

# Scenario Planning and Regional Parks and Trails Analysis

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space



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# Overview



Draft Regional Parks Objectives

Key Parks and Trails Topics

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Regional Growth Scenarios

Connections to Land Use

# Draft Regional Parks and Trails Objectives

**WORKING REGIONAL GOALS**

Our region is equitable and inclusive

Our communities are healthy and safe

Our region is dynamic and resilient

We lead on addressing climate change

We protect and restore natural systems

**DRAFT PARKS OBJECTIVES**

**Equity**  
Better connect people with community, natural, and cultural resources in order to support physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

**Infrastructure**  
People can rely on renewed, repaired, and replaced park and trail infrastructure.

**Climate and Natural Systems**  
Preserve and restore natural systems at regional parks and trails to help build a more resilient region.

**Meeting Future Needs**  
Acquire land and develop new opportunities to meet the region’s growing demand for regional parks and trails.

**EXISTING PARKS POLICIES**

**Siting and Acquisition**  
Identify lands with high-quality natural resources that are desirable for Regional Parks System activities and put these lands in a protected status, so they will be available for recreational uses and conservation purposes in perpetuity.

**Planning**  
Promote master planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.

**System Protection**  
Protect public investment in acquisition and development by assuring that every component in the system is able to fully carry out its designated role as long as a need for it can be demonstrated.

**Recreation Activities and Facilities**  
Provide a regional system of recreation opportunities for all residents and visitors while conserving the integrity of the natural resource base within the Regional Parks System on which these opportunities depend.

**Finance**  
Provide adequate and equitable funding for the Regional Parks System units and facilities in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefits to the people of the region.

# Engagements



- Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) *March 2, 2023*
- Regional Park Implementing Agencies (Agencies) *March 23, 2023*
- Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) *September 21, 2023*
- Regional Park Implementing Agencies (Agencies) *September 21, 2023*
- Committee of the Whole (CoW) *November 15, 2023*

*Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park  
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board*

# Key Parks and Trails Topics

## Acquisition

- Search areas and corridors take different forms in more mature park and trail systems versus developing ones.
- Most acquisitions today either fill in existing parks or acquire trail corridors.

## Protection

- Protecting regional park and trail land is essential for protecting our natural systems.
- Excessive park and trail use can undermine natural resource quality.

## Use

- Park and trail use impacts existing facilities and impacts operations and maintenance funding needs.
- The Regional Parks and Trails System needs to serve an increasingly diverse population.

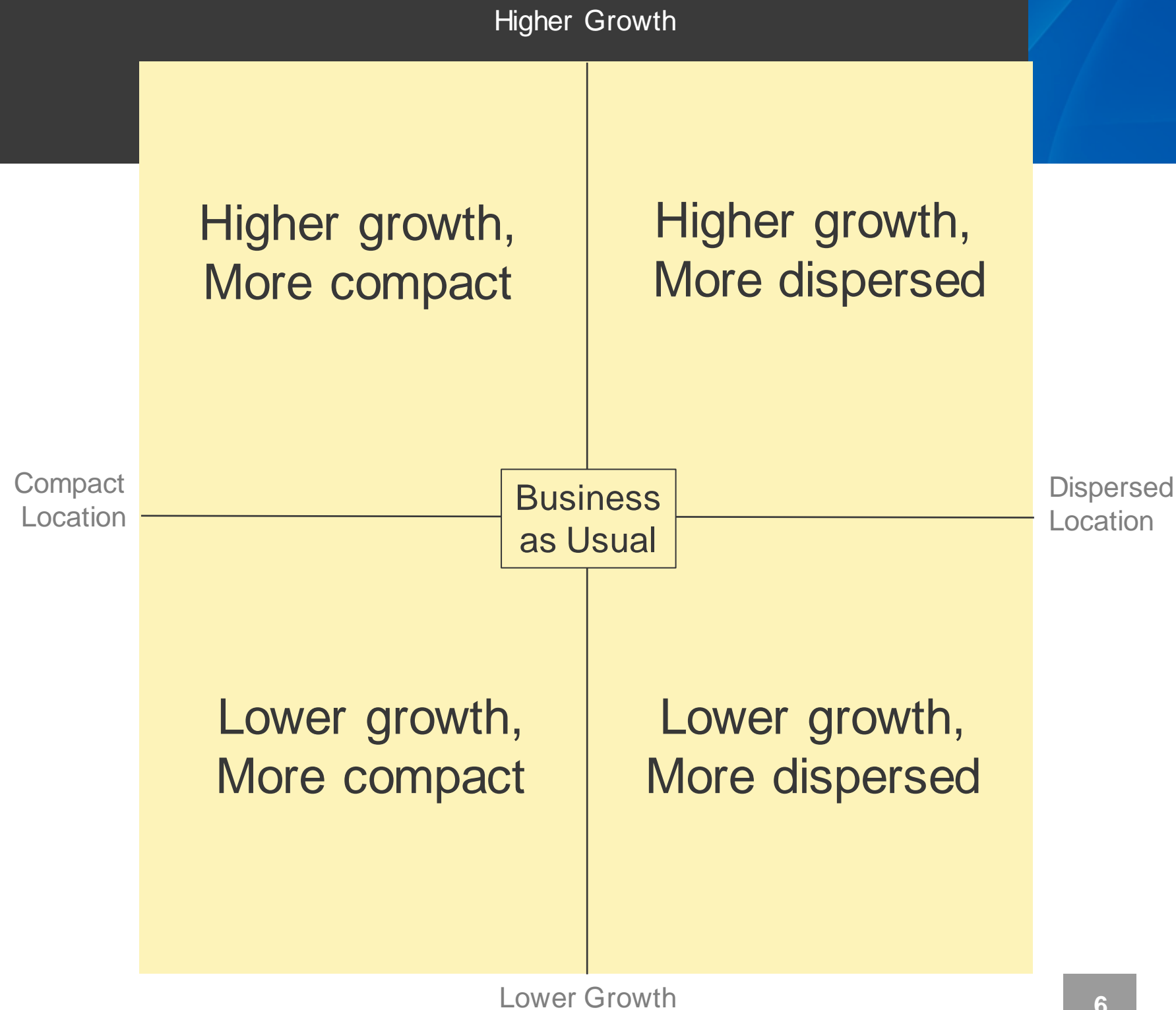
# Connections to Regional Goals

Parks and Trails Topics	Working Regional Goals				
	Equitable Inclusive Region	Healthy Safe Communities	Dynamic Resilient Region	Mitigated Adapted Resilient Climate	Protected Restored Natural Systems
Acquisition	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Protection	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Use	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓

# Regional Growth Scenarios

## How much? Where?

- Business-as-Usual: recent growth and development patterns continue
- High growth/compact development
- High growth/dispersed development
- Low growth/compact development
- Low growth/dispersed development



# Acquisition

## High or Low Growth

- High Growth: Cost of acquisition goes up due to high growth pressures. (*Agencies*)
- High Growth: Acquisition and development of industrial areas and new trails in rail corridors. (*Agencies*)

## Mature or Developing Parks

- Mature: Growth will take the form of trail acquisition and reclaiming industrial sites due to limitations on acquiring new parks. (*Agencies, LUAC*)
- Developing: There is an opportunity for acquiring natural system corridors. (*Agencies, LUAC*)



# Protection

## High or Low Growth

- High growth in urban and rural areas constitute a challenge for conservation. (*Agencies*)
- Lower growth in rural areas makes it easier to protect natural systems. (*Agencies*)

## Mature or Developing Parks

- Mature: Growth might challenge the carrying capacity and natural characteristics of parks and trails. (*Agencies*)
- Developing: There are opportunities to protect natural systems and cultural sites, including co-management with tribes. (*MPOSC, Agencies*)

# Use

## High or Low Growth

- High Growth: Overuse of parks and trails could be an issue. (MPOSC, Agencies)
- Lower Growth: Lower visitation in developing park systems may impact funding appropriations. (Agencies)

## Mature or Developing Parks

- Mature: Partner with local governments and implementing agencies to meet the needs of a growing region. (Agencies)
- Mature: Regional trails can be used as linear parks. (MPOSC, Agencies)
- Developing: Regional trails should connect to local businesses. (LUAC)

# Connections to Land Use

## Acquisition

Acquire land in industrial sites and railroad corridors in more compact areas. *(Agencies)*

Invest in less developed areas since land is available and acquisition costs will continue to rise. *(LUAC)*

## Protection

Protect and restore land in more compact areas to ensure all residents benefit from access to the outdoors. *(MPOSC, Agencies)*

Pursue opportunities to protect natural systems and cultural sites, including co-management with tribes. *(MPOSC, Agencies)*

## Use

Partner with local governments and implementing agencies to meet the needs of a growing region. *(Agencies)*

Regional trails should connect to local businesses. *(LUAC)*

# Thank you

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*Downtown, Mississippi River, and  
Samuel Morgan Regional Trail  
City of Saint Paul*

