



Regional Parks and Trails System Administrative Process for Minor Long-Range Plan Amendments

Business Item 2024-33

Community Development Commission



February 20, 2024

Administrative Amendment Process



Proposal

- Develop an administrative review process that would authorize the Executive Director of Community Development or designee to administratively review certain minor amendments that meet the administrative process criteria.

Benefits

- Savings of Park Agency Partner time in preparing “traditional” plan amendments.
- A reduction of Council committee review time and Council staff work.
- Park and trail plans are updated more frequently and better reflect future direction.

A wintery day at Lebanon Hills Regional Park.

Plan Amendments

Staff observations over past 5 years of plan amendments

- Nearly 25 percent of all plan amendments reviewed over past 5 years could be characterized as minor amendments.
- Council staff anticipate an increase in the need for minor amendments, particularly as a result of the GIS Improvement Project.

People at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory Special Recreation Feature in Saint Paul.



Proposed and Existing Amendment Processes

Proposed Administrative Amendment Process

Administrative review and approval: Proposal for certain minor amendments to clarify corrections, trail implementation, Council consents to easements, or boundary adjustments*.

*Proposes a boundary adjustment, public-to-public land exchange, or an acquisition long-range plan amendment that changes the administrative boundary by less than 5 acres; and the land addition/removal is valued at \$250,000 per acre, or less.

Proposed Minor Long-Range Plan Amendment**

Abbreviated plan requirement process for Council Committee Review: Proposal for all other minor (focused) amendments, acquisition long-range plan amendments, or name changes.

Full Amendment

Amendment requirement process for Council Committee Review: Significant changes, acquisition long-range plans, minor boundary adjustments, and name changes.

Minor boundary adjustments criteria (whichever is greater):

1. Affect less than a total of 100 acres
2. Affect less than 20% of the area within the administrative boundary

Policy Plan Update Amendments

Updates that occur with a public hearing: Major boundary adjustments, name changes, search corridor alignment changes, trail extensions, and system additions.

**The proposed minor long-range plan amendment will be developed as part of the 2050 RPPP Update process.

Draft Administrative Process Criteria

1. Consistent:

- Is consistent with Minn. Stat. § 473.313 requirements and be determined to be complete for review by the Council.
- Conform to the regional systems plans.
- Consistent with Council policies, including Thrive MSP 2040 and parks policies

2. Minor in Scope:

- Does not change the acquisition and/or development concept.

3. Subject of the Amendment:

- a. Corrections:** Proposes corrections to a minor mapping or design error affecting less than 1% of the unit's total acres of the administrative boundary.
- b. Minor Regional Trail Realignment:** Proposes regional trail implementation realignments that alter up to 1 mile of trail and are within 1 mile of the original alignment but do not alter the start and end points of the trail.
- c. Boundary Changes:** Proposes a boundary adjustment, public-to-public land exchange, or an acquisition long-range plan amendment that changes the administrative boundary by less than 5 acres; and the land addition/removal is valued at \$250,000 per acre, or less.
- d. Natural Area/Utility Council Consents:** Proposes land and/or easement conveyances for:
 - Natural area monitoring.
 - Conveys an easement for a natural area restoration, or enhancement project that affects the administrative boundary by less than 5 acres.
 - Underground utility that has no material long-range impacts to the park or trail and affects the administrative boundary by less than 1 acre.

No Impacts:

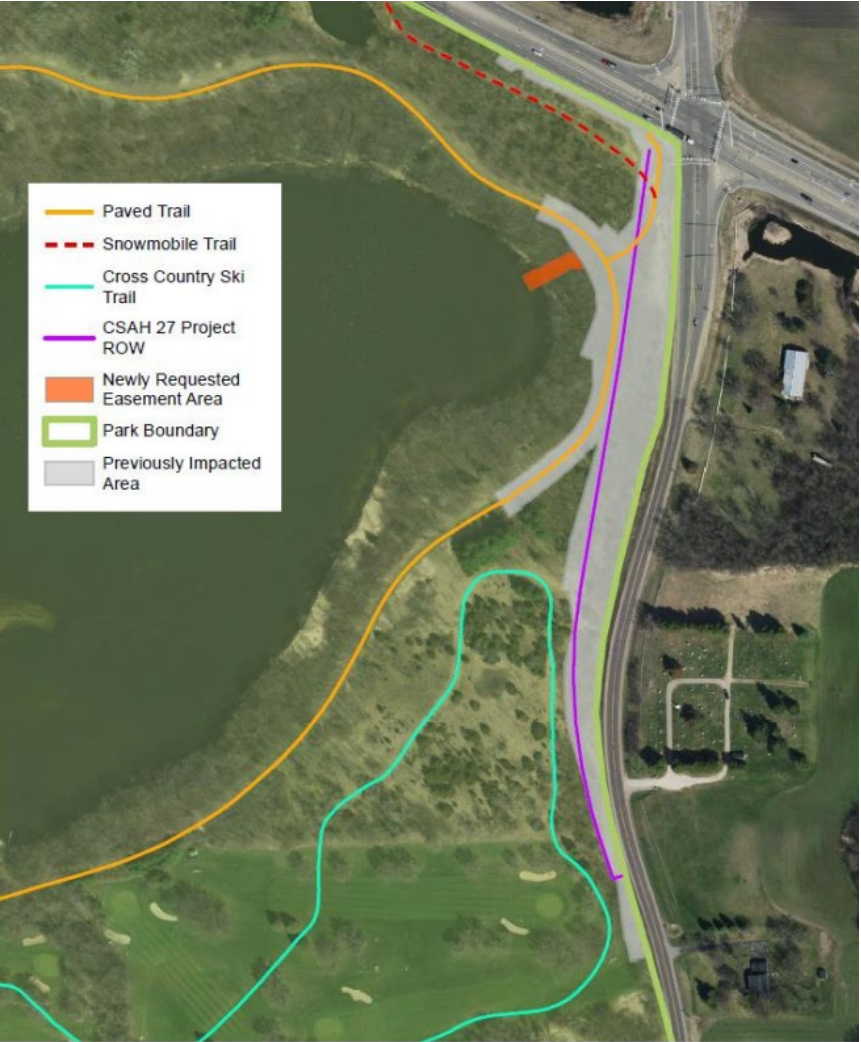
- Does not have the potential for a cumulative or material impact to the regional park or trail's recreational opportunities, natural areas, or cultural resources.

**Please note, Council staff will consider the requirements of any Council or State funding restrictions in determining whether a proposed candidate is eligible for administrative review.*

***Amendments meeting the criteria above may still be required to have full Council review if determined necessary by Council staff.*

Examples

Design Corrections



Three Rivers Park District's Clear Lake Regional Park Land Conversion

Boundary Changes



Anoka County's Mississippi River Regional Trail Land Conversion

Natural Area or Utility Easements



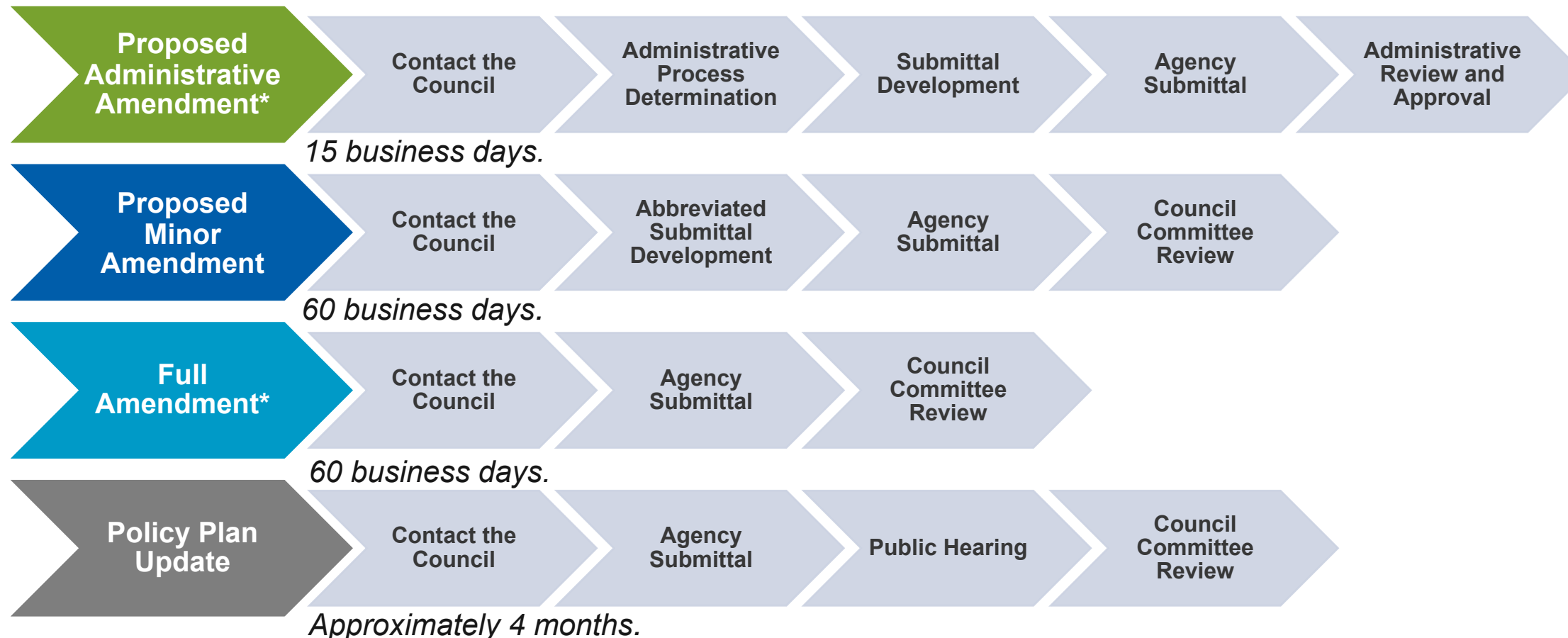
Washington County's Big Marine Park Reserve Drainage Easement

Pilot Program & Amendment Process Range

1-year Program Pilot:

- CDC and MPOSC annual update and assessment
- CM and MPOSC Commissioner **notification** of relevant items with a request for political conversation insights.

Amendment Process Range



CDC Advice October 2023 Meeting



- **CDC Annual Update:** Consider adding an annual update for CDC on the staff reviewed administrative review items.
- **Regional Trail Implementation:** Consider adding a trail mileage and distance to the criteria.
- **Political Items:** Items that are controversial or of public interest should not be considered as part of administrative review.

Young hockey players and skaters at Lake Nokomis Regional Park.

MPOSC Advice

October 2023 and February 2024 Meeting



- **Program Pilot:** Pilot the program for one year then provide an annual update and assessment to MPOSC:
 - *Notify Council Member and MPOSC Commissioner of relevant items for insights on political conversations.*
- **Funding:** Significant land removals with Council or state funding restrictions should not be candidates for the administrative amendment process.
- **Boundary Changes:** \$100,000 threshold for land removal and additions is too low. Update it to more accurately reflect market rate cost of land within metro.
 - *Consider using average cost of 5 acres within MUSA. Approximately \$1 million.*

A person walking on the Luce Line Regional Trail.

Rationale for Proposed Action

The Administrative Process for Minor Long-Range Plan Amendments is consistent with the requirements of the:

- 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
 - Chapter 5, Planning, Strategy 1
 - Other Council policies

People biking at Theodore Wirth Regional Park.



Proposed Action



That the Metropolitan Council approve the Administrative Process for Minor Long-Range Plan Amendments as described in Attachment 1 of this report.

People at a wintertime family event at Minnewashta Regional Park..



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Minnehaha Creek adjacent to the Minnehaha Regional Trail.