Information Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting Date: November 5, 2026

Topic

Proposed Mississippi River Regional Trail Long-Range Plan Amendment and Fridley Area Lift Station

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stats. §§ 473.145 and 473.147
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst, Community Development (651-602-1361)
	Tim Wedin, Assistant Manager, Environmental Services (651-602-4571)
Divisions/Departments:	Community Development / Regional Parks and Trails
	Environmental Services / Interceptor Engineering

Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed at this time.

Background

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES), operator of the metro-area wastewater collection and treatment system, plans to build a new lift station in Fridley. Lift stations pump wastewater from the local wastewater collection system into the Met Council regional sanitary sewer system. A series of regional sewers then conveys the wastewater to the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plan in St. Paul.

The existing lift station in Brooklyn Park is over 50 years old and has reached the end of its useful life. It lacks adequate storage, leading to sewer backups and odors. This site will be used as an odor control facility and to access pipes that cross the Mississippi River.

The new lift station will be located on the east side of the Mississippi River in Fridley. The new facility will preserve wastewater system assets, improve system reliability, and accommodate community growth. The lift station service area, the locations of the existing lift station and the new lift station, and the existing and proposed future layouts for the new site are depicted in Figures 1-4.

The lift station property, previously Girl Scout Camp Lockeslea, is approximately 22 acres in size and is adjacent to the Mississippi River. Because only 7-8 acres of the property are needed for the lift station facility, the idea for a public, park-like use for the remaining land emerged.

In July 2026, staff representatives from the Metropolitan Council, City of Fridley, and Anoka County Parks met to discuss opportunities. Given the parcel's proximity to the Mississippi River Regional Trail, Anoka County proposed developing the site as a trailhead. The National Mississippi River Trail, its route through the Twin Cities Metro Area and Anoka County, and the components of the Regional Parks and Trails System in the City of Fridley are shown in Figures 5-8. The location of the new lift station is highlighted with a star in Figure 8. The Mississippi River Regional Trail is adjacent to the site.

Anoka County Parks and the City of Fridley conducted a site visit and prepared a preliminary

concept prior to hosting an inter-agency public open house on September 16, 2026 at Fridley City Hall. The event was well attended, and participants provided feedback on both the lift station and the concept for the remaining land (Figure 9).

Community input showed strong support for a park-like facility with minimal development, such as unpaved trails, and highlighted interest in protecting local wildlife and habitat. Attendees also emphasized the importance of both physical and visual access to the river and the need to protect the remaining natural land.

The existing Mississippi River Regional Trail Long-Range Plan was developed in 1994. There have been two plan amendments since then; the Northern Alignment Master Plan (2007) and a Land Exchange and Acquisition Master Plan Amendment (2021). Neither of these amendments impacted the regional trail corridor in the area of the new lift station property. Because a new regional trailhead and any associated park-like facilities are considered a significant change to the regional trail corridor, a long-range plan amendment is required.

Next steps include continued collaboration between the Met Council, Anoka County Parks, and the City of Fridley, and the preparation of an amendment to the Mississippi River Regional Trail Long Range Plan. Interagency collaboration and the amendment process will inform how the parcel transfer will occur as well as any needed agreements. As usual, the plan amendment is required to include a development concept and natural resource management guidance. Significant work remains as details are further refined.

During the presentation of this information item, MCES and Anoka County Parks staff will share the latest on the lift station project and the proposed Mississippi River Regional Trail Long-Range Plan Amendment. City of Fridley staff have also been invited to join this Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting. Council staff are looking for the Commission's advice and feedback on the proposal.

Following submittal of a long-range plan amendment by Anoka County and review by Met Council Parks and Trails staff, Council staff will return to the Commission with a business item seeking the approval of a long-range plan amendment. The timing of this plan amendment is currently estimated to be Spring 2027.

Figure 1: Lift Station L32 Service Area

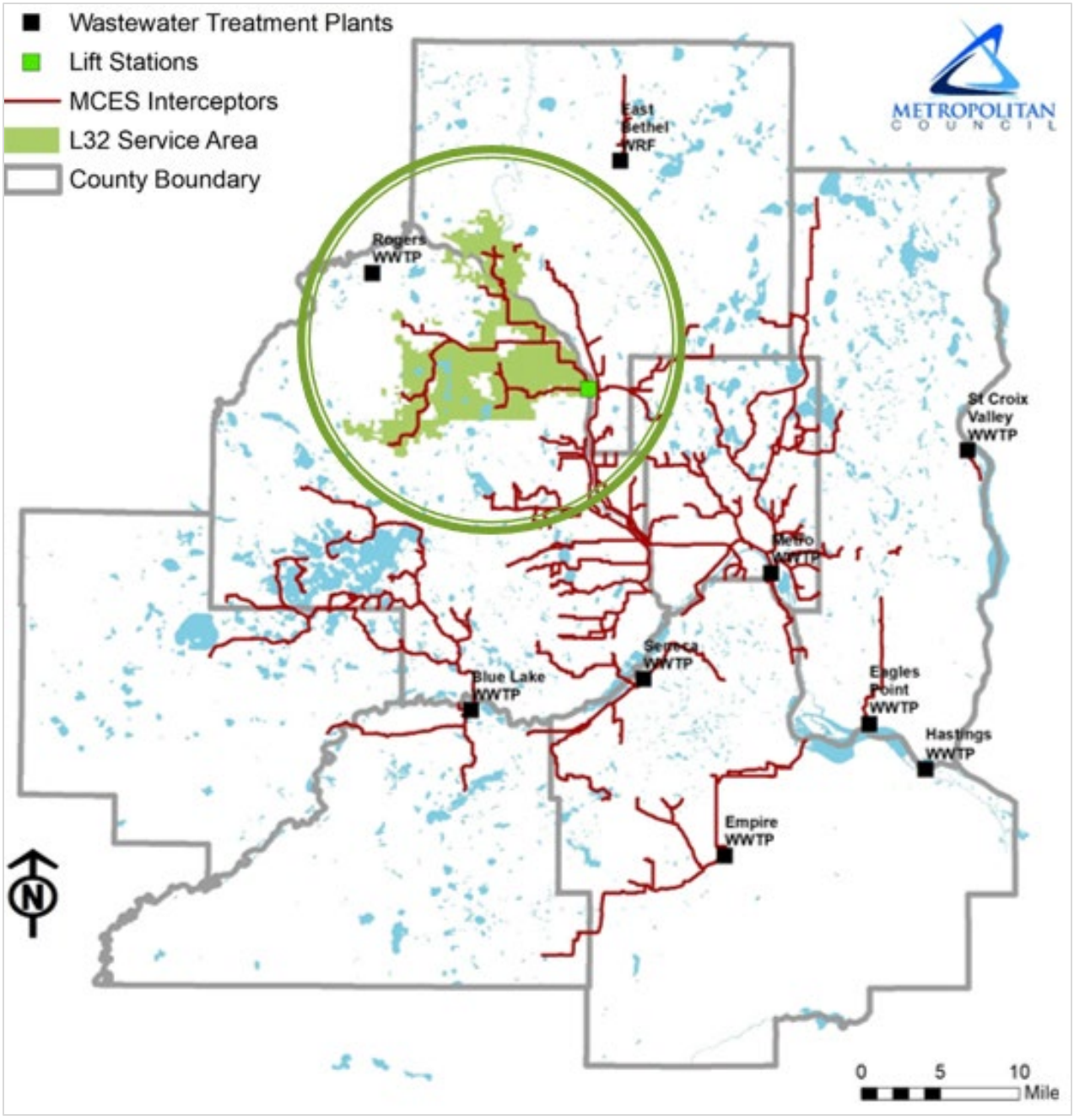

Figure 2: Lift Station Project Location



Figure 3: New Lift Station L32A - Existing Site



Figure 4: New Lift Station L32 – Future Site



Figure 5: National Mississippi River Trail



Figure 6: Metro Area Mississippi River Trail

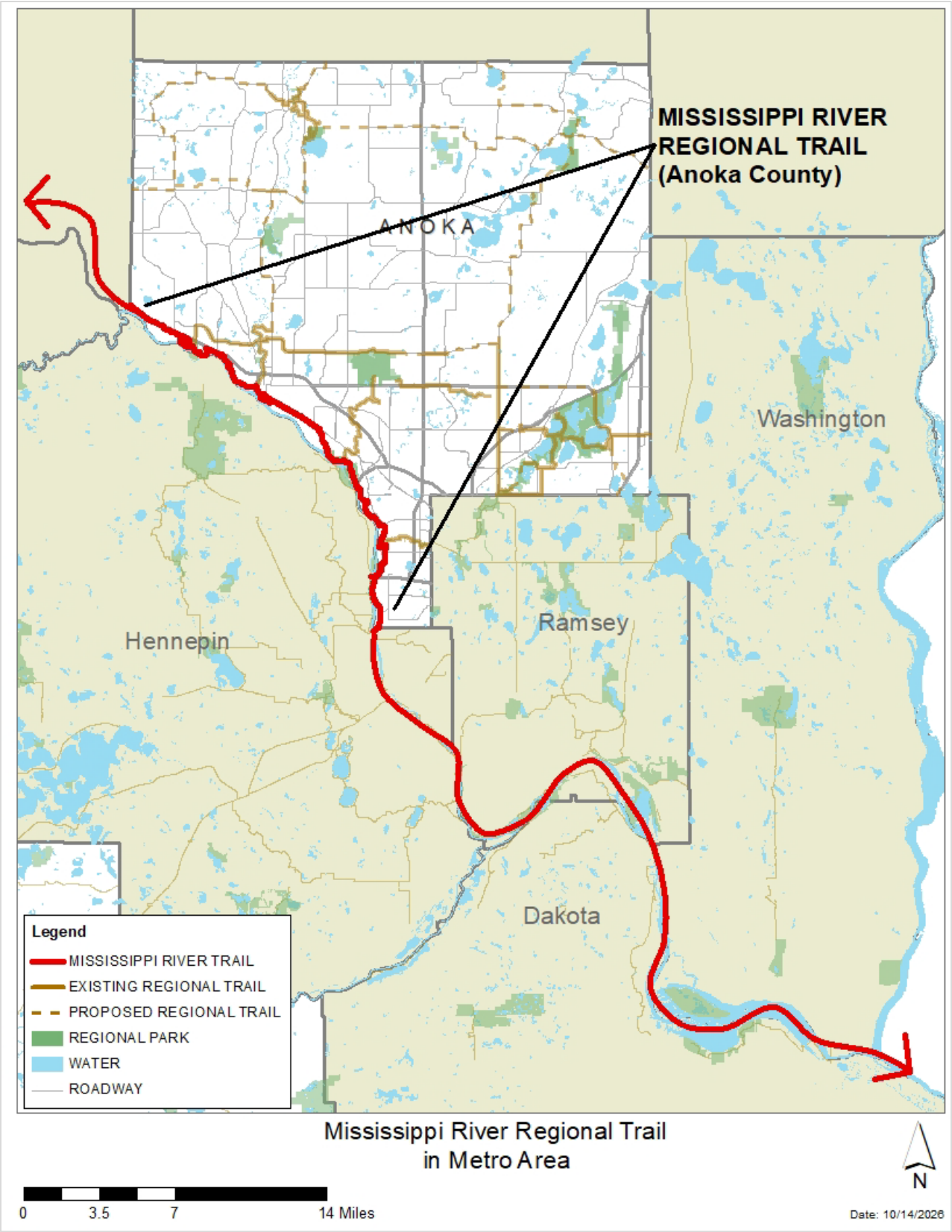

Figure 7: Anoka County Mississippi River Trail

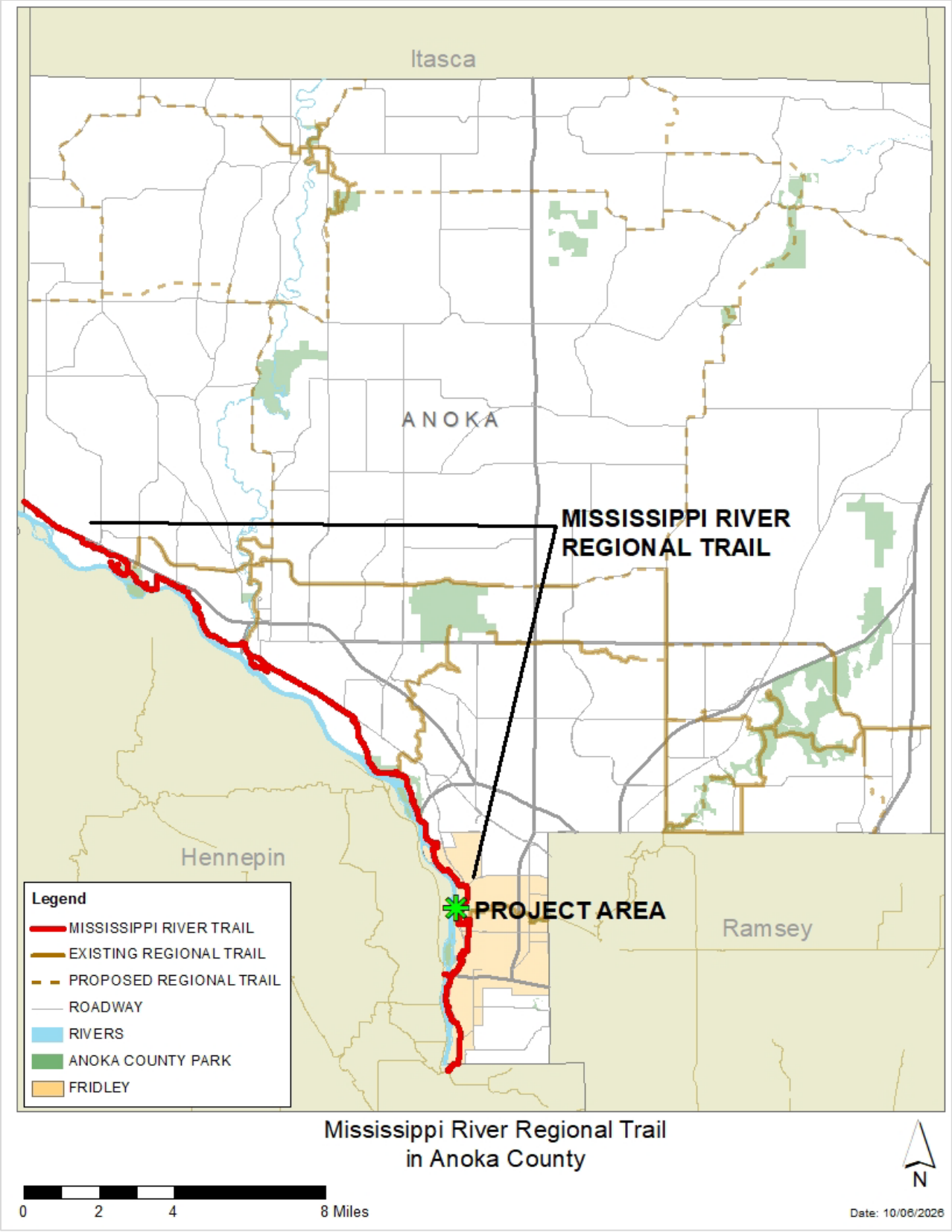

Figure 8: City of Fridley, Regional Parks and Trails System

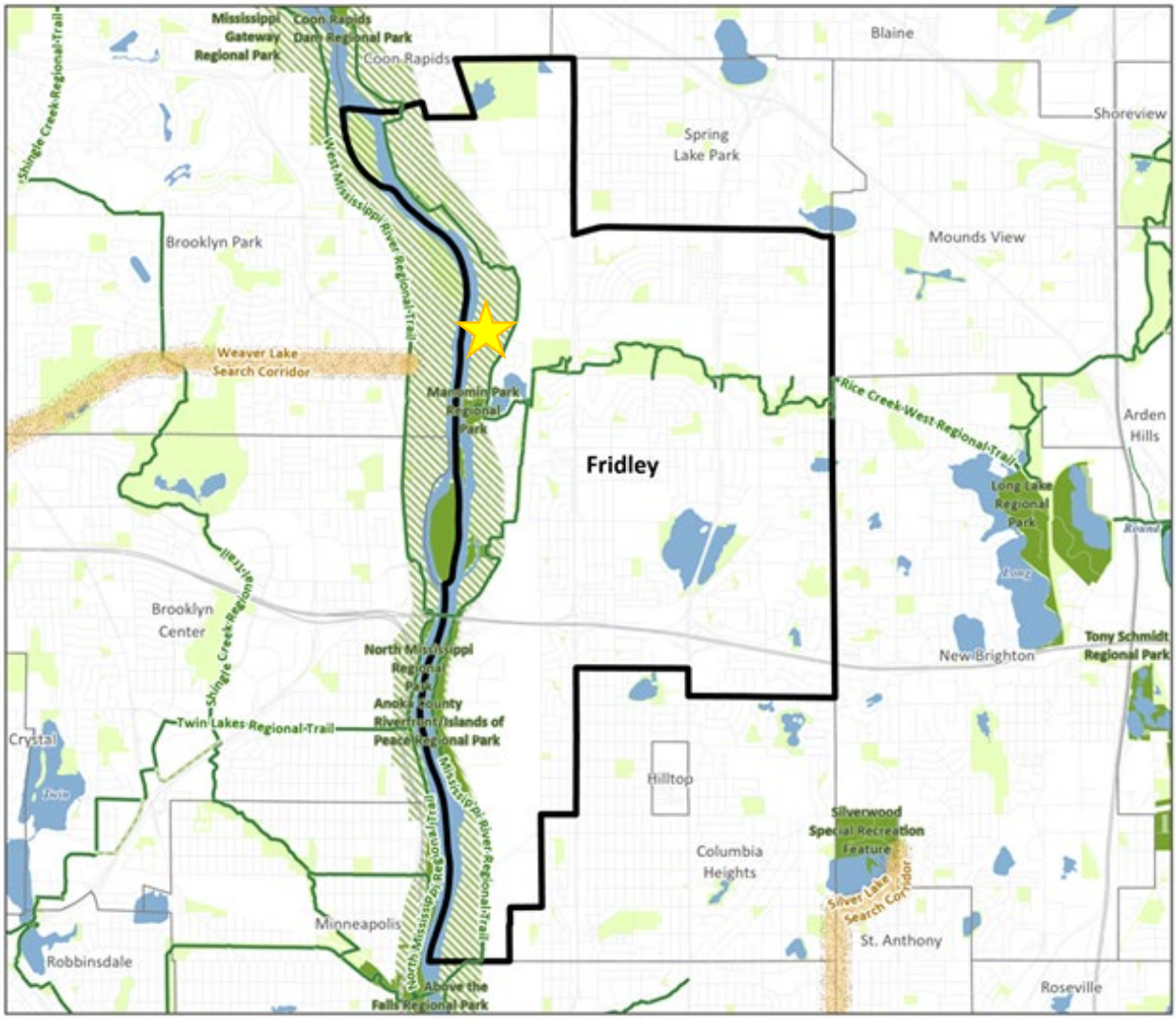

Figure 9: Proposed Development Concept



6900 East River Road
Proposed Development Concept