

# Business Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission: July 13, 2023

Committee Meeting Date: August 7, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: August 23, 2023

## Business Item: 2023-145

Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan, Anoka County

<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	Commission District F, Cecily Harris Council District 11, Gail Cederberg
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	Minnesota Statutes § 473.313; <i>2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan</i> : Chapter 5, Planning Strategy 1
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Chee Yang, Planner, 651-602-1449
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development / Regional Parks

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Approve Anoka County's Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan.
- Encourage Anoka County to work with the City of Columbus to change the land use from Rural Residential to Park within the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan when the proposed future 41-acre inholding is acquired and becomes part of the regional park. This will require a comprehensive plan amendment and must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for review and authorization.

### Background

Anoka County (the County) submitted the Coon Lake Regional Park (Coon Lake Park) Long Range Plan. It is located in the northern part of the Regional Parks System (Figure 1) and northeast Anoka County (Figure 2). The regional park is a 110-acre park on the east end of Coon Lake in the northwest corner of the City of Columbus (Figure 3).

The Coon Lake Regional Park is currently designated as a county park with existing recreational activities and park amenities. This existing search area is named Coon Lake County Park Regional Park in the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (RPPP). With the designation of Coon Lake Park as part of the regional parks and trails system, it fills a gap in the northern part of our region.

The park consists of wetlands and approximately 2,000 feet of lakeshore on Coon Lake, the largest lake in Anoka County. A large portion of land surrounding the park is designated as State Wildlife Management Area and State Scientific Natural Area, which have no park-like amenities.

The Coon Lake Park offers an oasis away from the city with its natural setting and sense of solitude. It is known for its fishing, providing anglers with an opportunity to catch a wide assortment of fish. The lake has northern pike and walleye, and the shallow emergent vegetation provides a great habitat for bass fishing. Additionally, the park offers picnicking facilities, a beach, natural surface trails, and a Veteran's Memorial.

## **Rationale**

The Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, particularly Planning Strategy 1 (Master plan requirements) and other Council policies.

## **Thrive Lens Analysis**

The Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan advances the Thrive outcome of Livability by increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, which enhances quality of life in the region.

## **Funding**

The total estimated cost to acquire needed inholdings at Coon Lake Regional Park is \$542,800.

The total estimated improvement cost associated with the Coon Lake Regional Park \$5,505,000.

The total estimated annual operations and maintenance costs for Coon Lake Regional Park is \$50,000.

Taken together, the total estimated cost associated with the Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan is \$6,047,850.



Figure 1. Coon Lake Regional Park location within the Regional Parks and Trails System

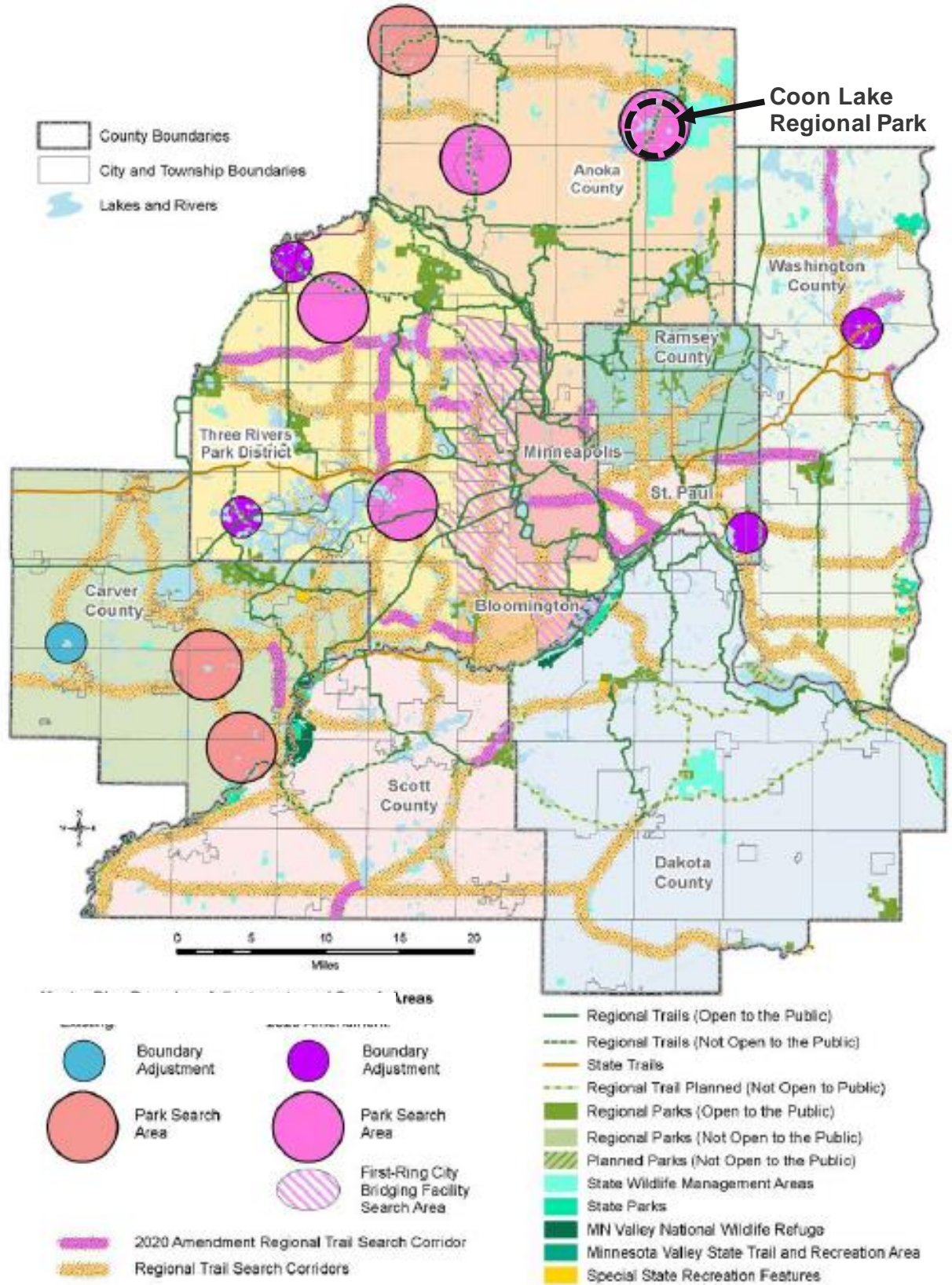
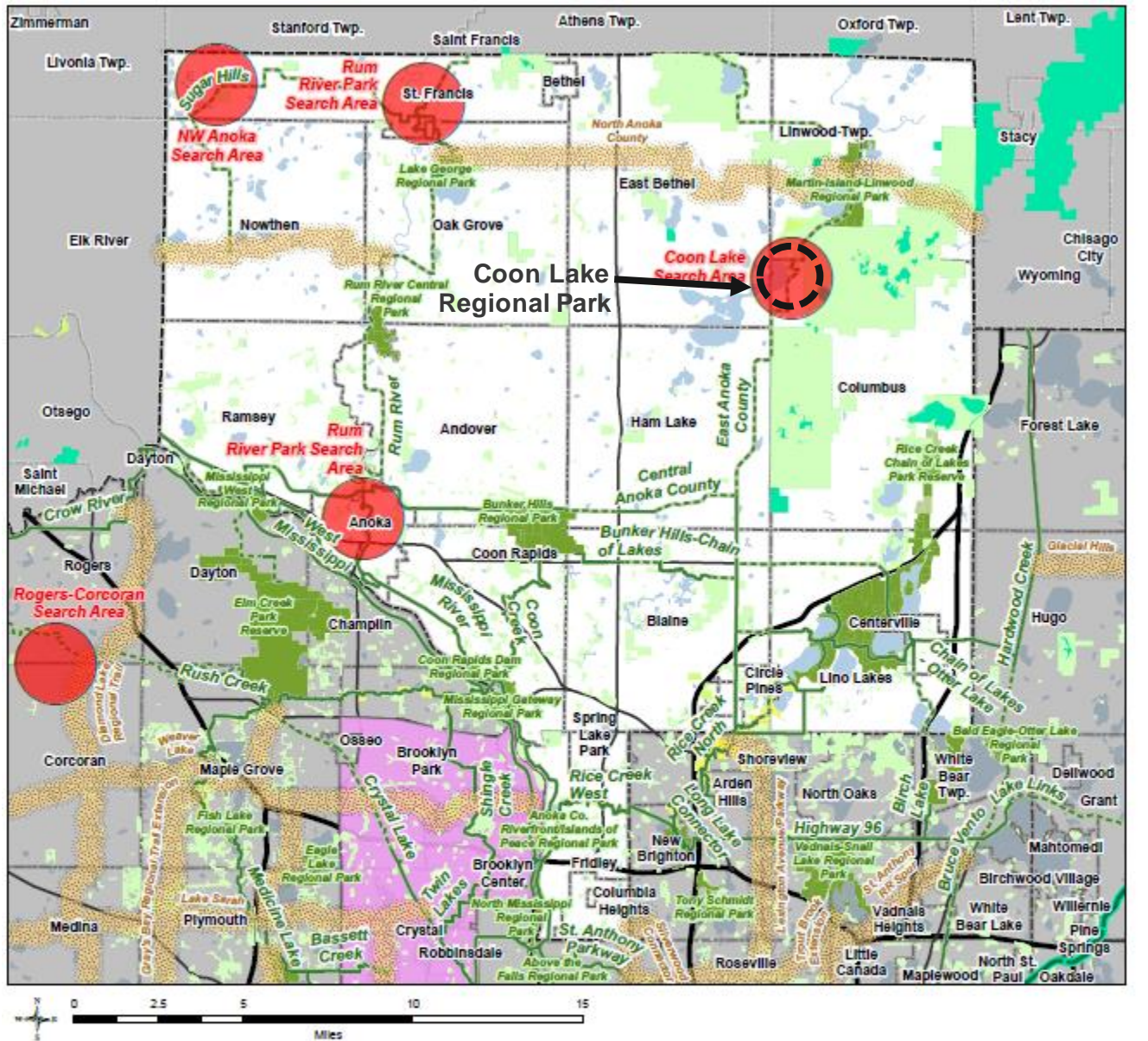




Figure 2. Coon Lake Regional Park location within Anoka County



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| <p><b>Regional Parks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #92d050; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Existing (Open to Public)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #d9ead3; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> In Master Plan (Not Open to Public)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, #92d050 2px, #92d050 4px); border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Planned Parks and Reserves</li> </ul> <p><b>Regional Trails</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 2px; background-color: #558b2f; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Existing (Open to Public)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 2px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Existing (Not Open to Public)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 2px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px dashed black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Planned</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ffc000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Regional Trail Corridor Land</li> </ul> | <p><b>Regional Park Search Areas and Regional Trail Search Corridors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 2px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Boundary Adjustments</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Search Areas</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background: radial-gradient(circle, #ccc 1px, transparent 1px); background-size: 4px 4px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Regional Trail Search Corridors</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, #ff00ff 2px, #ff00ff 4px); border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> First-Ring City Bridging Facility Search Area</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #00b050; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> State Parks</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> State Wildlife Management Areas (Publicly Accessible)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Scientific and Natural Areas (SNA)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Special State Recreation Features</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Other Parks, Preserves, Refuges and Natural Areas</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #e0ffff; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Minnesota Valley State Trail and Recreation Area</li> </ul> |
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Figure 3. Coon Lake Regional Park Boundary Map (LRP, Figure p.3)





## Analysis

Planning Strategy 1 of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires long range plans for regional parks to address 14 items: boundaries, acquisition costs, stewardship plan, demand forecast, development concept, conflicts, public services, operations, partner engagement, public engagement and participation, equity analysis, public awareness, accessibility, and natural resources. The following analyzes the master plan against those requirements.

### **Boundaries**

Coon Lake Regional Park boundary consists of four parcels totaling 110 acres, which are currently owned and managed by Anoka County.

### **Acquisition Costs**

The County is proposing to add three parcels totaling 41 acres to the park boundary, which, once acquired, would bring the total acreage for the park to 152 acres. The total estimated acquisition cost is \$542,800.

These parcels consist of uplands and lowlands that include freshwater emergent wetlands, aspen forest, oak forest, oak woodlands-brushlands, and medium/tall altered/non-native grasslands. The acquisition of these additional parcels would create additional protections and allow the County to restore the acquired areas back to native landscapes.

### **Stewardship Plan**

The Coon Lake Regional Park provides numerous outdoor activities and amenities for visitors. Visitors can enjoy the picnicking facilities to gather with family and friends, use the natural surface trails for exercise and enjoyment of nature, allow children to release some energy at the playground, enjoy the sun and water at the beach, launch a boat for fishing, or just relax and enjoy the scenery. In the winter months, visitors can access the lake for ice fishing.

Expenses generated from the park are related to the maintenance and operations of the park and amenities. Anoka County's park expenses are partially offset through revenues generated from pavilion rental fees and special use permit fees in the park's general operating budget. Other funds used to offset operations and maintenance will be provided by the Operations & Maintenance funds that the Metropolitan Council distributes funded by State sources.

There are no non-recreational related services within the park boundary, although the Parks Department does share a Maintenance Facility with the Transportation Division within the park boundary.

### **Demand Forecast**

The Metropolitan Council's 2050 regional forecast estimates that the Twin Cities metropolitan area will become more racially and ethnically diverse over the next 30 years. By 2050, the region's population of color will be about 44% of the total population. In addition, one in five people in the metropolitan region will be age 65 or older. The shift in demographics will require changes to the way the County operates and manages the park system and its amenities.

The County and the region's population growth is expected to increase demand in parks and trails amenities as the County anticipates growth from 363,887 in 2020 to 443,500 in 2040. 39 percent of the population will be Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), compared to 24 percent in 2011. For youths of color in Anoka County, a forecasted 53 percent growth by 2040 is anticipated, increasing demand and making it critical to connect young people to the outdoors. The County is committed to increasing equitable outdoor access and providing for the future stewardship of the regional parks and trail system.

According to the Council's, 2021 Regional Parks System Visitor Study Report, Indigenous and other communities of color are significantly more likely to participate in fishing, special events, and picnicking activities than white people. Additionally, the Council's 2014 Regional Park Use Among Select Communities of Color Report indicated that:

- Asian Immigrant/Asian American community groups identified their top three preferred



activities as walking, fishing, and rest or relaxation.

- African Immigrant groups identified playground use, walking, and being with family.
- African American groups identified barbecuing, biking, and basketball.
- Latinx groups identified picnicking, celebration events, and being with family.

Furthermore, the Council's 2021 Visitor Study indicates that the top activities for all demographic groups were hiking and/or walking. The second and third top activities include relaxing or doing nothing, biking, dog walking, family and/or friend meet ups, and observing nature.

The Coon Lake Regional Park offers these types of activities and with future improvements to new and existing park amenities and facilities, the regional park will be able to meet the future population growth, and recreational demand.

### ***Development Concept***

The Coon Lake Regional Park development plan calls for many proposed improvements to the park. The development concept map in Figure 4 highlights the proposed improvements to the park.

Recommended improvements are based on the park's long-term vision and will be implemented based on available funding and priorities. At the time of implementation, additional park features will be designed to minimize user conflicts, ensure safety, and limit overall impact. Additionally, any new proposed development will be purposefully designed to reduce natural resources fragmentation and impacts. The County is committed to continuing engagement with park users during design development.

Proposed Park improvements include:

- Park entrance and road improvements along Lexington Avenue/CSAH 17.
- Public access to the waterfront and the reconstruction of the parking lot.
- Park road and parking lot improvements.
- Trail improvements include adding more paved and natural surface trails. Additionally, the County is planning for the proposed future East Anoka County Regional Trail that will run through the park.
- Improvements to park's trails and features to meet American Disability Act (ADA) standards.
- Improvement to the maintenance facility.
- Beach improvements to increase the amount of shade structures, trees, picnic tables and grills, and an accessible path to the water.
- Installation of a 4-5 boat capacity dock system north of the beach and a self-serve canoe/kayak station with an ADA accessible launch for canoes and kayaks.
- Improvements to the existing two picnic pavilions including restrooms.
- Playground improvements to include play sensory equipment for kids with special needs, strength/speed challenge equipment for teens, and nature play elements.
- Expand on program offerings at Coon Lake Park to include hiking, fishing, and canoe/kayak programs with a focus on expanding programming for underrepresented community members.
- Improvements to signage and wayfinding.

The County recognizes that some of the recommended improvements are not eligible for Council funding such as the park entrance improvement. These ineligible items are highlighted in the long range plan. The County included these improvements in the Park plan as they are critical for the enhancement of the park to improve safety and visitor experience. Council staff concur with the assessment contained in the plan.



Figure 4. Coon Lake Regional Park Development Concept Map (Figure 4, LRP)



**Conflicts**

There are no anticipated land use conflicts with the existing surrounding land, which is mostly large rural residential and recreational state land.

There are a few conflicts raised during the public engagement process which include:

- concerns about boating behavior on the lake, which falls outside of the Parks Department’s jurisdiction.
- boat and swimmer conflicts near the beach outside the swim buoys; and
- vehicle and trailer parking along Lexington Avenue.

The County plans to address the first two bullet points by monitoring social media, analyze on-line





communications, evaluate complaints, educate park visitors, and provide education and enforcement through the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Conservation Officers if needed.

The County's Parks Department discussed the safety issues related to Lexington Avenue with the Anoka County Highway Department. While there are no current plans to widen the road or soften the sharp curves, the County has posted no parking signs by the park entrance as a temporary solution. This is to keep adequate visibility for entering and exiting the park.

Conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic will be minimized by ensuring safe crossings at road intersections. Treatments for these areas may include signing, striping, and other safety Improvements. Furthermore, signs within the park will advise visitors of potential conflict areas such as pedestrian cross-traffic.

### ***Public Services***

The Coon Lake Park plan does not anticipate additional non-recreational public services within the park. Water use for these facilities comes from an existing well that provides potable water to the shelters, restrooms, drinking fountains, and shower tower. The mechanical pump and variable frequency drive may need to be replaced in the future. A new well is not anticipated for another 20 years and a new septic system is anticipated to be replaced in 20-30 years.

### ***Operations***

The Anoka County Ordinance dated January 30, 2018, regulates all parks and trails under the jurisdiction of Anoka County. The County will continue to encourage safe and enjoyable user experiences through education, monitoring and collaboration between the Parks Services Unit, the County Sheriff's Office, local law enforcement (cities), and the Minnesota DNR.

Anoka County supports their part of the regional parks system with visitor fees, such as daily and annual park pass sales, pavilion rental fees and programming fees, as well as the parks operating budget. However, Coon Lake Park will not charge a daily entrance fee. The County may consider installing pay stations in the future to help supplement and fill funding gaps.

Anoka County has implemented several sustainable technologies that help foster conservation in the park. The County utilizes a remote building automation system that reduces energy in heating, cooling, lighting, and domestic water during unoccupied and off-peak periods. The Maintenance and Parks Services Units utility vehicle fleets include a growing number of electric powered vehicles. Additionally, turf irrigation systems employ a "rain sensor" technology to avoid using valuable water during periods of precipitation. Lastly, the County employs a refuse and recycling program through their Recycle & Resource Solutions Department.

### ***Partner Engagement***

The County's engagement plan proposed to engage local cities, community groups and organizations as well as the public in an inclusive and accessible manner. The County collected feedback from the local cities, watershed management organizations, and Indigenous tribes to help guide the plan development. The County engaged the cities of Columbus and East Bethel, Linwood Township, and the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization.

The County was unsuccessful in engaging the Indigenous community and is committed to doing more focused work to build and maintain this important relationship. The County Board of Commissioners and local jurisdictions provided feedback and support for this plan. Letters or resolutions of support for Coon Lake Regional Park are included in Attachments 1-4.

General themes from partner engagement include improving trails, safety, and amenities.

- Trails: Add more paved and loop trails with connections to and from the park and surrounding area.
- Safety: Alleviate high traffic volume along Lexington Avenue and improve park roads.
- Amenities: Include year-round park amenities and activities such as winter walking trails and other winter recreation uses.

## ***Public Engagement and Participation***

The County's goals for their public engagement plan were to build positive relationships with local communities and residents, build community ownership and understanding of the County's planning processes, making it easy for the public to participate. Additionally, the County believes it important to listen and embrace differing opinions, to create trust and meaningful interactions that result in quality input and feedback. The underrepresented community members and groups will further be discussed in the Equity Analysis section.

The County is dedicated to using a variety of engagement methods to make it easy for the community and/or people to participate. Community members can choose how, when, and where they participate.

The engagement process occurred in four steps.

- The County listened to what the public had to say about the park.
- The County shared with the public what County staff heard during engagement.
- The County developed a draft park concept plan based on the feedback received. Then, the County staff shared the draft plan with the public to ensure that comments received were reflected in the park plan.
- The County developed the draft long range plan and conducted a public comment process to capture additional community feedback and insights. After all this process, the County finalized the long range plan.

During the engagement process, the County conducted in-person meetings, virtual meetings, and surveys. The County provided information on the Plan Your Parks webpage and issued social media posts to receive feedback. The general public, park users, underrepresented community members, cities, and organizations were welcomed to review and provide comments on the Park plan during the public comment period from January 20 to March 17, 2023.

Additionally, the County continues to build and strengthen relationships with local cities, the Coon Lake Improvement District, Outdoor Latino, Outdoor Afro, and the Kiwi Snowmobile Club, a local Veteran's Group, as well as the public. Using the different engagement strategies, the County aims to increase the number of people engaged as well as increase the diversity of those engaged. The goal is to receive meaningful input. Findings from this public engagement process will be used to inform and amplify future engagements. Through these engagement efforts, the County worked with more than 25,000 people and had interactions with 4,500 people.

Engagement respondents provided their preferences and recommendations regarding park safety, trails, and amenities. General themes from public engagement include:

- Increase safety along Lexington Avenue and alleviate vehicular congestion.
- Provide more paved trails and natural surface trail loops within the park and trails.
- Provide winter walking trails.
- Support year-round amenities and activities, especially winter programs.
- Replace the existing play area with a nature play area that has adaptive/sensory play equipment and more climbing structures.
- More shade at the beach and picnic areas

## ***Equity Analysis***

### ***Project Data***

The County looked at the demographics using the Council's Regional Parks and Trail Equity Mapping Tool with a 3-mile service area for Coon Lake Park. The demographic areas around the Park includes the following ranges:

- 3-15% teenagers and young adults





- 7-17% people 65+
- 2-6% people with disabilities
- 0-16% Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians
- 4-19% of the population is below the 185% poverty level.

Additionally, the County used the MN Compass to find underrepresented community groups from a county wide perspective. The data indicated Anoka County is:

- 16% people of color,
- 10% people with disabilities, and
- 13% people ages 65+.

Anoka County recognizes the importance of engaging and building relationships with these underrepresented groups, to gain a better understanding of their needs and wants for parks, trails, and recreation. Regionally, the BIPOC population in the metro area is 28%, according to the 2020-2050 Council regional forecast (2021), which is higher than Anoka County's make-up, at about 16%. The forecasted growth in the BIPOC population is expected to increase to 39% in 2040 and 44% in 2050 for the metro region. The County anticipates a similar increase in demographics, making engagement of BIPOC and underrepresented populations more critical to this plan and future engagements.

### *Public Engagement*

The County is committed to engaging the underrepresented groups about parks, trails, and recreation activities as well as introducing them to the Regional Parks and Trails System and the opportunities that the system offers. The County aims to create a welcoming and inclusive space providing access for all to enjoy the outdoors, recreational activities, and natural areas.

The County's engagement goals, following the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation, focused on informing the public about the planning process. Additionally, the County sought to consult with the public, listening and gathering input to share back on what was heard and how it influenced the plan.

The County has relationships with the Coon Lake Improvement Association, Outdoor Latino and Outdoor Afro, the Kiwi Snowmobile Club, and a group for parents of kids with disabilities. The County received comments from the Lake Association and parent's group. However, the County did not receive feedback from Outdoor Latino or Outdoor Afro organizations because of the lack of awareness and unfamiliarity with the Coon Lake Regional Park. The County remains committed to focusing more of their efforts to create an authentic relationship and connection with these groups in the future.

The County could not meet in person with the underrepresented groups due to COVID-19. For engagement, they utilized alternative methods to engage underrepresented groups through virtual meetings, social media, surveys, and the Plan Your Park webpage. In addition, community groups were asked to share the information with their networks for additional outreach.

General themes from the underrepresented members and groups include having more trails and looped trails, more opportunities for fishing, road and water safety, and nature and sensory play amenities.

### *Evaluation Summary*

Many of the amenities and improvements outlined in the development concept plan were a direct result of the engagement process. The Park plan proposes to include more natural surface and paved trails in the park, more lighting at the boat launch parking lot, more shade at the beach, the canoe/kayak self-serve station, the dock system, and playground improvements with natural and sensory equipment.

The transparency of the engagement process seeks to ensure that underrepresented groups and the general public were heard. The incorporation of these comments is reflected in the



development concept that was a collaborative effort between the community and the County. The proposed recommendations intend to create better outcomes and provide park amenities for underrepresented groups.

The County will continue to work with the general public, park users, underrepresented communities, and partner agencies and organizations to implement the recommendations included in the Park plan as resources become available.

### ***Public Awareness***

The County will continue to work with the Metropolitan Council's efforts to help create and build awareness about the regional parks and trails system through public information maps, websites, social media, publications, and brochures. The County will continue community engagement activities throughout the year, to receive feedback, to provide parks and trails system information, and to promote park amenities and recreational activities throughout the County. Also, the Anoka County Parks' webpage identifies parks and trails transit availability.

### ***Accessibility***

Anoka County strives to provide equal access to all residents of the County and the region. There is a parking fee in many of the Anoka County's regional parks, however, Coon Lake Regional Park does not currently charge a fee. It is the County's intention to keep the park free of parking fees.

There is no transit service near the park and the nearest park and ride is over 5 miles away. Since there is a lack of connecting trails, most visitors are required to drive to the park. While transit access to the park is limited, the Anoka County Traveler Transit Link and Metro Mobility dial-a-ride services provide transportation for a minimal fee. Transit Link will pick up and drop off passengers anywhere there is an address or cross street, or anywhere along the regional trail if the vehicle does not have to back up. In addition, all the vehicles are equipped with bike racks so passengers wishing to carry their bike to the park could use Transit Link, which requires prescheduling a trip to and from their home.

The County is currently updating their Parks ADA Transition Plan, with the intent that any new development at the park will eliminate existing barriers. This work ensures that the park and any new facilities and amenities will conform to or surpass the ADA standards.

This Park plan calls out several areas for needed ADA improvements including the beach area, two ADA parking stalls, trails, and the boat launch area. Future park investments will help make these features accessible. In addition, a new ADA path will be constructed along the beach to the dock including a new ADA canoe/kayak launch.

### ***Natural Resources***

Anoka County has a strong commitment to preserving and restoring natural resources within its parks, trails, and open space system. The expansive 11,000-acre park system contains a diverse array of wildlife and natural areas including upland forests, deciduous woodlands, upland prairies, forested wetlands, shrub wetlands and open wetlands. The existing land cover in Coon Lake Park consists of mixed coniferous and deciduous tree cover, mixed hardwood swamp, oak forest, wet meadow, mixed emergent marsh and wetland, and upland forests.

To manage the natural areas and maintain the parks and trail's identity, Anoka County will provide:

- The protection, restoration, and enhancement of native plant and animal habitats.
- Protection and improvement of water and soil resources.
- Increase public awareness regarding the diverse natural resources in the area.
- Implement sustainable practices related to park development, operations, and maintenance.

General natural resources management strategies include identifying and assessing remnant plant and animal communities, monitoring rare species, controlling invasive species, restoring native plant and animal habitat, controlling detrimental insects and disease, wildlife management,



enhancing water quality, erosion control and cooperative land stewardship.

A sustainable development framework is utilized in all new park and trail development and redevelopment. This is to ensure that the land stewardship is beneficial to the existing ecology with an emphasis on maintaining the longevity of the park for public benefit. The following natural resource management components are vital in the County's planning efforts associated with the development and redevelopment of Coon Lake Regional Park:

- Be directly involved with the design, construction, and monitoring of the proposed park projects.
- Avoid and minimize adverse impacts to the plant and animal habitat to uplands, lakes and wetlands.
- Focus on incorporating local native plant species that complement the ecology.

Protection of wetlands and surface water resources is a top priority for the County. Mercury has been found in Coon Lake and in fish tissue. The County plans to work closely with various organizations such as the Lake Improvement District, the City of Columbus, the Minnesota DNR, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Council to ensure that the standards and requirements for resource protection are met. Additionally, the County will manage stormwater within the park on-site, and they will follow MPCA's best management practices.

The County's overall vegetation management goal is to identify restoration needs, and to define and implement adaptive management strategies that will sustain the biological diversity, production, and function of native plant communities. Vegetation management within the park will focus on preserving native plants, introducing local native plants, eradicate invasive species, maintain water quality within the watershed, and provide for plant and wildlife corridor connections.

Management and stewardship practices for natural resources maintenance in the park include but are not limited to:

- Periodic mowing
- Prescriptive fire management
- Invasive species removal and surveys
- Hazard tree assessments
- Seed collection and propagation
- Turf management
- Brush and tree maintenance
- Erosion control
- Forest health assessments and maintenance
- Wildlife surveys and management
- Interpretive signage



## **Consistency with Other Council Policies and Systems**

Council staff have reviewed and found the proposed master plans to be consistent with the other plans and policies of the Council, including *Thrive MSP 2040*, the *Water Resources Policy Plan*, the *Transportation Policy Plan*, and the *Housing Policy Plan*. Additional review comments are included below.

### Community Development – Land Use (Timothy Anderson, 651-602-1380)

When the proposed future 41-acre land is acquired and added to the regional park, Council staff recommends Anoka County to work with the City of Columbus to change the land use from Rural Residential to Park within the City's 2040 Plan. This will require a comprehensive plan amendment and must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for review and authorization.

### Community Development – Solar Resources and Access Protection (Timothy Anderson, 651-602-1380)

Council staff suggests Anoka County to consider installing solar powered features with any associated parking facilities, trail lighting, signage and wayfinding, maintenance buildings, pavilions, restrooms, shade structures, or shelters for the regional park.

### Environmental Services – Wastewater Services (Roger Janzig, 651-602-1119)

The proposed Park plan does not have an impact to the Metropolitan Disposal System. Coon Lake Regional Park have no existing facilities in this area and the plan does not propose new regional wastewater service.

### Environmental Services – Water Resources (Maureen Hoffman, 651-602-1279)

The plan appears to be accurate and complete, and potential water resource impacts appear to be addressed.

### Metropolitan Transportation Services (Joe Widing, 651-602-1822)

The plan appears to be consistent with regional transportation policies, and it will not impact the regional transportation system. When the future East Anoka County Regional Trail is being planned, staff recommend Anoka County to implement safe trail crossing at the park entrance by Lexington Avenue to ensure safe interactions between vehicles and trail users.

### Metro Transit (Scott Thompson, 612-349-7774)

As the Park plan notes, it is not being served by regular route transit service but is served by the Anoka County Traveler Dial-A-Ride, Metro Mobility, and Transit Link. The park appears to be ADA accessible by transit. We do not anticipate any impacts to transit.





**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
*Anoka County, Minnesota*

DATE: May 9, 2023

RESOLUTION #2023-49

OFFERED BY COMMISSIONER: Reinert

**RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF THE  
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the county; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the Metropolitan Council, local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city of Columbus; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated Coon Lake a regional park; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which includes reconstruction and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires an updated long range plan for this regional park be approved by the county and the Metropolitan Council prior to its adoption; and,

WHEREAS, the local city representatives, the general public, area residents and local businesses were given the opportunity to review and comment on the plan:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Anoka County, by and through its Board of Commissioners, does hereby adopt the Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan, which is dated May 2023, a copy of which is on file in the Anoka County Parks Department, Bunker Hills Activities Center, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd., NW, Andover, MN 55304, and authorizes its submission to the Metropolitan Council for its approval so that park development will be eligible for future Metropolitan Council grant funding.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution and long-range plan be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council, Anoka County Parks Department, and the cities of Columbus, East Bethel, and Linwood Township.

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF ANOKA ) ss

I, Dee Guthman, Deputy County Administrator, Anoka County, Minnesota, hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the resolution of the county board of said county with the original record thereof on file in the Administration Office, Anoka County, Minnesota, as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said board at a meeting duly held on May 9, 2023, and that the same is a true and correct copy of said original record and of the whole thereof, and that said resolution was duly passed by said board at said meeting.

Witness my hand and seal this 9th day of May 2023.

  
DEE GUTHMAN  
DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

	YES	NO
DISTRICT #1 – LOOK	X	
DISTRICT #2 – BRAASTAD	X	
DISTRICT #3 – REINERT	X	
DISTRICT #4 – SCHULTE	X	
DISTRICT #5 – GAMACHE	X	
DISTRICT #6 – JEPSON	X	
DISTRICT #7 – MEISNER	X	



**CITY OF EAST BETHEL  
EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-30**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S  
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK  
LONG RANGE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city; and,

**WHEREAS**, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and,

**WHEREAS**, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,


**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of East Bethel representatives have reviewed and gave input on the plan.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA THAT:** the City of East Bethel hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

Adopted this 24th day of April, 2023 by the City Council of the City of East Bethel.

CITY OF EAST BETHEL

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tim Harrington, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Davis, City Administrator





**TOWN OF LINWOOD  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-14**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S  
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary, and in the public interest for the County of Anoka, to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the county; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and

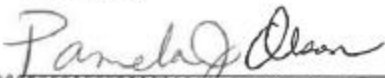
WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and

WHEREAS, the Linwood Township Board of Supervisors have reviewed and given input on the plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Linwood Township hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LINWOOD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
ON THE 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2023.

**ATTEST:**

  
Pamela J. Olson, Clerk  
PAMELA J. OLSON  
Clerk, Linwood Twp, Anoka County, MN  
Notarial Officer (ex-officio notary public)  
My term is indeterminate  
Linwood Township Resolution #2023-14

**LINWOOD TOWNSHIP**

  
Robert Millerbernd, Chairman

**RESOLUTION 23-05**

**CITY OF COLUMBUS  
COUNTY OF ANOKA  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S  
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and,


WHEREAS, City of Columbus representatives have reviewed and gave input on the plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Columbus hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Columbus, Minnesota, this 26th day of April 2023.

By:   
Jesse H. Preiner  
Its: Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Elizabeth Mursko, City Administrator

