

State Bonding for Metropolitan Regional Park System



Washington County requests **\$20 million in state funds for capital projects** within the Metropolitan Regional Park System.

Issue At-A-Glance

- The Metropolitan Regional Parks System is a highly utilized resource, receiving approximately 65.7 million visitors in 2024.
- Washington County depends on state bonding to the regional parks system for ongoing capital improvements. This provides the funding for Washington County to address pertinent needs within the regional parks and trails system.
- Every \$3 of state bonding to the Metropolitan Council’s regional park system leverages \$2 of additional Metropolitan Council funding up to \$10 million. Of that total, Washington County would receive 7% for its regional parks.
- Washington County has several proposed projects in 2026-2027 that rely on regional park system bonding for implementation, including improvements to Big Marine Park Reserve, Point Douglas Regional Trail, and St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park.

Support

- Metropolitan Council
- The 10 partnering regional park implementing agencies.

Previous Considerations

This is a biennial request necessary to fund our regional parks system. Metropolitan regional parks did not receive funding in 2024 or 2025.

No Action

If the requested state bonding is not provided, the proposed projects will either not proceed or will be scaled back significantly.

Financial Implications

- **State of Minnesota: \$20 million**
- Metropolitan Council Match (if funded): \$10 million

Total Requested Investment: \$30 million

Project Examples

Point Douglas Regional Trail



Updates to the existing trailhead and restroom facilities.

St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park



Campground upgrades.

