



IMAGINE²⁰₅₀

2050 Regional Development Guide and Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan

Committee of the Whole

Emmett Mullin and Colin Kelly

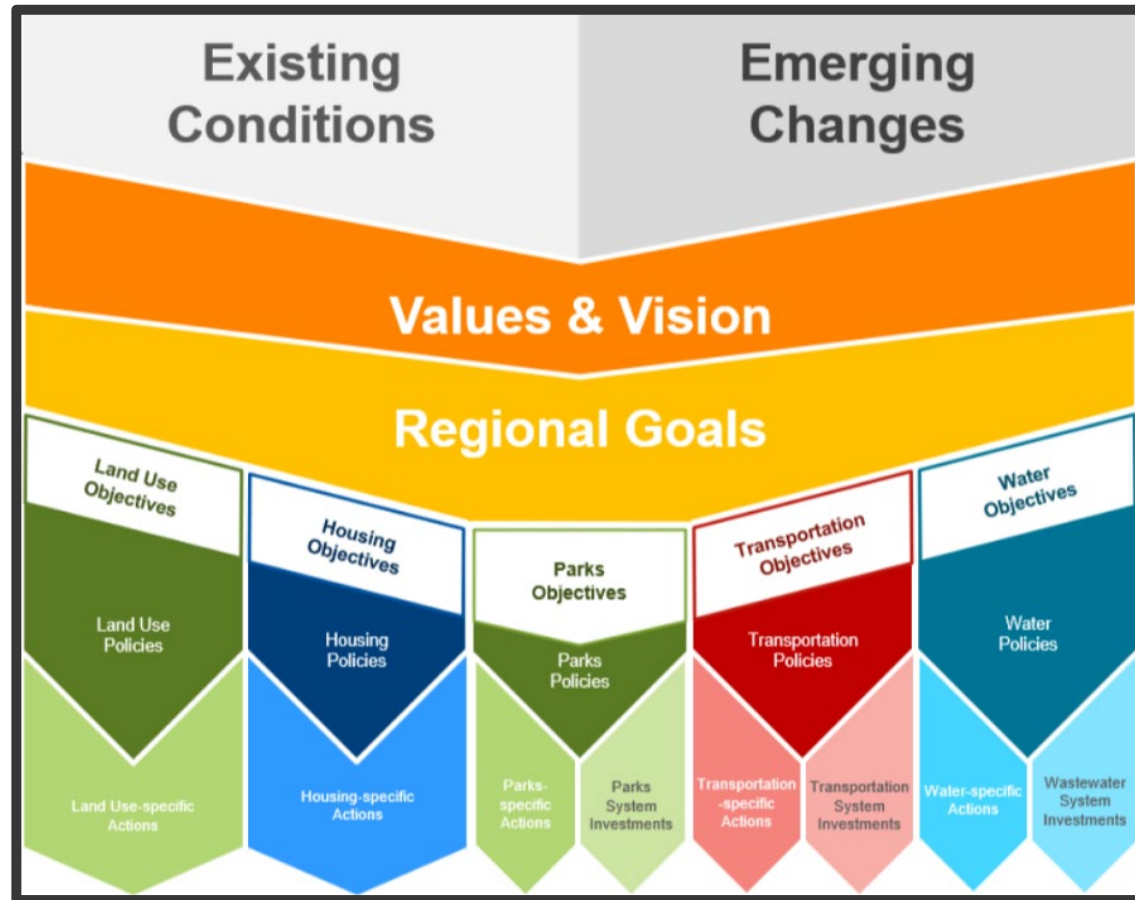
February 21, 2024

metro council.org



Regional Development Guide – Structure, Vision, and Goals

Structure



Vision *(Council endorsed)*

“A prosperous, equitable, and resilient region with abundant opportunities for all to live, work, play, and thrive.”

Goals

Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive

Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and every person feels welcome, included, and empowered.

Our Communities are Healthy and Safe

All our region’s residents live healthy and rewarding lives with a sense of security, dignity, and wellbeing.

Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient

Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and the economy including issues of choice, access, and affordability.

We Lead on Addressing Climate Change

We have mitigated greenhouse gas emissions and have adapted to ensure that our communities and systems are resilient to climate impacts.

We Protect and Restore Natural Systems

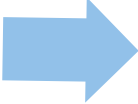
We protect, integrate, and restore natural systems to protect habitat and ensure a high quality of life for the people our region

Parks Policy Plan Timeline – Summary

Initiation

2022 Quarter 4 –
2023 Quarter 2

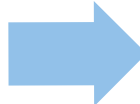
- Scoping
- Existing conditions
- Draft system vision, mission, and values
- Draft community, stakeholder, and public engagement plan



Planning

2023 Quarter 2 –
2023 Quarter 4

- Planner’s Forums, Council-Agency work groups
- Initial policy and plan development



Execution

2023 Quarter 4 –
2024 Quarter 2

- Continued policy and plan development
- Draft (~60%) plan complete (May ‘24)
- Plan refinement



Close

2024 Quarter 3 –
2025 Quarter 1

- Final draft (~90%) plan complete (August ‘24)
- Public comment period
- Public hearing (Sept. ‘24)
- Plan refinement
- Council approval (Feb. ‘25)

Coordination with the Regional Development Guide Process, Other Council Systems and Policy Areas

Ongoing Engagement: Council Committees, Implementing Agencies, Community Groups, Stakeholders, Public

Agency-Council Work Groups

1. Community, Stakeholder and Public Engagement
2. Regional Parks and Trails System Vision, Mission and Values
3. Park and Trail Plan Requirements, incl. Equity Analysis Requirement
4. System Plan Considerations, incl. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
5. Strategic, Sustainable Funding
6. Recreation Activities and Facilities
7. Climate and Natural Systems
8. Trail System Coordination

2023 Q1-2023 Q2

2023 Q3 - 2023 Q4

2023 Q4 - 2024 Q1



Draft Regional Parks and Trails Objectives

WORKING REGIONAL GOALS

Our region is equitable and inclusive

Our communities are healthy and safe

Our region is dynamic and resilient

We lead on addressing climate change

We protect and restore natural systems

DRAFT PARKS OBJECTIVES

Foster Equity and Belonging
Connect people with community, natural, and cultural landscapes to better support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Take Care of What We Have
Reinvest in existing regional parks and trails to maintain and enhance visitor experiences.

Meet Future Needs
Meet the growing demand for regional parks and trails through strategic and timely land acquisition and development.

Adapt and Mitigate
Increase the region’s resilience to climate change by adapting land management practices and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Protect and Restore
Protect and restore natural systems to safeguard the well-being of all living things.

EXISTING PARKS POLICIES

Siting and Acquisition
Identify lands with high-quality natural resources that are desirable for Regional Parks System activities and put these lands in a protected status, so they will be available for recreational uses and conservation purposes in perpetuity.

Planning
Promote master planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.

System Protection
Protect public investment in acquisition and development by assuring that every component in the system is able to fully carry out its designated role as long as a need for it can be demonstrated.

Recreation Activities and Facilities
Provide a regional system of recreation opportunities for all residents and visitors while conserving the integrity of the natural resource base within the Regional Parks System on which these opportunities depend.

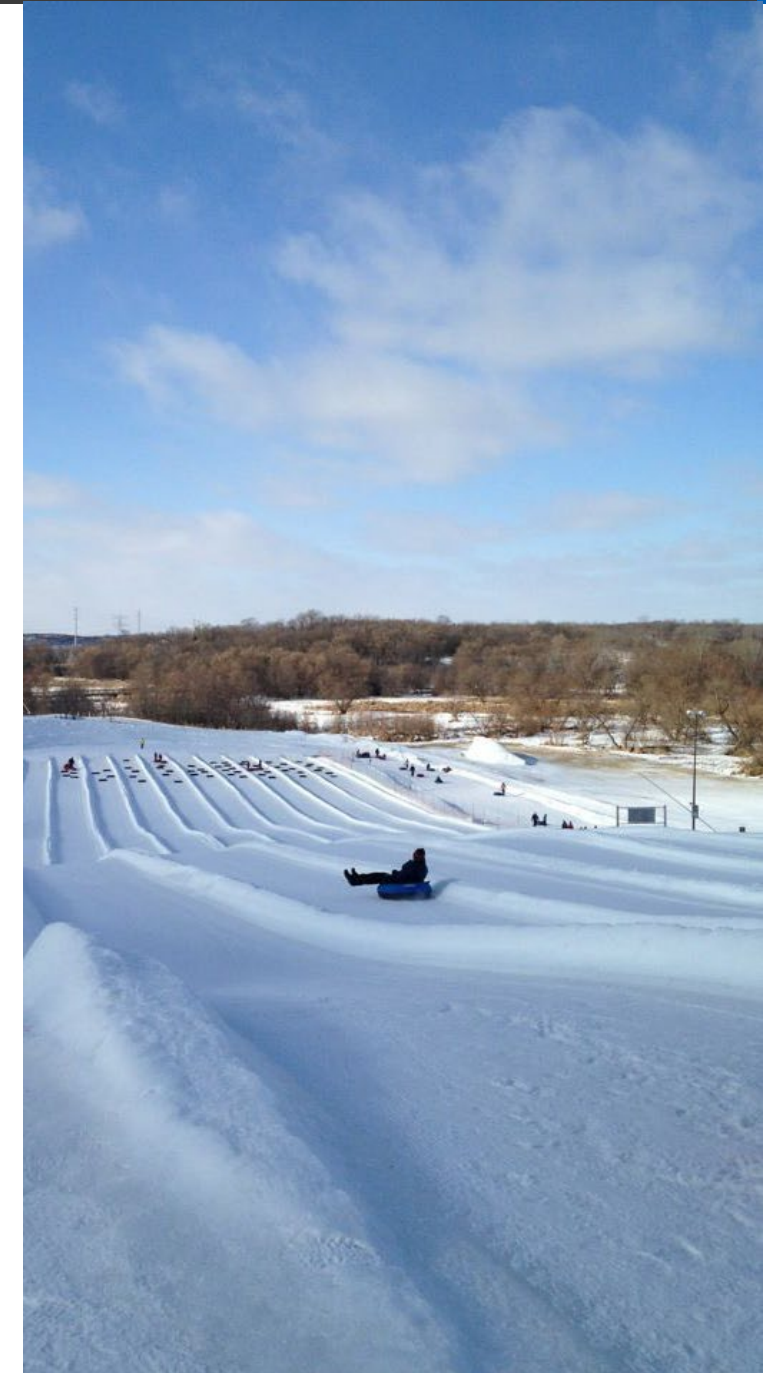
Finance
Provide adequate and equitable funding for the Regional Parks System units and facilities in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefits to the people of the region.

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Advice

November 2023, January and February 2024 meetings

A Range of Ideas

- Create **flexible regional standards for community engagement**, including expectations to engage people outside service area/jurisdiction.
- Promote **consistent wayfinding and signage** across system.
- Create new policy around **communication and marketing** of our high-quality system. Promote **public awareness** of the system.
- Create **sustainable approach to fund system**. Can we achieve what's currently included in the system plan? By when?
- Address **water quality** and **availability**. How to best inform people of issues like PFAS?
- **Rethink regional trails** as more than just a place to bike. Provide more park-like amenities in corridors that have more space.



Implementing Agency Partner Advice

Jan. 18, 2024 – Discussion of Draft Parks Objectives

Equity Ideas

- Streamline equity analysis and public engagement requirements
- Strengthen tribal relationships, co-management of parks and trails
- Decriminalize park ordinances

Regional Parks and Trails System Plan Ideas

- New cultural landscape classification idea
- New natural system/open-space classification idea

Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Ideas

- Promote regional trails as GHG reduction strategy, recognize as arterial backbone of an active transportation network.
- Use trail corridors to protect and connect habitat and wildlife.
- Create multi-jurisdictional Climate Action Plans



Implementing Agency Partner Advice

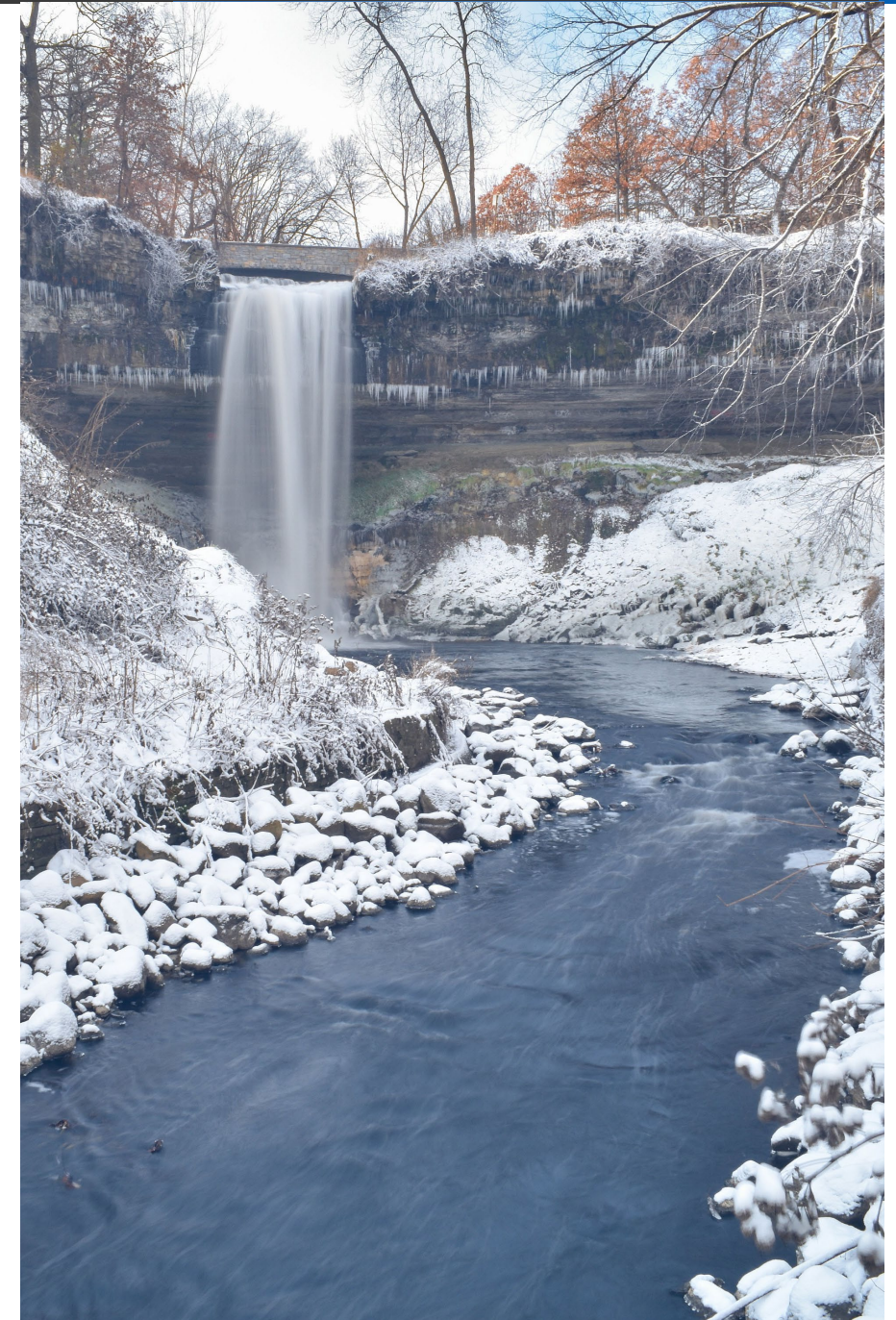
Jan. 18, 2024 – Discussion of Draft Parks Objectives

Natural Systems Ideas

- Emphasize lands with restoration potential, including former industrial landscapes.
- Designate lands in low-service, low-wealth, high BIPOC areas.
- Convert abandoned railroad corridors to regional trails.

Recreation Activities and Facilities Ideas

- Expand allowable activities and facilities in regional parks and trails to meet emerging needs.
- Balance flexibility with desire to retain our natural system foundation.



Draft Regional Parks and Trails Objectives

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Where does the input lead us?

Consider new and revised policies, actions



**DRAFT
PARKS
OBJECTIVES**

<p>Foster Equity and Belonging</p> <p>Connect people with community, natural, and cultural landscapes to better support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.</p>	<p>Take Care of What We Have</p> <p>Reinvest in existing regional parks and trails to maintain and enhance visitor experiences.</p>	<p>Meet Future Needs</p> <p>Meet the growing demand for regional parks and trails through strategic and timely land acquisition and development.</p>	<p>Adapt and Mitigate</p> <p>Increase the region's resilience to climate change by adapting land management practices and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>Protect and Restore</p> <p>Protect and restore natural systems to safeguard the well-being of all living things.</p>
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**EXISTING &
EMERGING
PARKS
POLICIES**

<p>System Plan (3) TBD</p> <p>Consider new classifications: cultural landscape and environmental open space</p>	<p>Natural Systems (4a) TBD</p> <p>Locating and acquisition, locate lands in low service areas - high BIPOC, low wealth</p>	<p>Adaptation (4b) TBD</p> <p>Create Climate Action Plans that are multi-jurisdictional and enable access to federal funding</p>	<p>Mitigation (4c) TBD</p> <p>Promote regional trail network as greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.</p>	<p>Planning (5) Promote long-range planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.</p> <p>Promote co-management with tribes, improved access to public transportation</p>	<p>System Protection (6) Protect public investment in acquisition and development...</p> <p>Local comp. plans, conversions, reimbursement for contamination, env'tl site assessments, telecom. towers, placement of utilities</p>	<p>Equitable Recreation Activities and Facilities (7) Provide a regional system of recreation opportunities... while conserving the integrity of the natural resource base...</p> <p>Expand allowable amenities, allow flexibility, rethink regional trail corridors for expanded use beyond walking, biking, etc.</p>
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**EXISTING &
EMERGING
PARKS
ACTIONS**

Action: Sustainably fund regional parks and trails through multiple grant programs (*connects to all policy areas*) (8, 9)

Action: Build awareness of system amenities, importance of habitat protection, engagement opps, etc. (*connects to all policy areas*) (9)

Questions, Discussion

Council staff have gathered a lot of input on draft objectives and existing and emerging policies and actions.

- *What resonates?*
- *What is missing?*
- *What is your advice for Council staff as regional parks and trails policy is drafted?*





Thank you

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