

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Designation Application

General Section

Designation Application #: 15-096D Date Submitted: 06/29/2015

Park or Trail Name: Barn Bluff Park

District #: 6 Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 44.5700 Longitude: -92.5258

Location Description:

Barn Bluff is located within the City of Red Wing in Goodhue County, Minnesota in the NW1/4 and the NE1/4 of Section 29 and the NE1/4 of Section 30 of Township 113N, Range 14W (Figure 3). Barn Bluff is bounded by downtown Red Wing and US TH 61 and US TH 63 on the south and southwest. The Canadian Pacific Railway mainline and Mississippi River form northern boundary.

Lead Applicant Organization: City of Red wing

Lead Contact First Name: Brian Last Name: Peterson

Mailing Address: 315 4th Street West

City: Red Wing State: MN Zip: 55066

Phone: 651-385-3617 Email: Brian.Peterson@ci.red-wing.mn.us

Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

Description Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Total proposed acreage:

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

Barn Bluff is a renowned natural geologic feature of the upper Mississippi River Valley. The 48 plus acre park is historically significant for its geology and its association with prehistoric and historic native peoples, early Euro American exploration of the Mississippi River and the pioneer period of Minnesota. Barn Bluff was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 3, 1990. Barn Bluff rises approximately 350 feet from the valley floor. The park borders downtown Red Wing, the Mississippi

River and US TH 61/63. Access to the park trails is from a local street (5th St. East) at the eastern toe of the bluff. The land form of Barn Bluff was created as the last glaciations receded from Minnesota and the present Mississippi River channel was made. Barn Bluff was formed due to its cap of Oneota Dolomite that resisted erosion during periods of glacial melt. The primary habitat characteristics of the park are classified as prairie, oak savanna, oak grove, mixed species deciduous forest and mature maple-basswood forest. Special features include: the western and eastern overlooks, primitive rock climbing within abandoned limestone quarry areas; the NRHP listed Carlson Lime Kiln, Native American Burial Mounds and the exposed portion of the Red Wing Fault and other geologic features of the Bluff. Barn Bluff is an isolated geologic prominence and as such, is a unique park within the region. Barn Bluff allows for low-impact recreation within a natural, historic landscape in an urban, accessible location and offers users unlimited views of the surrounding landscape. It is a destination for recreational users from throughout the region. The user groups that take advantage of the park include: casual tourists, daily walkers, rock climbers, nature enthusiasts, photographers, and students of geology, ecology, history and the environment. The park has five natural trail segments of varying difficulty. Due to erosion and safety concerns, the North Trail is currently closed. The hiking trails provide access to the diverse natural environments of the bluff and offer wilderness and nature treks leading to unlimited view sheds of Red Wing and the Mississippi River Valley. Other facilities include parking and a kiosk located at the East Kiwanis Stairway. Benches are provided along the two stairways and the West Overlook. Interpretive markers, plaques, and signage are situated in various locations. The Barn Bluff Park is one of the city's four Mississippi River waterfront parks. The park is within close proximity to Levee Park and Covill Park. Future development of the Mississippi River Walk Trail will align with the northern face of the park abutting the River with a trail/park head planned in combination with parking. The River Walk trail will complete a trail network connecting all of Red Wing's riverfront parks and historic downtown to the regional trail system that includes the Goodhue Pioneer State Trail and the Cannon Valley Regional Trail.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
 - Land Acquisition
 - Status:
 - Percentage of Land Acquired:
 - Development Status
 - No Development
 - Some Development, but more Proposed
 - New Facilities Proposed
 - Existing Facilities to be Upgraded
 - Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

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| Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park | |
| Existing Facility List | Proposed Facility List |
| Hiking Trails (natural), Climbing (natural/man-made), Natural-surfaced trail - user created, Natural-surfaced trail - purpose built for specific use, Underdeveloped natural-surfaced trail - user created, Trailhead information kiosks, Benches along trail, parking is undeveloped, and along city street | Picnicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Climbing (natural/man-made), Designated natural-surfaced trail - purpose built for specific use, Natural-surfaced trail - purpose built for specific use, Trailhead parking, Trailhead information kiosks, Trailhead restrooms, Benches along trail, Picnic shelters at trailhead, safety and parking enhancement with a combination Park/Trial Head planned |

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: No Master Plan is Available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), with appendices, completed January 2015. The CLR completed for Barn Bluff will provide supplementary guidance for the Barn Bluff Park Master Plan providing two important functions: it is a treatment document for cultural landscapes and providing the city a tool for long-term management of the park's landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems, and use when that use contributes to the historical significance of Barn Bluff. Appendix B within the CLR - Archeology Report for the G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln completed in September 2014. This report is an intensive literature search and archaeological investigation of the G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln in support of the Historic Structure Report (HSR) prepared for the kiln. The purpose of the archaeological investigations was to define the extent of archaeological features related to the G. A. Carlson Kiln and associated lime works. Appendix D within the CLR - Habitat Management Plan, completed in conjunction with the USFWS in 2014. The Habitat Management Plan is a working document that will assist the city in its decision making process and provide guidance for the management of the park's habitat that is consistent for habitat management. Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln completed in January 2015. The HSR is distinct preservation and rehabilitation tool that thoroughly documents the history and material elements of the NRHP listed G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln. The report provides existing condition information and gives the city general recommendations necessary to responsibly deal with existing issues and concerns about the structure in consideration of its current and potential adaptive use(s).

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: Red Wing is known for its enviable natural environment. Over the years the city has ranked high as a distinctive destination and natural area within several National and International publications. The beauty of the bluffs and the river continue to draw people from across the world to Red Wing. Barn Bluff exists because of its cap of Oneota Dolomite stone. Unlike the other bluffs in the upper Hiawatha Valley, Barn Bluff is totally isolated and is easily accessible and an entirely natural public park. Barn Bluff is a geological feature of Minnesota that is known throughout the Midwest. With proper planning and completion of the Master Plan, there are no doubts the planned improvements and potential upgrades will broaden the user type's utilizing the park and the park facilities. Discussion items related to improvements, renovations, and stabilization issues are presented within the attached Cultural Landscape Report, Habitat Management Plan and Historic Structure Report for the G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln. In addition to these preservation elements, the city foresees other improvements and modifications. Safety modifications and improvements to the rustic north trail are of primary importance. The trail segment is very popular due to its proximity to the Mississippi and the wildlife and fauna present in the native deciduous forest. Bringing elements that celebrate the Native American culture and presence will provide an additional historical educational perspective to the park. Incorporating a sanctioned rock climbing experience would develop this recreational experience. In conjunction with the planned River Walk Trail, construction of a joint use Park Visitor Area/Trailhead with ample parking and green space will enhance the attraction of a broad range of park users.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: The singular, monolithic land form of Barn Bluff is the result of its geological formation. Barn Bluff is unique unto itself by its presence in the River Valley. Barn Bluff has been Red Wing's and the region's most recognizable landmark for Euro Americans since the early exploration days of Minnesota and centuries for Native Americans. Barn Bluff was placed on The National Register of Historic Places on August 8, 1990. Several abandoned quarries and the G.A. Carlson Lime Kiln (at the northeast corner of the bluff) remain as reminders of Red Wing's limestone industry within the park boundaries. The G.A. Carlson Lime Kiln was placed on The National Register of Historic Places on September 27, 1976. From the mid-1800's to 1908, stone from Barn Bluff was used as a building material, rip-rap by the railroad, and for the production of lime. Although this industry was important to the local economy at the time, residents protested the resulting defacing of the bluff and eventually saved Barn Bluff in 1910. Now, for over 100 years, the city has persevered to keep the park in its natural state.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Barn Bluff Park is located prominently in the downtown of the city. Red Wing is an established regional economic center and tourist destination. In addition, having the only available interstate bridge crossing the Mississippi River within 30 miles up or down river adds to the regional significance of the city. Future riverfront projects within the city's River Town Renaissance vision will enhance Red Wing stature as a premier river town in Minnesota and will create new, added destination stops by regional and out of area tourist visitors. In particular, the development of the River Walk Trail, which will be a segment of the National Mississippi River Trail (MRT), will connect Barn Bluff to the multi-use, 'down river', Covill Park and will complete a riverfront trail network connecting the upriver parks, the historic downtown, the Goodhue Pioneer State Trail and the Cannon Valley Regional Trail. In addition to eventually

becoming a segment of the broader MRT system, the riverfront trail development will also contribute to a vital network of bike lanes and sidewalks connecting Red Wing neighborhoods to the riverfront parks and to downtown. Also as part of the Renaissance, development of transient/riverboat dockage and Levee Park promenade improvements will increase awareness of Barn Bluff. Red Wing is a 'Port of Call' for multiple riverboat cruise lines during the Upper Mississippi Riverboat cruise season. The addition of Viking Cruise Lines making Red Wing a future stop will bolster Red Wing as a destination stop, increasing Barn Bluff Park and other city riverfront parks usage.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: Barn Bluff Park is partially developed, with 4 designated trail areas and two partially developed look-out areas. The park features natural hiking trails with scenic overlooks and views of the Hiawatha Valley; rock climbing areas, natural areas, archeologically significant areas and historic landmarks. As a purely walking and hiking park, the experience users receive is unattainable in an urban setting, at a city public park, within the region. Barn Bluff Park complements the other natural areas in the Red Wing area by providing unmatched view sheds while in a natural environment of original prairie, oak savannah, oak grove, mixed species deciduous forest and a mature maple-basswood forest. The primitive rock quarry areas in particular are utilized by experienced rock climbers. The shear faces of the quarry walls provide a recreational opportunity in a public park that is lacking in the region. The presence of Native American burial mounds and the overall historical significance of Barn Bluff and individually, the Carlson Limestone Kiln, provide an opportunity to provide an interpretive educational experience for users in a city public park setting that does not presently exist in the region.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

| Type | Description |
|--------------|---|
| Other | Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the G. A. Carlson Lime Kiln completed in January 2015. The HSR is distinct preservation and rehabilitation tool that thoroughly documents the history and material elements of the NRHP listed Carlson Lime Kiln. |
| Other | Cultural Landscape Report (CLR), with appendixes completed January 2015. The CLR completed for Barn Bluff (CLR) will provide supplementary guidance for the Barn Bluff Park Master Plan providing two important functions: it is a treatment document for cultural landscapes and providing the city a tool for long-term management of the park's landscape's physical attributes, biotic systems, and use when that use contributes to the historical significance of Barn Bluff. |
| Resolution | Authorizing Resolution 6850 |
| Location Map | Barn Bluff Location and Trail Map |
| Location Map | Region View Red Wing-Parks and Trails |
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