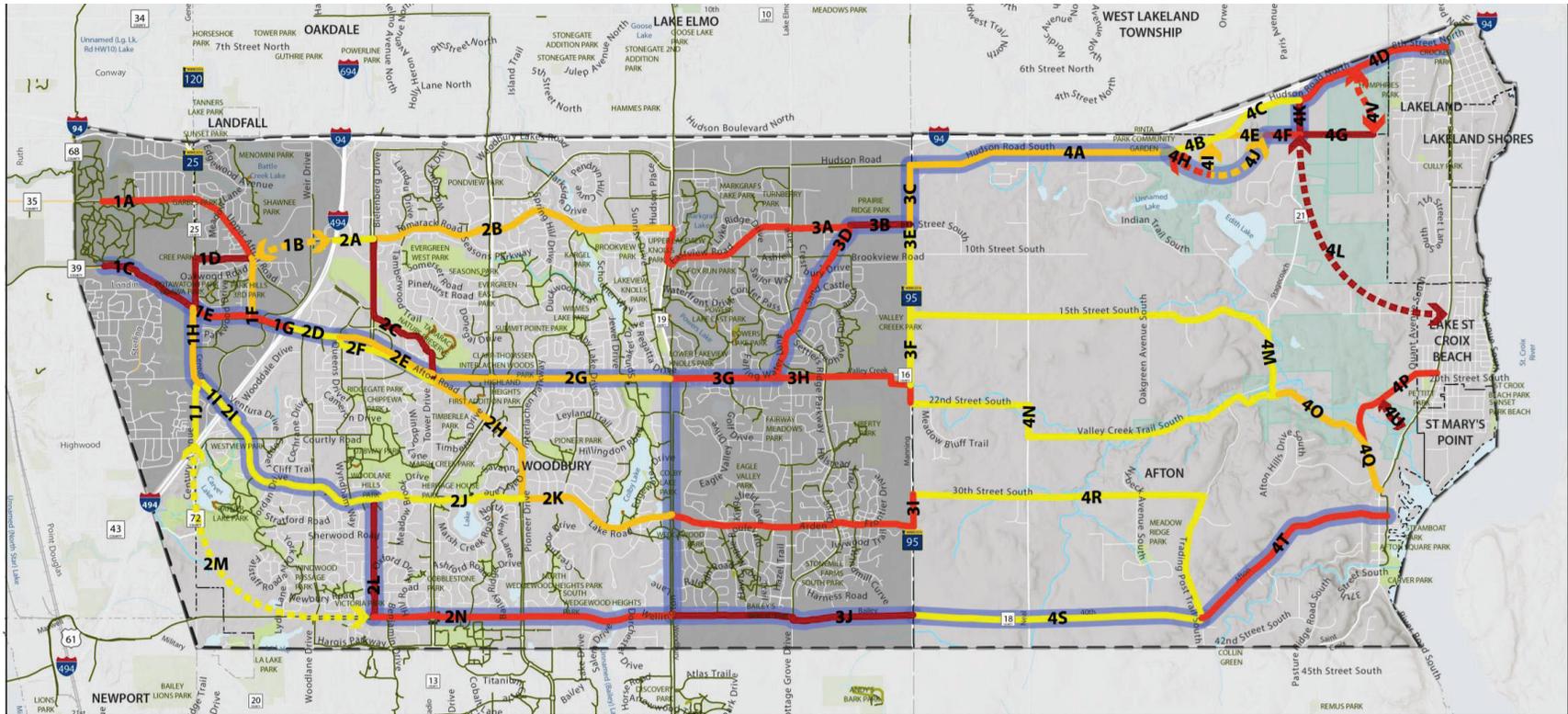
- Trail segment #s in the charts correspond to segments shown in map
- Each segment scored 1-4 on performance measures tied to Goals

## Evaluation Scores = just a guide

- Not prescriptive
- Supplemented by “boots on the ground”



# Draft Route Alternatives



	STUDY AREA		TOTAL AVERAGE SCORE		ROUTES TO BE DETERMINED		PAVED MULTI-USE TRAIL		PARKS
	MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY		LOW		ROUTE ALTERNATIVES		UNPAVED TRAIL		CITY PARKS
	RAIL LINE		LOW-MEDIUM				PIER, BRIDGE, OR BOARDWALK		STATE PARKS
			MEDIUM-HIGH				PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL		REGIONAL PARKS
			HIGH						BELWIN CONSERVANCY

# Summary Table – Project Goals



Goal Area	North Alternative	South Alternative A	South Alternative B
<b>Safety and Accessibility</b>	Mostly CR 16, with potential opportunities. Challenging intersections./crossings.	CR 16 & CR 18. Challenging intersections/crossings. Elevation challenges.	Intersections/crossings better. Elevation challenges.
<b>Equity and Inclusion</b>	Proximity to population and services in denser city areas and along I-94 corridor.	Proximity to population and services in denser city areas and downtown Afton.	Proximity to population and services in downtown Afton.
<b>Implementation</b>	Mostly existing and most within County ROW. MnDOT as cooperative partner.	Mostly existing and all within County ROW. Historically challenging east corridor.	Mostly existing but requires City road designation. Historically challenging east corridor.
<b>Connectivity</b>	Central Woodbury. Belwin Conservancy as potential destination.	Central and south Woodbury. Downtown Afton as destination.	South Woodbury. Downtown Afton as destination.
<b>Natural Resources and Resiliency</b>	Connection to local parks. Belwin Conservancy potential collaboration.	Connection to local parks. Scenic views along route.	Connection to local parks. Scenic views along route.
<b>High Quality Trail Experience</b>	Parallel to county road. Proximity to I-94	Parallel to county roads.	Parallel to city road and county road.

# Next Steps

# Next Steps



## Key Steps Remaining:

1. Refine segments based on agency input
2. Finalize Route Recommendation
3. Open House
4. Long Range Plan approvals
  1. Letters of Support
  2. Washington County Board
  3. Metropolitan Council



# Questions?

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## CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date February 23, 2026

**REPORT TO:** Michael Sable, City Manager

**REPORT FROM:** Steven Love, Public Works Director

**PRESENTER:** Steven Love, Public Works Director

**AGENDA ITEM:** Street Assessment Rate Discussion

**Action Requested:**  Motion       Discussion       Public Hearing

**Form of Action:**       Resolution       Ordinance       Contract/Agreement       Proclamation

### **Summary:**

The City must comply with Minnesota State Statute 429 when using special assessments for public improvement projects, including requirements that assessments do not exceed property benefit and that total assessments equal at least 20% of eligible project costs. Assessment rates have remained unchanged since 2009, but construction costs have increased significantly, making it increasingly difficult to meet the 20% threshold on some projects.

City staff's presentation will cover assessment rate requirements, history of assessment rates compared to construction cost, and next steps. Staff is looking for feedback from the City Council on street assessments and proposed next steps.

### **Recommended Action:**

No action is required.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Is There a Fiscal Impact?     No     Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0

    Financing source(s):     Adopted Budget     Budget Modification     New Revenue Source

Use of Reserves     Other: NA

### **Strategic Plan Relevance:**

Safety                      ◇ Focus Area: Maintain and enhance infrastructure and environmental systems

Sustainability            ◇ Focus Area:

Development            ◇ Focus Area:

Maintaining the City's street and utility infrastructure directly impacts the quality of life for those who live, work, and visit the City. Assessments are one of the funding sources that help the City deliver street improvement projects.

### **Background:**

To use special assessments for public improvement projects, the City must comply with Minnesota State Statute 429. This statute establishes two key requirements related to assessment rates.

1. The City may not assess a property for more than the benefit received. Each year, the City retains an independent appraiser to determine the benefit of a project to affected properties. That benefit amount is then compared to the maximum assessment rate established annually by the City Council. The assessment rate applied to a project is the lesser of the appraised benefit or the Council-adopted maximum rate.
2. The total assessments collected for a project must equal at least 20% of the City's eligible project costs. Eligible costs exclude funding for sewer, water, state aid, and grant contributions.

### **Cost History**

The last increase to assessment rates occurred in 2009, when the rate for full reconstruction projects increased from \$6,000 to \$6,600 per property. While assessment rates have remained unchanged since 2010, construction costs have continued to rise significantly. In 2010, full reconstruction projects were estimated at approximately \$1,772,000 per mile. By 2025, that estimate has increased to approximately \$4,500,000 per mile.

Additional factors that impact the City's ability to meet the 20% threshold include project scope and the number of assessable properties. For example, the 2025 CIP street improvement project included Prosperity Road, which has a substantial segment of roadway adjacent to Wakefield Park. This reduces the number of assessable properties by approximately half, thereby reducing the total assessment revenue available for the project and making compliance with the 20% threshold more challenging.

To help meet the 20% threshold while minimizing the financial impact on property owners, staff modified the structure of CIP projects beginning in 2024. Prior to 2024, the City typically had two separate projects, a reconstruction project and a reclamation project. In 2024, these two projects were combined into a single capital improvement project with designated Area A and Area B components. This structure allowed the City to leverage the higher assessment-to-cost ratio of the reclamation project to support overall compliance with the 20% threshold. However, as project costs continue to increase, some future Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects may become difficult to deliver at current assessment rates while still meeting the 20% threshold.

Staff recommend that, as part of the preparation of the 2027-2031 CIP, staff conduct a comprehensive review of proposed project assessment rates. The goal of the review will be to determine assessment rates that meet the 20% threshold while minimizing financial impacts to property owners. The review will include estimating future project costs, evaluating assessment rates relative to the 20% threshold for each project, developing recommendations for future assessment rates, and having the recommendations reviewed by an independent appraiser to ensure the recommended rates do not exceed the benefit to the property. The results of this review will be brought back to the City Council for consideration and direction.

### **Attachments:**

1. Street Assessment Rates Presentation

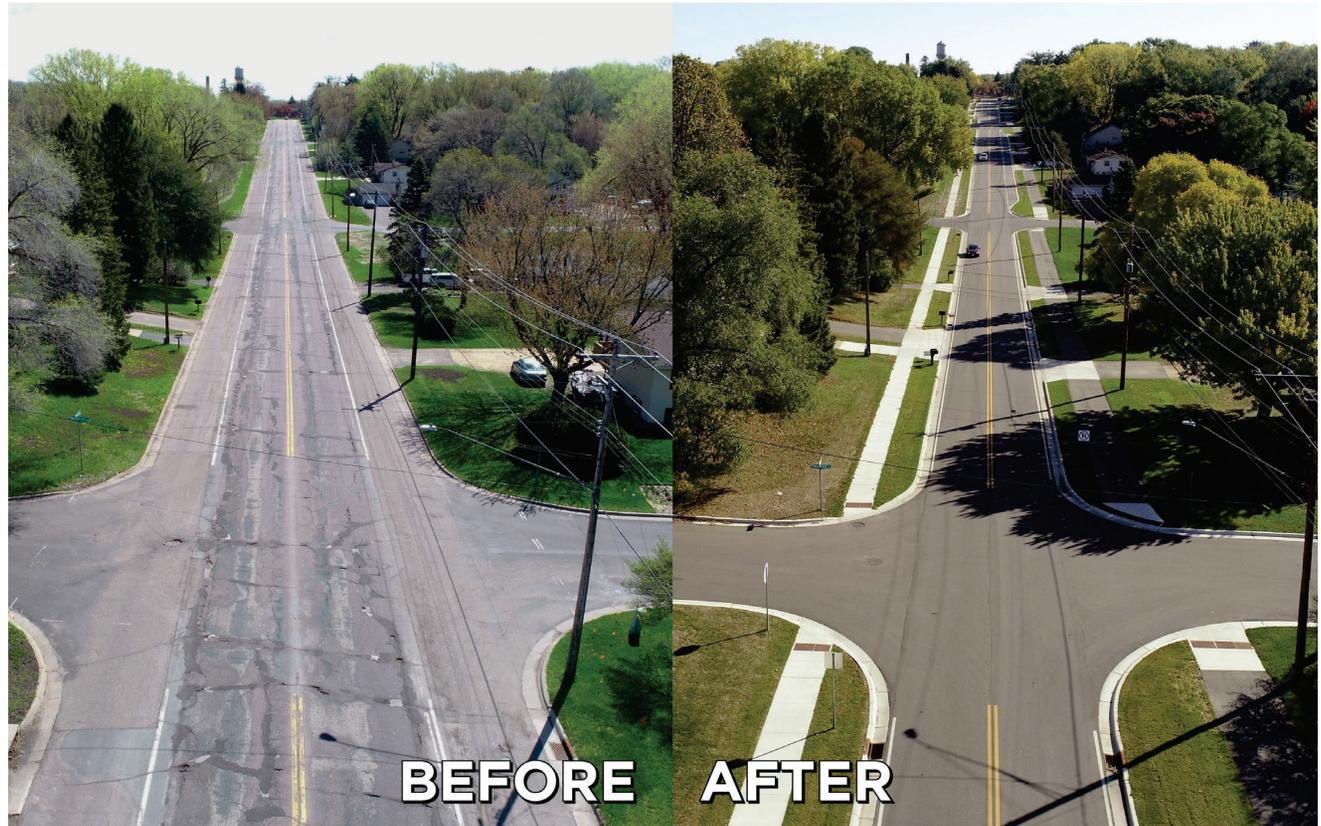
# Street Assessment Rates Review

City Council Workshop  
February 23, 2026



# Street Improvement Projects

- 135 miles of city streets
- Vast storm and sewer network
- Impact on quality of life



# State Statute 429 Assessments Requirement #1



- Maplewood’s Process
  - Council sets maximum rate
  - Independent appraisal
  - Assessment rate is the lesser of the two

**Assessment Cannot Exceed**  
*Benefit to the Property*



# State Statute 429 Assessments Requirement #2



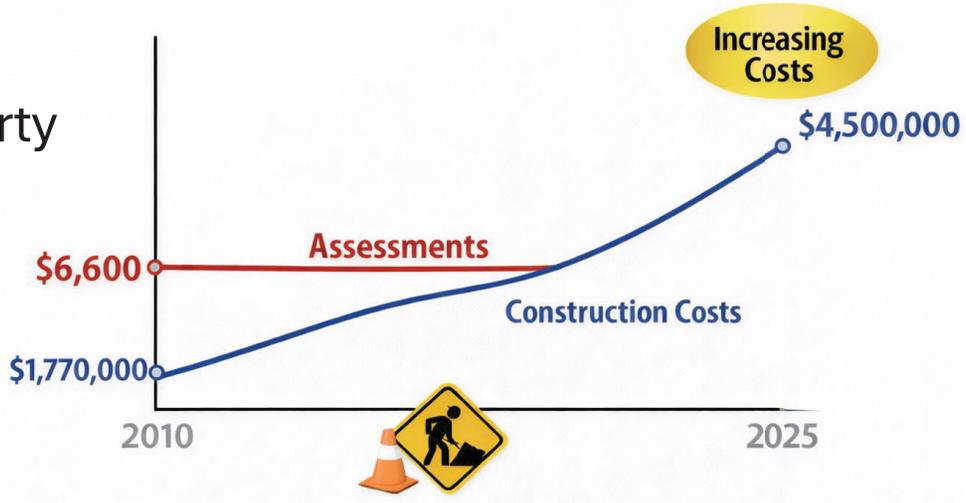
**Total Assessments Must Be  
At Least 20% of Eligible Project Costs**



# History

- Assessment Rate History
  - Last increase: 2009
  - Full reconstruction rate
    - \$6,000 to \$6,600 per property
  - No changes since 2010
- Full Reconstruction cost
  - 2010 - \$1.77 million per mile
  - 2025 - \$4.5 million per mile

## Assessments vs. Increasing Construction Costs



# Assessment Rate Challenges

- Direct challenges
  - Increased construction costs
    - Pressure on 20% threshold



# Assessment Rate Challenges

- Situational challenges
  - Project scope
    - More issues
    - Higher project costs
    - Pressure on 20% threshold
  - Number of properties
    - Fewer properties
    - Reduced total assessments
    - Pressure on 20% threshold



# Next Steps

- 2026 CIP project recommendation
  - No rate change at this time
- 2027-2031 CIP
  - Update project cost estimates
  - Review rates for 20% threshold
  - Develop options

