

Committee Report

Community Development Committee



Committee Meeting Date: September 16, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: September 25, 2024

Business Item: 2024-223

City of Saint Paul, Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan.
2. Advise the City of Saint Paul to consider implementing the recommendations for solar resources and population forecasts in the Advisory Comments section of the business item.
3. Require the City of Saint Paul, prior to initiating any new development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

Summary of Community Development Committee Discussion/Questions

Kevin Phan, Planner, presented the staff report to the Community Development Committee on September 16, 2024. Alice Messer, Katie Hamerlinck, and Anne Gardner (City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation) were in attendance and responded to questions.

Council Member Carter asked for clarification about the estimated annual project costs of \$65,000 and whether they are included in the plan's \$1.45 million operations and maintenance costs. Messer said that the City of Saint Paul will look into the Council Member's question and get back to the committee with the financial information.

Carter also asked if the trails around the lake are one-way or two-way. Phan clarified that there are currently some sections of trail that are one-way, but the plan intends to make the trails around the lake two-way.

Motion by Council Member Lee, seconded by Council Member Carter, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed action.

Committee Report

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Committee Meeting Date: September 16, 2024

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Summary of Community Development Committee Discussion/Questions

Kevin Phan, Planner, presented the staff report to the Metropolitan Council Parks and Open Space Commission on September 5, 2024. Alice Messer, David Ronzani, Katie Hamerlinck, and Anne Gardner (City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation) were in attendance and responded to questions.

Chair Yarusso sought further clarification on the funding and policy implications of the enterprise facilities in Como Regional Park, such as the athletic fields and Como Golf Course. Emmett Mullin, Parks Manager, responded that McMurray Fields are considered part of the local system and are not included in visitor counts, while the Golf Course is counted due to its regional recreational uses in winter months.

Yarusso also asked if the proposed stormwater improvement projects within the golf course would be eligible for regional funding. Mullin confirmed that these improvements are eligible for regional funding.

Commissioner Harris mentioned there are a lot of local amenities within the park and asked if some of the items in the development concept, like disc golf and a dog park, would be considered regional. Phan responded that these proposals are being explored and that these amenities are present in other regional parks and trails. Mullin added that context-sensitive design is a key consideration and in urban regional parks such as Como, these activities are considered regional.

Commissioner Moeller asked about the total park and Como Lake acreage, as well as the total trail mileage of the park. Messer and Ronzani said they don't know the exact acreage but will get the information to Commissioner Moeller. The estimated trail mileage around the lake is a little over two miles. Council Member Vento noted that Como Lake is approximately 70 acres in size.

Commissioner Duerr mentioned the issue of copper wire theft and asked whether the City is taking any steps to ensure adequate lighting in the park in the future. Messer said that the City has explored many options without a clear or lasting solution but is currently placing the light connection boxes eight feet up the light pole for deterrence. Saint Paul is also exploring solar lighting, but with a substantial tree canopy in many parts of the regional park, this solution is not ideal for all locations within the park.

Motion by Commissioner Dillenburg, seconded by Commissioner Duerr, the Commission voted unanimously to pass the proposed action.



Business Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Community Development Committee Meeting: September 16, 2024 Metropolitan Council: September 25, 2024

Business Item: 2024-223

Saint Paul, Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan

District(s), Member(s):	District G, Anthony Taylor District 14, Toni Carter
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stat. § 473.313; <i>2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan</i> : Chapter 5, Planning Policy Strategy 1, Master Plans
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst (651-602-1361) Kevin Phan, Planner (651-602-1333)
Division/Department:	Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

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2. Advise the City of Saint Paul to consider implementing the recommendations for solar resources and population forecasts in the Advisory Comments section of the business item.
3. Require the City of Saint Paul, prior to initiating any new development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

Background

Saint Paul's Como Regional Park is located near the center of the Regional Parks and Trails System in Ramsey County and in the City of Saint Paul (Figures 1 and 2). The Regional Park surrounds Lake Como and is intersected by both the Grand Round North Regional Trail and the Lexington Avenue/Parkway Trail Search Corridor.

The focus of this plan is to update the long-range vision for the regional park, guide improvements and trail connections within the park, and enhance the water quality of Lake Como. This plan intends to build on the park's original vision in its 1984 plan, while adding updated recommendations to meet the needs of current and future park users. Further details on the proposed development of Como Regional Park can be found in Figure 4.

Rationale

As described in the Analysis section of this report, Como Regional Park is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* including Chapter 5, Planning Policy Strategy 1, Master Plans.

Thrive Lens Analysis

Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan advances the Thrive outcome of Livability by increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, which enhances quality of life in the region.

Funding

The long-range plan proposes acquiring a single 2.87-acre parcel located in the southeastern part of the regional park near McMurray Fields, estimated to cost approximately \$421,603.

The total cost for implementing the improvements listed in the Long-Range plan is anticipated to be \$57.9 million on the low end and \$96.4 million on the high end. These projects include upgrading existing infrastructure within the park and improving the water quality of Como Lake. The annual project cost is approximately \$65,000.

The total cost for operations and maintenance of the park is \$1.450 million annually.

Funding for implementing the priorities within the long-range plan will come from a variety of sources, including the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Program and the Regional Parks Bonding Program. Both of these funding sources are subject to future Council actions.



Figure 1. Como Regional Park location in the Regional Parks System



Numbers Correspond to Existing Regional Park System Facilities in Tables 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5

- Park Reserves (Open to the Public)
- Park Reserves (Not Open to the Public)
- Regional Trails (Open to the Public)
- Regional Trails (Not Open to the Public)
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- Lakes and Rivers



Figure 2. Como Regional Park location in Saint Paul

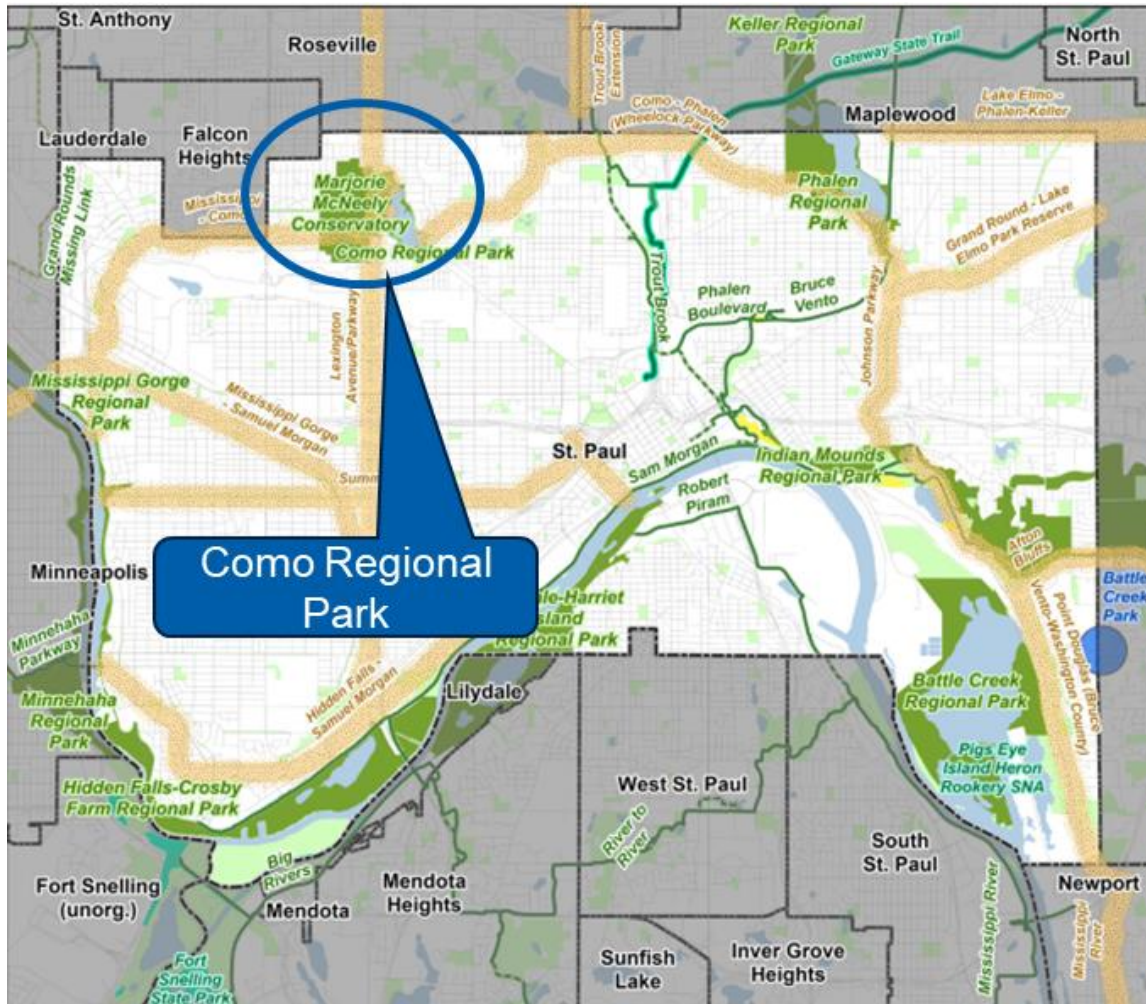


Figure 3: Como Regional Park Administrative Boundary

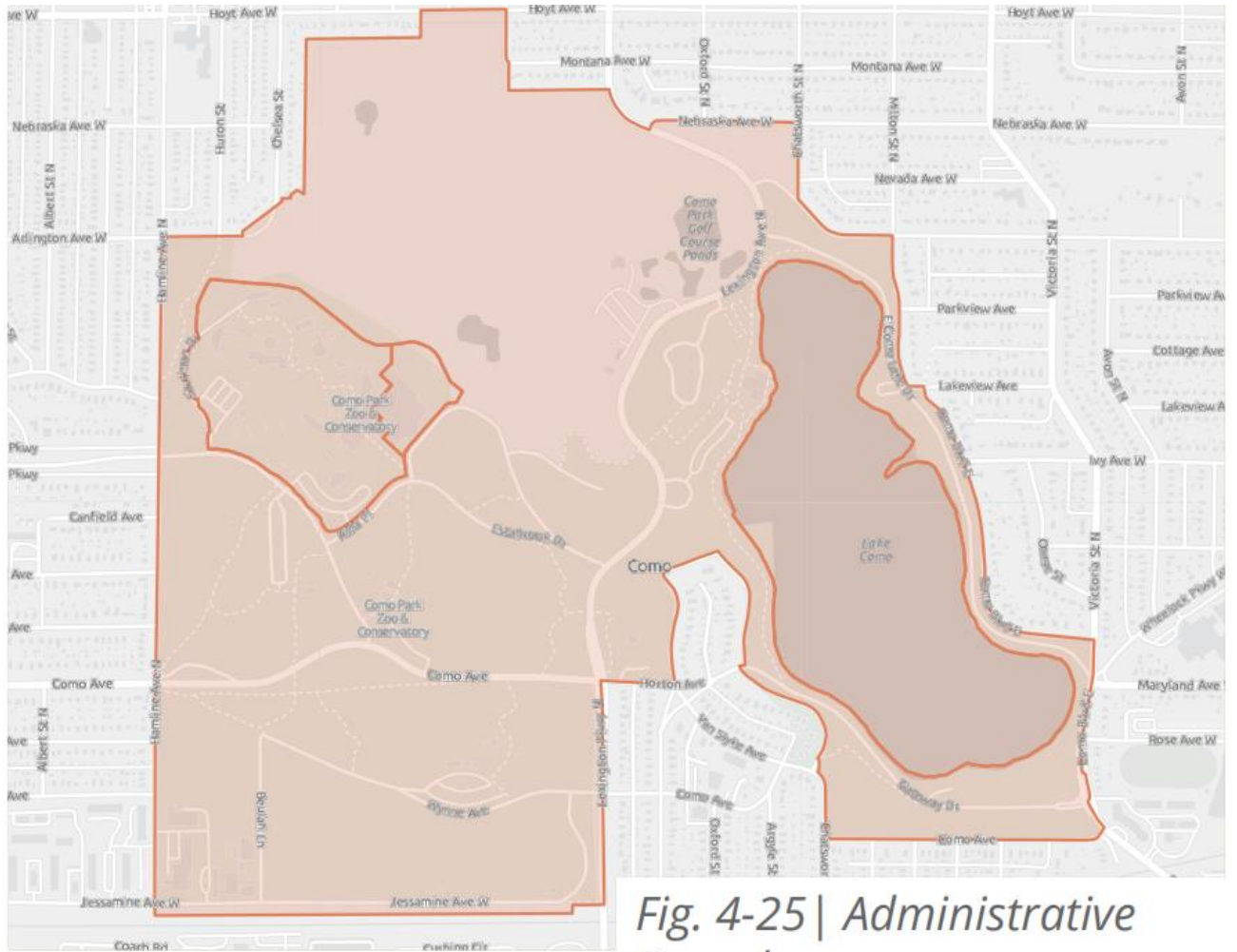


Fig. 4-25 | Administrative Boundary



Analysis

Planning Strategy 1 of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that long range plans for regional parks address 14 items: boundaries, acquisition costs, stewardship plan, demand forecast, development concept, conflicts, public services, operations, partner engagement, public engagement and participation, equity analysis, public awareness, accessibility, and natural resources. The following summary analyzes the long-range plan against these requirements.

Boundaries

Como Regional Park is located in the northwestern part of the City of Saint Paul, surrounding Lake Como and located within the Como neighborhood. The 460.66-acre park is bisected by two county roads, with Lexington Parkway going North-South and Como Avenue going East-West (Figure 3). The Grand Round North Regional Trail and the Lexington Avenue/Parkway Regional Trail Search Corridor connect to the park, with the Grand Round North connecting at Wheelock Parkway on the eastern side and at Como Avenue on the western side of the park.

Nested within Como Regional Park are two special recreation features, the Como Park Zoo and the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory. Como Regional Park is also adjacent to McMurray Fields. These three areas are not included within the regional park management boundary because the first two are separate units of the Regional Parks and Trails System and the third is a considered a municipal amenity. Also, Como Golf Course is located within the regional park. Golf is not considered a regional activity but also a municipal one. Winter activities at the golf course are eligible for regional park funding.

Acquisition Costs

This plan identifies one 2.87-acre inholding located along Jessamine Avenue along the southwestern border of the park. This inholding is part of a 10.6-acre parcel (PID: 272923140028) that is currently part of an active railway right-of-way owned by Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railway Company. This inholding would provide additional parking opportunities for the park during programming and events, such as the Hmong Freedom Festival that is held annually.

The total estimated cost for this acquisition is \$421,603.

Stewardship Plan

The City of Saint Paul plans to continue maintenance of park vegetation and habitats by coordinating efforts between Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, other city and state natural resource offices and the Capital Region Watershed District (CRWD). An area of focus for Como Regional Park is continuing to improve the health and water quality of Como Lake through implementing best management practices for stormwater management and improving the ecological health of the lakeshore. Further details on lakeshore stewardship can be found in the CRWD's 2022 Como Lakeshore Management Plan.

A cultural landscape study is being proposed for Como Regional Park to fully understand the history of the park and surrounding areas, especially focusing on Indigenous history prior to European settlement. The goal is to incorporate this history into the park's design and interpretation. This study will likely be done in collaboration with indigenous communities and advisory groups.

Demand Forecast

The Metropolitan Council's 2023 Annual Use Estimate shows that the park had approximately 3.5 million visitors, which makes Como Regional Park is the most visited regional park in Saint Paul. It is tied for the third most visited regional park in the entire regional system. (Como is tied with Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park for third most visits. Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and Mississippi Gorge regional parks were the first and second most visited in the system, with 7.6 million visitors and 3.8 million visitors respectively.)

According to the City of Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the City's population is expected to increase by approximately 9.2% between 2020 and 2040. The plan also mentions that between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of people of color in the City increased from 36% to 46%, with the trends line suggesting that Saint Paul became majority people of color around 2017. Based on Met Council



projections for Saint Paul, Como Regional Park’s users will be more diverse and older, which will require Como Regional Park to adjust programming and recreation needs in the future as demand for services evolves.

The plan also supports changing recreational and programming trends, proposes improvements to safety and accessibility, and protects the park’s natural resources to accommodate anticipated increases in visitation. In addition, the plan proposes improvements that increase the capacity of parks operations to keep up with the maintenance demands resulting from higher visitation and aging infrastructure.

Development Concept

The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is intended to guide the park’s development for at least 20 years. The plan recommendations consider the current needs of park users while also anticipating the needs of future visitors by employing principles of universal design and adapting facilities to be more climate resilient. Most improvements in this plan focus on improving existing infrastructure and upgrading trails to accommodate more people (Figure 4). Some improvements being proposed are:

- Widening existing trails for multi-use and two-way traffic.
 - Proposal to have two-way bicycle traffic around Como Lake
- Improve trail connections throughout the park and connect trails to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Improve wayfinding and signage.
- Upgrade crossings and trails to improve accessibility and safety.
- Add more lighting to improve safety.

Como Regional Park has categorized these improvements into “High”, “Medium, and “Low” priorities. High priority items will be implemented within 10 years, medium priority would be implemented in 10-15 years, and low priority improvements would take 15-20 years to implement.

Improvements that were identified as a ‘High’ priority include planting and maintaining trees and natural habitat, incorporating stormwater management practices, improving crossings to be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, and adding more amenities such as lighting and bike parking.

Items with a ‘Medium’ priority mainly involve improving trail connections throughout the park, working to connect incomplete trail segments, and to eventually update the Lakeside Pavilion to make it more accessible and visitor friendly. Currently, further planning and study is needed to develop the scope, timeline, and cost for the Lakeside Pavilion.

‘Low’ priority items being proposed are to explore providing alternative recreational activities such as disc golf or a dog park, fully implementing two-way bike traffic around the lake, improving wayfinding, adding bike parking and e-bike charging facilities, and exploring the closure of East Como Lake Drive.

In addition to these items, the Long-Range Plan also mentions some unranked priorities that could be explored at a future date, such as an expanded parks maintenance facility, construction of a warming house for winter activities, improving path connections, and conducting a cultural landscape study.

Conflicts

Como Regional Park is nestled within an urban neighborhood, resulting in a wide variety of recreational activities that can serve both a regional and local audience. During the engagement process, community members wanted more programmable spaces (dog parks and sport courts) but also heard other members’ desire to keep the unprogrammed and “natural” areas in the park. Staff



will coordinate with City staff, vendors at park facilities, and other agencies to ensure that there is a balance between different uses, as outlined in this plan.

Protection of cyclists and pedestrians from vehicular traffic has been identified as a high priority in the Long-Range Plan, as high-volume roadways are located within and adjacent to the regional park. Saint Paul plans to mitigate these conflicts by improving wayfinding and signage, adding more lighting, and improving crosswalks across the park, especially on Lexington Parkway and Nagasaki Road. The plan also mentions community desires to close East Como Lake Drive to vehicular traffic, allowing for expanded bike and pedestrian infrastructure and more shoreline restoration. No official action has been proposed for East Como Lake Drive, but the City of Saint Paul will explore performing traffic studies and counts to understand the benefits and drawbacks of closing this road.

Public Services

Since Como Regional Park is located within the urban core, all non-recreational infrastructure has already been developed and would not require extensive investment to implement the vision. The only infrastructure improvement would be the adding more lighting or repairing existing lights across the park. The park is currently facing a copper wire theft issue and is working to find ways to mitigate theft and vandalism.

The park's drinking water is currently provided by Saint Paul Regional Water Services, which uses water from the Mississippi River and the surrounding watershed. Wastewater is currently managed by the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services interceptor systems.

Como Regional Park is currently served by transit routes 3 and 83, bus routes that connect to downtown Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and the northern and southern portions of Saint Paul. The surrounding residential areas also have a robust sidewalk network, providing local pedestrian access.

Operations

The annual cost for the City of Saint Paul to operate and maintain Como Regional Park is approximately \$1.450 million. These annual costs include building maintenance and repairs, general park maintenance, and natural resources work. The higher operational cost is due to park infrastructure facing the end of its lifespan and the park receiving higher visitation compared to other units in the City. Operational costs are also associated with the City's commitment to meeting Saint Paul's carbon reduction goals through following B3 guidelines in new construction and supporting green initiatives for HVAC, lighting, water supply needs and irrigation. One example is the proposed installation of a stormwater best management practice project that will capture stormwater runoff to be used for irrigation.

Partner Engagement

During the creation of this plan, Saint Paul engaged with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), CRWD, and Saint Paul Public Works. The TAC is comprised of multiple professionals from different City divisions such as Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development, and Public Works. This group met with project staff two times to provide feedback and propose ideas for the Long-Range Plan. Some of the themes that emerged are:

- Need to improve and update wayfinding signage across the park
- Discussion of adding more amenities like a potential dog park or temporary restrooms throughout the park
- Potential location for the CRWD stormwater project
- Improved trail connectivity both within the park and connecting to local neighborhoods
- Discussion of closing East Como Lake Drive and the potential impacts to traffic, bicycle and pedestrian access, and ecological benefits to the lake (traffic study needed)
- Discussion about e-bikes and future transportation needs (rules, regulations, enforcement, charging).



Collaboration with the CRWD has resulted in multiple management plans and projects that focus on improving the water quality of Como Lake. The CRWD has helped shape this long-range plan by participating in the plan's Design Advisory Committee (DAC) and this group is currently working with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation on a proposed stormwater management project.

Saint Paul Public Works collaborated with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation to guide multiple components of the plan, such as the alignment with the Saint Paul Grand Round, identifying neighborhood sidewalk connections, and discussing future safety improvements to Nagasaki Road and East Como Lake Drive. All partner agency comments shaped the plan and are supportive of it.

Public Engagement and Participation

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation involved the public throughout the development of the plan. The project team engaged the public by setting up pop-up engagement events, meeting with small focus groups, and hosting an online engagement tool and survey for stakeholders. In the online engagement tool, participants could put comments on an interactive map to indicate things that they enjoyed or disliked and add comments to a virtual idea board. Additionally, between March 25 and April 26, 2024, people reviewed and commented a 90% draft of the long-range plan by completing a survey and prioritizing proposed projects. Overall, the online engagement garnered 928 visits to the website, 117 survey responses, and 478 pins on the interactive map.

In addition to these efforts, Saint Paul also convened a Design Advisory Committee that consisted of 15 members who lived in the Como neighborhood, served as representatives from local organizations, or community leaders. This group met three times and was tasked with determining community needs, reviewing concepts and proposals, and providing guidance to City staff. During the three meetings, some of the following themes emerged. These themes helped shape the plan's development concept, shared earlier in this report:

- Improve trail hierarchy by upgrading the signage and wayfinding
- Improve access and circulation throughout the park by improving crossings, providing more access to the Lakeside Pavilion and Como Lake, and connecting to nearby communities by connecting trails and sidewalks
- Add more amenities and activities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, winter activities (fat tire biking and luminary events), and exploring recreation options on the West Picnic Ground (disc golf, bicycle pump track, or dog park)
- Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive
- Better understand indigenous history and current significance of the Dakota Land at Como Regional Park and work with local indigenous groups for future considerations in interpretation and representation

Equity Analysis

Saint Paul conducted an equity analysis as part of the long-range plan. The advice heard during the planning process shaped the long-range plan.

Project Data

Scope: The project scope for Como Regional Park took place at both a local and regional level by assessing the community profile of District 10 (also known as the Como Neighborhood) and the City of Saint Paul. Demographic information is listed below:

- Race: Demographics of those living within the Como Park Neighborhood include: white (74.8%), Black (7.8%), multiracial/other (4.9%), Asian (5.8%), and Hispanic (6.7%). Demographics for the entire City of Saint Paul are more diverse with white (51%), Black (15.8%), multi-racial/other (5.6%), Asian (18.9%), and Hispanic (8.7%).
- Income: 8.9% of households within the Como Neighborhood have an income below the poverty level.
- Age: 13% of the population living within the three-mile service area are over 65 years old, and 20 percent are under 18 years old.



Context: Another component of the equity analysis is providing context that may explain any under-representation in park visitation. The City of Saint Paul acknowledges that one factor could be the historical use of racial covenants and redlining near Como Regional Park. Racial covenants were clauses within deeds that prevented people of color from buying or occupying homes and land.

The region is expected to become more racially diverse and older by 2040. With these changing demographics, Saint Paul expects increased visitation to Como Regional Park and changing recreational needs from communities of color and older adults.

Public Engagement and Participation

Participants: Saint Paul conducted engagement events with a focus on future stakeholders and underrepresented groups. By prioritizing future stakeholders, City staff held focus groups and engaged multiple times with students from Como High School, Metro Deaf School, and Hmong College Prep Academy. Additionally, they engaged with members of the Saint Paul Youth Commission.

Engagement: Saint Paul also engaged with local community groups and members of District 10 at a number of local events and through online surveys. A summary of the types of engagement events are below:

- Engagement held in conjunction with other community events
- Committee meetings (District Council, Transportation Committee, Safe Routes to Schools meetings)
- On-site and online surveys
- Engage Saint Paul engagement website
- Design Advisory Committee
- Community Open House

Public Participation: After meeting with stakeholders, feedback was compiled and included on a list of improvements. Staff went back to these groups to rank the improvements to identify the highest priorities. The top five priorities listed are below.

- Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; Improve ADA accessibility; increase measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.
- Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native prairie and plantings for native habitat.
- Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.
- Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and other park features.
- Consider the closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.

Evaluation Summary

Transparency: The advice received at the various engagement efforts guided the development concept by determining what projects to include and how to prioritize them. Projects that were ranked higher by community members will be prioritized for funding and implementation. Input from demographic groups underrepresented in park visits has resulted in recommendations that focus on increasing the park's connectivity, improving wayfinding and signage across the park, and adding amenities that improve safety and accessibility such as benches and restrooms.

Accountability: The long-range plan states that the planning process resulted in a better understanding of current barriers to access the regional park that underserved communities face, specifically regarding concerns around safety and accessibility within Como Regional Park. With this information, staff will work to make the park more welcoming to others and to the needs of



future users.

Public Awareness

Saint Paul primarily provides notices about long-range planning efforts, park closures or events on their website (<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/como-regional-park>). Additional information regarding Como Lake, Como Lakeside Pavilion, and rentals/reservations can also be found on this site.

Currently, closures to the pavilion for events or private rentals are not always published on the site. As improvements to the pavilion are being implemented, Saint Paul will work to improve methods of communicating closures to the public.

Accessibility

Saint Paul is committed increasing accessibility at park facilities consistent with the American with Disabilities Act and the US Forest Service's Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines for outdoor developed areas. The plan discusses the strategies that the City will be implementing, such as:

- Improving pavement conditions to ensure all trails meet ADA accessibility requirements.
- Providing accessibility upgrades at all intersections, such as curb ramps and tactile warning strips.
- Improving wayfinding and signage across the park to adhere to accessibility guidelines, including braille text.
- Adding more amenities throughout the park like lighting in low-visibility areas, ADA accessible restrooms, and more benches and seating areas along trails.

Natural resources

The regional park's land cover identified in the plan's Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) is predominantly "Southern Dry Prairie" with smaller areas of "Southern Mesic Oak-Basswood Forest", "Southern dry-Mesic Oak Woodland", and "Northern Bullrush-Spikerush Marsh" (Figure 5). These land cover types provide habitat that is favorable to support approximately 57 species with varying conservation status found in the Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS). The Minnesota County Biological Survey had found that there are no native plant communities within or near Como Regional Park.

Como Lake: Como Lake is included in the Council's Priority Waters List, which allocates additional resources to water bodies that provide significant use and benefit to the region, such as for recreation and tourism. The lake and shoreline are managed by the Capital Region Watershed District (CRWD) in collaboration with Saint Paul Parks (Figure 6). Historically, Como Lake has had poor water quality due to excess phosphorus and algal blooms, which has led to winter fish kills, reduced oxygen in the lake, and odor problems. The lake has consistently exceeded the State's shallow lake water quality standards for phosphorus. The high levels of phosphorus pollution can be attributed to nutrient and sediment runoff throughout the watershed. The CRWD and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation staff have been working to improve the water quality of the lake by improving ecological health, restoring lakeshore areas with native plantings, and continually assessing the conditions of the lake. The plan also mentions that several stormwater best management practices (BMPs) are being designed for Como Golf Course. This includes installing a sand filter in the northwestern golf course pond and creating a bioretention basin and infiltration system that will remove phosphorus before it leaves the pond. More information about the CRWD's management efforts can be found in their 2019 Como Lake Management Plan, the CRWD Watershed Management Plan, and the 2022 Como Lakeshore Management Plan.

Another focus area of the CRWD is managing invasive species and working to improve the aquatic health in Como Lake. This includes treating the lake to reduce the populations of curly-leaf pondweed and carp in the lake.



Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA): Como Regional Park is not located within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. The planning, design, and implementation requirements of the MRCCA will not apply to this recommended portion of the Regional Park System.



Figure 4: Como Regional Park Development Concept

Project Area



Fig. 4-21 | Overall Park Map

FOCUS AREAS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| ① Como Lake North | ⑤ East Como Lake Drive |
| ② Lakeside Pavilion Area | ⑥ Picnic Grounds |
| ③ Historic Streetcar Station | ⑦ Woodland Outdoor Classroom and Aquatic Facility |
| ④ Nagasaki Road | |

Special Recreation Features
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory*

Enterprise Facilities
Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*

*Not-included or partially included in analysis



Figure 5: Como Regional Park Natural Resource Inventory

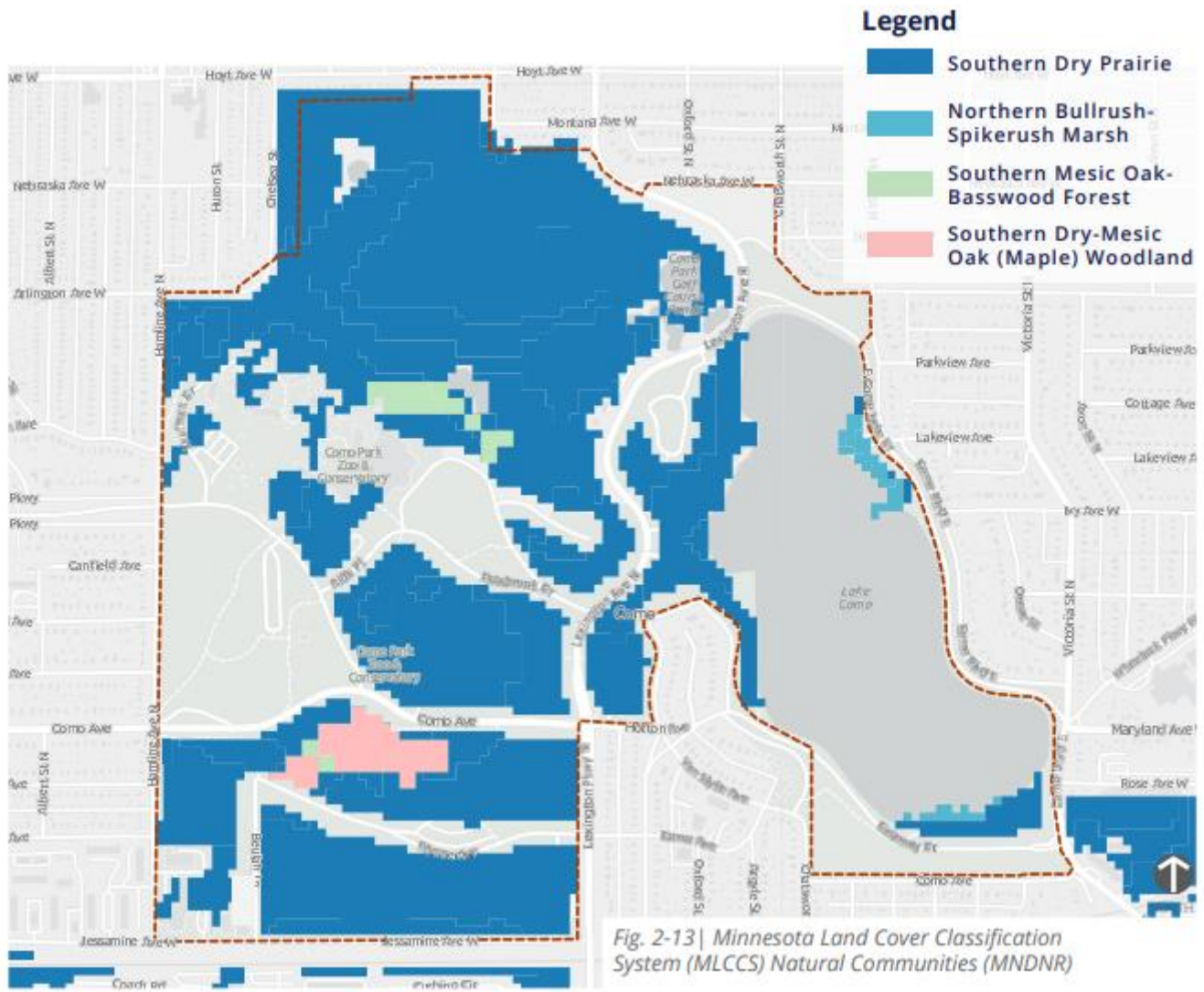


Figure 6: Como Regional Park Lakeshore Management Areas



Fig. 2-15| Como Lakeshore Management Areas (CRWD Como Lakeshore Management Plan, 2022)



Other Council Policies and Systems – Advisory Comments

Community Development – Solar Resources and Access Protection – (MacKenzie Young-Walters, 651-602-1373)

Council staff appreciate the plan's alignment with Saint Paul's Climate Action and Resilience Plan by planning to provide e-vehicle and e-bike charging stations. Council staff encourage further inclusion of solar power outside of vehicle charging stations, such as solar powered lighting installations and solar panels mounted on the roofs of facilities.

The Operations section of the plan notes the challenges of meeting the City's carbon goals given aging infrastructure and increased maintenance demands. Considering transitioning to electric powered maintenance equipment and including supporting charging infrastructure in the proposed Parks Operations and Maintenance Facility project could be an opportunity to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the park's upkeep.

Environmental Services – Wastewater Services (Roger Janzig, 651-602-1119)

Most projects identified in Como Regional Park's long-range plan do not depart from or have an impact to the Regional Wastewater System Plan, as they do not occur where there is existing wastewater infrastructure. However, one project to improve existing bike trails along the eastern shoreline of Como Lake is located near a 54-inch reinforced concrete pipe. While the trail improvements would not impact the interceptor, Council staff requests that when preliminary improvements have been identified, that the plans are submitted to Tim Wedin, Assistant Manager, Interceptor Engineering to make a final evaluation on the potential impact to the interceptor.

Community Development – Forecasts (Todd Graham, 651-602-1322)

In August, the Metropolitan Council proposed a new population forecast for the Imagine 2050 Regional Development Guide. The projected population mentioned in the plan is higher than the newly approved forecast. Council staff advises the use of the new forecast numbers in future long-range plans.



city of saint paul
planning commission resolution

file number 24-18

date June 7, 2024

WHEREAS, in accordance with the City's Administrative Code Section 105.06.(c), the Parks and Recreation Commission has referred the proposed Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan to the Planning Commission for its recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission, having reviewed the proposed Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan and a memorandum containing analysis provided by Parks and Recreation Department staff, provided a recommendation for consideration by the Saint Paul Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, having reviewed the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Committee's recommendation, finds the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan to be supported by the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, in particular policies in the Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Water Resources chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Parks and Recreation chapter of the District 10 Como Community Plan; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the City does not have a distinct "capital allocation policy" but does have a variety of policies and procedures regarding capital resources allocation, and that capital is not being allocated to the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan implementation at this time but could be allocated at some future time for infrastructure projects in accordance with adopted City policies, the Saint Paul Planning Commission finds no present conflicts with any City policies or procedures regarding capital allocation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Administrative Code, that the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is recommended for approval; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this recommendation be conveyed to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to the City Council for their consideration.

moved by Holst

seconded by Martinson

in favor Unanimous

against _____





RESOLUTION #24-05
Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission is an appointed body established to advise the Saint Paul Mayor and the Saint Paul City Council on long-range and city-wide matters related to the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, Section 105.06 of the Saint Paul Administrative Code outlines the Parks and Recreation Commission’s duty to review and comment on regional park master plans and the process that it must follow; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission held a public hearing on May 9, 2024 where it sought recommendations from all interested residents concerning the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan (“Plan”); and

WHEREAS, the Plan is a visionary document to guide future development at Como Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation assembled and facilitated a series of community and key stakeholder meetings, and worked across City departments and partner agencies to develop Guiding Principles for the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan contains information required by the Regional Parks Policy Plan and otherwise conforms to regional policy; and

WHEREAS, local and regional plan approval will make Como Regional Park eligible for regional capital funding to construct improvements proposed in the Plan, and for regional operations and maintenance funding to operate all areas open to the public; and

WHEREAS, the park is the City’s most-visited regional park and is expected to remain an important part of the Regional Park System; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a recommendation from the City of Saint Paul Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee on May 22, 2024 finding the Plan’s consistency with the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a recommendation from the City of Saint Paul Planning Commission on June 7, 2024 recommending the Plan for approval and conveying it to the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council; and





WHEREAS, in accordance with the Saint Paul Administrative Code the recommendation of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee and the Planning Commission have become part of the official record of the proposed plan; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan be approved; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission submits this recommendation to the City Council along with the entire official record including minutes of the public hearing and the recommendations of the Saint Paul Transportation Committee and the Saint Paul Planning Commission.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on June 13, 2024:

Approved:	Yeas	5
	Nays	0
	Absent:	3

Resolution #24-05

Attested to by:

Elizabeth Lee McDonald

Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission

