

Master Plan Content Requirements and Funding Process

Each master plan must include information for each of the items listed below:

1. **Boundaries and Acquisition Costs:** A list of parcels to be acquired and the estimated total cost and schedule for their acquisition; information on natural resources (see natural resources item II below), site suitability, special assessments and other conditions that affect acquisition of the site or location of the boundaries.
2. **Stewardship Plan:** A program for managing park property, including activities, expenses and anticipated revenue prior to developing the property for recreation purposes. Planned nonrecreation uses and disposition of revenue from such use should be detailed.
3. **Demand Forecast:** The recreational demand to be met by the site as identified by the Council the regional park implementing agency or other sources.
4. **Development Concept:** A plan for recreational development and natural resource management, including schedule and cost estimates for each project and the approximate capacity of each facility. Conflicts between recreational and natural-resource management needs in developing the park/trail unit should be addressed and resolved. Amendments to an acquisition-phase master plan should be made prior to funding recreation and visitor support facilities if there is insufficient detail on the scale and cost of the facility. Alternatively, the final design/engineering phase of a proposed facility should be funded first, with construction funding provided in a separate capital improvement grant.
5. **Conflicts:** Identification of conflicts with other existing or proposed projects or land uses affecting the park/trail unit, including steps necessary for their resolution.
6. **Public Services:** A description of any nonrecreational public services and facilities, such as roads or sewers, needed to accommodate the proposed recreational use, including the timing of these services and the arrangements necessary to provide them.
7. **Operations:** Rules, regulations or ordinances affecting the site, including estimated operations and maintenance costs and sources of revenue to operate and maintain recreation facilities and to manage natural resources in the park/trail unit. The operations plan should also indicate how energy to operate and maintain the park unit is being managed and conserved. The plan should also state how solid waste from park users is recycled and disposed of consistent with applicable laws.
8. **Citizen Participation:** A process to involve affected municipalities and the general public in the master planning. The process must include, but not be limited to, timely notice to the affected municipality and an opportunity to be heard. The master plan should include a summary of comment received with emphasis on issues raised.
9. **Public Awareness:** Plans for making the public aware of services available when the regional park is open, including cooperative measures with the Council's regionwide awareness program.
10. **Special Needs:** A plan that identifies special populations to be served by the facility and addresses accessibility, affordability and other measures designed to ensure that the facility can be used by members of special population groups.

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11. Natural Resources: As part of the master plan, there should be a natural-resource management component that includes:
 - a. Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) as a part of the master plan process. An NRI should include a land cover inventory that is consistent with the Minnesota Land Cover Classification system developed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Metro Geographic Information System - a consortium of government entities in the region that create, manage and share digital geographic data. It is the same format used in the Metro Greenways program. Using the same NRI format will assure compatibility with other natural resource inventories that have been completed or will be done in the metropolitan region. The natural resource inventory should include native plant communities mapped in the Minnesota County Biological Survey and listed (rare, endangered, and threatened) species documented in the Natural Heritage Information System
 - b. The Natural Resource Inventory should be a basis for projects/proposals to restore degraded resources and maintain high-quality natural resource features, including the estimated capital costs of natural resource restoration projects. Implementing agencies should consult with natural resource professionals in the design and final construction of park facilities, especially trails, that are adjacent to or cross over natural resource areas. The final design and construction should allow the public to view and enjoy these natural habitats with minimal adverse impact on that habitat.
 - c. Information on how surface water and groundwater resources in the unit, including wetlands, will be protected. This should include standards and requirements that are consistent with the Council's model ordinance for storm water management. The master plan should include provisions to, first, avoid wetland impacts; second, minimize impacts; and, finally, mitigate impacts when no other options are available.
 - d. Information on how vegetation will be managed. Vegetation management is important for maintaining water quality, preserving plants and providing bird and wildlife habitat. It involves protection of old growth trees and rare and endangered plant species, control of exotic species forest management practices, vegetative buffers on water bodies, and consideration of hard surfaces, including shortly mowed turf. The DNR's 'Guidelines for Managing and Restoring Natural Plant Communities along Trails and Waterways' is a good reference. State Critical Area guidelines/standards on vegetation management and resource protection should be addressed in master plans of parks and trails within the Mississippi River Critical Area/Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.