

**Minutes of the
MEETING OF THE
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION**

Tuesday, May 7, 2013

Committee Members Present: Barbara Schmidt, Seyon Nyanwleh, Daniel Shlaferman, Tony Yarusso, Dean Johnston, Bob Moeller, Carrie Wasley, Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison

Committee Members Absent: Emily Piper

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Johnston called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 3:35 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2013.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Without a quorum present, Committee Chair Johnston postponed the approval of the Agenda and Minutes.

PUBLIC INVITATION: Invitation to interested person to address the Commission on matters not on the agenda.

None.

BUSINESS

Discussion of Thrive MSP 2040 - Continued from April 30th MPOSC Meeting - Dan Marckel

Marckel continued the discussion from last week's meeting. He began by recapping what was talked about and reviewing the handout with an overview containing the Mission, Outcomes, Principles, and Goals, as well as four issues to be discussed including:

- Regionally Significant Economic Places
- Water Supply and a Thriving Region
- Land Use and Transit
- Affordable Housing Priority, Location, and Need

Last week's discussion covered Regionally Significant Economic Places.

Wasley asked how these areas were selected. Marckel stated that these areas were derived from round one of input from Thrive discussions and subsequent staff discussions. The discussions elevated these areas to having true policy questions yet to be asked. Wulff added that these are areas that still have competing policy questions. Marckel stated that these are areas that have open and active pressing discussions.

Marckel next discussed Water Supply and a Thriving Region and asked if there are areas related to parks that the group would like to discuss.

Wasley stated she is concerned about surface water versus ground water and noted that there is no regional plan for water. She felt that the issue of ground water is the bigger issue and asked if there are any plans to develop a regional plan for ground water.

Marckel noted that this is why this topic is in the mix right now. It has become increasingly clear that ground water is definitely a regionally significant issue. He noted that one of their questions is – who is in charge of it?

Moeller asked, from a goal standpoint, have we gotten far enough along to set measurable goals for ground water/aquifer levels, etc.

Wulff stated that looking at the map, with the modeling of aquifers, it shows areas with the most trouble and noted they are the ones located closest to the river. She stated that the bigger question is who coordinates that effort – the State, DNR, Met Council – and how should it be funded.

Johnston asked if this topic is currently being addressed by the Legislature. Wulff responded that the Legislature has discussed increasing what they charge for water that comes out of the ground to fund more research and discussion.

Wasley feels this is getting attention because of the White Bear Lake situation and is not going to go away anytime soon. She stated they are looking at how to fix it so it doesn't happen elsewhere. Stefferud discussed the role of Environmental Services at the Met Council, who are actively involved with this issue. Wulff stated the question, is the Met Council the one who should be leading the fight on this or some other agency and how much should be in the Thrive MSP 2040 Plan.

Wasley stated that right now, awareness of aquifers role is being discussed. She noted that watersheds don't have jurisdictional boundaries; therefore it has to be a regional issue and a regional entity should be charged with overseeing a regional policy on it.

Johnston feels the Met Council's involvement would be a positive step in the right direction. Moeller agreed and said the Met Council should set goals that can be measured.

Marckel next discussed Land Use and Transit and asked what the role of open space is?

Wasley stated that this goes right into the tour from last week and asked – how does the average person get there. She discussed restrictive access to Kingswood, as the first phase will only be for programs, so individual access would not be able to use it. Transit accessibility with land use is very important.

Moeller talked about programs such as Outward Bound that are trying to find ways to get inner city kids connected to our parks. He suggested special series of buses 1-2 times a day on weekends.

Wulff stated that there are many regional parks that are accessible by transit. She doesn't feel setting up public transit for parks would be cost effective.

Wasley discussed Como Park's free shuttle that she feels is very effective. She doesn't feel any park is 'economically feasible'. Wulff suggested a dial-a-ride option, and noted there are only so many transit dollars available. The committee discussed other parks that do offer public transportation options.

Moeller suggested adding to the Vision of Thrive MSP 2040 – making parks more accessible.

Yarusso stated it would be useful to make sure that current transit makes stops at parks through proper planning.

Marckel stated he would summarize by saying to take opportunities where possible. He then turned the topic to Priorities, Location and Need of Affordable Housing and asked the group for comments.

Wulff discussed where you prioritize with decreased funding available for affordable housing and where you locate new affordable housing.

Yarusso stated that being located near transit would be more important than locating near parks. Locating affordable housing near trails would be beneficial.

Marckel suggested that we can say in Thrive MSP 2040 – don't forget to link housing to trails where the opportunity presents itself.

Moeller stated that communities usually ask developers to contribute to parks/trails as part of their development. Marckel noted that this is done in the Comprehensive Planning process.

Wasley discussed 'no net loss' policy that Ramsey County has. She feels this protects the park system. Wulff noted that if we are talking about a Regional Park, this rule applies. Land cannot just be sold.

Nyanwleh commented on the 4th bullet – should consider why people move and consider how we classify people as qualified for affordable housing.

Marckel thanked members for their input.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

With a quorum now present, it was moved by Wasley, seconded by Nyanwleh to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Schmidt, seconded by Yarusso to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2013 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

Public Hearing Report and Adoption of 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan Amendment— Kingswood Special Recreation Feature, Three Rivers Park District - Jan Youngquist

Youngquist went through first of the three recommendations and discussed the public hearing report and adoption of the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan amendment – Kingswood Special Recreation Feature. She discussed the process noting the public hearing was held on April 15, 2013 and the site tour was on April 30, 2013. She reviewed testimony given by four people who testified at the public hearing as outlined in the report provided. She also discussed written testimony submitted.

Schmidt asked for clarification on a learning center. Jonathan Vlaming, Three River's Park District stated they are precluding specific mention of a building as they feel it is premature and this will be a part of a specific development master plan.

Schmidt asked how this aspect of the Special Recreation Feature will happen without a building. Vlaming stated it would be staged at Gale Woods and then participants would be shuttled over to the site itself. He feels the site itself is the real learning center and discussed erosion control. He stated the park itself is their true desire and that the building may come in future planning.

Moeller confirmed that the current building will be torn down. Vlaming stated that it will be as it is not ADA accessible and added that the picnic shelters will be kept.

Moeller asked about estimated usage (page 17, #5 in the handout). He asked how many will actually use this park. Youngquist stated that the usage was estimated based on the development of the site and based on other Special Recreation features, for example, Square Lake.

Moeller stated he was surprised by the number being this high due to the lack of accessibility and no learning center. Vlaming responded that the estimate is for once the park is fully developed. The development planning will have to go through a public process.

Nyanwleh asked about the significance of the estimated usage. Vlaming stated it is a requirement of the master planning process. He spoke to the rarity of this resource and feels the accumulative impact will be very important as generations learn about water resource management. Vlaming discussed the environmental outreach education program offered through Three Rivers Park District. He stated that this is one method of bringing folks into parks. He noted they will focus on relationships with schools as a method of getting folks there.

Schmidt asked if scuba diving would be open to the public. Vlaming stated yes and noted that there is a public boat launch there now. He discussed the importance of going through the public process on the east side of the lake as development is planned.

Schmidt stated she is still concerned with not having a learning center on site. She felt without it, it is not a 'special recreation feature'. Youngquist explained the thinking behind purchasing both sides of the lake at this time. Vlaming stated that the proposed language does not preclude building a water resource lab. This will be part of future planning.

Wasley is very familiar with Square Lake and feels that it is in a very populated area and is 'visible'. She asked if there are areas that are more 'popular'. Vlaming discussed the visitor use estimates but feels the estimate will be fairly accurate.

Yarusso doesn't feel we should get too hung up on a structure at this point. As far as comparisons to Square Lake, he asked if there are any facilities there. He feels that environmental education possibilities at Kingswood are far greater.

It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Shlaferman to recommend that the Metropolitan Council adopt the revised amendment to the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* to add the proposed Kingswood Special Recreation Feature to the regional parks system, as shown in Attachment 2.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried** – 6 voting yes, Schmidt abstained because she feels we don't have a good definition of what is a 'special use feature'.

Youngquist responded that next year we will be working on our 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan and can look at this definition.

2013-xxx Kingswood Special Recreation Feature Acquisition Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District - Jan Youngquist

Youngquist reviewed the Acquisition Master Plan for Kingswood as outlined in the materials provided.

Yarusso asked about the northern end and possibility of a trail and what the relationship with the neighbors is. Vlaming stated they do not have a relationship with the neighbors, but would need to speak with them.

Yarusso asked about the DNR easement on the lake. Vlaming explained when the easement was purchased it did not classify that portion as water.

Yarusso asked if there are any dates set for the different phases. Vlaming stated only Phase I would be done this fall.

It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Yarusso to recommend that the Metropolitan Council approve the Kingswood Special Recreation Feature Master Plan, subject to Metropolitan Council approval of the amendment to the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* acknowledging Kingswood Special Recreation Feature as a component of the regional parks system.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Kingswood Special Recreation Feature, Three Rivers Park District - Arne Stefferud

Stefferdud reviewed a funding request for the acquisition of this property. He noted that there are two grant scenarios and reviewed them as outlined in the materials provided. He noted with both scenarios, the Park District is requesting that they be eligible for reimbursement of their match (up to \$821,310) as part of the Three River's Park District's share of a future regional park capital improvement programs.

Yarusso asked if approving this would harm the odds of getting Scenario #1 approved by the LCCMR. Stefferud responded that LCCMR has to act in a non-arbitrary way and explained a number of things that will be presented to LCCMR. He cited the LCCMR's policy as outlined in the materials provided (page 2, (1)).

Nyanwleh asked the purpose for acquiring this land now. Stefferud stated that it is for sale now. Nyanwleh asked if there are other potential buyers. Stefferud stated yes, however there is a purchase agreement between the church and Three Rivers Park District.

It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Schmidt to recommend that the Metropolitan Council approve one of the following scenarios for Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grant(s) to Three Rivers Park District for the acquisition of the 106 acre Kingswood Special Recreation Feature:

Scenario 1: Approval by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) on June 11 or June 25 to use Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriations to partially finance the acquisition of the 45 acre "Northern lot" as part of Kingswood Special Recreation Feature.

If the LCCMR approval is made as described above, the Metropolitan Council approves two Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants as follows:

1. A grant of up to \$382,125 to finance 75% of the acquisition of the 45 acre "Northern lot" illustrated in Attachment 2. The grant is financed with:

- \$229,275 from the 2012 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriation
- \$152,850 Metropolitan Council bonds

This grant must be matched with up to \$127,375 of Three Rivers Park District funds to finance 25% of the "Northern lot" acquisition.

2. A grant of up to \$1,505,858 to finance 75% of the acquisition of 61.3 acres comprised of the "Western Lakeshore lot" and "Eastern lots" illustrated in Attachment 2. The grant is financed with:

- \$905,315 of FY 2013 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriation
- \$603,543 of Metropolitan Council bonds

This grant must be matched with up to \$502,952 of Three Rivers Park District funds to finance 25% of the remaining lot's acquisition costs.

The Park District fund match amount of up to \$630,327 is eligible for reimbursement consideration as part of Three Rivers Park District's share of future regional park capital improvement programs. The Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Scenario 2: Disapproval by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) on June 11 or June 25 to use Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriations to finance the acquisition of the 45 acre "Northern lot" as part of Kingswood Special Recreation Feature.

If the LCCMR disapproval occurs as described above, the Metropolitan Council approves a Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grant of up to \$1,700,000 from the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund account to Three Rivers Park District to finance up to 67% of the costs to acquire the 106 acre Kingswood Special Recreation Feature. The grant shall be financed as follows:

- \$1,020,000 of FY 2013 Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriation
- \$680,000 of Metropolitan Council bonds

This grant must be matched with up to \$821,310 of Three Rivers Park District funds to finance at least 33% of the remaining lot's acquisition costs.

The Park District fund match amount up to \$821,310 is eligible for reimbursement consideration as part of Three Rivers Park District's share of future regional park capital improvement programs. The Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Wulff asked how long before the money in the Environmental Natural Resource Trust Fund Acquisition Account runs out. Stefferud stated that it will be spent sometime this year and noted we will be requesting replenishment.

Stefferud stated, regarding the Park and Trail Legacy Fund, that the Legislature is making a decision by May 20, 2013 (the end of the Legislative Session). He noted that 10% will go into a Park and Trail Legacy Fund Acquisition Account. He added there will be \$1.6-1.79 million each year plus a match from the Met Council, so it will be replenished in July.

Wulff asked if we will run out. Stefferud explained that the Environmental Natural Resource Fund will run out this fall and be replenished in June 2014 but we will have Park and Trail Legacy funds.

Yarusso clarified that it has been our goal to spend down the Environmental Natural Resource Trust Fund. Stefferud responded yes, that we don't want to leave money on the table, so to speak.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Lake Waconia Regional Park –Pauls Parcel, Carver County - Tori Dupre

Dupre discussed the request from Carver County outlined in the materials provided.

Yarusso asked if \$1.7 million is the limit, will this be their only request this year. Stefferud responded yes for the fiscal year that ends June 30, 2013.

Moeller commented that he is strongly supportive of this acquisition.

Wulff clarified that reimbursement comes from their share this year and that the rest cannot come from their share next year but can come from their formula CIP availability.

Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks, asked for clarification on how the rule is calculated. Stefferud stated if money is left in the account and there are multiple requests, for example three requests, the money is divided proportionately to their request.

Nyanwleh asked if this is what is happening now. Stefferud stated that it could happen. Nyanwleh asked how does this affect this request. Stefferud stated that it does not because there are sufficient funds in the account now.

It was moved by Nyanwleh, seconded by Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

Authorize a grant of up to \$1,700,000 from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Carver County to acquire the 19.29-acre parcel (Pauls) as shown in Attachment 2 for the Lake Waconia Regional Park. The grant should be financed with:

- \$1,020,000 from 2012 Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriation
- \$680,000 from Metropolitan Council bonds

Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$1,992,240 from its share of a future Regional Park Capital Improvement Program for the balance of the acquisition costs minus potential income from selling a portion of the parcel to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for a boat access as called for in the Lake Waconia Regional Park master plan. The Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment and Reimbursement Request for Trail Development, Carver County - Jan Youngquist

Youngquist reviewed a request from Carver County outlined in the materials provided.

Yarusso asked what we are being asked to approve with alternative route scenarios. Youngquist responded approval of a trail connection and noted that the route will be determined in the future. She noted we will only fund one alignment however. Yarusso asked if the alignment should be determined first. Youngquist stated Carver County did not want to lose the opportunity during this construction season, therefore they are asking now.

Stefferdud stated that master plans, even at the development stage, are somewhat conceptual. Through design and engineering stages however, changes do happen. This plan identifies a range of possibilities and potential range of costs. When they submit a request for development grant, the alignment will be chosen.

Moeller asked for clarification with what was approved last week and how the proposed regional trail takes us to Scott County. Youngquist reviewed the map showing how the trail connection is laid out and noted that last week the Southwest Regional Trail connection was approved. She explained the connections to the existing state trail.

Marty Walsh, Carver County Parks further clarified how trail connections will be made.

Nyanwleh asked about citizen participation. Youngquist talked about the master plan and stated that this was part of the public hearing process. She stated that public awareness will be to let the public know about the actual development when it is there.

Nyanwleh asked if we charge a fee on other trails. Youngquist stated they do not charge a fee. Nyanwleh asked if there are any trails that charge a fee. Stefferud responded there are not.

It was moved by Nyanwleh, seconded by Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail Extension Master Plan Amendment.
2. Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$131,903 from its share of a future Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program for construction of a ¼ mile segment of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail along County Road 40 between Jonathan Carver Parkway (CSAH 11) and the southern intersection of County Road 40 and Carver Bluffs Parkway. However, the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.
3. Require that prior to initiating development of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail, preliminary plans should be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503) at Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review in order to assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system.
4. Inform Carver County that only one alignment of the regional trail extension between downtown Carver and the southern intersection of County Road 40 and Carver Bluffs Parkway will be eligible for regional parks funding. Once the Metropolitan Council has granted funds for the development of a regional trail making this connection, any alternate alignments in the area will not be eligible for regional parks funding.
5. Notify Carver County that the proposed costs for paving Alternate Route 1 of the regional trail through the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge are not approved through this master plan amendment, since the US Fish and Wildlife Service has stipulated that the trail will remain a natural surface. If Carver County and the US Fish and Wildlife Service reach an agreement regarding paving this trail segment, the County shall submit the estimated costs and a copy of the agreement to the Metropolitan Council.

Wulff clarified that presently the trail will connect to nothing; then the future trail will connect to other regional trails. Walsh explained that it will connect neighborhoods. Youngquist noted that we have other future search corridor trail connections that will provide connections.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Scheduling Summer MPOSC Tours and Related Off-Site Business Meetings - Arne Stefferud

Stefferud reviewed the memo presented to Commission Members and asked for their preferred dates of upcoming summer tours/meetings.

1. It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Yarusso to recommend Tuesday June 4, 3 to 6 p.m. **Motion carried.**
2. It was moved by Shlaferman, seconded by Nyanwleh to recommend Tuesday July 9, 3 to 6 p.m. **Motion carried.**
3. It was moved by Wasley, seconded by Schmidt to recommend Tuesday August 6, 3 to 6 p.m. **Motion carried,** with Moeller abstaining, as he will be out of town.
4. It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Shlaferman to recommend Tuesday, September 3, 3 to 6 p.m. **Motion carried.**

The following locations for tours and meetings are recommended based on touring agencies the MPOSC has not seen in the past two years and specific parks or trails that the MPOSC has not seen in the past three years: Proposals are based on input from the host park agencies.

1. Tuesday June 4 - Scott County--Spring Lake Regional Park. Tour recently completed projects financed with Parks and Trails Legacy Fund grants. MPOSC meeting either at the Prior Lake City Hall or the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (either at Mystic Lake Casino or perhaps at their offices).
2. Tuesday July 9 - Anoka County—tour Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve including recent improvements at Wargo Nature Center and other projects financed with Parks and Trails Legacy and State bond grants. MPOSC meeting at Wargo Nature Center.
3. Tuesday August 6 - City of St. Paul—Como Regional Park. Tour recently completed swimming facility financed with State bond and Parks and Trails Legacy grants, plus reconstructed Lily pond and other improvements financed with Parks and Trails Legacy Fund grants. Meet at either a room in the Education Resource Center or Lakeside Pavilion.
4. Tuesday, September 3 - Dakota County—tour portion of Mississippi River Regional Trail through recently completed section at Pine Bend Scientific and Natural Area and adjacent section under construction in City of Rosemount. MPOSC meeting location to be determined.

It was clarified that all tours will begin at 3:00 p.m.

INFORMATION

None.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Johnston let the Commission know that Jeff Lee has resigned from the Commission effective immediately as he has moved out of his district.

Commissioners: None

Staff: None

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary



Como Zoo, St. Paul

Siting and Acquisition Strategy 4: Special recreation facilities must enhance services and facilities already offered, not compete with or duplicate them.

Special recreation facilities proposed for inclusion in the regional parks system must:

- Be unique and complement or enhance the services already offered by the regional system.
- Be capable of functioning within the existing management structure of the regional parks system.
- Not duplicate or compete with recreation facilities adequately provided by the public or private sector.
- Not drain funds from other facilities in the system either because they have an existing or committed financial base or because a prior agreement for a public subsidy has been reached that is in the public's interest.
- Demonstrate the existence or potential for drawing a sizable number of people from throughout the metropolitan area.
- Be approved through the master plan process.

Regional parks system legislation indicates that the system should contain parks, park reserves and trails, and zoos, conservatories and "other special-use facilities." The term "other special-use facilities" is not defined in legislation. Discussion in previous Council policy plans suggests that "other special-use facilities," also referred to in the plan as special recreation features (SRF), are those facilities that:

- Contribute to the inventory of available and needed recreation opportunities.
- Are distinctive developments and/or unique natural landscapes not commonly found in the parks, park reserves, and trails.
- Require special programming or management.

As of 2010, 2013 there are ~~seven~~ eight special recreation features:

- [Como Zoo](#)
- [Square Lake](#)
- [Silverwood](#)
- [Como Conservatory](#)
- [Gale Woods Farm](#)
- [The Landing](#)
- [Noerenberg Gardens](#)
- [Kingswood](#)

The Como facilities are found within Como Regional Park. [Noerenberg Gardens](#) was given to Three Rivers Park District with the understanding that it was a unique and regional-level attraction. [Square Lake](#) provides beach and boat access to the clearest lake in the metropolitan area. The land encompassing [Gale Woods Farm](#) was originally proposed as a regional park. [Silverwood](#) is a former Salvation Army camp on Silver Lake that was acquired in 2001. It is programmed for environmental education to serve urban populations. The Landing was added to the regional parks system as a special recreation feature through adoption of this update to the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan. ~~in 2010 and the proposed Kingswood Special Recreation Feature was added in 2013.~~



Special Recreation Features

The special recreation features, which are called for in state legislation, are defined as regional parks system opportunities not generally found in the parks, the park reserves or the trail corridors. Special recreational features often require a unique managing or programming effort on the part of the regional park implementing agency.

As of 2010, 2013 there are seven eight special recreation features in the system:

- [Como Park Zoo](#), and
 - [Marjorie McNeely Conservatory at Como Park](#), both managed as a part of Como Regional Park;
 - [Square Lake](#) in Washington County;
 - [Noerenberg Gardens](#) on the northwest side of Lake Minnetonka;
 - [Gale Woods Farm](#) on the shore of Whaletail Lake in Minnetrista;
 - [Silverwood](#), on the shore of Silver Lake in the City of St. Anthony;
 - [The Landing](#), along the Minnesota River in Shakopee;
- [Kingswood](#), on the shore of Little Long Lake in Minnetrista.

New special recreation features need to be complementary to the rest of the regional parks system and not be a financial burden to the system.



Gale Woods Farm, Three Rivers Park District





Process for Determining System Changes

State law requires that every ten years, each city, county and township in the metropolitan region review and update its comprehensive plan to ensure that the local plan conforms to the Metropolitan Council's system plans, including the *Regional Parks Policy Plan*. ([MN Statute 473.864](#)) The latest round of local comprehensive plans was due to the Metropolitan Council in 2008 for review. These comprehensive plans were required to acknowledge and plan for the regional parks system facilities identified in the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

Regional park implementing agencies underwent extensive planning processes to prepare their parks system plans, which were incorporated into their jurisdiction's comprehensive plan. As part of their planning processes, some implementing agencies identified potential changes to the regional parks system. Council staff advised the agencies that the proposed additions could not be considered regional facilities unless they were identified in the Council's *Regional Parks Policy Plan* and recommended that the agencies seek regional status for their proposals when the Council updates its policy plan. The proposed system changes from Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington counties as well as St. Paul came from their local comprehensive plans. The proposed additions from Three River Park District and Anoka and Ramsey counties were initiated as part of this policy plan update.

Regional Parks System Changes

The regional parks system changes primarily focus on new regional trail search corridors and boundary adjustments to existing regional trails. A total of 17 regional trails search corridors proposed by Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties, as well as the City of St. Paul, were added to the regional parks system in 2010. The amendment to the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, adopted by the Council in 2012, added two regional trails proposed by Three Rivers Park District. These trails will provide connections between local and regional recreational facilities and meet the criteria for regional trails outlined in this policy plan. The regional trail system changes are shown in Table 3-10.

There are two system changes for regional parks—the addition of a special recreation feature and the deletion of a regional park search area identified in the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. A new category of Regional Park Study Area is also being presented.

Special Recreation Feature Additions

~~As part of this update to the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan, [The Landing](#), which is a park that provides a historical perspective of life in a river town in the 1800s, has been added to the regional parks system as a special recreation feature. in 2010. The Landing focuses on environmental education concepts in a historical setting. Several key buildings on the site are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Visitor origin information provided by Three Rivers Park District shows that about 68% of visits are non-local. The Park District owns and operates The Landing, so there would be no acquisition costs to the region. Acknowledgment as a special recreation feature would entitle the Park District to regional operations and maintenance funding, and upon Council approval of a master plan, The Landing would be eligible for regional capital improvement funding for development. Kingswood~~

SRF was added to the regional parks system in 2013. Three Rivers proposes to develop Kingswood SRF to function as a water resources learning center, focusing on public involvement in the enjoyment, study and management of the park's high quality natural resources.



Table 3-11 Regional Parks Changes

Regional Park Implementing Agency	Map Designation	Site Name	Type	Conversion Acres	Trail Length (miles)	Notes
Dakota County	P-1	Thompson-Kaposia-Port Crosby (local parks)	Regional Park Study Area	230	-	Studies to be conducted to determine the feasibility of combining three local parks that are connected by North Urban and Mississippi River RTs as a joint regional park unit.
Three Rivers Park District	P-2	The Landing	Proposed Special Recreation Feature	86		Recognition as a Special Recreation Feature as a historic site that introduces visitors to environmental education concepts.
Dakota County	DELETION	Proposed deletion of SW Dakota County Regional Park Search Area	Proposed Deletion of a Regional Park Search Area	-400		The Regional Parks Policy Plan (2005) indicated that this regional park search area was subject to the outcome of the County's Park System Plan. The System Plan did not include this search area.

Three Rivers Park District

P-3

Kingswood

Proposed Special Recreation Feature

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Addition to the regional parks system for development of Kingswood SRF, which will promote environmental stewardship and environmental education of the park's high quality natural resources.



Figure 3-3 2030 Metropolitan Regional Parks System Plan

Regional Parks System Amended 2013

