

## Purpose of the Plan

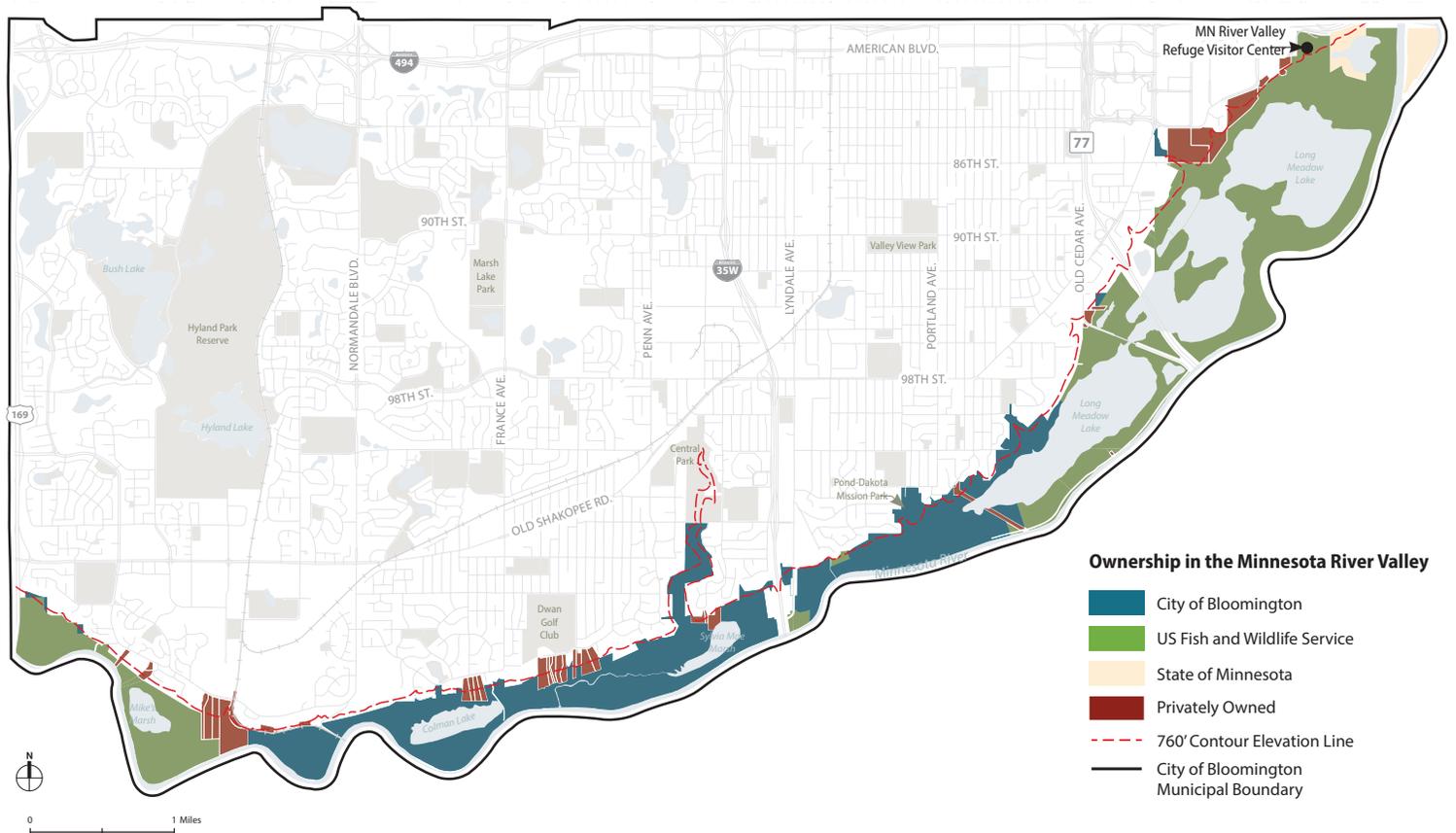
The purpose of the City of Bloomington’s Minnesota River Valley Master Plan is to create an implementation framework to enhance awareness and access to the Minnesota River Valley within the City of Bloomington while providing ongoing environmental protection and stewardship. The Plan focuses on city-owned land within the Valley.

## Vision Statement

To enhance awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of the Minnesota River Valley by ensuring that city-owned land in the Valley is used and managed in a manner that balances resource preservation with appropriate access and utilization.

## Goals

1. **Enhance access to recreational opportunities**
2. **Increase awareness and understanding**
3. **Improve utilization of land and resources**
4. **Ensure protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources**



Coleman Lake (left);  
Volunteers remove  
invasive species (right)



## PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### System Plans & Process and Management Tasks

Plan or Task	Why the Plan is needed
<b>Master Trail Plan</b>	To assess existing trails and trail heads, plan for future trail connections to local and regional trails, and identify priorities for improvements.
<b>Master Sign Plan</b>	Signs in the Valley often lack visual coherency and are unwelcoming. Also, many are old and deteriorating. The City needs a sign plan to develop guidelines for sign design and content and to establish a plan for sign replacement.
<b>Resource Protection Plan</b>	The Minnesota River Valley contains a vast number of native plant and animal communities, unique soils, and numerous cultural and historic resources. A Valley-wide plan is needed to identify best management practices and set priorities to ensure stewardship of these resources.
<b>Comprehensive Maintenance Plan</b>	Regular maintenance of City facilities will improve utilization of the Valley and is an important part of protection and preservation. The City needs a comprehensive maintenance plan for the Valley to identify the level of funding needed for maintenance, to ensure funds are spent strategically, and to establish routine maintenance schedules.
<b>Update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</b>	Under the MOU, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages a portion of the City owned land in the Valley. The MOU was last updated in 1997. The update is needed to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Address recent changes in the Valley (i.e. Old Cedar Bridge reconstruction, etc.).</li> <li>2. Clearly define City and U.S. Fish and Wildlife roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>3. Address differences between City and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service policies and regulations.</li> </ol>
<b>Pursue Metropolitan Regional Parks Preserve designation</b>	The designation promotes regional awareness of the facility, provides additional conservation protection as well as additional funding.
<b>Leverage existing communication tools to promote awareness of the Valley</b>	The City has an established communication network (i.e. Bloomington Briefing, City website, etc.). Using these networks to consistently promote the Valley will increase resident awareness and understanding of this resource.
<b>Strengthen partnerships with agencies and interest groups</b>	Partner agencies and interest groups provide important services in the Valley such as trail maintenance and invasive species removal. Strengthening partnerships will provide more opportunities for future collaboration.

### Ongoing Projects

The City is currently engaged in several projects that will directly shape the recommended System Plans and Process and Management Tasks. Completing these projects before starting on other priorities makes practical sense. Those projects are:

#### **Park Asset Inventory:**

The results of this inventory will be used to prioritize and budget for physical improvements at specific locations in the Valley.

**Expected completion:** Late Fall 2015

#### **Old Cedar Avenue Bridge:**

This trailhead serves as a convergence point for the State Trail, the Intercity Regional Trail, and Refuge trails. As a major trailhead, it can serve as a model for improvements to other Valley trailheads - particularly regarding signage.

**Expected completion:** Fall 2016

#### **Minnesota Valley State Trail:**

The MN DNR is in the process of developing plans that will identify the defined alignment of the State Trail and its design characteristics. The alignment of this major facility will influence the design and location of connecting trails.

### Questions or Comments?

#### **Find the draft plan and other information on our website:**

[www.bloomingtonmn.gov/  
minnesota-river-valley-master-plan](http://www.bloomingtonmn.gov/minnesota-river-valley-master-plan)

#### **Or contact us directly:**

**Randy Quale**

Parks and Recreation Manager  
952-563-8876

**Julie Farnham**

Senior Planner  
952-563-4739

**Email:** [MNRVMPcomments@bloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:MNRVMPcomments@bloomingtonMN.gov)

### Want more information on the Minnesota Valley State Trail?

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is the State Trail project lead agency. Questions on the State Trail should be directed to:

**Cynthia Wheeler**

Project Manager  
[cynthia.wheeler@state.mn.us](mailto:cynthia.wheeler@state.mn.us)