



2050 Regional Development Guide and Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan

Community Development Committee

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March 18, 2024 metro council.org

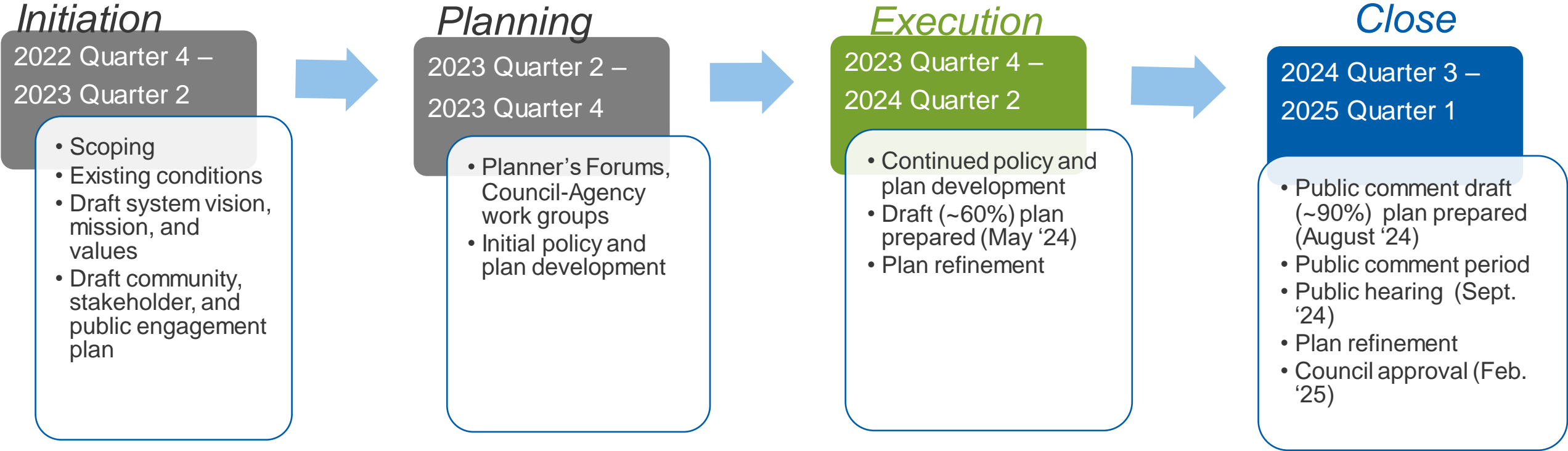




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Parks Policy Plan Timeline – Summary



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

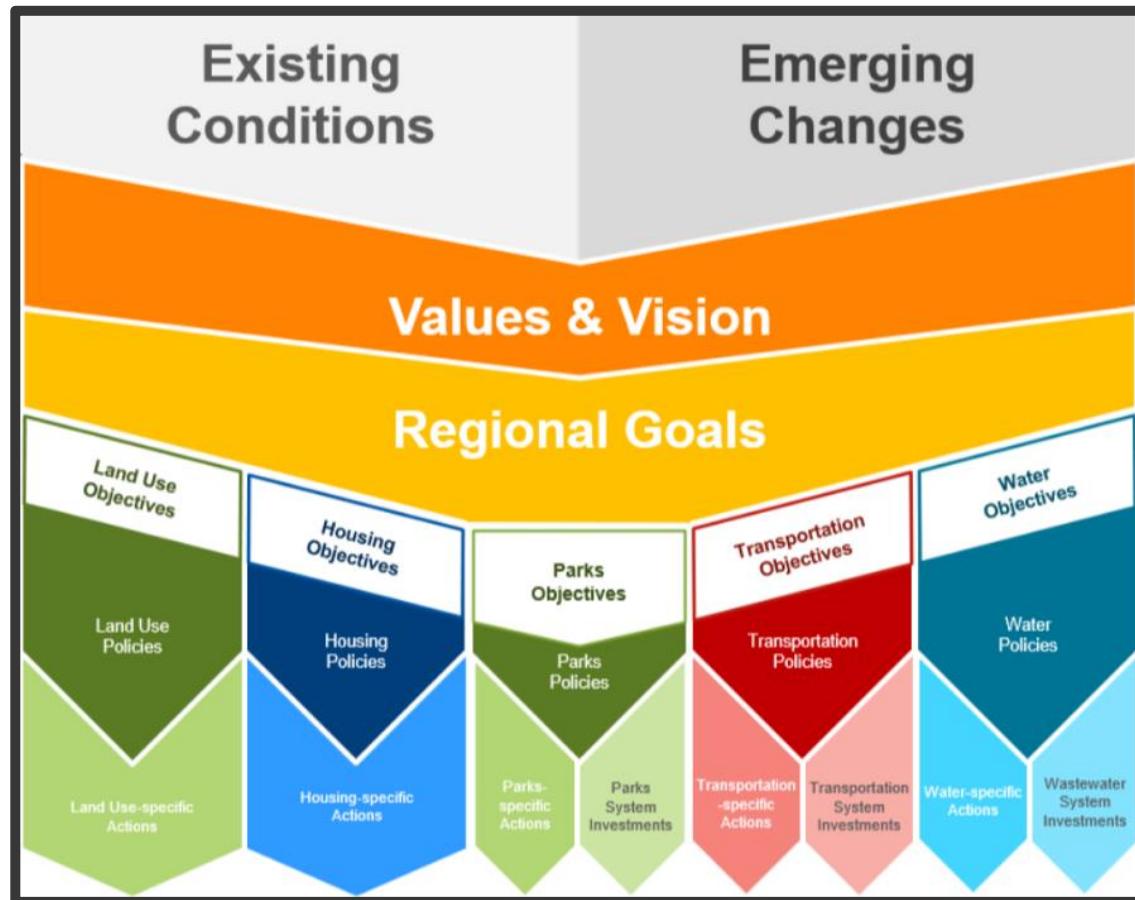
Ongoing Engagement: Council Committees, Implementing Agencies, Community Groups, Stakeholders, Public

Proposed Early 2024 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Engagement

Timing	Proposed Topics, Focus
January 4, 2024	<i>Imagine 2050</i> : Latest timeline, organizational approach. Focus : Priorities (policies and actions) to achieve objectives.
February 1, 2024	<i>Imagine 2050</i> : Emerging regional parks policies and actions Focus : Demographic changes, climate adaptation and mitigation.
March 7, 2024	<i>Imagine 2050</i> : Updated regional parks policies and actions 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan : Chapters 1-6, including Overview, System Plan, Siting and Acquisition, Planning, and System Protection policies. Focus : Proposals to reorganize content, develop Regional Parks Planning Handbook
April 4, 2024	<i>Imagine 2050</i> : Updated regional parks policies and actions 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan : Chapters 7 and 8, including Recreation Activities and Facilities and Finance policies. Proposed focus : Operations and maintenance challenge, completing the system.
May 2, 2024	Focus : Present overview of 60% draft plan and Regional Parks Planning Handbook.

Regional Development Guide – Structure, Vision, and Goals

Structure



Vision *(Informally 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

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

Feb. 1, 2024

- Address **water quality** and **availability**.
- **Rethink regional trails** as more than just a place to bike.
- **Joint promotion** of regional park and trail opportunities could **unlock economic benefits** for local communities.
- **Climate and natural systems** content seems to be **elevated**. That is important.

March 7, 2024

- Consider including **quantitative goals** for number of trails developed, acres protected, etc.
- **Safety** is critical. Let's be sure this is addressed appropriately.
- Really like proposal to **move procedural items** to a handbook.
- *Imagine 2050* should be **visionary** and **aspirational**.
- Looking out to 2050, **water may be a real limiting factor**.
- Consider an **executive summary**.
- Propose **approving handbook first**, before *Imagine 2050*.



Implementing Agency Partner Advice



Jan. 18, 2024

- Strengthen tribal relationships, **co-management** of parks and trails.
- New **cultural landscape** classification idea
- New **natural system/open-space** classification idea
- Create multi-jurisdictional **Climate Action Plans**
- Expand **allowable activities and facilities** in regional parks and trails to meet emerging needs

Feb.15, 2024

- Co-management is too specific an action at system level. Consider **indigenous reconciliation**.
- Like new classification ideas. Consider using existing classifications. **Define cultural landscapes.**
- Council should be a **convenor, not imposer.**
- **Don't diminish regional status** by adding more local amenities.

Committee of the Whole Advice

February 21, 2024

- Agree with shifting **siting and acquisition** to an action.
- Appreciate emerging policy space for **cultural landscapes**.
- Protect and provide access to **natural areas** in **suburban and rural contexts** too. Restoration of industrial landscapes is too narrow a focus.
- How do we assess **access and availability** of regional parks throughout the metropolitan area?
- Appreciate the “**take care of what we have**” objective. This is critical.
- Appreciate reframing of policy to **equitable recreation activities and facilities**.
- Appreciate the existing policy plan’s orientation to **community engagement**. This is meaningful.



Where does the advice lead us?

Propose reframing existing content



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 & EMERGING PARKS POLICIES

System Plan (3)
TBD

Consider new classifications: cultural landscape and environmental open space

Natural Systems (4a)
TBD

Locating and acquisition; locate new regional park and trails in underserved areas, where possible

Adaptation (4b)
TBD

Convene agencies to develop climate action plans that are multi-jurisdictional, better position Council and agencies for federal funding

Mitigation (4c)
TBD

Promote regional trail network as greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.

Planning (5)
Promote long-range planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.

Promote indigenous reconciliation, improved access to public transportation

System Protection (6)
Protect public investment in acquisition and development...

Local comp. plans, conversions, reimbursement for contamination, env't'l site assessments, telecom. towers, placement of utilities

Equitable Recreation Activities and Facilities (7) Provide a regional system of recreation opportunities... while conserving the integrity of the natural resource base...

Expand allowable amenities, allow flexibility, rethink regional trail corridors for expanded use beyond walking, biking, etc.

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)

Chapter One: Planning for the Twin Cities Region

Existing Content	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrive MSP 2040 • Thrive Outcomes • Thrive Principles • Additional Direction from Thrive MSP 2040 for the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan • Regional Growth and Demographics • Community Designations • Local Comprehensive Plans 	<p>Proposed update and move to Regional Development Guide “front matter”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrive MSP 2040 • Thrive Outcomes • Thrive Principles • Regional Growth and Demographics • Community Designations • Local Comprehensive Plans

High-Level Changes:

- Most content from Chapter One will be integrated into the Regional Development Guide
- Proposal to add remaining content to Chapter Two (Section One)

Chapter Two: Overview of the Regional Parks System and the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Proposed Title: Section One: Overview of the Regional Parks and Trails System and the 2050 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Existing Content	New/Emerging Topics	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • The Regional Parks System • Regional Parks System Management Structure • Regional Parks System Funding • Role of the Regional Parks Policy Plan 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation of remaining Chapter 1 content <p>Research and Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing Conditions • Research and Engagement Summary <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Parks and Trails System Objectives • Connection to Regional Development Guide’s goals and park vision, mission, and values 	<p>Consolidation with other chapters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Parks System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of park units (Regional Parks, Regional Trails, etc.) consolidated into the System Plan section

Chapter Three: System Plan

Proposed Title: Section Two: System Plan

Existing Content	New/Emerging Topics	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Components of the Regional Parks System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Parks • Park Reserves • Regional Trails • Special Recreation Features • Regional Parks System Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing and Planned Regional Parks System Facilities • Boundary Adjustments • Search Areas/Corridors • 2040 Regional Parks System Plan Summary • Introduction to Policy Framework 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation of Regional Park and Trail components (Chapter 2) <p>System Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Landscape and Environmental Open Space Classification 	<p>Proposed move to Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of other parks partners (National, state, local) <p>Proposed move to Regional Development Guide “front matter”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Policy Framework

Chapter Four: Siting and Acquisition Policy and Strategies

Proposed Title: Section Three: Natural Systems and Climate Policy and Actions		
Existing Content	New/Emerging Topics	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 1: Priorities Action 2: Geographic balance Action 3: Council-approved long-range plans Action 4: New regional trails Action 5: Special recreation features 	<p>Natural Systems and Climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on protecting and restoring natural systems Mitigation Action Adaptation Action 	<p>Proposed move to action level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy: Siting Locating and acquisition <p>Proposed move to another chapter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 3: Council-approved long-range plans (Long-range planning) Action 4: New regional trails (System Plan) Action 5: Special recreation features (System Plan)

High-Level Changes:

- Structure for Chapter Four is still to be determined (Potential for separate climate and natural system policies)

Chapter Five: Planning Policy and Strategies

Proposed Title: Section Four: Planning Policy and Actions

Existing Content	New/Emerging Topics	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 1: Long-range plan requirements Action 2: Enhanced multimodal access Action 3: Joint powers agreements Action 4: Cost sharing 	<p>Minor and Administrative Long Range Plan Amendments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes added to Regional Parks and Trails Planner Handbook 	<p>Proposed move to Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 1: Long-range plan requirements (Plan requirements only) Action 3: Joint powers agreements <p>Proposed move to Regional Parks and Trails Grants Administration Guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action 4: Cost sharing

High-Level Changes:

- Action 1 policies will remain in the Regional Parks Policy Plan, but requirements and procedures are proposed to move to the Regional Parks and Trails Planner Handbook

Chapter Six: System Protection Policy and Strategies

Proposed Title: Section Five: System Protection Policy and Actions

Existing Content	Proposed to be Moved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 1: Local Comprehensive Plans • Action 2: Conversions • Action 3: Reimbursement for contamination • Action 4: Environmental Site Assessments • Action 5: Telecommunication Towers • Action 6: Placement of utilities 	<p>Propose move to Regional Parks and Trails Grants Administration Guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 3: Reimbursement for contamination • Action 4: Environmental Site Assessments <p>Propose move to Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 5: Telecommunication Towers (Process) • Action 6: Placement of Utilities (Easement Process Only)

Proposed Content Shifts: Parks and Trails Planning Handbook, Grant Administration Guide



New Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook

Chapter 3, System Plan Introduction: National, Federal, State, Local, Private, and Nonprofit Partners content

Chapter 4, Strategy 5, Special Recreation Features: Bridging facility criteria

Chapter 5, Strategy 1, Planning: Long-range Plan Content Requirements and Amendment Processes

Chapter 6, Strategy 2, Land Conversions: Process;
Strategy 5, Telecommunication Towers: Process; and
Strategy 6, Placement of Utilities: Easement Process

Existing Regional Parks Grant Administration Guide

Chapter 5, Planning, Strategy 4: Cost sharing

Chapter 6, System Protection Strategy 3: Reimbursement for contamination and System Protection

Strategy 4: Environmental Site Assessments for contamination

Questions, Discussion, Advice

Council staff propose moving some content that is not fundamentally oriented to objectives, policies, or actions, or is considered contextual or procedural, to a new Parks Planning Handbook.

- *What are the strengths of this approach?*
- *What are your concerns?*
- *Do you have any other advice for staff?*





Thank you

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