



MAKING YOUR PLAN A WALK IN THE PARK

Presented by Jan Youngquist and Michael Peterka

Thursday, September 15, 2016

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Webinar Summary: Our region boasts a strong commitment to outdoor recreation through its park and trails. The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* defines the comprehensive plan requirements for parks, with a primary focus on the Regional Parks System, which has a structure that is unique to our region and is based on strong partnerships between the Metropolitan Council, regional park implementing agencies, and local communities. In this webinar, you will learn about this structure and the requirements for comprehensive plans, to help make your planning a walk in the park. *Questions and Answers:*

1. You talked a lot about coordinating with our regional parks implementing agencies. Who should we talk to at these agencies?

We will put together a list of contact information for appropriate staff from the regional parks implementing agencies and we'll add that to the parks section of the *Local Planning Handbook*. So, stay tuned!

2. If there is a regional trail search corridor in our city, how do we start the master planning process?

Regional park implementing agencies will lead master planning efforts, and they'll coordinate with local communities, so you need to contact your park implementing agency to find out their schedule for developing specific master plans. Many times the timing for developing master plans depend on staffing and financial resources for the agency.

3. How often to park agencies update their master plan?

As we all know, state statutes have timelines of comprehensive plans. It's a little unclear for park master plans. State statutes say that "agencies should update their master plan from time to time" and that is a direct quote. Neither state statute nor the Council have requirements for the timing of master plan updates like there are for Comp Plan updates. Master plans are the long term plans for park developments, so it may take several years for an agency to fully implement a master plan. But frequently, they will update master plans when they're planning for new development or there are changing situations in their parks.

4. Can we propose new regionals parks or trails in our Comp Plan?

Regional parks and trails are designated through the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, our system plan. If you do not have one in your community, you cannot refer to your own proposed parks and trails as regional. Additions to the regional park system require an amendment to the Regional parks Policy Plan and would need to meet criteria outlined in the plan. Michael talked a bit about that earlier on acreage requirements, natural resources, and regional draw. However, there may be some really great ideas that come forth through your local planning process. Again, we encourage you to work with staff from your regional parks implementing agency during your planning process so they can be apprised about your planning and suggestions. State statute requires that the Metropolitan Council updates the Parks Policy Plan every four years. There are potential opportunities in the future for changes to the system, but for your local comprehensive planning processes right now, you need to acknowledge what is in our *2040 Parks Policy Plan*.

5. Can we get legacy funds for our local parks and trails?

The Legacy Amendment dedicates sales tax revenue that's collected through the Legacy Amendment that is dedicated to parks and trails of state and regional significance. In the metro area, parks and trails of regional significance are those that are designated in the *2040 Regional parks Policy Plan*. As you can see from our system plan, our regional parks system benefits a huge part of the metropolitan region. Unfortunately those



funds cannot be used for local parks and trails. The DNR does have a local park and trail grant program, so I would suggest that you check their website for more information on funding opportunities for local parks.

Please send additional questions or comments to angela.torres@metc.state.mn.us.

