

## Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: February 6, 2018

**Subject:** 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update and Discussion about Strengthening Equitable Use

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statute 473.147

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Jan Youngquist, AICP, Planning Analyst (651-602-1029)  
Dan Marckel, Planning Analyst (651-602-1548)

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

### Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed.

### Background

Minnesota Statute 473.147 requires the Metropolitan 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. The Council's long range system policy plan, known as the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (2040 RPPP)*, must include policies, strategies, and a system plan that guide the Regional Parks System, and must also include estimated costs for acquisition and development and a five year capital improvement program. The Council adopted the *2040 RPPP* on February 11, 2015. Minnesota Statute 473.147 also requires the Council to complete a comprehensive review of the plan every four years. The current update addresses this statutory requirement to complete a comprehensive review.

Staff will describe recent activities related to the *2040 RPPP* update process and will engage the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) in a discussion on how the *2040 RPPP* furthers the *Thrive MSP 2040* direction to strengthen equitable use of regional parks and trails.

Attachment A depicts the range of approaches in the existing *2040 RPPP* to strengthen equitable use.

### Rationale

Minnesota Statute 473.147 states that the Metropolitan Council shall consult with and make maximum use of the expertise of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission in preparing the policy plan.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

The MPOSC discussion will advance the *Thrive MSP 2040* outcome of Equity by focusing on strategies to strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

### Funding

N/A

### Known Support / Opposition

N/A

## 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update Strengthening Equitable Use

### **Thrive MSP 2040 Direction for the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan:**

Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

The existing *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* addresses this direction by concepts that fall into three broad categories: 1) regional parks system planning, 2) funding and investment, and 3) convening and information.

#### **Regional Parks System Planning**

- Revise the description of a Special Recreation Feature to allow a “bridging facility” (page 83)
- Allow and encourage the following design elements to be included in a regional park or trail master plan: (pages 73, 90)
  - Amenities suited for the aging population and those with limited mobility
  - Picnic areas suitable for emerging recreational patterns of use
  - Large open ball fields that could accommodate a variety of pick-up games
  - Clustering of amenities that would allow for multi-generational groups
- Require community engagement that seeks to mitigate existing racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic barriers and includes diverse races, ethnicities, classes, ages, abilities, and immigrant statuses in developing regional park and trail master plans (pages 73, 85, 86, 88)

#### **Funding and Investment**

- Require implementing agencies to complete a Regional Parks System equity toolkit in grant applications (page 101)
- Using the toolkit, the Council and MPOSC will be involved in the prioritization of the project lists proposed for the CIP and the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund (pages 72, 100)
- Using Council bonds, the Council will create, fund, and administer a set-aside competitive grant program for capital projects explicitly aimed to strengthen equitable usage (pages 72, 101)
- Require a minimum percentage of each agency's share of its Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriations be used to “Connect People and the Outdoors” (page 99)

#### **Convening and Information**

- Create a Council funded regional parks system ambassador program (pages 72-73)
- Where appropriate, provide assistance to implementing agencies to establish a public engagement process that includes individuals representing diverse races, ethnicities, classes, ages, abilities, and national origin in developing master plans (pages 73, 86, 88)
- Conduct studies to inform Regional Parks System planning and management (pages 72-73)
- Convene stakeholder meetings with implementing agencies, partners, community based organizations and advocacy groups to enhance knowledge and continuous improvement (page 73)
- Conduct a region-wide visitor survey every five years (page 72)