Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment and Draft System Additions Recommendation

August 3, 2020

Community Development Committee

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment

Targeted Public Engagement Opportunities

1. Regional Designations
2. Boundary Adjustments Policy Clarification
3. Bridging Facilities
4. Estimated Costs to Complete the System
5. Equity Analysis Requirement for master planning
6. Workplan for the Regional Parks Policy Plan

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2020 Regional Park System Additions, Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment Timeline

Review criteria, seek advice

February and March

- February 26 - Implementing agency (I.A.) partner meeting
- March 5 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Process focus
- March 26 - I.A. partner meeting
  - Draft application

Develop, submit applications

April and May

- April 9 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Draft application
- April 20 - CDC **info** item
  - Draft application
- April 22 - **Launch system additions application**
- April 30 - I.A. partner meeting
- May 7 - MPOSC **info** item
- May 18 - CDC **info** item
- May 20 - **System additions application due**
- May 21 – Land Use Advisory Committee meeting
- May 28 - I.A. partner meeting

Initial review, feedback - Draft staff recommendation

June and July

- June 4 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Outline agency proposals, part 1
- June 11 – MPOSC info item
  - Outline agency proposals, part 2
- June 25 - I.A. partner meeting
- July 15 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Draft recommendation
- July 30 - I.A. partner meeting

Propose action to release Policy Plan amendment for public comment, open public comment period

August

- August 3 – CDC **info** item
  - Draft recommendation
- August 13 - MPOSC **business** item
  - Propose action to release Policy Plan amend. for public cmnt on Aug. 26
- August 17 - CDC **business** item
  - Propose action to release Policy Plan amend. for public cmnt on Aug. 26
- August 26 - MC **business** item
  - Release Policy Plan amendment for **public comment** through Oct. 30 and set public hearing date for Oct. 19
- August 27 - I.A. partner meeting

Update on comments, open public hearing - Close public comment period and public hearing

October and November

- October 1 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Update on comments rec'd to-date
- October 19 - CDC **info** item
  - **Open public hearing**
- October 29 - I.A. partner meeting
- October 30 - **Public comment** period and **public hearing close**
- November 5 - MPOSC **info** item
  - Update on comments rec'd and themes
- November 16 - CDC **info** item
  - Update on comments rec'd and themes

Summarize public comments, propose Policy Plan amendment adoption

December

- December 3 - I.A. partner meeting
- December 3 - MPOSC **business** item
  - Summary of public comment, how it has impacted staff recommendation; propose Policy Plan amendment adoption
- December 7 - CDC **business** item
  - Summary of public comment, how it has impacted staff recommendation; propose Policy Plan amendment adoption
- December 9 - MC **business** item
  - Summary of public comment, how it has impacted staff recommendation, Policy Plan amendment adoption

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Boundary Adjustments

- Most boundary adjustments are considered through the system additions process
- Minor boundary adjustments can be accomplished through a master plan amendment or acquisition master plan amendment to provide a more timely and simplified process
  - Minor adjustments are sometimes needed for land exchanges, boundary corrections, and new acquisition opportunities

Boundary Adjustments *continued*

- For Regional Parks, Park Reserves, and Special Recreation Features, minor boundary adjustments will meet one of the following size criteria:
  1. A maximum of 100 acres
  2. A maximum of 20% of the approved master plan administrative park boundary
- Regional Trail and Regional Trail Search Corridor realignments are considered minor boundary adjustments
- Regional Trail and Regional Trail Search Corridor extensions are major boundary adjustments and will be considered only through the system additions process.

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Questions, Discussion

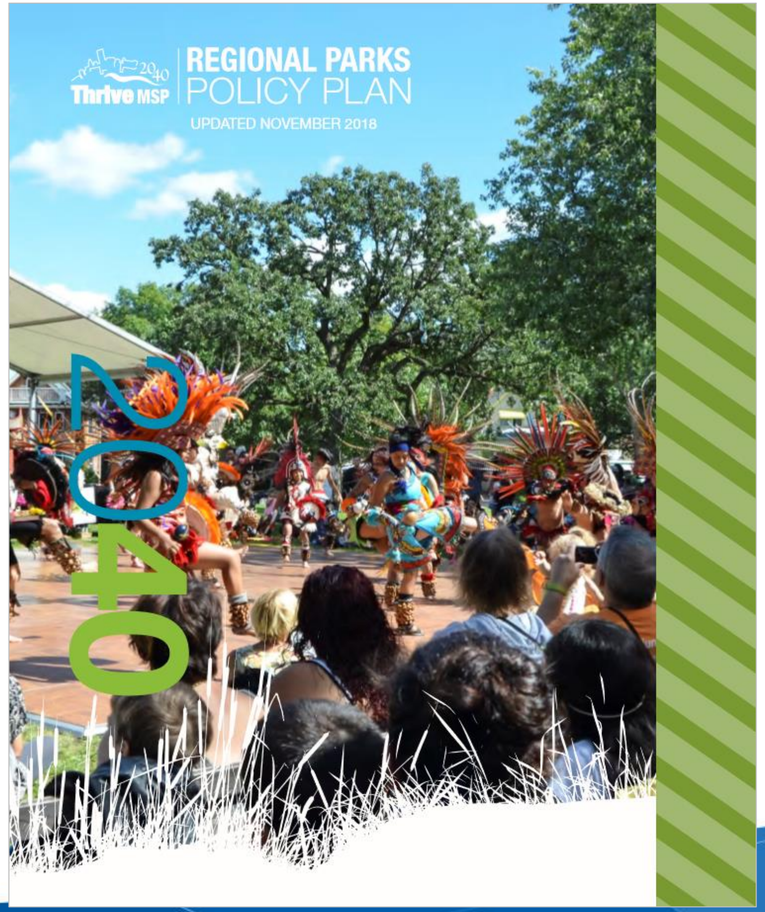
- Do you support the draft Boundary Adjustment language?

Red-winged Blackbird at Crow-Hassan Park Reserve

Why We're Here: Minnesota State Statute 473.147

The Policy Plan shall:

- "…identify generally the areas which should be acquired…"
- "…provide a system of regional recreation open space…"
- "…meet the outdoor recreation needs of the people of the metropolitan area…"



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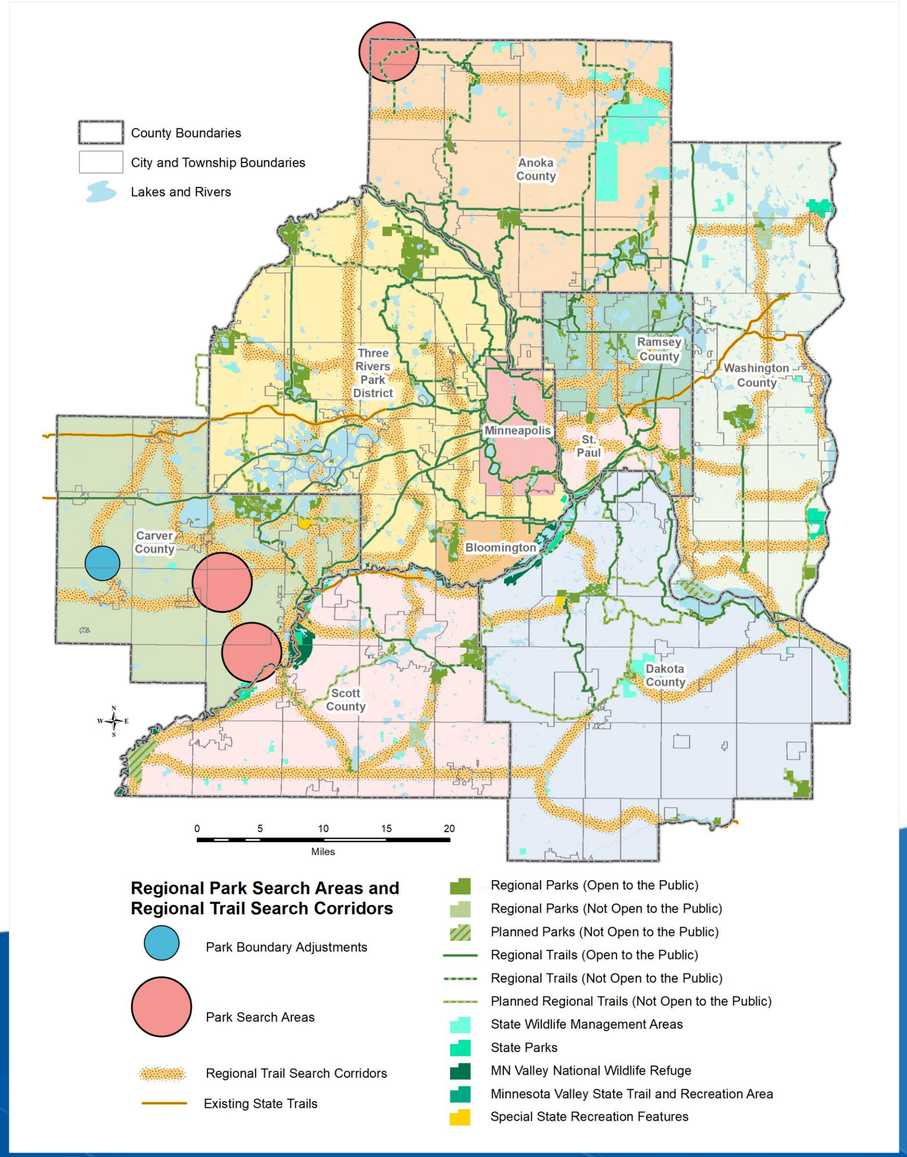
Envisioning our Regional Parks and Trails System Future

Our Process – Beginning with Contextual Considerations

- Climate change
- Demographic changes and the rising place of equity
- Evolving user needs, trends, expectations
- Sustainable funding

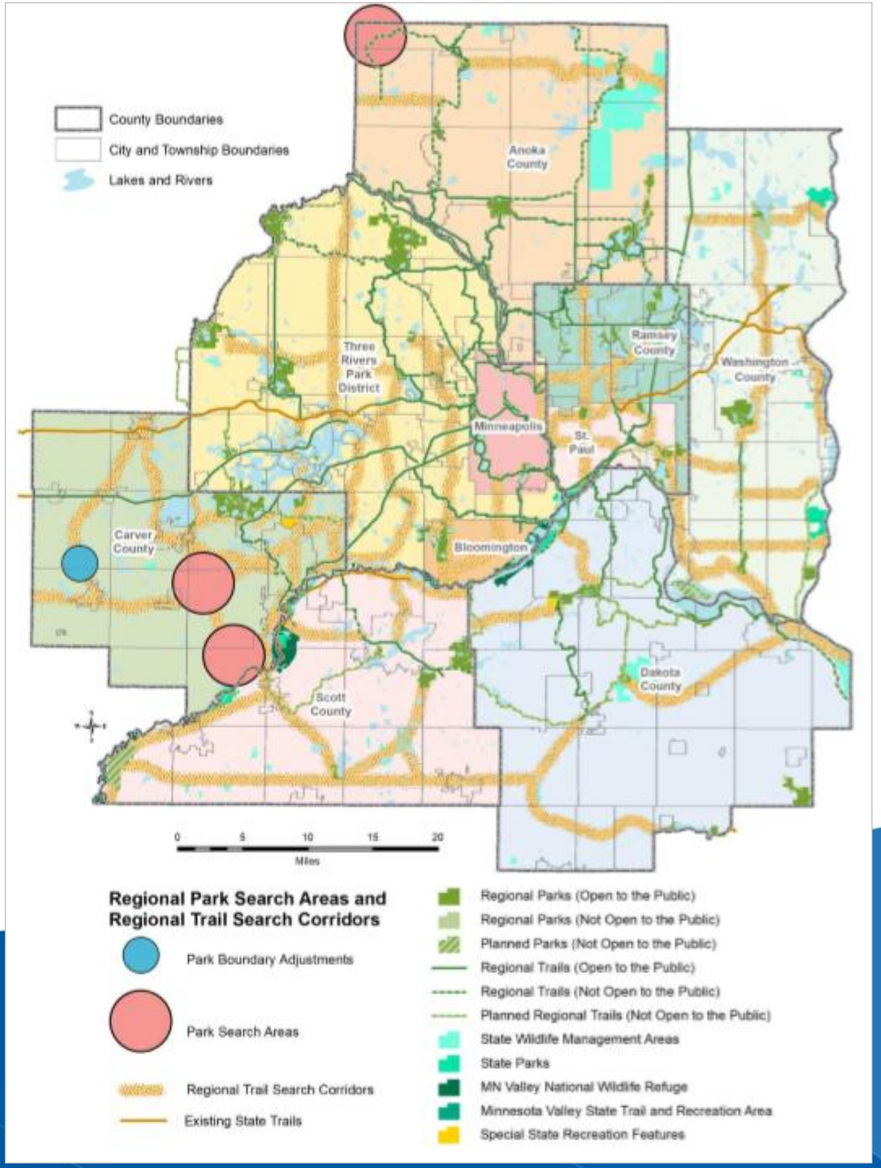
Our Question - What is the emerging Regional Parks and Trails System?



2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
System Overview

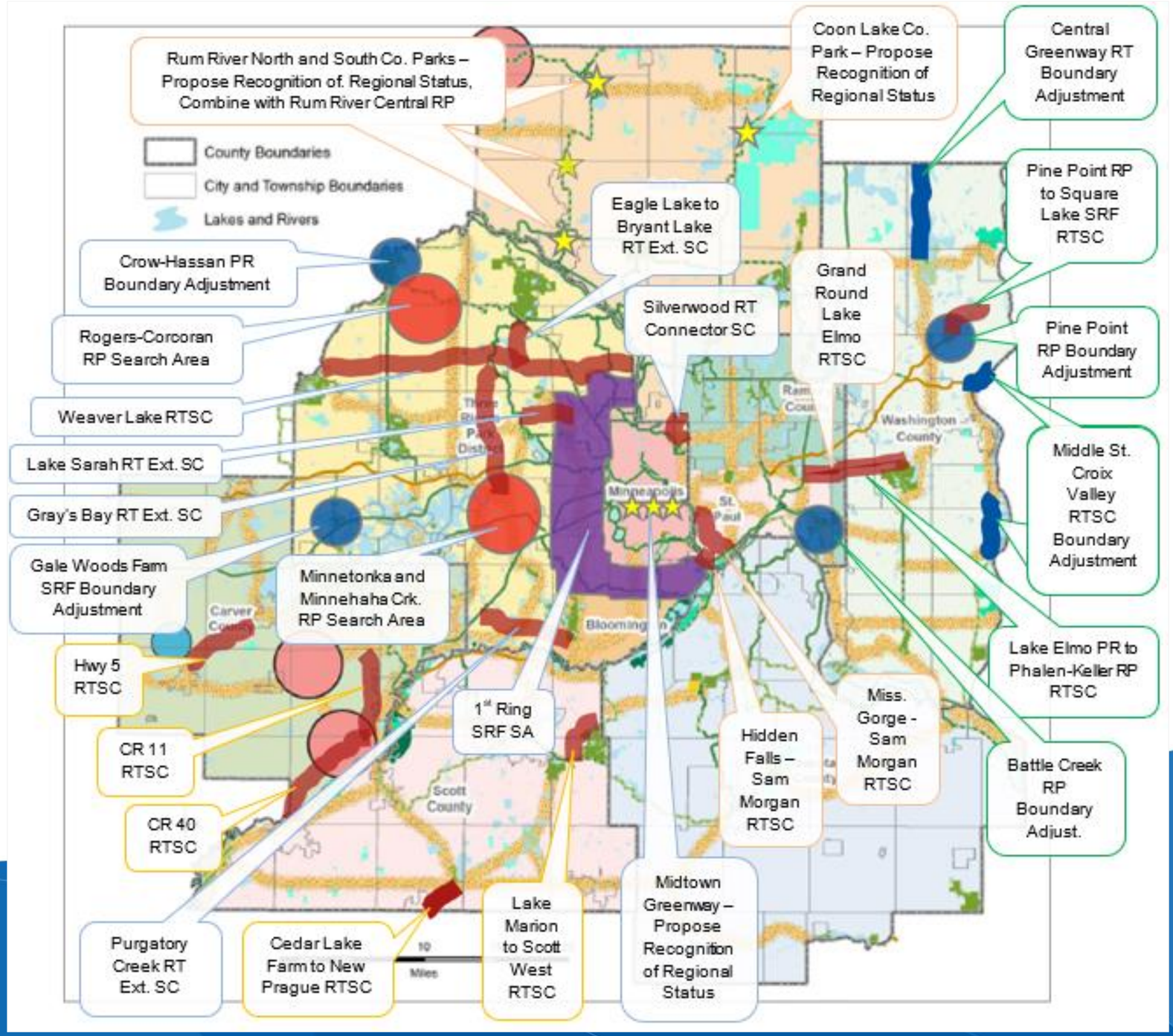
The Regional Parks System (2018) includes:

- **56** Regional Parks and Park Reserves
- **8** Special Recreation Features
- **49** Regional Trails
- **54,730 acres** open for public use



Overview of 2020 Regional Park System Addition Proposals

- 28 proposals, 8 agencies
  - 18 Regional Trail Search Corridors or Extensions
  - 4 Regional Park Boundary Adjustments
  - 3 propose Recognition of Regional Status
  - 2 Regional Park Search Areas
  - 1 Special Recreation Feature Search Area



Natural Resources - Council policy framework

- “Stewardship means responsibly managing our region’s finite resources, including **natural resources**… financial resources, and our existing investments in infrastructure.” (*Thrive MSP 2040*)
- “To protect **natural resources**, the Council will fund ongoing acquisition of priority **natural resource** areas for inclusion in the Regional Parks System…
(*Thrive MSP 2040*)
- “Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high-quality **natural resources,** increases climate resiliency…”
(*2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)
- “Identify lands with high-quality **natural resources**… and put these lands in a protected status...”
(*2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)

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Geographic Balance - Council policy framework

- "…The Council will intentionally consider **regional balance**… in planning, operations, and investment decisions. The Council's intent is that no part of the region is consistently favored or consistently ignored." (*Thrive MSP 2040*)
- "Advancing **regional balance** will be a consideration that helps all parts of the region receive investments that promote prosperity at their stage and level of development." (*Thrive MSP 2040*)
- "**Geographic balance** or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns shall be a consideration when exploring system additions." (*2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)

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Equity – Council policy framework

- "**Equity** connects all residents to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes and abilities… (*Thrive MSP 2040*)
- "Strengthen **equitable** use of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability." (*2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)
- "**Equity** is a consideration in Regional Parks System funding and investment." (*2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)

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Staff-Facilitated Analysis of Proposals

- 28 proposals reviewed
- 26 proposals recommended for addition/designation

<u>A focus on Three Council Priorities</u>

- Natural Resources
- Geographic Balance
- Equity

Policy Priorities: Natural Resources, Geographic Balance and Equity

Natural Resources – High rating

- Acquiring lands with natural qualities most desirable for outdoor recreational activities and protecting an important natural resource feature…

Geographic Balance – High rating

- Proposal demonstrates how the proposed unit will provide geographic balance or fill a gap for the seven-county Metropolitan Area (not just within the agency's jurisdiction), or such balance is supported by spatial analysis… or Council pop. forecasts to 2040.

Equity – High rating

- Proposed trail or park has a significant potential for building a more equitable Regional Park System…

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Designation of Regional Significance

Implementing Agency, Proposal	Natural Resources	Geographic Balance	Equity	Recommend addition?
Anoka County – 2 proposals				
Coon Lake County Park – Propose Recognition of Regional Status	High	Medium	Medium	Yes
Rum River North, South County Parks – Propose Recognition of Regional Status, Combine with Rum River Central Regional Park	High	Medium	Medium	Yes
Carver County – 3 proposals				
Highway 5 Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	Low	No
County Road 11 Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
County Road 40 Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Low	Low	No
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board – 1 proposal				
Midtown Greenway – Propose Recognition of Regional Status	Medium	High	High	Yes
Ramsey County – 1 proposal				
Battle Creek Regional Park Boundary Adjustment	High	Medium	High	Yes
Saint Paul – 3 proposals				
Mississippi Gorge – Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Hidden Falls – Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Grand Round – Lake Elmo Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	High	High	Yes
Scott County – 2 proposals				
Lake Marion to Scott West Regional Trail Search Corridor	High	High	High	Yes
Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague Destination Regional Trail Search Corridor	High	Medium	Medium	Yes

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Designation of Regional Significance

Implementing Agency, Proposal	Natural Resources	Geographic Balance	Equity	Recommend addition?
Three Rivers Park District – 11 proposals				
Weaver Lake Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Eagle Lake to Bryant Lake Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Gray's Bay Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor	Medium	Low	High	Yes
Silverwood Regional Trail Connector Search Corridor	Medium	High	High	Yes
Purgatory Creek Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Lake Sarah Regional Trail Extension Search Corridor	Medium	Medium	High	Yes
Rogers-Corcoran Regional Park Search Area	High	Medium	Medium	Yes
Minnetonka and Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area	High	Medium	High	Yes
First-Ring Special Recreation Feature Search Area	Low	High	High	Yes
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve Boundary Adjustment	High	Medium	Low	Yes
Gale Woods Farm Special Recreation Feature Boundary Adjustment	High	Low	Medium	Yes
Washington County – 5 proposals				
Pine Point Regional Park Boundary Adjustment	High	Medium	Medium	Yes
Middle St. Croix Valley Regional Trail Search Corridor Boundary Adjustment	Medium	High	Low	Yes
Central Greenway Regional Trail Search Corridor Boundary Adjustment	High	Medium	Low	Yes
Lake Elmo Park Reserve to Phalen-Keller Regional Park - Regional Trail Search Corridor	Medium	High	High	Yes
Pine Point Regional Park to Square Lake Special Recreation Feature - Regional Trail Search Corridor	High	High	Medium	Yes

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Summary of Staff-facilitated Draft Recommendation

- 26 proposals recommended for addition, 8 agencies
  - 16 Regional Trail Search Corridors or Extensions
  - 4 Regional Park Boundary Adjustments
  - 3 propose Recognition of Regional Status
  - 2 Regional Park Search Areas
  - 1 Special Recreation Feature Search Area

- 12 proposals were rated “high” for **natural resources**
- Eight proposals were rated “high” for **geographic balance**
- 16 proposals were rated “high” for **equity**

- 1 proposal was rated “high” for all three Council priority areas
- 8 proposals were rated “high” for two Council priority areas

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Questions, Discussion

- Do you support the Staff-Facilitated Draft Recommendation, as modified following the July 15 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting?
- What advice or guidance do you have for Council staff as the draft Policy Plan amendment is released for public comment?

Thank you!