

# News Release

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## **Winona County Trail Planning Committee Invites Public Input on County Trail Plan**

(Released May 19, 2011)

Members of the Winona County Recreational Trail Planning Committee invite county residents to learn more and to offer their input on the draft of a trail plan the committee has developed. The Open House is scheduled for **Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011, from 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm at the St. Charles Community Center, 830 Whitewater Avenue, St. Charles, Minnesota.**

Community volunteers and local planners involved in the trail-planning effort will be on hand to discuss issues related to development of the trail, display maps and other trail information, and to answer questions. Input will be sought on potential trail uses, trail surface options, alignment possibilities and desired amenities such as parking lots and rest areas.

Sandwiched between two highly successful state trails – the Root River Trail to the south and Wisconsin’s Great River Trail to the east, Winona County is working to develop connections to both trails. Connections are also proposed to the recently adopted Whitewater Country Loop Trail, which will connect the St. Charles/Elba area and Whitewater State Park to trails in Olmsted County.

The development of recreational trails is receiving increasing support with the recognition of the vital role exercise and activity play in maintaining personal health and healthy communities. Winona County has joined other counties in the region, with the support of Blue Cross & Blue Shield and the Minnesota Department of Health’s *State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)*, in an Active Living initiative aimed at improving the walkability and bikability of our communities.

Comments received at the Open Houses will be used to finalize the Winona County Trail Master Plan. Once the master plan is approved Winona County and its communities will be eligible to apply for trail development funds raised through the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, passed by the Minnesota Legislature in 2008.

The current draft of the plan can be viewed at Winona County’s website: [www.co.winona.mn.us](http://www.co.winona.mn.us)

### ***For more information or to comment on the plan, contact:***

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