

# Information Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting Date: July 11, 2024

## Topic

Draft 2050 regional parks and trails policy plan and planning handbook

<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	Minn. Stats. §§ 473.145 and 473.147
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst (651-602-1360) Tracey Kinney, Planning Analyst (651-602-1029) Kevin Phan, Planner (651-602-1333)
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development / Regional Parks

## Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed at this time.

## Background

The Met Council continues its work on developing the 2050 regional development guide, *Imagine 2050*. The current regional development guide, *Thrive MSP 2040*, along with the Council's system and policy plans, help guide the orderly growth and development of the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The policy plans include the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*, the *2040 Water Resources Policy Plan*, and the *2040 Housing Policy Plan*.

Like each of the other Met Council systems and policy areas, regional parks and trails policy will be integrated directly into the regional development guide during this planning cycle. As such, regional parks and trails policy will be one of several chapters in *Imagine 2050*.

At the July 11, 2024 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) meeting, Met Council staff will share:

- A summary of advice from the June 6 MPOSC and June 20 regional park implementing agency director's meetings on the draft regional parks and trails policy chapter and regional parks and trails planning handbook.
- A deeper dive into the System plan, Planning, and System protection sections of the draft policy chapter, and associated content in the draft planning handbook.

Content included in each of the policy areas of *Imagine 2050* is intended to be primarily oriented to objectives, policies, and actions. Content that is contextual, procedural, or highly detailed is proposed to reside in the regional parks and trails planning handbook.

The July MPOSC meeting continues a series of focused discussions on the draft regional parks and trails policy chapter that began in early 2023 and will continue through 2024. Met Council staff will continue to refine both the draft policy chapter and draft planning handbook as a result of input received from MPOSC, regional park implementing agencies, and others. A public comment (90%) draft regional parks and trails chapter will be shared with MPOSC in August 2024 (Table 1). A summary of MPOSC engagements related to the draft policy chapter and planning handbook

follows.

In March 2023, staff shared Met Council-endorsed values and vision statements for the regional development guide with MPOSC. Staff also shared a summary of the regional parks policy plan update work to-date, including a project timeline and a plan for working directly with regional park implementing agencies via a series of workgroups.

In April 2023, staff led MPOSC through small group activities focused on developing vision, mission, and value statements for the regional parks and trails system. An implementing agency-Met Council workgroup continued this work.

In June 2023, staff sought MPOSC’s advice on developing shared regional goals and policy area objectives. Policy area objectives connect regional goals to regional parks and trails policies and actions.

In August 2023, staff sought MPOSC’s feedback and advice on community engagement activities, and regional parks and trails system vision, mission, and values. Staff also shared updates on regional goals and the launch of two additional policy plan workgroups.

In November 2023, staff shared outcomes of policy plan workgroups and draft regional parks and trails objectives with MPOSC. The commission provided feedback and advice on draft parks and trails objectives.

In January 2024, staff shared a proposal for engaging MPOSC for the first five months of 2024 and sought advice on a revised set of draft parks and trails objectives.

In February 2024, staff shared a revised set of draft parks objectives based on input from MPOSC and regional park implementing agencies. Again, MPOSC provided advice on priorities to achieve draft parks and trails objectives.

In April 2024, staff shared feedback from MPOSC, regional park implementing agencies, and the Met Council’s Committee of the Whole. These discussions helped staff further refine and shape draft policies and actions.

In May 2024, staff shared an overview of the 60% draft regional parks and trails policy chapter with MPOSC, along with deeper dives into recreation, facilities, and programming, and finance sections of the draft policy chapter. The 60% draft was the result of numerous discussions with Council committees, regional park implementing agencies, and extensive outreach to prioritized communities.

In June 2024, staff shared an overview of the 60% draft regional parks and trails planning handbook with MPOSC, along with deeper dives into the natural systems and climate resilience sections of the draft policy chapter.

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). The policy plan was last updated in December 2020. Council adoption of the policy plan update, as an integrated part of *Imagine 2050*, is expected in early 2025.

*Table 1: Proposed Summer 2024 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission Engagement*

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Proposed Topics, Focus</b>
<b>July 11, 2024</b>	<b><i>Imagine 2050</i></b> : Content further developed <b>Focus</b> : System plan (section 2), Planning (section 5), and System protection (section 6)
<b>August 1, 2024</b>	<b><i>Imagine 2050</i></b> : Public comment (90%) draft regional parks and trails chapter <b>Focus</b> : Workplan (section 9)

