



Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan, Saint Paul
Business Item 2024-223
Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



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Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan

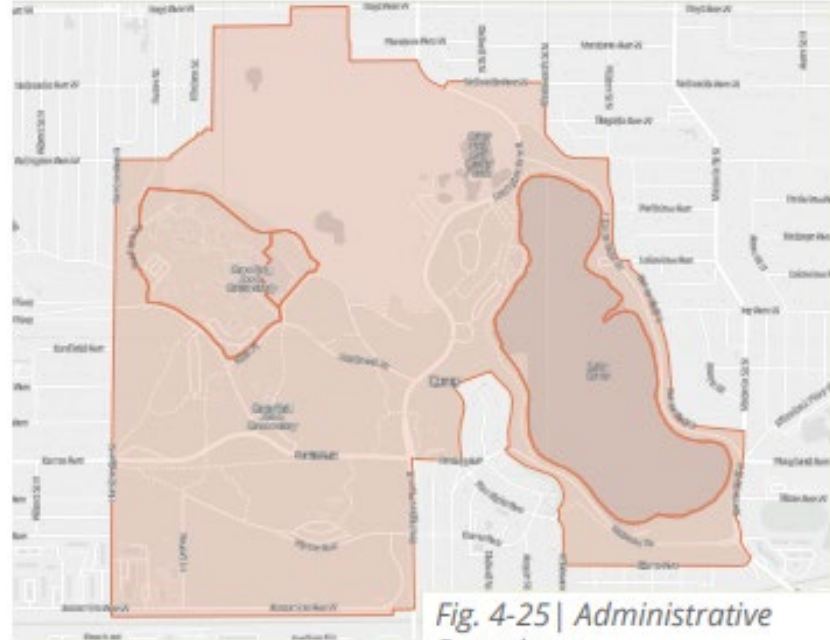
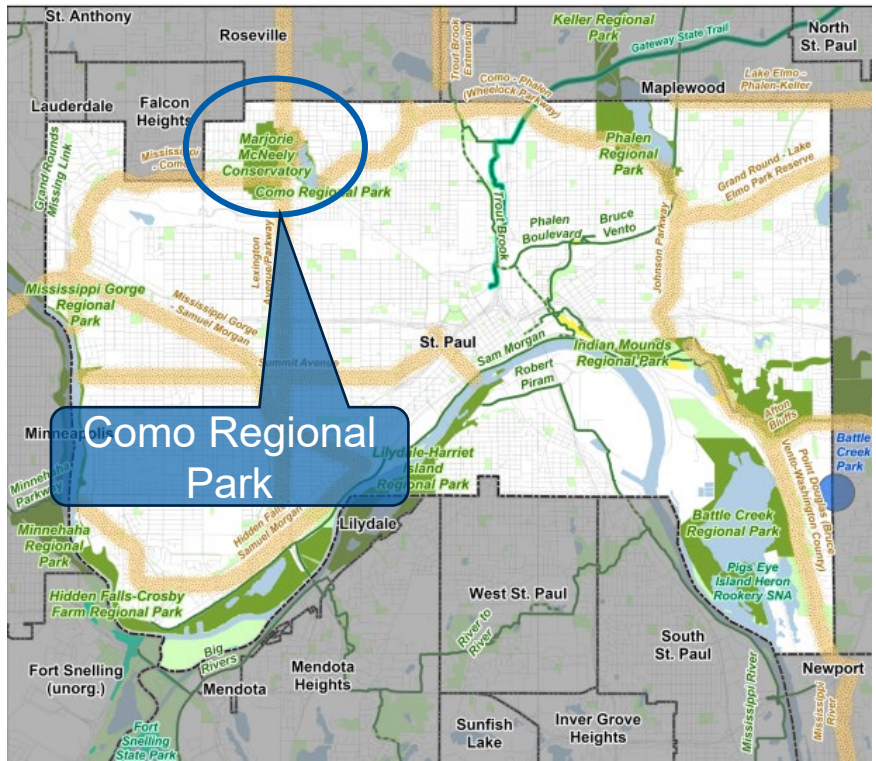


Fig. 4-25 | Administrative Boundary

Administrative Boundary

The administrative boundary includes all areas of the Regional Park including enterprise facilities and special recreation features.

- Numbers Correspond to Existing Regional Park System Facilities in Tables 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5
- Park Reserves (Open to the Public)
 - Park Reserves (Not Open to the Public)
 - Regional Trails (Open to the Public)
 - - - Regional Trails (Not Open to the Public)
 - County Boundaries
 - City and Township Boundaries
 - Lakes and Rivers

Equity Analysis

Focused Engagement:

- Prioritized future users and local community members.
- Engaged youth visitors through focus groups with Saint Paul Youth Commission and students of Metro Deaf School, Como High School, and Hmong College Prep Academy.
- Reached local groups through existing local events, including open houses.

Advice Shaped the Plan:

The top five priorities identified by stakeholders are:

- Improve safety and ADA accessibility at trail crossings.
- Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native plantings for habitat.
- Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, and drinking fountains.
- Consolidate trail system, resurface and widen paths, improve accessibility to lakeshore and other park features.
- Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.



Partner Engagement



Partner Engagement

- Convened a Technical Advisory Committee consisting of City staff from different departments to propose ideas.
- Collaboration with Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) to improve the water quality of Como Lake.

Partner Engagement Themes

- Improve and update wayfinding
- Explore adding amenities like a possible dog park or more restrooms throughout the park
- Potential location for CRWD stormwater project
- Improved trail connectivity within and adjacent to the park
- Exploring the idea of closing East Como Lake Drive and the potential benefits and drawbacks

Technical Advisory Committee meeting

Public Engagement



Public Engagement Efforts

- Pop-up events with the local community
- Convening a Design Advisory Committee
- Hosting an online engagement tool and surveys.

Public Engagement Themes

- Improve trail wayfinding and signage
- Improve access and circulation throughout the park and connect to local neighborhoods
- Add amenities and explore new recreational offerings
- Consider the closure of East Como Lake Drive
- Better understand indigenous history and significance of land at Como Regional Park and work with local groups

Public Engagement Event at Como Regional Park

Development Concept

20 Year Concept

Project Area



Fig. 4-21 | Overall Park Map

FOCUS AREAS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| ① Como Lake North | ⑤ East Como Lake Drive |
| ② Lakeside Pavilion Area | ⑥ Picnic Grounds |
| ③ Historic Streetcar Station | ⑦ Woodland Outdoor Classroom and Aquatic Facility |
| ④ Nagasaki Road | |

- Special Recreation Features**
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory*
- Enterprise Facilities**
Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*

*Not-included or partially included in analysis

- **High Priority (implemented within 10 years):**
 - Increase trail safety through improved ADA accessibility and adding lighting where appropriate
 - Plant trees and native plantings for shade and habitat restoration
 - Incorporate stormwater best management practices to trail infrastructure
- **Medium Priority (10-15 years):**
 - Consolidate trail systems, improve circulation to the lake, and widen high traffic areas
 - Update lakeside pavilion to make it more visitor friendly, provide access to the lake, and improve circulation (further study needed)
 - Increase seasonal programming opportunities
- **Low Priority (15-20 years):**
 - Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive (further study needed)
 - Implement two-way bike traffic along the Grand Round route and around Como Lake
 - Improve wayfinding and signage across the park
 - Explore alternative recreational activities (disc golf, skills park, dog park)

Natural Resources



Como Lake

- Como Lake is listed on the Priority Waters List, which provides significant recreational and tourism value to the region.
- Historically has poor water quality due to high phosphorus runoff and algal blooms.
- CRWD and Saint Paul are working together to improve water quality through restoring shorelines, continued monitoring, and stormwater best management practices.
- Proposal to install new sand filter and bioretention basin in the northwestern Golf Course pond to remove phosphorus before leaving the area.

Scenic Overlook at Como Regional Park

Costs



Total Costs

Plan implementation and improvements:

The cost is anticipated to be \$57.9 million on the low end and \$96.4 million on the high end, with an anticipated annual project cost of approximately \$65,000.

Acquisitions: \$421,603

Operations & maintenance annual cost: \$1.450 million annually

People running through Como Regional Park in the winter.

Rationale for Proposed Action

The Park Reserve Plan is consistent with the requirements of the:

- 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan
 - Chapter 5, Planning, Strategy 1
 - Other Council policies



Lakeside Pavilion at Como Regional Park

Proposed Action



That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan.
2. Advise the City of Saint Paul to consider implementing the recommendations for solar resources and population forecasts in the Advisory Comments section of the business item.
3. Require the City of Saint Paul, prior to initiating any new development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

Historic Streetcar Station at Como Regional Park.



Thank you

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110% Radical Sign at Como Regional Park