



IMAGINE²⁰₅₀

Draft Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook

Community Development Committee
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metro council.org



Upcoming Community Development Committee Engagement

Timing	Proposed Topics, Focus
November 18, 2024	High-level summary of public comments received on the draft Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan (information item)
December 16, 2024	Final Draft regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook (business item)
January 20, 2025	Final Draft Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan (business item)



Key Stakeholder Advice



Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission - October 3, 2024 meeting

- Continue to consider the balance between maintaining our natural systems and providing outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Recommendation to present handbook as business item.
- For a technical document, the language is still very clear.

Regional Park Implementing Agencies

- Reduce redundancies, clarify language, and maintain consistency with the policy chapter.
- Continue assessing content to differentiate policy from procedure.
- Would appreciate more time to review and comment on the draft planning handbook.

Draft Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook Overview

What is it?

- Complementary document to the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Chapter
- Contains procedural and contextual language outlining Regional Parks and Trails System processes.

Handbook Amendment Process:

- Handbook policy content will be amended every 4 years (same schedule as Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan)
 - Amendment process will be in partnership with Implementing Agencies and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
 - Resources (e.g., webinars, plan examples, infographics, etc.) will be updated on as-needed basis or when new content is available.



Sections 1 and 2: Introduction and System Plan



What's New?

Introduction

- Added contextual language describing Handbook purpose and amendment process.
- Moved research and engagement summary from Policy Chapter.

System Plan

- Added contextual language regarding Minnesota's Outdoor Recreation System.
- Consolidated Regional Park and Trail System unit classifications into Policy Chapter One-Pagers.
- Proposal to add Agency-Level Maps

Sections 3 and 4: Natural Systems and Climate Resiliency



What's New?

Natural Systems

- Clarified the System Additions process.
- Added graphics and language explaining how a “Search Area/Corridor” becomes operational.
- Realigned study area criteria to match Locating and Acquisition super factors.
- Continued commitment to monitor local and non-local visitation with park agency partners.

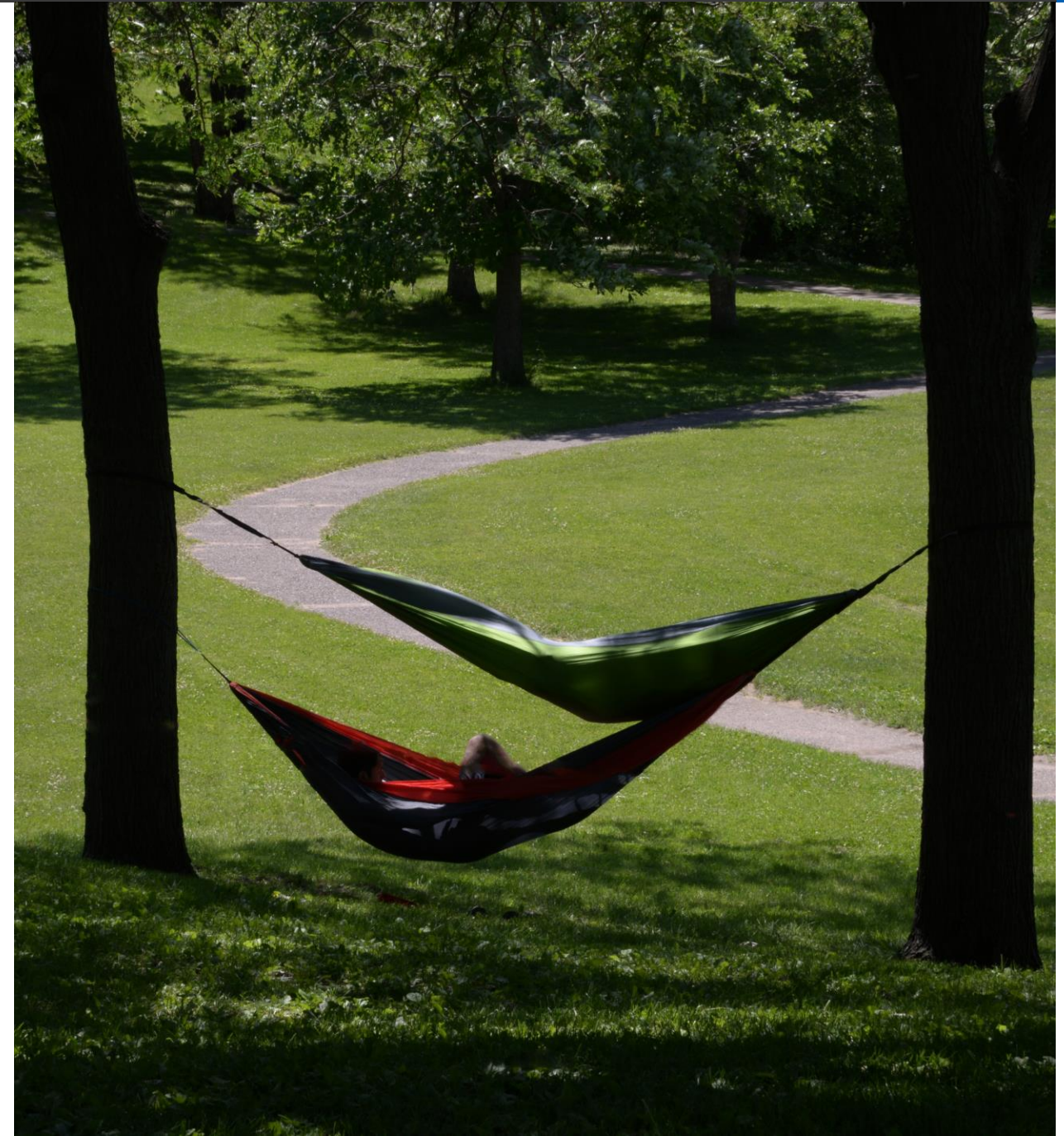
Climate Resiliency

- Added placeholder language for future tools and resources.

Section 5: Planning

What's New for 2050?

- Reorganized and streamlined plan requirements into three main categories:
 - Engagement
 - Development Concept
 - Natural Systems
- Added design considerations for long-range plans
- Created criteria and process for different types of long-range plan amendments:
 - Full amendment
 - Focused amendment
 - Administrative process for minor amendments.
- Modified criteria and process for boundary adjustments
- Moved language on joint powers agreements from Policy Chapter to Handbook



Boundary Adjustment Criteria: Regional Trail Alignments

Unit Type	Regional trails alignments
Administrative Approval of Long-Range Plan Amendment	Trail realignment alters up to 1-mile of trail and is within 1-mile of the original alignment but does not alter the start and end points of the trail.
Focused Long Range Plan Amendment, Acquisition Long-Range Plan or Land Conversion	A limited in scope plan amendment that meets one of the following two criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail realignment is up to 1.5 miles from the original alignment. • Proposed trail extension is up to one mile, and it enables connection to existing or future trailhead, park, local trail, or other destination.
Regular Long-Range Plan Amendment	A full scope plan amendment that significantly alters the earlier trail alignment and exceeds the thresholds for a focused long-range plan amendment (above).
Policy Plan Amendment	Meets one of the following two criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceeds plan amendment criteria • Proposes new trail

Section 6: System Protection



What's New?

- Added procedural and contextual language regarding Local Comprehensive Plans, Land Conversion Processes, and Telecommunication Towers Placement.
- Added process graphics and requirements for land conversion process.
- Moved the land conversion and utility easement criteria to the Policy Plan.

Section 7: Recreation, Facilities, and Programming

What's New?

- Added procedural language and flowchart describing the new Recreational Activities and Facilities evaluation process.
- Provided list of ineligible recreational activities.
- Added commitment to continue Trail System Coordination Workgroup





Thank you

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