

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: August 7, 2018

For the Community Development Committee meeting of August 20, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of September 12, 2018

**Subject:** Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan and Master Plan Boundary Amendment, Hennepin County, Review File No. 50210-1

**District(s), Member(s):** District A, Rick Theisen

**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statutes 473.313; Planning Strategy 1, *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Tracey Kinney, Planner (651-602-1029), Regional Parks and Natural Resources

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan.
2. Approve the Master Plan Boundary Amendment to include an additional 5.2 acres of natural area including a 2.6-acre property held by the City of Brooklyn Park and a 2.6-acre property held jointly by Hennepin County and the City of Brooklyn Park, to protect the natural resources.
3. Prior to implementing the Master Plan, require Three Rivers Park District to:
  - Create a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Brooklyn Park to:
    - Establish regional park use through a long-term lease or in perpetuity that identifies, outlines, and confirms use of land required for a park maintenance facility on land owned by the City of Brooklyn Park;
    - Clarify a minor realignment of the Rush Creek Regional Trail and grade separated crossing;
    - Transfer the 2.6-acre park easement held by the City of Brooklyn Park that is currently outside the regional park boundary.
  - Work with Hennepin County and the City of Brooklyn Park to transfer ownership of another 2.6-acre parcel of forfeited land currently owned by Hennepin County and the City of Brooklyn Park to Three Rivers Park District.
4. Advise Three Rivers Park District that:
  - Costs associated with lands and facilities associated with the Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area are not eligible for Metropolitan Council funding;
  - A Council approved master plan amendment is required to add inholdings eligible for acquisition funding.

### Background

Three Rivers Park District and the City of Brooklyn Park have completed a master planning process to determine a joint vision for Mississippi Gateway Regional Park located in the northeast corner of the City of Brooklyn Park, Hennepin County, along the Mississippi River. Mississippi Gateway Regional Park exists today as Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park (Three Rivers Park District) and Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area, a local park. The Metropolitan Council approved the existing Master Plan

for the Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park in 1979. The proposed park will provide a seamless experience to the user in a combined 267-acre facility focused on transitioning visitors from the built environment to nature while maintaining the existing parks' separate ownership, development, and maintenance. The proposed park connects to the eastern portion of the Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park and the Mississippi River Regional Trail both managed by Anoka County, and the West Mississippi River Regional Trail and Rush Creek Regional Trail both managed by Three Rivers Park District.

### Rationale

The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, including Planning Strategy 1, Master Planning, and other Council policies.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

The Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan advances the Thrive outcome of Livability through increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, which enhances quality of life in the region.

### Funding

The estimated total cost for Three Rivers Park District and the City of Brooklyn Park to implement the master plan is just over \$27,300,000 including development costs of just under \$25,500,000 and annual operation and maintenance costs of just over \$1,800,000 (*Table 1*). Only costs associated with the East Unit, owned by Three Rivers Park District, are eligible for Metropolitan Council funding. Costs associated with the West Unit, owned by the City of Brooklyn Park, are not eligible for Metropolitan Council funding. The City of Brooklyn Park is not an Implementing Agency, therefore not eligible for funding. Three Rivers Park District is proposing to develop the East Unit, lead operations for both the East and West Units, as well as construct and maintain a shared maintenance facility and Rush Creek Regional Trail realignment and crossing. The City of Brooklyn Park will pay for TRPD's operations services via cash or as part of payment for the 100-year lease for the land in which the maintenance facility will be located.

*Table 1. Estimated Development Costs*

Activity	TRPD	City of Brooklyn Park	Sub Totals
East Unit Development	\$18,465,000		\$18,465,000
West Unit Development	\$2,810,000	\$4,210,000	\$7,020,000
<b>Development Totals</b>	\$21,275,000	\$4,210,000	\$25,485,000
East and West Unit Operations	\$355,000		\$355,000
Maintenance	\$320,000	\$53,800	\$373,800
Natural Resources and Education Programming	\$1,087,000	\$20,000	\$1,107,000
<b>Operations Totals</b>	\$1,762,000	\$73,800	\$1,835,800
<b>Master Plan Total (Development and Operations)</b>	\$23,037,000	\$4,283,800	\$27,320,800

Approval of the master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time. The development costs based on this master plan may be awarded through the Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund for those portions of the combined park owned or leased by Three Rivers Park District. Further Council action is required to approve the CIP, the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund project list, and specific grants to Three Rivers Park District. No funds may be granted directly to the City of Brooklyn Park or for expenses incurred on any part of the property not owned or leased by Three Rivers.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

The Three Rivers Park District passed a resolution on December 21, 2017 to release the plan for public comment. The City of Brooklyn Park passed a resolution on February 5, 2018, in support of the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan. There is no known opposition to the Master Plan.

## *Analysis*

Planning Strategy 1 of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that master plans for regional parks address the eleven items listed below.

### **Boundaries and Acquisition**

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is located in the northeast corner of the City of Brooklyn Park, Hennepin County, along the Mississippi River. The park is divided into two units; the East Unit located east of West River Road and the West Unit located west of West River Road shown in *Figure 1*. The East Unit includes the existing 165.3-acre, Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park owned by Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), 2.6 acres of Hennepin County forfeited land operated by the City of Brooklyn Park, and a 2.6-acre park easement held by the City of Brooklyn Park over private property.

The West Unit is the existing 96.5-acre Brooklyn Park Environmental Nature Area owned by the City of Brooklyn Park. TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park are partnering to provide a seamless experience to park users through a shared name while maintaining separate ownership, boundaries, development, operations, and maintenance of the East and West Unit.

Both portions of land have Northern States Power utility easements running through them. These easements are restrictive in how the parkland may be used for natural resource management and recreation development. The master plan calls for working with the utility easement holders to explore opportunities to minimize the impact of the utilities to the greatest extent possible.

Figure 1: Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Ownership



Acquisition Needs: This master plan includes 2.6 acres of Hennepin County tax forfeited land and a 2.6-acre easement held by the City of Brooklyn Park.

The 2.6 acres owned by Hennepin County is tax forfeited land that has been managed as part of the Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park since its inception. The land includes a wetland within woodlands that is important for ecosystem continuity. Inclusion of the parcel in the Master Plan boundary allows TRPD to request Hennepin County to turn over that land to TRPD at no cost.

The 2.6 acres of City of Brooklyn Park land is a permanent recreation easement donated to the City of Brooklyn Park from the land owners. The land is woodland with flood plain, shrub swamp land cover important to ecosystem continuity and regional trail user experience. The City of Brooklyn Park intends to transfer that easement to TRPD at no cost through a future agreement. While there are no plans to actually purchase the land from the land owner, TRPD wants to include it in the boundary because TRPD will have the recreational easement rights to the land and will actively manage that land.

TRPD proposes to use a small portion of City of Brooklyn Park land for a shared park maintenance facility, and Rush Creek Regional Trail minor realignment and grade separated crossing. TRPD and the

City of Brooklyn Park intend to enter into a long-term lease or similar agreement that includes an exchange of TRPD's operation services for payment of the use of City of Brooklyn Park land in which the maintenance facility will be located.

Additionally, the master plan identifies residential properties adjacent to the regional park boundary and acknowledges the use of the willing seller policy if opportunities become available. If and when TRPD would like to include the parcels in the master plan boundary, an amendment to the master plan for a Council-approved boundary adjustment, and potentially a policy plan amendment, will be required.

### **Stewardship Plan**

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that a master plan describe how park property would be managed prior to developing the property for recreation purposes. The proposed Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is already developed and open to the public. The TRPD East Unit includes a boat carry-in access area, boat launch, fishing pier, parking area, picnic area, reservable shelter, bathroom facilities, boardwalk, and trails. The City of Brooklyn Park West Unit includes an archery range, dog park, parking, picnic shelter, and trails. Park improvements will begin with pavement reconstruction and improved river access within the East Unit in 2018 - 2020. All other development will occur as funding becomes available and at the discretion of TRPD Board of Commissioners and the Brooklyn Park City Council. TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park intend to continue to work together to secure funding for this park through grants, fundraising and partnerships.

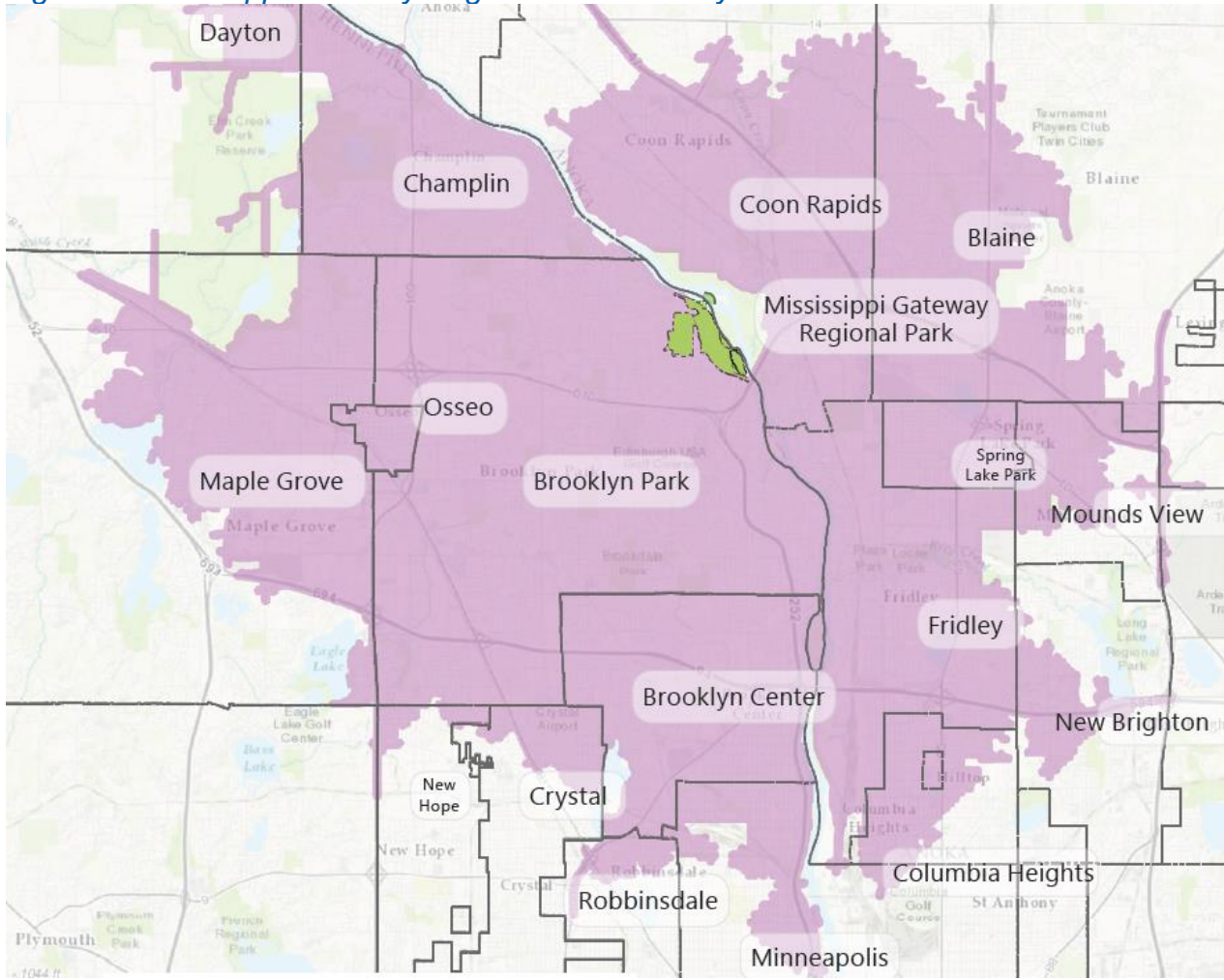
### **Demand Forecast**

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is located in the City of Brooklyn Park - a vibrant, young community. It is the 6th largest city in Minnesota and one of the most racially diverse. In fact, about half of its residents are people of color. About one in five Brooklyn Park residents were born outside the United States and one in four speak a language other than English at home. Its residents are young: three in ten residents are under the age of 19 compared to 2.5 in ten nationwide and within Hennepin County and the median age is 32 compared to 37 for the nation and Minnesota.

Within five miles of the park, 34 percent of residents are people of color and 16 percent of residents are below the 185 percent of federal poverty level. The demographics of the schools that currently participate in park programming also speak to the level of racial diversity, multiple languages, and lower socioeconomic statuses. Current school program participants of Mississippi Gateway Regional Park are 61 percent students of color, 18 percent English language learners and 57 percent receive free or reduced lunch. These are all individuals and communities that TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park want to serve better.

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park has a current annual visitation of 212,000. Upon completion of the master plan, this is anticipated to increase to 600,000, and the visitor profile will likely be reflective of the demographics of the area within a 15-minute drive time to the park as well as suburban Hennepin County (*Figure 2*).

Figure 2: Mississippi Gateway Regional Trail Primary Service Area.



## Development Concept

The proposed Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Master Plan development concept is structured to transition visitors from the built environment to nature. The farther one travels from the main recreation area, the less developed the park becomes and opportunities to interact with nature increase. The park includes four zones of park development; parkwide development, developed area, transition area and nature area shown in *Figure 3*.

*Figure 3: Mississippi Gateway Regional Park Development Concept*





### Parkwide Development

Parkwide development includes field learning stations, nature interpretation nodes, wayfinding, fishing facilities, trails, parking, and roads.

- Field learning stations will support group learning opportunities. A minimum of three park field learning stations are planned and will provide a basic education shelter and/or gathering space and storage for groups of 20-30 people.

- Nine nature interpretation nodes are proposed throughout the park to purposefully introduce and connect people with nature. These spots are intended to showcase the most special places in the park: the recreation pool north of the dam, the dam, the river's edge, the prairie, the wetland complexes, floodplain forest, the islands, the rookery overlook, and the south pond. These places are intended to be resource based and will provide opportunities for observing, interpreting nature, and educating park users (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Nature Interpretation Nodes**



- The wayfinding plan will be developed during the design/development phase of a park and not during the master planning phase. TRPD parks include simple kiosks (maps, basic information) that are often located near parking, major bike/ped entrances and key facilities (i.e. visitor center, beach, play area). 'You are here' maps are placed throughout the park and trail intersections and interpretive signs are located in logical places to inform visitors about a natural or cultural resource (Figures 5 and 6).

**Figure 5: Entry Signage**

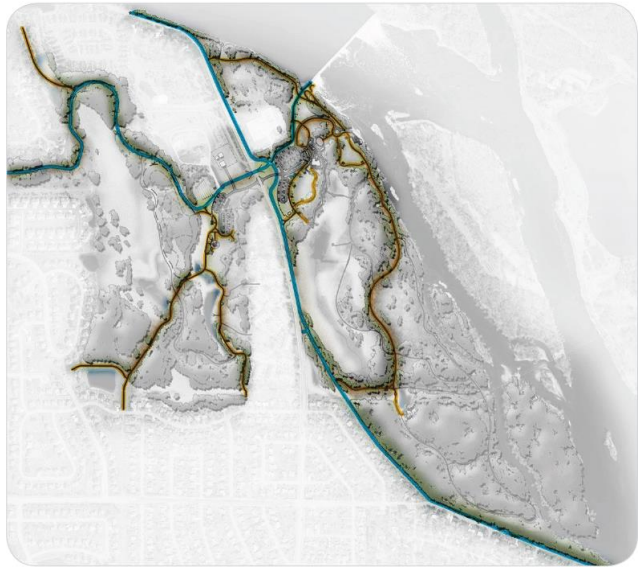


**Figure 6: Directional Signage**



- Fishing facilities are proposed along the river's shoreline to include a non-motorized boat launch, ADA-accessible route to the river's edge, places to sit and interact with the river, fishing platforms (some ADA-compliant), a fish cleaning station, and picnic spots with grills.
- The trail system of developed and maintained ADA-compliant trails will transition from the developed area of the park to the remote south portion of the park. The trails will connect to the nature interpretation node with seating and wayfinding. Trails include:
  - Paved Trails (3.65 miles total) (*Figure 7*)
  - Natural Surface Trails (3.15 miles total) (*Figure 8*)
  - Cross Country Ski Trails (2.0, 2.6, & 3.0 km loops) (*Figure 9*)
  - West Mississippi River Regional Trail (1.35 miles); and Rush Creek Regional Trail (0.5 miles).
- The proposed parking lot and park roads bring parking closer to the park entry points and away from natural areas. A new park road with short term and ADA parking is proposed to improve access to the River Flats Area. Overflow or future permanent parking will be provided. Bus parking and drop off will be accommodated in the Main Recreation Area parking area and an additional bus drop off servicing the South Pond Outdoor Learning Area is envisioned along West River Road in the southern portion of the park.

*Figure 7: Paved Trails*



*Figure 8: Natural Surface Trails*



*Figure 9: Cross Country Ski Trails*



### Developed Area

The proposed main recreation area includes 50 acres of developed destination park facilities and the main entry to the park for vehicles and pedestrians. West River Road bisects the park and provides weekday transit access via bus route 766. The Developed Area, shown in *Figure 10*, is divided into three areas: Upper Recreation Area (East Unit) (*Figure 11*), River Flats Area (East Unit) (*Figure 12*), and West Side Recreation Area (West Unit) (*Figure 13*). Two water fountains are located in West Side Recreation Area (West Unit).

**Figure 10: Developed Area Map**

#### Upper Recreation Area (East Unit)

1. Mississippi Gateway Center
2. Coon Rapids Dam
3. Mini-Mississippi River Play and Education Feature
4. Nature's Highline Trail and Tree House
5. Nature-based Play Area
6. General Picnicking

#### River Flats Area (East Unit)

7. Non-motorized Boat Launch, ADA Access and Outdoor Teaching Space
  8. General Picnicking
- West Side Recreation Area (West Unit)

9. Archery Range
10. Dog Off-Leash Area – includes a water fountain
11. Large Group Reservation Picnicking – includes a water fountain
12. Maintenance and Off-Site Learning Hub



Figure 11. Upper Recreation Area (East Unit)



Figure 12. River Flats Area (East Unit)



Figure 13. West Side Recreation Area (West Unit)



### Transition Area

The transition area is 140 acres that is both visually and physically accessible to the main recreation area (Figure 14). Natural areas in this area include oak savanna, prairie and wetland, lowland forest, and the Mississippi River shoreline. The recreation development within this area includes trails, field learning stations, and nature interpretation nodes. All of these elements focus on providing access and connection to nature by highlighting the natural processes occurring within the park.

*Figure 14: Transition Area*

13. Oak Savanna Restoration
14. Prairie Restoration & Wetland Complex
15. Mississippi River Shoreline
16. Lowland Forest & Wetland Complex



Nature Area

The Nature Area is 60 acres of undeveloped park land with pedestrian access. The main natural resources within this area include wetland, floodplain forest and Mississippi River shoreline (*Figure 15*).

*Figure 15: Nature Area*

- 17. South Pond Learning Lab
- 18. Floodplain Forest Restoration
- 19. Wetland Complex





## **Conflicts**

The master plan identifies the following potential utility, land use and bicyclist conflicts and solutions.

### **Utilities**

1. Both portions of the land have Northern States Power utility easements running through them. These easements are restrictive in how the parkland may be used for natural resource management and recreation development. The master plan calls for working with the utility easement holders to explore opportunities to narrow, realign, upgrade and/or remove utilities as opportunities present themselves in an effort to minimize the impact of the utilities to the greatest extent possible.
2. The existing Northern Powers electric substation and overhead power lines are visually incompatible and take away from the desired user experience of a natural resource-based park. There are no plans to move this facility as it is cost-prohibitive; however, the master plan calls for further screening the facility from parkland and working with the owner when opportunities arise to minimize the impact of the overhead lines on the park.

### **Land Uses**

1. There may be a future need to pull water from the Mississippi River to meet water supply needs and to alleviate reliance on depleting aquifers. If this becomes necessary, a Department of Natural Resources water treatment facility may be located at the West Unit's northern end. The master plan calls for vegetative screening and berming to buffer the parkland from this potential future land use.
2. There are two parcels to the west of the West River Road containing 3.55 acres of existing single-family homes that are guided for high density residential in the City of Brooklyn Park's 2030 Future Land Use. While the master plan doesn't oppose this guiding or formally identify any boundary adjustments, it acknowledges the use of the willing seller policy if opportunities become available.
3. The proposed dog off-leash area located in the West Unit is a concern for some neighbors along the western boundary. The dog off-leash area is approximately 600 feet from the closest residential neighbor and approximately 1,000 feet from known concerned neighbors. When developed, the dog off-leash area is envisioned to be naturalized (compared to turf or solid mulch), with additional vegetative screening to reduce potential visual impacts.

### **Bicyclist conflicts**

1. The Rush River Regional Trail crosses West River Road at the main vehicular and pedestrian entry point of the park posing a potential safety concern. The master plan calls for a grade-separated crossing at this intersection to increase bicyclist visibility to vehicles.

## **Public Services**

The master plan identifies an existing storage area and water tower, future water treatment facility, and proposed maintenance and off-site learning hub that are needed to accommodate the proposed regional park. These uses are located in close proximity to each other in the northern portion of the West Unit. Screening and fencing around the immediate area is planned to minimize any potential impact on the greater park and provide a secure area for maintenance related functions.

- The existing storage area includes storage for materials, compost and storm water equipment.

- The existing water tower and future water facility is discussed in the conflicts portion of this business item.
- The proposed maintenance & off-site learning hub will include temperature controlled and cold storage, open sided storage, garage work space, staff offices/break area/bathrooms and vehicle/equipment parking. This facility will also be home to a new off-site learning hub which is intended to bring the “park to the people.” This facility will serve community groups and schools that may not be able to easily access the site, are not aware of the park, or have limited access to TRPD within their community.

## **Operations**

The proposed Mississippi Gateway Regional Park will appear to the visitor to be a part of the TRPD greater regional park and trail system. TRPD will take the lead in operating and maintaining the whole park through a future collaborative agreement with the City of Brooklyn Park. Operations and maintenance costs for the East Unit, as well as the maintenance facility, and Rush Creek Regional Trail will be funded through Three Rivers’ Operating Budget. Operations and maintenance costs for the West Unit will primarily be funded through Brooklyn Park’s Parks Operations and Maintenance Budget. The City of Brooklyn Park will pay for TRPD’s operations and maintenance services via cash or as part of payment for the 100-year lease for the land in which the Operations and Maintenance facility will be located.

TRPD will operate Mississippi Gateway Regional Park using a wide variety of professional staff and in accordance with TRPD policies, guidelines, and ordinances. The park will be operated year-round and provide a variety of self-directed and instructor led outdoor recreation and natural resource education opportunities.

The new Mississippi Gateway Center will follow a new model, merging visitor and nature center functions. TRPD’s costs for basic operation services is a one-time cost of \$100,000 and \$14,000 annually thereafter. Basic operation services staffing costs are \$341,000 per year (*Table 2*). Kayak/canoe and bike rental is desired at the park and may be offered directly by TRPD or a third-party service provider.

Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is planned to be one of the core education programming centers at TRPD. The programming plan consists of hosting group education opportunities including both nature education and outdoor recreation offerings. For those desiring a more passive or self-guided approach to nature education, improved and enhanced exhibit space, as well as nature interpretation nodes throughout the park will help meet their education needs. In addition, the programming plan calls for continued growth of large community events. TRPD’s costs for education programming is a one-time cost of \$250,000 and \$40,000 annually thereafter. Education programming staffing costs are \$927,400 per year (*Table 2*).

The maintenance plan for Mississippi Gateway Regional Park calls for TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park maintaining the consistently with other TRPD regional parks. This generally includes a combination of routine maintenance, seasonal condition assessments and inspections, and specialized maintenance. Since this park maintains the operation of Coon Rapids Dam and will provide a hybrid of nature and outdoor education and host large community events seasonally or more, it is anticipated that there may be some customized maintenance procedures, equipment, and staffing needs. TRPD’s and the City of Brooklyn Park’s costs of maintenance for equipment and supplies is a one-time cost of \$100,000 and \$37,000 annually thereafter. Maintenance staffing costs are \$336,800 per year (*Table 2*).

*Table 2. TRPD and City of Brooklyn Park Operations, Maintenance and Education Programming Costs*

Activity	TRPD	City of Brooklyn Park	Sub Totals
Operations	\$355,000		\$355,000
Education Programming	\$967,000		\$967,400
Maintenance	\$320,000	\$53,800	\$373,800
Natural Resource Restoration	\$120,000	\$20,000	\$140,000
Totals	\$1,762,000	\$73,800	\$1,836,200

TRPD strives to utilize appropriate sustainable best management practices and guidelines for energy use conservation, sustainable storm water management, smart and responsible water consumption, and using sustainable building techniques. The 2019 parking lot project will replace and improve existing park lighting to be more energy efficient, have less light pollution, and provide more consistent and safe lighting levels across the parking lot and major walkways.

TRPD has an active solid waste management plan geared toward reducing waste and increasing recycling and composting. At which time Mississippi Gateway Regional Park generates enough organics that the benefits outweigh the impact of commercial organic waste (i.e. additional truck traffic/ trips), the park will evaluate moving toward a zero-waste facility model. In the meantime, garbage and waste will be collected and disposed of in accordance with best management practices and all applicable laws. Garbage and recycling bins will be located throughout the park to make participation convenient.

**Public Engagement and Participation**

TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park share the common goal of developing a master plan that is community driven and supported and serves new park users without displacing existing park users. To do so, an extensive engagement process was established to purposefully engage and build relationships with individuals, community groups, and agency partners.

Four main target populations were included in the engagement process including the general public, park users, underrepresented populations, and external advisory team (EAT). Staff from the following agencies were invited to participate on EAT: TRPD, Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Anoka County, cities of Brooklyn Park, Champlin, Brooklyn Center and Coon Rapids, National Park Service, Friends of the Mississippi River, and Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. Engagement strategies were customized to best meet the individual needs of each group.

The engagement process followed a three-phase approach with the majority of the engagement occurring early in the master plan process, providing the overall framework for the park plan. Phases included information gathering, summary and recommendations, and public comment period. Each phase was designed to serve a specific purpose and the strategies and tools within each phase were customized to meet the needs of the phase, as well as of the persons and groups engaged.

Engagement strategies for Phase 1, the information gathering, included:

- A press release translated into Hmong, Somali and Spanish and distributed to ethnic media contacts, as well as, distributed to TRPD media contacts.
- Paper Survey available at the Coon Rapids Dam Visitor Center.
- Preference Boards posted at the Coon Rapids Dam Visitor Center, Brooklyn Park City Hall and Zanewood Recreation Center.
- Five listening sessions paired with introduction to nature-based activities with underrepresented populations to share their experiences, preferences for park improvements, ideas to reduce barriers, and ways to welcome underrepresented populations to the park.

Engagement strategies for Phase 2, the summary and recommendations, included:

- A mobile display showing preliminary concepts and ideas was available at the park.
- Staff attended seven community-based meetings and discussions to present the preliminary concepts and ideas. Participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback and share thoughts.
- Staff held an informal meeting with interested neighbors sharing information on the project, preliminary concepts, and ideas.
- One neighborhood open house spanning two days that invited adjacent park neighbors to hear a brief presentation and leave comments on a comment board or box.

Engagement strategies for Phase 3, the public comment period, included:

- A mobile display showing the final recommendations and concept plan at the park, Brooklyn Park City Hall and Hennepin County-Brooklyn Park Library. Written comments were collected on-site.
- A press release with final recommendations and concept plan and how interested parties could obtain additional information and provide comments.
- A mailing from staff following up to all engaged parties in which contact information was available, inviting them to review and comment on the final recommendations and concept plan.
- Two open houses were held on January 9 and 16, 2018 for community members to review the final plan and share their thoughts. In addition, the plan was presented and/or discussed at the January 23, 2018 Brooklyn Center Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting, February 5, 2018 Brooklyn Park City Council Meeting and February 6, 2018 Champlin Parks and Recreation Commission.

External advisory team meetings and elected officials/board, City of Brooklyn Park City Council meetings, and website and social media updates took place throughout the engagement process. Websites included a project website available in Hmong, Somali and Spanish, as well as TRPD and City of Brooklyn Park websites and Facebook pages.

## **Public Awareness**

The TRPD Marketing & Community Engagement Department manages a centralized marketing communications function that oversees TRPD website, public relations, marketing, media relations, social media, brand management, event planning and promotion. A number of effective marketing and outreach tools are used to promote TRPD, including but not limited to events calendars, maps, digital and social media, direct mail, press releases, a centralized reservation system, brochures, advertising and on-site promotion. Promotional pieces will highlight how to get to the Park via foot, bike, transit and car.

TRPD collaborates with a wide array of community, business, and government organizations to promote its facilities, programs, and services, and to educate the public about its resources. TRPD also works with the Metropolitan Council, the State Office of Tourism, and other partners to leverage shared opportunities for creating awareness and visibility. Additionally, a focus is placed on developing partnerships and programming opportunities that allow TRPD to better serve all residents of suburban Hennepin County, especially those with less access to its facilities and programs.

In addition, TRPD is embarking on a process to formally change the name of this regional park. The roll out of the new name will be a phased approach, starting the day after the TRPD Board votes to approve the final plan. The roll out will continue as construction and development are made at the park.

## **Accessibility**

The TRPD is committed to full application of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to the services, programs and activities of the TRPD. The TRPD will inform the public of the accessibility levels of programs and facilities when appropriate, and will apply the concepts of universal design, wherever feasible, in development and redevelopment of areas and facilities. Based on this policy, the TRPD has identified accessibility measures under all components of the master plan mentioned in the previous sections.

## **Natural Resources**

TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park, under the guidance of existing natural and cultural resources management plans, will utilize best practices to minimize any potential negative impacts, work with agency partners to determine how to best protect and manage significant resources, and incorporate opportunities to enjoy and interpret the resources present. TRPD and the City of Brooklyn Park's costs for resource restoration is an annual cost of \$10,000. Resource restoration staffing costs are \$130,000 per year (*Table 1*).

## ***Review by Other Council Divisions***

### **Community Development – Environment and Surface Water Management** (Jim Larsen 651-602-1159)

- The West Unit Park boundaries presented in the development and concept plan figures on pages v, 14, and 25 differ markedly from boundaries presented in all other maps presented in the Master Plan (Plan). Metropolitan Council (Council) staff suggests these differences be resolved or explained.
- Council staff recommends adding a complete Legend on 'Figure 9: Preliminary Concept Diagram' on page 14 of the Plan. The assumed wetland areas on both Figures 9 and 17 appear to be diminished in areal extent when compared to the Council's GIS overlay of wetlands within the Park area. Please clarify whether the wetland areas within the Park have been specifically delineated or another established record of data was utilized in the Plan.

- Map background color for Park land on Figures 15, 16 and 17 on page 23 adds confusion to the interpretation of the information. Council staff suggests removing the green color from the figures.
- The Legend in Figure 16 utilizes different classification descriptors for the two qualities of vegetation mapped as Minnesota DNR Regionally Significant Ecological Area (RSEA) than indicated in the Council's GIS overlay of the DNR's data. Council recommends the maintenance of the DNR's specific classification descriptors when utilizing their data, to prevent misinterpretation of the results.
- It would appear some of the planned Park development areas (portions of the dog off-leash area, both paved and nature trails, and picnic areas) are within areas that our GIS overlay information depicts as wetland area and in some cases 100-year floodplain which might have unaccounted-for financial and permitting implications regarding potential need for wetland mitigation, floodplain fill mitigation, and added long-term maintenance costs and reduced longevity due to construction on poor (hydric) soils and threat of periodic inundation.

**Environmental – Sewer** (Roger Janzig 651-602-1119) – No additional comments.

**Metro Transit** (Steve Mahowald 612-349-7775) – No additional comments.

**Transportation Planning** (Russ Owen 651-602-1724) – No additional comments.

**Local Planning Assistance – Land Use** (Eric Wojchik 651-602-1330)

- The master plan states that the operation and maintenance of the entire park (east and west) will be administered by Three Rivers Park District, in collaboration with the City of Brooklyn Park (page 37). Council staff recommends that the two parties formalize their partnership through a Joint Powers Agreement. Consistent with policies and recommendations within the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, such a Joint Powers Agreement should clearly delineate roles and responsibilities for each party.
- The master plan identifies potential land use conflicts on page 19. Council staff encourages consideration of bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to, from, and through the high and medium density land use areas that bisect the two park areas from the south.