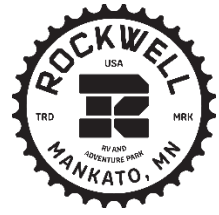


Rockwell RV & Adventure Park



3rd Avenue / CSAH 5 Mountain Bike Trail Setback Variance Request

Rockwell RV & Adventure Park is requesting a variance from the required roadway setback to allow construction of mountain bike trails along the west side of 3rd Avenue/CSAH 5 adjacent to the McClure Quarry property.

The proposed trail setback and cross-section have been developed in coordination with Blue Earth County. Following discussions with Blue Earth County Public Works Director Ryan Thilges, the proposed design maintains a minimum setback of **60 feet from the centerline of 3rd Avenue/CSAH 5** to the beginning of the mountain bike trail improvements. The existing County right-of-way extends 50 feet from the roadway centerline in this area.

The proposed 60-foot setback preserves the full 50-foot County right-of-way for roadway improvements, utilities, drainage, and other public infrastructure while providing an additional 10-foot buffer beyond the existing right-of-way. This additional area also preserves a potential corridor between approximately 50 and 60 feet from roadway centerline that could accommodate a future paved bicycle and pedestrian trail along 3rd Avenue.

Beginning at or beyond the proposed 60-foot setback, Rockwell would construct a protective quarried limestone retaining wall and/or earthen berm along the roadway side of the mountain bike trail area. The roadway/east side of an earthen berm would be constructed at an approximately 3:1 slope. The wall or berm would extend to a minimum height of 36 inches above the outside roadway edge elevation or 36 inches above the existing adjacent grade, whichever results in the higher protective elevation. Where a limestone retaining wall is utilized, soil could be backfilled against the interior side of the wall to integrate the feature into the trail area and surrounding landscape.

The mountain bike trails would be located on the interior/west side of this protective feature and constructed as two-tiered trail segments along the existing limestone highwall. The trails would generally be approximately 6 to 10 feet wide and would be field fit during construction to respond to the existing highwall, grades, rock formations, drainage, vegetation, and other site conditions.

The design also provides flexibility for the final location of the required perimeter fencing based on final grading, trail construction, and coordination with the County. As illustrated

in the accompanying cross-section, two potential fence locations are being considered: **(1)** on the roadway/east side of the proposed berm or retaining wall; or **(2)** at the top of the proposed berm or retaining wall. The final fence location would be selected to maintain appropriate separation from both roadway and trail users while accommodating the County right-of-way, potential future paved trail, and final constructed trail and berm configuration.

The proposed configuration provides multiple elements of separation between vehicular traffic and mountain bike users. The mountain bike improvements would remain outside the County right-of-way, with the limestone retaining wall or earthen berm providing an additional physical barrier between the roadway and the mountain bike trails. The design also takes advantage of the unique McClure Quarry topography by incorporating the trails into the existing limestone highwall rather than placing them immediately adjacent to the roadway at roadway grade.

As additional context, Rockwell reviewed several existing bicycle and recreational trail locations along public roadways in the Mankato area. Examples identified in the accompanying exhibit include bicycle trails located approximately 60 feet from roadway centerline along County Road 12/589th Avenue, less than approximately 60 feet from roadway centerline along County Road 17/Madison Avenue, and approximately 25 feet from roadway centerline along Stoltzman Road/County Road 16. The County Road 12 and County Road 17 examples are located along roadways with posted speeds of 55 mph. These examples are provided for general context regarding the proximity of existing bicycle facilities to public roadways and are not intended to suggest that the conditions at each location are identical to the proposed Rockwell trail.

Rockwell believes the proposed 60-foot minimum setback from roadway centerline, together with the protective berm or retaining wall and flexibility in final fence placement, provides a reasonable and site-specific approach to safely integrating the mountain bike trail system along 3rd Avenue/CSAH 5 while preserving the County's existing right-of-way and ability to accommodate future roadway, utility, and bicycle/pedestrian improvements.

The accompanying **McClure 3rd Avenue Setback Proposal** exhibit illustrates the proposed cross-section, roadway and right-of-way relationship, potential future paved trail corridor, protective wall/berm, potential fence locations, and mountain bike trail configuration, along with examples of existing bicycle trails located near public roadways in the surrounding area.