



Dakota County Physical Development Division Director's Update

Date: 9/13/2022

Environmental Resources

County Wetland Volunteer Program Successfully Featured at State Fair

The county's [Wetland Health Evaluation Program \(WHEP\)](#) was a featured community science program in the Eco-Experience building at the Minnesota State Fair on Sunday, Sept. 4, and Monday, Sept. 5. Staff and WHEP volunteers interacted with hundreds of youth and adults while highlighting that small animals such as insects, snails, worms, crayfish, and clams (macroinvertebrates), as well as plants living in wetlands, can inform us if the wetland is healthy or unhealthy. Kids participated in the "Macroinvertebrate Challenge" to identify the different creatures.



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Planning Underway for Organics Drop-Off Site in Apple Valley

Environmental Resources staff was invited to [Apple Valley's Informal Council Meeting](#) on August 11 to discuss the County's organics drop-off program and a potential partnership for a site to be located in Apple Valley. Council members expressed preliminary support for shared responsibilities, timing, and a possible location at the Apple Valley Central Maintenance Facility (6442 140th St W). City and County staff are finalizing details and plan to present to the County Board and City Council this fall. If approved, the site would open in 2023.

Providing and expanding opportunities for residential organics recovery aligns with the [Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan](#).

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Business Recycling Program Helps Country Club Improve Recycling and Start Food Scraps Collection

The County's Business Recycling Incentive Program assisted Somerset Country Club in Mendota Heights with improving recycling, starting organics collection and complying with commercial waste requirements. The club already had a recycling program but desired assistance to streamline collection across the property and start an organics program to collect food scraps from their restaurant kitchen.

During its first season, after making improvements, the club diverted 30,500 pounds of food scraps and an additional 4,480 pounds of recyclable material from their waste. They were able to reduce their waste service needs and save \$250 in hauling costs this season.

This effort aligns with [Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan](#) to provide support to commercial entities to improve recycling and to provide support to commercial entities to implement organics recovery within their operations.

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Cities Add Recycling Requirements to Implement County Ordinance 110

Environmental Resources Department staff is providing technical assistance to cities to update their local compliance tools to help enforce new recycling requirements. In 2021, cities with populations over 10,000 residents amended their city codes to require recycling at events and at multifamily properties with four or more units and a common waste contract, in accordance with [County Ordinance 110](#) (Solid Waste Management). City compliance tools include facility rental agreements, event permits, and multifamily licenses.

Department staff developed model language to update city event and multifamily agreements, which will assist cities in enforcing their new requirements and make it easy for applicants to understand how to comply. County staff are collaborating with cities to customize language for other types of agreements, including facility reservation forms, special event applications, and multifamily rental license applications.

This effort aligns with the [Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan](#) to provide support to municipalities to regulate recycling at multi-unit properties and to provide support to municipalities to implement event recycling requirements.

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County Adds Two New Properties to the Park System

The County acquired 42.6 acres from the Adelman Farm, LLC on August 2, 2022, as a new County Park Conservation Area in the City of Farmington. The property includes both the Vermillion River and a primary tributary, South Creek. The northern portion will eventually include a segment of the Lake Marion Regional Greenway as identified in the [Lake Marion Greenway Master Plan](#). This effort also aligns with the [Land Conservation Plan for Dakota County](#) to prioritize ecologically important areas for protection.

The eastern portion of the property is reserved for a proposed long-term Vermillion River Regional Greenway. The southern portion is reserved for a future local street and river bridge to preserve the transportation function of 220th Street/County Road 74 in anticipation of future residential development on the remaining Adelman Farm, LLC property to the east and the adjoining property to the west. Parks staff will seed native grasses and flowers in the cultivated portions of the property this fall after the crops are harvested.



The County acquired 10.2 acres from the Judith Ferguson Trust (Trust) in Randolph Township as an addition to Lake Byllesby Regional Park (LBRP) on August 31, 2022, as included in the [Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan](#).

The majority of the property, surrounded on three sides by existing park land and by State Highway 56, was used for growing hay. A preliminary natural resource management plan focuses on removing invasive tree and shrub species from wooded areas and restoring native grasses and flowers to the open areas to compliment existing park management.

The Ferguson family once owned what is now known as Echo Point in LBRP. They still own considerable land to the west, including portions of Chub Creek located within the future park boundary. The property has also been identified as a possible location for a portion of the Mill Towns State Trail.



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Parks, Facilities, and Fleet Management

Minnesota Historical Society Grants



The Parks department has received two grants from the Minnesota Historical Society through the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage small grant program to complete interpretive nodes along the greenway system. The two grants, totaling \$20,000 will enable the Parks department to further complete the visions outlined in the [Minnesota River Greenway Interpretive Plan](#) and the [Mississippi River Greenway Interpretive Plan](#). The first node located near the Wakota Bridge in South St. Paul along the Mississippi River Greenway will include signage connecting visitors to the story of the Wakota Bridge, the historic ferry crossing once located there, and the natural history of the river itself. The second node located at the Lone Oak Trailhead along the Minnesota River Greenway in Eagan will share the importance of the Minnesota River watershed, as well as the historic Minnesota Valley Railroad with trailhead visitors.

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Upcoming Events and Projects

Tentative Timeframe	Event/Topic	Department
Q3 (2022) - Q1 (2023)	Conduct Law Enforcement Center Renovations	PFF
Q3 (2022) - Q1 (2023)	Design Guild Crisis Center	PFF
Q3-Q4 (2022)	Construct Lawshe Museum Updates	PFF
Q3-Q4 (2022)	Recycling Zone II Site Search	PFF/Env Res
Q3-Q4 (2022)	Upgrade Law Enforcement Center 3100/7100 Cell Blocks	PFF
Q4 (2022)	Begin Veterans Memorial Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan Development	PFF/Planning

Q4 (2022)	Complete Host Fee Agreements	Environmental Resources
Q4 (2022)	Complete WSC Copper Roof Replacement	PFF
Q4 (2022)	Construct SLPR Bison Parking Lot	PFF
Q4 (2022)	Develop Greenway Wayfinding Standard	Planning/PFF
Q4 (2022)	Finalize the Greenway Wayfinding-Signage Guidelines	PFF/Planning
Q4 (2022)	Finalize the North Creek Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan	PFF/Planning
Q4 (2022)	Finalize the Veterans Memorial Greenway Interpretive Plan	PFF/Planning
Q4 (2022)	Preliminary Design of CR 46 between TH 3 and TH 52	Transportation

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Transportation

No Updates

Administration

No Updates