

Project Overview

BIG IDEA: PROJECT VISION

Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional Park in Saint Paul. This Long-Range Plan will identify and provide prioritization of projects that will clarify wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, improve safety and accessibility for all users, enhance lake water quality, and promote equity in design to provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably and welcome the evolving recreational interests and diversity of park visitors.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- September 2022 - August 2023**
 - Community Engagement Events
 - Focused Engagement
 - Plan Development
- September - October 2023**
 - Long Range Plan Draft Review and Revisions
- October - December 2023**
 - Community Open House
 - Long Range Plan Final Draft
- January 2024**
 - Begin Plan Approval Processes
Parks and Recreation Commission, Transportation Committee, Saint Paul City Council, Metropolitan Council
- Summer 2024**
 - Final Plan Adoption

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience, and comfort
- Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas
- Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park.
- Design, program, and maintain to promote year round activity
- Welcome, embrace, and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends
- Reduce barriers caused by financial physical, language and perception issues
- Provide interpretive elements to educate
- Improve wayfinding and Grand Round reinforcement and branding within the existing Como Regional Park wayfinding system
- Coordinate improvements with regulatory agencies as well as previous plans and studies.

PROJECT MAP



PROJECT PROCESS AND PARTNERS

Project Staff | Parks and Recreation

- Dave Ronzani
- Anne Gardner
- Katie Hamerlinck

Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Members:

- Britta Belden (CRWD)
- Theodore Budd (resident)
- Joni Chacich (resident)
- Dillon Clements (resident)
- Allison Cole (resident)
- Grant Cooper (resident)
- James Cowles (resident)
- Kevin Dahm (resident)
- Amy Gage (Friends of Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County)
- Sasha Mackin (resident)
- Zach Mensinger (Co-chair, Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition)
- Dave Montgomery (resident)
- Christopher Tabisz (German Immersion School)
- Greg Williams (Chair, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission)
- Han Zhang (resident)

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members:

- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation*
- Operations and Maintenance
 - Recreation Services
 - Como Regional Park Management Staff

Metropolitan Council | Long Range Plan Process

- For a park agency to receive a grant for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a Met Council-approved guiding plan.
- Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is required to have its own guiding plan.
- Project Funding: Legacy Grant, Met Council, **\$150,000***
**This does not include construction.*

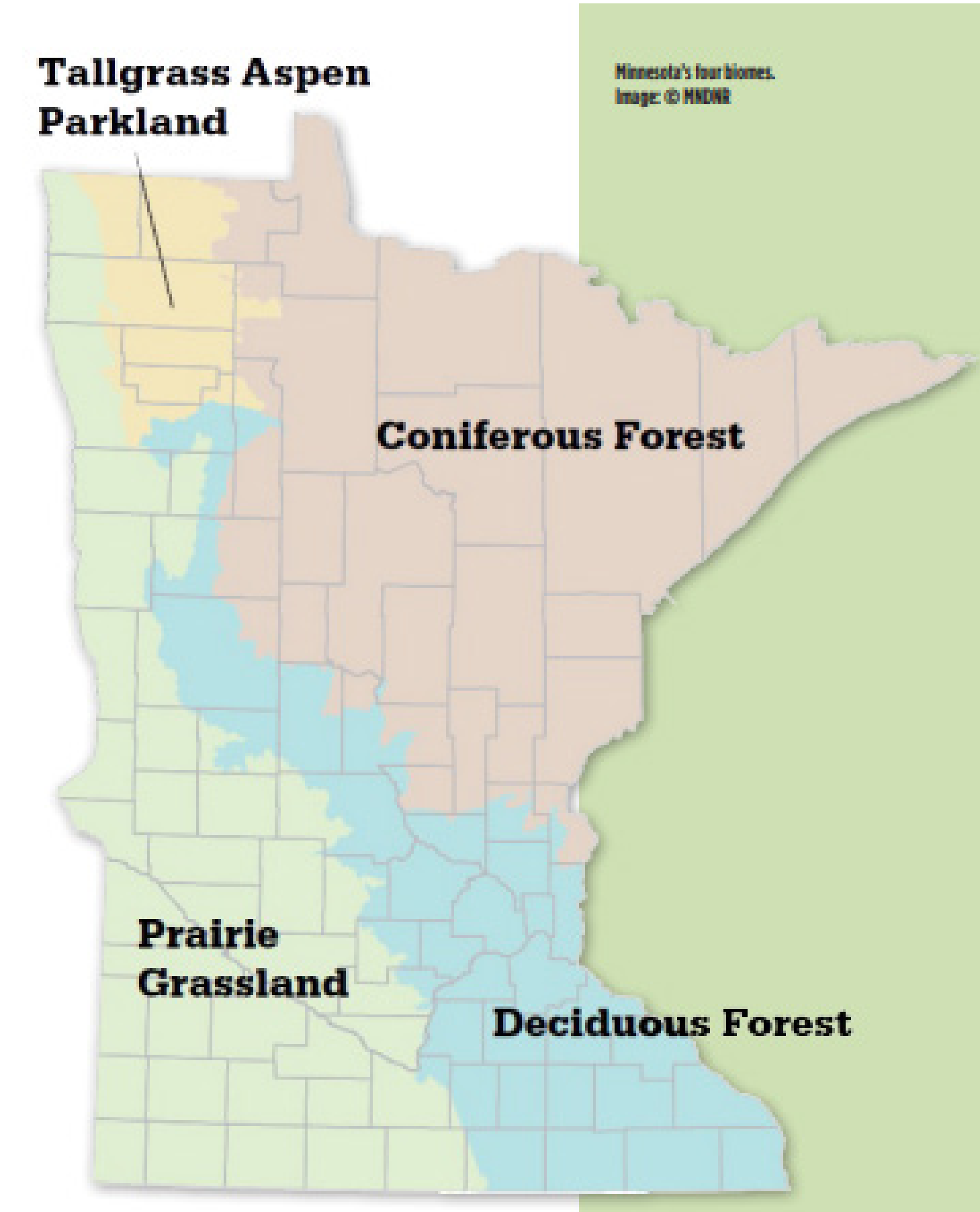
Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(P) Parking Area</p> <p>Project Focus Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">LakeBallfieldsWest Picnic GroundsWoodland Outdoor Classroom | <p>Not Included in Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Special Recreation Feature
<i>Como Zoo and Conservatory</i>Enterprise Facilities
<i>Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields</i> |
|--|---|

Historical Context

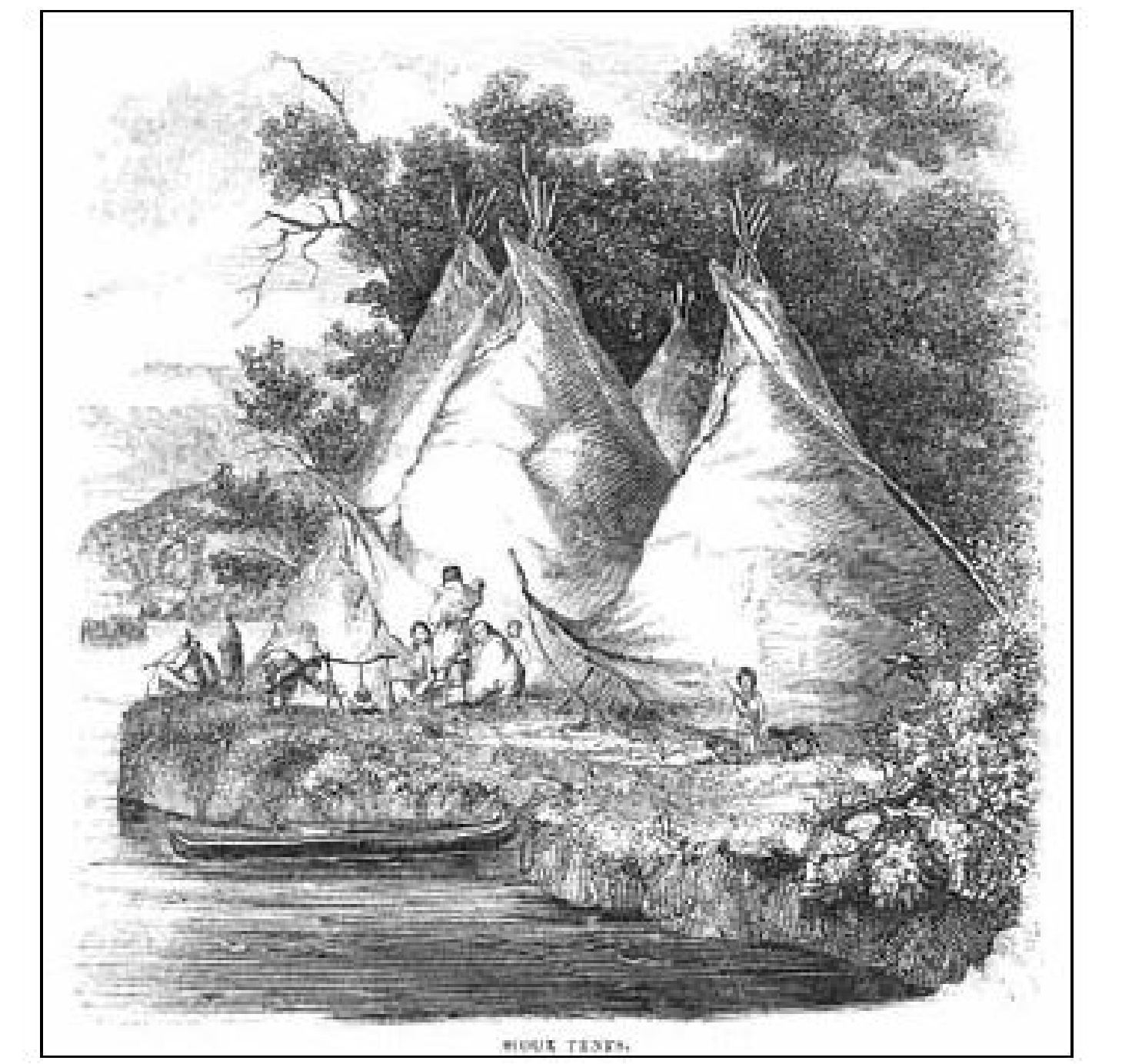
NATURAL HISTORY

Like many lakes in the region, Lake Como was formed by glacial retreat approximately 10,000-12,000 years ago. The land in the Como Park area was likely tallgrass prairie prior to its use for agriculture or recreation. In addition to Lake Como, a smaller lake ("Cozy Lake") once existing northwest of Como Lake.



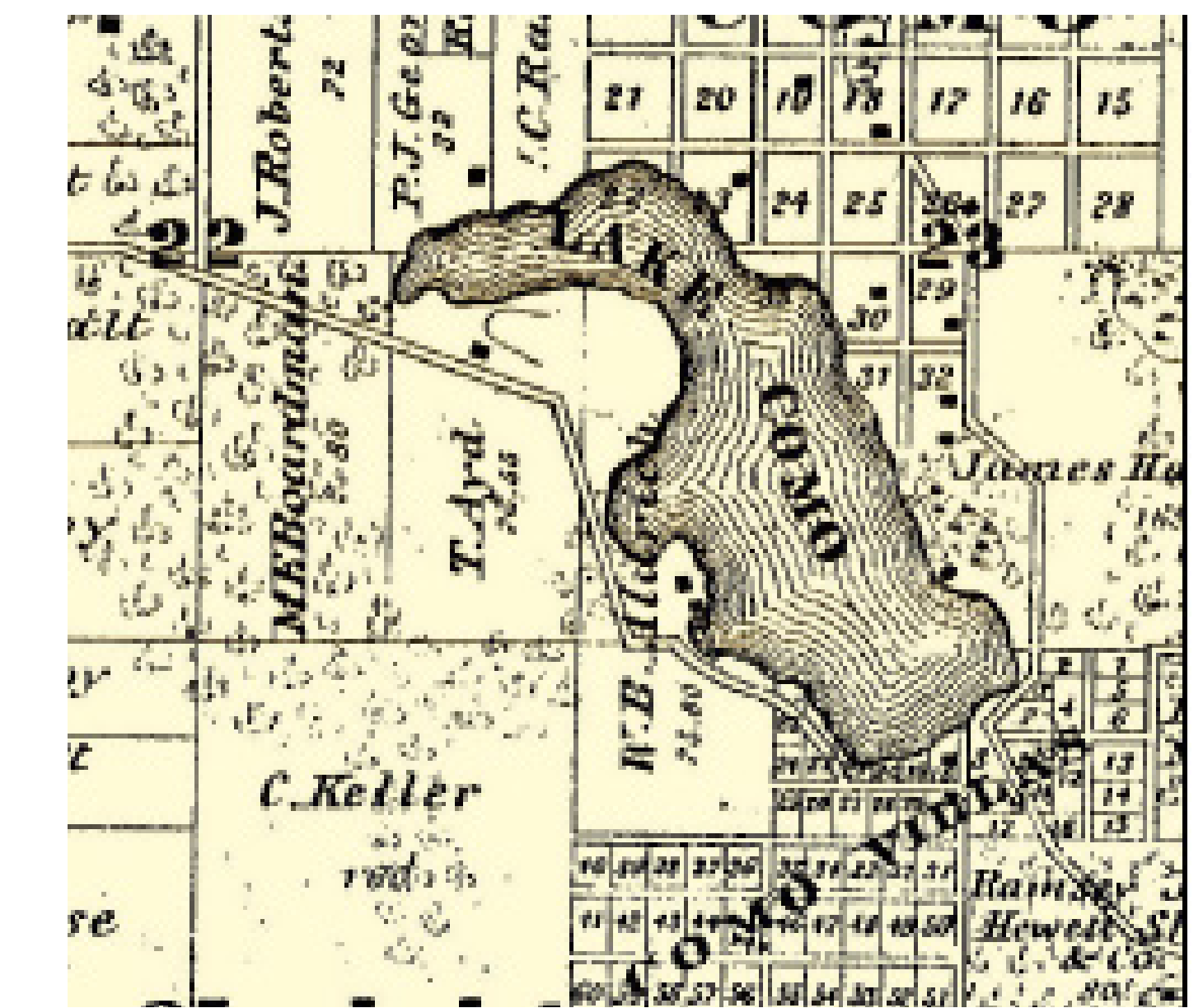
INDIGENOUS LAND

Como Regional Park is located on Dakota Homeland and holds great significance to Dakota people in the past and today. The area around what is now Lake Como was abundant with plants used for food and medicine by the Dakota people, prior to European settlement.



POST-EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

In 1873, Saint Paul purchased 260 acres of land near Lake Como with a vision for a City Park. H.W.S. Cleveland was hired in 1887 to design the park along with several other parks and parkways in Saint Paul. His plans for the Park emphasized his vision of parks as places of leisure, and focused on the preservation and development of natural features. The Park has since grown and evolved. The 1981 Como Park Master Plan recommended shifting focus away from vehicular traffic, prompting the realignment of Lexington Parkway. This Long Range Plan builds on the idea of multi-modal transportation to and around the park, and expands on the ideas set forth in previous park plans.



THE GRAND ROUND
The Grand Round was first imagined by H.W.S. Cleveland in 1872, and implementation began in the early 20th century under Park Superintendent Frederick Nussbaumer. The network connects Lake Como, Lake Phalen, the Mississippi River, and other parks and greenspaces. The Vision for the Grand Round as expressed in the 2016 Grand Round Design and Implementation Plan is *"The Saint Paul Grand Round connects people to parks, nature, neighborhoods, and businesses with scenic parkway facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists"*.



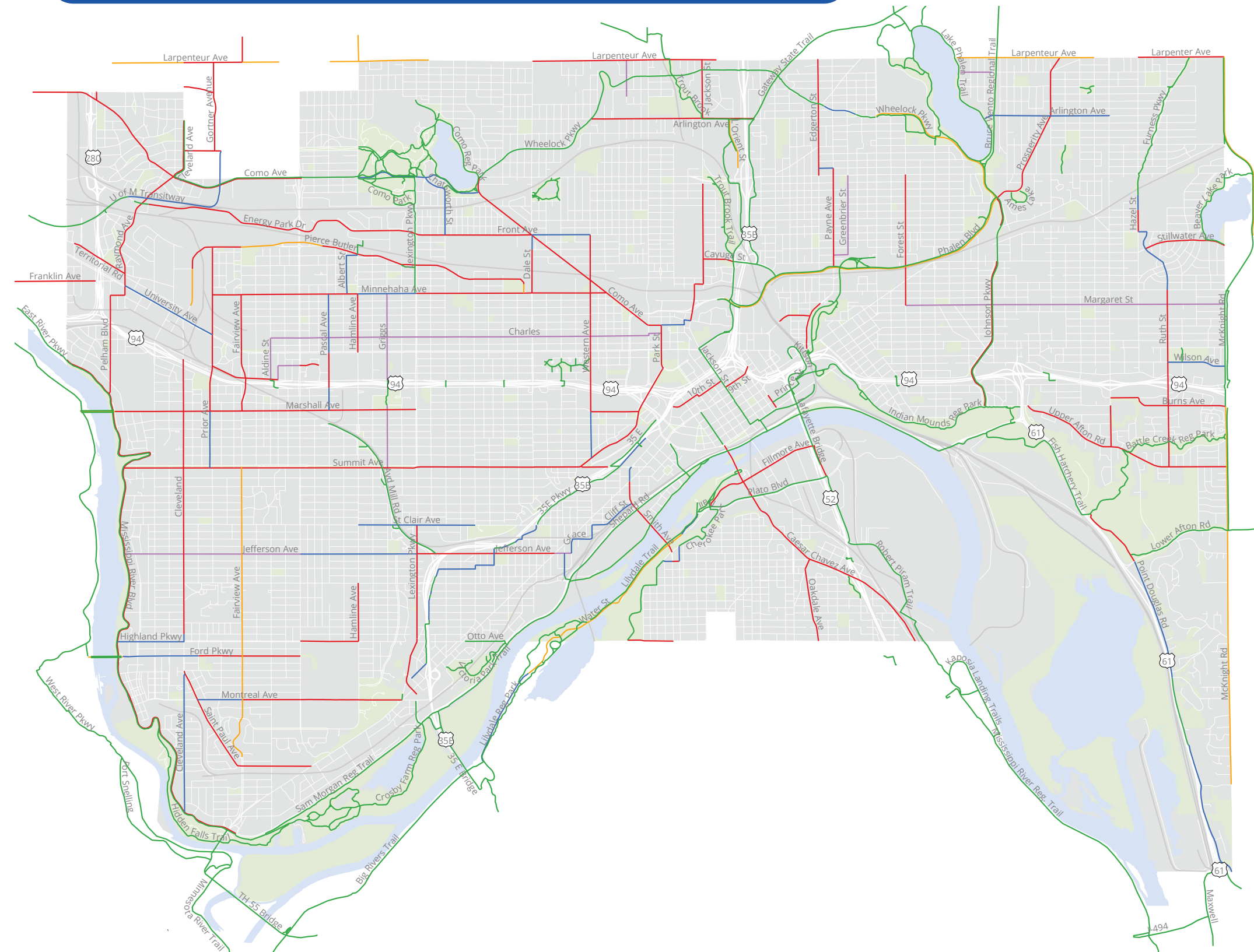
Resources and Links

A Chronological Illustrated History of Como Park
« <https://district10comopark.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Como-Park-History-Timothy-Gadban.pdf> »

Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom Como Park Area History
« <http://www.comowoodlandoutdoorclassroom.org/como-park-history.html> »

Regional Context and Existing Conditions

SAINT PAUL CITY BIKEWAYS



Existing Bike Network | Saint Paul Bike Plan

Saint Paul City Bikeways

- 214.6 miles of Bikeway
- 67.2 miles of Dedicated Bike Lanes
- 17.0 miles of Bikeable Shoulders
- 11.1 miles of Bike Boulevards
- 20.9 miles of Shared-Use Lanes

Legend

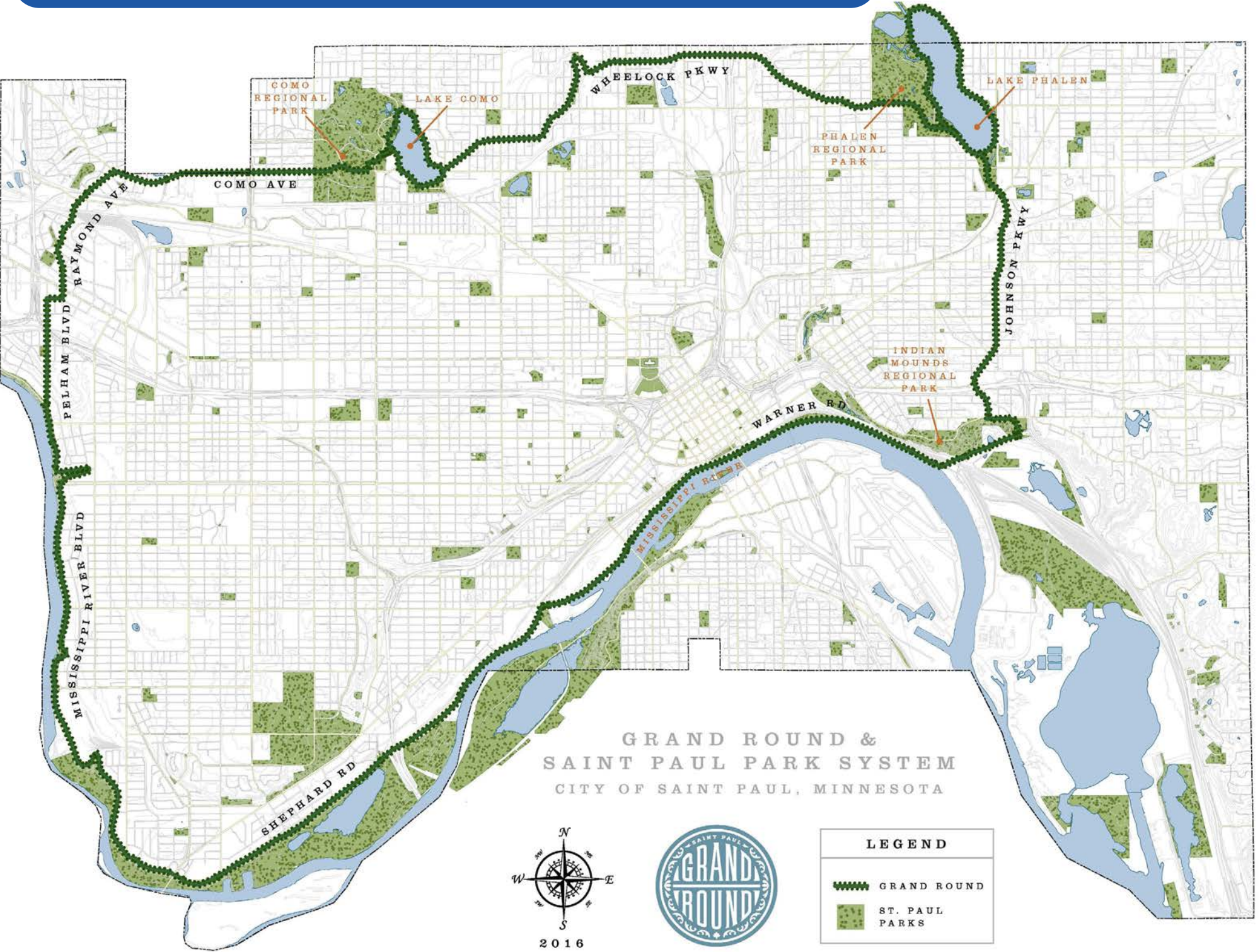
- Separated Bikeways and Paths
- On-Street Bicycle Lane
- Paved Shoulder
- Bicycle Boulevard
- Shared Lane

PREVIOUS STUDIES

- Como Park Master Plan (1984)
- Watershed Management Plan (CRWD)
- Como Pathways Report (District 10)
- Grand Round Design and Implementation Plan (City of Saint Paul)
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Systems Plan
- District 10 Como Community Plan: An Addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Como Lake Stormwater Master Plan (CRWD)
- Como Transportation Master Plan
- Como Woodland and Outdoor Classroom Master Plan
- Como Conservatory Master Plan
- Forecourt Master Plan
- Como Golf Course Master Plan
- and MANY more.



SAINT PAUL GRAND ROUND



Grand Round and Saint Paul Park System | Grand Round Implementation Plan

Saint Paul Grand Round

- 27.0 miles of Scenic Parkways
- Connects outdoor landmarks (Lake Phalen, Lake Como, Mississippi River, over a dozen parks)
- First envisioned 125 years ago by Horace Cleveland

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



Community Engagement

ENGAGEMENT WEBSITE

Project staff hosted a project engagement website to share project updates and information, and to provide a platform for community members to give feedback. Surveys were available on the site, as well as a park map where comments could be pinned to specific locations.

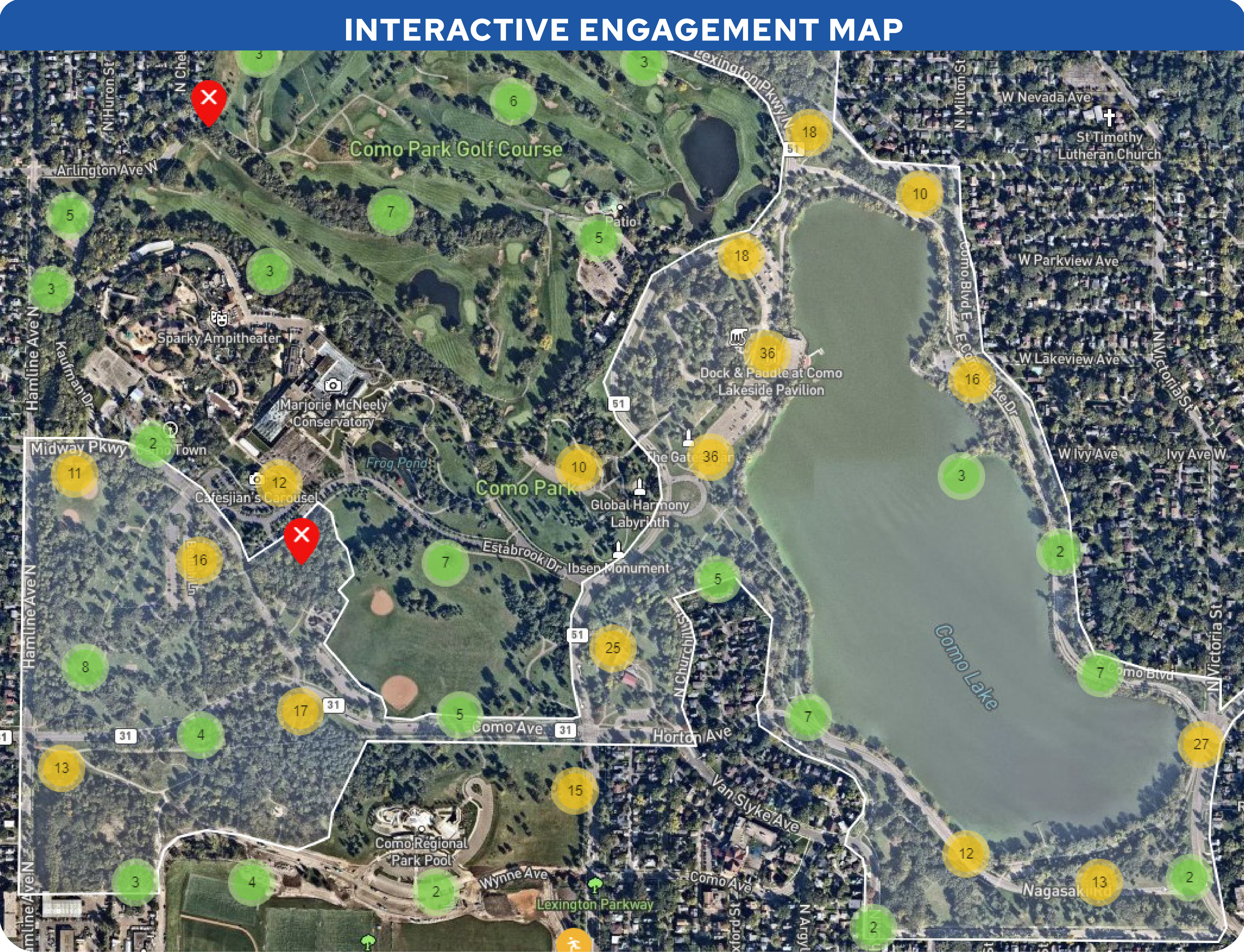
DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE(DAC)

Design Advisory Committee members are representatives from a variety of neighborhoods, communities, and organizations. Members met with the project team to review and discuss ideas, bring suggestions from other community members, and provide guidance to City staff. Members then communicated project progress and design ideas to members in their communities.

FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

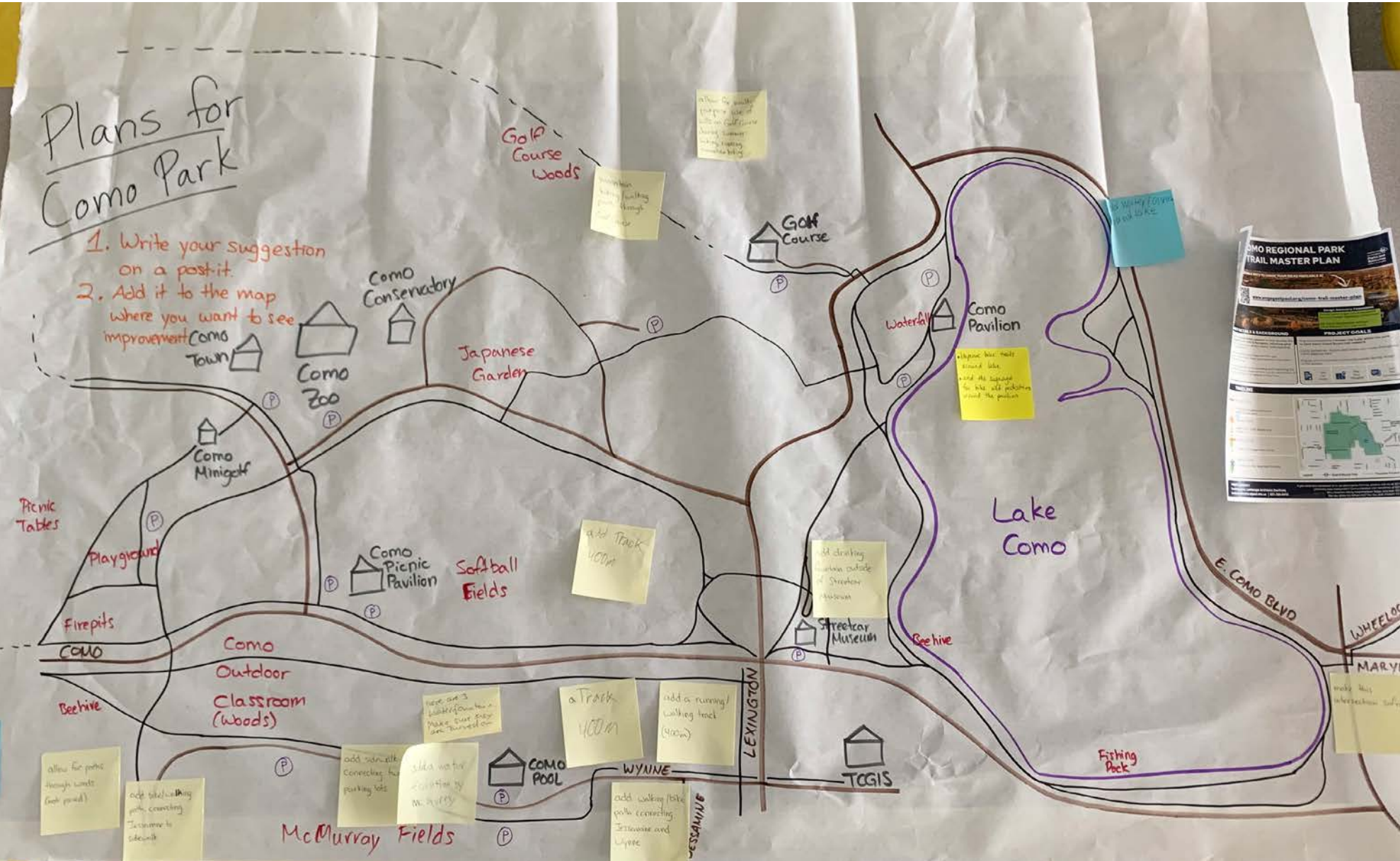
Project staff are continuing engagement with community groups throughout the development of the Long Range Plan. Focused engagement to date has included coordination with the following groups and events:

- Como Park High School
- District 10 Ice Cream Social
- German Immersion School
- Harvest Festival (2022)
- Hmong College Prep Academy
 - Metro Deaf School
- Saint Paul Bicycle Classic



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Navigation and safety
- Directional signs, intuitive trail markings
- Information kiosks
- Shade needed on east side of Lake
- Sidewalk connections out from Lake
- Traffic calming measures
- Vehicles stopping across paths
- Speed limit signage
- East Como Lake Drive closure
- Pavement condition improvements needed
- On-site amenities such as restrooms and trash receptacles
- Two-way bike traffic around Lake
- Pavement crossings and transitions
- Shoreline restoration
- Dog park
- Add amenities - south side of Lake
- Skills Course

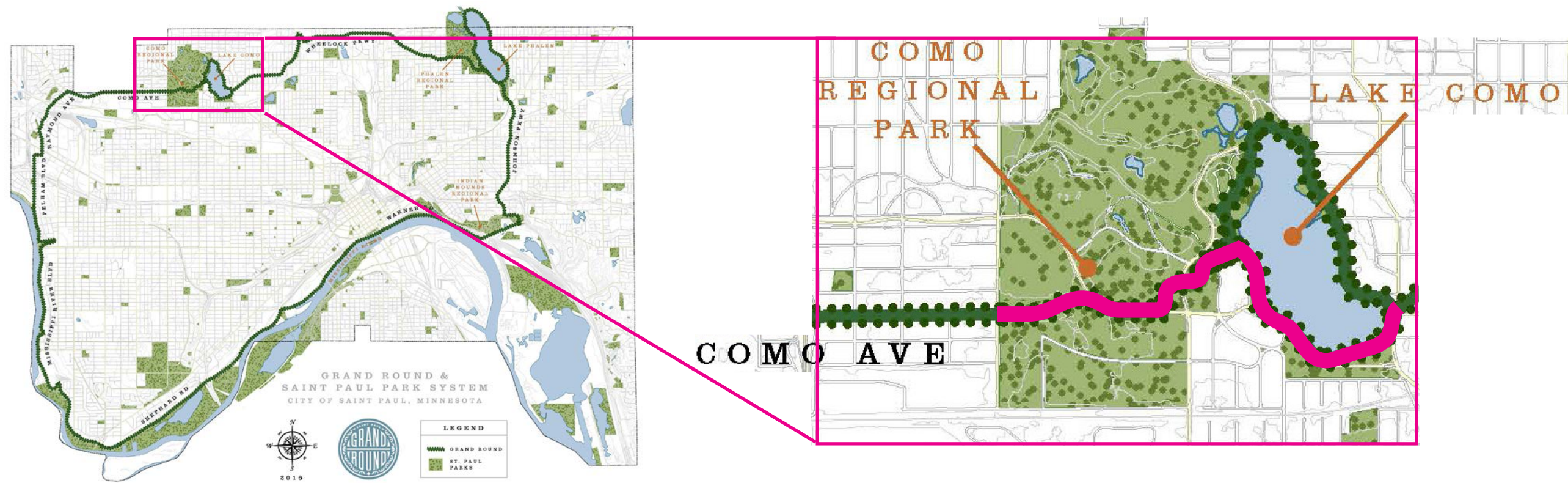


Precedents and Park Character

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

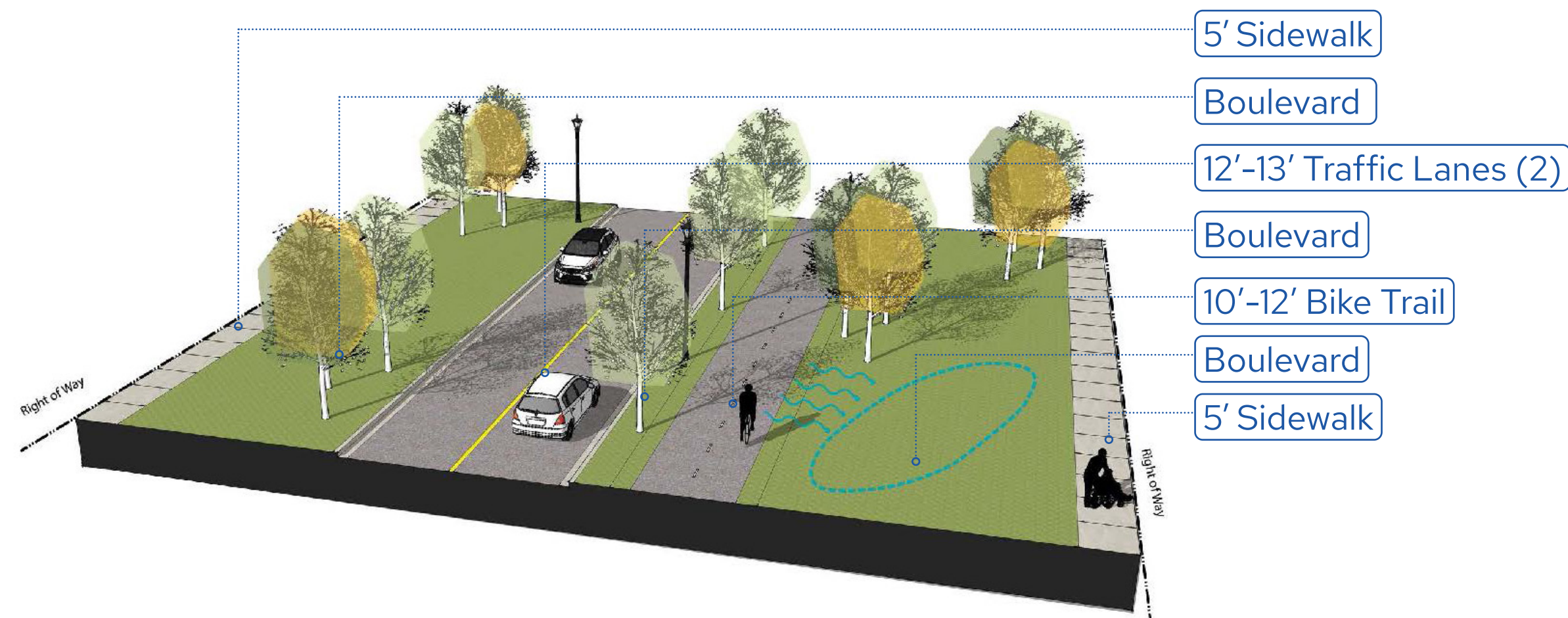
Grand Round Design and Implementation Plan

SAINT PAUL GRAND ROUND



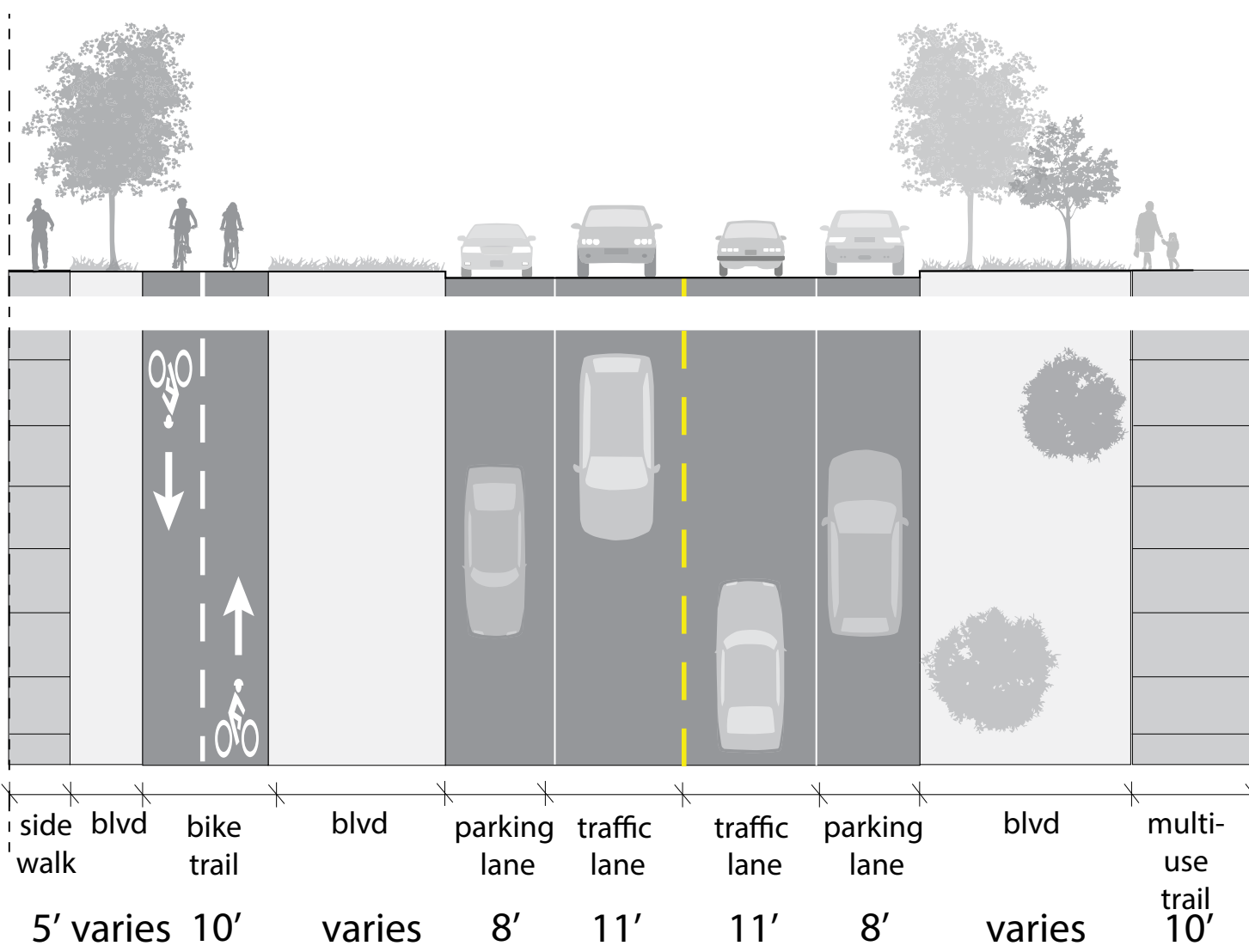
The portions of the Grand Round that are within Como Regional Park are highlighted in pink on the adjacent map. This Long-Range Plan recommends consistent trail facilities along Como Avenue and around Lake Como in alignment with the recommendations of the Grand Round Design & Implementation Plan.

TYPICAL OFF-STREET TRAIL IN BOULEVARD



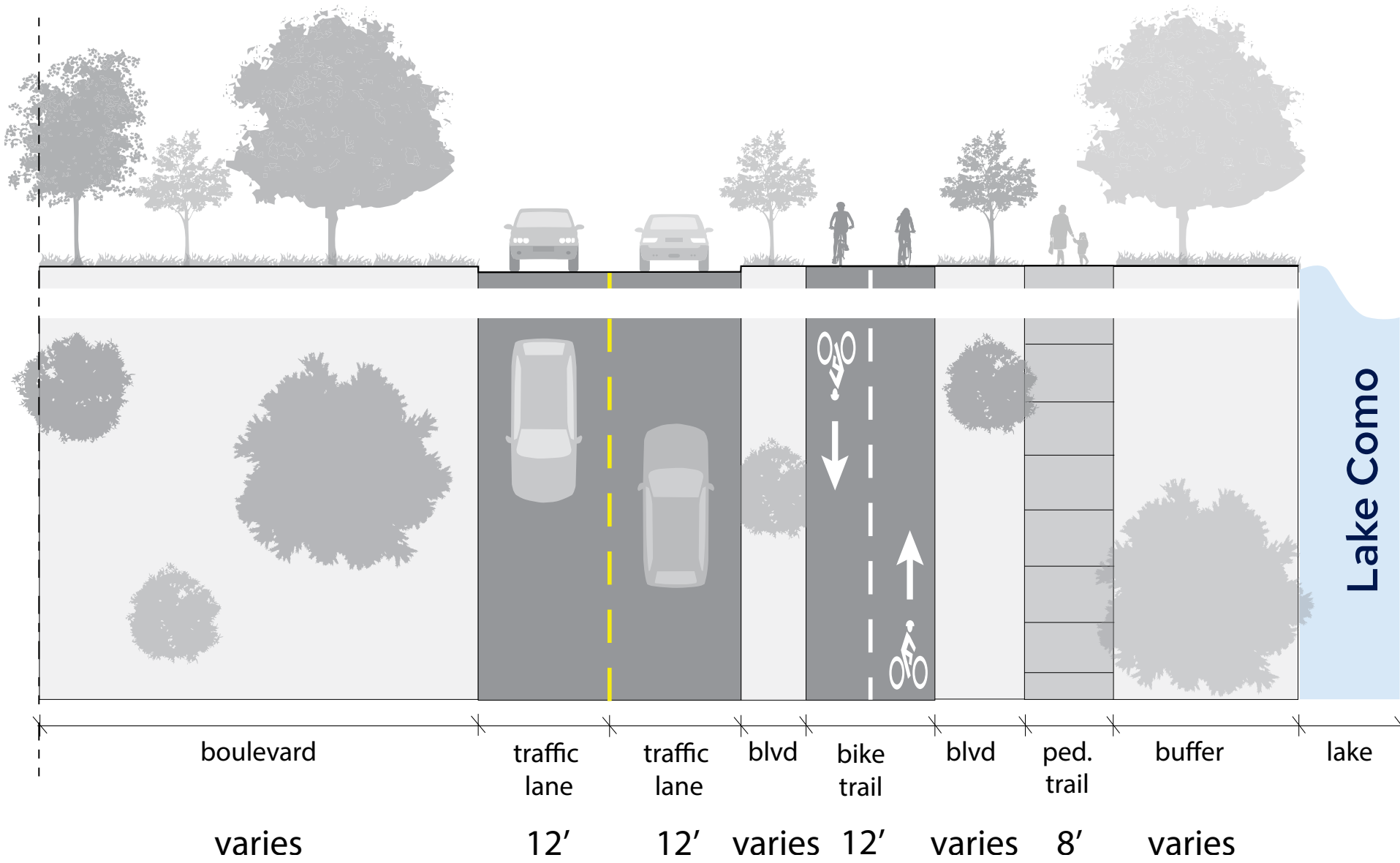
HORTON AVENUE

West Midway Pkwy to North Lexington Pkwy



NAGASAKI ROAD

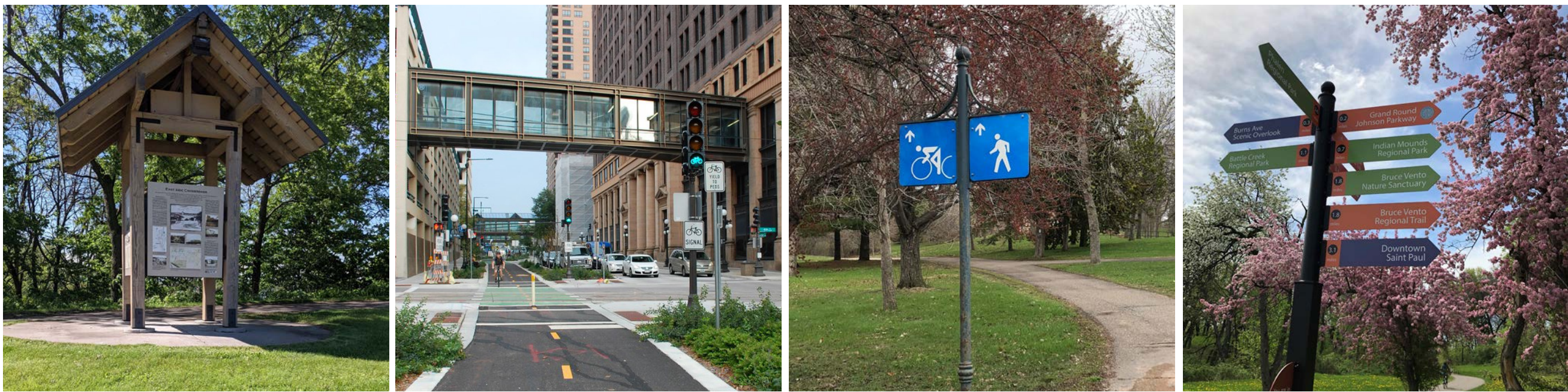
West Como Blvd to Como Blvd



PARK AND TRAIL PRECEDENTS

SIGNAGE

4-SIDE KIOSK	2-SIDE KIOSK	CORRIDOR MARKER	BLADE SIGN	DIRECTION SIGN	OPERATIONAL SIGN	LIGHT W/LOGO
P.1.	P.2.	P.3.	W.1.	W.2.	W.3.	W.3.
PLACEMAKING W/WAYFINDING ELEMENTS *Maps *Logo *Interpretive	INTERPRETIVE NODE *Maps *Interpretive	REINFORCEMENT TRAILBLAZING	MAJOR DECISION POINT	MINOR DECISION POINT (SEE MUTCD STANDARDS)	REINFORCEMENT OPERATIONAL	REINFORCEMENT TRAILBLAZING



SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY



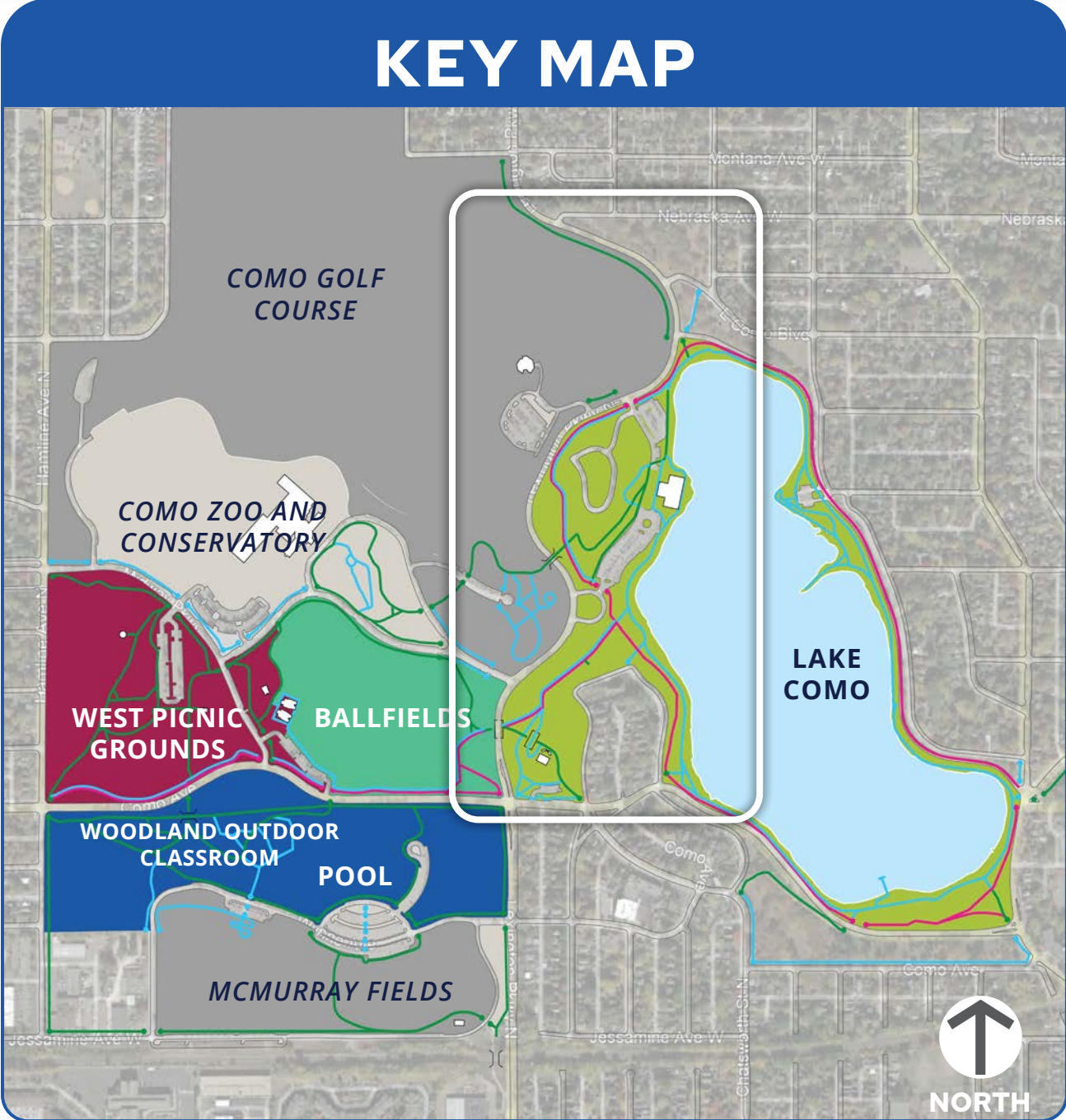
SEPARATED TRAILS



SHORELINE RESTORATION



Proposed Plan LAKE COMO WEST

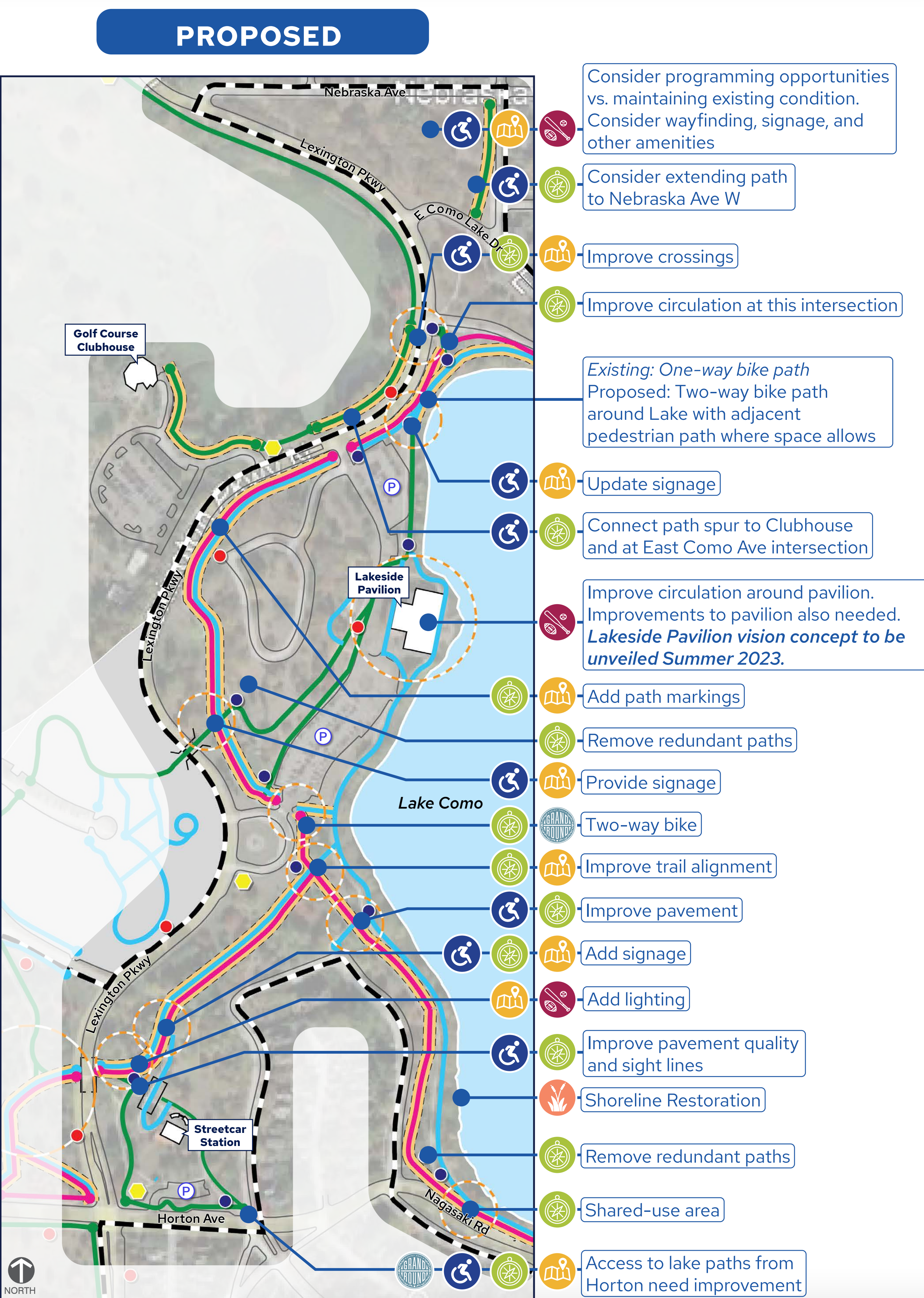
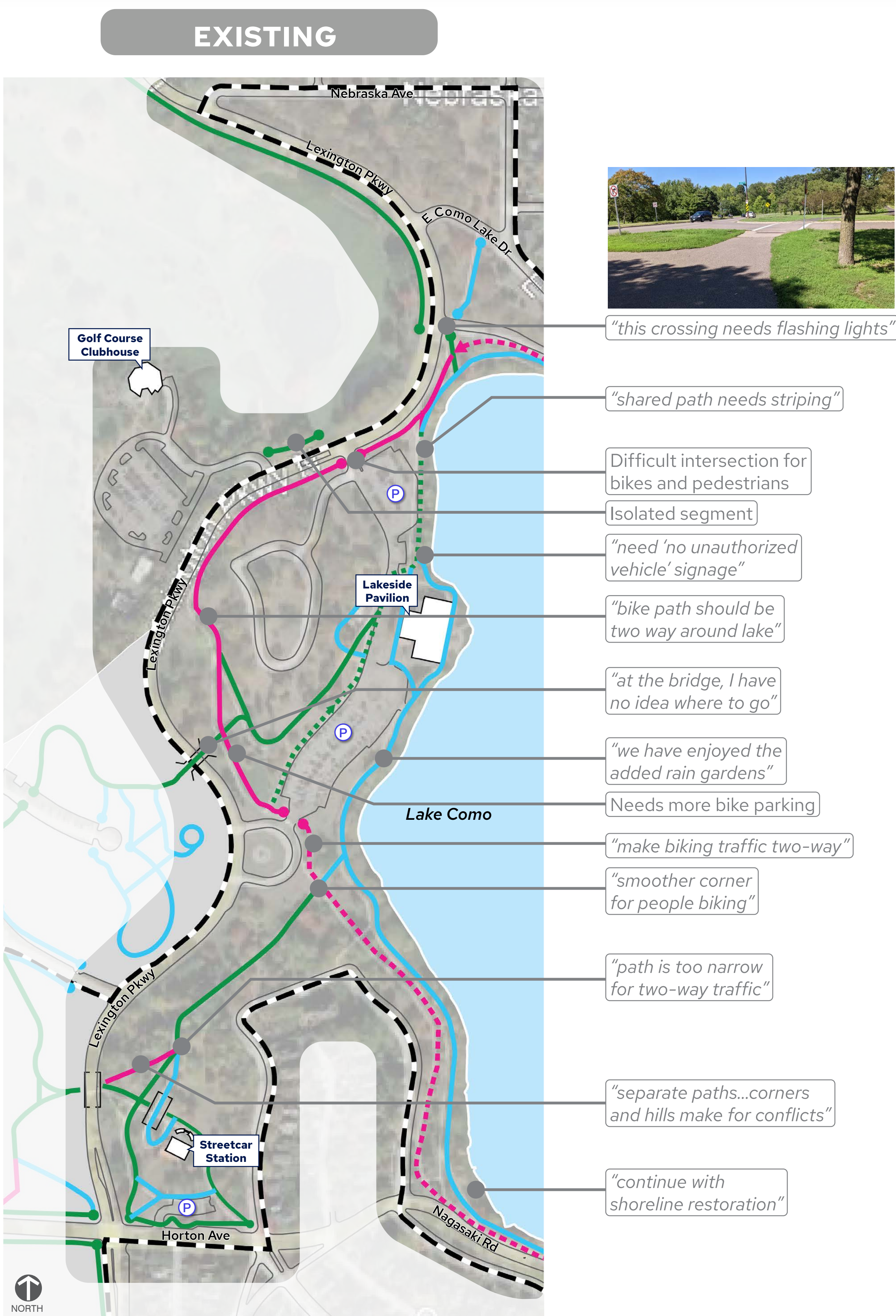


Implementation Toolkit

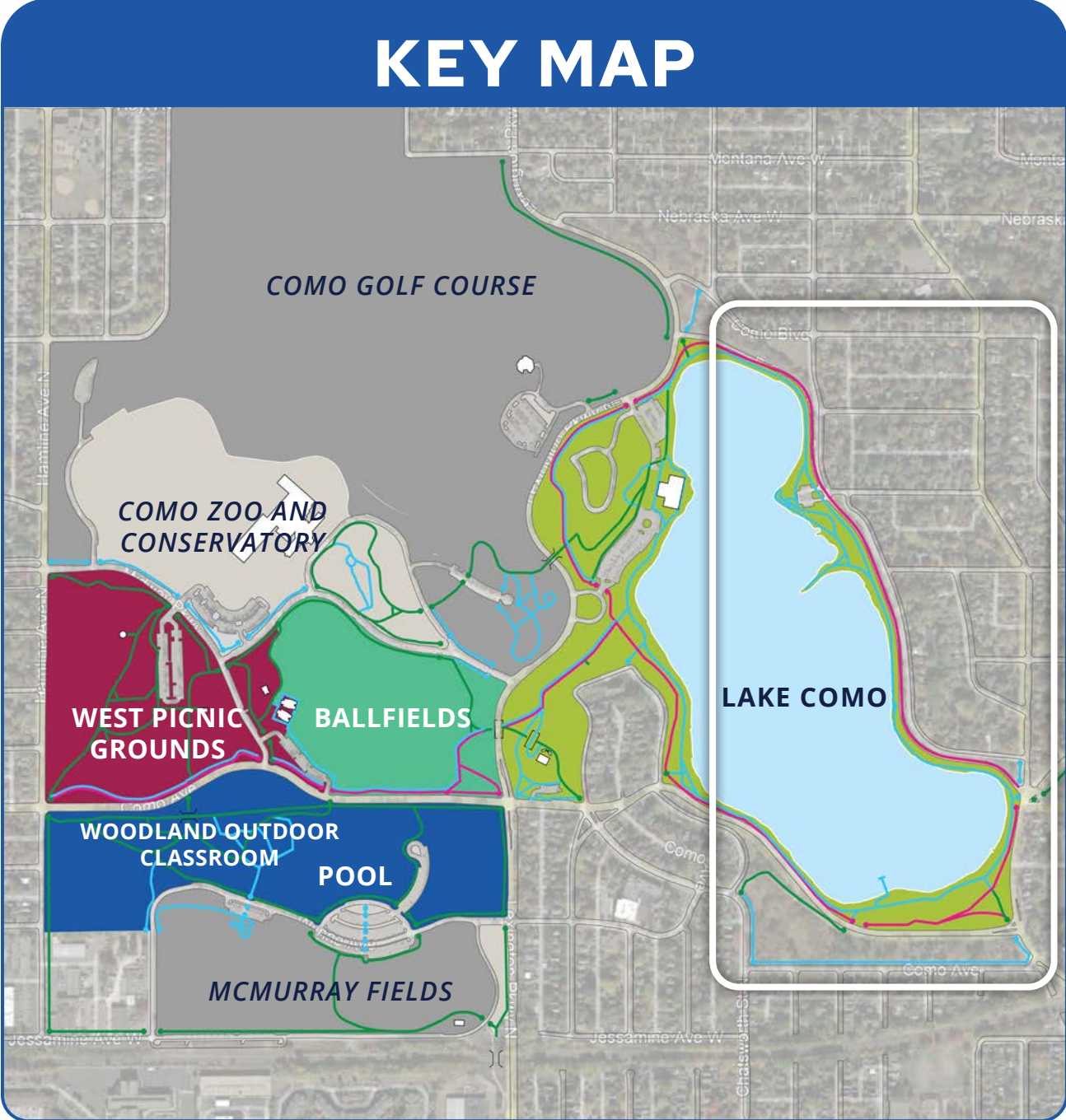
- Improve Wayfinding
- Provide Consistent, Intuitive Trails
- Implement Two-Way Bicycle Traffic Around the Lake per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
- Update Existing Park Amenities
- Improve Safety and Accessibility
- Improve water quality, manage stormwater, and restore shoreline per CRWD's Watershed Management Plan

Map Legend

- | Trail Types | Signage |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| One-Way Bicycle | Pedestrian Directional |
| Two-Way Bicycle | Vehicular Directional |
| Pedestrian | Identification Sign |
| One-Way Shared-Use | Historic Specialty Plaque |
| Two-Way Shared-Use | Gateway Specialty Arch |
| Proposed Improvement Area | |
| Parking | |



Proposed Plan LAKE COMO EAST

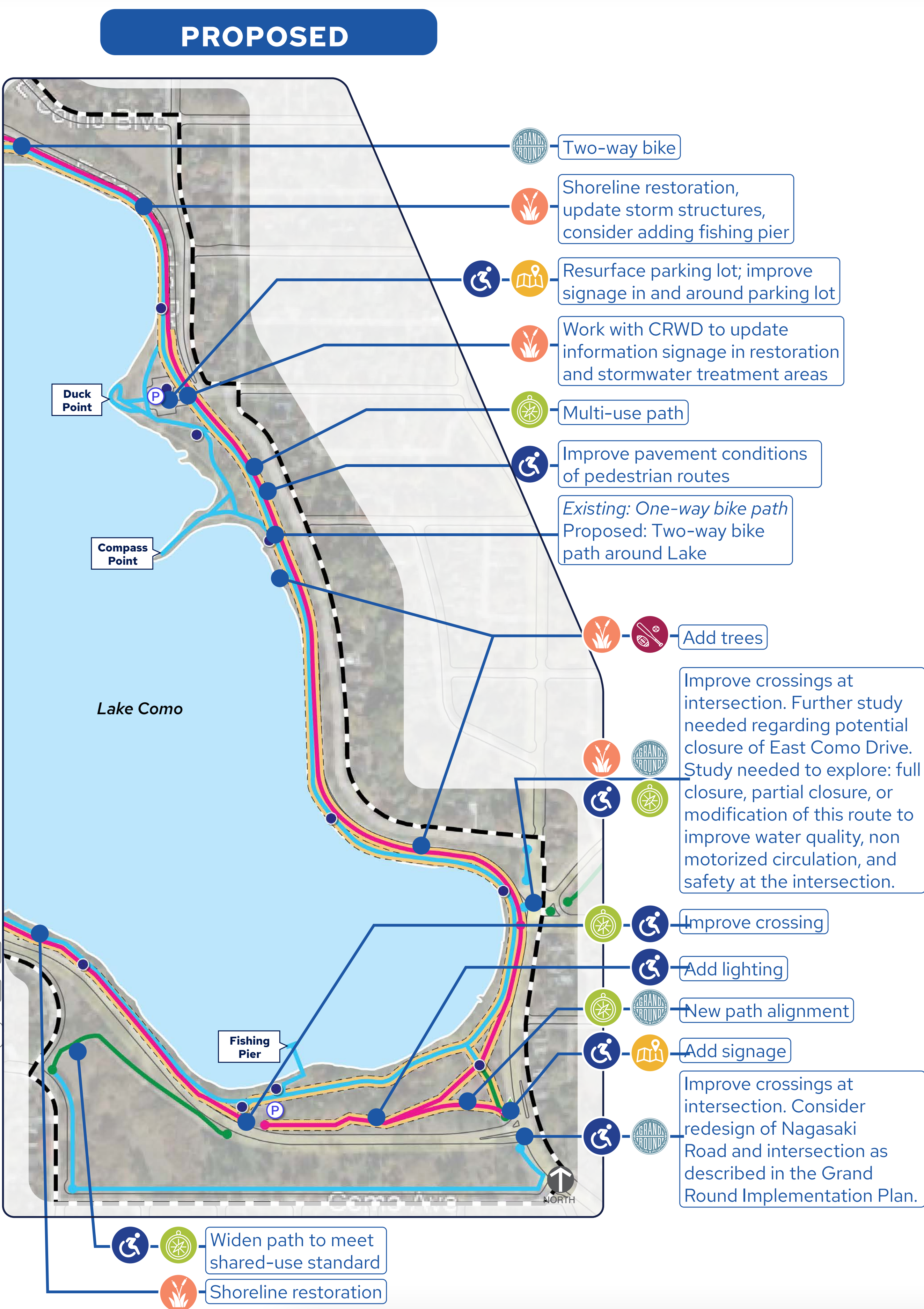
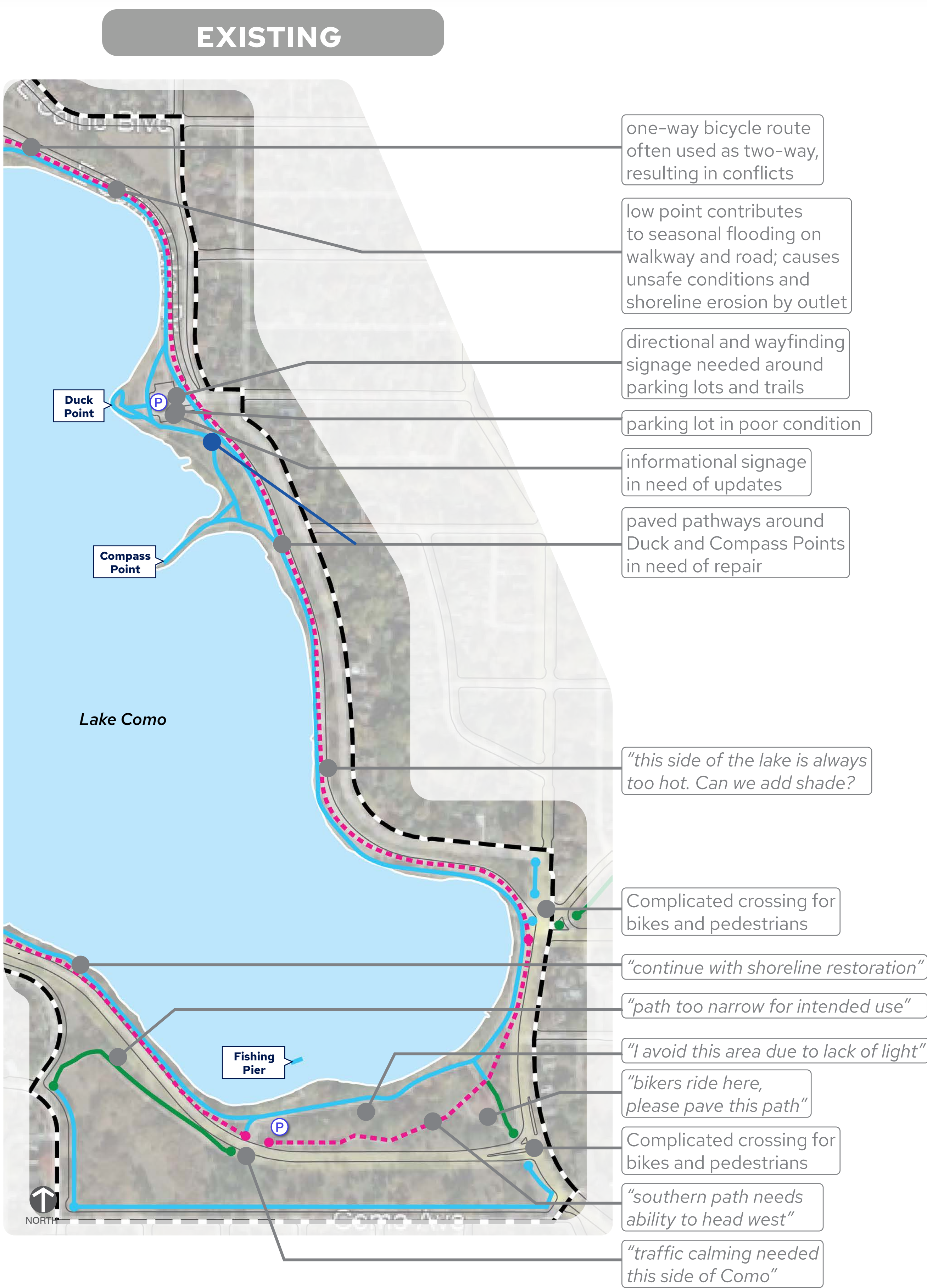


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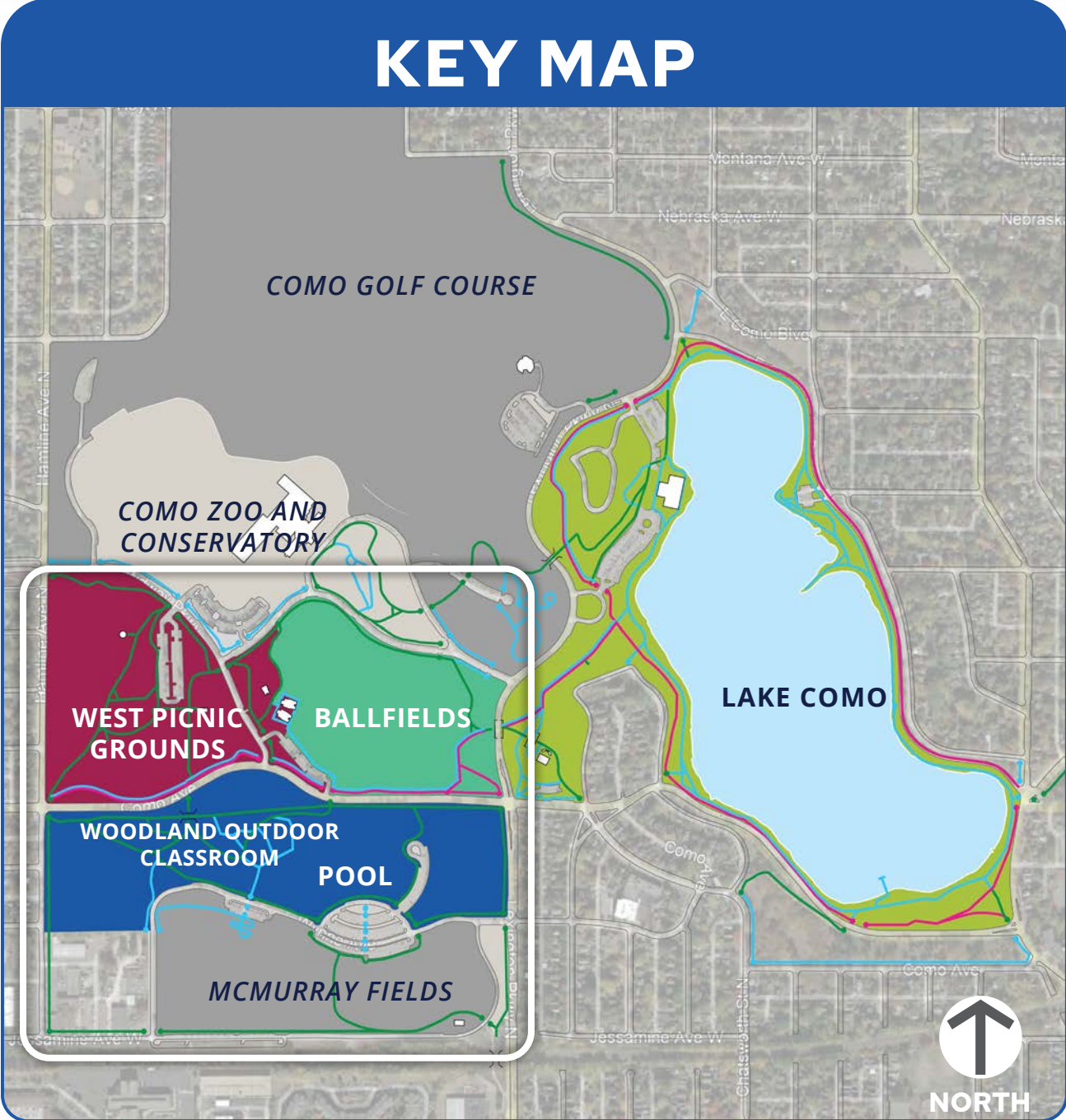
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Proposed Plan BALLFIELDS, PICNIC GROUNDS, AND WOODLAND OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

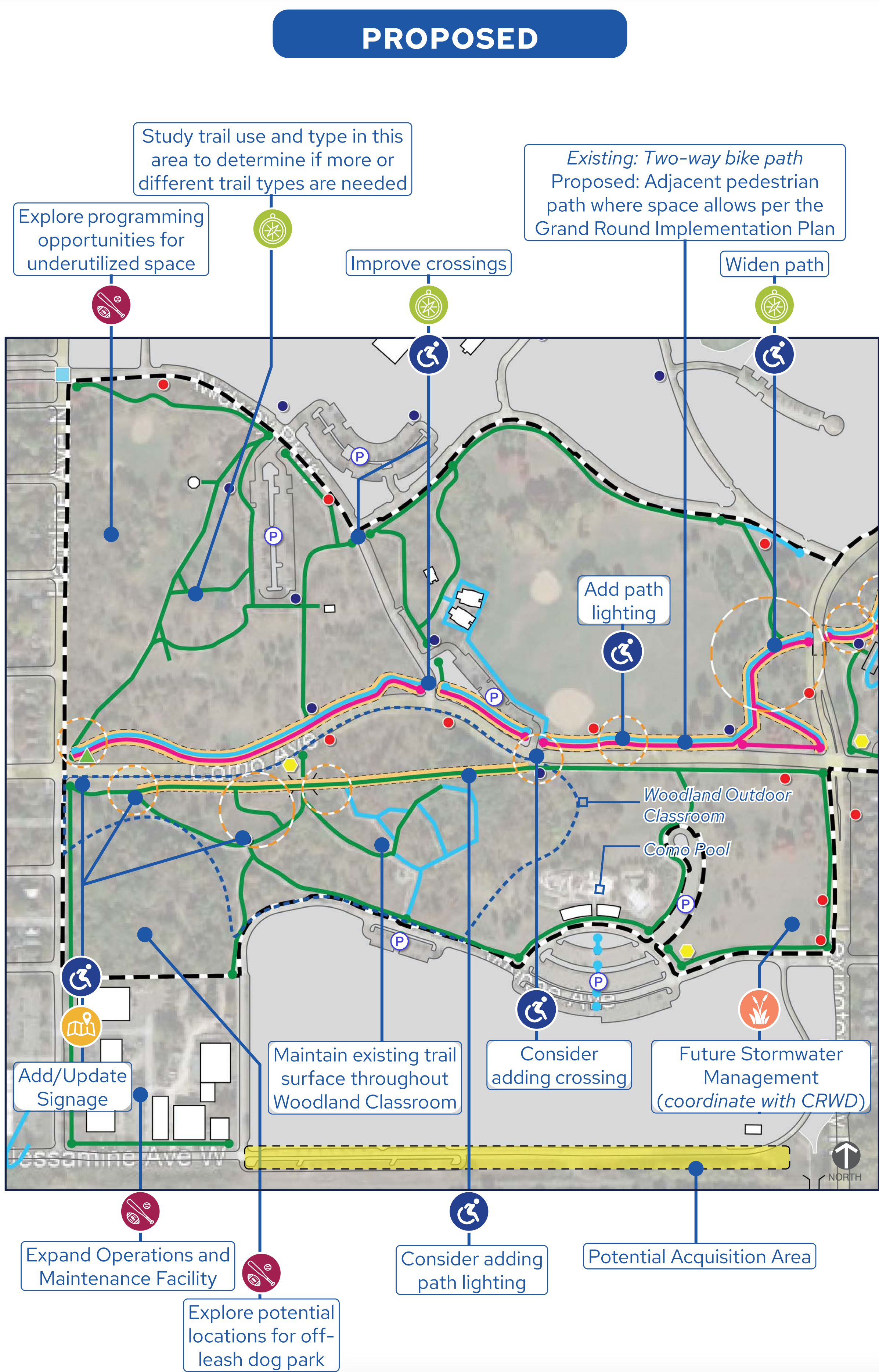
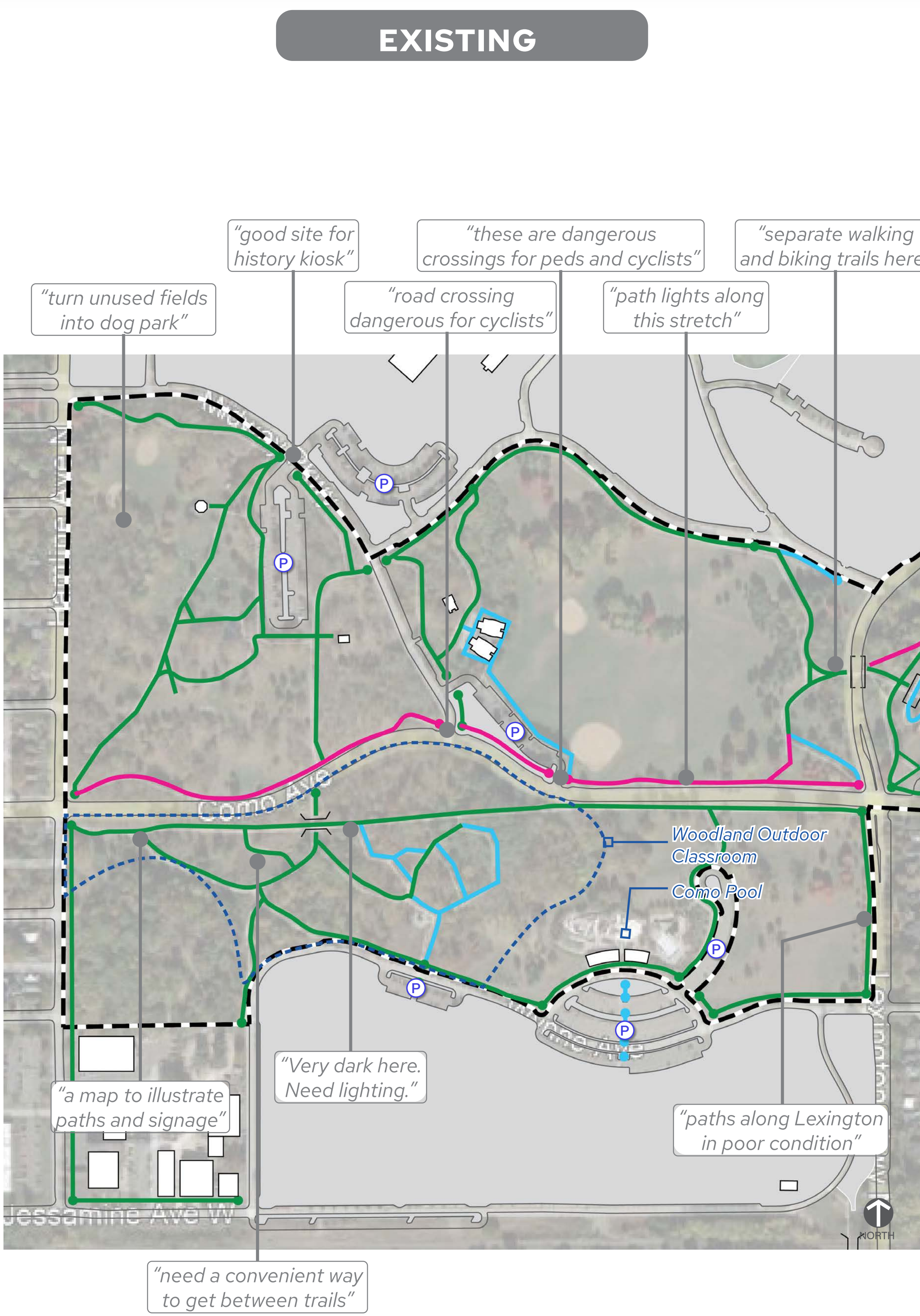


Implementation Toolkit

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Project Priorities

RECOMMENDED PROJECT

PRIORITY

Use stickers to rank the proposed project priorities

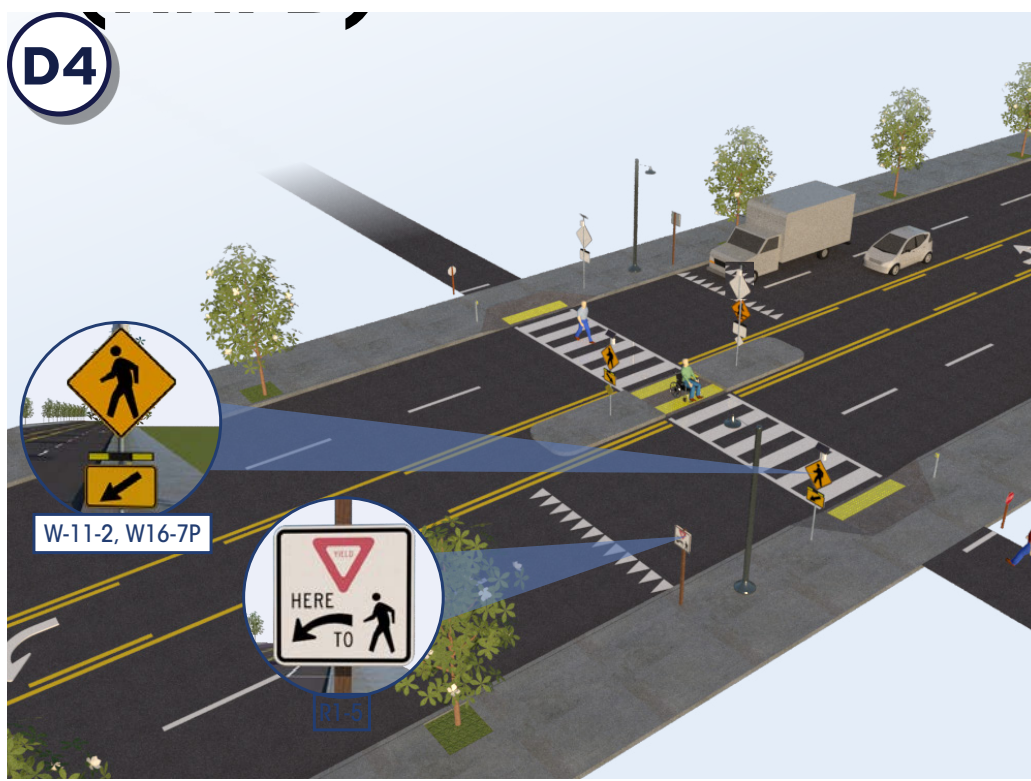
PATHS AND TRAILS	
<div>A1</div> Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and to other park features.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>A2</div> Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>A3</div> Connect incomplete trail segments: west side of Lexington Pkwy, trail connection to Golf Course club house, sidewalk at Beulah Lane.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>A4</div> Implement two-way bike traffic along Grand Round route and around the lake.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>A5</div> Improve wayfinding: Improve path markings and other wayfinding signage for all users. Improve signage accessibility including raised relief maps and tactile strips	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>A6</div> Design paths for improved snow plowing.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
PROGRAMMING	
<div>B1</div> Increase seasonal programming opportunities. Example: create groomed trails for winter activities.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>B2</div> Reserve areas for unprogrammed greenspace	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
HABITAT	
<div>C1</div> Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native prairie and plantings for native habitat.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>C2</div> Incorporate stormwater best management practices with added improvements to trail infrastructure.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>
<div>C3</div> Seed and stabilize shoreline with native plantings to reduce erosion.	<div>LOW</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> <div>HIGH</div>



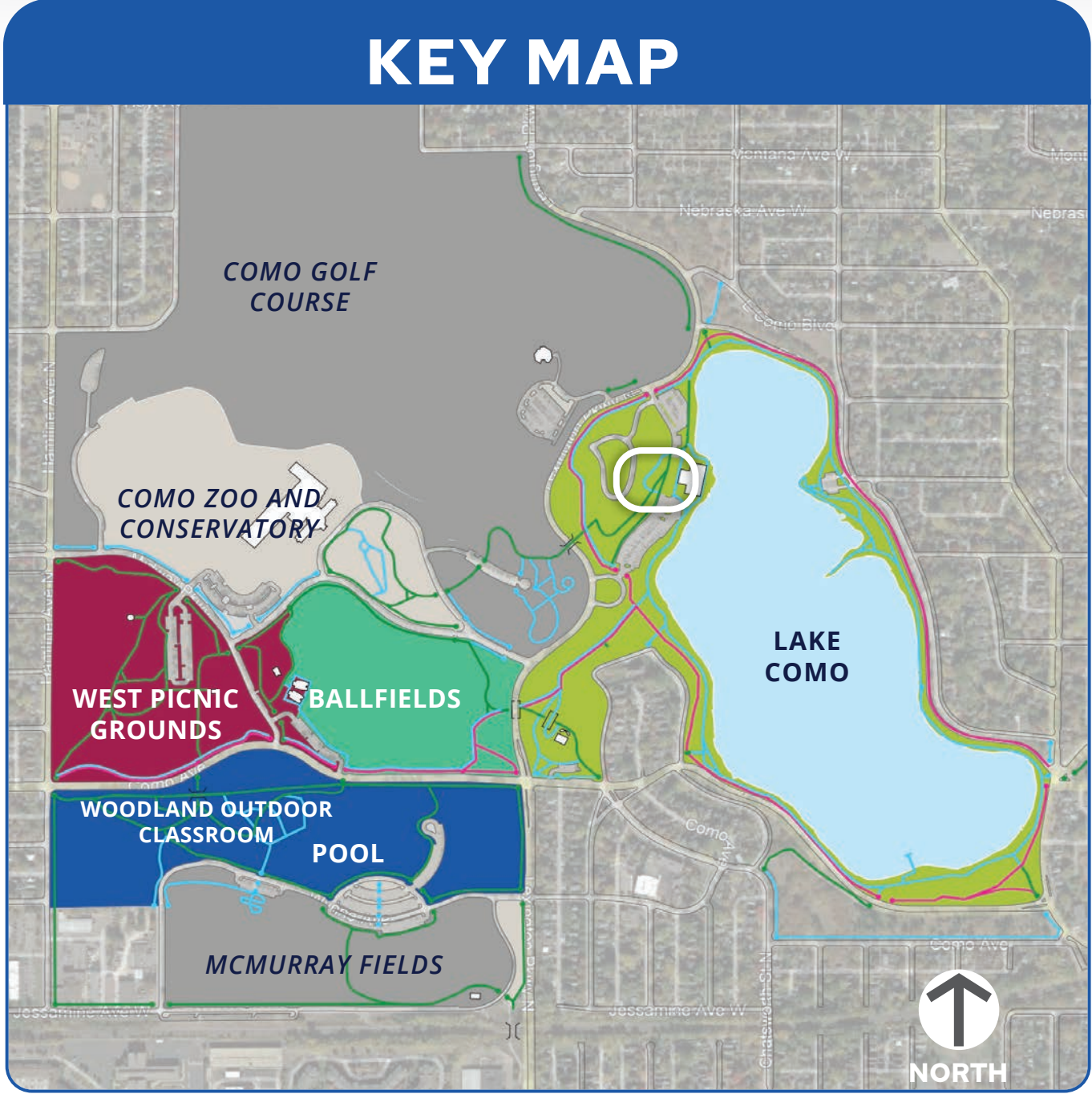
Project Priorities

Use stickers to rank the proposed project priorities

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY
STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS	
D1 Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
D2 Update Nagasaki Road to provide more space for off-street pathways; improve intersection at Como Avenue.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
D3 Combine efforts with Saint Paul Public Works to expand sidewalk infrastructure and improve access to park.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
D4 Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; include measures to prevent vehicle entry on to pathways.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
MISCELLANEOUS	
E1 Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more visitor friendly; improve access to lakeshore; provide diverse seasonal interest; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
E2 Improve bike parking and storage such as permanent secure facilities, electric bike charging stations, and racks to accommodate larger cargo bikes and bike trailers.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
E3 Alternative recreation activities: i.e. disc golf, skills park, dog park, bike pump track, fitness stations, pickleball courts, etc.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
E4 Public Art: For example, murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington Parkway.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH
E5 Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed.	LOW 1 2 3 4 5 HIGH



Proposed Improvements LAKESIDE PAVILION VISION PLAN



VISION PLAN GOALS

In the spring of 2023, Parks and Recreation worked with a consultant to prepare a vision to upgrade the Lakeside Pavilion. All plans and renderings are conceptual, but from this process, the following goals were realized:

1. Renovate and relocate bathrooms for accessibility
2. Maximize all space for public use
3. Add vendors and services for year round use
4. Appropriately size spaces to meet community needs
5. Maintain the historic quality of this landmark building and upgrade overall aesthetics
6. Promote community events and connection to the lake
7. Direct amplified sound toward natural sound breaks

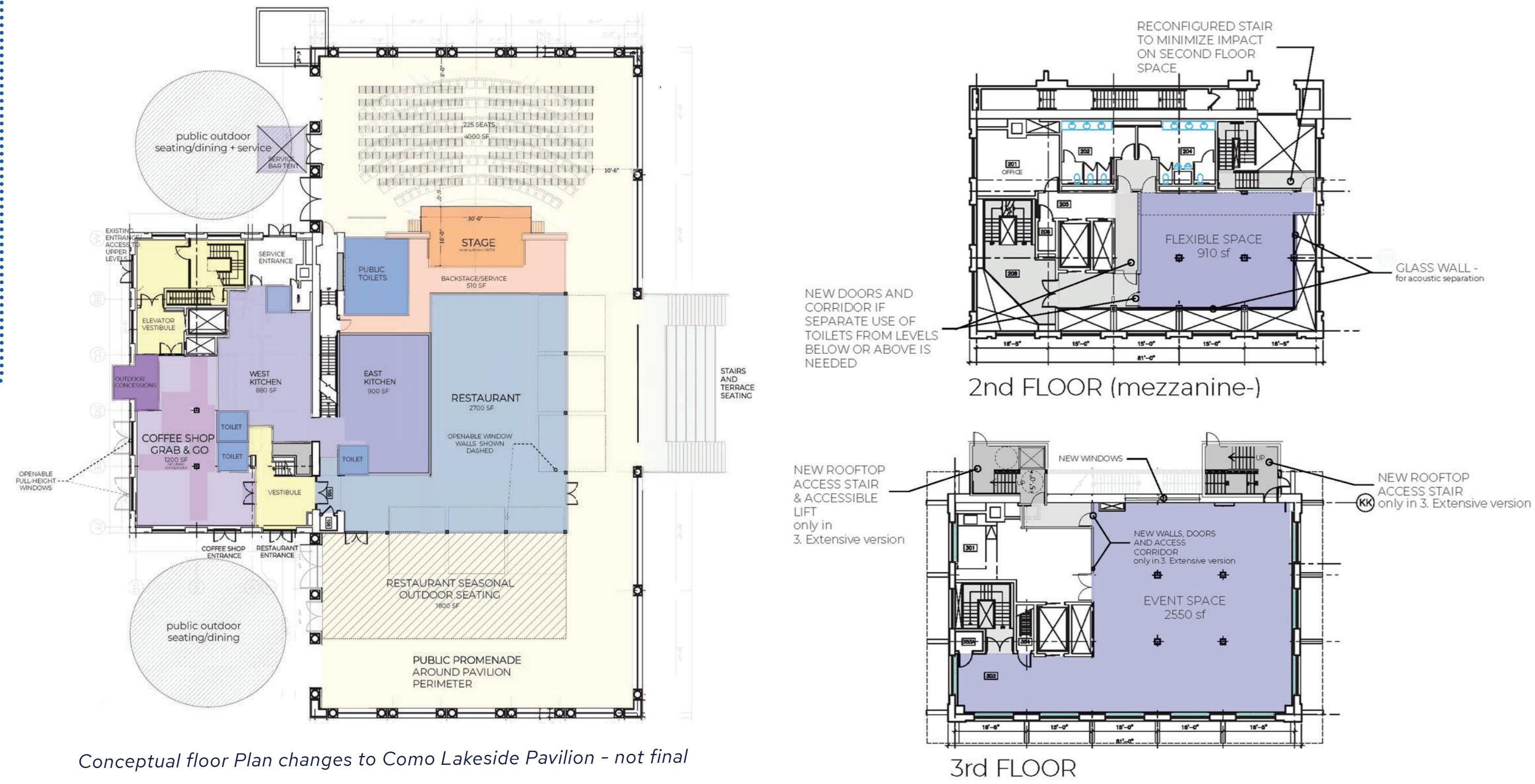


Project Goal: Create a vision for the Como Lakeside Pavilion to upgrade the public facility to better accommodate public use and operations

Next steps: Seek feedback, identify priority improvements, identify and apply for funding sources through inclusion in the Como Long Range Plan



Conceptual rendering of the Renovated Como Lakeside Pavilion



Conceptual floor Plan changes to Como Lakeside Pavilion - not final



Conceptual elevation of the East side of the Como Lakeside Pavilion



Conceptual section elevation of the South side of the Como Lakeside Pavilion