



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2024 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2024-094

Proposal Title: Zumbro River Regional Water Trail

Project Manager Information

Name: Sunny Bjorklund Schultz

Organization: City of Oronoco

Office Telephone: (507) 367-4440

Email: sunny@oronoco.com

Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Completion of the Master Plan for the Zumbro River Regional Water Trail (ZRRWT). Roughly 150 miles of navigable waters that wind through a diverse landscape before joining the Mississippi River.

Funds Requested: \$170,000

Proposed Project Completion: July 31, 2025

LCCMR Funding Category: Small Projects (H)

Secondary Category: Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation (G)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Region(s): SE

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): SE

When will the work impact occur?

In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

The ZRRWT will create an experience connecting people between land and river. The thirteen river communities will strengthen their connections by enhancing existing and creating new facilities designed to accommodate multiple user groups. A Master Plan strategy would analyze existing amenities, develop connections from towns to natural features, and improve user experience. Currently, most local residents and visitors don't know how to access the river or existing amenities, nor is the river recognized for the larger network of recreational opportunities that exist.

Paddlers connect to the river from towns and state parks which can be strengthened through better connections from the water and trails. Existing public access points are a good start to create better experiences along the trail, but more access facilities will need to be developed to fill gaps. Trailhead signage and interpretation areas are needed to create a uniform understanding of locations and distances to regional destinations. Development of destinations will create more opportunities for local community partnerships to program river events, benefiting an active lifestyle for residents and visitors. Many county, city and resident partners are on board with developing these facilities. In initial discussions, the Mn/DNR supports the regional approach to the trail.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

- Formally establish a Joint Powers Board to ensure proper alignment with the identified primary goals for this project.
- Creation of a Master Plan will ensure the best level of financial investment in existing and new river access sites.

The Master Plan will include:

- o Develop signage and maps which unify the trail and encourage exploration.
- o Enhance sites to provide greater river accessibility for people of all ages, abilities, and income levels.
- o Create new river access locations with various amenities in areas found to be underserved or a gap in the system.
- o Stimulate the local economy of towns and businesses along the river. Many of the communities along the river offer services for people using the trails.
- o The Mayo Clinic in Rochester is a regional draw for young professionals and brings patients and their families to the region. The ZRRWT would create a cost-efficient opportunity for these people to experience the beauty of the Minnesota landscape.
- o The ZRRWT is a regional asset to Minnesota that will draw users from greater distances, as well as providing recreational activities for local communities.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

The outcomes of this project include a renewed, positive identity for the region's environmental assets, and increased opportunities to promote and educate users on the necessity to maintain our sensitive environments. Through these education opportunities, the identity of the Zumbro River will be positively impacted, and more care will be given to the health of the watershed. The efforts of this project will create new and enhance the existing regionalized facilities along the river to help increase the river trails usage and promote regional economic development. The Master Plan will help identify the best uses and locations for future investments.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Program Management & Joint Powers Board

Activity Budget: \$30,000

Activity Description:

Creation of Joint Powers Board composed of stakeholder members from Counties and Cities identified herein. The Joint Powers Board would be formally adopted to have authority over the development of the master plan: evaluating criteria, setting deadlines, selecting intervention areas, and participating in engagement events; as well as future phases of the ZRRWT. The board members would be chosen on a volunteer basis and be responsible for representing the best interests of their represented community. The Board would develop their own governance materials, roles, and responsibilities therein.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Confirmation of participating members, roles and responsibilities	August 31, 2024
Creation of governance materials	September 30, 2024
Adoption of Joint Powers Board	September 30, 2024

Activity 2: Stakeholder Engagement & Master Planning

Activity Budget: \$140,000

Activity Description:

This activity will engage the various local and regional stakeholders for input and create the criteria for site evaluation and river site access investment recommendations. This also includes travel mileage within Minnesota for site reviews and project meetings and printing/publishing costs for public engagement and communications.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Creation of evaluation criteria to evaluate existing river sites	November 30, 2024
Identification of potential new river sites to develop	January 31, 2025
Stakeholder engagement and review of sites	February 28, 2025
Draft Master Plan review by stakeholders	May 31, 2025
Approval and adoption of final Master Plan document	June 30, 2025
Project Completion- this phase	July 31, 2025

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Dodge	County	Sponsor Local Government Unit (LGU) Contribution: \$10,000	No
Goodhue	County	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$14,000	No
Olmsted	County	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$14,000	No
Wabasha	County	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Hammond	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Kasson	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$5,154	No
Mantorville	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Mazeppa	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Milville	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Oronoco	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Pine Island	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Rochester	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Zumbro Falls	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Zumbrota	City	Sponsor (LGU) Contribution: \$154	No
Zumbro Watershed	Watershed District	Sponsor Contribution: \$9,551	No
Lake Zumbro Improvement Association	Homeowners Association	Sponsor Contribution: \$154	No
People's Energy Cooperative	Electric Utility Company	Sponsor Contribution: \$4,600	No

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

As the 150-mile ZRRWT corridor overlaps four counties and multiple jurisdictions, a Joint Power Board is most appropriate to coordinate and oversee guidance and implementation of various projects. If funds are awarded, the Joint Powers Board will be created and guide the development and recommendations identified in the Master Plan and oversee the future phased implementation of enhanced and developed project sites. The Master Plan will include potential funding sources for the various projects, including local and state funds, such as DNR, LCCMR, and Minnesota bonding, along with federal grant funding.

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Sunny Bjorklund Schultz

Job Title: City Administrator

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Sunny Bjorklund Schultz is a management professional educated and experienced in areas of administration, finance, law, and real estate. Sunny comes to the City of Oronoco with several years' experience managing local, state, and federal grant awards across public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Sunny's first foray into the public sector was as a finance/accounting contractor brought into the City of Carver to manage developer escrows and a significant FEMA grant award after the Minnesota River flooded its banks in the city. Since then, she has worked in cities of Jordan, Greenfield, Starbuck, Richmond, and now in Oronoco developing and managing general fund budgets of \$1,000,000 and more, as well as other city-related enterprise funds and budgets in like amounts. She has similar experience with budgets in her work with private and nonprofit entities.

Sunny has served as administrative lead and/or finance director for several entities. Clients, residents, colleagues, and stakeholders have benefitted from Sunny's leadership, eye for detail, and willingness to delve into areas of new learning to move leaders, organizations, and projects forward.

Sunny's understanding of contract legalese, regulations, and compliance issues has been honed through education and experience as a paralegal, former real estate broker, contract/compliance officer, and project manager. Her ability to view and voice issues from public, private, and nonprofit perspectives is advantageous in building partnerships and bringing about consensus among partners and sometimes competing interests.

Organization: City of Oronoco

Organization Description:

Local Government Unit. Oronoco is a city in Olmsted County, Minnesota, along the Middle Fork of the Zumbro River. The population was 1,802 at the 2020 census.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
							Sub Total	-
Contracts and Services								
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Joint Powers Board, Program Management, legal fees and start-up coordination				-		\$30,000
TBD	Professional or Technical Service Contract	Program/Project Management; working w/ Joint Powers Board on governance and creation; assessment phasing recommendations; completing Master Plan.				-		\$130,000
							Sub Total	\$160,000
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-
Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Minimum of 2 trips, 200 miles each for 2-5 people	Site/field reconnaissance and data collection for site locations; stakeholder/steering board meetings; public engagement					\$5,000
							Sub Total	\$5,000

Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Plotting/mounting oversized color graphics/boards	For public presentations and communications with stakeholder groups					\$5,000
							Sub Total	\$5,000
Other Expenses								
							Sub Total	-
							Grand Total	\$170,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
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Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
Cash	Initial programming non-LCCMR funding received to date. See Project Partners and Collaborators section.	Initial planning and program coordination.	Secured	\$58,855
			Non State Sub Total	\$58,855
			Funds Total	\$58,855

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [0c65fcb6-b22.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

A map of the Zumbro river across the four counties. Identified are areas of current access, including those managed by the MnDNR, and potential new access points. The map also displays: cities, the Zumbro River watershed, parks, and existing state biking trails. Also, eight photos of existing kayak access points....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
LCCMR Board Resolution 2023-09 Approval Letter (Oronoco)	06f4ec66-aab.pdf

Optional Attachments

Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Coverletter	bf9df4a5-84d.pdf
County Resolutions	02dd7f93-743.pdf
City Resolutions	7722507b-90c.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, or sale of products and assets?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other capital asset costing \$10,000 or more?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services, as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7?

No