Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment and Draft System Additions Recommendation

August 3, 2020
Community Development Committee
2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment

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

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

**Propose action to release Policy Plan amendment for public comment, open public comment period**
- August 3 - CDC info item
  - Draft recommendation
  - August 13 - MPOSC Business item
    - Propose action to release Policy Plan amends for public comment 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 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

**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

**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
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.
Questions, Discussion

- Do you support the draft Boundary Adjustment language?

Red-winged Blackbird at Crow-Hassan Park Reserve
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…”
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?
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)
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)
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)
Staff-Facilitated Analysis of Proposals

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

A focus on Three Council Priorities
- 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…
# Designation of Regional Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing Agency, Proposal</th>
<th>Natural Resources</th>
<th>Geographic Balance</th>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Recommend addition?</th>
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<td><strong>Anoka County – 2 proposals</strong></td>
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<td>Rum River North, South County Parks – Propose Recognition of Regional Status, Combine with Rum River Central Regional Park</td>
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<td>First-Ring Special Recreation Feature Search Area</td>
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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
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!