

Attachment 4.

2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN DRAFT AMENDMENT

*Public Comment Summary Report
August 26, 2020 – October 30, 2020*



November 2020

The Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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Picture on front cover: Metropolitan Council, People walking on a trail at Lake Phalen Regional Park in Saint Paul.

Table of Contents

Public Comment Summary Report Overview	2
Demographic Analysis	3
Public Engagement Pilot	12
List of Public Comment Contributors	16
Public Comment Themes and Responses	24
Amendment Process.....	24
Bridging Facilities.....	25
Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management.....	27
Engagement Process.....	28
Equity Initiatives	29
Funding	34
Future Regional Parks System	34
Geographic Balance.....	36
Land Acknowledgement.....	38
Master Plan Requirements.....	40
Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development.....	45
Other	46
Park Reserves.....	48
Policy Plan Section Comments	48
Programming and Engagement	63
Regional Bicycle Transportation Network	64
Reconsidering History	65
Recreation or Facility Requests	67
Regional Parks System.....	74
Regional Trails	75
Specific Parks or Trails	82
System Additions	91
Water Trails.....	98

Public Comment Summary Report Overview

The Public Comment Summary Report summarizes the comments received on the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* Draft Amendment. The draft amendment was released for public comment on August 26, 2020. The public hearing occurred on October 19, 2020 and the public comment period concluded on October 30, 2020. During that time, the plan was available on the Council's website and through printed copies as requested.

The Council received written comments from:

- Regional park implementing agencies (2 regional parks implementing agencies)
- City / township / county governments (4 cities)
- Organizations (28 organizations)
- Residents (145 residents)
- Council staff (1 staff member)

One organization and one implementing agency provided oral testimony at the October 19 public hearing.

How to Use This Document

The Public Comment Summary Report includes a demographic analysis of the survey respondents, summary of the public engagement pilot, and summary of the public comments received and staff responses to the comments.

The demographic analysis summarizes a select segment of the public comment respondents' age, race, and gender summarized from voluntarily provided survey data. This analysis covers only the survey respondents and does not summarize the participants who took part in the engagement pilot. The analysis provides a glimpse into who commented on the draft amendment and approximately where in the region they live. It is a baseline description of public comment participants to identify which communities are over and underrepresented in the public comment process. From the beginning of this effort, Council Members and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commissioners recognized that there are limitations to traditional outreach approaches. They encouraged staff to engage a more representative sample of the region's population. With this intent in mind, staff undertook the engagement pilot.

For the public engagement pilot, Council staff worked to expand participating voices in shaping the future of the Regional Parks System. The strategies for the pilot included engagement with prioritized groups, new plain language engagement efforts, a social media campaign, public comment aligned with outreach and accountability goals, and leveraged expertise within our leadership networks.

For the summary of the public comments received and staff responses to the comments, each public commenter received an identification number. Comments are organized by theme. Under each theme, similar comments are grouped together for a shared response. The table of contents that identifies the location of the themes in relation to the comment identification numbers.

Demographic Analysis

Purpose

The public comment period of the draft amendment *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (Draft Amendment) is an opportunity to include advice from residents across the region and ensure the plan increases equitable access to the Regional Parks System. The Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee and the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission have provided feedback that underserved populations should be prioritized when planning for the Regional Parks System. To do this, staff conducted a pilot engagement process that sought to reach these critical residents through organizations connected to parks and to youth. This extended engagement was paired with more traditional engagement efforts used by the Council to invite the general public to comment.

The demographic analysis summarizes a select segment of the public comment respondents' age, race, and gender summarized from voluntarily provided survey data. This analysis covers only the survey respondents and does not summarize the participants who took part in the engagement pilot. The analysis provides a glimpse into who commented on the draft amendment and approximately where in the region they live. This is the first-time the Metropolitan Council conducted a demographic analysis for a parks public comment period. It provides a baseline description of public comment participants to identify which communities are over and underrepresented in the public comment process. From the beginning of this effort, Council Members and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commissioners recognized that there are limitations to traditional outreach approaches. They encouraged staff to engage a more representative sample of the region's population. With this intent in mind, staff undertook the engagement pilot. The following analysis includes a description of the results, methodology, and limitations.

Summary

A summary of the results captured survey respondents' age, race, and gender, as well as location in the region. Most of the public commenters were ages 35-44, comprising almost a third of the responses (31%) (Table 1). Almost all (97%) of public comment survey respondents were white. One participant identified as American Indian/Native Alaskan, one participant identified as Black/African/African American, and one respondent identified as multiracial (Table 2). The survey provided opportunity to list Native Tribal Affiliation; one respondent gave an affiliation. Six respondents (five percent) identified as multiethnic (Table 3). Our survey was available in Hmong, Spanish, and Somali languages, but no respondents used these options; 100% of the respondents primarily spoke English at home (Table 4). Women were more than 2/3 of respondents (71%) and nearly 1/3 were men (29%) (Table 5). One participant identified as non-binary/third gender. One participant identified as transgender (Table 6). Eight percent of the respondents reported having a physical, mental, or sensory disability or condition (Table 7). Finally, the largest education demographic was those with a graduate or professional degree (38%), followed by 4-year degrees or bachelor's (33%). Only ten percent had 2-year or associate degrees. Nineteen percent reported having some college, vocational, technical or trade school, and less than one percent had a high school degree or GED (Table 8). Six percent were students (Table 9). Finally, the location of respondents was heavily concentrated in the southwest metro area with 60% of respondents closest to Scott County Implementing Agency (Table 10).

Methodology

In total, the Council received 137 public comment survey respondents of 180 responders overall. Of these survey respondents, 22 were received on behalf of an organization. This analysis includes demographic information from all 137 survey respondents. Our survey provided the opportunity for respondents to share:

- Age
- Race and multiracial identity
- Multiethnic identity
- Gender identity
- Transgender identity
- Physical, mental, or sensory disability or condition
- Language most spoken at home
- Education level
- Student status

Researchers calculated totals and percentages based only on those who chose a demographic category. Respondents had the option to select 'prefer not to answer' or 'don't know'. 'Prefer not to answer,' 'don't know,' and unselected demographics options were omitted in the analysis. Excel was used to conduct this analysis.

This analysis is not a sample representative of our region; it is drawn from the whole population of the survey's 137 respondents. Percentages were rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Age Range

The most frequent (modal) age range of public commenters was age 35-44, comprising almost a third of the responses (31%). Next most frequent was age 45-54 (25%). Age range 55-64 made up 14%, while age ranges 25-34 and 65-74 were both 11% of responses. The youngest age range, 18-24, constituted the least amount of responses at nine percent (Table 1).

Table 1: Age range of respondents

Age Range	Count	Percentage
18-24	12	9%
25-34	14	11%
35-44	41	31%
45-54	33	25%
55-64	18	14%
65-74	14	11%
Total	132	100%

Race

According to the 2019 *American Community Survey* (ACS), people of color comprise approximately 27% of the greater Twin Cities region’s population. The present analysis indicates that communities of color are currently underrepresented in the public comment process, as 97% of participants were white. One participant (one percent) identified as American Indian/Alaskan Native, one participant (one percent) identified as Black/African/African American, and one participant (one percent) identified as multiracial (Table 2).

Table 2: Race of respondents

Race	Count	Percentage
White	111	97%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	1%
Black/African/African American	1	1%
Multiracial	1	1%
Total	114	100%

Ethnicity and Multiethnic Identity

Most respondents (95%) did not consider themselves to be more than one race. Five percent of survey respondents identified as multiracial/multiethnic (Table 3).

Table 3: Respondents who themselves to be more than one race/ethnicity

Multiracial/Ethnic Identity	Count	Percentage
No	109	95%
Yes	6	5%
Total	115	100%

Language

All (100%) of the survey respondents reported English as the language most frequently spoken at home (Table 4).

Table 4: Respondents language spoken most at home

Language	Count	Percentage
English	124	100%
Total	124	100%

Gender Identity

Most respondents (71%) identified as female. The next most frequent response was male (29%) while one respondent (one percent) identified as non-binary or third gender (Table 5).

Table 5: Respondents gender identity

Gender Identity	Count	Percentage
Female	89	71%
Male	36	29%
Non-binary/Third gender	1	1%
Total	126	100%

Transgender Identity

One respondent identified as transgender (one percent) (Table 6).

Table 6: Respondents who identify as transgender

Transgender Identity	Count	Percentage
No	120	99%
Yes	1	1%
Total	121	100%

Disability

Most survey respondents (92%) did not have a physical, mental, or sensory disability or condition while eight percent of respondents did (Table 7).

Table 7: Respondents with a physical, mental, or sensory disability or condition

Physical, Mental, or Sensory Disability or Condition	Count	Percentage
No	113	92%
Yes	10	8%
Total	123	100%

Education and Student Status

The most frequently selected education category was graduate or professional degree (38%). A close second was 4-year degree or bachelor’s degree (33%). Next was some college, vocational, technical, or trade school (19%). 10% of respondents had a 2-year degree or Associate, vocational, or technical degree, and finally, one percent were high school graduates or had their GED (Table 8). Six percent were current students (Table 9).

Table 8: Respondent highest grade or year of school completed

Education	Count	Percentage
High school graduate or GED	1	1%
Some college, vocational, technical, or trade school	24	19%
2-year degree (Associate, vocational, or technical degree)	12	10%
4-year degree (Bachelor’s degree)	41	33%
Graduate or professional degree	47	38%
Total	125	100%

Table 9: Respondents who are currently a student

Student Status	Count	Percentage
No	118	94%
Yes	8	6%
Total	126	100%

Zip Codes and Implementing Agencies

The survey included the option for the respondents to share residential zip code. Council researchers mapped the zip codes to visualize the distribution of respondent location in the 7-county region. The location of respondents indicates that northern areas of the region are underrepresented in our current Regional Parks Draft Amendment public comment process (Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Distribution map of respondent zip codes

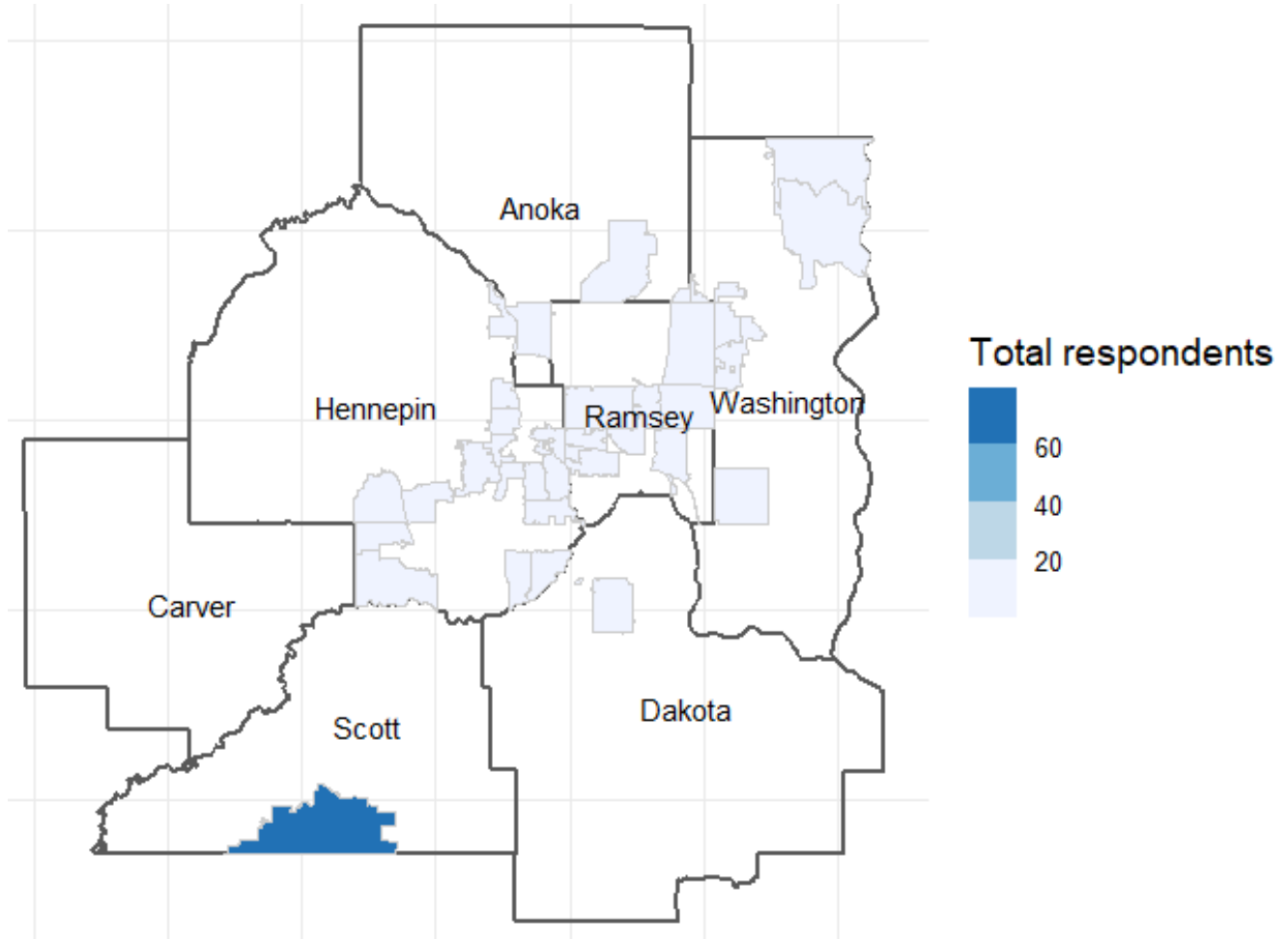


Figure 2: Distribution map of respondent zip codes except Scott County

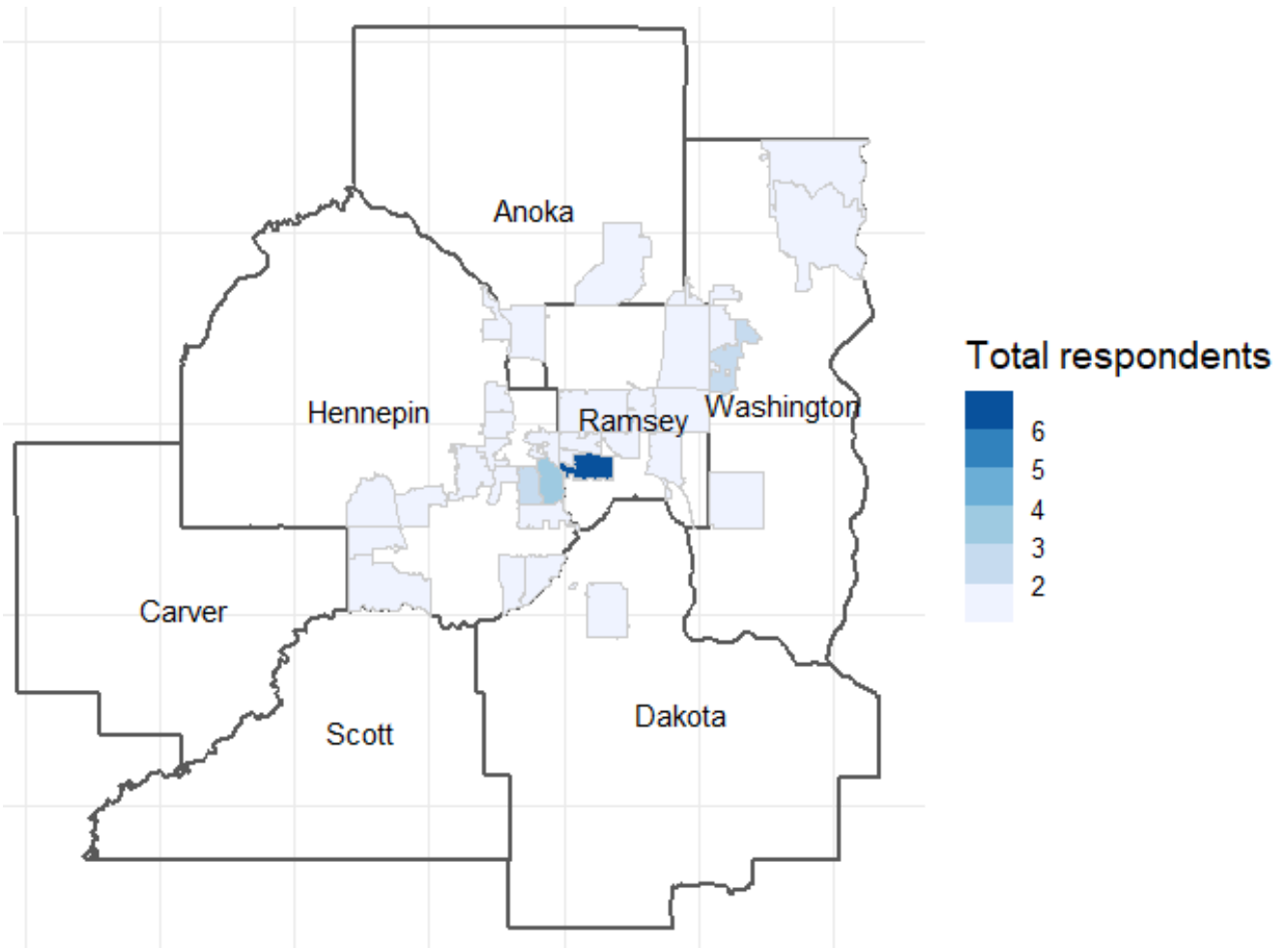


Table 10: Closest implementing agency to respondents' zip code

Closest Implementing Agency	Count	Percentage
Scott County	78	60%
MPRB	20	15%
Saint Paul	14	11%
Ramsey	9	7%
TRPD	5	4%
Dakota	2	2%
Anoka	1	1%
Washington	1	1%
Total	104	100%

Limitations

Respondents not analyzed: The demographic analysis has limitations. Some respondents did not offer demographic information. Survey analysis did not consider characteristics of those who gave the Council advice through the engagement pilot with youth and other prioritized organizations. The analysis did not have data for email and telephone comments. We did not ask about income because of the high refusal rates associated with this question. As a result, we have less understanding of socioeconomic distribution, although education is an approximation of income. Finally, this is the first analysis of public comments, so it is a baseline with no point of comparison.

Representativeness of public comment process: The analysis also shows the limitation of using only the traditional public comment process to listen to public feedback. As this analysis shows, the survey respondents are not representative of the region's population. The traditional public comment process does not reflect the true diversity of the region. Examples of the gaps are detailed below for each demographic category.

Race and Ethnicity

According to the 2019 ACS, the racial and ethnic demographics of the Twin Cities region are:

- White alone, non-Latinx: 73.22%
- Black alone, non-Latinx: 9.35%
- Asian alone, non-Latinx: 7.46%
- Hispanic or Latinx: 6.32%
- Multiracial, non-Latinx: 3.04%
- Other, non-Latinx: 0.18%

Based on the racial and ethnic demographics of the seven-county area, white communities were overrepresented in the public comment process while communities of color are severely underrepresented. White people comprise less than three quarters of the region; however, 97% of

respondents were white. While Black, Asian, Native, and Latinx people comprise a much smaller percentage of the population, they are still an important part our region.

Education

The ACS reports that the education demographics of the Twin Cities region are as follows:

- Two-year associate degree or less: 56.29%
- 4-year or bachelor's degree or greater: 43.72%

While less than half the population of the region holds a 4-year/bachelor's degree and/or a graduate or professional degree, this demographic comprises 71% of respondents. This indicates that residents with no high school degree, a high school degree of a GED, some college, and a 2-year of associate degree are underrepresented in Parks traditional public comment processes.

Disability

The ACS estimates that people with disabilities comprise about nine percent of the seven-county area's population. Disabilities can be categorized into six areas: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living. One in 11 residents report having at least one disability. Respondents who reported having a disability constituted eight percent of the survey population. This indicates that our region's disabled residents are underrepresented by the public comment process.

Language

We compared the question about which language respondents spoke most frequently at home to the closest question in the ACS, 'Persons with language other than English spoken at home'. Almost fifteen percent of the region's households speak a language other than English at home. The 2019 ACS reports that 86% of the region's adults exclusively speak English at home, yet 100% of survey respondents mostly spoke English at home. Families who speak a language other than English in their homes are heavily underrepresented in the Park public comment process.

Conclusion

We conducted this demographic analysis to understand who participates in the traditional public comment process, and to identify communities who may be underserved and underrepresented throughout these traditional processes. We conclude that the traditional public comment process is not adequate to engage and represent people of color, people with disabilities, people who primarily speak languages other than English, and people with lower educational attainment. It is important to include underrepresented communities' advice to the Regional Parks System to meet the Council's Regional Parks Policy Plan goals to create an equitable park system that serves all the region's residents.

Our findings confirm the need for additional ways to seek public comment. This research can help us create culturally competent, accessible outreach initiatives and processes to better serve all residents of the Twin Cities region. The demographic analysis advances the *Thrive MSP 2040* Outcome of Equity and the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* guidance to strengthen equitable use of the Regional Parks System by better understanding who is responding to the public comments.

Public Engagement Pilot

The public comment period for the Regional Parks Policy Plan draft amendment provided an opportunity to increase equitable access to the Regional Parks System. Hearing the goals of the Metropolitan Councilmembers, *Thrive 2040* and the Policy Plan, the Council Parks team piloted new engagement efforts. These efforts were designed to respond to the need for more diverse public input, a need supported by the demographic analysis of public comment. Council staff worked to expand participating voices in shaping the future of the Regional Parks System. The strategies for the pilot included engagement with prioritized groups, new plain language engagement efforts, a social media campaign, public comment aligned with outreach and accountability goals, and leveraged expertise within our leadership networks.

Process

The pilot process began with writing a plain-language explanation of proposed changes to the Policy Plan. We identified four stories being told in the draft amendment: growing the system, reconsidering history, increasing equitable access, and climate resilience/natural resources. We then took the four stories out to the public by expanding the ways the region could respond during the comment period. The Council Communications team designed a social media campaign about the public comment opportunities that could be shared by stakeholders who wanted others to be aware of the process.

The public was invited to share their perspectives in response proposed changes, giving us a way to see how the public would like us to approach the four stories. Traditional methods of public comment opportunity (email, phone, chapter-specific feedback) remained options, too. All the ways to participate were translated into Hmong, Somali and Spanish and posted on the Council website. A short survey invited individuals to share their thoughts on any or all the four stories. Youth and the older public alike sent responses via a video challenge competition.

With the four stories and engagement materials available, Council Staff turned to targeted engagement with prioritized organizations. Ongoing collaborations with valued partners from the Council's Youth and Parks Research Study and Parks Ambassador work guided our efforts. Council members and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission members connected us with their networks for outreach.

Summary

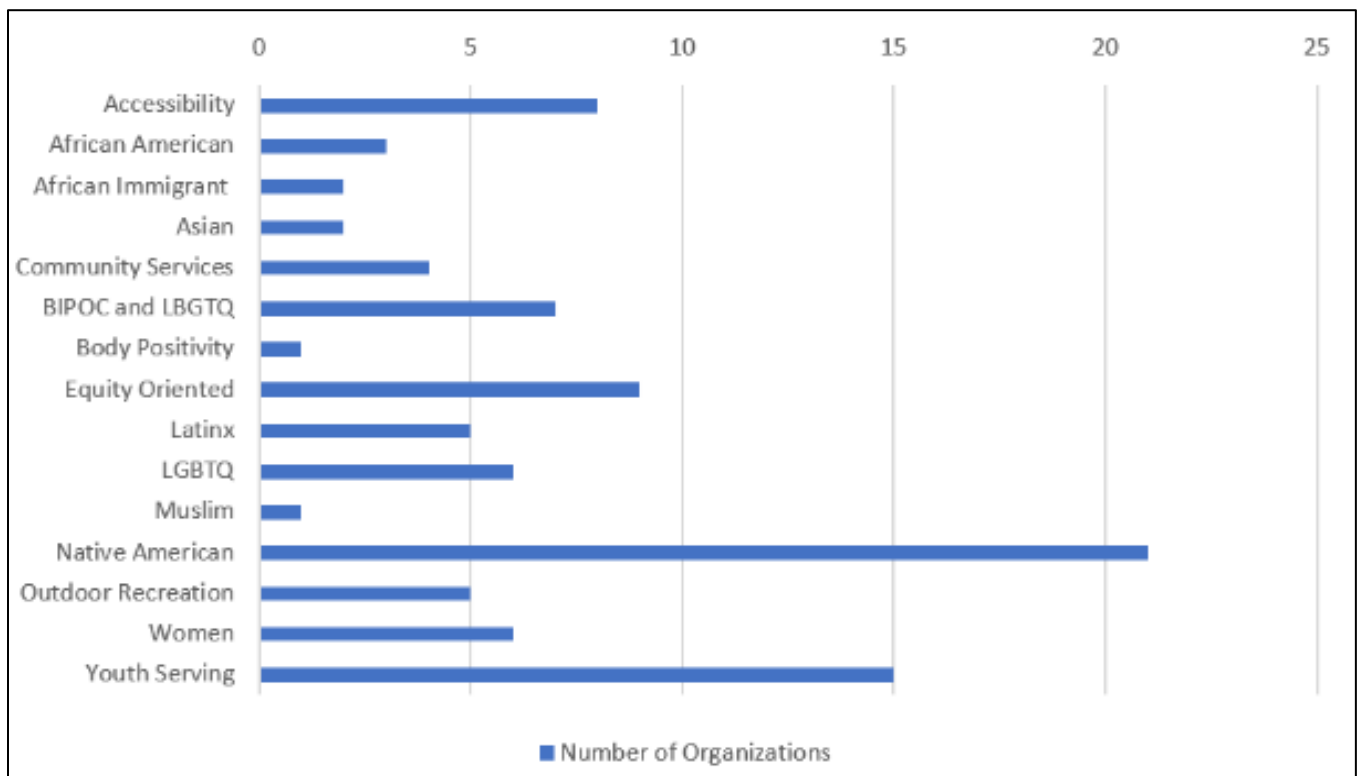
In summary, Council Parks and Communication staff contacted 90 organizations, hosted 6 deeper conversations, and reached the public through social media and received two videos.

Youth Serving and Outdoor Recreation Organizations

Of the 90 organizations, twenty-four of these organizations advanced existing relationships and 66 were new opportunities to make a connection. The Communications Teams sent three emails to each of these organization at the beginning and end of the public comment period to invite comments. Additionally, each organization was contacted a third time through a phone and/or email to follow-up. The first email received a 53% open rate (a 20-25% open rate is average), the second email received a 30% open rate, and the third email received a 15% open rate.

Of the 90 organizations, Council Staff engaged: 21 organizations that are Native American based, 15 organizations serve youth, 10 organizations are equity oriented, 8 accessibility organizations, and 7 organizations dedicated to BIPOC and LGBTQ communities (Figure 3. Some of these organizations serve intersecting communities or identities, so they are listed twice.)

Figure 3. Organizations engaged by Community/Identity



Deeper Engagements

As part of the engagement pilot, Council staff had successful deeper engagements with six organizations. Council staff engaged Urban Roots and Cycle Sisters and made three new connections through requests for staff presentations at meetings of the Saint Paul Indians in Actions, South Eastside Community Organization, and the League of Women Voters of Minnesota. We had additional engagement with two youth and park collaborators, Urban Roots and Outdoor Latino Minnesota. A summary of all targeted engagement is in Table 11.

Table 11: Summary of all engagement in pilot project with targeted organizations

Organization and Relationship	Organization Mission	Type of Engagement	Resulting Input
Cycle Sisters – Participant in Council Bikes and Trails facilitated brainstorm	“We are Ladies, who ride bike together in North Minneapolis and support Local Businesses! Come ride with us!”	Online Zumba Class and Facilitated Group Discussion using Mentimeter and individual reflections, collective editing of group public comment letter via online collaboration	Public comment letter based on comments and submitted by the organization. Individuals participated in public comment survey. Expressed interest in future engagement and involvement opportunities.
League of Women Voters of Minnesota – New contact	“The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.”	Online conversation about RPPP amendment during organization’s regular meeting time.	In-meeting feedback and further information to members about the regional park system.
Saint Paul Indians in Action – Prior work with Council Outreach Staff	“SIA is a network of American Indian organizations in St. Paul, MN dedicated to advocating for our community.”	Online conversation about RPPP amendment during organization’s regular meeting time.	In-meeting feedback and further information to members about the regional park system. The organization is interested in further communication and collaboration.
Southeast Community Organization – Councilmember Chai Lee contacted	“In collaboration with community members in our district, we address issues around business development, the environment, parks, transportation, safety, housing and other matters.”	Online conversation about RPPP amendment during organization’s regular meeting time.	In-meeting feedback and further information to members about the regional park system.

Organization and Relationship	Organization Mission	Type of Engagement	Resulting Input
Outdoor Latino – Prior youth & parks partner	“El objetivo de OLMN se enfoca en concientizar a los habitantes del estado sobre la importancia de convivir con la naturaleza y el uso de las áreas verdes con las que cuenta el estado de MN. Para así destacar habilidades y conocimientos en el cuidado y aprovechamiento del medio ambiente.” (OLMN’s objective is focused on raising consciousness among the state’s residents about the importance of living in harmony with nature and enjoying Minnesota’s natural spaces. We help build skills and knowledge about caring for and enjoying the natural world.)	Meeting with organization leader about RPPP amendment and participation	Submission of video comment and proposed continued communication and collaboration in the future.
Urban Roots – Youth & Parks Research Partner	A Saint Paul organization whose mission is to cultivate and empower youth through nature, healthy food, and community.	Two in-person small group conversations about RPPP updated themes, collective editing of group public comment letter	Public comment letter based on comments and submitted by the organization. Individuals participated in video challenge. Expressed interest in future engagement and involvement opportunities.

Social Media and Video Challenge

The social media campaign and video challenge used Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Nine Facebook posts and one video reached an average of 695 people per post and an average of 15 clicks per post. Eleven tweets from Twitter reached an average of 1,268 views per Tweet with an average of 20 interactions per Tweet. Three Instagram posts and one Instagram story reached an average of 228 accounts per post. One organization, St. Paul Indians in Action contacted, contacted the Council for a presentation through Instagram. The video describing the video challenge received 55 views and two submitted videos.

List of Public Comment Contributors

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
1.0	Metropolitan Council	Byard, Guthrie
1.1	Metropolitan Council	Byard, Guthrie
2.0	Resident	Johnson, Bryan
3.0	Resident	Kuechle, Lynne
4.0	Resident	Gregorie, Shirley
5.0	Resident	Bancroft, Kara
6.0	Resident	Hartmann, Sandra
7.0	Resident	Tarwuita
8.0	Resident	Huber, Michael
9.0	Resident	Winter, Tyler
10.0	Resident	Risse, Michael
11.0	Resident	Paulson, Emily
12.0	Resident	Roepke, Dan
13.0	Resident	Tang, Brian
14.0	Resident	Guttman, Jim
15.0	Resident	Jelen, Dave
16.0	Resident	Sanz, Tina
17.0	Organizations	Arden Hills - Parks & Trails Committee
18.0	Resident	Vanderpoel, Jane
19.0	Resident	Cirillo, Ryan
20.0	Resident	Hegland, Dustin
21.0	Resident	Anondson, Eric
22.0	Resident	Anonymous
23.0	Resident	McNamara, Marianne
24.0	Resident	Wilson, Vita
25.0	Organizations	North Star Ski Club
26.0	Organizations	Race Forward
27.0	Resident	Knuteson, Steve
28.0	Resident	Slater, Karen

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
28.1	Resident	Slater, Karen
29.0	City / Township / County Governments	City of New Prague
30.0	Organizations	Urban Roots
31.0	Organizations	Midtown Greenway Coalition
32.0	Organizations	Lake Street Council
33.0	Resident	Lee, Brooke
34.0	Resident	Harris, Cecily
35.0	Organizations	Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden, Theodore Wirth Regional Park
36.0	Organizations	Urban Roots
37.0	City / Township / County Governments	City of New Prague
38.0	Resident	Jansen, Jean
39.0	Organizations	Midtown Greenway Coalition
40.0	Resident	Hanson-Busch, Mary
41.0	Resident	Gammon, Lisa
42.0	Resident	Tupy, Sue
43.0	Resident	Shirley Schulz
44.0	Organizations	Boy Scouts
45.0	Resident	Albaugh, Jannina
46.0	Resident	Amundson, Cortney
47.0	Resident	Belter, Brenda
48.0	Resident	Bohn, Chad
49.0	Resident	Brever, Eric
50.0	Resident	Dohlman, Crystal
51.0	Resident	Holets, Katie
52.0	Resident	Jabas, Lindsay
53.0	Resident	Jirik, Katie
54.0	Resident	Klimp, Mary

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
54.1	Resident	Klimp, Mary
55.0	Resident	Kreutzian, Lexi
56.0	Resident	Lexa, Caroline
57.0	Resident	Mackenthun, Jackie
58.0	Resident	Murphree, Jennifer
59.0	Resident	Proulx, Mike
60.0	Resident	Raymond, Michael
61.0	Resident	Ruhland, Jan
62.0	Resident	Ryburn, Becca
63.0	Resident	Ryburn, James
64.0	Resident	Ryburn, Julianna
65.0	Resident	Seifert, Rebecca
66.0	Resident	Thielbar, Amber
67.0	Resident	Timmerman, Shanna
68.0	Resident	Ulschmid, Emily
69.0	Resident	Van Wylen, Nathan
70.0	Resident	Wagner, Jamie
72.0	Resident	Ykema, Gretchen
73.0	Organizations	Mayo Clinic Health System
74.0	Organizations	Minnesota Off Road Cyclist (MORC)
75.0	Organizations	New Prague Area Schools
76.0	Resident	Anderson, Mishael
77.0	Resident	Ashley, Kelly
78.0	Resident	Barten, Joe
79.0	Resident	Bartyzal, Tony
80.0	Resident	Beckius, Erica
81.0	Resident	Beaudette, Jennifer
82.0	Resident	Brown, Katie
83.0	Resident	Burroughs, Stefany

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
84.0	Resident	Cecere, Dominic
85.0	Resident	Croatt, DeAnn
86.0	Resident	Deihl, Kiffin
87.0	Resident	Duklet, Claire
88.0	Resident	Eller, Brad
89.0	Resident	England, JJ
90.0	Resident	Fahey, Leigha
91.0	Resident	Fors, Marie
92.0	Resident	Frykman, Angie
93.0	Resident	Garretson, Lisa
94.0	Resident	Gjerdr, Angie
95.0	Resident	Goldade, Maggie
96.0	Resident	Goodman, Mark
97.0	Resident	Griffith, Rachel
98.0	Resident	Hallet, Christine
99.0	Resident	Helgestad, Pauline
100.0	Resident	Illies, Dana
101.0	Resident	Jaspersen, Emily
102.0	Resident	Jennifer
103.0	Resident	Julie
104.0	Resident	Kottke, Thomas
105.0	Resident	Labelle, Stephanie
106.0	Resident	Lee, Greg
107.0	Resident	Leiter, Bethany
108.0	Resident	Maruska, JoAnne
109.0	Resident	Melby, Jason
110.0	Resident	Moore, Jen
111.0	Resident	Olson, Allison
112.0	Resident	Peck, Claude

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
113.0	Resident	Prokopec, Marcia
114.0	Resident	Rusciano, Mark
115.0	Resident	Schoenecker, Jolene
116.0	Resident	Schroeder, Jennifer
117.0	Resident	Shaffer, Aaron
118.0	Resident	Shoemaker, Tara
119.0	Resident	Springer, Tim
120.0	Resident	Tovo, Aaron
121.0	Resident	Washa, Vicky
122.0	Resident	Wong, Crystal
123.0	Resident	Zweber, Sara
124.0	Organizations	Twin Cities Adaptive Cycling
125.0	Resident	Ackos, David
126.0	Resident	Schoenecker, Sandra
127.0	Resident	Tietz, Pam
128.0	Resident	Gunvalson, Samuel
129.0	Resident	Johnson, Andrew
130.0	Resident	Dunn, Susan
131.0	Resident	Nasty, Donna
132.0	Resident	Gasterland, Hans
133.0	Resident	Frykman, Paul
134.0	Resident	VanderSchaaf, Mark
135.0	Resident	Prochaska, Nick
136.0	Resident	Meyer, Suzanne
137.0	Resident	Dimond, Tom
137.1	Resident	Dimond, Tom 2
137.2	Resident	Dimond, Tom 3
138.0	Resident	Wlizlo, Will
139.0	Resident	O'Connor, Patrick

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
140.0	Resident	Gjerdingen, Steve
141.0	Resident	Novak, Heather
142.0	Organizations	BikeMN
142.1	Organizations	BikeMN, Twin City Bike Club, and Hiawatha Bike Club
143.0	Resident	Novotny, Lora
144.0	Resident	Moore, Gordy
145.0	Resident	Jansen, Andrew
146.0	Organizations	Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust
147.0	Regional Parks Implementing Agency	Three Rivers Park District
148.0	Organizations	Bike MN
149.0	Organizations	Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative
150.0	Resident	Heinen, Natile
152.0	Organizations	Great Northern Greenway task force
151.0	Resident	Anstedt, Bill
153.0	Resident	Chatfield, Andrea
154.0	Resident	Ouradnik, Louise
155.0	City / Township / County Governments	City of Circle Pines
156.0	Organizations	Cycle Sisters
157.0	Organizations	Midtown Community Works Partnership
158.0	Organizations	Cycle Sisters
159.0	Resident	Bissonnette, Raymond
160.0	Organizations	Sustainable Earth Advocates
161.0	Resident	Gould, Sam
162.0	Organizations	Urban Farm and Garden Alliance
163.0	Resident	Seru, Emily
164.0	Organizations	Hamline Midway Coalition
165.0	Resident	Sample, Bonnie

Commenter ID	Relation	Name
166.0	Resident	Aichinger, Cliff
167.0	Organizations	Wild Ones Prairie Edge Chapter
168.0	Resident	Rameyb, Brett
169.0	City / Township / County Governments	City of Hopkins
170.0	Regional Parks Implementing Agency	Three Rivers Park District
171.0	Resident	Hankerson, Stephanie
172.0	Resident	Kiley, Emma
173.0	Organizations	Sierra Club North Star Chapter
174.0	Resident	Rogers, Mary
175.0	Organizations	City of Skate
176.0	Regional Parks Implementing Agency	Dakota County
177.0	Resident	Hammer, Tina
178.0	Resident	Thompson, Pat
179.0	Organizations	Trust for Public Land
180.0	Resident	Bryan, Raymond
181.0	Resident	Schwartz, Philip
182.0	Organizations	Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust
183.0	Organizations	Environmental Studies, Hamline University
184.0	Resident	Ecological Design
185.0	Resident	Hackett, Maureen
186.0	Organizations	Ramsey County CWMA
187.0	Organizations	Women Observing Wildlife MN

Public Comment Themes and Responses

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment response
1.0	Amendment Process	160.0, 172.0	Invite public comments to these questions: What does a natural resource-based regional park system look like? What are the limits to development in all units of the Regional Parks System?	Thank you for your comment. We will continue to keep those in mind when we embark on our 2050 long-range planning efforts and as implementing agencies develop master plans for their units.
2.0	Amendment Process	160.0, 172.0	Publish notice that the comment period has been extended for 120 days to allow the public opportunity to fully engage in this process.	Thank you for your comment.
3.0	Amendment Process – Oppose	13.0, 16.0	Request for an interactive map to understand the Policy Plan.	The Metropolitan Council, working in partnership with the ten regional agencies, has a long-term goal of creating an interactive map that is mobile device compatible.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment response
4.0	Amendment Process – Oppose	149.0, 159.0	There is little to no coordination shown with Washington County Bike and Ped plan. Met Council needs to get together with county planners and figure this out together and not produce master plans like this in a vacuum.	Thank you for your comment. Washington County was involved throughout the 2019-2020 Regional Parks System additions process – system additions being the primary driver for the current Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment. Each of the County’s proposed additions were recommended for inclusion into the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Council staff recognize an integrated and collaborative approach to regional trails and bicycle transportation planning is needed and will continue to engage bicycle and pedestrian planners in other Metropolitan Council units, implementing agency staff, and other stakeholders.
5.0	Amendment Process – Support	176.0, 189.0	We would also like to thank the Metropolitan Council for including the regional park implementing agencies and other stakeholders with the development of the policy amendment.	Thank you for your comment.
6.0	Bridging Facilities - Oppose	7.0, 10.0	General opposition.	The Regional Parks System seeks to balance natural resource use and enjoyment with natural resource conservation. The Bridging facilities “concept” focuses more on the people side of parks work, creating unique opportunities that connect new users to the outdoors, with the goal of building future outdoor enthusiasts.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
7.0	Bridging Facilities - Support	3.0, 6.0, 9.0, 8.0, 11.0, 9.0, 12.0, 11.0,14.0, 13.0, 16.0, 15.0, 18.0, 21.0, 24.0, 58.0, 66.0, 160.0, 172.0, 170.0, 183.0, 179.0, 192.0	Support for new approaches to welcoming people to the Regional Parks System.	The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the ten regional park implementing agencies, is excited to expand outreach efforts and to connect new visitors to regional parks and trails through bridging facilities.
8.0	Bridging Facilities - Support	16.0, 19.0	Change title of bridging facilities to be more reflective of this good concept.	Thank you for your comment.
9.0	Bridging Facilities – Support	19.0, 22.0	Need for green space and connectivity for those living in North Minneapolis.	Thank you for your concrete observations for building an equitable park system. This is a critical goal for the system.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
10.0	Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management - Support	3.0,6.0, 4.0, 7.0, 10.0, 8.0, 11.0, 14.0, 15.0; 18.0, 21.0, 24.0, 116.0, 124.0, 75.0, 83.0, 42.0, 47.0, 159.0, 171.0, 102.0 110.0, 141.0, 151.0, 174.0, 187.0, 171.0, 184.0, 166.0, 179.0, 167.0, 180.0, 168.0, 181.0	General support for natural resources and habitat.	Thank you for expressing support for natural resources and habitat protection. High-quality natural resources are at the heart of the Regional Park System and are one of the critical factors for deciding whether a proposed system addition should be recommended for inclusion in the Regional Parks System.
11.0	Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management - Support	163.0, 176.0	Residents should be given incentives to create climate-friendly amenities for their homes.	This is an interesting idea and one we will share with regional park implementing agencies. Currently, Regional Parks System funding must be used within the boundaries of a regional park or trail. The Metropolitan Council and implementing agencies may seek other funding sources to expand sustainability work.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
12.0	Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management - Support	163.0, 176.0	Support more safe ways for animals (and people) to move between parks and natural areas.	Thank you for your comment. Destination or Greenway regional trails provide more opportunities to conserve, enhance, or restore natural resources, and may contain natural features in the greenway or adjacent to the trail treadway that provide important ecological services.
13.0	Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management - Support	160.0, 172.0	Please acknowledge your agreement with Vice President Al Gore's statement that "Rescue of the environment [is] the central organizing principle for civilization."	Thank you for your comment.
14.0	Climate Resiliency and Natural Resource Management - Support	160.0, 172.0	Work with interested parties to repeal the trail exemption from environmental review under the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act.	Thank you for your comment.
15.0	Engagement Process - Support	1.0, 2.0	Support for plain language communication .	Thank you for your comment. Plain language is important. Using it increases the likelihood more people will understand the message, among other benefits.
16.0	Engagement Process - Support	1.0, 2.0, 1.1, 5.0	Engage accessibility community.	Including the accessibility community in planning processes is a critical step.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
17.0	Engagement Process - Support	156.0	How the Met Council can continue to support and engage us in the parks planning processes? We envision the Council creating something that is sustainable for BIPOC individuals and organizations, with groups like ours and others throughout our community.	The Metropolitan Council's engagement work seeks to continuously improve how it expands its networks. Creating meaningful and sustainable relationships is important and is something the Council is trying to reimagine. Thank you for the suggestion.
18.0	Equity Initiatives - Oppose	28.0, 31.0	"Parks are not able to discriminate against people, so the vision to make parks equitable is actually a discriminatory statement itself." Suggests using language that says our parks are for the people of Minneapolis and surrounding areas as well as drawing visitors to our city and state once again.	Equity is one of the five desired outcomes in <i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> , the policy foundation currently used by the Metropolitan Council to develop its regional systems and policy plans. By prioritizing equity, the Regional Parks System elevates underserved populations and intentionally works to build more equitable policies and investments.
19.0	Equity Initiatives - Oppose	158.0, 169.0	As residents of North Minneapolis, we should not feel limited to visiting one or two specific Regional Parks nearest to us: we need to feel comfortable and welcome at any park in the state. In order to do this, parks and governing bodies need to hire BIPOC Black instructors, Black decision makers, and Black directors. Who knows and understands the parks, forest, or greenery better than those who originally birthed it, cared for it, and nurtured it...our Indigenous neighbors.	Thank you for sharing your belief that all residents of the region should feel comfortable and welcome at regional parks and trails across the system and voicing support for hiring staff that are reflective of the demographic makeup of the region. Metropolitan Council staff will share the advice about the importance of hiring staff to better reflect the region's residents with regional park implementing agencies.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
20.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	1.0, 2.0	Add more inclusive policy language describing disabilities	Thank you for this recommendation. In this update, we have expanded the definition of disability.
21.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	3.0, 6.0	All-gender bathrooms, facilities for families	Thank you for expressing support for all-gender restroom facilities and family-friendly facilities. The Metropolitan Council aims to strengthen equitable use of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents.
22.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	16.0, 19.0, 21.0, 24.0, 36.0, 41.0, 156.0, 167.0, 158.0, 169.0, 145.0, 155.0, 171.0, 184.0, 166.0, 179.0, 167.0, 180.0, 68.0, 181.0, 164.0, 177.0, 179.0, 192.0, 184.0, 197.0, 185.0, 198.0	<p>Programming should serve more communities than only traditional participants of the Regional Parks System. Parks should be places that represent the entire history of the region. Go beyond traditional history to make connections between different groups and parks. History can find the commonality to connect people to places.</p> <p>Regional Parks are not always peaceful or welcoming places for black and brown individuals and communities, especially with past encounters with park police. Feeling safe in nature is important so it is accessible to everyone, especially considering it is public, tax-payer space. We want to feel like we belong in our parks.</p>	Making sure that the Regional Parks System welcomes all residents is a critical goal, especially as the region continues to evolve and become more diverse. Community engagement is more important than ever.
23.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	16.0, 19.0	Encourage the Council to look at Hennepin County Green Partners Environmental Education Program.	Thank you for sharing this innovative and creative grant program. It is inspiring.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
24.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	18.0, 21.0, 9.0, 12.0	Support for enjoyment of parks without needing special equipment.	The Regional Park System strives to provide fun and accessible opportunities at all of the regions parks and trails, without needing equipment. Council staff recognize walking is one of the most popular uses of regional trails. Many regional parks offer high-quality affordable equipment rentals.
25.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	21.0, 24.0, 141.0, 151.0	General support.	Equity is a priority across the Regional Parks System and in all of the Metropolitan Councils work; from planning, to design, to programming, with the goal of making regional parks and trails accessible to all people.
26.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	36.0, 41.0	Affordable access is important for families. If they are free, they're more likely to go and be comfortable. It's important to have these things for families because you're less likely to go at our age (teen) if you don't go as a kid.	Affordable access is critically important to ensure all residents have opportunities to experience the Regional Parks System. All ten regional park implementing agency partners are working to reduce barriers to participation. Earlier this year, Carver County moved to eliminate their gate fees, with this express purpose in mind. Other agencies are taking similar approaches.
27.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	36.0, 41.0	Add signage that is reflective of the residents of the region.	The Council and implementing agencies strive to make its spaces more inclusive and welcoming for all users. Thank you for the suggestion to incorporate a more inclusive history in signage and the reminder that cultural connections to the natural world are not just tied to a specific history or place.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
28.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	156	Young people need a place to hang out for good clean fun and activities.	Thank you for this important observation. Council staff agree. The Metropolitan Council continues to advocate for equitable access for young people, which includes investments in amenities and programming specifically for them. Our recent Youth and Parks research project generates specific recommendations to create fun activities for youth.
29.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	158.0, 169.0	In our parks, there is no accountability or repercussions for things people don't see. We share and hold stories that have hurt our community, from negative encounters with police in the parks to trees being cut down without community consultation. It is essential that all our Regional Parks offer more programming for BIPOC people.	Thank you for sharing these comments. Accountability is critical to the Metropolitan Council's work. Any inappropriate actions in regional parks, whether by people in positions of authority or otherwise, should be immediately reported. Regional park implementing agencies that undertake significant facility development projects or natural resource management projects are required to update that plan and are required to engage the public in the development of that plan. In relation to programming, it is at the discretion of each regional park implementing agency to offer the programs and services it feels will best serve the residents of the region.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
30.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	171.0, 184.0	Employees should be representative of the cultures using the parks.	Thank you for voicing support for hiring staff that are reflective of the demographic makeup of the region. Metropolitan Council staff will share the advice about the importance of hiring staff to better reflect the region's residents with regional park implementing agencies.
31.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	153.0, 164.0	Bring new people to the parks by having field trips for kids, ideally monthly, so they continue to use parks as adults. Have weekend family events. Have adult and senior events that they design themselves.	Thank you for your comments on programming you would like to see related to local history. Council staff appreciate your input about the importance of creating invitations for children to enjoy the parks as well as your suggestions regarding best programming times. Staff will share your ideas with implementing agencies.
32.0	Equity Initiatives - Support	179.0, 192.0	We encourage the Metropolitan Council to consider its role in building connections, reducing barriers, and convening stakeholders across disciplines and differences. We encourage the Metropolitan Council to continue its journey of identifying solutions alongside the community while remaining aware of the intersectionality of parks, housing, economic resiliency, climate change, health, equity, and transportation. Please consider The Trust for Public Land a partner in this work.	Thank you for your comments and support.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
33.0	Funding - General	28.0, 31.0, 28.1, 39.0	Comments focus on the importance of being prudent with taxpayer funds, particularly given choices city leaders made with regard to not protecting some public buildings during spring 2020 riots in Minneapolis.	Thank you for taking the time to share your comments regarding being prudent with taxpayer funds.
34.0	Funding - General	179.0, 192.0	We encourage the Metropolitan Council to consider regional equity in its calculations. Many first ring suburban communities in the north, east, and south metro are rapidly diversifying and deserve more or equal attention in comparison to some of the more affluent west metro communities identified in the Council's maps.	Thank you for your comment encouraging regional equity in the Metropolitan Council's calculations.
35.0	Funding - Support	177.0, 190.0	Support for funding existing trail maintenance.	Thank you for your comment supporting the funding of existing trail maintenance.
36.0	Future Regional Parks System	4.0, 7.0	Economically affordable and truly regional amenities.	Many regional park amenities are accessible without charge. Thank you for your thoughts supporting affordable regional park access and for the essential resource of a truly regional park system.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
37.0	Future Regional Parks System	4.0, 7.0, 6.0, 9.0, 3.0, 6.0, 8.0,11.0, 9.0, 12.0, 13.0, 16.0, 118.0, 126.0, 47.0, 54.0, 159.0, 171.0, 171.0, 184.0, 167.0, 180, 168.0, 181.0	Easy use, accessible to people with disabilities and maintained.	Thank you for these concrete suggestions about how to make regional parks and trails more equitable and accessible. Council staff will share these ideas with the regional park implementing agencies that operate and maintain regional parks and trails. Well-maintained and accessible parks and trails create a positive experience for visitors of all abilities.
38.0	Future Regional Parks System	11.0, 14.0, 156.0, 167.0	Clean, safe water bodies, playgrounds, and splash pads. Safe for mothers and toddlers.	Thank you for sharing your vision for a safe, connected and healthy Regional Parks System, where all visitors feel welcome and respected. This is a critical goal for the system.
39.0	Future Regional Parks System	27.0, 30.0, 46.0, 53.0, 156.0, 167.0, 166.0, 179.0, 167.0, 180.0, 168.0, 181.0, 184.0, 197.0	Don't use pesticides or fertilizers. Preserve natural spaces and make connections to larger parks and other natural spaces. Prefer parks that are primarily natural systems.	Thank you for expressing support for natural resources and habitat protection. High-quality natural resources are at the heart of the Regional Park System and are one of the critical factors for deciding whether a proposed system addition should be recommended for inclusion in the Regional Parks System. Specific natural resource management activities are at the discretion of each regional park implementing agency, who operate and maintain the regional parks and trails in their jurisdiction.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
40.0	Future Regional Parks System	68.0, 76.0, 87.0, 95.0, 90.0, 98.0, 107.0, 115.0, 110.0, 118.0, 129.0, 137.0	Plenty of paved trails through various landscapes, well-kept and dog friendly. Would love to see more nature trails. A bike trail would also be wonderful! Connect the parks by trails. More off-street bicycle trails and paths, please!	Thank you for helping to envision the future Regional Trails System. Adding new trails or extending existing trails and making connections between units of the Regional Parks System and other destinations appears to be of significant interest by many residents of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.
41.0	Future Regional Parks System	153.0, 164.0	No growth but well-maintained and consider security cameras.	Thank you for your comment.
42.0	Future Regional Parks System	159.0, 171.0	I would love to have several parks set aside only for nature and wildlife observation and appreciation. Biking, especially mountain biking seems to be incompatible with other uses. The riders don't seem to pay attention or anticipate other users or wildlife and go way too fast.	There are 12 park reserves across the region that place an additional focus on the conservation of natural resources. Thank you for sharing your concerns about multiple use and overuse of regional park and trail facilities. It is important for all visitors to the Regional Parks System to tread carefully and share this amazing resource with one another. This is one of the important goals of the Regional Parks System.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
43.0	Future Regional Parks System	172.0, 185.0, 171.0, 184.0, 161.0, 173.0, 162.0, 175.0, 164.0, 177.0, 182.0, 195.0, 183.0, 196.0, 184.0, 197.0	An abundance of edible food for humans and animals.	Gale Woods Farm in the Three Rivers Park District System highlights the region's agricultural history and sustainable practices. Some of the regional parks in the system make spaces for community agriculture. This topic will be important to explore in the 2024 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update.
44.0	Future Regional Parks System	167.0, 180.0	Don't increase hardscapes and ruin the immersive natural experience.	Thank you for your comment about not increasing hardscapes. Balancing conservation and recreation is a key objective of the Regional Park System, as is ensuring the accessibility of individual regional park and trail units. While regional trails are typically paved for easy travel by bicyclists and users of all abilities, regional parks and especially park reserves offer hundreds of miles of natural-surface trail opportunities.
45.0	Geographic Balance	7.0, 10.0, 179.0, 192.0	Support funding all units in the system.	Chapter 8 in the Regional Parks Policy Plan, Finance Policy and Strategies, offers a framework for providing adequate and equitable funding for the Regional Parks System units and facilities in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefits to the people of the region. Further, when evaluating the system addition proposals, geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns served as an important factor.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
46.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	3.0, 6.0, 8.0, 11.0, 13.0, 16.0, 75.0, 83.0, 158.0, 169.0, 171.0, 184.0, 185.0, 198.0	General support for acknowledging the historical origins tribal communities have with Regional Parks System land.	The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, seeks to honor Anishinaabe and the Dakota history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation. This effort will commence as we prepare for the 2024 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update.
47.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	141.0, 151.0	Share history of landowners and donation.	Good suggestion. Protecting private property is a critical commitment of the Regional Parks System. The history of land ownership will be an important part of the coming historical and cultural study to be taken up in the coming year, as outlined in the Work Plan in the draft amendment.
48.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	171.0	Land acknowledgement means replacing offensive names, taking down statues that celebrate conquerors, posting land acknowledgement, normalizing acknowledgement at events.	Thank you for providing concrete examples of how land acknowledgements can be implemented through consideration of name changes, park statues, posting information, and normalizing conversations about land acknowledgement. As the Metropolitan Council holds dialogue with tribal communities and other park stakeholders, it will be informed by your comments about ideas on how to proceed.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
49.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	153.0	Land acknowledgement of local history, history of local tribes.	Thank you for sharing your interest in local history. A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects the indigenous peoples as traditional stewards and the enduring relationship that exists between indigenous peoples and their traditional lands.
50.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	168.0	Operate from a baseline awareness that current inhabitants are merely a part of a longer lineage of a place. This begins with Indigenous peoples of the place- past, present, and future. And it is a beginning point to consider how to operate in a respectful way that doesn't minimize or erase those who came before or relegate them to the past.	Thank you for articulating your support for a land acknowledgement process.
51.0	Land Acknowledgement - Support	168.0	Tribal governments (to uphold obligation to honor government to government relationship), Native-led organizations and individuals, non-Tribal governments, any non-Native organizations and individuals who wish to be engaged and earnest contributors to the process.	Thank you for your concrete suggestion of how the Regional Parks System can build authentic collaboration with indigenous communities.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
52.0	Land Acknowledgment-Oppose	4.0, 7.0	General opposition.	Cultural and historical interpretation is one of the original primary activities of the Regional Parks System. The land acknowledgement process will enable the region to better accomplish this activity. Thank you for your request for responsible fiscal stewardship in accomplishing these goals.
53.0	Master Plan Requirements	1.0	Accessibility enforcement.	Metropolitan Council staff will continue to review and enforce Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) language in regional park and trail master planning. Council staff ensures each implementing agency has an ADA transition plan in place, to help each agency bring their systems into compliance.
54.0	Master Plan Requirements	5.0	Engaging residents through community-led existing meetings.	Master planning processes are better when designed to fit diverse audiences rather than a "one size fits all" model. Thank you for your specific recommendations on how to be more inclusive and equitable in trail design and planning processes.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
55.0	Master Plan Requirements	26.0	Community engagement is not the same as an equity analysis.	Thank you for your comment. The equity analysis requirement is applied to regional parks and trails during the unit's long-range master planning process. The equity analysis guides the agencies to have deeper understanding of the inequities local, agency-wide, and regional visitors face, sets up a framework to ensure underserved populations' voices are reflected in the master plan, and holds agencies accountable to better equitable solutions.
56.0	Master Plan Requirements	137.0, 137.1	Ensure broad public engagement and public participation. It is essential that all the public are valued participants throughout the planning process.	Thank you for your comment. The Regional Parks Policy Plan, Chapter 5, Strategy 1, ensures agencies provide an opportunity for public engagement and participation in the development of master plans. The Council's new equity analysis requires agencies to consider and engage underserved community members. Agencies must demonstrate and describe the service area, current and historical inequities, engagement process, comments heard, and they must articulate the connection between what they learned and what they are proposing.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
57.0	Master Plan Requirements	137.0	It is also essential to hold people accountable that this [public participation in master plan development] is happening.	Public engagement and participation are critically important master plan requirements. Master planning processes must include opportunity for the public to be heard and to have influence over the contents in the master plan.
58.0	Master Plan Requirements	137.0	Support for the Equity Analysis Requirement.	Thank you for your support of the equity analysis requirement. Council staff are working with the agencies to move the dial on our collective goal - that race, ethnicity, national origin, age, ability, or income - does not determine who visits the Regional Parks System.
59.0	Master Plan Requirements	137.0	I encourage you to add language that public participation and public engagement applies from start to finish of the planning process. A truly participatory and representative process cannot be just a thumbs up or thumbs down call after all options have been decided, design work done, and agencies have signed off.	Thank you for this comment. The new equity analysis requirement encourages relationship-building to enhance public participation at earlier stages of the planning process. Council staff continue to collaborate with implementing agencies and other regional partners to generate earlier opportunities for advice from the public.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
60.0	Master Plan Requirements	137.2	<p>Include veterans in equity considerations. Veterans find the park system a valuable place to help with PTSD and overall health of the body and mind. Facilities that help Veterans live a better life include facilities that accommodate some of the unique needs of Veterans and benefit others.</p>	<p>Implementing agencies currently consider the needs of veterans in programming connected to equity. The Metropolitan Council will share your support of these initiatives directly with them. Council staff are updating the policy plan to have a more expansive definition of accommodated disabilities to include cognitive disabilities, ensuring that equitable access for PTSD survivors will be part of the regional system's priorities.</p>
61.0	Master Plan Requirements	160.0	<p>Page 92-93 and 95-96: Currently, public engagement is deficient in the park planning process. Support for increased public engagement, including timely knowledge of proposals, access to information, including park master plans and the parks' planning processes. We recommend a central website that displays pending planning processes – and how to participate.</p>	<p>The Metropolitan Council continuously strives to improve its planning work, as well as supporting the regional park implementing agencies as they do regional park and trail master planning. Thank you for sharing this suggestion.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
62.0	Master Plan Requirements	160.0	Page 93, lines 18-33: Support for on-the-ground surveys of plant/animal species, in addition to the criteria in the section describing the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). The endangered Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (Minnesota’s “state bee”) requires particular attention: The Twin Cities is one of its last strongholds on Earth.	Thank you for these comments. The Regional Parks System is made up of lands with high-quality natural resources, near lakes, rivers, and other water bodies. Natural resource protection and restoration is a key objective of the system, providing critical habitat to species such as the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee. Natural resource inventories will continue to be an important requirement for regional park, park reserve, special recreation feature and regional destination trail master plans.
63.0	Master Plan Requirements	160.0	Page 93, lines 32-33: The draft states, “The final design and construction should allow the public to view and enjoy these natural habitats with minimal adverse impact on that habitat.” Minnesota Rule 4410.4600, Subpart 27 exempts from environmental review “constructing or rehabilitating” a non-motorized trail in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Regional Park System. We support working with Metropolitan Council and other interested parties to repeal this rule. In this way, the environmental impacts of mountain bike trails and other projects on Rusty Patched Bumble Bees – and other natural resources - can be better understood.	Thank you for your comment.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
64.0	Master Plan Requirements	142.0	Support more planning and coordination in collaboration with counties and cities.	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trails System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
65.0	Master Plan Requirements	142.0	Support for planning that does not end at major county/other boundary lines.	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trails System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. We will share your comment with these two agencies. Regional coordination and planning are cornerstones of the Council.
66.0	Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development - Support	7.0, 28.0, 153.0, 154.0, 159.0, 160.0, 165.0, 166.0, 185.0, 187.0	Prioritize natural resources and restoration over development.	Natural resources serve as the foundation of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System. As the system continues to grow, natural resource conservation will remain a priority.
67.0	Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development - Support	153.0, 185.0	Stop clearing trees for trails.	The development concept and natural resource management approach for each regional trail corridor is outlined by regional park implementing agencies during master planning and then is carried out by implementing agencies or contractors based on the master plan. Typically, regional park implementing agencies aim to preserve as much tree canopy as possible when developing regional trail corridors, but occasionally trees need to be removed for safe use of the trail corridor.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
68.0	Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development - Support	185.0	Supporting access to undisturbed lands, native habitats, habitats for birds and wildlife, and native planting, without an emphasis on recreational facilities in our parks.	Thank you for these comments. The Regional Parks System primarily consists of lands located in a high-quality natural resource setting that are contiguous with lakes, rivers, or other water bodies. Natural resource protection and restoration are key objectives of the Regional Park System. It is also important for the Council and agencies to provide access for a range of recreation opportunities to the residents of the Metropolitan area.
69.0	Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development - Support	160.0	Add language in the Plan to remove the incompatible uses and protect the natural resources of the Regional Park System as much as possible.	Thank you for this suggestion.
70.0	Natural Resources Prioritized Before Development - Support	186.0	Put policies in place to protect the parks, their plant communities and rare species from fragmentation and invasive species.	Thank you for your comment. System protection is a critical component of the Regional Parks Policy Plan.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
71.0	Other	28.0, 28.1	Southwest LRT has negatively impacted the natural aesthetic and wildlife habitat of the Kenilworth Corridor.	The Cedar Lake Regional Trail is undergoing a significant construction project, with the development of the Southwest LRT light rail line. The Metropolitan Council recognizes that this trail is a highly valued regional asset. Re-establishing the recreational, natural resource, and transportation values around this corridor is critical. This work will take time. Thank you in advance for your patience.
72.0	Other	33.0	Concern about people who are homeless sheltering in the park near residential homes. Asks for green space to be reclaimed and restored, to care for the order, people and activities that occur there.	Thank you for sharing your concerns about homeless encampments across our local and regional parks system in the Twin Cities. This past year has been a very difficult and trying time for the region, nation, and world. One goal of the Metropolitan Council, along with its many government, non-profit, and other partners, is to find long-term, durable solutions for people experiencing homelessness. This is a problem that can only be solved with wide-ranging partnerships across all sectors of society, to be good, compassionate stewards. There is not an easy or fast solution.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
73.0	Park Reserves	160.0	Unfortunately, in many metropolitan “park reserves”, the “ecological functions” of the 80% natural areas are compromised - fragmented into smaller ecological units by incompatible horse trails, paved bike trails, mountain bike trails, excessively wide cross-country ski trails, and other park “improvements.”	Thank you for sharing your concerns about fragmentation of park reserves. While these areas are expected to provide for a diversity of outdoor recreation activities, they are also intended to conserve, protect, and manage the region's natural and historical heritage.
74.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	14.0	The modified sentence on page 49, lines 8 through 10 of the plan states: "Regional parks and park reserves offer important services to the trail, including providing places for picnicking and other fun activities, parking, restrooms, and drinking water." The use of the phrase "fun activities" in this context seems very subjective and ambiguous.	Thank you for your comment. The word "fun" has been replaced with "desirable," as it is these amenities and activities that draw people to the park or trail.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
75.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 1, line 18: Please specify what are the "... new demands stemming from demographic shifts ..."	<p>The region's residents are becoming more diverse and older. By 2040, two in every five Twin Cities residents will be people of color, and one in five residents will be age 65 or older. Encouraging innovation and adaptation in the Regional Parks System to meet future activity and facility needs is critical to ensuring the system remains a vital part of our regional community.</p> <p>Determining how to strike this balance - to conserve the natural resource base and natural character of the system with these evolving facilities and uses - will continue to be critical.</p>
76.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 12, lines 27-28: Current language states: "Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities." [Emphasis added.] We know that Earth is presently "out of balance." (Gore, 1992.) Please describe in detail how the Regional Park System will re-balance conservation of natural resources.	Regional parks and trails protect natural resources and provide wildlife habitat, but they are also intended to serve people. This section of the Regional Parks Policy Plan sets a strategic framework to balance conservation with use. This is an active, dynamic system that requires regular management and investment.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
77.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 25, lines 27-39: We support the acquisition of parks and trails but are concerned that designation of these acquisitions as “regional parks”, instead of “park reserves” removes the development constraints of “park reserves.” That is, at least 80% of “park reserves” must be managed to “... protect the ecological functions ...”	Thank you for your comment. Regional park implementing agencies determine the type of regional park or trail classification. The Council reviews and approves these proposals through the approximately every four-year system addition process.
78.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 31, lines 16-20: Thank you for recognizing the non-profit partners, such as Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota, Trust for Public Land, and The Nature Conservancy. Are there other non-profits worthy of mention?	Thank you for your comment. The Regional Parks System has many partners. The ones listed in the Policy Plan just name a few as an illustration of these important partners.
79.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Pages 38, 40, 45, 81: “Regional Parks” should be defined as 200-500 acres, not 1,000 acres. “Park Reserves” should be defined as 500+ acres. In this way, more land is subject to the “80% - 20%” formula governing “park reserves.” This is particularly important when acquired land is near, or adjacent, to a natural resource corridor.	Thank you for your comment.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
80.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 39: "Hunter training education facilities" should be required to use non-toxic ammunition. (It is our understanding this may already be occurring. Please confirm.	"Hunter training education facilities" are an example of a "specialized or single-purpose recreational activity" that may be allowable in a special recreation feature. At present, none of the eight existing special recreation features offer hunter training education facilities. According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the use of lead shot for waterfowl hunting has been illegal in Minnesota since 1987 and nationally since 1991. Additionally, all types of hunting with lead fine shot on Federal Waterfowl Production Areas has been illegal in Minnesota since 1999
81.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	169.0, 170.0	Include the City of Hopkins in the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility - Special Recreation Feature Search Area in Figure 3-8.	Thank you for the comment. The City of Hopkins will be included in the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility - Special Recreation Feature Search Area.
82.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	169.0	Consider a different name for the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility - Special Recreation Feature Search Area.	Thank you for the wording suggestion. Council staff will share it with Three Rivers Park District, the agency that will oversee this future facility or facilities.
83.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	169.0, 170.0	Exclude the City of Hopkins from the Minnetonka & Minnehaha Creek Corridor Regional Park Search Area in Figure 3-8.	Thank you for the comment. The City of Hopkins will be excluded from the Minnetonka & Minnehaha Creek Corridor Regional Park Search Area.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
84.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	Three Rivers requests that visits to approved bridging facilities be included as part of the Annual Use Estimate. Please remove Lines 17-20 from page 89.	Thank you for this comment. If bridging facilities function as they are designed, then they will encourage visitors to use other regional park implementing agency parks and trails. Council and agency staff will learn a lot in the early years of implementing the bridging facility “concept.” This is a topic Council staff will return to during the 2024 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update.
85.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	On page 94, lines 20-22, Three Rivers requests the following changes: Boundaries: A map showing the general trail route/concept, and when known, the administrative boundary that includes agency-owned acres and any anticipated private inholdings associated with the trail route/concept that together establish the desired management boundary of the land to be managed by the agency.	Thank you for your comment related to regional trail boundaries. Council staff desire more specificity with trail boundaries, identifying the corridor and desired acquisitions. Staff recognize that agencies will be including “anticipated” private inholdings, as some of the final parcel details will not be known until further into the establishment of the trail corridor. The amended proposed language acknowledges this intention.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
86.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	<p>On page 94, lines 23-27, Three Rivers requests the following changes: Acquisition costs: A list of anticipated parcels or real property to be acquired when known, and their estimated total acquisition cost. A description of the natural resources, site suitability, special assessments, potential contamination based on data from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and other conditions that affect acquisition of the site or location of the boundaries should be included for those parcels.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment related to page 94, lines 23-27 of the Policy Plan. During master planning, agency staff should provide a high-level description of the ownership and management arrangement.</p> <p>Council staff accept your proposal and will make the following change: "Acquisition costs: A list of anticipated parcels or real property to be acquired when known, and their estimated total acquisition cost. A description of the natural resources, site suitability, special assessments, potential contamination based on data from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and other conditions that affect acquisition of the site or location of the boundaries should be included for those parcels.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
87.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	On page 106, lines 34-36, Three Rivers requests the following bullet points/criteria remain in the Policy Plan and be reevaluated in the next Policy Plan update: Whether the regional park system unit benefits from a facility exchange for the parkland. Whether the need for the conversion, as in the instance of a transportation improvements, is generated by the recreation park system unit.	The two bullet points refer to the process for assessing requests to convert Regional Parks System lands to other uses. This practice is allowed only in limited circumstances and with the approval of the Metropolitan Council. Staff determined that the intent behind the two bullets is captured in other existing "Issues with respect to the existing park system unit" bullet points. The deletion of these two bullet points will not have a material effect on the conversion process, including considerations for transportation improvements.
88.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	The Corcoran-Rogers Search Area should be moved further west so that it does not overlap Maple Grove or Dayton.	Thank you for the comment. The Corcoran-Rogers Search Area will be moved further west so that it does not overlap Maple Grove or Dayton.
89.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	On page 77, line 18, Three Rivers requests the following change in relation to the Special Recreation Feature bullet point: 1 location siting multiple unique Bridging Facilities	Thank you for this comment. Council staff will propose this change with the final recommendation.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
90.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	<p>On page 22, lines 7-10, and also on pages 23, 79 and 128, the following language affecting the Regional Park System Fund Distribution Policy is proposed to be dropped from the Policy Plan: “Adopted annually by the Council upon the recommendation of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission...”</p> <p>This is a significant oversight reduction for MPOSC and the Council, and raises the following question: What will be the process for amending/ updating the Fund Distribution Policy, and for the Regional Park System sub-recipient administrative guide?</p>	<p>The Council is currently undergoing a system-wide process to revise all Council Policies. The Regional Parks System Fund Distribution Policy will be included in this update. In addition, Council staff are developing a Grant Administration Guide, which will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment and conformity with statute and policy.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
91.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	<p>On page 98, lines 33-35, the draft Policy Plan amendment states, “If an opportunity for a major boundary adjustment arises off-cycle, the Council may consider a focused Policy Plan Amendment which will determine whether the addition should be brought into the system.”</p> <p>Thank you for including this “safety valve” language on the major boundary adjustments. The language allows exceptional opportunities to be addressed in a timely fashion. Three Rivers is supportive of the work the Council staff has done on revising the boundary adjustments policy language.</p>	Thank you for your comment. The Council appreciates your support.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment summary	Comment response
92.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	170.0	<p>On page 116, lines 3-11, and page 148, the draft Policy Plan amendment proposes dropping language that showed the Council's interest and intent to explore new types of classification systems that provide a diversity of natural resource and recreational settings across the region. This concept is known within the professional park planning field as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), and the ROS model has been adapted for use by the U.S. Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, several state park systems, and a few urban park systems. Three Rivers has recently adopted its own modified version of the ROS classification system.</p> <p>The ROS classification system idea was not added to the Work Plan section on Page 148.</p>	<p>Thank you for the comment and offer of partnership. The text that is proposed for removal refers to "the upcoming system addition discussion that will commence in 2019..." Since this process has already occurred, it is appropriate to remove it. Council staff are aware of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and may still choose to "to explore the potential benefits of a classification system..." as part of the Regional Park units' future work. While the draft 2020-2023 Workplan for the Regional Parks Policy Plan identifies several important projects, Council staff may also take on other projects in addition to those outlined in Chapter 9, particularly as we begin long-range planning work for the 2050 metropolitan development guide.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
93.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	176.0	Change the name of Rich Valley Greenway Regional Trail to Veterans Memorial Regional Greenway (Page 61, 63, 64).	The Council will update the name of Dakota County's "Rich Valley Regional Trail" to "Veterans Memorial Greenway Regional Trail" in Chapter 3: System Plan.
94.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	176.0	Change name of Mississippi River Regional Trail to Mississippi River Regional Greenway (Page 50).	The Council will update the name of Dakota County's "Mississippi River Regional Trail" to the "Mississippi River Greenway Regional Trail" in Chapter 3: System Plan.
95.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	176.0	Dakota County supports advancing the discussion for long-term sustainable funding for supporting the acquisition, recreation and natural resource enhancement, operations, maintenance and asset preservation (Page 148, 149).	Thank you for your comment.
96.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	179.0, 75.0	We encourage the Metropolitan Council to improve the legibility of its maps within the regional parks plan. We understand the need to balance the ambiguity of search areas and the sheer size of the region, however, in terms of transparency, accessibility, and good governance, we encourage the Council to consider improving the quality, usability, and detail of the maps.	Thank you for this comment. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with our ten regional park implementing agencies, seeks to improve the utility of the maps within the Regional Parks Policy Plan and beyond. One of the Council's longer-term goals is to have better on-line maps that can be used for information and navigation.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
97.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	<p>Page 113, after line 5: Mountain Biking - was not a popular activity in the early 1970s, either inside or outside the Regional Park System.</p> <p>Fishing, where allowed, should be conditioned upon the use of non-toxic tackle.</p> <p>Snowmobiles consume gasoline and oil, contribute to global warming, cause noise and air pollution, disturb animals, and damage habitat. They should be banned from the regional park system.</p>	Thank you for taking considerable time to comment on the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
98.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	<p>Page 114, lines 7-8: Off-leash Dogs. The language, "... allowing off-leash dog use on a trail ..." is incompatible with the goal of natural resource protection.</p>	While natural resource protection and restoration are key objectives of the Regional Park System, so is balancing conservation and recreation and providing a range of recreational opportunities.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
99.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 116, line 2: SEA agrees that parks should not try to be "... all things to all people." However, the Metropolitan Council should explain why lines 3 to 11 (pertaining to a park classification system) were deleted.	Thank you for the comment. The text that is proposed for removal refers to "the upcoming system addition discussion that will commence in 2019..." Since this process has already occurred, it is appropriate to remove it. Council staff are aware of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and may still choose to "to explore the potential benefits of a classification system..." as part of the Regional Park units' future work. While the draft 2020-2023 Workplan for the Regional Parks Policy Plan identifies several important projects, Council staff may also take on other projects in addition to those outlined in Chapter 9.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
100.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 116, lines 29-30: The present language states: “Intense developments at parks and park reserves in the Rural Service Area should be the exception rather than the rule and should be considered on a project by project basis.” [Emphasis added.] It is unclear what criteria will be applied to these projects. What does “project by project basis” mean?	To be eligible for state or regional funding, regional park implementing agencies are required to submit master plans for the acquisition and/or development of regional parks, park reserves, special recreation features, and regional trails. These master plans are carefully reviewed by Council staff and presented to Council committees for their review and potential approval. If an activity or facility is deemed incompatible with the criteria outlined in the Regional Parks Policy Plan or the character of the Regional Park System, the Council reserves the right to ask the Regional Park Implementing Agency to modify or improve the approach or design, or to exclude the activity or facility from regional funding.
101.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 116, line 39: “... movies and music in the park ...” constitute non-consensual noise pollution and light pollution, have adverse impacts on animals, and are incompatible with a nature-based system unless contained inside buildings. This language should specify where these activities can occur.	Thank you for your comment. Programming at individual regional parks is at the discretion of each regional park implementing agency. While natural resource protection and restoration are key objectives of the Regional Park System, so is balancing conservation and recreation and providing a range of recreational opportunities.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
102.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 188, line 12: Please note the Plan states, "Walking remains the most frequently mentioned favorite activity", yet far too many trails are designated for horses and mountain bikes – incompatible with walking.	Thanks for your comment. Regional park implementing agencies seek to balance a variety of needs including recreational uses during their planning and management processes.
103.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	Page 134, lines 9-10: SEA strongly agrees that the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) money should be used for acquisition only – and not used for "development, redevelopment, or restoration."	Thank you for your comment. The Council uses ENRTF money to fund acquisitions with high quality natural resources or high-quality natural resources restoration potential.
104.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	160.0	<p>Page 148: SEA strongly agrees with the proposed language: "Work with stakeholders to develop a set of Regional Parks System indicators as a foundation for continuous improvement and public accountability to address key priorities such as strengthening equitable usage, managing natural resources within the system, and contributing to climate resilience."</p> <p>SEA also strongly agrees with the proposed language: "Explore the development of a land acknowledgement that recognizes and respects indigenous residents and the histories of the land where our regional parks and trails are located."</p>	Thank you for your comments.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
105.0	Policy Plan Section Comments	183.0, 196.0	Request to change policy plan language around food productions and gardens in Regional Parks, away from "specialized or single-purpose recreational activities" which asserts colonial assumptions about parks and a limited view of food landscapes. Food needs to be built into our landscapes like it was for this place's ancestors. Removing this hierarchical vision also helps uplift those in poverty and the current climate crisis.	Gale Woods Farm in the Three Rivers Park District System highlights our agricultural history and sustainable practices. Some of the regional parks in our system make spaces for community agriculture. This topic will be important to explore in the 2024 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update
106.0	Programming and Education	36.0, 167.0	Provide for learning about our natural environment.	The Regional Parks System provides a range of learning opportunities for visitors and residents. You may learn more about the range of these offerings by exploring the individual regional park implementing agencies' websites.
107.0	Programming and Education	158.0	Parks need to offer more programming for BIPOC people.	Regional park implementing agencies are working to expand their programming along with making sure their current programming is accessible and welcoming to the BIPOC community. The new Equity Grant Program has funds to build relationships create new equity focused programs.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
108.0	Programming and Education	163.0	More educational and youth programming needed in all neighborhoods with priority for those underserved and those with least green space.	Programming is a significant focus of the Regional Park System's Equity Grant Program. This program focuses on underserved communities. Thank you for your comment that communities are critical to helping connect people with their parks and the environment.
109.0	Programming and Education	182.0, 164.0, 183.0	Encourage parks programming focusing more on community food infrastructure to also help build/heal community.	Regional park implementing agencies are working to expand the programming they offer to our region's residents. The new Regional Park System Equity Grant Program focuses on expanding programming work with equity as its chief goal.
110.0	Regional Bicycle Transportation Network	179.0	Connect parks and trails to places of employment, learning, and home; integrate the parks and trails system with the broader transportation network.	Thank you for your comment. In addition to connecting units of the Regional Park System, regional trails aim to connect other destinations such as schools, job centers, tourist destinations, historical, cultural and architectural buildings and sites, and commercial districts.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
111.0	Reconsidering History - Oppose	4.0, 7.0	General opposition.	Cultural and historical interpretation is one of the original primary activities of the Regional Parks System. The proposed cultural history will enable the region to better accomplish this activity. The proposed cultural history will enable compliance with the equity analysis requirement that asks implementing agencies to document the historical circumstances that prevent current equitable use. Thank you for your request for responsible fiscal stewardship in accomplishing these goals.
112.0	Reconsidering History – Support	6.0, 8.0, 9.0, 13.0, 16.0, 21.0, 36.0, 158.0 159.0, 166.0, 167.0, 168.0, 184.0	General support	Cultural and historical interpretation is one of the original primary activities of the Regional Parks System. The proposed cultural history will enable the region to better accomplish this activity. As comments noted, inclusive history creates a sense of belonging for all who visit. The proposed cultural history will enable compliance with the equity analysis requirement that asks implementing agencies to document the historical circumstances that prevent current equitable use. Thank you for your comments and suggestions in support of these efforts.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
113.0	Reconsidering History – Support	36.0, 158.0, 141.0, 168.0	Having something to learn about the land you are visiting is important. History can find the commonality to connect people to places.	Great idea. Council staff agree. Some of the regional park implementing agencies do this well. Regional parks and trails have very interesting histories that are interdependent with diverse cultures and technology. Building educational programs on environmental history and human settlement/culture would be a great step toward creating a more welcoming Regional Parks System. This idea could be a proposal for the Council's Competitive Equity Grant Program.
114.0	Reconsidering History – Support	153.0	Some support for providing local history. Would like to tour the last remaining farm and would be willing to pay family for access. Would also love guided tours in the river valley area.	Thank you for your comments on programming you would like to see related to local history. Council staff will share your ideas with regional park implementing agencies.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
115.0	Reconsidering History – Support	168.0	Engage Tribes with present and/or historical presence in the region. Follow their lead on elevating their histories and visions for the future through establishment of and/or continued engagement with Advisory Boards- In addition to having representation on these boards, have the Tribes structure and facilitate them on their terms as well. Once their presence and perspective is established in the foundation of the narrative of the past, present, and future of the Regional Parks system, continue with engaging other BIPOC communities who may not frequently be represented in narratives of the part system.	Your comment provides important details about why the land acknowledgement process for the Regional Parks System must be a collaborative process that follows the lead of tribal governments and works with American Indian organizations. Council staff appreciate the further suggestion to continue to encourage historical interpretation in parks that includes BIPOC stories in park narratives.
116.0	Reconsidering History – Support	168.0	Engage in design and co-management of parks to include Indigenous land management practices (especially Dakota, Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, and then other tribes with historical and current standing in the region).	Thank you for your concrete suggestion of how the Regional Parks System can build authentic collaboration with indigenous communities.
117.0	Recreation or facility requests	7.0	Opposes motorized vehicles on trails.	Regional trails are designed for a variety of recreational uses. As directed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, these trails must meet accessibility standards and guidelines. The decision about whether to allow electric scooters and bicycles is made by the responsible regional park implementing agency.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
118.0	Recreation or facility requests	10.0	Add cross country ski and snow making.	The Regional Parks System, through the work of the ten regional park implementing agencies, is continually assessing where both bicycle and ski trails will be located. Several of the regional park implementing agencies have snow-making capabilities. Ramsey County is moving forward with a project to add snow-making to Battle Creek Regional Park. The efforts to adapt our system and associated recreational facilities and activities to the changing warming trends will be critical to meeting needs in a changing future.
119.0	Recreation or facility requests	12.0	Support for off-road motorcycle paths.	Thank you for your comments about off-highway motorcycle trails in the Metro area. Although snowmobiling is an allowable activity in some locations in the Regional Park System, motorized recreation is generally not allowed in regional parks or on regional trails.
120.0	Recreation or facility requests	20.0, 107.0	More disc golf.	Great suggestion. Disc golf is a fun, low- or no-cost way for all ages to enjoy the outdoors. This use is considered one of the approved recreational uses in the Regional Parks System. Regional park implementing agencies decide what recreational uses to propose to each regional park and trail. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all recreational uses.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
121.0	Recreation or facility requests	20.0, 128.0	More off-road mountain bike courses.	The Regional Parks System has renowned mountain bike facilities. This use is considered one of the approved recreational uses in the Regional Parks System. Regional park implementing agencies decide what recreational uses to propose to each regional park and trail. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all recreational uses.
122.0	Recreation or facility requests	36.0	Parks should have a place to play volleyball or soccer, too. An open field that allows for this is great. It doesn't have to be an official field but just a space to play whatever game we chose at the time.	Thanks for supporting green spaces to play games. Informal ball fields that can be used for a variety of pickup games are encouraged in the Regional Parks System and are supported in the <i>2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan</i> .
123.0	Recreation or facility requests	13.0	2-night stay requirement for camping is a barrier. Support for opening camping to 1-night stays.	Thank you for bringing this to the Council's attention. Your comment was forwarded to Scott County and Washington County. While the Metropolitan Council funds operations and maintenance, the implementing agencies determine regional park and trail rules.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
124.0	Recreation or facility requests	146.0, 158.0, 145.0	<p>Reserve some land in regional parks for agricultural production, including community gardens and small market farms.</p> <p>We need to shift to regenerative practices with water, soil, and air mitigation, moving towards fruit bearing trees, spaces for gardens and harvesting, and canning and preserving classes in our regional parks.</p>	<p>Thank you for the suggestion. Some existing regional parks and special recreation features include community or demonstration gardens. If a regional park implementing agency is interested in including community or demonstration garden space, or some other type of small-scale agricultural production, it must be included in the master plan for that regional park or trail unit. All regional park and trail master plans are reviewed by Council staff for compatibility and consistency with the Regional Parks Policy Plan and are considered for adoption by the Council review structure.</p>
125.0	Recreation or facility requests	42.0	More dog parks	<p>Thank you for your comment on dog parks. Regional park implementing agencies decide which recreational activities or facilities to propose for each regional park or trail. These activities and facilities are typically determined based on a recreational needs analysis and public engagement. They must be consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all regional park and trail master plans.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
126.0	Recreation or facility requests	42.0	More camping opportunities, specifically near New Prague.	Thank you for your comment on camping. Regional park implementing agencies decide what recreational uses to propose to each regional park and trail. This is typically determined based on an agency and regional recreational needs analysis. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all regional park and trail master plans.
127.0	Recreation or facility requests	151.0, 175.0, 181.0	Support for skateparks. Use of natural infrastructure/terrain can result in unique features not found in city parks.	Thank you for your comment on skateparks. Regional park implementing agencies decide which recreational activities or facilities to propose for each regional park or trail. These activities and facilities are typically determined based on a recreational needs analysis and public engagement and must be consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all regional park and trail master plans. As skateparks are a non-traditional use, they may require additional Council review and discussion during the master plan review process.
128.0	Recreation or facility requests	156.0, 158.0	Add water fountains for people not just dogs.	Thanks for your comment. While drinking water is available at each regional park, it is important to ensure there are adequate water fountains for easy use.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
129.0	Recreation or facility requests	158.0	<p>A welcoming system includes seating and gathering places, tables, drinking fountains, spaces to wander and rejuvenate, flat places for yoga, publicly accessible bathrooms, and nice trails for being active outdoors.</p> <p>We also want to see more specific efforts to have Black folks of all ages gather together. We want spaces in our parks for working parents, where they can use Wi-Fi while still letting their kids spend time in nature, in a designated space. We want to see all different types of people and all activities in our parks.</p>	<p>Making sure the facilities meet the needs of the users is an important challenge in our Regional Park System. We know that needs are continually changing and evolving, and we are working hard with our agency partners to better understand community needs. We recognize that engagement does not always reach everyone. With equity as a focus in the Metropolitan Council and Regional Parks System, we strive to listen and learn from BIPOC communities to better meet their needs, with the goal of making all regional parks and trails welcoming and accessible.</p>
130.0	Recreation or facility requests	160.0, 159.0, 167.0	<p>“Single track” trails are not compatible with people on foot, who would be distracted from enjoying nature by having to be constantly on the lookout for fast-moving cyclists.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding hazards involving mountain bikers and hikers. It is the responsibility of the mountain biker to be on the look-out for pedestrians, not the other way around. That said, our regional system offers miles of safe hiking trails, far from any mountain bikers. You may find the "hiking only" areas more amenable to the type of experience you seek.</p>
131.0	Recreation or facility requests	160.0	<p>“Single track” mountain bike trails fragment natural habitat, damaging its “ecological function.”</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your concerns about mountain biking and impacts to the ecology of our regional parks system. This is an important and valid concern that will be shared with our ten regional park implementing agencies.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
132.0	Recreation or facility requests	43.0	Support for more play areas for children	Thank you for your comments on play areas. Regional park implementing agencies decide which recreational activities or facilities to propose for each regional park or trail. These activities and facilities are typically determined based on a recreational needs analysis and public engagement and must be consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves all regional park and trail master plans.
133.0	Recreation or facility requests	167.0	I would love to see well maintained bird (songbird and owl), as well as, bat houses to help them survive their loss of habitat.	Thank you for expressing support for natural resources and habitat protection. High-quality natural resources are at the heart of the Regional Park System and are one of the critical factors for deciding whether a proposed system addition should be recommended for inclusion in the Regional Parks System. Specific natural resource management activities are at the discretion of each regional park implementing agency, who operate and maintain the regional parks and trails in their jurisdiction.
134.0	Recreation or facility requests	179.0, 23.0.0, 26.0	Ensuring parks and trails have shade, places to rest, and access to water and restroom facilities will improve accessibility, use, and protect the health and well-being of parks and trail users.	Thank you for your comment. The amenities you reference are common in regional parks and will continue to be.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
135.0	Recreation or facility requests	167.0, 180.0	Don't see the need for playground equipment.	Thank you for your comment. The Regional Park System provides a range of outdoor recreation opportunities from developed to rustic, welcoming users of all ages and abilities. Regional park implementing agencies decide which recreational activities or facilities to propose for each regional park or trail. These activities and facilities are typically determined based on a recreational needs analysis and public engagement and must be consistent with the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
136.0	Recreation or facility requests	167.0, 180.0	Promote bathrooms with composting toilets.	Thank you for your suggestion to have composting toilets and running water in bathrooms. Council staff will share it with the ten regional park implementing agencies, who own and operate the Regional Parks System.
137.0	Regional Parks System - Support	3.0, 18.0, 19.0, 24.0, 165.0	General Support	Thank you for expressing support for the Regional Park System. With 64 regional parks, park reserves or special recreation features, and 55 regional trails with more than 400 miles currently open to the public, opportunities to be active outdoors - or to simply relax and reflect - abound in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
138.0	Regional Parks System - Support	165.0	Support and promote a diversity of experiences of the outdoors and uses of our Regional Parks.	Thank you for your comment. The benefits of being in nature are well documented. The Regional Parks System strives to provide opportunities for quiet reflection in nature, while also providing more active opportunities.
139.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	9.0	Favors people with resources for bicycles	Thank you for sharing your comment about privilege and recreational biking. Council staff strive to make regional trails welcoming to walkers, recreational bikers, bike commuters, and others with the goal of building a multi-use system that welcomes all users.
140.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	159.0	I am also opposed to having so many trails paved with impervious surfaces. We are already having problems dealing with the effects of runoff from these trails. We don't need so many trails especially so many paved ones.	Balancing conservation and recreation is a key objective of the Regional Park System, as is the accessibility of individual regional park and trail units. While regional trails are typically paved for easy travel by bicyclists and users of all abilities, regional parks and especially park reserves offer hundreds of miles of natural-surface trail opportunities.
141.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	160.0	Page 99, line 28: Paved trails are not "equitable." They discourage people on foot, seeking to stop to enjoy, contemplate, and/or photograph nature.	Paved regional trails are intended for multi-modal use, which includes walkers, bikers and other forms of recreation. The Council's definition of equity includes ability. This means we meet or exceed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility laws, requiring trails to be accessible for people of all abilities to be welcome.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
142.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	160.0	Page 99, line 28: Paved trails are good for access to and from the park - not through the park.	Thank you for your comment. Regional park implementing agencies work through a whole host of potential conflicts as they develop the master plan. When a regional trail travels through a regional park, pedestrian conflicts are mitigated through design choices.
143.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	160.0	Institute a moratorium, to be included in the Regional Parks Policy Plan, on building any new trails until their environmental impacts are determined.	Thank you for your comment. Trails have multiple benefits for individuals, communities and the environment, including improved physical and mental health and providing non-motorized transportation options. They reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide economic benefits to the individuals and the communities in which the trails are located.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
144.0	Regional Trails - Oppose	74.0	Need more mountain biking trails and not more paved trails	<p>Thanks for your comment on mountain bike trails. Mountain bike trails are considered a recreational use, and they are usually included as a “use” within a unit. Mountain bike trails are considered one of the approved primary recreational uses in the Regional Parks System. Regional park implementing agencies decide what recreational uses to propose within each regional park and trail. This is typically determined based on an agency and regional recreational needs analysis. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Council reviews and approves regional park and trail master plans.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
145.0	Regional Trails - Support	4.0, 5.0, 10.0, 11.0, 15.0, 19.0, 20.0, 21.0, 100.0, 82.0, 103.0, 121.0, 143.0	Creating a seamless system.	Thank you for expressing support for regional trails and the continued development of a seamless system connecting regional parks. While the Metropolitan Council provides a long-term regional vision for the Regional Parks System along with funding for the acquisition and development of regional parks and trails throughout the seven-county Metro area, the actual regional parks and trails are operated and maintained by the ten regional park implementing agencies. It is critical that the Council and regional park implementing agencies work together to make connections across jurisdictional boundaries.
146.0	Regional Trails - Support	5.0, 77.0, 163.0	Neighborhood connections and increased access.	The Regional Parks Policy Plan includes many regional trail search corridors. Once regional trail master planning is undertaken for these units, there will be extensive community engagement. As the system grows, Council staff encourage connections to local trails and communities.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
147.0	Regional Trails - Support	13.0	Support for building redundant facilities to compensate for closures. Support for Regional Trails to be natural resource experiences as compared with road-side trails.	<p>Thank you for your comments on regional trails. The Metropolitan Council differentiates between Destination (or Greenway) and Linking regional trails. Destination trails are generally located within or near high-quality natural resources in highly desirable settings. Linking regional trails connect Regional Park System units with each other and with other regional trails, state and federal lands, and other regional destinations. Any two trails running parallel to each other and not separated by natural or human-built barriers should be at least 1.5 miles apart so as not to overlap the localized service area of those trails. When temporary trail closures are necessary, regional park implementing agencies provide information on detours or alternate routes and use bikeways, where possible.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
148.0	Regional Trails - Support	24.0, 40.0	Need for increased safety on regional trails including safe crossings at busy intersections and visibility for vehicles.	The suggestion for bike-friendly crossing actuators and vehicular visibility is a good one. Visitors should have a safe experience while using regional trails. The <i>2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan</i> supports safe trails through master plan criteria in Chapter 5 Planning, Strategy 1 Master Plans. Each regional park and trail master plan addresses conflicts which include provisions for pedestrian crossings. Three Rivers Park District owns and manages the regional trail that you have described. This comment has been forwarded to them.
149.0	Regional Trails - Support	40.0	Trails must be 6 feet wide or more and allow no motorized vehicles and animals must be leashed.	Thank you for your comment. Ensuring regional trails are safe is critical. The average regional trail width is 10-foot wide within a 30-foot corridor. On most regional trails, motorized travel is prohibited. That said, some motorized vehicles are used to provide greater access for visitors in need. Leashed animals are important. The Council guides and funds the Regional Parks System and the agencies own and manage the system. The agencies determine regional park and trail rules.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
150.0	Regional Trails - Support	58.0, 100.0, 53.0, 72.0, 54.0, 54.1	Support for adding more trails for safety and increased access. Paved, well-lit, and easily accessible trails.	Council staff also dream of connecting more of our region to regional parks via our regional trails. This long-term vision for Regional Parks and Park Reserves is to connect them with both regional destination trails and linking trails. Council staff strive to make regional trails safe and accessible for multiple uses including biking, walking and running.
151.0	Regional Trails - Support	42.0, 163.0	Creating safe trails.	The Regional Trails System is the fastest growing part of the regional system. Council staff are working with regional parks implementing agencies to expand regional park and trail opportunities throughout the region, with the goal of providing safe, accessible and welcoming opportunities for all residents of the region.
152.0	Regional Trails - Support	63.0	A mix of both easy and difficult trails in our regional system.	Thank you for your suggestion to provide a mix of differing challenges in the Regional Parks System.
153.0	Regional Trails - Support	85.0	Trails to accommodate all users appreciating nature: walkers, runners, skateboarders, ebikes.	Thank you for your comment. The Regional Parks System strives to accommodate multiple use, as well as separating uses that might conflict.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
154.0	Regional Trails - Support	94.0	Support safe, well-maintained trails on the side of roadways, but not through private property. Also don't take away private property or use private property for land acknowledgement.	Thank you for your comment on trails. While many regional trails travel within existing road rights-of-way or along former rail corridors, some regional trails traverse spaces outside current or former transportation corridors. Regional trails are not only meant for transportation purposes, they are also meant for recreation. Trail routing, when possible, seeks to travel near natural features or scenic locations. Regional park implementing agencies take a "willing seller " approach to regional park and trail acquisitions whenever possible.
155.0	Specific Parks or Trails	2.0	Support for Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park expansion.	Thank you for your support for the future Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park. Your comment and support have been shared with Scott County Regional Parks Staff.
156.0	Specific Parks or Trails	10.0	Add crossing country skiing and snow making to the northern part of Elm Creek Park Reserve.	Thank you for your suggestion for Elm Creek Park Reserve. Council staff will share this comment with Three Rivers Park District, the agency responsible for this unit.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
157.0	Specific Parks or Trails	17.0	Develop recreation destination in NW Ramsey County- with trails and water trails.	Ramsey County recently submitted the Rice Creek North Regional Trail Master Plan to the Council for review. The master plan includes significant discussion of Building 189, which is the lone surviving building that still stands on land owned by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, in the regional trail corridor. Building 189 has been identified as an opportunity for reuse for several recreational purposes including a trailhead facility, nature center, interpretive and educational programming, civic space, and other uses. Also, the master plan discusses several potential future boundary and easement adjustments when properties become available.
158.0	Specific Parks or Trails	22.0	Support for Lake Minnewashta.	Thank you for your voice message and support for Lake Minnewashta Regional Park in Carver County. Your message was shared with Carver County.
159.0	Specific Parks or Trails	25.0	Need for snowmaking at Lake Elmo.	Thank you for your suggestion for Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Your comment was shared with Washington County, the agency responsible for this area.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
160.0	Specific Parks or Trails	28.0, 28.1	Comments focus on Chain of Lakes Regional Park - Cedar Lake Park - and the importance of maintaining the beauty of the natural wooded lake area, particularly as SWLRT construction impacts the nature of the Kenilworth corridor.	Thank you for sharing your hopes and concerns about Cedar Lake, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Kenilworth Regional Trail and the beautiful nature that surrounds it. Council staff shared your comments with the Southwest LRT Project Office. Staff look forward to the restoration and redevelopment of this vital area.
161.0	Specific Parks or Trails	30.0	The Bruce Vento Regional Trail connects to many great local and regional parks offering recreational amenities as well as other community destinations.	Thank you for your comment. Council staff agrees that the Bruce Vento Trails is a gem in the Regional Parks System.
162.0	Specific Parks or Trails	35.0	Need for trails and maps for Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden	Thank you for your comments. Council staff shared your suggestions with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, who manage Theodore Wirth Regional Park and Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden.
163.0	Specific Parks or Trails	38.0	Concern for homelessness near Lake Phalen Regional Park. Homelessness creates safety and security problems for park users and housing prices decline.	Thank you for your efforts and your concern. Homelessness is a challenging societal problem that requires coordination across all sectors of society. Your comment has been shared with the City of Saint Paul.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
164.0	Specific Parks or Trails	57.0, 79.0, 116.0	<p>Are there plans for more sidewalks at Cedar Lake Regional Park?</p> <p>Complete paved walking trails at Cedar Lake Regional Park. Also, a swing set for children would be great.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Your comments were shared with Scott County. The master plan for Cedar Lake Farm identifies a traditional playground/play structure as well as a nature-based playground, hiking trails, and paved trails. In 2015 and again in 2018, Scott County developed portions of these facilities including paved trails, hiking trails, a small play feature, expanded beach, picnicking, etc. Expanding these facilities or bringing new amenities to the park will be at least several years away, as the Scott County Board balances investment in different areas of the County. There are no amenity expansion or enhancement projects included for this park in current Scott County 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.</p>
165.0	Specific Parks or Trails	76.0	<p>I live on the East side of Cedar Lake, near Cedar Lake Farms Regional Park. I would love a trail system that would connect the East and West side of the lake as well as a trail system that would connect NP to the Park system.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your interest in establishing a trail system to connect the east side of Cedar Lake with the west side. We shared your comment with Scott County, the regional park implementing agency that owns and operates Cedar Lake Farms Regional Park. As the implementing agency, they would be able to evaluate and respond to your idea.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
166.0	Specific Parks or Trails	137.1	I support the suggested changes and it highlights one of the concerns involved with the proposal to dump dredge spoils into Pig's Eye Lake in Battle Creek Regional Park. Not only was there no public engagement, the public was denied the ability to participate in the development of the plan.	Ramsey County is currently updating the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Also, the County is developing a focused master plan amendment for the Pigs Eye Lake unit. According to Ramsey County, the public was invited to review and comment on the draft Pigs Eye Master Plan Amendment during a 45-day public review, through September 30, 2020. All master plans and master plan amendments submitted to the Council are carefully reviewed to ensure master plan content requirements are met.
167.0	Specific Parks or Trails	74.0, 153.0, 154.0	Minnesota River Valley State Trail should be a natural surface. A paved trail in the floodplain is too expensive to maintain.	Thank you for your comments. Council staff have shared your suggestions with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, who manage the Minnesota Valley State Trail.
168.0	Specific Parks or Trails	69.0	I would like to see the Great Northern Greenway and future trails along the Mississippi River in north Minneapolis added to systems maps.	Thank you for the suggestion. The Regional Parks Policy Plan focuses primarily on regional parks and regional trails. Local parks and trails are not typically depicted on maps or figures in the Regional Parks Policy Plan. In the future, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board could submit other proposals for regional trail search corridors that meet the criteria for "regional significance" through the Council's system addition process.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
169.0	Specific Parks or Trails	149.0	Lake Links Regional Trail - Something should be able to be accomplished in the next 20 years	Thank you for your comment. Developing regional trails is challenging work due to a variety of factors, including available funding, limited road right of way, private property, waterways and wetlands, and other factors. Planned regional trails (like the Lake Links) that cross regional park implementing agency jurisdictional boundaries (Ramsey and Washington counties) pose additional challenges and require inter-agency coordination. Acknowledging these challenges, Council staff are hopeful this and other planned regional trails can be successfully implemented over a reasonable timeframe.
170.0	Specific Parks or Trails	155.0	Would like to see the "missing link" of the Rice Creek North Trail in Circle Pines connected- 2 bridges, a floating walkway, and paved trail sections.	Thank you for the suggestion. Anoka County is the Regional Park Implementing Agency for the Rice Creek North Regional Trail in Circle Pines. To be eligible for state and regional funding for this portion of the trail corridor, a regional trail master plan coordinated by Anoka County and approved by the Metropolitan Council is required.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
171.0	Specific Parks or Trails	158.0	Black history should be commemorated throughout Theodore Wirth Regional Park.	Thank you for sharing your ideas for making Theodore Wirth Regional Park a more inclusive and welcoming space for black residents, particularly from North Minneapolis. Council staff will continue to work to make the Regional Parks System more welcoming and inclusive. Staff shared your letter with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the owners and operators of this important resource. And Council staff will continue our work with all ten regional park implementing agencies, to increase equitable use of the system.
172.0	Specific Parks or Trails	43.0	Support for more trails through New Prague (to Montgomery, to Heidelberg, to Jordan)	Thank you for the suggestion. The Southern Scott Regional Trail Search Corridor was included in the Regional Parks Policy Plan previously, and it will connect Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park with the planned Spring Lake Regional Trail and Jordan. Connections to locations south of New Prague, like Heidelberg and Montgomery in Le Sueur County, are currently outside of the seven-county metropolitan area and are part of the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks System's jurisdiction.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
173.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add County Road East/Stillwater Road to Stillwater corridor.	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
174.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add Century Avenue corridor (White Bear Lake to Woodbury) with access to Century College.	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
175.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add trail from Gateway to Square Lake.	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
176.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add corridor from Bayport to 94 to Afton and Afton to Prescott	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
177.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add North/South corridor to connect Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Stillwater Road	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
178.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Add corridor from Bruce Vento through White Bear Lake to Hugo	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
179.0	Specific Parks or Trails	142.0	Support Lake Links trail access around White Bear Lake with the 96 corridors	Thank you for your comment to align the Regional Trail System with Ramsey and Washington County Bike and Pedestrian Plans. Council staff will share your comment with these two agencies.
180.0	Specific Parks or Trails	178.0	As part of master planning for the Midtown Greenway Extension, please remember the need to connect to the Saint Paul Grand Round, which runs north-south on Pelham Ave. and changes over to Raymond Ave. right around where the railroad tracks run east from the Extension. Planning for a connection to the Grand Round in the area of Raymond or Pelham is a crucial connection point in building the overall bike network.	Thank you for your comment. It will be forwarded to Saint Paul.
181.0	Specific Parks or Trails	86.0, 94.0	Connect New Prague to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park, which would then connect to Spring Lake Regional Park.	Thank you for the suggestion. Council staff shared your suggestion with Scott County, the implementing agency for this jurisdiction.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
182.0	Systems Addition - Oppose	26.0, 153.0	Local, regional and state funding can barely maintain the recreational resources it has.	<p>Thank you for your comments about adding regional trail search corridors to System Plan and the challenges related to funding. While operations and maintenance funding for regional park and trail units continues to fall short of needs, the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund and other funding sources help regional park implementing agencies acquire and develop regional park and trail units. The system addition proposals were submitted by the locally elected boards of the ten agencies and they are responsible for their implementation. Council staff along with our agency partners, will continue to pursue additional funding to help realize this robust system.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
183.0	Systems Addition - Oppose	26.0	Proposed additions cater to affluent recreationists, specific user groups and powerful agency heads.	Submitting system addition proposals for consideration by the Council was at the discretion of each individual implementing agency. Eight of ten agencies chose to submit proposals. Council staff carefully reviewed each proposal for eligibility to be added to the Regional Parks System, based on an evaluation of the criteria in Chapter 4 of the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Council staff found that all 28 of the proposed additions were eligible for inclusion in the System Plan of the Regional Parks Policy. A deeper examination of three foundational priorities rooted in <i>Thrive MSP 2040</i> and the Regional Parks Policy Plan - natural resources, geographic balance and equity - led to the staff-facilitated draft recommendation of 26 system additions.
184.0	Systems Addition - Oppose	59.0, 108.0, 65.0, 123.0	Opposed to the proposed Cedar Lake - to New Prague Regional Trail Search Corridor.	Thank you for sharing your opposition to the Cedar Lake to New Prague Regional Trail Search Corridor. Respecting private property is a cornerstone of the Regional Parks System. Agency managers recognize the importance of being a good neighbor. If this trail is approved for addition into the Regional Parks System, Council staff encourage you to be involved in the master planning process, to ensure that your concerns about the trail are addressed before it is established.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
185.0	Systems Addition - Oppose	130.0	It would be wrong to put a trail that connects Phalen to the Regional Park Reserve. I am opposed to that proposition. No to connecting Lake Elmo Park Reserve with the inner city, it's supposed to be only 20% developed.	Thank you for your comment. Regional trails provide important connections between regional parks and park reserves, regional trails, and other community destinations like schools, libraries, and local parks and trails. The future development of a regional trail connecting Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Phalen-Keller Regional Park would not likely require any, or any significant, development within Lake Elmo Park Reserve itself.
187.0	Systems Addition – Oppose	159.0	I do not necessarily favor more "parks", and especially not more trails. The concept of multi-use has gotten way out of hand. When I go for a quiet walk on the woods, I don't want to be disturbed or almost run down by mountain bikers. They disturb the peace and quiet, as well as the birds and wildlife I go to observe.	Thank you for sharing your concerns about multi-use trails and mountain bikers. The Regional Parks System offers miles of safe, natural-surface hiking trails that are separate from cyclists and mountain bikers. You might find some of the "hiking only" areas more amenable to the types of experiences you seek.
188.0	Systems Additions – Support	3.0, 9.0, 11.0, 13.0, 21.0, 58.0, 116.0 52.0, 50.0, 70.0, 110.0, 147.0, 42.0, 43.0, 44.0, 45.0, 141.0, 171.0 167.0, 168.0, 179.0 185.0	Support for expanding the Regional Parks System	Thank you for expressing support for the expansion of the Regional Parks System. The new and extended Regional Trail Search Corridors, Regional Park Search Areas, significant Regional Park Boundary Expansions, and Special Recreation Feature Search Areas will serve our growing metropolitan area.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
189.0	Systems Additions - Support	4.0, 6.0	General support with fiscal restraints.	Taking care of our existing Regional Parks System is critical work. Thank you for sharing your concerns and priorities.
190.0	Systems Additions - Support	7.0	Supports adding lands for natural resources.	The proposed system additions that are a part of this Policy Plan Amendment will add natural resource lands to the Regional Parks System. Natural resources are the foundation of the Regional Parks System.
191.0	Systems Additions - Support	15.0	Support trails being added but want to focus on the parks system we already have first before adding more parks.	Thank you for expressing support for adding regional trails to the Regional Park System. New or extended Regional Trail Search Corridors were the largest component (17 of 26) of the recommended regional designations. New Regional Park Search Areas were a much smaller component (4 of 26) of the recommended regional designations. Given the proposals received for regional park system additions in 2020, regional park implementing agencies support the idea of adding or extending trails while generally maintaining or minimally growing the number of regional parks.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
192.0	Systems Additions - Support	21.0	Acquire closing golf courses in first ring suburbs to create new regional parks.	<p>Consideration of adding units to the Regional Park System occurs every four years when the Regional Parks Policy Plan is updated. Because regional parks and trails are owned and operated by regional park implementing agencies like Three Rivers Park District, it is these agencies who formally propose and would later acquire and develop the land for a regional park. As a result of the 2019-2020 system additions process, Council staff recommend adding a regional park search area in Minnetonka that would include portions of the Minnehaha Creek, as well as a special recreation feature search area that includes all of the first ring suburbs in Three Rivers Park District.</p>

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
193.0	Systems Additions - Support	29.0, 37.0, 56.0, 57.0, 58.0, 78.0, 79.0, 80.0, 96.0, 97.0, 98.0, 99.0, 116.0, 51.0, 73.0, 55.0, 75.0, 48.0, 49.0, 66.0, 67.0, 86.0, 88.0, 106.0, 109.0, 126.0, 127.0, 150.0, 41.0, 42.0, 91.0, 92.0, 95.0, 111.0, 113.0, 115.0, 133.0, 135.0, 45.0, 61.0, 62.0, 64.0, 65.0, 81.0, 83.0, 101.0, 102.0, 105.0, 121.0, 122.0	Support for the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague. The City has had a trail connection identified in its Comprehensive Plan dating back to 2004 between the City and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and this continues to be a major goal of the City.	Thank you for expressing support for a regional trail search corridor connecting Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park to New Prague. The proposed search corridor is an opportunity for Scott County to provide trail and other recreational amenities, as well as conserve natural resources in a part of the county where there are not a lot of other existing opportunities.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
194.0	Systems Additions - Support	31.0, 32.0, 39.0, 117.0, 119.0, 120.0, 138.0, 139.0, 140.0, 69.0, 157.0, 84.0, 104.0, 124.0, 125.0, 144.0, 145.0, 178.0, 179.0	Letters of support from the Midtown Greenway Coalition and the Lake Street Council for the Midtown Greenway to be designated as part of the regional system.	Thank you for expressing support for the Midtown Greenway to be designated as part of the Regional Park System.
195.0	Systems Additions - Support	60.0, 69.0, 89.0, 129.0, 148.0, 93.0, 112.0, 114.0, 132.0, 173.0	Support for the Saint Paul Greenway	Thank you for expressing support for the Midtown Greenway Extension, a Regional Trail Search Corridor that would connect Mississippi Gorge Regional Park and Samuel Morgan Regional Trail in Saint Paul.
196.0	Systems Additions - Support	140.0, 148.0	Support for the Hidden Falls-Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Search Corridor (Ford Spur) and the Mississippi Gorge - Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Search Corridor (Midtown Greenway Extension)	Thank you for your comment and support for these two system addition proposals.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
197.0	Systems Additions - Support	145.0, 177.0, 179.0	Support Midtown Greenway extension plus addition of aligning streetcar.	Thank you for your support for the City of Saint Paul's proposed Midtown Greenway Extension Regional Trail Search Corridor and for a Greenway Streetcar in Minneapolis. While the streetcar proposal is not a part of the Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment, the Policy Plan supports enhanced multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit system, where appropriate.
198.0	Systems Additions - Support	169.0	The City of Hopkins supports the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility Special Recreation Feature and provided Three Rivers Park District with a letter of support.	Thank you for expressing support for Three Rivers Park District's proposed system addition.
199.0	Systems Additions - Support	177.0	Support for trail extensions to Washington County's parks.	Thank you for expressing support for trail extensions to the regional parks in Washington County.
200.0	Water Trails - Oppose	7.0, 9.0	General opposition.	Thank you for your comments on the potential for creating regional water trails or water trail parks in the Regional Park System. Council staff will be working with regional park implementing agencies, stakeholders and the public to further explore the concept in future years.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
201.0	Water Trails - Support	3.0, 4.0, 6.0, 8.0, 13.0, 15.0, 58.0, 75.0, 42.0, 134.0, 159.0, 141.0, 166.0, 167.0, 185.0, 160.0	General support for water trails.	Thank you for expressing support for the concept of water trails or water trail parks in the Regional Park System. Council staff will be working with regional park implementing agencies, stakeholders and the public to further explore the concept in future years.
202.0	Water Trails - Support	16.0	Increase partnerships and education around swimming and water safety	Thank you for this comment. Council staff will pass this important observation on to implementing agencies.
203.0	Water Trails - Support	21.0, 166.0	Accessible canoe rental for Minnehaha Creek. Also, general support for boat rentals and/or guided trips.	One of the items in the Policy Plan's Chapter 9 Work Plan is the desire to establish a "water trail" classification in 2021. This will be important work that will help set the expectations and planning requirements for this concept. Your comment to help future paddlers with the transportation of their boats will be shared with those involved in this effort.
204.0	Water Trails - Support	34.0, 160.0	Consider what types of use will be allowed, what amenities are needed, signage, maps, local rules and regulations, and the protection of wildlife.	Thank you for expressing support for the concept of water trails or water trail parks in the Regional Park System. Council staff will be working with regional park implementing agencies, stakeholders and the public to further explore the concept in future years. The types of uses, needed amenities, and natural resource protection will be important considerations in that process.

ID	Comment Theme	Commenters	Comment Summary	Comment Response
205.0	Water Trails - Support	153.0	Minimal support for water trails. Expensive and challenging but consider a trial site.	Thank you for your comments on the potential for creating regional water trails or water trail parks in the Regional Park System. Council staff will be working with regional park implementing agencies, stakeholders and the public to further explore the concept in future years.
206.0	Water Trails - Support	168.0	If coupled with initiatives to minimize potential adverse impacts to water quality and nonhuman habitat.	Thank you for your comments on the potential for creating regional water trails or water trail parks in the Regional Park System. Council staff will be working with regional park implementing agencies, stakeholders and the public to further explore the concept in future years.



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