

Business Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Committee Meeting Date: July 1, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: July 9, 2025

Business Item: 2025-161 SW

Annual Metropolitan Regional Parks Operation & Maintenance Allocation

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|----------------------------------|---|
| District(s), Member(s): | All |
| Policy/Legal Reference: | Minn. Stats. §§ 473.351 and 297A.94(e)(3); 2050 Regional Parks Policy Plan, Section 5 |
| Staff Prepared/Presented: | Nicole Clapp, Grants Manager (651-602-1723); Rachel Neuville, Budget Analyst (651-602-1216) |
| Division/Department: | Community Development / Finance and Administration |

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission reports to the Metropolitan Council the Regional Parks and Trails System state fiscal year (SFY) 2026 Operations and Maintenance Funding requests.

Background

By law, the Council serves as the fiscal agent to distribute state funds to the ten Regional Park Implementing Agencies for operation and maintenance costs.

[Minn. Stat. § 473.351](#) requires that by July 15 of each year, the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC) reports to Council “the funding requests from the implementing agencies based on the actual expenditures made” in the previous year.

Staff conduct a review of the Agencies’ operation and maintenance (O&M) submittals to determine eligibility of claimed costs and the appropriate dollar distribution. The statute directs that the funding distribution be based on three factors:

- 40% is based on the *use* that each Agency’s regional parks and trails has in proportion to the total use of the Regional Parks and Trails System. Each agency’s total count of visitors comes from the 2023 Regional Parks and Trails System Annual Use Estimate produced by the Council.
- 40% is based on the O&M *expenditures* made by each Agency in proportion to the total O&M expenditures for the entire Regional Parks and Trails System. These numbers were determined following the eligibility review of 2023 calendar year Agency submittals.
- 20% is based on the *acreage* for each Agency’s regional parks and trails in proportion to the acreage of the entire Regional Parks and Trails System. The numbers are based on 2023 acreage as reported to the Council by each Agency.

The analysis this year will program \$11,740,000 appropriated by the State Legislature for state fiscal year 2026. The appropriation includes \$2,540,000 from the state General Fund and an estimated \$9,200,000 in lottery-in-lieu of sales tax revenue (LIL).

Table 1 below shows the Agencies’ estimated distribution amounts for O&M funding for SFY 2026,

as based on their reported actual eligible expenditures. The calculations underlying this year's distribution are attached in Table 2.

Table 1. State Fiscal Year 2026 O&M Distribution

| Agency | Reported Actual 2024 O&M Expenses | Estimated Distribution Amount |
|--|--|--|
| Anoka County | \$9,309,883.98 | \$980,207 |
| Bloomington Parks | \$863,310.91 | \$94,087 |
| Carver County | \$1,760,919.36 | \$248,300 |
| Dakota County | \$9,913,013.13 | \$768,058 |
| Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) | \$28,912,771.00 | \$2,897,284 |
| Ramsey County | \$8,673,636.24 | \$1,063,855 |
| Saint Paul Parks | \$24,753,617.35 | \$1,504,758 |
| Scott County | \$2,496,588.41 | \$214,842 |
| Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) - Hennepin & Scott | \$51,206,536.95 | \$3,468,186 |
| Washington County | \$5,811,365.63 | \$500,423 |
| TOTAL | \$143,701,642.96 | \$11,740,000 |

Rationale

The State Legislature funds a portion of the expenses necessary to run the Regional Parks and Trails System because the System draws a significant percentage of its visits from people that live outside of the political jurisdiction of the park or trail, including outside of the Twin Cities metropolitan area and the State of Minnesota. The O&M appropriation comes from the State in its entirety; the Council neither matches the funds, nor withholds any for administrative costs. The statute requires the Council to review the claims presented by each Agency for eligibility and MPOSC to report the claimed costs to the Council, so the amounts are paid appropriately.

Thrive Lens Analysis

On Feb. 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Under the Thrive lens, the Thrive outcome of stewardship is supported by helping the ten Regional Park Implementing Agencies care for existing infrastructure within the Twin Cities' world-class Regional Parks and Trails System.

The Thrive outcome of livability is supported by investing in the System and providing access to outdoor recreation, enhanced quality of life, and opportunities for increased health and wellness.

Funding

Operations and Maintenance funding has been appropriated by the State of Minnesota for SFY 2026. Final passthrough amounts will be based upon actual revenues received.

*Table 2. O&M Calculations by Agency, SFY 2026

| Agency | Weighted Regional Park Acreage | Acres % | Regional Park Visits | Visits % | Regional Park Expenditures | Expenditure % | Funding % | FY26 General Fund Lump Sum | FY26 Lottery-in- Lieu Estimate | Projected total FY2026 distribution |
|----------------------|---|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Anoka | 6056.89 | 15.77% | 4,265,000 | 6.51% | \$9,309,884 | 6.48% | 8.35% | \$212,072 | \$768,135 | \$980,207 |
| Bloomington | 165.55 | 0.43% | 778,000 | 1.19% | \$863,311 | 0.60% | 0.80% | \$20,356 | \$73,731 | \$94,087 |
| Carver | 993.74 | 2.59% | 1,814,000 | 2.77% | \$1,760,919 | 1.23% | 2.11% | \$53,721 | \$194,579 | \$248,300 |
| Dakota | 3,878.69 | 10.10% | 2,888,000 | 4.41% | \$9,913,013 | 6.90% | 6.54% | \$166,173 | \$601,885 | \$768,058 |
| MPRB | 2,935.08 | 7.64% | 24,741,000 | 37.76% | \$28,912,771 | 20.12% | 24.68% | \$626,840 | \$2,270,444 | \$2,897,284 |
| Ramsey | 5,034.13 | 13.11% | 6,595,000 | 10.06% | \$8,673,636 | 6.04% | 9.06% | \$230,170 | \$833,685 | \$1,063,855 |
| Saint Paul | 2,482.42 | 6.46% | 7,592,000 | 11.59% | \$24,753,617 | 17.23% | 12.82% | \$325,561 | \$1,179,197 | \$1,504,758 |
| Scott | 1,519.58 | 3.96% | 563,000 | 0.86% | \$2,496,588 | 1.74% | 1.83% | \$46,482 | \$168,360 | \$214,842 |
| TRPD/Scott County | 1,998.93 | 5.21% | 581,000 | 0.89% | \$3,444,215 | 2.40% | 2.35% | \$59,802 | \$216,606 | \$276,408 |
| TRPD/Hennepin Co | 10,329.61 | 26.90% | 13,945,800 | 21.28% | \$47,762,322 | 33.24% | 27.19% | \$690,554 | \$2,501,224 | \$3,191,778 |
| Washington | 3,007.52 | 7.83% | 1,767,000 | 2.70% | \$5,811,366 | 4.04% | 4.26% | \$108,269 | \$392,154 | \$500,423 |
| Totals | 38,402.14 | 100.00% | 65,529,800 | 100.00% | \$143,701,643 | 100.00% | 100.00% | \$2,540,000 | \$9,200,000 | \$11,740,000 |

*There are small discrepancies in some totals due to rounding