

# Information Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



**Meeting Date:** December 5, 2024

## Topic

Imagine 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan: Public Comment Summary Continued

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Minn. Stats. §§ 473.145 and 473.147

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst (651-602-1361)  
Tracey Kinney, Planning Analyst (651-602-1029)  
Emmett Mullin, Parks Manager (651-602-1360)  
Kevin Phan, Planner (651-602-1345)

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Parks

## Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed at this time.

## Background

On October 7, 2024, the public comment period closed for the draft Imagine 2050 plan, the Met Council's regional development guide. Imagine 2050 is made up of each of the Met Council's system and policy plans, including regional parks and trails, transportation, water resources, land use, and housing.

At the November 7, 2024, Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) meeting, Council staff shared a summary of public comments on the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan (policy plan), proposed policy plan modifications, and outlined next steps. Public comments and proposed policy plan modifications will continue to be the focus at the December 5, 2024, MPOSC meeting.

In addition to this information item and an accompanying presentation, a redline version of the near-final draft policy plan and a clean version of the draft planning handbook are included in the materials for the December 5, 2024, MPOSC meeting. Council staff continue to seek feedback and advice from the Commission on the draft policy plan and draft Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook (planning handbook).

On January 9, 2025, Council staff will share a business item for MPOSC's consideration, including a summary of significant plan changes, the draft final parks policy plan – including both redline and clean versions – the draft final planning handbook, and a public comment report. Council staff will share the same materials with the Community Development Committee (CDC) on January 21, 2025. Imagine 2050, including each of the Council's policy plans, is proposed for adoption by the Metropolitan Council on February 12, 2025 (Table 1).

Table 1: Schedule for finalizing Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, Planning Handbook and Imagine 2050

Date/Timing	Milestone
December 5, 2024	Continue summary of public comments on the draft Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan and proposed policy plan modifications (MPOSC information item)
January 9, 2025	Final Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, Planning Handbook, and Public Comment report (MPOSC business item)
January 21, 2025	Final Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, Planning Handbook, and Public Comment report (CDC business item)
February 12, 2025	Metropolitan Council adoption of <i>Imagine 2050</i> , including the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan (MC business item)

The draft policy plan is the result of over two years of dialogue with numerous discussions with regional park implementing agencies, MPOSC, CDC, Committee of the Whole, Land Use Advisory Committee, and Metropolitan Council as well as extensive outreach to prioritized communities and the public. Engagement with MPOSC on *Imagine 2050* began in August 2022, with focused discussions on updating the *Regional Parks Policy Plan* beginning in October 2022. A summary of MPOSC engagement appears in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Regional Development Guide engagement with Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission

Date	Focus
October 6, 2022	Regional vision, values, and goals; kick-off the Regional Parks Policy Plan update process; gather input on key topics and issues to inform policy plan workgroups
March 2, 2023	Council-endorsed regional values and vision statements; Regional Parks Policy Plan project timeline; proposal for regional park implementing agency-Council policy plan workgroups.
April 6, 2023	Small group activities focused on developing vision, mission, and values for the regional parks and trails system.
June 1, 2023	Developing shared regional goals and policy area objectives
August 3, 2023	Regional goals; regional parks and trails system vision, mission, and values; the development of a community, stakeholder and public engagement plan; launch of two more policy plan workgroups
November 2, 2023	Outcomes of policy plan workgroups; draft regional parks and trails objectives; preview remaining policy plan workgroups
January 4, 2024	Proposal for engaging MPOSC in early 2024, schedule for finalizing the Regional Development Guide, revised set of draft parks objectives
February 1, 2024	Revised set of draft parks objectives, subset of the draft objectives surrounding the Climate and Natural Systems topic, local forecasts
March 7, 2024	Revised draft regional parks and trails objectives; emerging ideas on policies and actions; background information on the existing Regional Parks Policy Plan and how components of it may



Date	Focus
	change going forward
April 4, 2024	Revised regional parks and trails objectives; emerging ideas on regional parks and trails policies and actions; emerging thinking on a Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook
May 2, 2024	Overview of the draft 60% Regional Parks and Trails Plan; deeper dives into section 7 (Recreation, Facilities, and Programming) and section 8 (Finance)
June 6, 2024	Overview of the draft Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook; deeper dives into section 3 (Natural Systems) and section 4 (Climate Resilience)
July 11, 2024	Deeper dives into section 2 (System plan), section 5 (Planning), and section 6 (System protection), and associated content in the draft planning handbook
August 1, 2024	Overview of the public comment (90%) draft of the 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, with a particular focus on new and different elements of the draft 2050 plan
October 3, 2024	Update on the draft Regional Parks and Trails Planning Handbook, with a particular focus on section 5 (Planning) and regional trail boundary adjustment criteria
November 7, 2024	Summary of public comments on the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan, proposed plan modifications, and next steps

Minnesota law requires the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the Regional Parks Policy Plan at least every four years (Minnesota Statutes, section 473.147). Completion of the policy plan update, as an integrated part of *Imagine 2050*, is expected in early 2025.

