

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Meeting date: November 5, 2020

Subject: Public Comment and Engagement Pilot Update for the Draft Amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statute § 473.147

Staff Prepared/Presented: Tracey Kinney, Senior Planner (651-602-1029); Ellie Hohulin, Parks Intern (651-605-1449); and Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks Manager (651-602-1360)

Division/Department: Community Development / Regional Planning

Proposed Action

None; information and discussion only.

Background

Minnesota Statutes 473.147, subd. 1 directs the Metropolitan Council (Council) to plan for the Regional Parks System. As part of the 2018 update of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (RPPP), the Council committed to convening a region-wide discussion about system additions in 2019. This effort began in October 2019 and continues to the present day through the public comment period on the draft amendment to the RPPP. In addition to adding or expanding regional parks and trails, this draft amendment adds new policy language to strengthen equitable access and proposes a new future study on the history of the land where the parks and trails are located.

The Council has consulted with the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (Commission), Community Development Committee, Land Use Advisory Committee, and Regional Park Implementing Agencies as part of the system additions discussion and the other policy additions included in the draft amendment to the RPPP. This plan amendment builds on the policy direction established in the most recent policy plan update adopted in 2018, as well as the direction provided in *Thrive MSP 2040*. The public comment period for the draft amendment to the RPPP runs from August 26 to October 30, 2020.

At the November 5, 2020, regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, staff will provide a summary of the public comments, demographic analysis of the comments received, and summary of the Public Comment Log Report (Attachment 1). The summary of the public comments will feature an overview of the comment themes that received the most support, as well as highlight unique and impactful comments. The demographic analysis will summarize the respondents' age, race, and gender where that information is available. This analysis provides a glimpse into who commented on the draft amendment and approximately where in the region they live. The Public Comment Log Report is a compendium of all of the original comment submittals organized by commenter type (Agency, Organization, Resident, Staff Member). Staff will also brief the Commission on the Engagement Pilot highlighting the organizational engagements during the public comment period and a few of the videos received from the video challenge.

Rationale

The Council's [Public Engagement Plan](#) recognizes that the public and key constituencies are "full and equal partners in the region's decision-making processes at all levels." An open discussion of key issues raised during the public hearing and public comment period for the amendment to the RPPP demonstrates the Council's and the

Commission's commitment to listening and responding to public comments. This process will demonstrate how these comments inform the final version of the amendment to the RPPP.

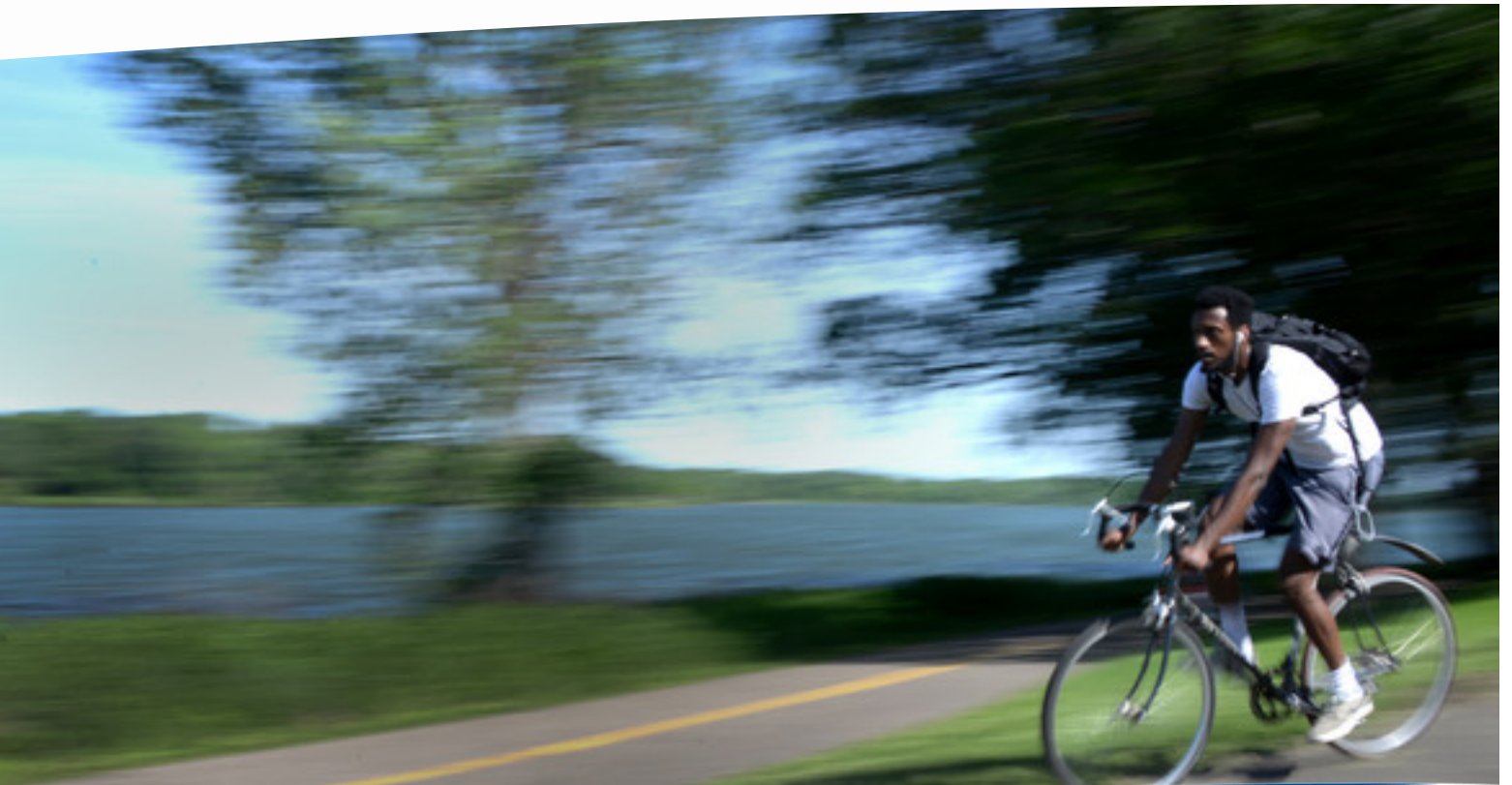
Thrive Lens Analysis

The RPPP draft amendment advances the *Thrive MSP 2040* Outcome of Livability through increasing access to natural resource-based outdoor recreation, which enhances the quality of life throughout the region. It also advances the Thrive Outcome of Equity through strengthening equitable use of the regional parks system by reducing barriers to participation across race, ethnicity, income, and ability. These two outcomes were key considerations in scoring proposed additions to the regional parks and trails system.

Known Support / Opposition

During the public comment period, the Council will receive a wide array of comments in support of and in opposition to the current draft policy plan language.

PUBLIC COMMENT LOG 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN DRAFT AMENDMENT

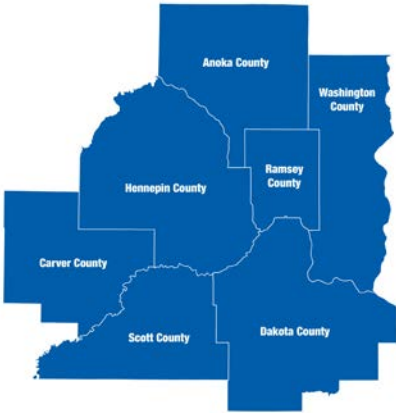


August-October 2020

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.

On request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats to people with disabilities. Call Metropolitan Council information at 651-602-1140 or TTY 651-291-0904.

Picture on front cover: Metropolitan Council, Scenes around Lake Phalen one day.

Overview of compilation of Public Comments

This document compiles the written and in-person comments that the Metropolitan Council received on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

The draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* 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 190 comments submittals from 180 commenters:

- Regional park implementing agencies (2 submittals from 2 agencies)
- City / township / county governments (4 submittals from 4 cities)
- Organizations (34 submittals from 28 organizations)
- Residents (148 submittals from 145 residents)
- Council Staff (2 comments from 1 staff member)

Two commenters including one organization and one regional park implementing agency provided their oral testimony at the October 19 public hearing.

The Public Comment Report, a compilation of the themes of these public comments, will accompany the adoption of the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Comments at the Public Hearing

The public hearing took place at the Monday, October 19th, Community Development Committee meeting. All verbal comments made at the hearing are summarized below. A video of the meeting can be viewed through this [link](#) (Table 1).

Table 1. Public Hearing Comments

Commenter	Commenter Type	Affiliation	Comment
Gilmer, Jenean	Organization	Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reserve some land in regional parks for agricultural production, including community gardens and small market farms Many people in the region have deep agricultural knowledge but lack access for close-to-home gardening This issue exists within the core cities as well as further out
Vlaming, Jonathan	Implementing Agency	Three Rivers Park District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On behalf of Three Rivers thank the committee for including all of Three Rivers system additions These additions will benefit residents of the region for generations to come

Comments from regional park implementing agencies

The Council received two written comments on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* from two of the ten regional park implementing agencies:

- Dakota County
- Three Rivers Park District



October 26, 2020

Charles Zelle, Chair
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Chair Zelle:

On behalf of the Dakota County Board of Commissioners, we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment. The 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan provides the framework needed for the regional park agencies to manage and improve the Metropolitan Regional Park System and guides regional park investments that are important to citizens of Dakota County.

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. As a result, Dakota County's comments are few and supportive with no comments for amendment language for Chapters 1,2,4,5,6,7 and 8. We offer the following comments for your consideration to the draft 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment:

Chapter 3: Change name of Mississippi River Regional Trail to Mississippi River Regional Greenway (Page 50). Change name of Rich Valley Greenway Regional Trail to Veterans Memorial Regional Greenway (Page 61,63,64).

Chapter 9: Dakota County supports the Metropolitan Councils workplan advancing discussion for long-term sustainable funding for supporting the acquisition, recreation and natural resource enhancement, operations, maintenance and asset preservation of the Metropolitan Regional park and Greenway System (Page 148,149).

We appreciate your attention to these comments and look forward to working with you towards a final version of the Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Slavik".

Mike Slavik, Chair
Dakota County Board of Commissioners

cc: Dakota County Board of Commissioners
Matt Smith, County Manager

County Board of Commissioners

P 651-438-4418 F 651-438-4405 W www.dakotacounty.us

A Dakota County Administration Center • 1590 Highway 55 • Hastings • MN 55033



10/30/2020

Metropolitan Council
390 Robert St. N.
St. Paul, MN 55101
ATTN: Emmett Mullen, Parks and Natural Resources Manager

RE: Three Rivers Park District Comments on the Regional Parks Policy Plan/System Plan Update

Thank you for your work on updating the Regional Parks Policy Plan, and for offering the opportunity to provide comments and proposed revisions to the plan.

Three Rivers' comments are organized by type of comments:

1. **Request Policy language change:** Three Rivers requests consideration of changing policy-level language in the plan.
2. **Request Technical Correction:** Proposed revisions which are consistent with current policy but require technical corrections to ensure accuracy.
3. **General Comments:** As described.

Request Policy Language Change:

Page 89, Lines 17-20

The Policy Plan identifies Bridging Facilities as units of the regional parks system:

- *"Bridging facilities are a type of special recreation feature that are intended to attract and introduce new outdoor recreation users to the Regional Parks System's Parks and Trails. (Page 88, lines 15-16).*

The policy plan defines the purpose of these facilities:

- *"Their purpose is to help address inequities that contribute to lower participation rates" (Page 88, lines 16-17).*
- *"Bridging facilities are designed to prototype new ideas that advance equitable usage, focusing on underserved groups in the Regional Parks System." (Page 88, Lines 20-21)*

Three Rivers is a strong advocate for the bridging facility concept and is the only park implementing agency to propose a search area and process for developing bridging facilities in this Policy Plan update. The vast majority of the Policy Plan language on bridging facilities is excellent and is supported by Three Rivers. However, there is one bullet point in the Policy Plan that is not acceptable:

- *"Bridging facilities will not be included in the annual Regional Park System use estimate. If designed to meet their purpose of attracting new users and connecting them to regional*

parks and trails, a facility's success will be reflected in increased visitation in future annual regional park and trail use estimates." (Page 89, lines 17-20)

This bullet implies that visits to Bridging Facilities are not important, and that underserved communities' visits to bridging facilities do not count.

Furthermore, as noted above, the Policy Plan identifies bridging facilities as a type of Special Recreation Feature in the Regional Park system, and reaffirms that status by requiring that the bridging facility have an approved Master Plan. Visits to approved bridging facilities are visits to the regional park system. The idea that the "success" of the bridging facility is only reflected in gross visitation increases to other regional parks and trails diminishes the importance and purpose of bridging facilities.

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.

Page 94 Lines 20 – 22, line 23 -27: Linking Regional Trail Master Plan Requirements

Historically the implementing agencies provided a generalized route, anticipated acquisition needs and an associated cost estimate for potential linking trail easements. This practice has worked well in the past and is appropriate for the level of detail evaluated and utilized during a master planning process. It is not reasonably possible for most Linking Regional Trail Master Plans to fully meet the new proposed boundary and acquisition requirements in the Draft Policy Plan.

- Implementing Agencies need to have flexibility to work with willing landowners and to shift the route slightly to take advantage of opportunities such as a road reconstruction projects or development and avoid challenges such as utility relocation. These tools can help reduce cost, reduce impact on residents, and can help expediate development of the trail.
- Linking Regional Trails Master Plans often identify what road the trail is proposed to follow, occasionally indicate which side of the road the trail is proposed and include general acquisition assumptions (i.e. "an estimated 5' of easement is anticipated"). However, this is not finalized; and the final alignment and true acquisition needs are not determined until the design phase is complete.
- The design phase includes detail design, wetland delineation, available right-of-way, safety considerations, utilities, potential road reconfiguration, survey work, title work and similar. These components, in addition to thoughtful conversation with project partners and impacted property owners, are what guide the final alignment and acquisition needs. As such, the master plan is not the appropriate place to detail these findings and create an "administrative boundary", a list of parcels to be acquired, or an estimated cost of those exact properties.
- It is also not possible to provide an exact schedule for the acquisition of said properties for trails since the exact properties and acquisition boundaries are unknown until the design is finalized.
- Requiring this level of detail eliminates an Implementation Agency's flexibility to be cost effective and efficient, take advantage of opportunities, avoid challenges, and potentially seek acquisition and construction reimbursement if modifications to the conceptual route and preliminary acquisition needs are modified following a master plan approval process.

To address these issues, Three Rivers requests the following changes to this section (shown in blue):

Lines 20-22

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.

Lines 23-27

Acquisition costs: A list of anticipated parcels or real property to be acquired when known, and their estimated total acquisition cost. and schedule for their acquisition. 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. A description of the ownership and management arrangement.

Page 106, Lines 34-36

This section discusses the important topic of land exchange.

The Policy Plan update proposes to drop the following criteria when the Council considers conversion of parkland:

- *Whether the regional park system unit benefits from a facility in exchange for the parkland*
- *Whether the need for the conversion, as in the instance of transportation improvements, is generated by the recreational park system unit.*

This is a significant topic that needs additional review and discussion. Three Rivers requests that these two criteria remain in the Policy Plan and be reevaluated in the next Policy Plan update.

Request Technical Corrections:

Page 53: Figure 3.4: Regional Trails Open to the Public 2020

There are multiple technical corrections to this map (e.g. portions of Medicine Lake Regional Trail are missing, portions of other trails not yet open are shown as open). Please reach out to Kelly Grissman at Three Rivers to correct this map. Thank you.

Page 69: Figure 3.8: Regional Park and SRF Boundary adjustments and Search Areas

- The First-ring City Bridging Facility Search Area should also include the City of Hopkins.
- The Minnetonka/Minnehaha Creek Search Area circle should move slightly south and west so as to not overlap the City of Hopkins.
- The Corcoran-Rogers Search Area should be moved further west so that it does not overlap Maple Grove or Dayton.

Please note that there are other maps that will need these same corrections.

**Page 77: Line 18:
Request Technical Correction**

Line 18 currently says "1 location siting 2-3 unique Bridging Facilities".

The number of potential bridging facilities was not quantified in the proposal submitted by Three Rivers. The appropriate number of facilities will be determined in the Master Planning process.

Please change the language to say:
"1 location siting ~~2-3~~ **multiple** unique Bridging Facilities".

General Comments:

Page 22 (lines 7-10) and also on pages 23/79/128

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..."

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?

Page 98, Lines 33-35

"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."

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.

Page 116, Lines 3-11 & Page 148

The section on page 116 dropped 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.

The ROS classification system idea was not added to the Work Plan section on Page 148.

ROS is an important concept for regional parks planning and helps ensure all peoples' needs are being met within the broader system. As part of Three Rivers 2040 System Plan, Three Rivers is prepared to work in partnership with the Met Council or independently with the Implementation

Agencies to further explore how this tool could be used across the Regional Park System to best serve our residents, reduce duplicity, create parks/trails with regional draw and ensure diversity of recreational experiences, settings and opportunities for all.

Thank you for all of your hard work in developing the System Plan update and additional revisions to the Regional Parks Policy Plan.

Thank you for considering Three Rivers' requests.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Vlaming', written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Vlaming
Associate Superintendent of Planning, Design and Technology

Comments from city / township / county governments

The Council received 1 set of written comments and three surveys on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* from four cities of the region.

- City of Circle Pines
- City of Hopkins
- City of New Prague - Bass, Maggie
- City of New Prague - Ondich, Ken

City of Circle Pines
10/26/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

We would like to see the Rice Creek North trail "missing link" in Circle Pines connected. We worked with our local legislators to have \$500,000 set aside in the 2020 bonding bill for design on the missing link. This missing link consists of two bridges as well as a mixture of a floating walk way and paved trail sections. This trail is heavily used and not having this connector is a big problem as city streets serve as the connector right now and those are not nearly as safe as a paved trail. This project was originally in the 2008 bonding bill which was ultimately vetoed by Governor Pawlenty. After the veto the project was put on the back burner until it was brought back up this year with Representative Runbeck.

From: [Jan Youngquist](#)
To: [PublicInfo](#)
Cc: [Mike Mornson](#); [Kersten Elverum](#); [Steve Stadler](#); [Jason Lindahl](#); [Vlaming, Jonathan \(Jonathan.Vlaming@threeriversparks.org\)](#); [Kelly, Colin](#); [Larson, Michael](#)
Subject: Comments on draft amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
Date: Friday, October 30, 2020 1:11:43 PM

Dear Metropolitan Council and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (2040 RPPP)*. The City of Hopkins is a hub for the regional trail network, with the North Cedar Lake, Cedar Lake LRT, Lake Minnetonka LRT, Minnesota River Bluffs LRT, and Nine Mile Creek Regional Trails all converging in our community. We value these regional parks system components, which contribute to Hopkins' reputation as a great community in which to live, work, and play. In fact, Hopkins was designated a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists in 2019 due in part to our strong trail network.

The draft amendment to the *2040 RPPP* includes two proposed additions to the Regional Parks System within Hopkins—the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area and the Minnetonka/Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area. The Metropolitan Council required regional park implementing agencies to submit letters of support from affected cities for proposed additions to the Regional Parks System. Hopkins and Three Rivers Park District have a strong partnership for the regional parks system facilities in our community.

We offer the following comments on the proposed system additions within Hopkins:

First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area

Three Rivers Park District approached the City of Hopkins regarding their proposed First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area and we submitted a letter of support for the search area, dated May 21, 2020. However, the map of the search areas in Figure 3-8 on page 69 of the draft *2040 RPPP* does not include Hopkins within this search area. The text on page 66 indicates that the search area spans 11 cities, but it appears that the map includes 10 communities, rather than 11. Therefore, there is a discrepancy between the map and the text, and it appears that Hopkins may have inadvertently been omitted from the map.

Mapping of the Search Area: The mapping for the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area shows the entire boundary of the affected communities within the search area. Additions to the Regional Parks System require the Metropolitan Council to issue System Statements to affected communities, who will then need to amend their comprehensive plans to acknowledge the regional parks system additions. While Hopkins supports the idea of a bridging facility and looks forward to exploring options for a facility with Three Rivers Park District, we are a small community that is trying to grow our tax base through redevelopment, especially near the Southwest LRT—METRO Green Line. If Hopkins was included in the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area we would amend our comprehensive plan with the understanding that the general search area would apply to publicly owned land only, rather than opening up land within our entire community to potentially be the location of a bridging facility.

Name of the Search Area: The Metropolitan Council may want to consider changing the name of the search area. "First ring cities" is not a regional planning term defined in *Thrive MSP 2040* and thus may be confusing. It appears that Three Rivers Park District's intent with the search area is to provide regional park amenities in areas that are more densely developed and do not have the land base for regional parks. The Metropolitan Council could consider using the *Thrive MSP 2040* Community Designations, which are defined in both *Thrive* as well as in the *2040 Regional Parks*

Policy Plan (page 6 and 8). The 11 communities included in the search area are defined as Urban and Urban Center in *Thrive*; therefore the search area could be referred to as the Urban/Urban Center Bridging Facility Search Area for consistency in regional planning terminology.

Minnetonka/Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area

The draft *2040 RPPP* also includes the Minnetonka-Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area. The City of Hopkins did not submit a letter of support for this search area, but the mapping of this search area in Figure 3-8 on page 69 encompasses small portions of northwest Hopkins. We would consider having conversations with Three Rivers Park District over this proposal as they begin a master planning process, but since we did not submit a letter of support, we cannot support Hopkins being included in the search area, which would require us to amend our comprehensive plan for this proposal.

In summary, the City of Hopkins respectfully requests that the Metropolitan Council:

- Include the City of Hopkins within the First Ring Cities Bridging Facility/Special Recreation Feature Search Area, with the understanding that the search area would apply only to publicly owned land within the City
- Remove the City of Hopkins from the Minnetonka-Minnehaha Creek Regional Park Search Area

If you have any questions or would like additional information about our comments, please contact me. The City of Hopkins appreciates our partnership with both Three Rivers Park District and the Metropolitan Council.

Jan Youngquist, AICP | Community Development Coordinator | City of Hopkins

1010 1st Street S. | Hopkins, MN 55343 | 952-548-6343



*Artery Hopkins has been recognized
by the American Planning Association
as a 2019 Great Street in America.*

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City of New Prague - Bass, Maggie
10/13/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Would love a trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I will specifically comment about the City of New Prague's desire to have a trail connection to nearby Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. The City has had a trail connection identified in our 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.

Comments from organizations

The Council received 34 comment submittals on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* from 28 organizations or organizational affiliates of the region (five organizations had multiple comment submittals). Thirteen of these comment submittals were emails, eighteen were surveys, and one was a video submittal.

- Bike MN (3 comment submittals)
- Boy Scouts
- City of Arden Hills, Parks & Trails Committee
- City of Skate
- Cycle Sisters (2 comment submittals)
- Ecological Design
- Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden, Theodore Wirth Regional Park
- Environmental Studies, Hamline University
- Great Northern Greenway task force
- Hamline Midway Coalition
- Lake Street Council
- Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative
- Mayo Clinic Health System
- Midtown Community Works Partnership
- Midtown Greenway Coalition (2 comment submittals)
- Minnesota Off Road Cyclist (MORC)
- New Prague Area Schools
- North Star Ski Club
- Race Forward
- Ramsey Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Sierra Club North Start Chapter
- Sustainable Earth Advocates
- Trust for Public Land
- Twin Cities Adaptive Cycling
- Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust
- Urban Farm and Garden Alliance
- Urban Roots (2 comment submittals)
- Wild Ones Prairie Edge Chapter
- Women in Wildlife

BikeMN, Lake
Links,
Gateway Trail-
Eggert, Scott
10/19/2020

8. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Major commuter and recreation corridors E/W,

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Should align with and be coordinated with the Ramsey and Washington County Bike & Ped Planning North/South & East/West Major commuter corridors. I would recommend: 1) Adding Lake Links Trail (around White Bear Lake) & Gateway Trails to lists, along with Vento 2) County Road E / Stillwater Road /12 to Stillwater corridor (along with 96 corridor, but more used) 3) Century Ave corridor (White Bear Lake to Woodbury) 4) Gateway to Square Lake - Marine (Carnelian lakes & Square Lake) 5) Bayport to 94 to Afton, and Afton to Prescott 6) Vento through White Bear Lake to Hugo (*priority - not open to public?) 7) north/south corridor to get to Lake Elmo Park from Stillwater Road /12

From: Scott Eggert <>

Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2020 11:38 AM

To: Kelly, Colin <>

Cc: Ian Harding <>

Subject: Re: Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the draft Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment

Colin, thanks for the **Metropolitan Council's** county alignment work with the *"Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment – specifically (my/our) suggestion that planning efforts be aligned and coordinated with Ramsey and Washington County's bicycle and pedestrian planning work – via the Metropolitan Council's online survey."*

[Parks Policy Plan - Metropolitan Council](#)

Parks Policy Plan - Metropolitan Council

We are advocates for connecting the major **East/West and North/South** commuter and recreation **corridors** so that families can safely, easily and directly bike, walk or roll to our parks, schools and businesses across counties and cities. Planning and coordination should continue be a collaboration with counties and cities, *and planning efforts shouldn't end at the major corridor border-lines.*

Specifically we would like to see the direct corridors for **County Road E/12 to Stillwater** and **Century Ave./120**, from **Woodbury to White Bear Lake** with access to the **Century College** walking and biking paths, for improved for bicycle safety to the parks, schools, businesses and open spaces along these corridors.

Supporting the **Lake Links Trail** access around White Bear Lake with the **96** corridor and **Bruce Vento Trail** to Hugo are also important to access the parks, beaches and businesses around the lake areas and parks.

[Lake Links Trail Project | White Bear Lake Minnesota](#)

Please let us know if we can assist with this planning alignment in any ways.

Scott Eggert

Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, Lake Links (White Bear Lake), Gateway and Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota member and bike trail advocate.

121 Loretta Lane
Mahtomedi (White Bear Lake)
651-500-3439

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

From: Ted Duepner <
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 11:17 AM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Comment on Draft Amendment to 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Hi there, I am writing to express my support for the inclusion of the new search areas including Ford Spur Trail and Midtown Greenway Extension. Attention to both will be amazing assets to connecting trail systems and furthering usefulness of existing trails systems.

Thank you

--

Supporter Relations Manager
952-913-0420 [LinkedIn](#)



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Chad Wiekus, Boy Scouts
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Enough trails to walk, run and bike for miles.

Straumann, Rich
09/22/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Develop NE Metro "Recreation Destination" in NW Ramsey County - previously planned - using Bldg 189 area (former TCAAP). Currently 100 acres with Loop Trail exists and area is ready for another 100 acres with more planned multi-use trails and Water Trail more developed on Rice Creek.

From: INFO City of Skate <>
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 2:09 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

City of Skate would like to add our support of the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan with the inclusion of a public skateparks within the plan.

City of Skate, as a non profit, is a long-term partner with MPRB in the implementation, design, funding and building of the 22 skateboard spaces that have been approved through the extensive MPRB city-wide master plan process which has included regional parks within the MPRB system.

The first skatepark we are building with MPRB at Elliot Park in downtown Minneapolis was awarded a [Mississippi Watershed Management Organization action grant](#) to help with the cost of water gardens and a permeable patio that was initiated into the design from the beginning.

Our [Skate-able Art Plaza project with lead partner Juxtaposition Arts](#) in North Minneapolis also received a MWMO action grant in 2019 for water gardens and water management.

Quality skateparks that help the environment and our watershed are possible and a priority for City of Skate and MPRB.

Skateboarding and quality skateparks will bridge participation and inclusion of youth into the regional park system. Skateboarding has diverse participants, is easily accessible, equitable, and has developed over many decades into a multigenerational activity

Please continue to support and expand skateboarding within regional parks to widen equity access to regional parks for all our metro communities and youth.

Paul Forsline, President
cityofskate.org
612.240.4400



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Cycle Sisters
Raquel, Kiara
10/26/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I want to see a park system where everyone is treated equal & with respect. I want it to be safe for mother's with toddlers who need to Telework. I want to see y'all respecting nature. Stop cutting trees without justified reasoning. I want to see water fountains for people, not just dogs!

October 29,2020

Dear Met Council Members,

Cycle Sisters are writing to comment on the Regional Parks Policy Plan update, to share what parks mean for us and what we want to see of our parks in the future. Cycle Sisters are a group of women who bike together in North Minneapolis. We strive to continuously support our local community and the businesses of North Minneapolis. Our group rides and experiences cycling directly connected to the network of bike lanes and trails existing in our city, including our Regional Parks and Trails which are important for mental health and building community.

Nature is healing and good for decompressing, but it should be that space for everyone, and that is not the case right now. Regional Parks are not always peaceful or welcoming places for black and brown individuals and communities, especially with past encounters with police in the parks. Feeling safe in nature is important so it is accessible to everyone, especially considering it's public, tax payer space. We want to feel like we belong in our parks. 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.

We don't just want a pretty place, but one that feeds our soul, mind, body, and stomachs. 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. We share our ideas to ensure that our parks are safe spaces for everyone. Specifically, we want to emphasize the need for sharing history and culture that is representative of the region and promoting further accountability of our parks agencies and leaders.

Considering History

Regional Parks should focus both on the history of the land they sit on and the communities they sit within. We want our parks to share the history of Native Americans and Indigenous people, while reflecting the history and culture of neighborhoods nearby. For example, for many decades, Theodore Wirth hosted the Juneteenth celebration. Having a memorial to share about this important event within Theodore Wirth is important. How do parks justify telling a depressing history, and omit the joyful and positive stories? One Cycle Sister member lives in a house that was moved from Theodore Wirth to Thomas Avenue when the park was created. Stories like this, one would never know unless someone shared it. How do we share that this space is more than manicured landscapes, golf courses, and the Loppet Foundation? North Minneapolis is dedicated as a historically Black neighborhood— Black history should be commemorated throughout Theodore Wirth Park.

Planning, Community, and Accountability

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. 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. They are one with Mother Earth. It is rare to observe within the DNR system, an employee who is of Indigenous descent or from the BIPOC community at all. In order for our community to truly feel represented and safe in our regional parks, we need staff who look like us. 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.

Lastly, we want to know how the Met Council can continue to support and engage us in the parks planning process? We envision the Council creating something that is sustainable for BIPOC individuals and organizations, with groups like ours and others throughout our community. We want to see these "Environmental Reparations" for spaces that we have been excluded from and not represented in. .

Thank you for your time in considering our thoughts and feelings on our Regional Parks and the future of our system. We hope to continue our partnership and engagement into the future. If you have any questions for our Cycle Sisters group, or would like to continue the conversation, please contact MN Renewable Now:

Cycle Sisters

612-208-3896

kristel@mnrenewablenow.org

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would like to see Honoring Indigenous Land, Food, Water, Chemical Use Decrease, Equitable Community Spaces & Trails. We need to heal ourselves through healing the land. The Commons is a place for all species of our ecosystem. Let us celebrate community resilience with foraging, food, pollinators, clean water, healthy soil, animals on the land, art, indigenous knowledge, place making, equitable distribution of resources, community driven design.

Eloise Butler Wildflower
Garden, Theodore Wirth
Regional Park
Brandel Tanis, Annelise
10/07/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I work at Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden in Theodore Wirth Park (south end). We regularly interact with park patrons who want to take walks in the park, but would prefer to know information about path locations and distance beforehand. Trail signage and publicly accessible maps would greatly improve public access to the park, as would clear, consistent information about parking, hours, and locations of picnic benches and playgrounds.

Environmental Studies, Hamline University
Cadieux, Valentine
10/30/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

As I read the plan, something that really strikes me is the inclusion of food production and gardens as "specialized or single-purpose recreational activities." This language is repeated several times, and I'd like to focus on this framing, because I think it inherits several problematic nineteenth-century quite colonial assumptions about parks that need to be updated for our parks to meet their stated goals of equitable usage. For one thing, the idea that food production in parks is inherently specialized or single-purpose is an overly limited view of food landscapes. The food landscapes of this place's ancestors were not specialized or single-purpose -- they were built into the fabric of the landscape: wild rice in the lakes, along with fish and swimming and the rest of the aquatic ecosystem; berries and fruit and nut trees and herbs and other edible plants in the forests and savannas (amongst which animals could move, and eat, and play and work and exploration and trails could take place; corn and other crops along the path and on the hills -- not taking AWAY from other uses, but adding to them, just as wildflowers do, or other vegetation. Secondly, everyone eats. Treating the idea of apple trees in a park as a specialized

interest not only reflects perhaps too much concern about whether people might break a branch picking an apple, but also an idea that food is only /some/ people's interest. Food is a great connector, and fits well with other kinds of programming, both outdoor and educational and in community kitchens and exchange programs. Finally, the idea that foodscapes don't belong in public spaces, or in the city, reflects a pernicious hierarchical version of the "city beautiful" idea that both devalued agrarian stewardship skills and practices (an incredibly valuable asset of the Metro region, especially with the richly diverse agrarian traditions represented here), and explicitly withheld and eradicated produce and forage potential to compel residents into wage labor. Especially facing climate instability and the long-term effects of poverty and our current crises, it is unconscionable to reproduce this denial of the entitlements of the land that could feed us. Thank you for your attention to correcting and healing this history we have inherited!

October 23, 2020

To: public.info@metc.state.mn.us

Cc: Robert Lilligren, Metropolitan Council Member District 7
Abdirahman Muse, Metropolitan Council Member District 8

Re: Comments on Regional Parks Policy Plan

The Great Northern Greenway is a four and a half mile shared use trail which travels along 26th Avenue N and 18th Avenue NE in Minneapolis. Some trail segments were constructed as early as 1997. Two-thirds of its route have been completed since 2017 as part of three separate street reconstructions that were over a twenty-million dollar infrastructure investment. There are only a few remaining trail gaps of which the Mississippi River crossing is the most notable.

For over twenty years, many public studies including Riverfirst and the Above the Falls master plan have identified the BNSF railroad bridge, halfway between the Lowry and Broadway bridges, as the river crossing. The railroad bridge is nominally servicing freight delivery to only one business. One of its two sets of tracks was removed long ago, leaving fourteen feet of non-utilized, empty space that could be converted to a trail. Alternatively, the freight service could be moved to a nearby Canadian Pacific rail, allowing for trail use of the full bridge.

The Great Northern Greenway is primarily an independent and road adjacent trail linking Theodore Wirth Regional Park to the Diagonal Trail. It links to the Mississippi River water and shore line trail systems. Access over the BNSF bridge, will be the only protected route traversing the northern half of Minneapolis other than the combined Victory Memorial, Columbia, St. Anthony regional trail systems one to two miles north. It traverses nine north and northeast Minneapolis neighborhoods several of which are areas of concentrated poverty. It is a direct, protected urban route to schools, parks, transit, cultural, business entities and job centers.

While the trail is primarily under the City of Minneapolis jurisdiction, it connects to parks and trails under the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board including the newly constructed 26th Avenue N River Overlook. The Great Northern Greenway task force continues to advocate with them as well as Hennepin County, State and Federal representatives to seek an agreement with the BNSF railroad to gain access to the bridge.

We ask that the Met Council include the Great Northern Greenway river crossing in its 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan to acknowledge the importance of this goal.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Boe, Dan Miller
Great Northern Greenway task force members
greatnortherngreenway@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/GreatNorthernGreenway>

encl: River crossing photos and illustrations



Hamline Midway Coalition
Reynolds, Mike
10/30/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I would like to consider more formal, explicit use of our parks system to help shape community food/gardening resources. I think this could serve as a model for sustainable use of land that is also beautiful, impacting the look and community feel of neighborhoods. The model clearly shapes (or enables) community behaviors that could be or become more sustainable, as well. A community garden is an invaluable space for teaching, for gathering, for remembering and echoing the history of the land. And such dedicated uses would be an invaluable addition to the revisioning of how we live in cities, absolutely vital to shaping a future where we all thrive.



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Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Metropolitan Council

390 Robert St N

Saint Paul, MN 55101

September 22, 2020

Dear Members of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission,

Please accept this letter in enthusiastic support from the Lake Street Council for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's inclusion of the Midtown Greenway for Regional Parks and Trails System designation in the Regional Parks and Trails System Policy Plan update under review.

The Lake Street Council serves, supports, and advocates for businesses in the Lake Street commercial corridor, which runs parallel to the Midtown Greenway. Over the past two years, we have partnered with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, and the Midtown Greenway Coalition to improve the connections between the Midtown Greenway trail and the businesses on Lake Street.

The Midtown Greenway carries over 3,000 bicyclists every day. Many of these users start or end their trips on or near Lake Street's major institutions and small businesses, and they rely on the Greenway to provide a safe and enjoyable route for reaching their destination. Many others experience the Greenway as a critical connector between major regional destinations, including the Mississippi River Gorge and the Chain of Lakes. These users, and the businesses they frequent, would benefit from the additional expertise and coordination that would result from the Midtown Greenway operating as a regional trail.

We strongly support the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's submission and hope that you will strongly consider designating the Midtown Greenway to the Regional Parks and Trail System.

Thank you,

Allison Sharkey
Executive Director

Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative

Harding, Ian

10/20/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

1. The hwy 96 trail (through Dellwood in Washington County) is shown on several maps as planned but not open to the public . There is not mention of it anywhere in the documents as to what the true status is? Is in going to have a master plan developed for it , is it going to move forward . Something should be able to be accomplished in the next 20 years on this . ref Table 3.6 2. Washington County seems to be shortchanged in this process . Lots of projects in Carver County . 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

Mayo Clinic Health System
Ashley, Kelly
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Please add the Trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake Park. We are a community that promotes exercise and this will provide a great option to use our local park without having to drive. Families could bike or walk out there together. We would use it as a family for sure. I am also a runner and this would be a great run route as well because the roads are not safe without sidewalks or trails to Cedar Lake Farms



Business Leadership Public Commitment Citizen Involvement

October 29, 2020

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert St N
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Members of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission,

The Midtown Community Works Partnership is pleased to submit this letter in support of inclusion of the Midtown Greenway in the Regional Parks Policy Plan update.

The Midtown Community Works Partnership is a public private partnership formed to guide the redevelopment of the Midtown Greenway-Lake Street corridor in south Minneapolis. Our partners are Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, Metropolitan Council, Allina Hospitals and Clinics, Wells Fargo, Midtown Greenway Coalition, and the Lake Street Council. Throughout its work, the Midtown Community Works Partnership has supported, and continues to support, a vision of the Midtown Greenway as a multiple use corridor that includes bicyclists, pedestrians, and future streetcar or rail transit use to connect the Southwest LRT and Hiawatha LRT lines.

The Midtown Community Works Partnership recognizes that, in conjunction with an operating agreement with the City of Minneapolis, the Midtown Greenway has become a flagship trail in a regional network of bikeways and walking paths, serving as a key connector between the Mississippi River Gorge Regional Park and the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, as well as to many regional parks and trails assets operated by a variety of jurisdictions. These other parks and trails include the Southwest LRT Trail, Kenilworth and Cedar Lake Trail, West River Parkway, Grand Rounds Scenic Byway, Brackett Park, the Mall Park, Soo Line Gardens, and Minnehaha Parkway, among others. The Midtown Greenway's location carries the potential to connect neighborhood residents with the region's greatest diversity in terms of race, national origin, and income/wealth, serving the goal of strengthening equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability. The Midtown Greenway-Lake Street Corridor is also home to a vibrant commercial and cultural corridor of established and emerging small businesses created by generations of immigrants and people of color. The corridor boasts a revitalized employer center of over 15,000 jobs at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Allina Health, and Children's Minnesota.

The Midtown Greenway strongly aligns with the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan criteria for inclusion of regional linking trails, including drawing visitors from across

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
October 29, 2020

the region, benefitting the regional trail system, connecting two or more units of the regional parks system, and connecting to multiple public interest destinations such as schools, job centers, cultural sites, and commercial districts.

The Midtown Community Works Partnership initially voted to support the exploration of regional trail designation for the Midtown Greenway on June 28, 2019, and then voted to express support for the designation on March 12, 2020. We support adding the Midtown Greenway to the Regional Parks and Trails System, under management of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, with the understanding that such a designation would continue to include the vision of future rail transit use in the corridor, and that agreements among our local governments will need to address further details.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you further at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Alondra Cano
Minneapolis City Council Member
Midtown Community Works Partnership Chair



Marion Greene
Hennepin County Commissioner
Midtown Community Works
Partnership Vice Chair

2834 10th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone: 612-879-0105
www.midtowngreenway.org



LAKE STREET COUNCIL

September 23, 2020

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert St N
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Members of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission,

The Midtown Greenway Coalition is pleased to submit this letter in support of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's submission of the Midtown Greenway for Regional Parks and Trails System designation.

Our founders had the idea for the Midtown Greenway and worked with our public and private partners in the Midtown Community Works Partnership to get it built.

We are the 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is the "friends" group for the Midtown Greenway. Our programs help keep the Greenway safe, clean, green, and full of public art. We also regularly work with our Midtown Community Works partners on ideas and recommendations for trail improvements.

We believe a major improvement for the Midtown Greenway would be for it to become part of the Regional Parks and Trails System, bringing the corridor under a unified operating structure with expertise in park and trail management.

The Midtown Greenway serves as a connector to many other regional parks and trails, connecting residents and visitors to the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes, the Mississippi River Gorge, and beyond. We estimate that more than 5,000 people use the Greenway every day during warmer months, and over 1 million bike trips are taken on it each year.

We hope the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's submission to have the Midtown Greenway added to the Regional Parks and Trails System is successful, and we appreciate your consideration of their request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Soren R. Jensen".

Soren R. Jensen
Executive Director

MIDTOWNGREENWAY.ORG

PHILLIPS WEST

MIDTOWN PHILLIPS

WHITTIER

LYNDALE

CENTRAL

LOVE OUR PATHWAYS

WEST CALHOUN

CEDAR ISLES DEAN

EAST ISLES

EAST CALHOUN

CARAG

LOWRY HILL EAST

PROSPECT PARK

LONGFELLOW

SEWARD

EAST PHILLIPS

CORCORAN

POWDERHORN

Midtown Greenway Coalition
Jensen, Soren
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The Midtown Greenway Coalition enthusiastically supports adding The Midtown Greenway Extension Regional Trail Search Corridor (aka Mississippi Gorge Regional Park to Samuel Morgan Regional Trail Search Corridor) to the Plan.

8. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Other

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The whole plan for the bicycling network seems to only focus on paved trails. This is missing the largest growth category in bicycling which is natural mountain bike trails. The current trail systems in the Twin Cities area are overwhelmed by new and existing users. The NICA High School Mountain Bike League is over 2,000 kids and the majority of their parents also ride these trails. As a person who works in the Bicycle Industry the growth in mountain bikes is the largest category. This plan clearly lacks the growth and planning for this rapidly growing segment of bicycling. Paved trails are great but there is no shortage of pavement, more mountain bike trails are needed asap. A user study would verify the growing need for more natural mountain bike trails.

10. Do you have more comments?

- Yes
- No

Option 3- Comment on the Policy Plan by Section or Overall

Below is a list of Policy Plan sections or the overall plan itself. Please check a box or boxes and include your comment in the below space.

11. Overall Plan or Chapter Number

- Overall
- Chapter 1: Planning for the Twin Cities Region
- Chapter 2: Overview of the Regional Parks System and the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
- Chapter 3: System Plan
- Chapter 4: Siting and Acquisition Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 5: Planning Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 6: System Protection Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 7: Recreation Activities and Facilities Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 8: Finance Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 9: 2019 – 2022 Workplan for the Regional Parks Policy Plan

- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Other

13. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The Minnesota River Valley State Trail should be a natural surface trail for biking, hiking, and etc. A paved trail in this major flood plain is extremely expensive to maintain. The continued multi year flood events will only draw more funding away from more sustainable projects. For example the current natural trail in Bloomington while not perfect is one of the most popular areas in the Twin Cities and has not required any funding. Management and slight improvements such as bridges is all that is required. The Met Council should require a neutral user study for this plan and not consult with the Parks and Trails Council due to their paved trail bias until the study is completed. This is not about access as there are many unpaved trails that are ADA compliant, this is about the right plan for the area.

New Prauge Area Schools
Webb, Chuck
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes because while I love our trail system in town, it is limited due to its length. I would also love to be able to travel from town to Cedar Lake park without having to drive, or have to bike or walk on the roads, which are not safe not meant for pedestrian traffic.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I've walked every trail system in town, many, many times. I enjoy the scenery and just being outdoors.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Something like a combination of Clearly Lake trail system and Ritter Farm in Lakeville.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

I think including the history of the area would be a great idea. It could be an educational source for people using the trails and help those who are not from here learn the history and culture of their adopted home.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

I don't have an answer for this. I am not from this area, but would love to learn more about my adopted home.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Giving honor to the indigenous peoples who lived here prior to European settlement. I think this is very important, as we already acknowledge the indigenous peoples with the names of many of the communities across the Midwest, and many of the States.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Any and all of the Native American Tribes who once populated this area, as well as the original European settlers who immigrated here and made this their home.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

I haven't thought about this, but I'd be in favor of listening to new ideas and supporting them if they have merit.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

YES!!!! For the variety.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Maps for easy navigation and planning.

Yes, anything of this nature needs to be maintained if we want future generations to experience and enjoy it. This comes with a tax burden. It is for the common good.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

I do not know.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change - Keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

From: Cecily Harris
Sent: Sunday, September 27, 2020 11:15 PM
To: Mullin, Emmett <> **Subject:** Fwd: parks

Emmett,

Here is a comment from a North Star Ski Club Member.

Sent from Cecily Harris' iPhone.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Karen Hulstrand > **Date:** September 27,
2020 at 4:59:05 PM CDT **To:**
Subject: parks

My comment on regional parks. I would really like to see snow making capabilities at Lake Elmo Park. It gets high use but snow conditions have deteriorated with climate change that it would fill a big gap on the East Side to have this.

Karen Hulstrand

Caution! This email was sent from an external source. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Do we really need an additional 588 miles of trails? What evidence do you have that these can be needed and can be sustained? How are you going to pay to maintain this when local, regional, and state funding can barely maintain what resources it has? Who has done the cost benefit analysis of these proposals? Who is on point to evaluate the long term cost to maintain these additional miles? Generally speaking, looks like your systems additions are again creating significant geographic imbalance. Way to play to affluent recreationists, specific user groups, and powerful agency heads. Also, your plan mistakenly assumes community engagement is the equivalent of an equity analysis. While engagement is important, that is not the same as an equity analysis. You should not create conditions for anyone to assume it is. It is short-sided and frankly appears ignorant. No amount of engagement is going to matter if your institutions continue to perpetuate inequitable decision-making and power-sharing imbalance. Your analysis needs to incorporate elements that address root causes of persistent inequities. And, if that's not possible (as in you all don't know what that entails), then restate that section because it's not actually an equity analysis at all. What you have there is a simple mapping and community engagement exercise for agencies to undertake.

8. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
-

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

There need to be policies in place to protect the parks, their plant communities and rare species from fragmentation and invasive species: -Environmental impact statements before installing additional trails - WorkCleanGo protocols in every contract for construction, equipment should come clean and leave clean. - PlayClenGo protocols for off road bikers and hikers. Off road bikers should be involved with removing the invasive plants that are spread by their activities as part of trail maintenance. - Construction contract clauses stating contractors are responsible for removing invasive species from project area for 5 years following construction and must use methods recommendaed by state or local invasive species experts. - Boot brush and bike cleaning stations at off-road biking and other trail heads - Fund terrestrial invasive species early detection, treatment and educational efforts. Partner with and support existing and future Cooperative Weed Management Areas. Train staff and volunteers in invasive species detection and spread prevention.

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The Sierra Club North Star Chapter is comprised of 80,000 members and supporters in Minnesota, about two thirds of which live, work, and recreate in the seven county metro region. The Sierra Club is pleased that the Metropolitan Council has added the Midtown Greenway Extension over the Mississippi River and through Saint Paul in the proposed Regional Parks Policy Plan. The Sierra Club strongly supports the Greenway Extension to the Plan and we urge the Met Council to work with the Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, and other stakeholders and decisionmakers to make this project eligible for regional funding and bring this regional trail vision to fruition.

THOMAS E. CASEY

Attorney at Law
2854 Cambridge Lane
Mound, MN 55364
(952) 472-1099
tcasey@frontiernet.net

October 30, 2020

Metropolitan Council
Public Information
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101

Via E-mail and U.S. Mail
public.info@metc.state.mn.us

RE: Regional Parks Policy Plan – Draft Amendment
Comments from Sustainable Earth Advocates (SEA)

Dear Metropolitan Council and Planning Staff,

I represent Sustainable Earth Advocates (SEA), a Minnesota non-profit corporation organized in 2008 for the purposes, in part, of ensuring that our natural resources are protected from unnecessary and ecologically damaging development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft amendment to the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Please consider SEA's comments to this draft as preliminary, subject to revision as more information is provided.

Background Facts - Sixth Mass Extinction

The Earth is suffering from the 6th mass extinction event in its history. This time, the cause is us. (Kolbert, The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History. 2014.)

Human-caused global warming is creating unprecedented climate change and weather events, resulting in tragic loss of human and animal life, extensive damage to ecosystems, and severe economic costs.

The “Anthropocene” is proposed as a new geological epoch, acknowledging that human activity now rivals natural geological processes, leaving unmistakable evidence in the stratigraphic record.

“... [T]he current world population of 7.6 billion is expected to reach 8.6 billion in 2030, rising to 9.8 billion in 2050.” [WWF Living Planet Report, 2018, page 51.]

“In March 2018, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released its latest Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment (LDRA), finding that only a quarter of land on Earth is substantively free of the impacts of human activities. By 2050

this fraction is projected to decline to just a tenth. Wetlands are the most impacted category, having lost 87% of their extent in the modern era. **The immediate causes of land degradation are typically local – the inappropriate management of the land resource ...** [WWF Living Planet Report 2018, page 42; emphasis added.]

In summary, the Earth, on a global scale, is being afflicted by “death by 1,000 cuts.”

Minnesota’s Natural Resources - Imperiled

Minnesota’s native plants and their communities have suffered great losses. Less than 1% of our native prairies and oak savannahs remain. Less than 2% of our old growth forests remain.

About ½ of Minnesota’s original wetlands remain. “It has been estimated that Minnesota has lost approximately half of its original pre-settlement wetlands due to draining and filling for agriculture and development, with some regions of the state having lost more than 90 percent of their original wetlands (Anderson and Craig 1984).” (Kloiber, S.M. and Norris, D.J. 2013. Status and Trends of Wetlands in Minnesota: Wetland Quantity Trends from 2006 to 2011. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul, MN.)

“Monitoring suggests that about 40% of Minnesota's lakes and streams are impaired for conventional pollutants.” (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/minnesotas-impaired-waters-list>, last visited 11/11/18.)

The Metropolitan Regional Park System contain **the crown jewels** of our area, with the most sensitive and rare plant and animal communities. They deserve the highest degree of legal protection.

Yet, our Metropolitan Regional Park System is also suffering from “death by 1,000 cuts.”

“Rescue of Environment is Central Organizing Principle”

Former Vice-President Al Gore wrote in Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit (1992): “I have come to believe that we must take bold and unequivocal action: we must make the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle for civilization.” (Page 269.) Former Vice-President Gore continues: “Adopting a central organizing principle ... means embarking on an **all-out effort** to use every policy, every tactic and strategy, every plan and course of action - to use, in short, every means to halt the destruction of the environment and to preserve and nurture our ecological system.” (Page 274.) [Emphasis added.]

The ethical/moral decisions, arising from the Regional Parks Policy Plan, must be guided by this “central organizing principle.”

Park Reserves Are Ecologically Fragmented

The current Regional Parks Policy Plan – and draft amendment – state that “park reserves” are subject to an 80% - 20% formula. That is, “at least” 80% of the land is preserved to “protect the ecological functions of the native landscape”; and “up to” 20% is allocated for “compatible recreational activities.”

Specifically,

“... regional park implementing agencies are required to manage **at least 80%** of the park reserve as natural lands that **protect the ecological functions** of the native landscape. [Page 14; emphasis added.]

“To establish and maintain an **uncompromised** sense of nature and protect high-quality natural resources, **at least 80%** of each park reserve should be managed as wild lands that **protect the ecological functions** of the native landscape. **Up to** 20% of a park reserve **may** be developed for **compatible recreational activities.**” [Page 45; emphasis added.]

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.” Often times, these trails are constructed in close proximity to each other, diminishing the quietude of each recreational user.

Moreover, “park reserves” are very susceptible to political pressure by organized recreation groups, who demand that their hobby be allowed in the park. For example, “single track” mountain bike trails fragment natural habitat, damaging its “ecological function.” Furthermore, these “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.

Horse riders have enjoyed special privileges for many years, with fly-infested horse manure lying along trails – land mines for unwary walkers.

The “wants” never cease; they only increase with each new hobby invention.

And the “Recreation-Industrial Complex” is always poised for a new capital project – or as one of my clients bluntly stated: “... another **wreck**-reaction ...”

All to Nature’s detriment ...

Specific Comments to Draft Regional Parks Policy Plan

Page 1, line 18:

Please specify what are the “... new demands stemming from demographic shifts ...”

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.

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 ...”

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?

Page 38:

“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.

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.)

Page 40:

Again, “regional parks” should be limited to 500 acres, not 1,000 acres.

Page 45:

Again, “park reserves” should be 500+ acres.

Page 81:

Again, “regional parks” should be limited to 500 acres, not 1,000 acres. “Park reserves” should be 500+ acres.

Pages 88-89:

“Bridging facilities” are vague statements of good intention. They could be a Trojan Horse for uses that are incompatible with nature-based recreation and protection of natural resources. This needs clarification. Not every activity, proposed for location in a natural area, is in fact a “nature-based” activity.

Nevertheless, SEA supports adequate funding of “bridging facilities” from other sources where “bridging facilities” are located outside the regional park system.

Page 92-93:

Currently, public engagement is deficient in the park planning process. SEA supports increased public engagement, including timely knowledge of proposals, access to information, including park master plans and the parks’ planning process. SEA recommends a central website that displays pending planning processes – and how to participate.

Page 93, lines 18-33:

SEA supports 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.

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."

SEA notes 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. SEA supports 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.

Page 95-96:

Again, SEA supports increased public engagement, including timely knowledge of proposals, access to information, including park master plans and the parks' planning process.

SEA recommends a central website that displays pending planning processes.

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 trails are good for access to and from the park - not through the park.

Mountain bike trails are not "equitable." They favor a limited age group, discourage multiple uses (e.g. walking; nature photography), and can trammel natural resources more than walkers.

Page 111, after line 39:

Please add another strategy: "System Protection – Strategy 7: Environmental Review." Again, the Regional Parks Policy Plan should require environmental review of certain proposed trails and other projects.

Minnesota Rule 4410.4600, Subpart 27, exempts from environmental review the project of "constructing or rehabilitating" a non-motorized trail in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Regional Park System. Again, SEA supports working with the Metropolitan Council and other interested parties to repeal the rule. In this way, the environmental impacts of mountain bike trails and other trails on Rusty Patched Bumble Bees – and other natural resources - can be better understood.

Page 113, after line 5:

Mountain Biking - was not a popular activity in the early 1970s, either inside or outside the Regional Park System. They are located in natural areas – and further fragment the habitat.

For example, Carver Park Reserve contains the "Monarch Singletrack Trail", a 10-mile single-use mountain bike trail, through a vast area of intact "Big Woods" and prairie habitat, that once contained only one hiking trail. Unfortunately, horses are also allowed in this area. (See [attached Exhibit 1.](#))

Mountain bike trails have also fragmented habitat in Elm Creek Park Reserve – 12.7 miles (**Exhibit 2**); Lake Rebecca Park Reserve – 13.25 miles (**Exhibit 3**); and Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve - 10 miles (**Exhibit 4**).

Horses should be removed from the park system. Horses are incompatible with protecting the “ecological function of the native landscape,” particularly when they are located in “park reserves” - areas receiving the highest level of natural resources protection. They deposit manure, with no requirements to pick up and remove the manure. (Unlike dog owners who pick up and deposit pet waste in appropriate containers.) Horse manure can also spread exotic species. Horses churn up trails, making them muddy and difficult to walk on. (Crow Hassan Park Reserve is a glaring example of horse damage.)

Fishing, where allowed, should be conditioned upon the use of non-toxic tackle.

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.

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. Off-leash dogs disturb wildlife, damage habitat, and increase conflict with other park guests. (Dogs are also imperiled when they encounter wild animals.) Off-leash dogs should not be allowed in the Regional Park System. Off-leash dogs fail the criteria stated on page 112:

1. “avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects”
2. “compatible with other uses and activities, minimizing user conflicts”
3. “conserve, enhance, and/or restore the natural-resource base”
4. “remove ... safety concerns”

Page 115, lines 18-19:

The Regional Parks Policy Plan should be amended to clarify the meaning of the following language: “Regional park implementing agencies may participate in siting an off-road vehicle use area.” ORVs should **not** be allowed in the Regional Park System.

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.

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?

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.

Page 117, lines 29-30:

Please note the Plan states, “Study findings revealed the **most preferred** outdoor recreational activities included **walking**, picnicking or barbecuing, and playground use.” Understandably, mountain bikes, horses, and snowmobiling are not mentioned.

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.

Page 134, lines 9-10:

SEA strongly agrees that the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund money should be used for acquisition only – and **not** used for “development, redevelopment, or restoration.”

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.”

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.”

Page 149:

SEA generally supports recreational water trails, but is concerned about the environmental impacts on the shoreland areas from camping and overuse. The Plan should contain a provision for environmental review.

Summary

The current Regional Parks Policy Plan – and draft amendment – state that “park reserves” are subject to an 80% - 20% formula. That is, “at least” 80% of the land is preserved to “protect the ecological functions of the native landscape; and “up to” 20% is allocated for “compatible recreational activities.” This ratio is **not** honored. Instead, multiple, incompatible uses litter the natural landscape of the park reserves and other park units.

It is important to note that SEA is not against park development. For example, SEA is on record supporting development of a bison range in Spring Lake Park Reserve, as part of the Minnesota Bison Conservation Herd. (This assumes there are no genetically detectable cattle

genes in the herd.) SEA also supports one contiguous range, to allow more natural conditions, as opposed to 3 separate paddocks. It is laudable that 150 acres of native prairie will be restored.

Most important, the Regional Parks Policy Plan does not answer the question: What are the limits to “development” within any unit of the regional park system?

Requests for Action

SEA respectfully submits the following requests to the Metropolitan Council:

1. Please acknowledge your agreement with Vice-President Al Gore’s statement that “Rescue of the environment [is] the central organizing principle for civilization.”
2. Institute a moratorium, to be included in the Regional Parks Policy Plan, on building any new trails until their environmental impacts are determined.
3. Work with interested parties to repeal the trail exemption from environmental review under the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act.
4. Add language in the Plan to remove the incompatible uses and protect the natural resources of the Regional Park System as much as possible.
5. Address the questions and comments in this letter, specific to the draft amendment to the Regional Parks Policy Plan.
6. Expand the scope of the subject matter for public comment to the draft amendment to the Regional Parks Policy Plan. Please include the topics stated in this letter and, more broadly, invite public comments to these questions:
 - a. What does a natural resource-based regional park system look like?
 - b. What are the limits to development in all units of the regional park system?
7. Publish notice that the comment period has been extended for 120 days to allow the public opportunity to fully engage in this process.

On behalf of SEA, I **thank you** in advance for your kind consideration and reply.

Sincerely yours,



Thomas E. Casey

TEC/tc

Metropolitan Council
October 30, 2020

cc: SEA

Charles Zelle – Met. Council Chair – via e-mail: charles.Zelle@metc.state.mn.us

Christopher Ferguson – Met. Council Rep, District 3 – via e-mail:

christopher.ferguson@metc.state.mn.us

Robert Moeller, MOSC Representative, District B – via e-mail: bob@moeller.us.com

Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Metropolitan Council Liaison to MOSC – via e-mail:

lynnea.ai@metc.state.mn.us

Emmett Mullin, Met. Council staff – via e-mail: Emmett.Mullin@metc.state.mn.us
file

Exhibit 1: Carver Park Reserve - Monarch Singletrack Trail

Exhibit 2: Elm Creek Park Reserve - Singletrack Trail

Exhibit 3: Lake Rebecca Park Reserve – Singletrack Trail

Exhibit 4: Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve – Singletrack Trail



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tpl.org

Metropolitan Council
Public Information
390 Robert St N
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Updates to the Regional Parks Policy Plan

To Whom It May Concern,

Our amazing park systems make the Twin Cities a safer, healthier, and more vibrant place to live. The link between access to parks and open space and economic, health, and climate outcomes, to name a few, is undeniable. Our parks have always been cherished by us in the Twin Cities, but as the pandemic has proven, having a close-to-home park is critical in maintaining physical and mental health.

The Trust for Public Land applauds the Metropolitan Council for supporting and fostering a strong regional park system, and we are encouraged by the Council's efforts to address the health, climate, and equity issues we face, the latter of which deserves our utmost attention, action, and commitment.

We support the Metropolitan Council's efforts to expand the park system; connect parks and trails to places of employment, learning, and home; integrate the parks and trails system with the broader transportation network; and to offer amenities, programs, and park spaces that meet the unique needs, preferences, and priorities across race, ethnicity, age, ability, income, and national origin.

The Trust for Public Land encourages the Metropolitan Council to geographically and programmatically balance its offerings in urban, suburban, exurban, and rural areas. As



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our region and its population expand, we need to continue investments towards efforts to preserve unique natural areas before those opportunities are lost permanently to development. And at the same time, we must provide new, unique, and culturally-relevant spaces within developed areas. We understand the Metropolitan Council and regional park implementing agencies face limited budgets and as such we offer our assistance in efforts to expand conservation and park development funding sources.

In that vein, The Trust for Public Land supports the additional language and emphasis on exploring bridging facility opportunities within the first ring suburbs. As first ring suburbs diversify, evolve, and urbanize, our region needs to place an emphasis on providing regional amenities for these communities. That being said, 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.

Which, in that regard, 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.

While there are many great park and trail proposals and search areas, we do want to specifically call out our support for the Midtown Greenway Extension and closing gaps in the grand rounds systems. These projects will provide critical links around and between the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.



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In regard to parks and trails, we encourage the Metropolitan Council to consider efforts to improve user experience and quality. Many parks and trails can be exposed to the elements and air and noise pollution sources, especially highways. As our climate changes, urban heat will become an increasing threat to our communities. 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.

Finally, we encourage the Metropolitan Council to consider its role in building connections, reducing barriers, and convening stakeholders across disciplines and differences. We know that our park systems do not operate within a vacuum. And we are increasingly aware, often due to painful experiences, that not all of our parks are safe and welcoming to everyone. Systemic racism and prejudice have plagued our region and our park systems - our regional culture can be unwelcoming to newcomers and those seen by some as different; policing whether by official systems or overzealous members of our community can make our communities of color, low-income, and LGBT communities feel unsafe; the impacts of a vast undersupply of affordable housing and shifting housing patterns can lead to green gentrification and displacement and people experiencing homelessness with nowhere to go but parks; epidemics of loneliness, obesity, and other diseases threaten our mental and physical health; and the impacts of climate change and urban heat island threaten the health, safety, and vitality of our most vulnerable and historically marginalized communities. No one organization or individual will be able to solve these systemic breakdowns. We encourage the Metropolitan Council to continue on 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 providing the opportunity to comment on the regional parks plan update. We look forward to partnering with the Metropolitan Council on implementing the plan



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and advancing efforts to ensure everyone in our region has a high-quality park close to home.

Best,

Eric Weiss, AICP
Community Powered Parks Program Director
The Trust for Public Land - Minnesota/Northwoods

From: Caito Bowles-Roth >
Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 7:59 AM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Support for Midtown Greenway Extension

Dear Met Council,

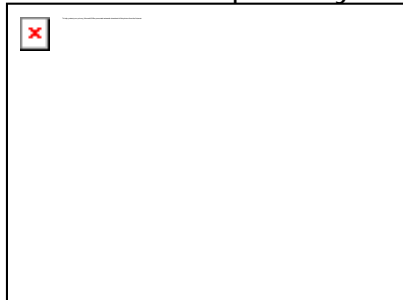
I am writing to voice my support to add the Midtown Greenway Extension in St. Paul to the proposed 2040 plan Regional Parks Policy Plan.

Kindly,

Caito Bowles-Roth

--

Caito Bowles-Roth
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Twin Cities Adaptive Cycling



<https://www.tcacycling.org>

Twin Cities Community Agricultural Land Trust
Cadieux, Valentine
10/30/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Community food has a place in parks! Food can play an important part to help us heal our relationships with the land and each other. This is not what the parks of 50 years ago thought -- and there's *still* a strong tendency to imagine that everyone who wants a garden has a backyard, and to think that anyone who picks an apple might break the tree -- but I want us to imagine community gardens and farms and food forests that can feed the four leggeds and wingeds AND US: raspberry picking along with little league, community orchards where people can fill their hands and pockets and stock up for the winter, incubator farms and community kitchens for passing on everybody's food cultures. The parks programming (like at the urban learning farm on the west side of Mpls, at Theo Wirth?) could focus so much more on the community food infrastructure!

Urban Farm and Garden Alliance
Dodge, Diane
10/29/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would include places where people could grow food! In the greater metropolitan area, as it continues to grow more urbanized and the population becomes denser, municipalities still have a tendency to think that active gardening is a "backyard" thing. Increasingly, people simply do not have yards, and zoning has not caught up to equitable land use for either gardening or urban agriculture. It is time to get creative and in addition to "restoring" historical land patterns and sports uses, put some of our parkland into sustainably shared and managed gardening areas.



October 7, 2020

Hello Council Members,

We, the interns of Urban Roots are writing to comment on the park plan update and how it impacts our lives. For over 50 years Urban Roots has been providing programming in the areas of architecture, urban planning, economic and organizational development—with a common thread of empowerment, engagement and innovation. Since 1996 we have operated food and environmental programs on the East Side of Saint Paul. These programs engage thousands of youth in education, training, and work projects that provide service to the community, develop young leaders and improve health and the environment. Our activities directly benefit from a robust and representative park system. We are writing to ensure parks become places that are representative of the entire history of the region as well as inviting to all people to enjoy learning about that history. We also want to emphasize the need for parks to provide the opportunity for learning about our natural environment and allow us to exercise and use these spaces safely for recreational purposes.

Considering history:

Parks are more impactful when they provide a bigger history. For example, Bruce Vento Nature Refuge has burial grounds and a cave with history. Having something to learn about the land you are visiting is important. Telling histories is meaningful. Then, when visitors come, they know what land they're standing on, what it means to stand there, and who is connected to the land. When we visit a park, we want to know about all the events that happened there and how the land has changed. For example, Trout Brook used to be a place for trains and trash. People came together to make it better. It's important whose history is told. The histories need to be more inclusive, not just one group. It's neat to know these things. For example, Swede Hollow could have more recent history about who lives there, not only the Swedes. We want to know also what the Ojibwe use the Mississippi for. Can parks include more than one history?

Inclusivity

Everybody should be included in parks and be consulted. When a park or trail is put in, people who live in the neighborhood around the park should be included in the process, but we also want environmental experts to be included. Climate change and the need to mitigate its effects is very important to us and our future.

Affordable access is important for families. If the park is free, they're more likely to go and be comfortable. 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 choose at the time. 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. We can't afford to go if it's even \$2 or \$3. At this point, it's a time when we're coming out of kid stage, and we pay for our own stuff. Free parks have given us the chance to make memories that will stick with us the rest of our lives.

Parks can be more inclusive and show us we're welcome by going beyond history to making connections between different groups and the parks. For example, Hmong people do not have a history with the Mississippi River, but the Mississippi River park can integrate our histories. The river park could have



signs about how rivers are important to Hmong people and the people of Minnesota in similar ways. This is a bridge to our understanding of the Mississippi River. History can find the commonality to connect people to places.

We agree with our team member who said, "My people never had a place to call home. When parks have signs and things that connect to me, I can know that this place belongs to me, that I have a place here."

Lastly, we would like to know how we can be a part of the parks going forward? We are trained in ecology and sustainability and many other subject areas pertaining to these park spaces. We would like to offer our help in providing services in the future. We are trained to teach other youth about native plants, pollution, trees and habitat restoration. Do not hesitate to call on us in the future to help spread the word about any subject we can in partnership with the parks. It would be an honor to know that our hard work had contributed to the lasting future of the entire park system through service.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our thoughts on the future of our parks. We appreciate the thoughtful process you have put forth for planning our future. We look forward to engaging with you more in the future. If you have any questions for the youth of Urban Roots or would like to continue the conversation about our concerns please feel free to contact us at:

Urban Roots

463 Maria Ave #207

St Paul, MN 55106

(651) 228-7073

info@urbanrootsmn.org

Respectfully Submitted,

Urban Roots Interns

Chemery

[Signature]
Pachrada Vao

Regional Parks Policy Plan Comment

Video

Name: Gustavo Ibarra (Urban Roots)

Date: 2020-09-30

Address: 1611 Iowa Ave, St Paul, MN 55106

Age: 17

Message Summary: Use Bruce Vento Regional Trail often. Like that it connects to favorite parks, including local parks like Harvest Park where I work for Urban Roots. Can use the trails to do everything from shopping to swimming at Phalen Regional Park. Can connect to lots of places in my community using the Regional Trails System. It's very fun to see all those different places using the trails system as I'm biking more.

Original Message:  [Gustavo Park Connect.mp4](#)

Wild Ones Prairie Edge Chapter
Torkelson, Marilynn
10/30/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes I support adding parks to the Regional Parks System because outdoor enjoyment is so vital to our physical and mental well being, preserves green space to counteract global climate change and provides habitat for the creatures we share the planet with. I prefer dirt hiking trails, as they are least intrusive to wildlife and provide the best immersive experience for enjoying nature and de-stressing from modern life. I do not like sharing these dirt trails with mountain bikers as they ride very fast with little concern for pedestrian and wildlife safety.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I visit my local Riley Creek Woods Conservation Area. I've visited Carver Park Reserve several times this spring and it was fairly crowded. I also did not like that so much of it is overrun with invasive buckthorn. I also visited the Louisville Swamp Unit of the Minnesota River Valley National Wildlife Refuge many times this fall and was surprised to see how busy it was on fall weekends, in spite of the hunting season!

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A place to enjoy nature that is filled with native plants and native birds bees butterflies etc... Invasive plants would be removed. There would be bathrooms with composting toilets and water to wash your hands. There would be occasional programs on nature appreciation to educate the public and increase appreciation of the natural world. There would be some wheelchair accessible trails and dirt paths, possibly a few picnic tables. I do not see the need for playground equipment. This would be a place for children to play in prairie or woodland.

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

YES I support telling a more inclusive history of Tribal Nations and their use/stewardship of the land.

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes, I believe caring for and protecting natural spaces are critical to our survival. I don't quite understand why we've allowed invasive species to invade our parks. I spend many hours pulling garlic mustard in the spring and cut & treat buckthorn in the fall. I think we need to encourage more volunteerism, employ seasonal workers, and/or use prison labor to combat this threat. If goats have been successful in invasive control, employ them as well, which would help restore the health of the soil too. I think we need to ensure that our parks are connected so that there are wildlife and plant life corridors. I think we need to ensure a healthy tree canopy replanting if needed with species that will survive in our changing climate.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes I support unique approaches to welcome new park users as long as that does not mean increasing hardships and ruining the immersive nature experience. How can we value, want to preserve a place if we don't experience the awe of a wildlife sighting or the beauty of nature?

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

I love to be on and in the water. Paddling a kayak or canoe are favorite activities for spring, summer and fall. I love swimming in the summer. I paddle about 100+ miles every year on rivers such as the Cannon and St. Croix. When water levels allow I've paddled the Minnehaha Creek as well. So, yes I think I support parks with water trails but I'm not sure what that means exactly. Would it mean digging canals to connect bodies of water that are not currently connected (and were never historically connected) or just making equipment available for people to rent and paddle existing lakes? I would have to know more about the environmental impact.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

If would mean we would halt or at least slow the insect apocalypse. People would see and appreciate our pollinators, dragonflies and other beneficial insects. Integrated pest management in the form of bats eating the mosquitoes. It would mean fewer people density so you would sometimes get a glimpse of wildlife before the people ahead of you on the trail scared them off. It would mean having a place to get away from street noise and hear a healthy population of birds instead. I would love to see well maintained bird(songbirds and owls) as well as bat houses to help them survive their loss of habitat. I would love to see tree snags left as homes for mushrooms, birds, insects and microbes.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

If you are welcoming people of all ethnicity, I would make fishing available. I would make ensure the water is clean enough and well stocked so fish are plentiful and healthy for consumption.

Women Observing Wildlife MN
Zimmer, Catherine
10/29/2020

6. Which option would you like to respond to? *

- Option 1. Answer one question for your dream about the parks and trails system.
- Option 2. Answer the stories and themes questions, which have four primary categories.
- Option 3. Pick a plan section and provide a comment.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

One that is a true Natur - , where the natural resource base is respected, treasured, supported and restored rather than constantly trammelled by trails and construction.

Comments from residents

The Council received 148 comment submittals on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* from 145 residents of the region (two comments had multiple submissions). Thirty of these comment submittals were emails, 114 were surveys, one video, and three voicemails.

- Ackos, David
- Aichinger, Cliff
- Albaugh, Jannina
- Amundson, Cortney
- Anderson, Mishael
- Anondson, Eric
- Anonymous
- Anstedt, Bill
- Ashley, Kelly
- Bancroft, Kara
- Barten, Joe
- Bartyzal, Tony
- Beaudette, Jennifer
- Beckius, Erica
- Belter, Brenda
- Bissonnette, Raymond
- Bohn, Chad
- Brever, Eric
- Brown, Katie
- Bryan, Raymond
- Burroughs, Stefany
- Cecere, Dominic
- Chatfield, Andrea
- Cirillo, Ryan
- Croatt, DeAnn
- Deihl, Kiffin
- Dimond, Tom (3 comment submittals)
- Dohlman, Crystal
- Duklet, Claire
- Dunn, Susan
- Eller, Brad
- England, JJ
- Fahey, Leigha
- Fors, Marie
- Frykman, Angie
- Frykman, Paul
- Gammon, Lisa
- Garretson, Lisa
- Gasterland, Hans
- Gjerdingen, Steve
- Gjerdr, Angie
- Goldade, Maggie
- Goodman, Mark
- Gould, Sam
- Gregorie, Shirley
- Griffith, Rachel
- Gunvalson, Samuel
- Guttman, Jim
- Hackett, Maureen
- Hallet, Christine
- Hammer, Tina
- Hankerson, Stephanie
- Hanson-Busch, Mary
- Harris, Cecily
- Hartmann, Sandra
- Hegland, Dustin
- Heinen, Natile
- Helgestad, Pauline
- Holets, Katie
- Huber, Michael
- Illies, Dana
- Jabas, Lindsay
- Jansen, Andrew
- Jaspersen, Emily
- Jelen, Dave
- Jennifer
- Jirik, Katie
- Johnson, Andrew
- Johnson, Bryan
- Julie
- Kiley, Emma
- Klimp, Mary (2 comment submittals)
- Knuteson, Steve
- Kottke, Thomas
- Kreutzian, Lexi
- Kuechle, Lynne
- Labelle, Stephanie
- Lee, Brooke
- Lee, Greg
- Leigha, Fahey
- Leiter, Bethany
- Lexa, Caroline
- Mackenthun, Jackie
- Maruska, JoAnne
- McNamara, Marianne
- Melby, Jason
- Meyer, Suzanne
- Moore, Gordy
- Moore, Jen
- Murphree, Jennifer
- Nasty, Donna
- Novak, Heather
- Novotny, Lora
- O'Connor, Patrick
- Olson, Allison
- Ouradnik, Louise
- Paulson, Emily
- Peck, Claude
- Prochaska, Nick
- Prokopec, Marcia
- Proulx, Mike
- Rameyb, Brett
- Raymond, Michael
- Risse, Michael
- Roepke, Dan
- Rogers, Mary
- Ruhland, Jan
- Rusciano, Mark
- Ryburn, Becca
- Ryburn, James
- Ryburn, Julianna
- Sample, Bonnie
- Sanz, Tina
- Schoenecker, Jolene
- Schoenecker, Sandra
- Schroeder, Jennifer
- Schwartz, Philip
- Seifert, Rebbecca
- Seru, Emily
- Shaffer, Aaron
- Shirley Schulz
- Shoemaker, Tara

- Slater, Karen (2 comment submittals)
- Springer, Tim
- Tang, Brian
- Tarwuita
- Thielbar, Amber
- Thompson, Pat
- Tietz, Pam

- Timmerman, Shanna
- Tovo, Aaron
- Tupy, Sue
- Ulschmid, Emily
- Van Wylen, Nathan
- Vanderpoel, Jane
- VanderSchaaf, Mark
- Wagner, Jamie

- Washa, Vicky
- Wilson, Vita
- Winter, Tyler
- Wlizlo, Will
- Wong, Crystal
- Ykema, Gretchen
- Zweber, Sara
- Jansen, Jean

From: David Ackos <>

Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 12:26 AM

To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: Comment on 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

I am writing to ask you to please add the Midtown Greenway Extension to St. Paul into your parks plan. We already have exceptional bike infrastructure for the US, but with the right investments, we will have world class bike infrastructure and people's lives will be bettered in all kinds of ways. Please add the Midtown Greenway Extension to St. Paul to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan!

Thank you so much,
David Ackos

--

David Lauer Ackos

They/them, He/him

davidackos@gmail.com | +1 612-361-7338

Caution! This email was sent from an external source. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Aichinger, Cliff

10/30/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

We need to strive for equitable access to parks and trails for all metro residents.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I prefer parks that are primarily natural systems.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

More natural not manicured. Very little mowed grass, but this must vary depending on location and population served.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

The true historical picture of our area needs to be told. Much of our history has been withheld or miss told in the past. There is no reason in modern society to withhold information or misrepresent our past.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Storyboard displays and kiosks could be provided as well as QR codes and links to information on the web.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

History of who occupied or managed the land prior to modern, non native settlement.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Current area residents, local government reps, college history academics and students, Native American communities and organizations.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Of course.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

This would be a great way to provide new exploration opportunities for residents with little or no prior experience with water craft and provide a new perspective for users. This should also be accompanied by boat rentals or guided trips.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

As few restrictions and financial barriers as possible

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

New opportunities to explore new environments and natural experiences.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Definitely. Parks and open spaces provide opportunities to relax and unwind and exercise.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love the trail system to make its way out to Cedar farm park! I often use the trails and am rather bored and they just don't connect enough and aren't long enough for some solid exercise! Many would appreciate the trails being extended!

Amundson, Cortney
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

In natural spaces and connected to larger parks and natural spaces.

Anderson, Mishael
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I live on the East side of Cedar Lake. 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. There are a lot of runners, bikers and walkers on major highways around this area that are at risk because there is not a safe place to exercise and enjoy the outdoors. This would be a great quality of life improvement for all to enjoy safely.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. I live in a first ring suburb. Currently there are no regional parks among the Hennepin County first ring suburbs, I must travel to second ring suburbs or into Minneapolis. The Regional Parks System needs to have a contingency for acquiring closing golf courses in first ring suburbs so as to create regional parks in the first ring suburbs. Maybe even when municipalities need to close down a golf course because of low usage, that that land be considered for acquisition for conversion into a regional park. Meadowbrook Golf Course would be a nice example because of Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's existing greenway creation adjacent to Meadowbrook.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I use each of the major trails radiating in/out of Hopkins. I have often bike commuted the North Cedar Lake trail to Downtown Minneapolis, the roughness of the Minneapolis Parks section makes biking on my commuting eBike a regrettable ride every time. I regularly biked the Cedar Lake Trail into Saint Louis Park for errands. I regularly bike the Lake Minnetonka trail for recreation. I tried the Nine Mile Creek trail, but until the tunnel under 169 is open I will not try it again. I would love a boardwalk connection from the Nine Mile Creek trail north over Nine Mile Creek to the apartment and townhomes along Lincoln Drive.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

My dream is that where trails and roads intersect, that the trail crossing meets modern design best seen in Netherlands and Copenhagen. World Class means imitate Netherlands and Copenhagen. That is, the trail crossing is what road engineers sometimes called a tabled crossing, where the road rises to trail/sidewalk level, instead of trails dumping trail users into the gutter. A trail/road intersection should not treat trail users as inconveniencing after thoughts. Even better would be to solve the crossing altogether with a tunnel under the road.

11. Would you like to respond to another topic area? (You cannot select a section you already responded to.)

- Yes- Reconsidering history (4 short questions)
- Yes- Equitable access (3 short questions)
- Yes- Environment, Climate, and the Parks (2 short questions)
- No

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

12. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes. Hard to say no to such a question.

further and further away, accessible only by cars or extended hours long bike trips by the fit. Yards are not open space nor parks.

17. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Adding high quality land includes making it accessible to be appreciated. Adding high quality land means upgrading medium and low quality land. Adding high quality land means making sure roads are kept as narrow as possible and don't fatten out and swallow up land just because the road engineers are checking boxes on their lists.

18. Would you like to respond to another topic area? (You cannot select a section you already responded to.)

- Yes- Adding parks or trails (3 short questions)
- Yes- Reconsidering history (4 short questions)
- Yes- Equitable access (3 short questions)
- No

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

19. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

It means acknowledging that this land was not uninhabited before settlers from Europe showed up. It means acknowledging that "wilderness" was actually managed landscape by the Dakota peoples, that many forests only happened because Europeans changed the land.

13. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Absolutely. I hope someday that the Minnehaha Creek has an accessible canoe rental. The biggest drawback is coordinating picking up the canoe when you are done. If a "water trail" on a creek that includes a designated destination where you can drop your canoe and go, I would LOVE IT.

14. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

One where savvy users are not given favoritism

15. Would you like to respond to another topic area? (You cannot select a section you already responded to.)

- Yes- Adding parks or trails (3 short questions)
- Yes- Reconsidering history (4 short questions)
- Yes- Environment, Climate, and the Parks (2 short questions)
- No

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change — keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

16. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. With the Met Council of the past allowing nearby agricultural land to be swallowed up and converted into tract development in rings instead of spurs, large amounts open space has gotten

20. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Acknowledge that most parks are just one moment in time when we decided these areas were "wilderness".

21. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

That parks are manufactured, that people before us were using and managing the land.

22. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Acknowledging much of the forests in the regional parks happened because European-descended people made them happen. That we would have more "open space" if yards in second and third ring suburbs were not so big. That new refugee residents in the state have barriers in accessing the regional parks being added on the periphery. That people who were here before European settlers have barriers accessing the land that used to be theirs.

From: [William Anstedt](#)
To: [PublicInfo](#)
Subject: Public skateparks in regional parks
Date: Friday, October 23, 2020 2:12:35 PM

Good afternoon Met council,

I hope this email finds you all well. This email is in reference to the draft amendment to provide funding and infrastructure for skateparks in regional parks. Oftentimes skateparks are not seen as regional draws. I would say that assumption is incorrect. Often times well done skateparks can draw users to park that they may not have thought to go to. Many skateboarders and bmx'ers enjoy the outdoors very much we like to hike and camp and even fish. And even if we don't we have family members who do enjoy those activities. Providing space for skateparks allows families for all members to enjoy outdoor spaces.

Also utilizing the terrain and natural infrastructure to be incorporated into skatepark design creates interesting and unique features that are not found in city parks. Which gives park users unique objects to use and utilize.

So I ask you consider voting in favor of including the funding for the inclusion of skateparks in your funding.

Regards,

Bill Anstedt

Bill Anstedt

612-991-1426

Sent from my mobile device. Please excuse any spelling or grammatical errors.

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Ashley, Kelly
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be great to have trails to all the local parks in the area. Our town promotes healthy living and we need to provide options for biking and this has been a conversation for many years. I used to be on the Community Education Advisory Council and this was a request from our group. We have nice trails in town, and this would be great to add on for some out of town options.

Regional Parks Policy Plan Comment

Voicemail

Name: Anonymous (Resident)

Date: 2020-09-23

Message Summary: Broad appreciation for Lake Minnewashta Regional Park, Carver County. Particularly the lawns, beach, trails, and spacious and clean restroom facilities. It is a gem. It's one of the reasons I am moving to this area next year.

Original Message: [09-23 Voicemail](#)

Ashley, Kelly
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be great to have trails to all the local parks in the area. Our town promotes healthy living and we need to provide options for biking and this has been a conversation for many years. I used to be on the Community Education Advisory Council and this was a request from our group. We have nice trails in town, and this would be great to add on for some out of town options.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Better connections and accessibility for all. For example, Meadowbrook (now ERA) Apartments has long been right on the edge of an amazing trail, but has not had access to the trail. Re-look at older suburban neighborhoods and determine where "cut throughs" can be made to connect neighborhoods and create safe ways for people to bike/walk without having to access the main roads. Look at ways to build trail connections and bike ways to serve as "highways" for bike commuters. For example, Excelsior Blvd. in Minnetonka would be a great "bike freeway" that would connect people in the western suburbs to the two trails that meet in Hopkins and the future light rail train station. Seek local input for what people already using the roads, trails, etc. in different areas want. Find ways to seek input that are specific to what works in different communities. For example, the west metro online surveys often are easily accessible but attending community meetings/gatherings and having conversations might be a better way to access community voice in less affluent areas.

Barten, Joe
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

In table 3-11 of the draft plan, I wholeheartedly support a trail from Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague. I am a member of the New Prague Park Board and the Board has expressed support for this project. I think Cedar Lake Farm park is a very valuable regional amenity and it makes sense to connect that to the very nearby urban area of New Prague. This is the closest urban area to the park and there are currently no safe routes to the park aside from driving.

Bartyzal, Tony
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Complete paved walking trails at Cedar Lake Regional Park and connect to New Prague. Also a swing set for children would be great.

Beaudetter, Jennifer
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Yes expand trails to cedar lake farms

Beckius, Erica
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be great to have a connection from Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague.

Belter, Brenda
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Something for any age and or disability

Bissonnette, Raymond
10/29/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

While I do support protecting natural areas for wildlife, which we need, 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. 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.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I go to several regional parks and trails in the east Metro. I go for frequent walks at Pine Point and Sunfish Lake, and enjoy walking and skiing at O'Brien and Afton State Parks, and Lake Elmo Park. I also bike and rollerblade the Gateway Trail and Brown's Creek Trails.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

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.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Yes. It's good to know why and how parklands have been set aside, as well as historical uses of lands.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

An acknowledgement means to me that the story of who and how lands came to be donated, or otherwise deemed important to be protected.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Not sure what this means.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, I do, because I am an avid paddler, both of canoes and kayaks.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

A system that is easy to access, and which provides a variety of activities, including habitat and protection for wildlife

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes! Our current parks are being loved to death through multi-use activities.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Adding more high quality land (like the TCAAP lands) provide more recreational opportunities, which reducing pressures on existing parks and trails.

Bissonnette, Raymond
10/29/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

While I do support protecting natural areas for wildlife, which we need, 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. 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.

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12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

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An acknowledgement means to me that the story of who and how lands came to be donated, or otherwise deemed important to be protected.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Not sure what this means.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, I do, because I am an avid paddler, both of canoes and kayaks.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

A system that is easy to access, and which provides a variety of activities, including habitat and protection for wildlife

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes! Our current parks are being loved to death through multi-use activities.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Adding more high quality land (like the TCAAP lands) provide more recreational opportunities, which reducing pressures on existing parks and trails.

Bohn, Chad
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Connected walking/biking path from New Prague to Cedar Lake

Breuer, Eric
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Love the idea of connecting the City of New Prague to the Cedar Lake Farm trail. Would greatly enhance the area for outdoor recreation-- I know for certain I would take my young kids to the lake a lot more if I didn't need to get in a car to get there.

Brown, Katie
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Large paved patches with several path options.

Burroughs, Stefany
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Having a trail connecting New Prague to the Cedar Lake Farm would be amazing! My son loves to bike, and I have always been a runner and biker. This would give us the opportunity to safely bike to the farm and enjoy our days there. Ideally, I would love a trail system similar to that of the red/yellow jacket trail system in Mankato.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Some. It would be nice to have historical postings in the areas describing local history as there is so much in river valley area. Before the last farm is gone would be fabulous to be able to tour it and would be willing to pay the family for access.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Not at this time. There are not enough funds for existing parks and trails to be maintained. We have many parks and trails. With increases use in recent months it seemed the current parks and trails were enough for everyone. Most important is to end the plan to put asphalt trail in river valley as this area floods so much and this will increase with climate change. Asphalt washing into this eco system is a terrible plan.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

As I live in Bloomington and knowing there is a lot of history in river valley area it would be nice to have guided hikes with history as I know there are a few people in the area that know so much. Not just short walks by refuge but from refuge area to cedar bridge and from cedar bridge to Lyndale. Etc. There is a 100+ year old horse barn in hillside just west of garden center. Hard to see until winter but would be fun to hike in with owners permission of course. My personal history and culture are not relevant. Prefer to know more about local history where I've lived for over 60 years.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Minnesota river valley by cedar bridge which is already accessible for everyone. Moir park and trail to Minnesota river - also accessible for all. Hyland Park and Richardson Trails - also accessible to all. Bass Lake Ponds. Also accessible but would be better if you posted and allowed handicap parking in lower lot.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Just knowledge of local history is fine. We all know original inhabitants in 1800s were Indians but no one ever talks about the earlier Indians in the area from nearly 1000 years ago. Only found out about this when archeological digs occurred in cedar bridge parking area before it was repaved.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Well pretty much the local Indian tribes as most recent population came mostly in mid 1800s and were Europeans and Canadians.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Just as it is but actually maintained. Perhaps some security cameras as security seems to be a recent need and important.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

The smartest way is to be having school kids field trips and even on a monthly basis to see and experience all the local parks and trails. If they learn about them as youth they are more likely to continue as adults. Have weekend family events. And have adult and senior events that are events that they design vs being planned by parks people.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Minimally. This is a more expensive endeavor and challenges but a trial site perhaps.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Well maintained, security, and uncrowded spaces.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Stop clearing so many trees for trails. Trail from Lyndale eastward was so horrifying to see how much they cleared. I will do everything I can to fight this ever continuing and happening again.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Funds for this are not likely going to be available for a while. Maintain what we have and stop trying to create more than can ever be maintained.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be a respite from our busy, urban lives that are increasingly spent at home. There would be significant connectability between the regional parks, allowing the Twin Cities to be explored by foot, bike, or cross country ski. It would not be necessary to drive to a park, but rather they would be in close proximity to everyone. I would hope that the Regional Parks System would show off what is unique about Minnesota-- our industrial heritage, our natural environment, and the people who have and continue to occupy this land. I would like environmental justice for those living in North Minneapolis-- they need green and blue spaces and connectivity to the Mississippi riverfront in order to boost the quality of life on the North side.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A trail that would accommodate bikes, ebikes, walkers, runners, skateboarders, so we can safely get more exercise while appreciating nature. Our roads are not safe for pedestrians.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Connect New Prague to Cedar Lake Farms Regional Park which would then connect to Spring Lake Regional Park.

From: Cecere, Dominic <> **Sent:** Thursday, October 15, 2020 3:36 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Greenway extension

I fully support the Greenway extension into St.Paul !

Dominic Cecere

Sent from my iPad
Dominic J. Cecere
Partner

STINSON LLP
50 South Sixth Street, Suite 2600
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Direct: 612.335.7005 \ Mobile:
612.709.7009 \ <https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.stinson.com%2Fpeople-DominicCecere&data=04%7C01%7Cpublic.info%40metc.state.mn.us%7Ca5a3736214b64c6d27f508d87149f151%7Cddbf68b482a457381e0fef8156a4fd0%7C0%7C1%7C637383909692563832%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6k1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C2000&data=THfPXhYDteTqDzhx5%2FZyOWIf%2BSQ0dxgYzfbI2U8UytM%3D&reserved=0>

Assistant: Nancy Sirany \ 612.335.7008 \ <mailto:nancy.sirany@stinson.com>

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.stinson.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cpublic.info%40metc.state.mn.us%7Ca5a3736214b64c6d27f508d87149f151%7Cddbf68b482a457381e0fef8156a4fd0%7C0%7C1%7C637383909692563832%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6k1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C2000&data=8EKwSNikrKx0nXnencAU6GZYWI%2BUJ47apgyclihDLps%3D&reserved=0>

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From: TOM DIMOND <>
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2020 8:03 PM
To: Mullin, Emmett <Emmett.Mullin@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Input for the Community Development Committee on Monday

Emmett,

Thanks for getting back to me. My wife had to go into the hospital last week and I am going to be at the VA Medical Center for much of tomorrow. We will both be fine, it just means I am slow to return your call. In the mean time the issue below is coming before the Community Development Committee. 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. Not only was there no public engagement, the public was denied the ability to participate in the development of the plan. I hope to be able to participate tomorrow. If I can not make it, please consider this my testimony.

Thank you,

Tom Dimond

Tom Dimond
219 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119

Metropolitan Council
Community Development Committee

RE: 2020-262 Draft Amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

I hope to participate in the October 19, 2020 public hearing. If unable, please consider this as my testimony.

I would like to commend you and encourage your approval of Chapter 5 recommendations that ensure broad public engagement and public participation. I also strongly support language to provide accountability that these policies are implemented. When it comes to ensuring broad public engagement and participation in the development of a Regional Park Master Plan or Plan Amendment, the Metropolitan Council has the ability to ensure public participation. It is essential that all of the public are valued participants throughout the planning process. It is also essential that there be accountability to hold people accountable that this is actually happening.

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 after all the options have been decided, design work is done, and agencies have signed off.

I previously submitted testimony about a real-life example of park planning that ignored Met Council public engagement and participation policies. I requested on multiple occasions to participate and was told the public could not participate in the planning. They insisted it was an agency only process. I asked to at least receive meeting minutes so I could follow what was being considered. I was told the public could not see any information until they had completed their plan.

The Met Council Park Planning Policy calls for public engagement and participation process to engage the public **in the development** of the master plan amendment. The public engagement process must seek to mitigate existing racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic barriers and include people of diverse ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, national origins, and abilities. How is this possible when the public is not allowed in the room?

I strongly support the recommended changes to more fully include the public in park planning. Ultimately, it is up to the Met Council to ensure that plans do not move forward without the public engagement and participation you call for in the Park Planning Policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

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From: TOM DIMOND <
Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2020 8:34 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Support for more inclusive planning process

Tom Dimond
219 Skyway Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55119
Metropolitan Council

Community Development Committee

RE: 2020-262 Draft Amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

I hope to participate in the October 19, 2020 public hearing. If unable, please consider this as my testimony. I would like to commend you and encourage your approval of Chapter 5 recommendations that ensure broad public engagement and public participation. I also strongly support language to provide accountability that these policies are implemented. When it comes to ensuring broad public engagement and participation in the development of a Regional Park Master Plan or Plan Amendment, the Metropolitan Council has the ability to ensure public participation. It is essential that all of the public are valued participants throughout the planning process. It is also essential that there be accountability to hold people accountable that this is actually happening.

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 after all the options have been decided, design work is done, and agencies have signed off. I previously submitted testimony about a real-life example of park planning that ignored Met Council public engagement and participation policies. I requested on multiple occasions to participate and was told the public could not participate in the planning. They insisted it was an agency only process. I asked to at least receive meeting minutes so I could follow what was being considered. I was told the public could not see any information until they had completed their plan.

The Met Council Park Planning Policy calls for public engagement and participation process to engage the public **in the development** of the master plan amendment. The public engagement process must seek to mitigate existing racial, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic barriers and include people of diverse ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, national origins, and abilities. How is this possible when the public is not allowed in the room?

I strongly support the recommended changes to more fully include the public in park planning. Ultimately, it is up to the Met Council to ensure that plans do not move forward without the public engagement and participation you call for in the Park Planning Policy.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

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From: TOM DIMOND <
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 6:40 AM
To: Mullin, Emmett
Subject: Park Planning Engagement and Participation

Emmett,

Chapter 5 amendment. When it comes to those that should be included, in park planning engagement and participation, the list should include Veterans. Sorry I failed to include this. As a Veteran and one who volunteers to help fellow Veterans and advocate for care the parks system has special meaning to many Veterans. 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 also benefit others. If you would mention Veterans as a consideration to the Committee it would be greatly appreciated.

Tom Dimond

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Dohlman, Crystal
10/14/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes, they provide ways for families to get outside, enjoy the outdoors and provide physical activities.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Any- walking /biking paths, parks for kids, water activities, splash pad, etc

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Lots of paths, play park, splash pad, older/teenage area

Duklet, Claire
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love to see more nature trails throughout the city and out in the country. We live off of country road 28 and would use these regularly if they were an option! A bike trail would also be wonderful!

Regional Parks Policy Plan Comment

Voicemail

Name: Susan Dunn (Resident)

Date: 2020-10-12

Phone Number: 651-777-0197

Message Summary: Opposition to Regional Trail connecting Phalen Regional Park and Lake Elmo Park Reserve.

Original Message: This is Susan Dunn (651-777-0197), it is October 12th 2020, I read the newspaper article in St Paul Press about connecting trail to Lake Elmo park reserve. I am 80 years old and was involved extensively when the park reserve was developed, and this was never to be connected to these other areas. There are lots of issues in other sections of our communities. It would be wrong to put a trail that connects Phalen to the Regional Park reserve. I am opposed to that proposition. Someone can call me if they desire. I would appreciate you putting my comments in: No to connecting Lake Elmo Park Reserve with the inner city, it's supposed to be only 20% developed.

Eller, Brad
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Please connect new Prague to cedar lake farm regional park. I was on a committee when that park was being developed and the plan had a trail connection to town. Still waiting. 2040 is way too late. I originally thought my kids could benefit from this and this timeline pushes it past their youth years. This is a project that should be done now! Give kids a chance to ride their bikes to the lake...fish, hike trails, recreate! Time is wasting

Fahey, Leigha
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

To connect the parks by trails

Fors, Marie
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Sidewalks! We have so many kids out by cedar lake and if there was a trail system to get into town, more kids could ride their bikes into school. A trail system from cedar lake into town is very much needed

Frykman, Angie
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Adding a path from New Prague to cedar lake park. I feel this path not only would be used on a regular basis but also keep residents safe. People already use the highways as a form of exercise. Which can be very dangerous. Please consider adding this path from New Prague to cedar lake park.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Adding parks and trails increases access to public land for others to enjoy. This allows many to be able to hike and bike to see the lakes, streams, and rolling hills that made this area highly sought after to settle in. Being on the south side of the region there is little opportunity to bike from my community and get into a trail. This would be a great opportunity for someone from New Prague to bike to Cedar Lake Farms then make their way to Cleary Lake and beyond. This increases physical activity, family time and lifelong bonds of friendship with others and nature.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

The parks used are Cleary Lake, Cedar Lake Farms, and Carver Park Reserve. We do not use trails very much because we must drive to a park and then unload everything (kids, bikes, packs). We enjoy hiking the trails at each park, having picnics, and swimming at the beach. We really wish that there was more opportunity to bike to various parks from our home in New Prague. It is dangerous biking on the highway to get to the nearest park.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Trails connecting all the parks and future parks. Living in the south end of the region in New Prague really is a disadvantage as there are no trails connecting the city to a park that then has access to the vast network of trails. This vast network of trails can get you to many different parks in a single day/weekend. My dream is that the Regional Parks Policy Plan would expand that network of trails to reach more parks and cities (like New Prague) in the south. I hope that they would be planned routes not trail search routes at this point.

Gammon, Lisa
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I vote to have trails from new prague to cedarake farms

From: Lisa Garretson
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 8:05 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Please extend the Greenway to St. Paul!

Hello - I am writing in support of extending the greenway from Minneapolis to St. Paul. As a resident of the Longfellow neighborhood, I am a heavy user of the trail to reach the western part of Minneapolis, but I am forced to use alternate trails or surface streets when going east.

Extending the Greenway to St. Paul would effectively double the occasions I would be able to use the trail and make bicycle commuting an even safer option for trips I make around the city.

Thanks,
Lisa Garretson

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Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I dream of extensions of all the bike paths to form a complete network. Especially extending Midtown Greenway over the railroad bridge into Saint Paul and beyond. Providing more bike infrastructure will encourage more people to interact with each other to build community, give people a greater sense of connection with the environment and the city, and encourage healthy exercise. All goals shared with Parks.

From: Steve Gjerdingen <>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 9:02 AM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: "Comment on Draft Amendment to 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan"

Dear Met Council,

I heard about 2 recently mentioned "search areas" in your Regional Parks Policy Plan development: the Midtown Greenway Extension and the Ford Spur Trail. I've been following the conversation about the Midtown Greenway extension for years, ever since I discovered the Greenway (back in 2007). I am excited of the prospect of connecting St. Paul to this system and highly encourage the further study of how to make this happen. I also heard about the Ford Spur Trail as a possible rails to trails conversion. I also think that would be worth exploring given the opportunities in regards to connecting the new Ford development with West 7th.

--Steve Gjerdingen

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Gjerdr, Angie
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

I support trails extending on the side of roadways but not through people's private property.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Cedar lake farms. Pic IV, swim, fish, bike, walk

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Safe well maintained trails that connect but don't take away land from private landowners.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Don't take away/use private landowners property.

Goldade, Maggie
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

More trails around New Prague would be great, especially for biking!

Goodman, Mark
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Would like a trail from Cedar Lake Farm to New Prague

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

What we've long known, and what Covid has made abundantly clear, is that food insecurity is shocking prevalent in America. Minneapolis, with our vast parks system, has the unique opportunity to reimagine urbanites connection to wildness, agriculture, and common space by allowing for significant sections of our parks to be available for managed and unmanaged food growth. Locally managed urban farms, orchards, berry patches, and other crops available for humans and animals alike. I live two blocks from Powderhorn Park. It is a refuge. But often, as I walk through this wonderful space I wonder to myself why we insist on so much needless cultivation and management. Keeping the grass mown, so much open space, constant maintenance. To what end? As this summers encampments have shown us, there are many residents in our city that do without. There are countless more residents, unseen, who experience hunger or, due to lack of fresh food close at hand, eat good that does no service to them. Allowing space in Powderhorn, for instance, for community agriculture would create community cohesion, space to gather with shared purpose, and fresh food for those who like to grow it as well as those who desperately need it. I highly recommend that our parks rethink themselves, away from their 19th century aims towards something more wild, more abundant, more cooperative in values.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Economically affordable from a fees standpoint. Very considerate of any tax impact passed on to the citizens- COVID times are rough and taxes are already high in MN. Regional system connects to other systems via bike trails. Features for a wide variety of interests- biking, picnicking, hiking, — not as much emphasis on other items that are available through other access points (sports fields, etc)

I use biking trails and connected parks extensively. Visit in spring, summer, fall

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I think the focus should be on the outdoors... not a bunch of buildings and exhibits about historical stuff. There are lots of sources of historical information that has that as their main focus. Avoid that... just focus on outdoor activities. No monuments, plaques all that stuff. Nature is good enough.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Yes- with fiscal considerations.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

No. It would mean to me that you will spend money re-naming everything, promoting the re-naming, putting up information kiosks, ... nope. If you want to publish that info in the paper- no prob. Spend the money on stuff people will use in an outdoor activity. Focus on health and nature and green space.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

As noted in #10 I don't support regional parks becoming history centers or cultural center. For me (and my tax money) I believe their focus should be healthy living, the gift of nature and green space. Leave history and culture to the historians and sociologist through some media work you want to roll out.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

No one really owns the land or has owned the land. The land is it's own self. People, cultures, politics, countries come and go. Different groups may occupy and use it for a bit.. but the land belongs to the land. Just celebrate the land.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

I assume in this political culture you are looking for various representative groups. You will look for gender, race, ethnicity. Making sure you have all your political bases covered. Who do I really think should be included in this work- people that care about the land for the land's sake. Thinking about how us humans can engage with the land. In a way that is respectful and not harmful. Not people that are there just to root for for their own team.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

I don't know what your question means. It feels like code words. If you mean a "water trail" I think that is a great idea.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Sure. Why? Because water is the same as dirt.. it is the face of the land. As long as we are respectful of the land- that is the determiner. So- that would mean- no to speed boats (noise pollution- upsetting the environment- not respectful). Yes to canoes, kayaks- no motors.. quiet.. respectful.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Easily accessible, well maintained, accommodations for folks with disabilities and our senior citizens, a key focus on conservation and the environment- very green.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. Why? — nature talks to the human soul. it calls to our roots. It helps us be calmer.. kinder.. and more thoughtful.

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

Seems like a weird question.. why wouldn't you care for the environment? Money? I put environment over capitalism.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Land that is useable in a way that connects people to the land ... a gravel pit is not it.

Griffith, Rachel
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would be thrilled to see more trails within New Prague. There is such beautiful nature around here, but as someone who recently moved to town, it has been frustrating not finding an hiking or walking trails

Gunvalson, Samuel
10/16/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

There would be mountain biking trails everywhere!!! The parks I see with the most people are those with mountain biking trails. Everyone coming together on their bikes and having a fantastic time out in nature. More trees, more animals, more fun! Great for getting family exercise, learn new skills, and a reason to explore the different parks.

Hallet, Christine
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

The trail system in New Prague is great but they aren't all connected so they are not long enough. I'd love to have a trail that connects New a Prague to Cedar Lake

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I use most of the trails in New Prague. I like to ride bikes with my son.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Cedar Lake connect to New Prague

From: Tina H. >
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 7:03 AM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Bike Trails

Hello,

I'm submitting comments on the bike trails project I read about in the Pioneer Press on 10-11-20. I'm in favor of these Twin Cities projects, particularly the Midtown Greenway extension and the extension of bike trails to the Washington County parks. I'm also in favor of using taxpayer dollars to maintain existing bike trails, for instance, the Gateway Trail which at times has needed resurfacing. The more that cyclists can be provided safe pathways within the city and from the city to scenic suburban areas, the better.

Thank you,

Tina Hammer
St. Paul Resident

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Hankerson, Stephanie

10/30/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes! especially between municipalities.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

trails along the Mississippi Park, Trail at Bruce Vento Walk dog, enjoy nature, get sunlight.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

One that is accessible to all residents. Includes food growing within its boundaries: community plots, edible trees & shrubs, naturalized medicinal plants that are allowed to be foraged.

Yes I support renaming, daylighting overlooked history, offer interpretive experiences that demonstrate missing history.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

My culture is dominant culture and is way over represented.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Replacing non-offensive names, taking down statues that celebrate conquerors, Posting land acknowledgement, normalizing acknowledgement at events.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Tribal nations.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes. Parks need to be there for all.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Employees that are representative of the cultures using the parks.

Removing invasive plants and insect impacted plants. Adding plants that will be tolerant to climate change, esp trees and shrubs. Limiting mowed areas, convert much grass to bee lawns. Eliminating herbicides and pesticides to extremely rare use. Converting parking lots with stormwater catchment BMP. Add solar to buildings and parking structures. Convert R.O.W plantings are diverse mix of native plants. Add charging stations to parking areas. Add high density of urban food growing options such as community plots, food producing trees/shrubs and establishing medicinal plant patches for foraging.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes, tending the greenspaces is important so they are thriving and can best operate to share, clean air and absorb run-off.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Hanson-Busch, Mary
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Open paved trails alongside or coinciding with roads for maximum safety and visibility of bikers or walkers. Trails must be 6 feet wide or more and allow no motorized vehicles and animals must be leashed.

Harris, Cecily
10/01/2020

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- | |
|-----------------------------|
| Regional Water Trail Policy |
|-----------------------------|

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

When developing this policy consider that all lakes and all rivers may not be suitable. And seriously discuss whether it serves no motorized hand carried boats such as kayak, canoe, sail boat, dragon boat, paddle board, windsurfer, etc. Consider what amenities are helpful for water trail sites. i.e. parking, picnic table, restroom, boat wash, trash can, launch this is not a concrete ramp. It is natural soil or a low freeboard pier. Signage is very important too. Any users should know local rules/regulations, DNR or Coast Guard rules but also how far to stay away from threatened/endangered wildlife or migrating waterfowl to not impact them further. Maps are also crucial so people know the distance between launches and what amenities are available and what is any amenities are fully accessible.

Hartmann, Sandra
08/27/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A priority for a park system is that it be consistently maintained othing new should be built unless there is the capacity to keep it maintained.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Easy to access and use. Well maintained and lit.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

only if by adding we don't inhibit our ability to maintain what we currently have.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

I think it is important to acknowledge the past and how we ended up where we are. Not sure what "land acknowledgement" is. Why don't you state what you really mean by this.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Bike, walk, play golf and tennis. Attend concerts. Meet up with family and friends. Walk and play with the dog.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Nothing

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Have to know what it is to answer this.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

I support the general idea but of course it depends on what is specifically meant. Also why just new park users?

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Sure, we have excellent water resources and should support their enjoyment by more than just the residents living on them

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Safe, accessible, diverse users

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

I don't support it if existing and new areas cannot be consistently maintained.

Hegland, Dustin
09/24/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would like to see more Disc Golf courses, skate parks and off road mountain bike courses. A paved bike trail along hwy 95, hey 97, country rd 4 and manning connecting all the parks in the area would also be nice.

Helgestad, Pauline
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Would love to see a bike trail from Cedar Lake to New Prague.

Holets, Katie
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love to see either a paved or mowed path from town to Cedar Lake Farm. The trail system around the farm is great and I love how it wraps around the surrounding neighborhoods. If we could find a means to connect that to town it would be a wonderful asset to our current park system.

Huber, Michael
08/27/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Preserving existing resources, and adding additional natural areas and trails to preserve and/or expand the ratio of forested space and wetlands to developed parcels. These values are important at the neighborhood and regional level.

Miesville Ravine, Whiterail Woods, and LeBaron Hills in Dakota Co. The UMN Landscape Arboretum. Various parks in Eagan, MN. Carlos Avery on the north side of the region. MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge (from Jordan to MSP). The Superior Hiking Trail on the North Shore. The Mississippi River valley ... from Itasca to Houston County. Nature Conservancy properties in NW MN. Activities = birding, hiking, fishing, photography, reflection.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

More of what we've got. Preserve the existing, and allow it to expand in scale.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Yes.

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

I support this effort. I've a handful of Native American & African American colleagues and friends, and acknowledgement of their respective heritages (including past exploitations) warrants exploration with them.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

As a Caucasian of European descent (with a measurable bit of Neanderthal), I think question 10 above deserves more attention.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

It would (I hope) be a sign of recognition and respect and contrition regarding the racist, acquisitive legacy of European intrusion and exploitation within the last few centuries of the United States.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Material input from Native American and African American communities ... and input from newer immigrants to MN whose vitality and current contributions to U.S. energy and prosperity also deserve acknowledgment.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

In principle, yes. The devil will be in the details. Striking the balance between natural preservation and facilitating broader accessibility is a significant challenge that'll take time and thoughtful reflection to parse out.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes ... though perhaps with limits on traffic volumes on said water trails.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

A network of woods and waters across the region-as-a-whole. I tend to emphasize the importance of natural preservation and environmental sustainability ... but greater accessibility to a greater percentage of our regional population needs to be a consideration.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Emphatically, yes. Failure to preserve (and expand upon) natural resources accessible to metro inhabitants will make our communities less attractive and less sustainable. Our descendants need this.

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

See above.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Progress with respect to what really matters over time.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be nice to have continued trails for biking/running/walking. Many of these activities need to be done on streets & county roads as there are no continuous trails in our city. It would be beneficial for the person doing these activities as well as those who drive on the roads to minimize the danger to both parties. Many other cities have these paths in their communities. Personally if I didn't already live in this area it would be a deciding factor in moving here. Many times I have driven to areas with paths like these so I can have the safety of the path for a longer run/bike/walk.

Jabas, Lindsay
10/14/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes! More expansion means ability for longer training and exercise opportunities on safe, designated paths. Also adding the ability to bike to the beach for swimming instead of driving from town.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Cleary Lake regional park. We walk the paths, climb trees, play on playground, bike

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Trails all connect and loop for continuous laps.

From: Andrew Jansen <
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 5:36 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Support for Greenway Extension & Witches Tower View, Food Forests, Native Use & More

Hello Met Council,

I'm just putting in my 2 cents on your proposals! I really like the idea of extending the Greenway to St Paul. Our bike trails are already fantastic but that would be really great. Streetcar on the greenway makes sense to me too.

I'd like to see the Witches Tower in Prospect Park opened year round. It really is one of the most amazing views in town and could be similar to a Coit Tower in San Francisco.

Equitability is also important ~ I think a Food Forests makes a lot of sense for that... opening it up for people too can give that food to people.. allow people to become stewards of the land or the park. Especially allowing native people to use the land as well for food. These are important things!

Anyways just a few ideas.

thank you,

Andrew

612-298-1284

--

Andrew Jansen

Loud Sun // [facebook](#) / [soundcloud](#) / [tumblr](#)

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From: JEAN JANSEN <> **Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 9:19 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Park Proposals

1

I support investment to our parks and trails as these are truly an amenities in our neighborhood. I live on the East Side of Saint Paul and with closure of parks in the area, i.e. Prosperity Playground and Park community center, young people need a place to hang out for good clean fun and activities. My kids played baseball and softball for years at this park and I was sad to see the closure. My kids would gather for free lunch at this park during the summer months and I felt safe for them to do so.

However, more urgently need right now is the homeless encampment near Lake Phalen Park. This is adding safety and security concerns for those walking or running the lake. What can be done about this to stop further decline housing prices and safety and security for kids who visit the park or live in the surrounding area.

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2

Jasperson, Emily
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

We would love a path from new prague to cedar lake farms!

Jelen, Dave
09/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Be completely connected via regional trails. Lots of reserves/natural space to explore and get immersed in.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Natural and accessible via connected trails, not car dependent.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Sure, but not my primary concern.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Natural restoration and reserves

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Natural restoration and reserves

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Yes, more trails to make these accessible without having to drive!

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Ramsey county. Walk, hike, bike. Also includes mountain biking

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Sure. These more people using these the better these case to keep, maintain our grow them

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. Teaches stewardship and responsibility. Civic pride. Climate change. Once these areas are developed they are likely gone for good.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, would love to have this more accessible

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Would rather focus on connecting what we have.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Connected! Connected means accessible.

21. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Other

22. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The goal to connect these parks Visa trail is great. Would like more clarity on how the back and forth works with local cities and counties to work together to achieve this.

Jennifer
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would be great to be more connected via walking or biking to parks close to New Prague. I'm not talking about the small neighborhood parks with play grounds for children. We need water, paths, trees and wild life in our parks.

Jirik, Katie
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Paved/trails to train for marathons that are well lit and safe

From: bryanjohnson4 <>
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 1:04 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Parks Expansion

It is my understanding that the land near my home in Scott County has been purchased for a park. I reside at 22787 Valley Forge Road in Cedar Lake Township. If the land was purchased with plans to build a large park I just wanted to Express my overwhelming support for this. We need more large parks to recreate. I would love to see a park in the area.

Thanks

Bryan Johnson
22787 Valley Forge Road
Cedar Lake Township
952-221-127

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

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From: Andrew Johnson <
Sent: Friday, October 16, 2020 11:41 AM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: 2040 REGIONAL PARKS POLICY PLAN

More off-street bicycle trails and paths, please! There are not enough, particularly outside of Minneapolis. We would also like to see the Midtown Greenway extended over the river into St Paul.

Thanks,

~ Andrew & Sara Johnson

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Julie
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Lot of connecting trails

Kiley, Emma
10/30/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I want an abundance of edible foods for humans and animals! Apple trees, raspberries, etc.

Klimp, Mary 2
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

The best plan will include new and connecting trails in the south metro.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

The dream Regional Parks System would include connecting trails capitalizing on our beautiful scenery.

Knuteson, Steve
09/27/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

More natural spaces. No pesticides or fertilizers.

From: Thomas Kottke <Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 4:42 PM

To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: Extending the Midtown Greenway into St. Paul

I just learned that extending the Midtown Greenway into St. Paul is part of the 2040 Regional Plan. This is great news because physical activity is critical for both physical and mental health. Giving people increased opportunity to bike, walk or run recreationally or as they commute to work will pay for itself many times over through the reduction of diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, anxiety and depression. I would be happy to provide supportive evidence either in person or in text.

Best wishes,

Thomas E. Kottke, MD, MSPH
Medical Director, Well-being
HealthPartners

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Kreutzian, Lexi
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would like more walking and hiking trails around New Prague! With scenic views! Preferably not just walking through rows of houses.

Kuechle, Lynne
10/27/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A lot like what we have, only more so. Having at least one accessible to people no matter where they live, with hiking and biking paths, possibly kayaking/canoeing, and some dog parks. Nature. Vadais/Snail, for example, is lovely.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

We love the Gateway trail, mostly for biking but occasionally for walking. We kayaked at Rice Creek for the first time this summer. I also became acquainted with the beautiful trails and scenery at Vadnais/Snail Lake Regional Park. I'm only sad that it took me so long to realize what lovely parks we have so close to home. I always thought "regional parks" meant a picnic table by a lake. I enjoy hiking, biking, and photography. We have rollerbladed in the past but not recently, although I'd like to do it again.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I answered that already.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Yes. COVID-19 has brought greater use of the parks, and I would hope/think that will continue even after the pandemic. I love bike trails because they are so much safer than riding on streets and even sidewalks. Having to cross streets is particularly worrisome for bikers. More and more news articles are talking about the benefits of "nature bathing." People need access to the outdoors in all seasons.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Well, you could have historical markers about things like Native Americans, people of color, women, etc., if important things happened at the site of the parks. You of course want to be inclusive/accessible to all. Yes I would support it.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

I'm white and I think I'm probably over represented.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Noting where the land came from--was it hunting grounds of a Native American tribe? Burial grounds? Were there original settlements there? Also tell me what grows there and why.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

See above. I must say I don't know a lot about this topic.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

I guess? I'm not sure what this refers to, but I think you want to welcome as many park users as possible (within the constraints of what a park can handle--I don't want them overcrowded). But nature is good for all.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

ABSOLUTELY. This summer people haven't been able to find kayaks in stock. They are definitely interested. We kayaked in Rice Park and on the St. Croix this summer and both were lovely and peaceful. Water sports are especially nice for people who might have some mobility problems (arthritis in the lower extremities, sprains or breaks that make walking/biking difficult.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Bathrooms that aren't gender-specific. Acknowledgment of communities that lived there before. Accessibility even to people who live in the city.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change -- keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes, for the reasons above. Environmental concerns are one of my highest priorities. Open space is limited and we need to save it now while we can.

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

Open space is limited and we need to preserve it. Exposure to nature is good for people and for animals. I want safe habitats for people, domestic pets, and wildlife.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

I'd be proud to live in Minnesota, and I'd be excited to explore new areas.

Labelle, Stephanie
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love to see a paved trail from New Prague to cedar lake park. Cedar lake park has such great trails for a small park and to be able to bike or run there on a safe paved trail would bring even more visitors.

Lee, Brooke
10/01/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I have always taken advantage of the Twin Cities regional park system. They are places to explore, to see Nature (somewhat) preserved in the midst of our neighboring cities, and general places of respite and rejuvenation. This Summer and Fall, however, have been different. Many of our Parks and Trails have become the homes for the unsheltered. They have been littered in garbage, and in some, with drug paraphenalia and human feces. Many of our Parks, to include the one in front of my home, are no longer the playgrounds for children on Summer vacation nor a green space to enjoy fresh air and a stroll. Some of these spaces are no longer safe, nor do they hold the peace that they once did. My dream is for the Twin Cities to reclaim these green spaces, and to restore care and order to the people and to the activities that occur there. My dream is for tranquility, respect and trust to be restored to our Parks and our Trails.

Lee, Greg
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Would love to see a trail connecting New Prague to Cedar Lake. I currently drive at least 25 minutes out of town to bike on other park paths because New Prague does not have any. I would use this almost daily.

Leiter, Bethany
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Would love to see more easy connect walking trails and also perhaps disc golf.

Lexa, Caroline
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I would love to see the trails around Cedar Lake connect to New Prague!

Mackenthun, Jackie
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Yes to a trail between new prague and cedar lake. Also, are there plans for more sidewalks? Particularly 1st Ave which is busy and sidewalk does not go all the way and CR 29 since its dangerous and so many use it as a loop. 1st Ave needs to be redone. I trip on road chunks breaking apart on walks. Thanks for consideration

Maruska, JoAnne
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I saw a preliminary plan for a trail connecting New Prague to Cedar Lake Regional Farm and want you to know that I am against it. It runs through private property that people invested in for the privacy of living out in the country. If a public bike trail runs through, it would take away that privacy.

McNamara, Marianne
09/25/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Because I use a walker to get around, I have some very specific needs that would affect my dream. NO STEPS would be key. I'd need real sidewalks to maneuver. I'd need benches provided for resting. Shorter trails would be more doable. Enough handicap parking, close to the trails/sidewalks, is very important. And of course a well- maintained handicap rest room. I'm a big fan of native plants. I'd love to walk near water (lake, pond, stream, river). Mile markers, or 1/4, 1/2 mile markers would be nice so you'd have an idea of how far you were walking. Even the addition of small fountains would add charm & interest. Disabled people need to feel a sense of independence, so simple is better. Walking in nature provides calm & peace, if you can get around! A lot of people walk at the malls for exercise, but walking in the outdoors is so much better, if it's set up right. ❤️

Melby, Jason
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

It would be amazing if New Prague trail system connected to Cedar Lake farm.

Meyer, Suzanna
10/19/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love to see a bike/walking path from New Prague to Cedar Lake Farms Park.

From: Gordy Moore <>
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2020 4:16 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Draft Amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to register my strong support for the inclusion of the Midtown Greenway Extension in the Draft Amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. The Greenway is already a vital, incredibly useful piece of transportation infrastructure for residents of Minneapolis and other cities in the metro area. Extending the Greenway over the Mississippi River and to/through St. Paul would provide a phenomenal, safe, and efficient bicycle and pedestrian connection between the two cities.

With the Greenway extending into St. Paul and potentially all the way down the Ayd Mill corridor and eventually to downtown St. Paul, bicyclists and pedestrians would have a truly world-class connection for both recreation and commuting; the extension would tie together downtown St. Paul and the regional trails that converge near there to the far western reaches of Minneapolis near Bde Maka Ska and the other regional trails that come together there. Extending the Greenway is truly a special, generational opportunity to better utilize underused infrastructure (rail bridge over Mississippi and right-of-way in Ayd Mill corridor) to create a seamless bike highway for the benefit of all residents in the Twin Cities and metro region.

Thank you for your vital work at our regional government agency!

Sincerely,
Gordy H. Moore

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Moore, Jen
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. Getting out to be in nature is spiritually grounding.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I usually drive to get to a good bike system. I've tried a lot of different ones in Rochester, Hastings, and Avon to make a few. Having a nice trail nearer would be awesome.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Miles of paved trails. However I enjoying hiking also but I don't think the terrain would appeal to me (not hilly enough for hikes I like).

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

I love learning. I think you're talking about things a person could stop and read along the route. That would be interesting.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

I'd love to learn how my ancestors used the land in the area. That would be neat.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Letting me know who owns the property?

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Not sure

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Not sure what you mean here.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

That would be interesting. I had never thought of anything like that. It sounds like something I'd like to try.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

One that many people would enjoy utilizing.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

I don't understand.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Like helping to take care of landscaping? Or letting things grow naturally? I'm not sure about the question.

Murphree, Jennifer
10/14/2020

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Unsure what these questions are referencing?

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. To increase accessibility and have a safe method to reach town without having to drive. The county roads are not safe to run/walk along.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Cedar Farm Park near my home - I love to walk the trails and enjoy the lake.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would like to be able to get from Cedar Lake/Cedar Farm Park to the downtown New Prague area via trails. My family members would use this for running, walking and biking to and from the lake to downtown.

Yes

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes. We have kayaks and would gladly take advantage of this resource.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Accessible, multi purpose

Regional Parks Policy Plan Comment

Voicemail

Name: Donna Nasty (Resident)

Date: 2020-10-16

Message Summary: Opposition to the Midtown Greenway extension and putting more money into bike trails. Desire to set priorities on supportive and affordable housing to help end homelessness.

Original Message: I am Donna Nasty, I live in Minneapolis about 3 blocks from the Midtown Greenway and was reading that the Midtown Greenway will be extended by the Met Council and extended to regional parks proposed for 2040. I got hopping mad when I read that. I am an avid bike rider, until this year, I'm 71, I would ride 100 miles a week. Now I'm down to 50-70 miles a week. I ride all over. I ride my bike to every place I need to go in town in the summer, fall, and spring. And I'm still made about this. The Met Council does not need to put any more money into bike trails, I cannot use the Greenway because it's full of tents where people are shooting up drugs and driving down the greenway making everything unsafe. It's become unusable. We need to set our priorities on housing, affordable and supportive housing for drug addicts and drunks. Get them out of those tents, off our city streets and greenways, that should be our focus. Almost like the coronavirus, we need to focus on this. Get rid of that and then our economy will be back. Get rid of homelessness and drug use and we will be able to ride our bikes again on the greenway and anyplace. Need to focus on housing, this should be a priority. Not making any more bike trails, and I'm a bike rider.

Novak, Heather
10/19/2020

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Having small permanent info about each place to read.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Not sure.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

That the land tells its history of owners and donation.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

whoever wants to be.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes, trails and parks are a key place for family and individuals to be healthy. It provides open areas to exercise, hang with family or relax on an afternoon. In addition trails are important for learning to ride bikes for young kids or staying safe for older people as they exercise.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

New Prague area trails, Cedar Lake Farm. Walk, bike, swim,

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would love to see trails that connect different towns with park systems. The more miles the better!

Yes, because everyone should be able to enjoy the outdoors

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, because the water is important to keep clean, but also enjoy a different perspective

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Being able to enjoy the outdoors, have trails that link places, have basic amenities like picnic tables, and bathrooms.

Positive for me. Even it is untouched for years, it is still important!

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

YES! who else will and if not, will our children understand how to steward for this land!

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Novotny, Lora
10/20/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Biking and walking trails connecting parks and towns

From: Carol Blackburn <>
Sent: Saturday, October 17, 2020 1:42 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Greenway extension

Please support the Greenway extension into St. Paul. Cycling will continue to be not only exercise for people, but a larger part of our transportation infrastructure. The extension of the Greenway into St. Paul will help to facilitate this growth and keep cyclists safe as well.

Thank you,

Patrick O'Connor

Sent from my iPad

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Olson, Allison
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

We would LOVE a trail connecting New Prague to Cedar Lake Park. Kids would be able to safely arrive with friends and spend the day. Adults could enjoy walks with friends that led to the park. It is ideal! Please, please consider this!

Ouradnik, Louise
10/25/2020

8. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Mn River Valley trail

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Please keep this trail natural and unpaved. The area floods every year and this allies a natural softer surface for hiking. There are very few places left in the metro tgat all natural hiking surfaces. I was seriously disabled in a car accident years ago and cannot walk far on paved trails due to the hard surface. These natural trails allow me to get out and hike in the woods. Previous attempts on another section to pave, has left that trail damaged each year by flooding and asphalt contamination of the river when this happens. It just doesn't make sense, and disrupts the natural ecosystem. Please do not pave this precious last remnant of a wildlife corridor. Thank you!

Option 2- Stories and themes questions

7. Which topic area would you like to respond to?

- Adding parks or trails (3 short questions)
- Reconsidering history (4 short questions)
- Equitable access (3 short questions)
- Environment, Climate, and the Parks (3 short questions)
- I would like to go through all the topic areas.

Yes. I run for fun, and I don't own a car, so having safe places to bike, walk, and run from place to place is important to my daily life.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Hiawatha LRT Trail, Midtown Greenway, Currie Park, Gold Medal Park, West River Parkway trails, Winchell Trail, East River Parkway trails, Lake Nokomis, Bde Maka Ska, Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles. I bike, run, and walk on these trails. I also play with my young nephew and family on the playgrounds, soccer fields, and parks.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

The trails would support being able to get from place to place without owning a car. They would have enough space to be safe for both bikers and those on foot. The trails would also be connected so you could go for a really long run or ride. Parks and trails would be clean and not have unsafe trash like glass or needles. Parks and trails would be by bodies of water when possible. Parks would have playgrounds and splash pads or pools.

From: Claude Peck <claudepeck@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 8:39 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Midtown Greenway extension

I strongly support extending the great Midtown Greenway bike path to St Paul over the railway bridge. Study is done, let's move to make this momentous move to promote biking, healthy exercise, green transportation and the beautiful Mississippi River.

Claude Peck
Minneapolis

Sent from my iPhone

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Prochaska, Nick
10/18/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I would love to see a trail that connects the city of New Prague to the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park!

Prokopec, Marcia
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Would love to see the trail system expanded especially out to cedar lake as well as hwy 29

Proulx, Mike
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I disagree with spending the money to have a path go from the city of new prague to the cedar lake farm park. That's a long walk and dont forsee a ton of repeat traffic going there to justify spending that kind of money on it. I also think that is very unfair to land owners who live in a rural area to avoid public things such as this. There are tons of bike paths around the cities. If someone moves out to a rural city like new Prague they should expect that there wont be as many bike paths as a suburb city. There are soo many other city improvements that could use this kind of funding.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Trails along Mississippi River- especially between downtown Minneapolis and Bdote (on the west bank), and downtown Minneapolis and Hidden Falls park (on the east bank)

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Option 2 – Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Yes. Engaging Tribes with present and/or historical presence in the region. Following 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.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

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).

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Operating from a baseline awareness that I am 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 then consider how to operate in a respectful way that doesn't minimize or erase those who came before, or relegate them to the past. It means considering, then acting on a responsibility to be a respectful contributor to the community/lands i'm part of.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

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

From: Gmail >

Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 4:46 PM

To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: Extend the greenway to Saint Paul!

Hello,

Please add the Saint Paul greenway to the 2040 city planning goals.

I am from Saint Paul and I recently moved to Minneapolis. I live on the midtown greenway and it has made biking so

1

much easier.

Biking in Saint Paul is good, but it lacks an epic bike path. Sure, there's river road, Bruce vento, and the gateway trail, but no routes through Mirraim park and grove land that connect the city. Adding the greenway in Saint Paul will bring bring Saint Paul up to Minneapolis' level of bike friendliness for generations to come.

Also, it will help fight climate change and make more people want to live in Saint Paul.

Michael Raymond

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Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

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providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, if coupled with initiatives to minimize potential adverse impacts to water quality and non-human habitat

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. Lands and waters have always been "managed" for their health and future longevity- both for human "benefit", as well as for their own right to existence.

19. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

It demonstrates an ethic that places health of human and non-human species at equal (or higher) value than other land-uses (e.g., commercial development, roads, etc.)

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Seeing a range of access opportunities, cultural accessibility, and forethought towards long term health of lands and water

Risse, Michael
08/28/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I would like to see more opportunities to cross country ski on manufactured snow. I'd like to see manufactured- snow expanded to the Northern Lights Trail at Elm Creek Park. I'd like to see increased opportunities for cross country skiing on natural snow, including expansion of cross country ski trails to the northern part of Elm Creek Park. I'd like to see increased bicycle trails linking park reserves, and perhaps ski trails, or multi-use trails that include skiing, paralleling some of those trails. Thanks for a great park system!

> On Aug 31, 2020, at 1:57 PM, PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us> wrote:

>

> Hi Don,

>

> Thanks for expressing your opinion about stewardship of public lands. I have forwarded your comment to Joe Unger (joe.unger@state.mn.us) at the Department of Natural Resources, the state agency in charge of this project. The Met Council is not involved.

>

> Regards,

>

> Jeanne

> Communications | Metropolitan Council

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Don Roepke <dr grouse@yahoo.com>

> Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2020 4:35 PM

> To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>

> Subject: Future plans for equitable access and use

>

> The DNR today sent out a solicitation for UP an organization looking to create more off highway motorcycle trails in northern and central Minnesota. How about this plan instead put the off highway motorcycle trails in th metro area. That way large sums of money would not need to be spent creating destructive, noisy trails in existing tracts of pristine Wild land. While money in metro area would not need to be spent trying to create the illusion of pristine wilderness. The off road motorcycle trails would Be easy to incorporate into the already noise and polluted areas of the metro. Toxic landfills would make excellent hills for climbing and moguls. Best part is the majority of the riders are from the metro area. This would reduce travel and allow for equitable access for those that cannot a Afford to travel out of metro area.

>

Rogers, Mary
10/30/2020

8. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes and I would also like to see land devoted to providing specific valued ecosystem services, including pollinator and beneficial insect habitat, food forests (fruit trees, nuts, berries), rain gardens, etc...

9. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Integration of plants and gardens beyond just shade trees and turf

Ruhland, Jan
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Need a trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake Farm!

Becca, Ryburn
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Having a path that connects the city of New Prague to the cedar lake farm trails

Ryburn, James
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A mix of easy and difficult trails

Ryburn, Julianna
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I love the idea of a trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake farm. It would be such an asset for New Prague!

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Every resident, especially kids, would have access to a 'natural' area where they could explore the diversity and beauty of, and be fascinated by, our Minnesota landscape. It is acknowledged that in an urban area, a 'natural' area must be cared for to prevent native plants being overtaken by invasive species and the destruction of the area by overpopulation of animals. It is also acknowledged that these places may not be accessible to everyone to enjoy, although paths indicated through the area would make sense, sometimes to protect other creatures/plants would make sense. The area would be managed for the health of the land - not managed for the convenience of people. This is a place where a person could get a sense of the connectedness to the earth and the creatures that live within it. I know this is a dream, but the closer we get to providing places for discovery of natural elements and processes, and the peace that comes from 'communing' with nature is missing in most places. These places are fast being diminished by the louder voices that want freedom to do what they please. When that happens, there is no place for people for whom quiet and peace is what they please. All places cannot be designed for all people. There must be a diversity of experiences in the outdoors - for everyone's health - and it is getting harder to do.

Sanz, Tina
09/22/2020

10. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

A welcoming Regional Parks System has a variety of programming and participants that reflect and serve more communities than the traditional parks system has. ***I would really encourage the Met Council to study the Hennepin County Green Partners Environmental Education Program, <https://www.hennepin.us/greenpartners>, a program that invites community members to submit ideas for environmental education to receive grants for use with that specific community.

11. Would you like to respond to another topic area? (You cannot select a section you already responded to.)

- Yes- Adding parks or trails (3 short questions)
- Yes- Reconsidering history (4 short questions)
- Yes- Environment, Climate, and the Parks (2 short questions)
- No

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

8. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes, I support "unique" approaches, although I would prefer the title be more reflective of what the nebulous term "Bridging Facility" does not, which, as I understand it, is to make the parks more INCLUSIVE of people who have traditionally not used the parks. How about the title "Inclusive facility?"

9. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, it sounds like a good way to draw people in. I would suggest partnering with a government organization that is already working on water safety for people who may not have had access to this type of facility previously (e.g. Hennepin County grants for swim lessons and water safety).

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

12. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

Yes, I very much support this effort.

13. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

As a person of the majority culture, I do not need further references on my history and culture. However, I would like to see a more inclusive history and culture made available at regional parks.

14. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Land acknowledgment means providing a context to the current users of what existed before the land's current use, using historic tools available and working in conjunction with affected peoples' groups.

15. Who do you think should be included in this work?

People from the groups left out of the mainstream historical context (e.g. Native Americans, African Americans, immigrants, other people of color). Historical partners Reference note: The MN DNR did a great job in this area with the Fort Snelling interpretive center at the State Park (it tells the story of the concentration camps which held Native American people there).

Schoenecker, Jolene
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A bike trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake regional park

Schoenecker, Sandra
10/16/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Would love a paved trail from New Prague to Cedar Lake Farms regional park.

Schroeder, Jennifer
10/15/2020

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. I already enjoy the trails and would like them to be extended for longer runs/hikes/bike rides.

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Cedar Lake Farm trail system. I usually run the paths when I'm alone but also use them for family bike rides.

12. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. I like untouched nature but understand that maintenance needs to occur to keep nature preserved while providing space for people to enjoy park spaces too.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I really like the farm's updates to the current paths- signage, better trail bed, clearing of brush to widen path. I would love for the trail to extend around the lake. If there was a path to connect the city to the farm that would be awesome too! We are runners/bikers in this family and it doesn't feel the safest to be out on 2-lane country roads.

13. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

Not sure. High quality might mean nicely groomed spots for people in the midst of "natural" spaces for trails...even roped off segments for nature where people should NOT go.

Schulz, Shirley
08/27/2020

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes, many residents including me, go on long walks/jogs for exercise. I like to go 5 miles and have to be on the shoulders of streets/roads which isn't very safe.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I have tried jogging on trails here in New Prague but there aren't any good trails, they end and you have to know what streets to continue on to find another trail. I end up a lot of time on roads with narrow shoulders and unsafe in traffic.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I don't have little children anymore but I'd like to see trails going in a and around parks, play areas for children, a trail between New Prague and Jordan and/or trail between New Prague and Montgomery, trail between New Prague and Heidelberg, 5-10 miles of trails would be nice.

From: Philip Schwartz <
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 8:39 AM
To: Lilligren, Robert; PublicInfo; Zelle, Charles
Subject: Support Skateparks!

Good morning,

I'd like to provide my support for including skateparks in regional parks. High quality skateparks definitely are a regional draw. Skaters travel quite far just to check out new places to skate, like my day trip from South Minneapolis to St. Cloud this summer to check out their new park, or the countless times I trekked all the way to Woodbury or Oakdale to skate their parks. Skateboarding can also be a nature based activity. While most of the skateboarding I do is in urban areas due to the types of terrain not found in nature, I have seen other states with skateparks in very natural areas that look like a great way for skateboarders like myself to enjoy the therapeutic effects spending time in nature can bring.

Skateboarding is an activity that reaches across ages and cultures. Please support skatepark planning and funding!

Thanks,

Philip Schwartz
Lyndale Neighborhood, Minneapolis

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Seifert, Rebecca
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I enjoy the idea of adding to the trails to connect the town to Cedar Lake Farm. I however have concerns of the possible pathway. From the sample shown it goes directly through my parents property and that is not something that we want. If you could somehow please direct the pathway along the roadside instead of going through private property that would be ideal. Please think of the homeowners and farmers first. This is their life, property and way of income not to mention their privacy (they live out there to be away from people in town and bike traffic). Adding a trail through it cuts out a sections of crops that could be planted, it will affect wildlife. We release Pheasants and a laying hens and this trail could disrupt their nesting ground and environment. It can also add to careless people littering and damaging property.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

All people would be able to walk or roll safely from where they live to a clean and safe green space. Residents and property owners would be given incentives to create climate friendly amenities and designs such as rain gardens, green roofs, and alternative energy captures. There would be safe travel connecting spaces between parks and natural areas for people and animals to move between them safely. There would be robust educational (youth and community) programming available in all neighborhoods- but with priority given to those neighborhoods that have been historically underserved and underfunded and with the least green space and access to park lands.

From: Aaron Shaffer <>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 3:21 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Midtown Greenway Extension

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing in support of the Midtown Greenway Extension being added to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. As someone who for several years commuted from south Minneapolis to St. Paul by bike, it was often treacherous and scary, especially in winter, to use painted bike lanes on major roads in St. Paul. By connecting the Greenway to St. Paul, you not only eliminate that, but add the ability for a growing winter biking culture to travel between the city's and support local shops, restaurants, and brewies.

Thank you and have a great day,

Aaron Shaffer
4331 Pleasant Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55409

Aaron Shaffer, (he/him/his)
Digital Communications & Social Media Associate
(direct)612-752-8591 (fax) 612-752-8001



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Shoemaker, Tara
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Good scenery, without obstacles,

From: Karen Slater <slaterkarenm@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 3:36 PM

To: Kelly, Colin <Colin.Kelly@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: Re: Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the draft Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment

Colin,

I appreciate your response back. As I mentioned in my comments I am 34 year resident of CIDNA and my husband and I have, and do use the parks extensively. Although biking has been problematic with the SWLRT and that is very disturbing, but we knew that when the Met Council pushed its agenda on the residents of Minneapolis and chose to destroy one of the most beautiful connecting trails to the city and outlying suburbs. And no, it will never be the same. Not ever.

Hopefully there is a consensus to be fiscally responsible for the Parks Plan as we have been hit hard with taxes for a lot of poor policy decisions made by the city. The parks are vital to the health of the city and keeping Cedar Lake a natural beauty as it is, is a bonus for all of us as Minneapolis will not recover for years from the riots and violence, and the pandemic.

Thank you for your role to maintain something beautiful in our city.

Best,

Karen Slater

Sent from my iPhone

9. Comment

Slater, Karen
09/29/2020

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

<https://www.cedarlakepark.org/vision-history> The above link was a great vision for Cedar Lake Park and still is. It is a unique area for residents and visitors to enjoy as it is unlike the other three city lakes. It was connected to our beautiful Kenilworth Corridor which has been destroyed by the light rail. Maintaining the beauty of a natural wooded lake area is even more important now. There are so many things that simply need fixing. The following are recommendations: - repave the heaving trails -clear areas where there are benches for better views of the lake - address the erosion of shoreline -address the water quality, especially after the toxic algae bloom, which I believe may have been caused by the SWLRT project (many photos I have of the area indicate as such) and possible future impacts with water pumping with the light rail tunnel, -DO NOT pave the north side with the natural trail going through the woods -add more birdhouses through the woods to help increase the birding population -add more signs for dog owners to leash and pick up (I am a dog owner and do this!) -add signage for those who fish so they don't discard hooks, bobbers, and dead fish back in the lake -add more picnic tables for people to gather for meals - we won't have a pandemic forever! -Please do not institutionalize Cedar Lake with another plastic playground. We have many playgrounds available for children and have redone Park Siding Park twice! That annoys me as a 34 year resident and taxpayer -Hidden Beach could be safer if it were cleaned up and made a nicer picnic area with lighting at night to deter unsavory characters and behavior -The remnant land should be simply used for more trees, plants, and grasses to maintain our wildlife which was greatly dispersed with the destruction of the Kenilworth corridor - wildlife are not meant to depend upon a neighborhood for their existence, which is what has been happening since the loss of habitat in Kenilworth -I think the beauty here is the natural woods, wildlife, swimming, boating, picnic sites, walking, biking, and green space for throwing a frisbee or kicking a ball. All of which are located near a city, albeit a city in a dismal state, and other connecting lakes which are used all year round. As a former board member for People for Parks and a 34 year resident of CIDNA, I and my husband, have used the parks extensively and had many out of state visitors enjoy our park areas as well. With our current state of a lack of public safety in our city, which will not end until we have resolved many issues around what our residents need, our parks are a sanctuary and need to remain so. It is also very important to be very prudent with funds as our city leaders allowed Minneapolis to be burned to the ground and as taxpayers we will pay for some of that poor decision. Parks are not able to discriminate against people, so the vision to make parks equitable is actually a discriminatory statement itself. Let's use language that simply says our parks are for the people of Minneapolis and surrounding areas as well as drawing visitors to our city and state once again. Thank you for your time and consideration to maintain our beautiful park areas. Karen Slater

From: Tim Springer <>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 9:09 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: 2020 amendments to 2040 parks plan

Dear Sir/Madam:

I strongly support the inclusion of an extension of the Midtown Greenway as regional trail search corridor in the 2020 amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. This is consistent with many aspects of the 2040 Plan, including efforts to serve more people and broaden who is served, to get people to important regional park destinations, and to use link trails to serve an important transportation function.

Cheers,

Tim Springer
2836 18th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612 355 9600

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Tang, Brian
09/09/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I dream of a regional parks system that provides a quiet, peaceful counterpart to (or replacement of?) our regional freeway system. It would be expansive, seamless, interconnected, and ubiquitous. You would be able to bike from one corner of the metro to the opposite corner without ever hitting a stop sign or traffic signal--just like a freeway, but with no cars, pollution, or deadly wrecks.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

My favorite used to be the Kenilworth Corridor. I could bike from downtown Minneapolis to Lake Harriet after work in half the time would take to drive. It was fast, peaceful, and so stress-free you could almost do it with your eyes closed. I also loved running on Kenilworth, making a loop around Cedar Lake. Today, my favorite is biking on the Mississippi River Trail through Spring Lake Regional Park on the way to either Afton or Frontenac State Park. On our most recent visit we stopped at a bench in the middle of the restored prairie as an endless cloud of migrating birds swirled above us. My next favorite would be biking on the new Wheelock Parkway trail to the Gateway and Browns Creek State Trails. We've bike camped at both St Croix Bluffs and Cleary Lake regional parks. At both places we hardly got any rest. St Croix Bluffs had no privacy between campsites. Cleary Lake had privacy, but they we still were kept awake by families partying at the group campsites, each probably half a mile away, but still very audible. The last issue we've had with camping at the regional parks is the 2-night stay requirement. I'd love to be able to string together a weekend bike trip from one regional park to the next, but this does not allow for that.

I dream of quiet trails through prairies and woodlands with lots of bridges and tunnels so you never have to hear or worry about getting killed by trucks and car traffic. I dream of secluded walk-in campsites with views of prairies, lakes, and rivers, not other campers. To me the sound matters more than the look. I want a break from the incessant noise of traffic and freeways. I want to hear birds and insects (hopefully the kind that don't bite). I want to hear wind rushing across a prairie and rustling leaves.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Absolutely--there are so many gaps.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

I am excited by this idea because I think it would allow us all to better understand, connect with, and care for the landscape and ecosystems. I think this will offer us great material and

cultural benefits.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

I would like greater facilitation of foraging for fruits, berries, and edible plants. Possibly more tapping of sugar maples. Maybe cultivation of additional wild crops. Maybe some trapping of wildlife.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

I imagine creating a system where the landscape and ecosystems can return to playing the role they once did in supporting a way of life intertwined with and dependent on those landscapes and ecosystems.

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

I think native elders and cultural practitioners should be employed to plan out how to manage landscapes and ecosystems. I think there may need to be a period of time when these cultural practitioners may need priority use of certain areas until enough additional land can be acquired and restored so larger numbers of people can take part.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Absolutely—the existing trails and bikeways in our region are what give me access to many regional parks (and their absence keeps me cut off from others).

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes, especially if there are rentals and places to store watercraft on-site to make it usable without a car.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

In my experience, I feel most at home in parks that I already routinely pass through. A welcoming Regional Parks System would be fully integrated into the surrounding walking and biking networks. There would be schools, libraries, and other civic buildings on grounds that are contiguous with regional parks, with regional trails spanning it all.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Absolutely—parks are what make cities possible.

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

I don't want to live in a deadly wasteland.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

As I alluded to in an earlier response, I think land will eventually become a limiting factor on participation in traditional usage of the land for food and culture. Adding more land would give me hope of some day participating in the cultivation and harvesting of wild fruits and berries. I struggle to picture what is meant by "high-quality" land. I want regional parks and trails to extend tendrils through every neighborhood and commercial center the same way highways do. Almost any parcel or corridor could be connected to this network and therefore valuable in my mind.

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Other

Option 3- Comment on the Policy Plan by Section or Overall

Below is a list of Policy Plan sections or the overall plan itself. Please check a box or boxes and include your comment in the below space.

21. Overall Plan or Chapter Number

- Overall
- Chapter 1: Planning for the Twin Cities Region
- Chapter 2: Overview of the Regional Parks System and the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
- Chapter 3: System Plan
- Chapter 4: Siting and Acquisition Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 5: Planning Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 6: System Protection Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 7: Recreation Activities and Facilities Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 8: Finance Policy and Strategies
- Chapter 9: 2019 – 2022 Workplan for the Regional Parks Policy Plan

22. Comment Topic

23. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment

Is there an interactive map somewhere? I am finding this report to be impossible to digest. I have one specific comment: I would definitely use a trail between Point Douglas and Afton--just biked that route on Saturday. I have a couple policy-level comments: (1) can the plan be sure to address the need for redundancy to allow the network to be resilient to closures related to flooding, construction, or other causes? (2) I was surprised to see some existing regional trails on the map that I currently think of as gaps--mostly sidepaths along busy streets. I can see how a sidepath along a busy street is suitable for neighborhood-level travel such as getting to a middle school, grocery store, or transit center. However, I don't think that sort of glorified sidewalk works for regional travel. When I picture regional trail use I think of biking 20+ miles, perhaps laden with camping gear, perhaps using an e-bike, perhaps going 20+ mph, perhaps riding in a group. It is hard for me to picture this working on a sidepath next to a highway or urban arterial road. I would like for the plan to put more emphasis on acquiring corridors of parkland for trails--perhaps acquired from what are now highway rights of way.

24. Do you have more comments?

- Yes
- No

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A system where funds are distributed equally among all parks, not just focused on certain areas, like North Minneapolis.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Pedestrian and bike trails, nothing motorized....no motor

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Reconsidering history

The Council proposes the creation of a cultural-historical study that describes and documents the impacts inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System. The Regional Parks System's parks and trails are on lands that the Anishinaabe people and the Dakota people have long cared for and called home. The lands hold great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for these original stewards, the Tribal nations. The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, proposes to explore honoring this history through land acknowledgment and broader regional conversation.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

No, it means nothing...

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

Sure

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I use the trails along the parkways, which are now not safe because you allow motorized scooters and bikes and people who wear headphones and can't hear you coming or care.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Honor the people that made this area safe for us to be here....

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

Honor the land first, people second.

Leave things as natural as possible to support native plants and animals.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility" with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Less people, more natural space.

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

People ruin things, I don't support making it easier for people to destroy the environment.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Protecting open space...yes

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

We need natural space as humans.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

If added and undeveloped...I would feel great.

Thielbar, Amber
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

To have the city of new prague connect to cedar lake and then have more trails out there.

From: Pat Thompson <>
Sent: Friday, October 30, 2020 10:43 AM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Comment on Draft Amendment to 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Dear Metropolitan Council folks,

I'm writing to support the addition of the Midtown Greenway Extension as a Regional Trail Search Corridor in the 2040 Regional Parks Plan.

Creating this important bike (and pedestrian) connection is a major missing link that will help both cities work toward their climate goals and give everyone more enjoyment of the Mississippi River gorge. It will also connect to bike infrastructure in Saint Paul, including the new Ayd Mill trail, or will by the time the Extension is completed.

As part of master planning for this 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,

—
Pat Thompson
1496 Raymond Avenue, Saint Paul 55108

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Tietz, Pam
10/16/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Connect the existing trails in new prague as one path that can connect to cedar lake by a couple of paths one north of new prague and one east of new prague.

Timmerman, Shanna
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Trail from new prague to cedar lake park

From: Aaron Tovo <>
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 11:42 PM
To: PublicInfo <public.info@metc.state.mn.us>
Subject: Midtown Greenway Extension

Dear Met Council,

I just want to chime in that I support the plans to extend the Midtown Greenway across the river to St Paul. It would be a huge addition to the Twin Cities' excellent biking opportunities and I would use it often.

Thank you for reading this,

Aaron Tovo

Minneapolis

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Tupy, Sue
10/14/2020

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. We need safe outdoor spaces in New Prague that include hiking and biking paths.

I would support a safe walking or biking trail in my community similar to Spring Lake Park.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

None in my area. I have to drive 25 minutes to Spring Lake Park or Cleary Lake to enjoy a long walk or bike ride.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

17. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

Yes. We would love walking or biking trails closer to New Prague, and any water activities would be great!

19. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. As suburban areas sprawl out, we need places we can go to enjoy nature.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

18. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

Good amount of parking, clean paved trails. Dog parks are a plus.

It would give our community a place to participate in healthy outdoor activities. New Prague has one regional park, Cedar Lake Farm, and there is not much to speak of for walking or biking paths. Our community doesn't have any longer trails that are away from neighborhoods and busy roads. Camping would be a huge bonus.

Ulschmid, Emily
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Plenty of paved trails through various landscapes, well kept and dog friendly

Van Wylen, Nathan
10/14/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I fully support adding the Midtown Greenway to this plan and working to extend the Midtown Greenway over the Mississippi River into Saint Paul. I would also like to see the Great Northern Greenway and future trails along the Mississippi River in north Minneapolis added to systems maps.

Vanderpoel, Jane
09/23/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I appreciate the Met Council's support for the regional park system. I live near Lebanon Hills park, which touches Egan, Apple Valley and Rosemount. The best thing about this park is that it has an excellent hiking trail system that's accessible to all economically (it's free) and physically (except for those who are not ambulatory) because the trails are well kept, well signed, and even casual walkers can thoroughly enjoy the setting without strain. I hope you'll continue to make a priority ways for people to enjoy the parks who don't invest in fancy, expensive equipment and need nothing more than their feet and legs. My 86-year-old mother walks daily in Battle Creek park in Ramsey County. She needs paved trails, and I know how important it is for her to get that exercise and enjoyment of being outside in the sunshine. Thanks for asking.

VanderSchaaf, Mark
10/17/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Thank you for p. 149 and Work Program Item #3, to Explore expansion of the Regional Park Classification to include "Regional Water Trail Parks." As a newly minted kayaking enthusiast I've begun exploring especially the waterways of our Regional Park System and, while grateful for the current opportunities, I can see ways that they could be improved. Please do retain this item in the work program. I look forward to following and possibly contributing in some fashion to this effort in 2021.

Wagner, Jamie
10/14/2020

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change – keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System? Why or why not?

Yes. Our community would benefit from having trails outside of the city.

12. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Absolutely. Our human sustainability is at risk because many don't take our environment seriously. Countless studies note the benefits of spending time outdoors and in nature. I also believe having more accessible trails nearby will result in more people using them and ultimately having a better appreciation for our planet.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

We visit Ney Nature Center, Murphy Hammehan, Lebanon Hills, Ritter Park Farm, etc. We explore the environment—admire plants, wildlife, scenery while getting a good walk/run/hike in.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Rustic trails in the forest including a lake or a pond.

13. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

It would mean not having to travel 20+ minutes in order to go on a hike with family or friends.

Washa, Vicky
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

It would extend a trail further out side New Prague to enjoy the country. Connect New Prague to other regional parks like Cedar Lake Farm and Cleary Lake Park.

Regional Parks Policy Plan Comment

Video

Name: Vita Wilson (Resident)

Date: 2020-09-25

Address: 10810 46th Pl N, Plymouth, MN 55442

Email: VitaWilson@edinarealty.com

Message Summary: Supporting the need for developing safe regional trails, specifically enhancing technology for crossing busy intersections (like at Zachary Land and Rockford Road in Plymouth). Develop a better way for cyclists to request light changes rather than getting off the bike and using a manual button. Excited for continued progress in enhancing the Regional Trails System.

Original Message: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/fHds37VYH9yH65Z87>

Winter, Tyler
08/28/2020

Adding Parks or Trails

Following record use of the Regional Parks System in 2019, the Council's plans to add parks and trails to the system are reinforced. People use the region's parks for connecting with family and friends, building community, picnicking, camping, hiking, biking, and being in nature, among other popular activities.

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

I want a park system that is built around how people actually use park space. Some people see trash, unofficial trails, and trampled vegetation as evidence people are disrespecting parks. I see it as evidence that the park isn't meeting people's needs. If there is a place with trash, it should have a trash can. Unofficial trails should be improved to provide safe access to what is obviously a desirable area. Many of these so called "eye-sore" locations are centered on popular shore fishing spots. This creates conflict between shore based anglers and the general public. It is important to remember that basically everyone who is fishing from shore does not have a boat and is therefore likely from an underprivileged or under-represented group. Equitable access to our region's waters requires water access for people without boats or kayaks. While people with the resources for a boat of kayak (or bike) get access to extensive park resources, people who are shore fishing (often for food) are relegated to trampled river banks without safe access or basic amenities. The existing fishing docks are inadequate for the demand, especially when we must maintain 6 ft separation from each other. Furthermore, these docks are placed next to boat ramps as an afterthought. They rarely (if ever) actually have any fish around them. The existing public fishing docks only act to reinforce the existing disparities between classes. People with boats and kayaks get exclusive access most of the water, while those without are relegated to a fish-less dock or a trampled shoreline without even a trash can. Regional parks should identify places where shore based anglers are having negative impacts (litter, trampled vegetation, unofficial trails) and work to improve them so that shore anglers might get equitable access to our parks water resources.

8. Do you support adding parks and trails to the Regional Parks System?

I support adding parks. Trails, especially bike trails, do not provide equitable access to our parks. Bike trails are used by people who have so much time, money and food that they can use those resources to ride a bike in circles for hours. Recreational cycling, like golf, is an activity reserved for the leisure class.

9. What parks and trails do you use and love? What do you do when you visit?

I use parks along Rice Creek, Elm Creek and the Mississippi River. When I visit a park I am usually fishing with my children.

10. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

My dream park system would provide clean, safe, and easy access to river and lake shorelines. The water would be safe for children to play in.

11. Do you support efforts to tell a more inclusive history of the Regional Parks System? What would this mean to you?

That sounds good.

12. How could the Regional Parks System reflect your history and culture better?

Right now our parks reflect a culture of privileged people riding bikes and boats in circles. Literally anything else would be an improvement.

13. What does a land acknowledgment mean to you?

No idea

14. Who do you think should be included in this work?

Everyone without a boat.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Equitable access

The Regional Parks System will gain a new type of special recreation feature called a "Bridging Facility," with this update. The goal of this facility will be to ensure our parks encourage broader participation by people of different races, ethnicities, national origins, ages, abilities and income. This update will also consider establishing a "water trail" park providing safe places for people to paddle creeks and rivers in the region.

15. Do you support unique approaches to welcome new park users? Why or why not?

Yes. For a long time parks have included boat ramps and docks which can only benefit people with boats. Obviously this is a unique approach to attract boat owning park users. Why not have new approaches to attract new park users?

16. Do you support parks and trails that include paddling on a water trail? Why or why not?

No. The state already has many "water trails" designated by the DNR. The only difference between a creek and a water trail is the map and the title. Our parks need improvements just to reflect how people are already using them. Bathrooms, trash cans, buckthorn removal, safe access to shorelines just to name a few. Why should we spend any resources so that we can tell kayakers about a new place to kayak? They have a map, a kayak and a car - they don't need a water trail for equitable access.

17. What does a welcoming Regional Parks System look like to you?

A welcoming park system doesn't require a park pass. It has plenty of bathrooms (with changing stations for families). It has parking spaces near the water to make access easier for families and the disabled. There is easy and safe access to the water's edge. And the shoreline is a clean and safe place for children to play.

Option 2 - Stories and themes questions

Environment, Climate, and the Parks

Trees are the lungs of the atmosphere, cleaning the air of pollutants for a more resilient future climate. Parkland plays a significant role in mitigating climate change - keeping us healthy, protecting water, providing habitats, moderating temperature, and teaching future generations about nature. By expanding the Regional Parks System, we're fighting pollution, managing water, and providing critical habitats.

18. Do you support caring for and protecting the open space and parks? Why or why not?

Yes. Our public lands and parks are an amazing resource.

19. Why does caring for our environment matter to you?

My children play in the river water. If the water is contaminated with bacteria they will get sick. If the environment is degraded the habitat in the streams and rivers will disappear. Once the habitat is gone the fish will follow.

20. What would adding high quality land to the Regional System mean to you?

It depends on what amenities and access the land has. Is it flat and covered in bicycle trails? That would mean that people with expensive bikes are once again being favored. Does it have bathrooms, nice paths, high quality natural resources, trash cans and plentiful access to clean water? Because that would mean the park system is a welcoming place for all families who wish to go outside.

22. Comment Topic

- Overall
- Adding, modifying, or expanding parks and trails
- Equitable Access
- Reconsidering History
- Climate Resilience and Natural Resources
- Park and Trail Boundary Adjustments
- Bridging Facilities
- I don't know
- Other

23. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

Currently access to our parks seems to favor people with resources and plenty of free time. Boat ramps and bicycle trails being prime examples. Yet many people without those privileges go to parks to fish from shore hoping to catch dinner. Shore based anglers are treated like second class citizens in most parks. The places they want to use are un-maintained, and sometimes even closed to fishing. I recommend everyone in your group read the book "A Different Pond" a children's story written by Bao Phi. This books explains it better than I can. Equitable access to parks needs to include high quality access to the shoreline/ water for people without boats.

From: Will Wlizlo <>
Sent: Saturday, October 17, 2020 1:50 PM
To: PublicInfo
Subject: Please add Greenway Extension to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Dear Met Council,

I'm writing to encourage you to formally adopt the extension of the Midtown Greenway multi-use trail into your updated 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. This project would be a historic and game-changing addition to our regional active transportation network.

I live in Minneapolis and use the Midtown Greenway multiple times per week, primarily by bicycle. I use the trail for recreational, commercial, and social trips -- and, at a recent previous job, used it for work-related activities as well. What's more, as a connection to the Cedar Lake Trail(s), I have been able to visit my family members who live in Hopkins, Minnetonka, Plymouth, and Long Lake. This network has allowed our family to live car free and still stay in human contact with our relatives.

Extending the Midtown Greenway in the other direction would create a safe, accessible, and beautiful way for others to connect with Saint Paul, which is currently a challenging City to visit by bicycle (in some ways). When synched up with the Ayd Mill road cycletrack project, it will also provide an easy route to a hard part of Saint Paul to travel to without a car.

Thank you for considering this project for your long-term plans.

Peace and light,
Will Wlizlo
3236 23rd Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55407

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Wong, Crystal
10/15/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

A great smooth running/biking trail that made it easy to get from New Prague to Cedar Lake Farms. Our family would love this!

Ykema, Gretchen
10/14/2020

Option 1

7. What would your dream Regional Parks System look and feel like?

Easily accessed, safe access via foot and bike. Many options of trail. Embraced by the community.
Staff presence for overall safety.

Zweber, Sara
10/15/2020

9. Comment

If you are referring to a specific page number in a chapter, please include that in your comment.

I am strongly opposed to a trail that would link New Prague and Cedar Lake Park. As a taxpayer and Scott County land owner, I have many concerns about this idea. First and foremost, who is going to pay for it? It better not be through my property taxes because I moved to the country for privacy, and I will not support paying additional taxes to fund a trail that brings loiterers, litterers, and thieves closer to my personal property. We chose to move out of town and into the country for peace & quiet. Area residents have MILES of trail to enjoy throughout New Prague that are already constructed. Use those. Cedar Lake Park should not be used as a trail destination. Secondly, who is going to maintain this new trail? Who is going to pick up the garbage that people leave? Or the dog poop? Who is going to pay for the lawsuits when people slip on patches of ice that form overnight? As a Scott county resident and taxpayer, I expect those in charge of making these decisions to use our money for projects that benefit the majority, such as infrastructure or highway maintenance. We do not need to spend millions of dollars on a "feel good" project such as this one for a small minority of people who will use it, and many of whom

likely don't even pay taxes in this county. We are in the middle of pandemic. Businesses are hurting, as are many county residents. We have homeless people right here in New Prague. How about we focus our time, energy and resources on expanding humanitarian efforts instead of a pipe dream that does benefit the greater good.

Comments from Metropolitan Council Staff

The Council received two written comments on the draft amendment to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* from one Council staff member, Guthrie Byard. Guthrie Byard serves as the ADA & Title VI Administrator for the Metropolitan Council's Office of Equal Opportunity.

From: Byard, Guthrie <Guthrie.Byard@metc.state.mn.us>

Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 10:24 AM

To: Mullin, Emmett <Emmett.Mullin@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: Updated 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Hi, Emmett—

I noticed that this policy plan is being updated and will soon go out for comment. I have a few comments on the plan to share with you. Please let me know if there is someone on your staff that could benefit from getting this information and I'd be happy to discuss this with them.

1. I agree with what has been shared by some Council members which is to ensure promotional materials are in plain language, especially helpful for those with disabilities.
2. It would be good to target disability advocacy organizations as a way to help promote inclusion of those communities in our parks, but also in the planning process. I would make engagement of these types of agencies/demographics a priority
3. I noticed that the language in the policy plan about ADA compliance requires agencies to conduct ADA reviews of their projects and master plans. How are we enforcing this so that we know money we grant is going towards compliant and more universally designed efforts?
4. One consideration for language change is to not just reference physical disabilities but to say participants of all abilities, as persons with cognitive, hearing, or visual disabilities also should have the same experiences at the parks as those without disabilities.

Thanks for reviewing these comments, and please let me know if you would like me to explain any of this further or help out in any way.

Best,

Guthrie J. Byard, MPH, ADAC

Pronouns: he/him

ADA & Title VI Administrator

Office of Equal Opportunity

(763) 458-6231

guthrie.byard@metc.state.mn.us

560 6th Avenue North, Minneapolis MN 55411

From: Byard, Guthrie <Guthrie.Byard@metc.state.mn.us>

Sent: Friday, August 28, 2020 12:52 PM

To: Mullin, Emmett <Emmett.Mullin@metc.state.mn.us>

Subject: RE: Updated 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Thanks for the answers, Emmett. Below are a few agencies that support outdoor rec for those with disabilities, though some have a reach outside of the metro.

I would also reach out to regional park system therapeutic and adaptive rec coordinators for them to share within their networks. They presumably have lists of families with participants with disabilities.

- [Capable Partners](#)
- [Courage Center](#)
- [Let's Go Fishing with Seniors](#)
- [Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing](#)
- [United Federation of Disabled Archers](#)
- [Wilderness Inquiry](#)

Thanks,

Guthrie



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