



IMAGINE²⁰₅₀

2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan 60% DRAFT

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Colin Kelly, Tracey Kinney, and Kevin Phan

June 6, 2024

metro council.org



Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Advice



May 2, 2024 meeting

Overall

- Consider the addition of a graphic that outlines the relationship between the Planning Handbook, Grant Admin Guide and Policy Chapter

System Plan

- Cultural Landscape classification should include belonging and identity to nature and the outdoors. This could inform interpretation

Climate

- Metrics are needed to track progress and advance implementation

Recreation Facilities and Programming

- Safety on trails is important to consider with e-bikes being more common
- Trail coordination and wayfinding are important to build awareness of the regional system
- With the removal of the recreation activities list, how do we define what is regional vs. local?

Community Development Committee Advice



May 6, 2024 meeting

Introduction

- History is important to learn from and we all have a responsibility to remediate past harms
- How can we more holistically assess access to parks and trails? Could programming help bridge existing service gaps?
- Recommendation to include recent immigrants in demographic and equity considerations

Climate

- Support the idea of using metrics to measure progress
- Climate citizen science is a tangible way to engage visitors

Finance

- How can funding distribution be restructured to broaden funding opportunities

Regional Park Implementing Agency Feedback



May 16, 2024 Partner Meeting

Overall

- With a lot of new content proposed, it is important to keep agencies engaged throughout the process to build buy-in

Introduction

- History is important, but also consider the way some jurisdictions will react to the language
- How to build support for the Regional Parks and Trails Mission, Vision, and Values from agency boards?

Natural Systems

- Own the Council's role in research

Climate Resilience

- Could the Council focus actions in this section on what other Council divisions could do with parks to promote resiliency?

**In addition to the Partner Meeting feedback, Implementing Agencies provided detailed comments on the 60% draft that will help inform the 90% August draft.*

Key Changes Proposed Since May



Regional Parks and Trails Policy Chapter

- Moved “Costs to Complete the System” to System Plan
- Continued development and engagement on Cultural Landscape Sub-Classification
- Continued identification of work plan items

Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook (RPTPH)

- Developed a 60% Draft for June MPOSC discussion.
- Added and revised procedure-level language that was moved from existing 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
- Added amendment process and schedule for updating

Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook (RPTPH)



RPTPH Overview

- Complementary document to the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Chapter
- Contains procedural and contextual language outlining Regional Parks and Trails System processes such as:
 - Update procedure
 - Systems Additions Process and Criteria
 - Long-Range Plan Requirements
 - Long-Range Plan Amendment Processes
 - System Protection Processes (Local Comprehensive Plans, Utilities Planning, Land Conversions)
 - Revised Recreational Activities and Facilities Evaluation Process



Long-Range Plan Requirements

Existing Plan Requirements

RPPP Chapter 5: Planning

- Boundaries
- Acquisition Costs
- Stewardship plan
- Demand forecast
- Development concept
- Conflicts
- Public services
- Operations
- Partner engagement
- Public engagement and participation
- Equity analysis
- Public awareness
- Accessibility
- Natural resources

Proposed Plan Requirements

RPTPH Section 5: Planning

- Engagement
 - Demand Forecast
 - Public Awareness
 - Engagement, Participation, and Equity Analysis
- Development Concept  
 - Boundaries
 - Acquisition Costs
 - Development Concept
 - Accessibility
 - Public Services
- Natural Systems and Cultural Landscapes
 - Stewardship Plan
 - Natural and Cultural Resources
 - Mississippi Corridor Critical Area

Section Three: Natural Systems



Natural Systems Policy and Actions

Policy: Identify, protect, restore, and maintain lands with high-quality natural features, access to water, and/or restoration potential as part of the Regional Parks and Trails System

Action 1: Locating and Acquisition Priorities

Work with Implementing Agencies to locate and acquire lands with natural features, access to water, or restoration potential for conservation, recreation, and protection.

Action 2: Equity and Geographic Balance

Identify new regional park and trail lands in areas not well served by our current system.

Action 3: Natural Systems Research

Provide the Regional Park and Trail Implementing Agencies with research and data that will better inform restoration and protection of Natural Systems.

Action 4: Maintenance of Natural Systems

The Council will convene and coordinate efforts with implementing agencies and external partners to protect, restore, and maintain natural systems across the Regional Parks and Trails System.

Natural Systems Key Changes



Action 1: Locating and Acquisition

- Action reframes existing “Siting and Acquisition” Policy and Strategies from 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
- Action describes the three major priority areas for locating and acquiring lands:
 - Natural Systems Foundation
 - Geographic Balance
 - Equity
- Language added to Parks and Trails Planning Handbook that describes system additions process

Action 2: Geographic Balance and Equity

- Modified existing Chapter 4 Strategy 2 – Geographic Balance by clarifying equity component.
- Currently working on defining what “Areas not well served” means. Considering a holistic approach that involves factors such as includes:
 - Underrepresented communities
 - Recreational opportunities gaps
 - Distance to regional parks and trails

Section Four: Climate Resiliency



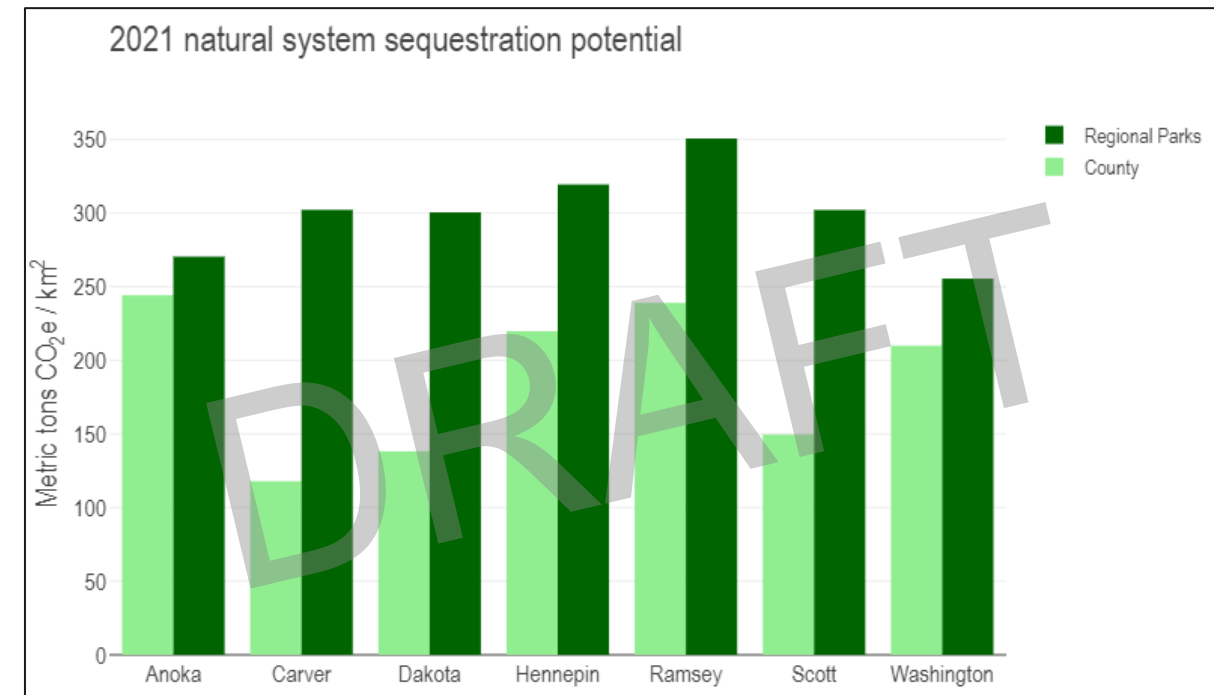
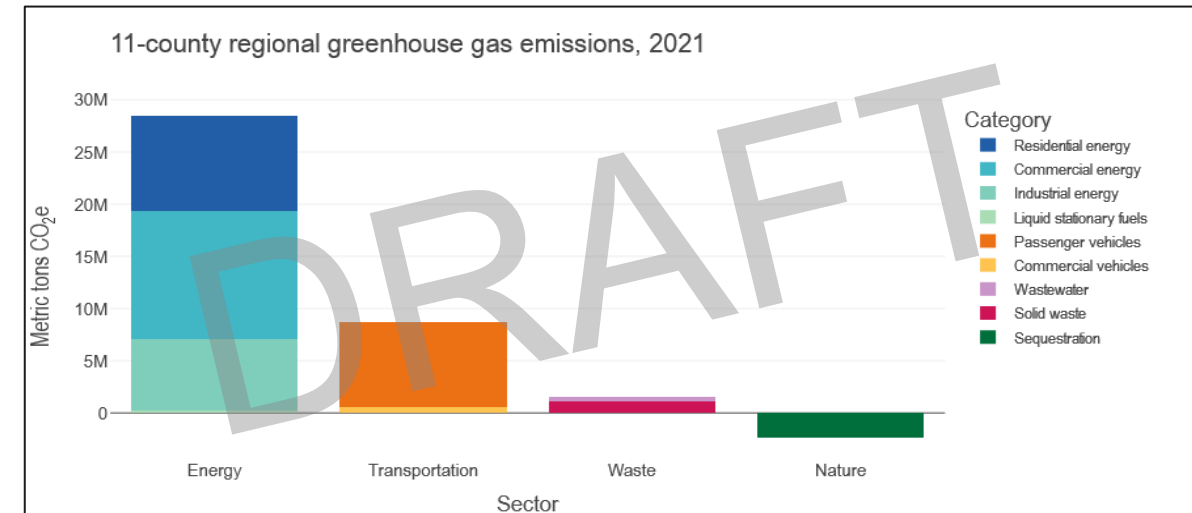
Climate Resiliency

Addition of Climate Metrics

- Desire to use metrics and quantitative data to track progress
- Council Parks staff working in partnership with research team to develop preliminary baselines for the Regional Parks and Trails
- More robust data on existing and potential carbon sequestration and stock will likely come out after the planning process
- Additional metrics and tools will likely be developed from the resulting data

From Preliminary Analysis:

- Regional Parks make up 3.9% of the 7-County Area's landcover
- Regional Parks account for 5.5% of the area's sequestration potential and 7.2% of the carbon stock potential



Questions, Discussion, Advice

Questions:

- What excites you about the new changes being proposed?
- Is there anything missing from these sections?
- What recommendations do you have for Council staff?
- What are your questions?





Thank you

Colin Kelly

Planning Analyst, Regional Parks
colin.kelly@metc.state.mn.us

Tracey Kinney

Senior Planner, Regional Parks
tracey.kinney@metc.state.mn.us

Kevin Phan

Planner, Regional Parks
kevin.phan@metc.state.mn.us

