



# Greater Minnesota Parks & Trails Legislative Forum - March 2025

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March 14, 2025

# Agenda for today

- ▶ Legislative Session - where are we at?
- ▶ Hottest of the hot issues
- ▶ GMPT's Legislative Agenda
- ▶ What else are we watching
- ▶ What's next and how you can help

# GMPT's Legislative Advocacy & Your Role

- ▶ At its core, GMPT founded to advocate for the parks and trails of Greater Minnesota
- ▶ Legislative Advocacy (AKA lobbying) is a team sport
  - ▶ Lead at legislature is our lobbyist, Elizabeth Wefel
  - ▶ Board/Executive Team drives the ship with our legislative policies/agenda as the guide stone
  - ▶ Our members play a crucial role as voices to their own legislators and other key legislators

# Legislative session - Power Sharing Begins

- ▶ Special election in Roseville
  - ▶ DFL candidate wins
  - ▶ House now split 67-67
- ▶ Committees now 50/50/ with co-chair
  - ▶ Fraud committee excepted
- ▶ Speaker Dehmuth remains speaker

# HOTTEST OF THE HOT - Park and Trail issues to care about

- ▶ Legacy fund overpayment
- ▶ LCCMR turmoil
- ▶ Eminent domain
- ▶ Park dedication prohibition ??

# Legacy Fund Overpayment

- ▶ When Legacy tracking set up in 2010, an error was made with respect to sales and use taxes
- ▶ A small percentage of sales taxes were allocated to Legacy when should have been allocated to the general fund
- ▶ Over the last 15 years, \$31 million was allocated to the wrong fund
  - ▶ No fraud. This was not fraud.
- ▶ Revenue has transferred \$31 million from Legacy Fund to General Fund
- ▶ \$ 3 million impact to Parks and Trails Fund
  - ▶ Impact to Greater MN about \$536,000 this biennium
  - ▶ No clawbacks, but less to grant

# LCCMR Turmoil

- ▶ Last week, smooth sailing
- ▶ This week, chaos
- ▶ House amended bill to greatly reduce set aside for a new community grant program
  - ▶ Originally, 1.5% of ENRTF to program. Now only 5% of that amount.
  - ▶ Remainder to a number of different programs plus some one time money to several projects
  - ▶ No impact to remainder of bill
- ▶ Likely an end of session leadership decision
- ▶ GMPT board to discuss how we approach

# Bad bills - Eminent domain

- ▶ Senator Nelson introduced [S.F. 2141](#) again
  - ▶ No House companion
- ▶ Legacy money can not be used to acquire property using eminent domain
  - ▶ Removes a tool from the toolbox
- ▶ Exercise caution when discussing. No need to take any action at this moment.



# Bad Bills - Parkland Dedication

- ▶ Housing package contains potential restrictions on city's ability to require parkland dedication
- ▶ Language is ambiguous at best so taking very seriously.
- ▶ **Subd. 5.**

## **Official controls; limitations.**

A municipality may not use official controls to prohibit the application of this section, including by imposing performance conditions, standards, requirements, ordinances, fees, exactions, and dedications on any residential unit or development that are more restrictive than those in this section or other municipal law or rule.

Bill numbers: SF 2229/HF 1987

SF 2231/HF 2140

SF 2286/HF 2018

# Translating the Agenda & Policies into Legislation

- ▶ Bill one: Appropriate 20% of legacy funds to Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails. This bill will also address fees to DNR.
- ▶ Bill two: Pay for Commission out of general fund, not legacy.

# Progress on legislation

- ▶ SF 1039 (Hauschild)/HF 489 (Skraba)
  - ▶ Legacy appropriation, extensions, and administrative costs
  - ▶ Heard in Senate.
  - ▶ Discussions continue
  
- ▶ SF 1040 (Hauschild)/HF 723 (Skraba)
  - ▶ Shifts Commission cost to general fund
  - ▶ No hearing yet, but few budget requests have been heard
  - ▶ Given projected deficit will be difficult to get hearing

# Progress on Legislation

- ▶ Local Sales Tax Authority S.F. 375
  - ▶ Provides expedited process of certain local sales taxes
  - ▶ Designated Regional Parks and Trails potentially eligible
  - ▶ Discussion continue, but challenging
  - ▶ Unclear what direction the House will take

# Other Legislation of Interest

- ▶ Outdoor School for All Grant Program Creation S.F. 1050
  - ▶ Creates grant program for outdoor education. Must be accredited overnight outdoor school
  - ▶ A version of this is Included in the LCCMR amendment
- ▶ Keep It Clean Program S.F. 1297 (Putnam)
  - ▶ Surcharge on fishing house licenses
  - ▶ Grant program to local units of government to help keep crap off ice
  - ▶ A version is included in the LCCMR amendment
- ▶ Statewide Bicycle Pass Fee H.F. 469 (Heintzman)
  - ▶ Creates requirement for a state bicycle pass for all state trails
- ▶ No Legacy Funds for Overhead HF 529 (Bliss) /SF 27 (Green)
- ▶ Director of Grants Administration HF 754 (Robbins)

# What's next?!

- ▶ Read our monthly newsletter and legislative updates
- ▶ Connect with your lawmakers
- ▶ Let us know what you're hearing!
- ▶ Next forum TBD - Likely April 11



# Greater Minnesota Parks & Trails

QUESTIONS?