

Regional Parks Policy Plan Update Overview and Discussion

June 6, 2018

Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole



Today

- Background
- Overview of changes
- Discussion for draft

Background



Regional Parks Policy Plan

- Regional Parks and Trails is a Metropolitan System
- Comprehensive review every four years
- Adopted 2015



2040 Regional Parks System Plan

70,000 acres

1,100 miles of regional trails

Regional Parks, Park Reserves, Special Recreation Features

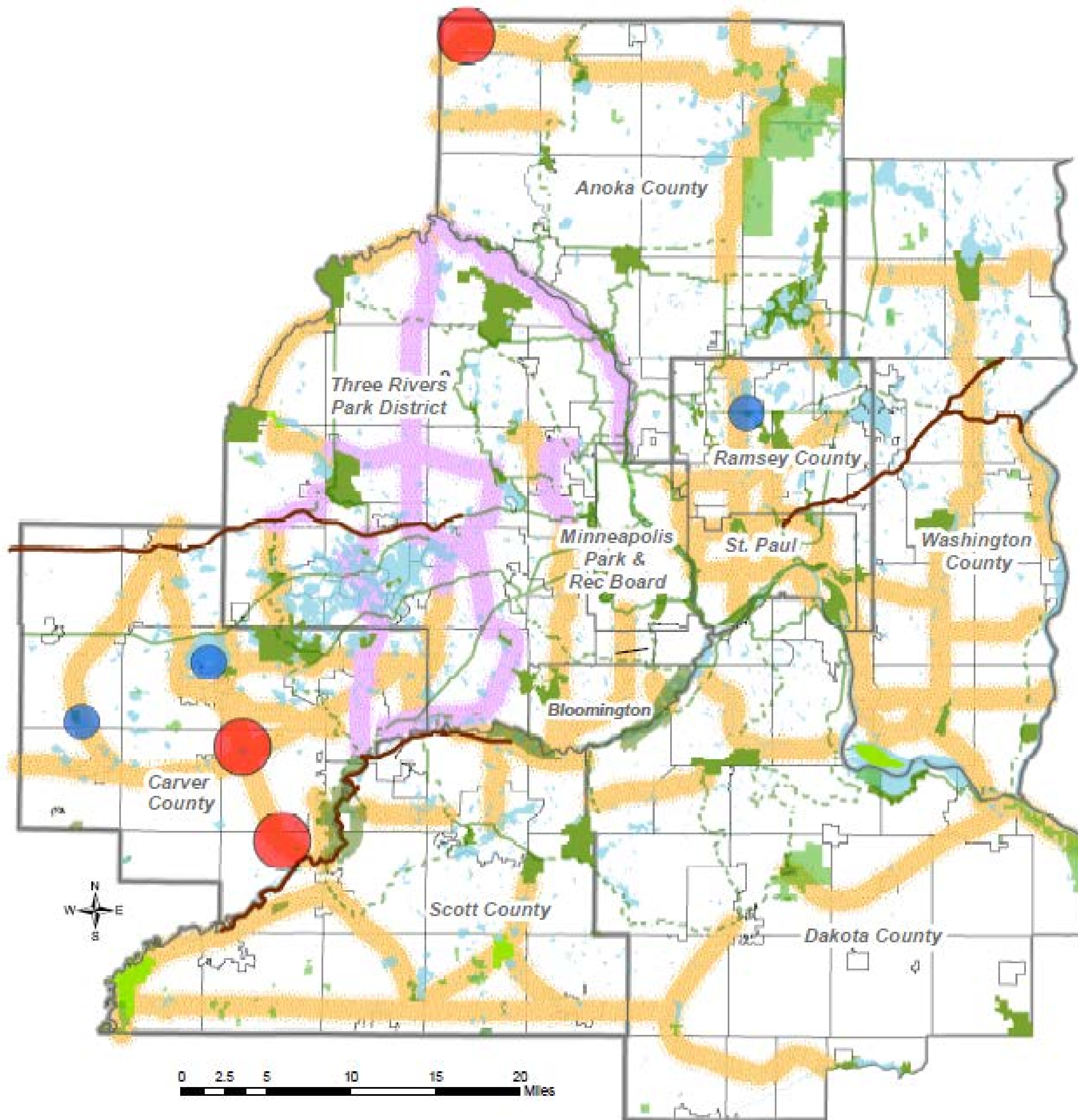
- Existing
- Planned
- Boundary Adjustment
- Search Area

Regional Trails

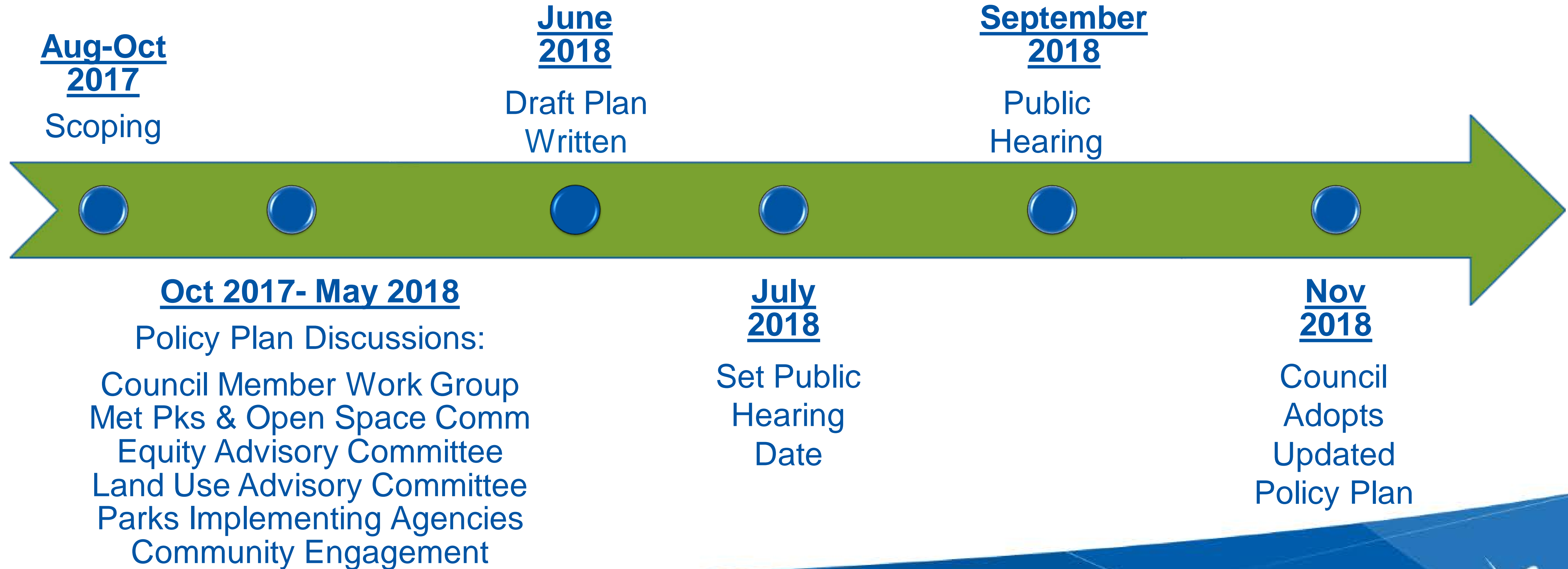
- Existing Regional Trails
- Planned Regional Trails
- Regional Trail Search Corridors
- 2040 Regional Trail Search Corridor Additions

State and Federal

- State Lands
- State Trails
- Federal Lands



Timeline for Plan Update



Engagement

Participation

Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups Visioning sessions Park user surveys 2014 stakeholder follow-up 		
Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing Agencies Boards and Commissions Department of Natural Resources 		
Council Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks/Community Development Leadership Parks Finance Transportation staff Environmental Services staff 		
Council Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Equity Advisory Committee Land Use Advisory Committee 		
Council Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Member Work Group Community Development Committee Committee of the Whole 		

Community Engagement

- Questionnaire of Implementing Agency engagement methods
- Follow-up interviews of community stakeholders engaged in 2014 RPPP
- Visioning exercise: Richfield Women's Group
- Visioning exercise: Adult Basic Education group (refugee program MORE)
- Focus group conversations with Early Childhood Family Education groups in suburban Hennepin, Anoka, and Washington counties
- Survey of park users
- In process: summary report for policy drafting, convenings, and information

Park Implementing Agencies Engagement

- Exploration and advice on update topics
- September-November: identify topics
- January-May: topical discussions

Boards and Commissions

- Interaction at discretion of agency staff
- From “we’ve got this” to “please present.”



Council Advisory Committees Engagement

- Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
 - Monthly updates (January-November 2018) and topic discussions
 - Recommend to CDC for public hearing
- Land Use Advisory Committee
 - January- May 2018
 - Coordination with Council land use issues and policy
 - Regional balance
- Equity Advisory Committee
 - May and June 2018

Council Member Engagement

- Council Member Work Group
 - Council Members Wulff (chair), Elkins, Melander
 - First stop for policy discussion and strategy
 - Monthly meetings December 2017- November 2018
- Community Development Committee
 - Review, advice and recommend to Council for adoption
 - February-September
- Committee of the Whole

Internal Staff Teams

- Leadership team
 - Overall project direction and management
- Finance team
 - Development of program guide
 - Advice on finance policy and grant operations
- Council Communications team
 - Community engagement
- Regional Bicycle Transportation Network team
 - Coordination on trails

Sample Feedback

Community Members

Fulfill commitments in plan, such as:

- Improve involvement techniques
- Refine and use parks equity toolkit
- Park equity grant program
- Park ambassador program
- Stakeholder meetings
- Targeted studies
- Improve targeted outreach
- Service improvement

Implementing Agencies

Fulfill commitments in plan, such as:

- Convenings for best practices
- Park equity grant program
- Refine use of parks equity toolkit
- Improve involvement techniques
- Park ambassador program
- Share agency practices
- Targeted studies

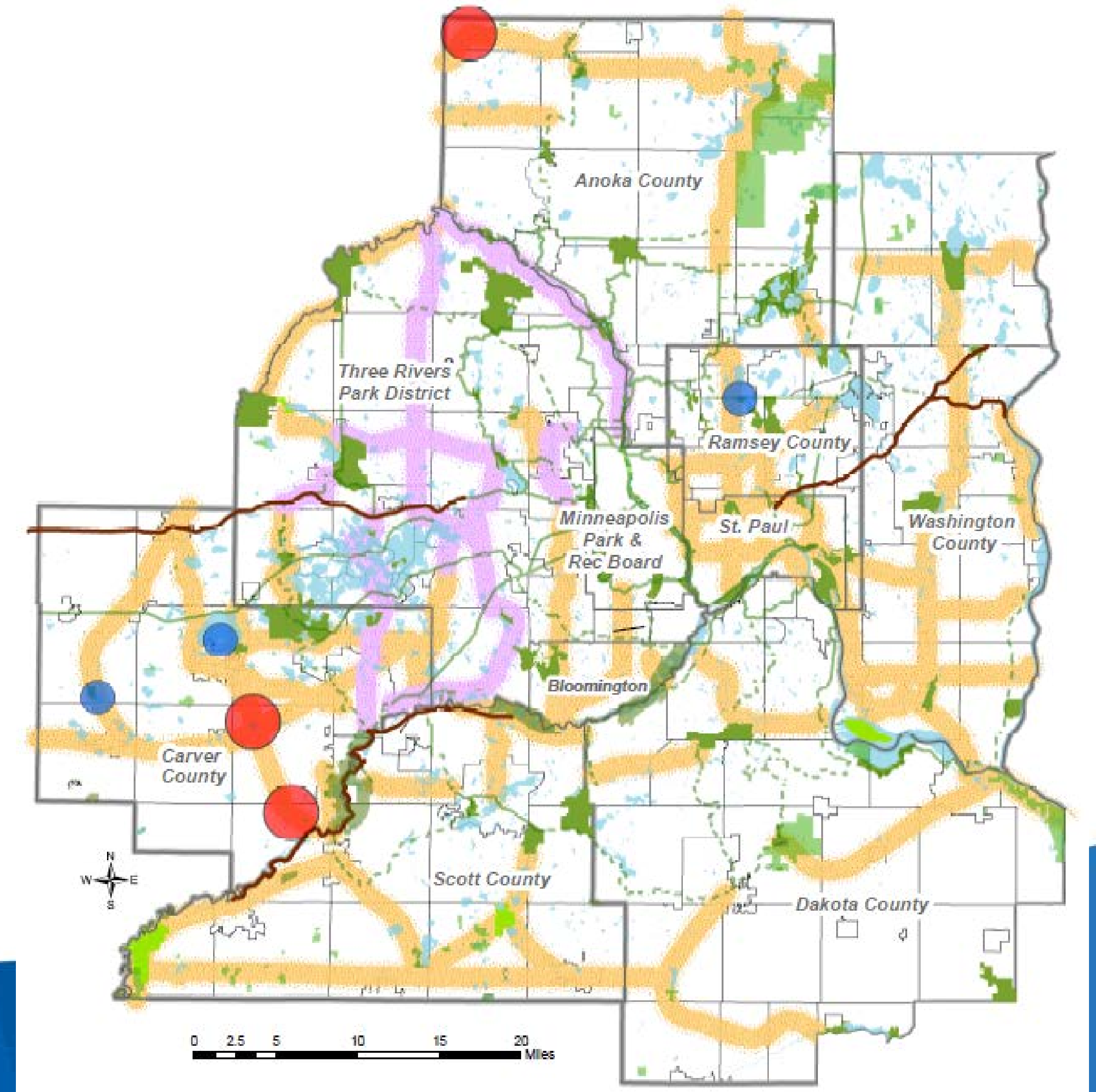
Where are we headed? Proposed directions

Stewardship



Additions to the System

- Wait for Comprehensive Plan Updates
- Convene discussion about additions in 2019
- Consolidate and clarify criteria
- Lands with restoration potential
- Connecting regional parks and trails to other trail systems and natural features



Estimated costs to complete the System

- Costs for acquisition and remaining development of all the parks and trails in the System Plan
- Required by statute
- Refined methodology

	Acquisition	Development
Open to public		
Planned, not open		
Park search areas		
Trail search corridors		



Grant Program Guide

Purpose:

- Clarify current policies and procedures.
- Create a mechanism for additional communication between the Council and Regional Park Agencies.
- Provide appropriate flexibility for changing administrative procedures.

Parks Policy Plan	Grant Program Guide
Finance Strategies	Administrative policies and procedures
Overview of Funding Sources / Formulas	
Cost projections	
<i>Update every four years.</i>	<i>Review annually.</i>

Interest Earnings on Regional Park System Funds

Prior:

- Interest earnings to be used for North Mississippi River Regional Park

New in 2018:

- Legislative change broadens use of interest earnings for “use and betterment of system”

Equity



Reinforce Council commitment to equity

2040 Plan Commitment	Plan Update – Draft Commitment	
Enhance public engagement and participation requirements for parks and trails master plan development.	Continue requiring enhanced public engagement and participation in the development of master plans and project funding. Incorporate into best practices convenings.	
Development of regional parks equity toolkit	Continuous improvement process and adaptation of the toolkit approach for master planning, plan amendment and project funding	
Use of regional parks equity toolkit in grant fund programs to review and prioritize projects	Continue use of toolkit for during project application process	

Reinforce Council commitment to equity

2040 Plan Commitment	Plan Update – Draft Commitment	
Develop park equity competitive grant program	Grant program to be developed	
Development of Regional Parks System Ambassador program	Senior Outreach Coordinator to be hired in 2018; will continue to develop and deliver program	
Convene stakeholder meetings with regional park implementing agencies, partners, community-based organizations, and advocacy groups to enhance knowledge and continuous improvement.	Convenings strongly supported by all participants; will be a commitment in plan update	

Reinforce Council commitment to equity

2040 Plan Commitment	Plan Update - Draft Commitment	
Bridging Facilities	Continue and refine vision and criteria	
Provide technical assistance	Provide technical assistance to implementing agencies to establish public engagement processes that include people from diverse races, ethnicities, abilities and income levels.	
Conduct studies on behalf of the system.	Conduct studies to inform Regional Parks System planning and management, including region-wide visitor studies every five years.	

Livability

Revise “Minimum Percentage” language

Existing Plan

- Require a minimum percentage of Parks and Trails Legacy Funds to connect people and the outdoors.

Update

- FY 2018-19 Legacy bill required only funding projects approved by locally elected boards. Language removed.

Recreation Activities and Facilities

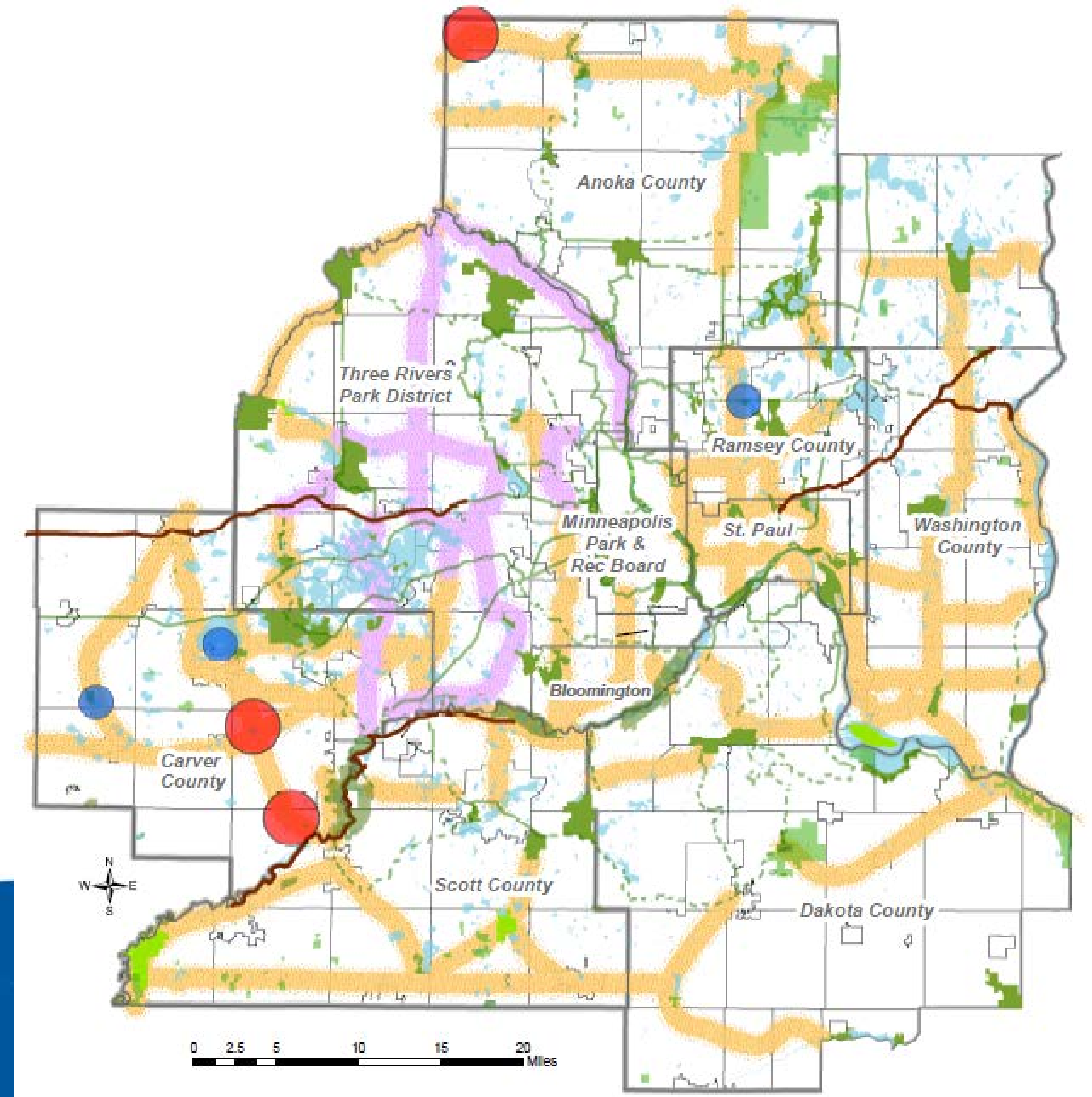
- Retain current approach, including lists of allowable activities.
- Begin exploring use of performance standards in future plans to allow flexibility while preserving the key attributes of the Regional Park System.
- Enhance coordination and communication among Regional Trails and Regional Bicycle Transportation Network planners and stakeholders.

Siting and Acquisition

- Clarify that land with natural restoration potential may qualify for acquisition.
- Consolidate system addition criteria to set up 2019 System addition discussion.
- Strengthen language encouraging regional facilities to connect to other state, federal and local trail networks and to emphasize natural features.

Update System Plan and Related Maps

- Incorporate changes made since last plan
- No new additions to the System
- Convene System addition discussion in 2019



Sustainability



Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Rules

- Add language referencing these rules.
- Agencies will be required to incorporate these into master plans
- Agencies will need to apply for permits to ensure that future facility development follows these rules.

Regional Parks are a Natural Resource-focused System

- Reinforce that the Regional Parks System is natural resource-focused system that balances conservation of natural resources with provision of outdoor recreation.
- Modify language in the plan to capture the importance of balancing conservation with access.
- Emphasize that the Regional Parks System should inspire a legacy of participation in the natural world.

Review and Adoption Schedule

- June 5: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission – overview
- June 6: Committee of the Whole – overview
- June 18: Community Development Committee –if needed
- July 12: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission – recommend
- July 16: Community Development Committee – recommend
- July 25: Metropolitan Council – adopt draft for public comment
- September 17: Community Development Committee – public hearing
- November 13: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission –final review
- November 19: Community Development Committee – final review
- November 28: Metropolitan Council – adopt

Thank You!

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