

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: August 7, 2018

Subject: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Comments on the draft 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

District(s), Member(s): ALL

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes § 473.147

Staff Prepared/Presented: Libby Starling, Director of Regional Planning (651-602-1135) and Emmett Mullin, Manager of Regional Parks and Natural Resources (651-602-1360)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission submit comments on the draft *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* to the Metropolitan Council.

Background

Minnesota Statutes § 473.147 requires the Council to prepare and adopt a long-range system policy plan for regional recreation open space as part of the Council's Metropolitan Development Guide. This statute also requires the Council to complete a comprehensive review of the plan every four years. This update addresses this statutory requirement.

Rationale

Minnesota Statutes § 473.147, subd. 2 requires the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) to submit comments on the draft *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* to the Metropolitan Council and requires the Council to post MPOSC's comments 15 days prior to the public hearing on the draft. At the August 7 meeting, MPOSC members will have the opportunity to agree to consolidated MPOSC comments. Individual MPOSC members wishing to submit additional comments for posting may submit them via email to tracey.kinney@metc.state.mn.us by Wednesday, August 29, 2018. Council staff will post a package of MPOSC comments, both comments emerging from the August 7 conversation and any individual comments, by Friday, August 31, 2018 to meet the statutory requirement of posting at least 15 days prior to the public hearing to be held on September 17, 2018

Thrive Lens Analysis

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* provides the policy framework for the Regional Parks System, which represents one of the Council's primary means of advancing the Thrive outcomes by responsibly managing natural resources (that is, advancing Stewardship), planning for the quality of life needed for economic competitiveness (advancing Prosperity), creating real choices in recreation for all residents (advancing Equity), and increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation (advancing Livability).

Funding

Updating the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* is a regular part of the Community Development Division budget.

Known Support / Opposition

The purpose of the public comment period and public hearing is to learn more about support and opposition for the language in the draft *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

August 7, 2018

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101

- **Tony Yarusso, Mahtomedi**
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Representative
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- District B
- **Margie Andreason, St. Louis**
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To the Metropolitan Council:

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission has discussed the proposed update to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* at each of our eight monthly meetings so far in 2018 and will continue to discuss the plan until we recommend its adoption to you later this year.

While we look forward to reviewing comments received during the public comment period, we submit the following comments on the draft plan as released for public comment:

- We support handling future potential uses of the interest earnings on Regional Parks System funds outside of the plan update and are interested in using this funding for the Equity Grant Program. (Chapter 2, Key Legislation)
- We support the strategy of geographic balance and would look forward to better articulating what geographic balance means, including how it aligns with population distribution and access to a range of recreational opportunities. (Chapter 4, Siting and Acquisition)
- We support reaffirming the equity strategies and engaging a broad community of stakeholders around equity solutions. (Chapter 7)
- We are interested in learning more about the estimated cost to complete the system, including how and why the cost increased from the 2015 plan estimate and how this significantly higher number will affect future funding strategies for the Regional Parks System. (Chapter 8)

As Commissioners, we plan to engage our networks and partners in the public comment period on the plan. We look forward to discussing the final revisions of the update with you this fall. Thank you for your continued support of our region's magnificent Regional Parks System.

Sincerely,

Tony Yarusso, Chair
Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

www.metrocouncil.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Metropolitan-Parks-and-Open-Space-Commission.aspx