

Battle Creek Regional Park Long-Range Plan, Ramsey County

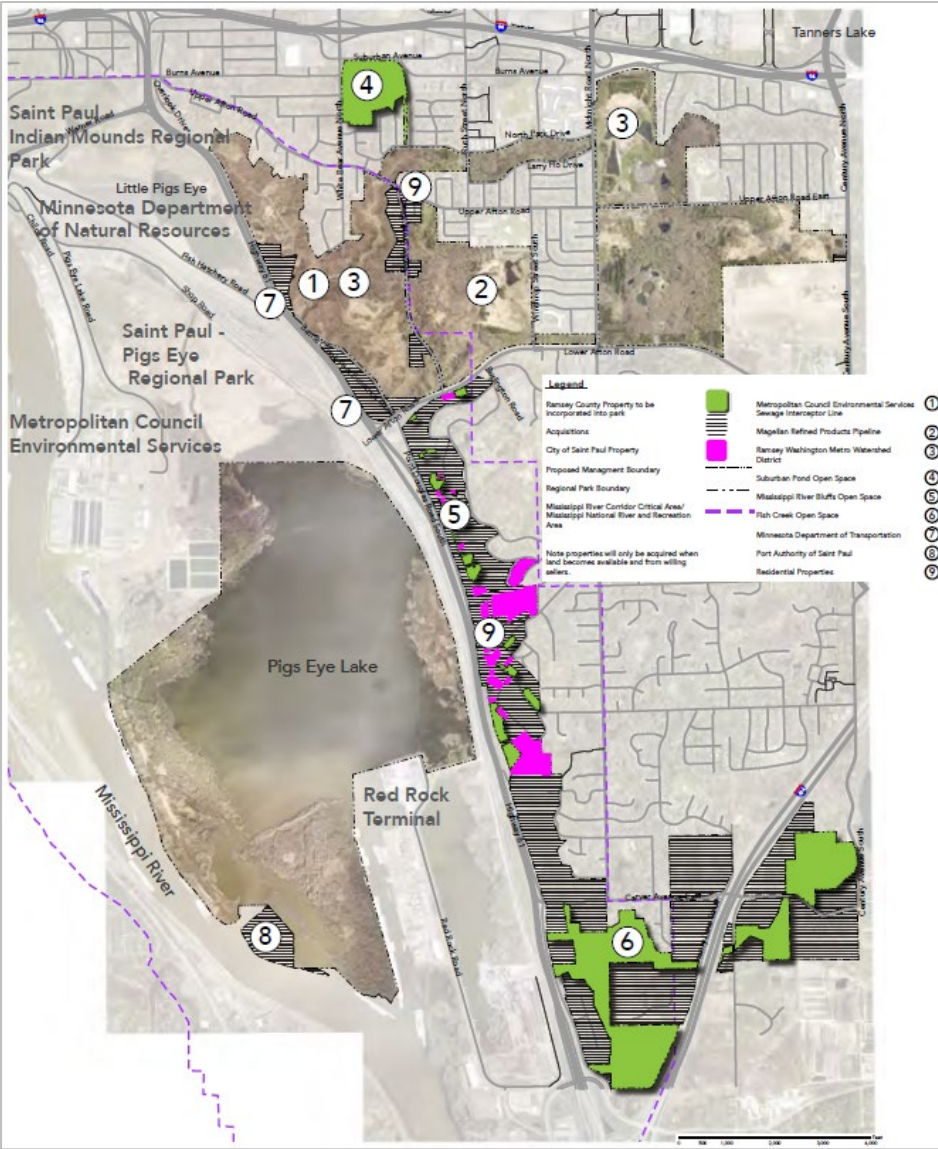
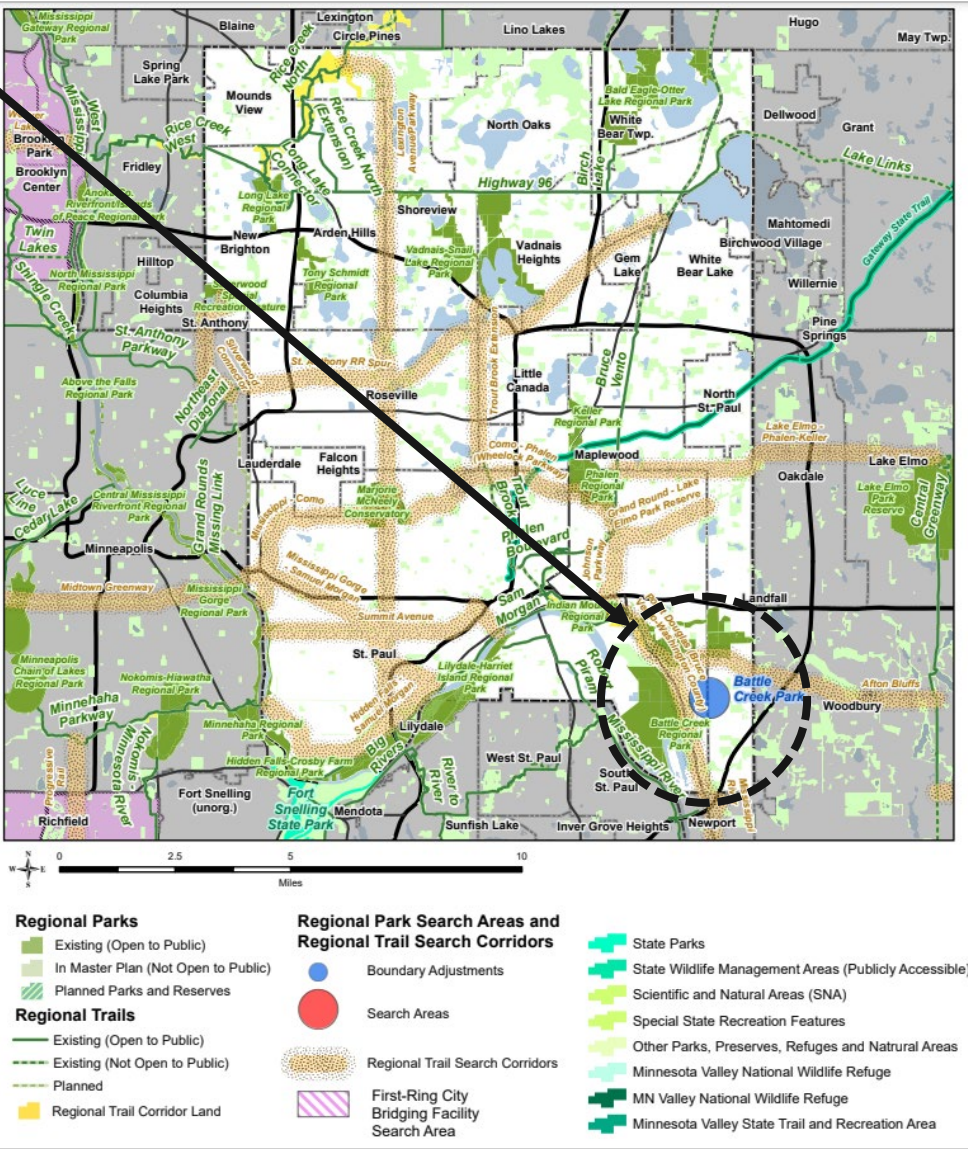
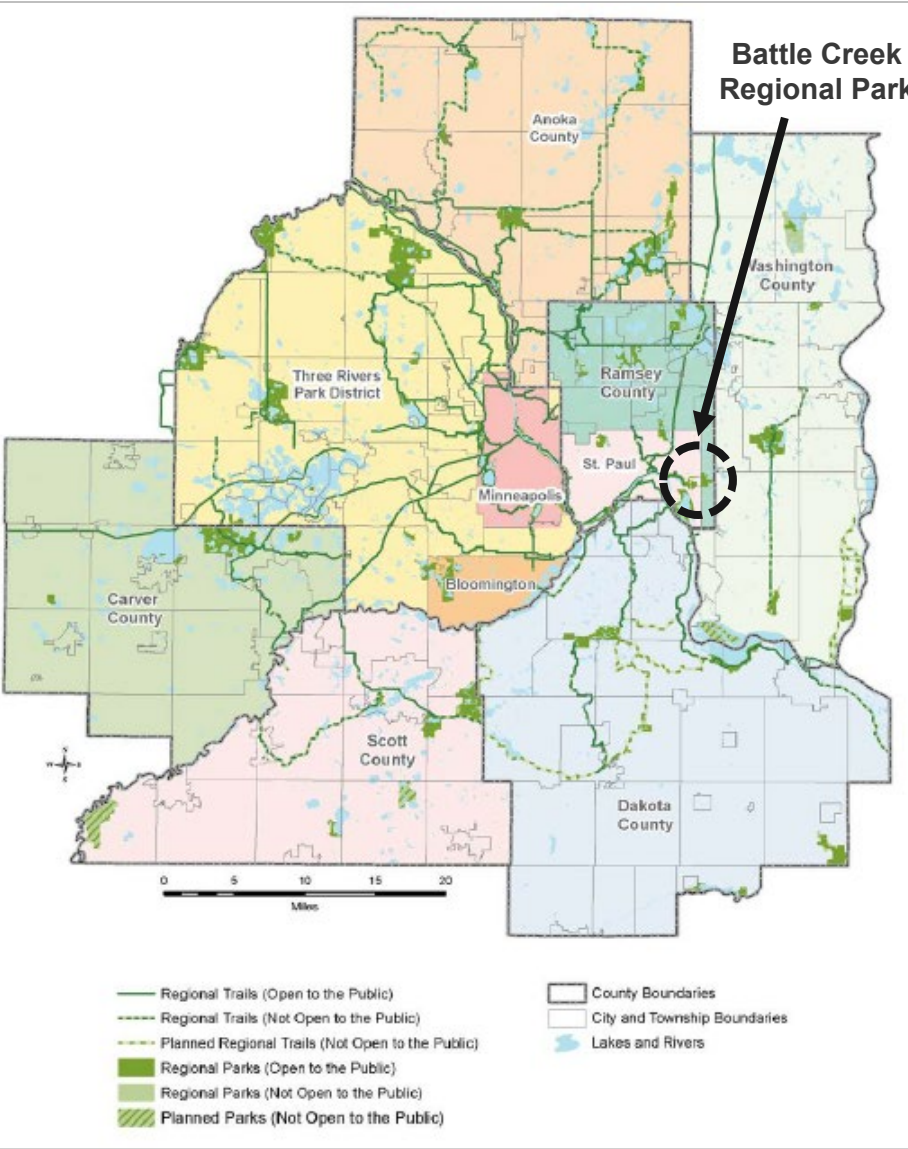
Business Item 2023-261 SW

Community Development Committee



November 6, 2023 | Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst

Battle Creek Regional Park



Metropolitan Council

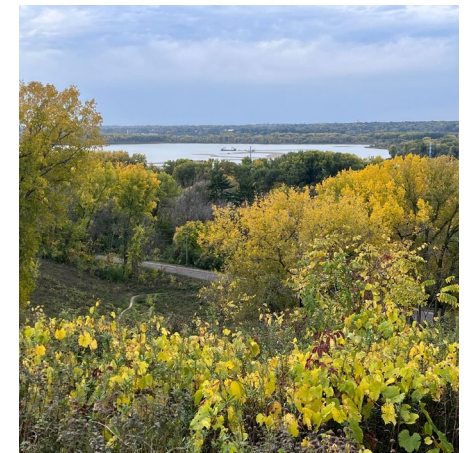
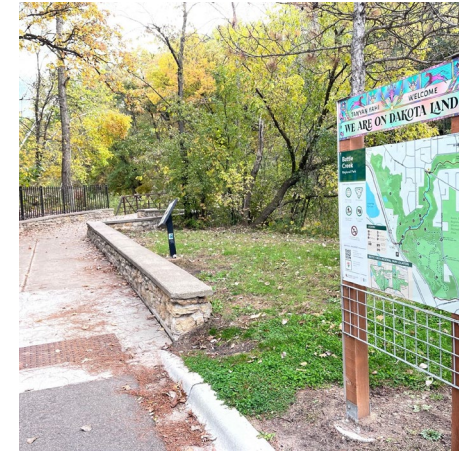
Battle Creek Regional Park within the Regional Parks & Trails System

Battle Creek Regional Park in Ramsey County

Battle Creek Regional Park

Partner Engagement

- Ramsey County started the long-range planning efforts for the Battle Creek Regional Park in Spring 2019.
- Stakeholder agencies are the key decision makers throughout the planning process and were primarily involved through the Project Management Team (PMT).
- The PMT consisted of representatives from:
 - Ramsey County
 - City of Saint Paul
 - City of Maplewood
 - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
 - SRF Consulting Inc.
 - Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi (*formerly known as Lower Phalen Creek Project*)
- The County received resolutions and letters of support from:
 - Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission
 - City of Saint Paul
 - City of Maplewood
 - District 1 – Southeast Community Organization



Public Engagement

Goals

- Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure there is transparency and consistent communication of project information.
- Use an equity lens in amplifying the voices of communities traditionally left out of planning processes, including immigrants, people of color, LGBTQ communities, Native American communities, youth, and the elderly.
- Connect with a broad cross section of community stakeholders to provide ideas, guidance, and feedback.
- Deploy a defined communications and messaging strategy.

Recommendations

- Balance recreation with natural passive uses.
- Improve bike and pedestrian connectivity.
- Play area improvements.
- Realize the goal of connecting people and youth to the park.
- Improve wayfinding.
- Protect the bluffs and acquire more bluff land for the park.
- Identify areas for water fountains and restrooms.
- Better narrative of the site and its history.
- Preserve natural areas and strategically locate new development within developed park areas.



Equity Analysis

- Relative to the rest of the County, the area surrounding the regional park is a more racially diverse area with a population that also skews slightly younger.
- The focus area has larger populations of Asian or Pacific Islanders (15.3%), black or African Americans (13.3%), and Hispanic or Latino people (8.9%).
- Specific engagement locations and events included:
 - Hmongtown Marketplace.
 - Battle Creek Pavilion Eritrean Muslim Council
 - Southeast Community Organization Community
 - Battle Creek Recreation Center
 - Southeast Community Organization Council
 - Carver Elementary School
 - Battle Creek Middle School English as a Second Language Classroom.

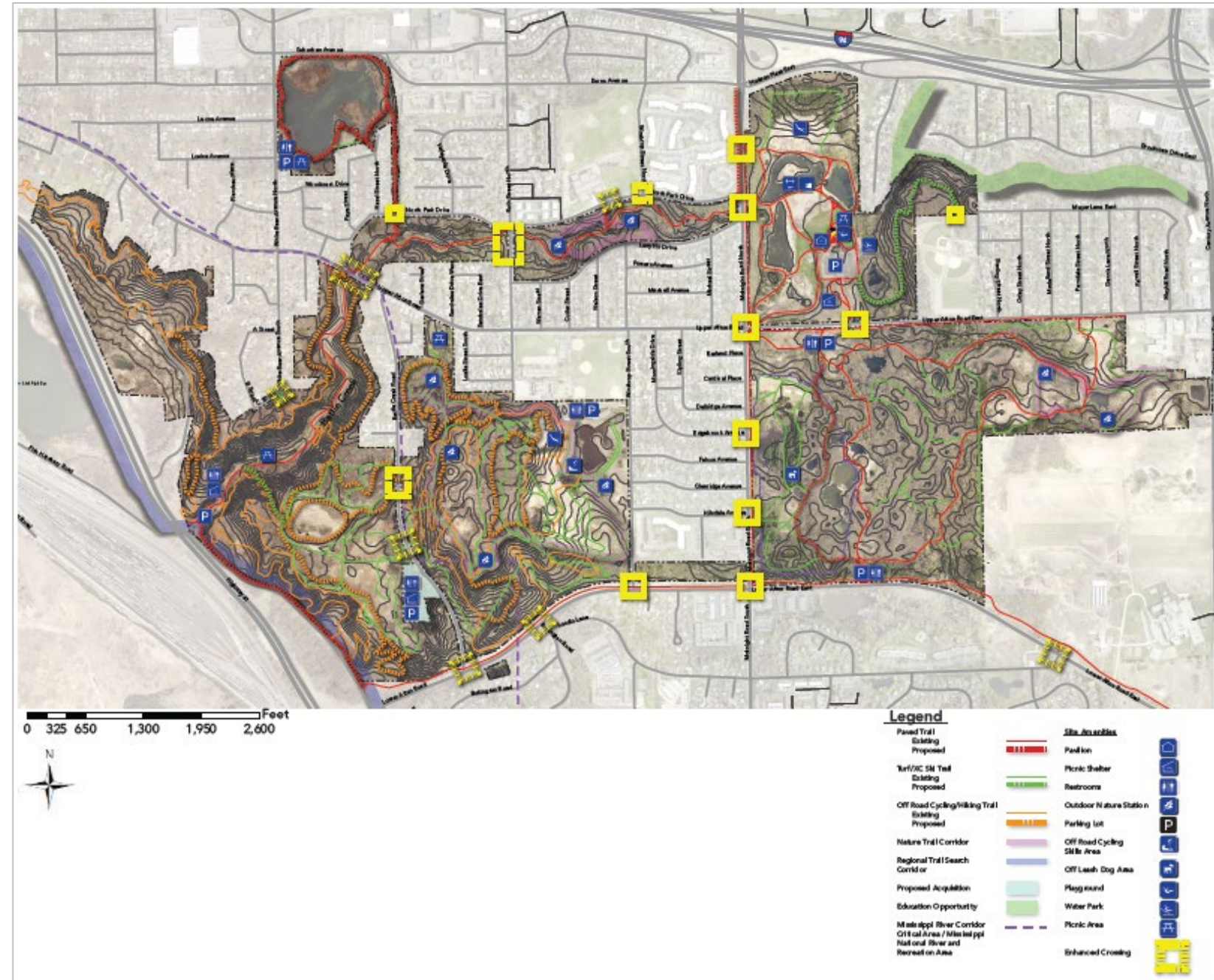
Themes from Underrepresented Members and Groups

- Prioritize beginner to intermediate level outdoor programs.
- Prioritize introductory outdoor recreational activity programs.
- Prioritize the redevelopment of waterworks or a free splash pad.
- Develop and improve park amenities.
- Add trailhead amenities.
- Addition of a nature center.
- Increase fishing opportunities.
- Create safe access to the regional park.



Development Concept

- Connect the Battle Creek and Fish Creek segments.
- Recreational development includes a mix of active and passive opportunities.
- Existing trailheads and access points have planned enhancements.
- Major amenities proposed include:
 - Multi-season trailhead and nature center
 - New trailhead locations
 - Waterworks redevelopment or reconstruction
 - Extension of existing trails
 - Safe pedestrian access points
 - Interpretive signage along three learning trail corridors
 - Improvements to the off-leash dog area
 - Additional picnicking opportunities
 - Benches, trash and recycling bins, wayfinding signs, water fountains
 - Additional access to the Pigs Eye Lake segment, long-term



Overall Estimated Cost



- Total estimated acquisition cost associated with the Battle Creek Regional Park is \$58,754,945.
- Total estimated improvement cost is \$30,150,000.
- Total estimated annual operations and maintenance costs are \$878,000.
- Taken together, the total estimated cost associated with the Battle Creek Regional Park Long-Range Plan is \$89,602,945.

Rationale for Proposed Actions

The Battle Creek Regional Park Long-Range Plan is consistent with the requirements of the:

- *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*
 - Planning Strategy 1
- Other Council policies

Proposed Actions

1. Approve Ramsey County's Battle Creek Regional Park Long- Range Plan.
2. Require Ramsey County, prior to initiating any development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Environmental Services Assistant Manager at the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division.



Thank you

Colin Kelly

Planning Analyst, Community Development
colin.kelly@metc.state.mn.us

