



# City of Burnsville

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MOST OF BLACK DOG ROAD IN BURNSVILLE TO PERMANENTLY CLOSE TO PUBLIC TRAFFIC, SLATED TO BECOME GREENWAY TRAIL**

On July 8, the Burnsville City Council approved closing a large portion of Black Dog Road in Burnsville to public auto traffic to begin preparation for a future greenway trail. Partial access from the west (from I-35W to the western bridge/parking lot) and the east (to the existing Minnesota Department of Natural Resources [DNR] parking lot) will remain open.

Xcel Energy, which owns the Black Dog Power Plant off of Black Dog Road, has recently decided to decommission coal-powered portions of their facility. Upcoming construction related to this project is providing an opportunity for the City of Burnsville to partner with Xcel Energy, Dakota County and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to create safer and more efficient recreational spaces for pedestrians, cyclists and nature lovers who visit the Black Dog area.

In July, Xcel Energy will take ownership of the road, which has proven to be a maintenance challenge for the City with its frequent flooding and inaccessibility. Once reopened, a majority of the road will be open only to Xcel-approved vehicles.

In 2015, crews will begin construction on a new park and trailhead on the west end of Black Dog Road near I-35W. The first portion of a trail, extending from the new trailhead park to an area near the Black Dog power plant, will also be built during that time. The portion will include an improved wildlife viewing outlook area.

The second half of the trail, from the power plant to a park near Cedar Avenue (operated by the DNR), will begin in 2016. Once complete, the 3.75 mile paved trail will include several educational signs and will be a scenic recreational area for walking or biking. Both phases of the trail are scheduled for completion in the fall of 2016.

The trail, known in plans as the "Black Dog Greenway," will become a portion of a much larger comprehensive trail plan. Dakota County's Minnesota River Greenway Master Plan (developed in 2011) outlines a network of connected trails that extend along the south side of the Minnesota River through Dakota County. Ultimately, it is planned for these trails to connect to the even larger Minnesota Valley State Trail corridor planned by the DNR.

*To learn more about the Minnesota River Greenway project, visit [www.dakotacounty.us](http://www.dakotacounty.us) and search for "Minnesota River."*

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