



# Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

## 2023 Request for Proposal

### General Information

**Proposal ID:** 2023-213

**Proposal Title:** Above the Falls Regional Park Acquisition and Restoration

### Project Manager Information

**Name:** Adam Arvidson

**Organization:** Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

**Office Telephone:** (612) 230-6470

**Email:** aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org

### Project Basic Information

**Project Summary:** This project would acquire industrial acreage from willing sellers along the Mississippi River within the Above the Falls Regional Park.

**Funds Requested:** \$2,000,000

**Proposed Project Completion:** December 31, 2025

**LCCMR Funding Category:** Land Acquisition, Habitat, and Recreation (G)

### Project Location

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

Region(s): Metro

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

Region(s): Metro

**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.**

All of the waterfront in Minneapolis has been public for more than 100 years—except the Mississippi River in North and Northeast Minneapolis. This historic gap in habitat and public access illuminates disparities across the city and creates a break in the Mississippi Flyway. Over years and with significant state assistance, parcels were purchased by MPRB and other public entities in the interest of implementing a grand park vision known as RiverFirst. That 2012 vision established a framework for Above the Falls Regional Park that would acquire and restore the entire riverfront, thereby closing historic access and habitat gaps.

Today, approximately half of the land within Above the Falls Regional Park is owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). Through a variety of strategies including purchase with local tax dollars, traditional mortgages, grants from watershed partners, creative financing with willing sellers, and land banking, MPRB has accelerated this critical vision. However, properties are transitioning regularly, and MPRB needs to act quickly with flexible and immediate funding or opportunities for public water access and habitat restoration will be lost for many decades.

### **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.**

This project would establish a fund for the acquisition of parcels when willing sellers come forward. The parcel list accompanying this proposal includes ALL private parcels within Above the Falls. Though the geographic area is tightly defined and limited to a single regional park, MPRB is finding that more flexibility on specific parcels is necessary. The industrial waterfront in Minneapolis is experiencing high volatility and unpredictability. MPRB needs to be ready with reliable funds and to act quickly when opportunities arise. MPRB cannot predict at this time which parcels will become available, but will carefully follow all state rules associated with property acquisition under LCCMR funding.

We understand this proposal is similar to the ENRTF-funded Parks Acquisition Opportunity Fund through the Metropolitan Council. We are bringing this single-park, multi-parcel proposal directly to LCCMR because urban acquisitions could exhaust the PAOF quickly. In addition, because of the urban/industrial character of these parcels, they could be viewed as out of character with typical PAOF purchases, notwithstanding the critical need to re-establish habitat along the Mississippi River. MPRB feels it is worthwhile to make this proposal directly so it can be discussed individually.

### **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?**

This project will help complete a continuous green ribbon along Mississippi River in Minneapolis. The outcome of this project, therefore, is to contribute to the eventual acquisition of all the Minneapolis riverfront, as envisioned in plans that go back decades. Much work has been already completed to this end. We are requesting funds to accelerate the vision to complete the promise of parkland, water access, and habitat in North and Northeast Minneapolis.

## Activities and Milestones

### Activity 1: Parcel Acquisition

**Activity Budget:** \$1,950,000

**Activity Description:**

MPRB would work with its partners and current property owners to acquire fee title to parcels, once sellers are willing to transfer ownership. MPRB staff time, legal costs, appraisals, and closing costs would be paid by MPRB as part of the grant match, with the entirety of the ENRTF funding going to actual parcel acquisitions. It is possible that this funding could be applied to multiple parcel purchases. It is also possible MPRB may match ENRTF funds with other sources, in order to ensure the most effective use of state funds.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Appraisals, Negotiations, and Due Diligence	December 31, 2024
Parcel Acquisitions	December 31, 2025

### Activity 2: Restoration Planning

**Activity Budget:** \$50,000

**Activity Description:**

MPRB will hire an ecological restoration professional through a competitive process and work with them to prepare restoration plans for acquired sites. The restoration plans will guide future restoration of the sites. After completion of restoration plans, MPRB will seek additional funding through a variety of sources to implement the site restorations, likely in conjunction with restoration activities on adjacent parcels.

**Activity Milestones:**

Description	Completion Date
Selection of Restoration Ecologist Professional	December 31, 2024
Completion of Restoration Plans	December 31, 2025

## 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?**

Long term maintenance and management of the acquired parcels, including protection prior to restoration activities, will be performed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board as part of its overall maintenance programs. Such activities do include paid staff work, volunteers, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations. MPRB will seek additional funding from a variety of sources to accomplish future restoration of the site.

## Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Invasive Carp Management Research in Lake Nokomis Subwatershed	M.L. 2016, Chp. 186, Sec. 2, Subd. 06g	\$189,000
Expanding Nature Knowledge and Experience with New Interactive Exhibits at North Mississippi Regional Park	M.L. 2018, Chp. 214, Art. 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 05h	\$500,000
Mississippi River Aquatic Habitat Restoration And Mussel Reintroduction	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 09e	\$1,800,000
Above The Falls Regional Park Acquisition	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09q	\$950,000

## Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

**Project Manager Name:** Adam Arvidson

**Job Title:** Director of Strategic Planning

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

Mr. Arvidson is MPRB's Director of Strategic Planning, in which role he is responsible for large-scale planning of public lands. He is a registered landscape architect with 20+ years of experience in the public and private sector and has worked on numerous habitat and environment projects, including several funded through LCCMR and the Lessard-Sams Council. He was the project manager for the MPRB's Ecological Systems Plan and also led the agency's effort to create new environmentally sound master plans for each neighborhood park.

**Organization:** Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

**Organization Description:**

With 171 park properties totaling nearly 6,800 acres of land and water, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) provides places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment. Each year, approximately 20 million visits are made to the nationally acclaimed Minneapolis park system. Its urban forests, natural areas, and waters endure and captivate. Its Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway, neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and diversified programming have made the Minneapolis park system an important component of what makes Minneapolis a great place to live, play and work.

## Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
<b>Personnel</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Contracts and Services</b>								
Restoration Ecologist Professional to be Determined	Professional or Technical Service Contract	The Restoration Ecologist Professional will prepare the restoration plan for the site, based on BWSR guidelines.				-		\$50,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	\$50,000
<b>Equipment, Tools, and Supplies</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Acquisitions and Stewardship</b>								
	Fee Title Acquisition	Acres: 7 Parcels: 3						\$1,950,000
							<b>Sub Total</b>	\$1,950,000
<b>Travel In Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Travel Outside Minnesota</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-

<b>Printing and Publication</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Other Expenses</b>								
							<b>Sub Total</b>	-
							<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>

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
<b>State</b>				
			<b>State Sub Total</b>	-
<b>Non-State</b>				
Cash	Minneapolis park and Recreation Board General Fund as designated for general staffing and fringe	Matching funds will be used for all personnel costs, including community engagement, landowner negotiation, and project administration for the acquisition and restoration activities.	Secured	\$50,000
Cash	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board General Fund as designated for land acquisition.	Land acquisition designated funds will be used for all acquisition soft costs, as well as a portion of land costs.	Secured	\$500,000
Cash	Partnership funds from local non-profit organizations and agencies.	These funds will be used for a portion of acquisition costs. Though not secured for specific parcels, MPRB has had historic success with this type of local assistance, once parcels have been identified.	Potential	\$250,000
			<b>Non State Sub Total</b>	<b>\$800,000</b>
			<b>Funds Total</b>	<b>\$800,000</b>



## Acquisition and Restoration

### Parcel List

Name	County	Site Significance	Activity	Acres	Miles	Estimated Cost	Type of Landowner	Easement or Title Holder	Status of Work
1002924130001	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.46	-	\$500,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130002	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	6.48	-	\$1,532,500	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130003	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.21	-	\$6,000,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130005	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.53	-	\$122,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130006	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.26	-	\$53,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130007	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.27	-	\$67,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130008	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.41	-	\$91,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924130009	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.81	-	\$797,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924140008	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.16	-	\$150,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924140010	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	2.25	-	\$1,000,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924140011	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	2.07	-	\$2,000,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924140173	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.38	-	\$264,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun

1002924410009	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.63	-	\$566,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924410026	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.26	-	\$450,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924410029	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.24	-	\$500,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924410030	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.25	-	\$150,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Negotiations In Progress
1002924410031	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.49	-	\$550,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924410145	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.33	-	\$481,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924410179	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.64	-	\$412,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924420005	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.64	-	\$483,700	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924420006	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.38	-	\$114,100	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924420007	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	9.58	-	\$2,584,500	Private	Minneapolis park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924430007	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.12	-	\$195,500	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924430008	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.35	-	\$51,900	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924430009	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.38	-	\$62,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924430010	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.41	-	\$75,600	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun

1002924440005	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.05	-	\$2,000,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924440006	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.39	-	\$250,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924440071	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.24	-	\$270,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924440072	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.24	-	\$350,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924440073	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.24	-	\$291,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1002924440074	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.24	-	\$345,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1502924110002	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.09	-	\$1,300,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1502924110033	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.66	-	\$189,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
1502924110034	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.63	-	\$215,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
302924230102	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	1.12	-	\$200,000	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
302924240006	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	0.12	-	\$83,200	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
302924310012	Hennepin	Mississippi riverfront within Above the Falls Regional Park	Fee Title	3.25	-	\$934,800	Private	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Has Not Begun
<b>Totals</b>				<b>42.26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$25,680,800</b>			

## Fee Acquisition

**1. Describe the selection process for identifying and including proposed parcels on the parcel list, including an explanation of the criteria and decision-making process used to rank and prioritize parcels.**

The extents of Above the Falls Regional Park were determined through extensive community engagement as part of the RiverFirst vision in 2011 and 2012. The boundary of this park is recognized by the Metropolitan Council and it includes both publicly owned and privately owned parcels. The ultimate vision is to acquire and bring into MPRB ownership all parcels within the boundary. Specific decisions around which parcels to acquire when is dependent on three main factors: willingness of the owner to sell, impact on completeness of the park, and available funding.

**2. List all adopted state, regional, or local natural resource plans in which the lands included in the parcel list are identified for the acquisition purposes you propose. Include the URL to the plan if one is available.**

Though not strictly a natural resources plan, the MPRB- and City of Minneapolis-adopted RiverFirst Vision calls for the acquisition and restoration of the entire riverfront in North and Northeast Minneapolis. The principles of RiverFirst are displayed in MPRB's Master Plan for Above the Falls Regional Park, which has been adopted by the Board of Commissioners and the Metropolitan Council. A link to the ATF Master Plan is found below.

[https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park\\_care\\_\\_improvements/park\\_projects/current\\_projects/above-the-falls-regional-park-master-plan-update/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park_care__improvements/park_projects/current_projects/above-the-falls-regional-park-master-plan-update/)

**3. For any parcels acquired in fee title, a restoration and management plan must be prepared. Summarize the components and expected outcomes of restoration and management plans for parcels acquired by your organization, how these plans are kept on file by your organization, and overall strategies for long-term plan implementation, including how long-term maintenance and management needs of the parcel will be financed into the future.**

Components of the restoration and management plan will include a description of current conditions, with a focus on hydrology, geology, and the aquatic biotic community as they apply to large river systems; description of a target restoration community, which is most likely to be partly an aquatic to emergent wetland/riparian system and partly an upland grassland or savanna system; a timeline for restoration; and guidance for ongoing management of the restored areas. The restoration plan will be included in the creation of any future construction plans for the project and will guide both future construction and ongoing management. This plan will be kept both in MPRB staff project files and in the MPRB archive, as well as posted publicly on the MPRB website.

**4. For each parcel to be conveyed to a State of Minnesota entity (e.g., DNR) after purchase, provide a statement confirming that county board approval will be obtained.**

Not applicable.

**5. If applicable (see M.S. 116P.17), provide a statement confirming that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained 10 business days prior to any final acquisition transaction.**

MPRB confirms that M.S. 116P.17 will be followed and that written approval from the DNR Commissioner will be obtained.

## Attachments

### Required Attachments

#### *Map*

File: [308c6882-940.pdf](#)

#### *Alternate Text for Map*

Page from the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan showing current private inholdings...

#### *Board Resolution or Letter*

Title	File
MPRB Resolution 2022-201	<a href="#">f9941f1f-ff0.pdf</a>

## Administrative Use

**Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?**

Yes: Fee Acquisition,

**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

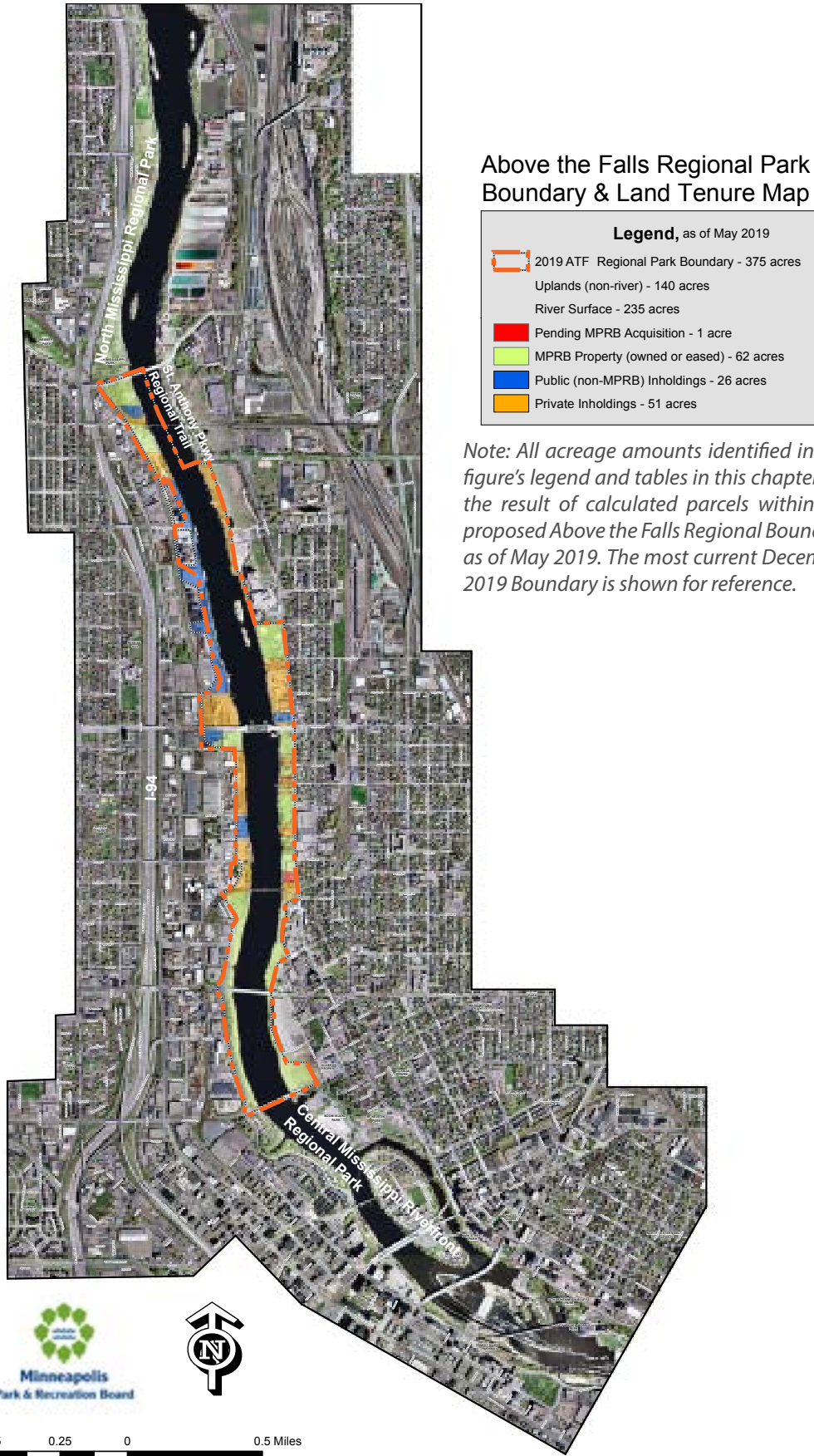


Figure 7.3 Above the Falls Regional Park Boundary and Land Tenure Map