

Regional Parks System

# Historical-Cultural Study

May 6, 2021

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



# Project Purpose

What does a welcoming and inclusive Regional Parks System look like?



Flag design by Marlana Myles



Flag design by Witt Siasoco



# Context



"Supergirl" jumps into Webber Park Pool, the nation's first outdoor natural-filtration swimming pool, in North Mississippi Regional Park, Minneapolis.

"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."

•—*Urban Roots*

- Amendment Public Comment
  - Urban Roots and Cycle Sisters
- Equity Analysis Requirement
  - MPOSC, CDC, and IA's

# Policy

- The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* commits the Council to conduct a historical-cultural study to:
  - Describe and document the impacts that inequitable policies have had on the development of the Regional Parks System, and
  - 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.
- *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, Equity Analysis Requirement*
  - What is known about future stakeholders, underserved populations, and how the region's history created present-day inequitable outcomes?



# What this is...

- Continuation of our collective work
- More about process than product
- Mutual learning and building relationships
- Outcomes that are meaningful, useful, attainable



People picnic during the Dragon Festival at Lake Phalen Regional Park in Saint Paul. The annual event brings together diverse Asian communities in the region.



# What could this be?



Cyclist on the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis.


- Lifting up stories
- Place-based inquiry
- Something else?

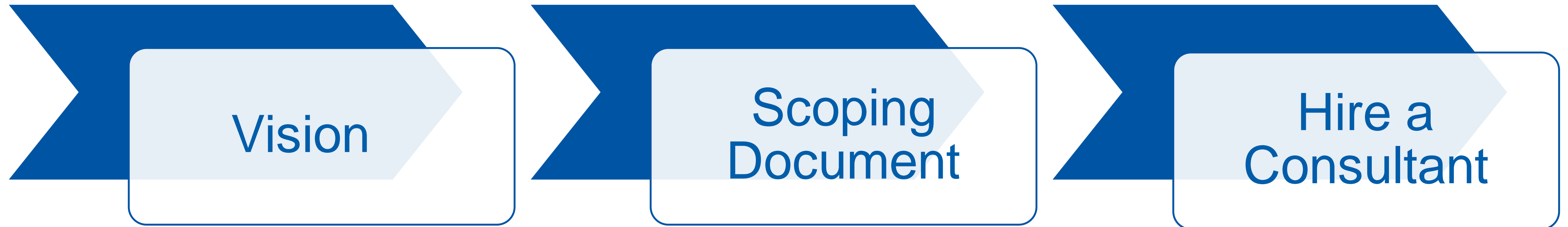


# 2021-2022 Study Timeline

**Continue  
Imagining &  
Deepening** 

**Assess &  
Co-Create** 

**Continue our  
Journey** 



Spring & Summer, 2021

2022 and Beyond

Park Implementing Agencies, Council Policy Makers, Regional Organizations

Agency Staff Technical Committee, Council Staff Technical Committee

# Vision

## What does an equitable Regional Parks System look like?

### Some examples could be:

- Prioritize the region's underserved populations' sense of belonging
- Centering their culture and history

Where we want to go or what we want to aspire to? This is not an action plan for how to get there.



# Mission

How we will achieve the vision? It's the core purpose, present situation, and cause of the situation.

## How should we go about achieving an equitable Regional Parks System?

Some examples could be:

- Lifting up cultural, historical, and systemic narratives
- Supporting actions towards a more equitable system



# Impact

What are the longer-term effects of the outcomes. Impact refers to the much broader effects.

## What long-term effects should this project strive for?

### Some examples could be:

- Mutual learning and collaboration with the ten agency partners, Council policy makers, and Council staff
- Build relationships and sustain support for marginalized communities with respectful, paid engagement
- Authentic restorative justice forums
- Shape future actions
- Historical, cultural, and systemic stories are alive in our planning, design, and programming of our regional parks and trails



# Outcome

## What tangible deliverables should this project produce?

### Some examples could be:

- Tools provided for agency staff to address section 1b of the equity analysis requirement for park and trail master plans
- Accountability indicators
- A more accurate history, culture, and systemic narrative document
- Build awareness of sacred and historical site information for regional parks and trails


The finite and often measurable changes we would like to see.

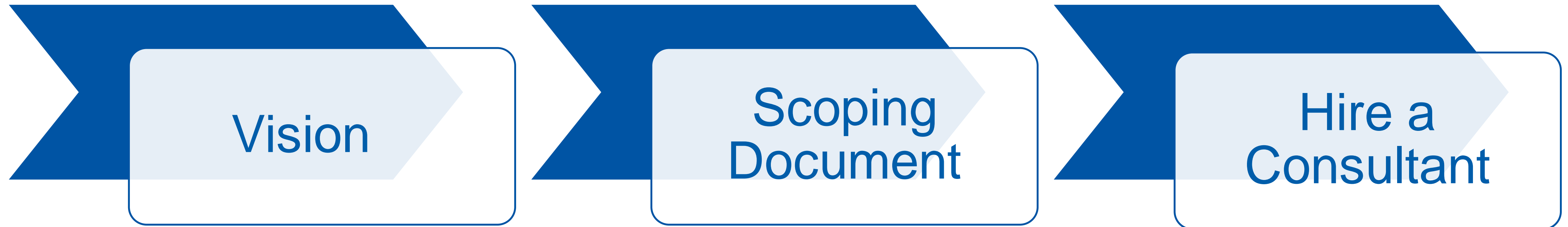


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# Next Steps

- **Imagining Phase:**
  - **May MPOSC and CDC**
  - May/June Agency Staff Technical Committee Meeting
  - June Partner Meeting
- **Creating Phase:**
  - June, July, and August Agency Technical Committee Meetings
  - September Partner Meeting
  - **November MPOSC and CDC**



Children help plant a rain garden through the Saint Paul Parks & Recreation sPARK program.



# THANKS!

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