



# WELCOME!

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## COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN OPEN HOUSE OCTOBER 10, 2023



**SAINT PAUL**  
MINNESOTA

**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

**COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | OCTOBER 2023**



# TODAY'S AGENDA

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**1. Introduction**

**2. Project Overview**

**3. Project Connections**

**4. Community Engagement**

**5. Clarifications**

**6. Project Boundary**

**7. Focus Areas**

**8. Q&A**

**9. Project Next Steps**



# INTRODUCTION

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## City of Saint Paul

Parks and Recreation

*David Ronzani | Project Manager*

*Anne Gardner | Supervisor*

*Katie Hamerlinck | Landscape Architect*

**David Ronzani (he/him)**  
Landscape Architect | Project Manager  
City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation  
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651.266.6410

## Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Members

*Britta Belden*

*Theodore Budd*

*Joni Chacich*

*Dillon Clements*

*Allison Cole*

*Grant Cooper*

*James Cowles*

*Kevin Dahm*

*Amy Gage*

*Sasha Mackin*

*Zach Mensinger*

*Dave Montgomery*

*Christopher Tabisz*

*Greg Williams*

*Han Zhang*

**Thank You For Being Here!**

# PROJECT OVERVIEW | LONG-RANGE PLAN

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- The **Metropolitan (Met.) Council** is the regional policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. The 17-member board guides the strategic growth of the metro area.
- **A Long-Range Plan** is a conceptual planning document that **provides a framework** for design to guide future growth, development, and maintenance of a space.
- The project will serve as an **update** to the current “Como Master Plan.”
- The last Master Plan for Como Regional Park was completed in 1984, though many improvements have been made to the Park since.
- **Met Council** requires updating master plans every 20 years.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW | GOALS

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## Parks & Recreation:

- Plan will focus on reviewing and **improving the trail system** within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections to **Saint Paul's Grand Round** trail network.
  - **Clarify** pedestrian, bicycle and mixed-use **routes** throughout Como Regional Park. Improve Safety and Accessibility for all users.
  - Identify and prioritize additional **amenities** for **future inclusion** within Como Regional Park.
  - **Goal:** Update Existing "Como Master Plan document" with changes for **adoption by Met. Council**.
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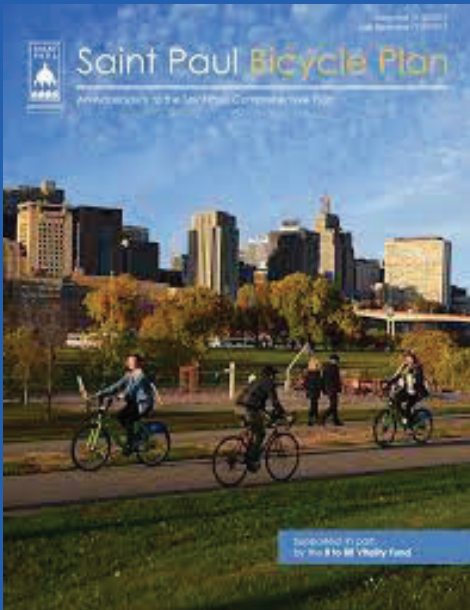
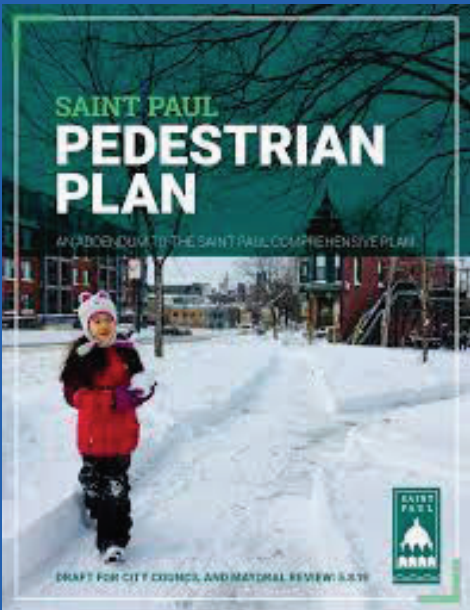
## Metropolitan Council:

- For a park agency **to receive a grant** for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a **Met Council-approved Long-Range Plan**.
- Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is **required** to have its own **Long -Range Plan**.
- Project Funding: Legacy Grant, Met Council - **\$150,000**

# PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## BIG IDEA

Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional park in Saint Paul. Our Long Range plan will impart clarity in wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycles 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 reflect the evolving recreational interests and diversity of park visitors.





# PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

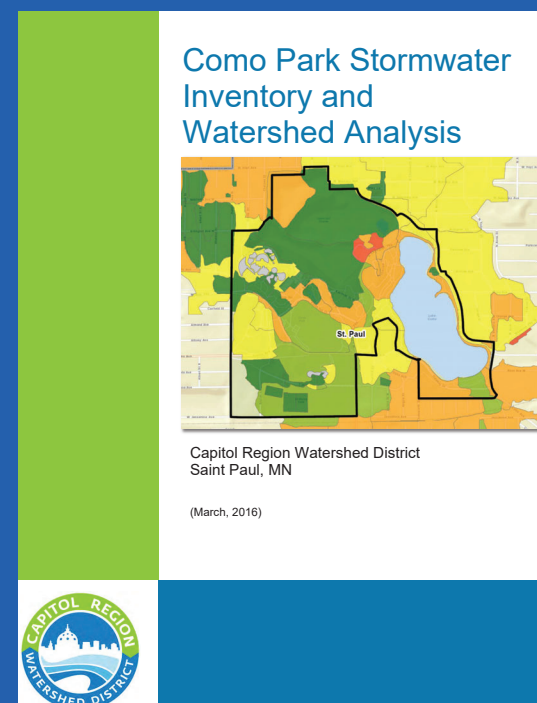
- Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience and comfort.
- Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas,
- Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park.
- Design, program, and maintain to promote year round activity.
- 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, previous plans, and studies.



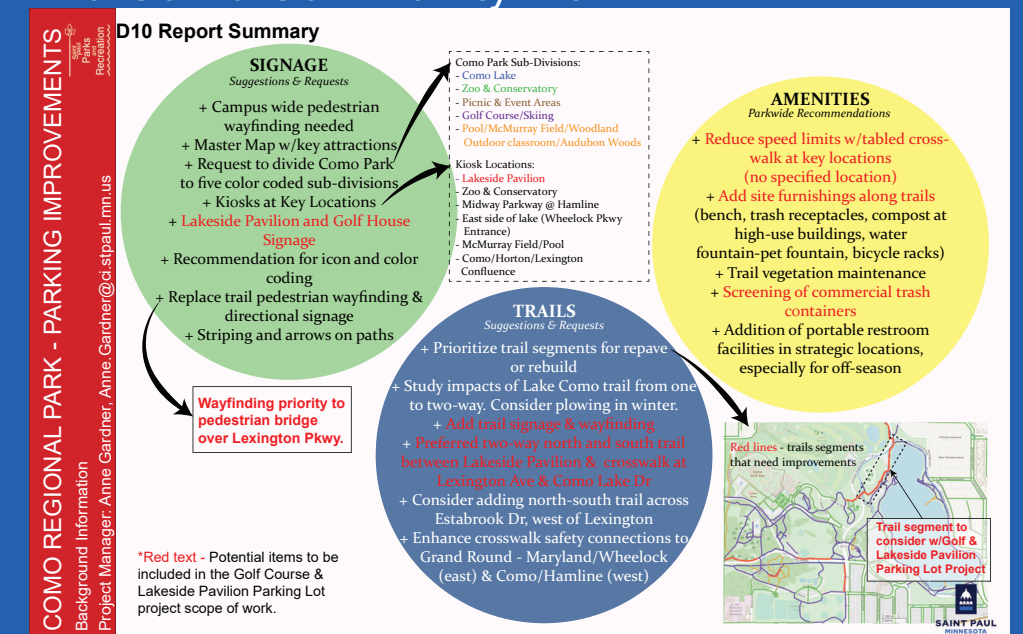
• Image Credit: West St. Paul Reader June 11, 2023

# PROJECT OVERVIEW | PREVIOUS STUDIES

- Como Park Master Plan (1984)
- Lake Management Plan (CRWD)
- Como Pathways Report (District 10)
- Grand Round Implementation Plan
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Systems Plan
- Como Park Stormwater Inventory and Watershed Analysis
- District 10 Como Community Plan: An Addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Como Stormwater Master Plan
- Como Transportation Master Plan
- Como Woodland Master Plan
- Como Conservatory Master Plan
- Forecourt Master Plan
- Como Golf Course Master Plan



## D10 Como Community Plan





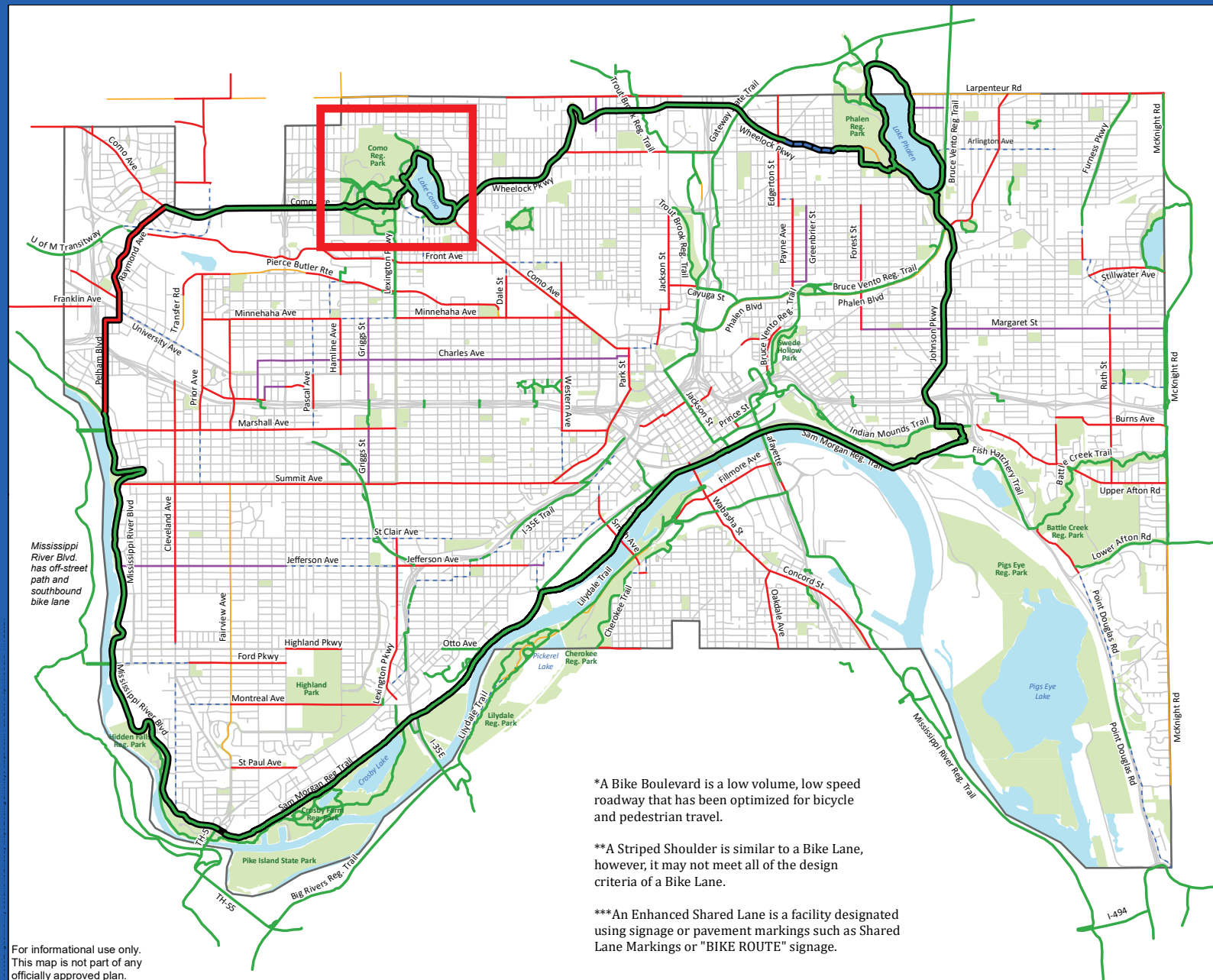
# PROJECT CONNECTIONS | REGIONAL

## Saint Paul Bikeways

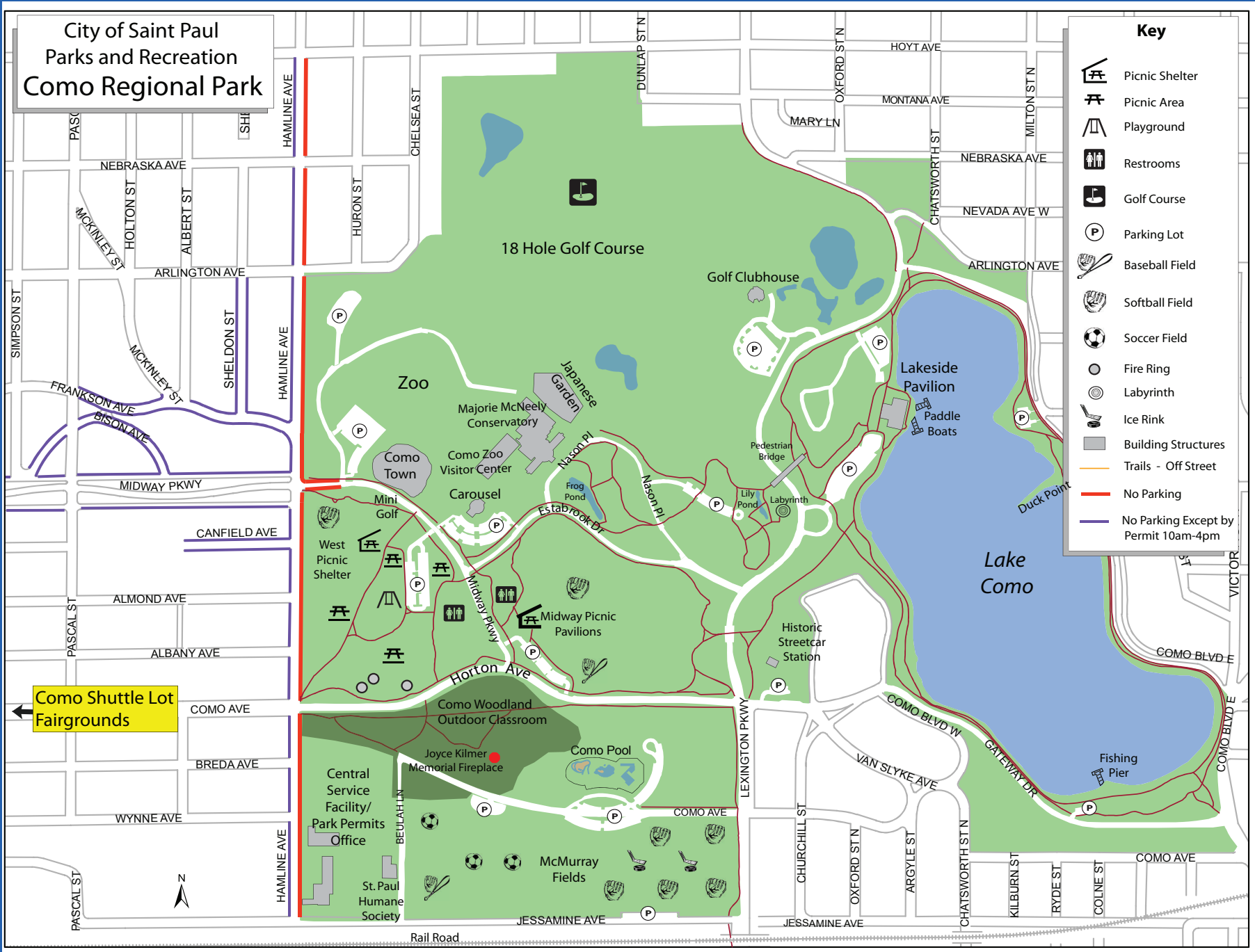
- **214.6 miles of bikeway**
- **67.2 miles of Dedicated Bike Lanes**
- **17.0 miles of Bikeable Shoulders**
- **11.1 miles of Bike Boulevards**
- **20.9 miles of Shared-Use Lanes**

## Saint Paul Grand Round

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



# PROJECT CONNECTIONS | INTERNAL



## Como Regional Park

- **2.3** miles of paved walking and cycling paths around lake area.
- **4.6 million** visits in 2021- per Met Council
- 2nd most in Twin Cities Regional Parks System. (Minneapolis Chain of Lakes)



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | OVERVIEW



- On-site + Neighborhood Events
- **Engage Saint Paul**
- Surveys
- **Pin Map**
- Site Signage
- Advisory Committees
- **Targeted Engagement**



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | DAC ROLE

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Help to determine the **community needs** and desires for the site.

- Communicate with group(s) you are representing and solicit input.

Review plan concepts and **provide input** on **major design elements** and themes.

- Contribute constructive and respectful suggestions and feedback.

**Bring suggestions** from community, stakeholders, and respective organizations to the attention of the project team.

- Communicate via email and/or at meetings.

Help **communicate** project **progress** to community members.

- Act as the **liaison** between project and community.

**Provide guidance** to City staff on final design recommendations for the project.

- Actively contribute through discussion at committee meetings.

Ensure that the full **range of issues** are discussed during the design process.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | EQUITY

## Equity Component:

Equity means **connecting all residents** to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities **so that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change.**

## Targeted Engagement

- Schools
- Organizations
- Events
- Ongoing



Equity –  
Ensuring every voice has equal  
opportunity to share.

# CLARIFICATIONS

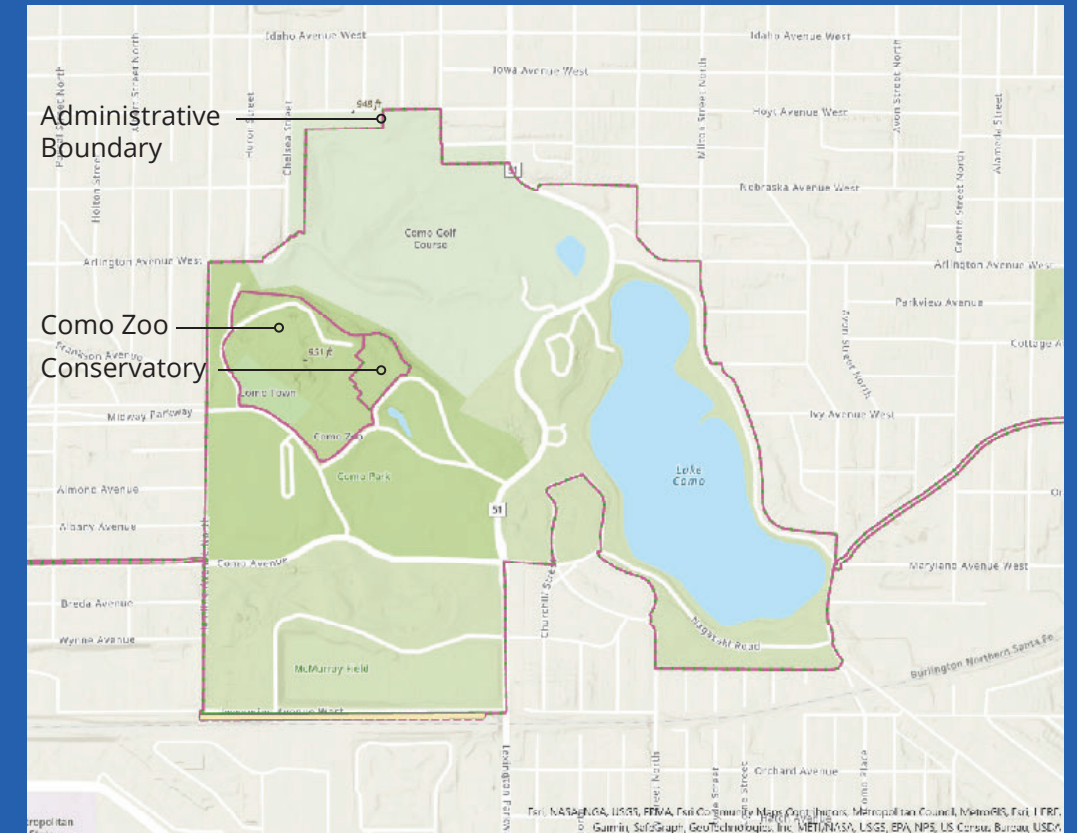
## 3 UNITS OF THE COMO REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM-

- Como Regional Park (Includes Como Pool)
- Como Zoo\*
- Como Conservatory\*

\*Both Como Zoo and Como Conservatory are Special Recreation Features and require their own Long Range Plan.

### Enterprise Facilities

- 2 enterprise facilities within Como Regional Park - Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields.
- Enterprise-fund recreation facilities include any facility that is expected to generate sufficient revenues to pay its own costs, such as golf courses, downhill ski areas, and water parks.
- These facilities **are not eligible for regional park funds** from the Council because enterprise-fund recreation facilities are expected to raise money for their development and operation in the same way as their private sector counterparts.



# CLARIFICATIONS

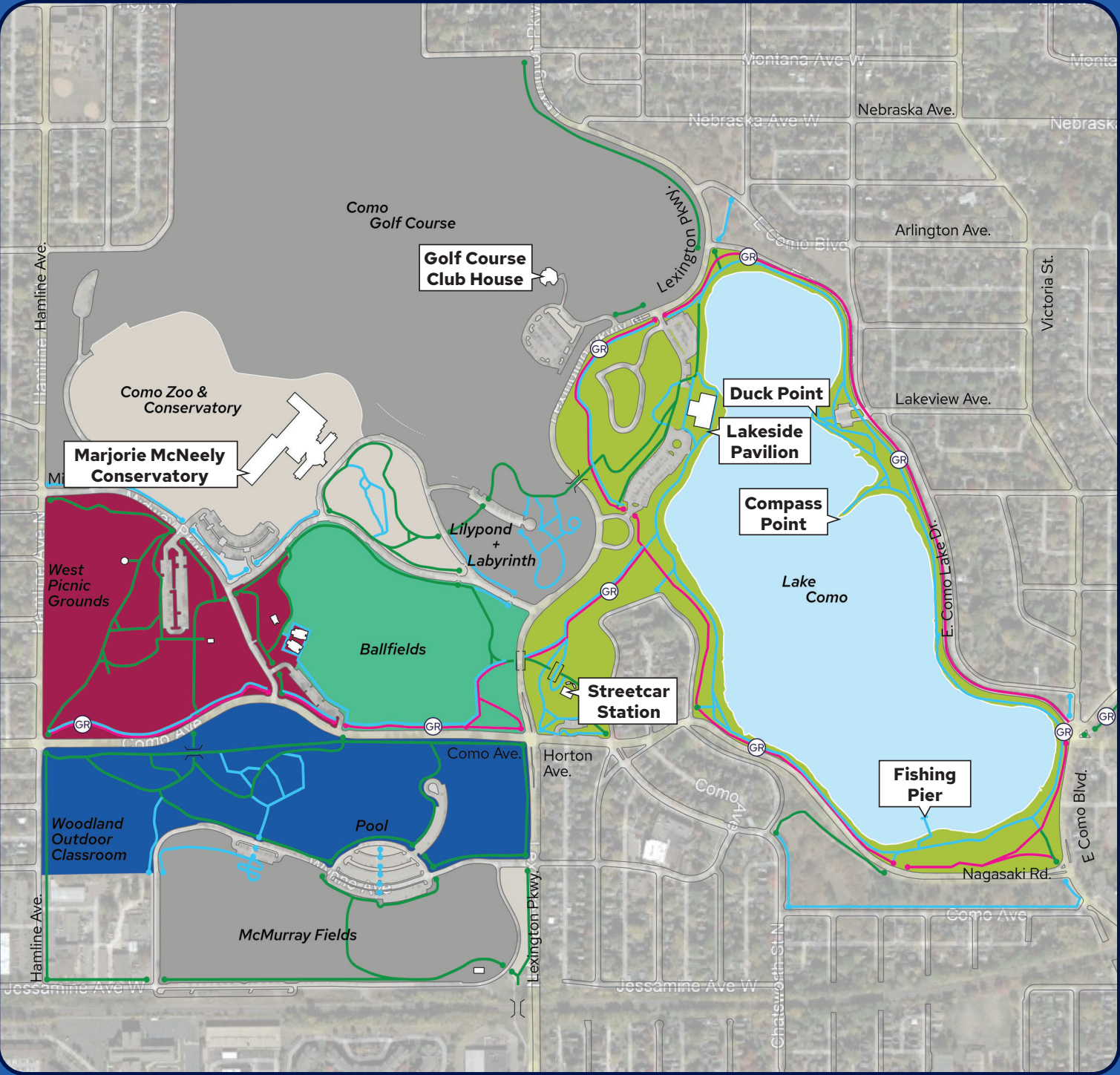
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## PRIORITY WATERS –Lake Como is considered a Priority Water

- The Metropolitan Council developed the Priority Waters List to help sustainably manage Twin Cities metro area waterbodies.
- Waterbodies classified as Priority Waters have been determined to be regionally significant based on the benefits these waterbodies provide
- The benefits to the region are based on seven categories: **recreation and tourism, healthy habitat, drinking water protection, tranquil connection, equity, industry and utility, and science and education.**
- The Priority Waters List:
- Guides Met Council allocates resources.
- Provides a key lens for developing policies and activities to include in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan (2050 WRPP).
- Offers insights to other organizations as they prioritize projects and spend their resources.



# PROJECT BOUNDARY



## PROJECT AREAS

- Lake
- Ballfields
- West Picnic Grounds
- Woodland Outdoor Classroom
- Special Recreation Features  
*Como Zoo & Conservatory\**
- Enterprise Facilities  
*Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields\**

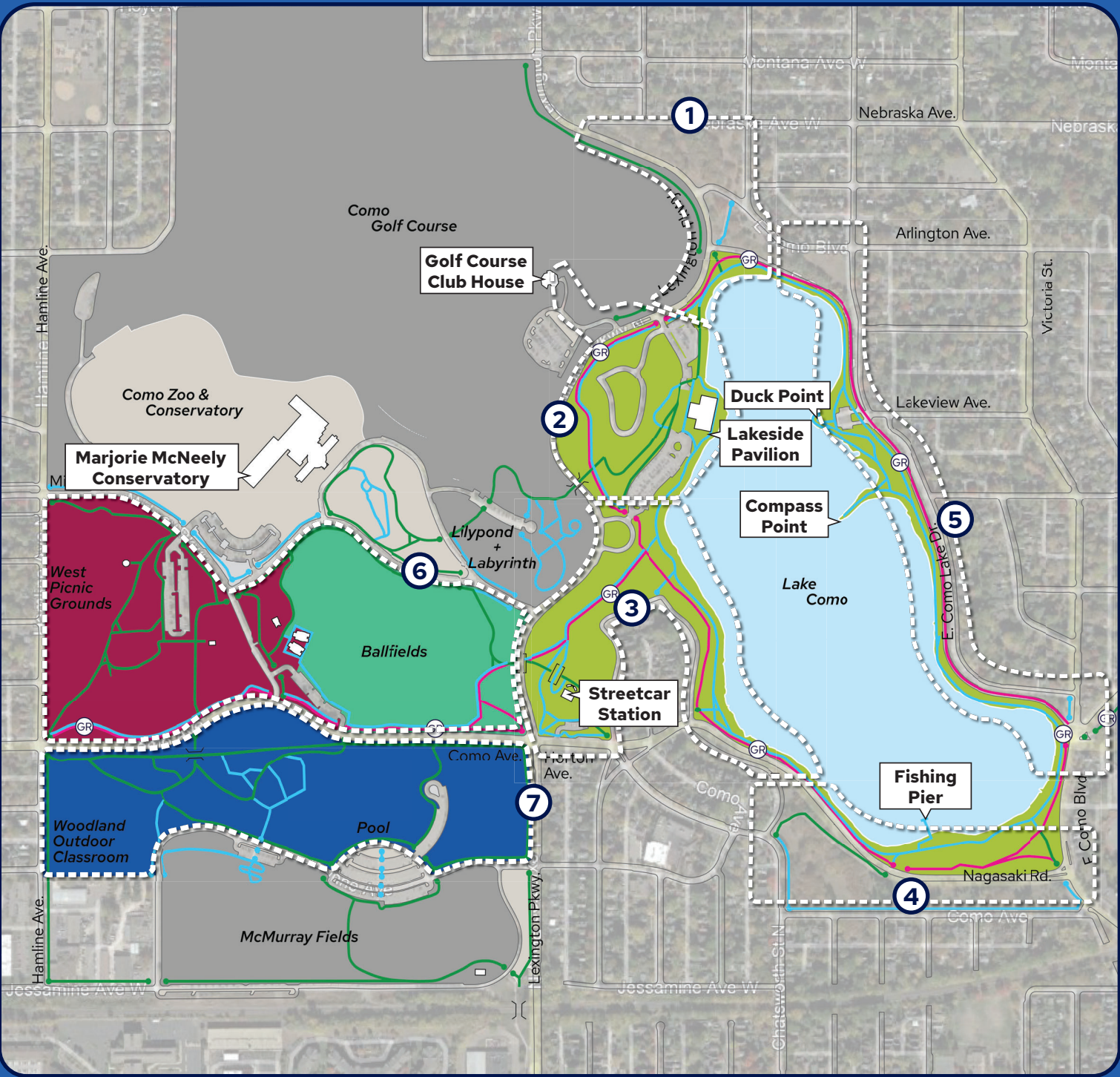
\*Not-included or partially included in analysis

## PROJECTWIDE IMPROVEMENTS

- Proposed changes for all areas withing Specified boundary
- Additional lighting
- Improve crossings, improve ADA accessibility
- Clarify path types and uses; implement two-way bicycle facilities
- Trail and crossing improvements per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
- Re-align and widen paths to make trail more accessible
- Improve pavement conditions
- Work with CRWD to update informational signage in restoration and stormwater treatment areas
- Explore opportunities for stormwater BMPs and improved access to Lake. Coordinate with CRWD.



# FOCUS AREAS | OVERVIEW



## FOCUS AREAS

- 1 Como Lake North
- 2 Lakeside Pavilion Area
- 3 Historic Streetcar Station
- 4 Nagasaki Road
- 5 E Como Lake Drive
- 6 Picnic Grounds
- 7 Woodland Outdoor Classroom

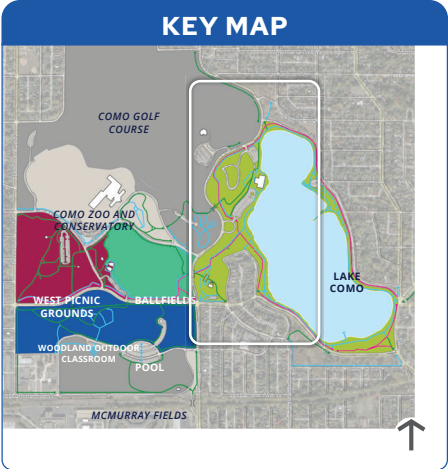
## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT

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



# FOCUS AREAS | EXAMPLE

## Proposed Plan LAKE COMO WEST

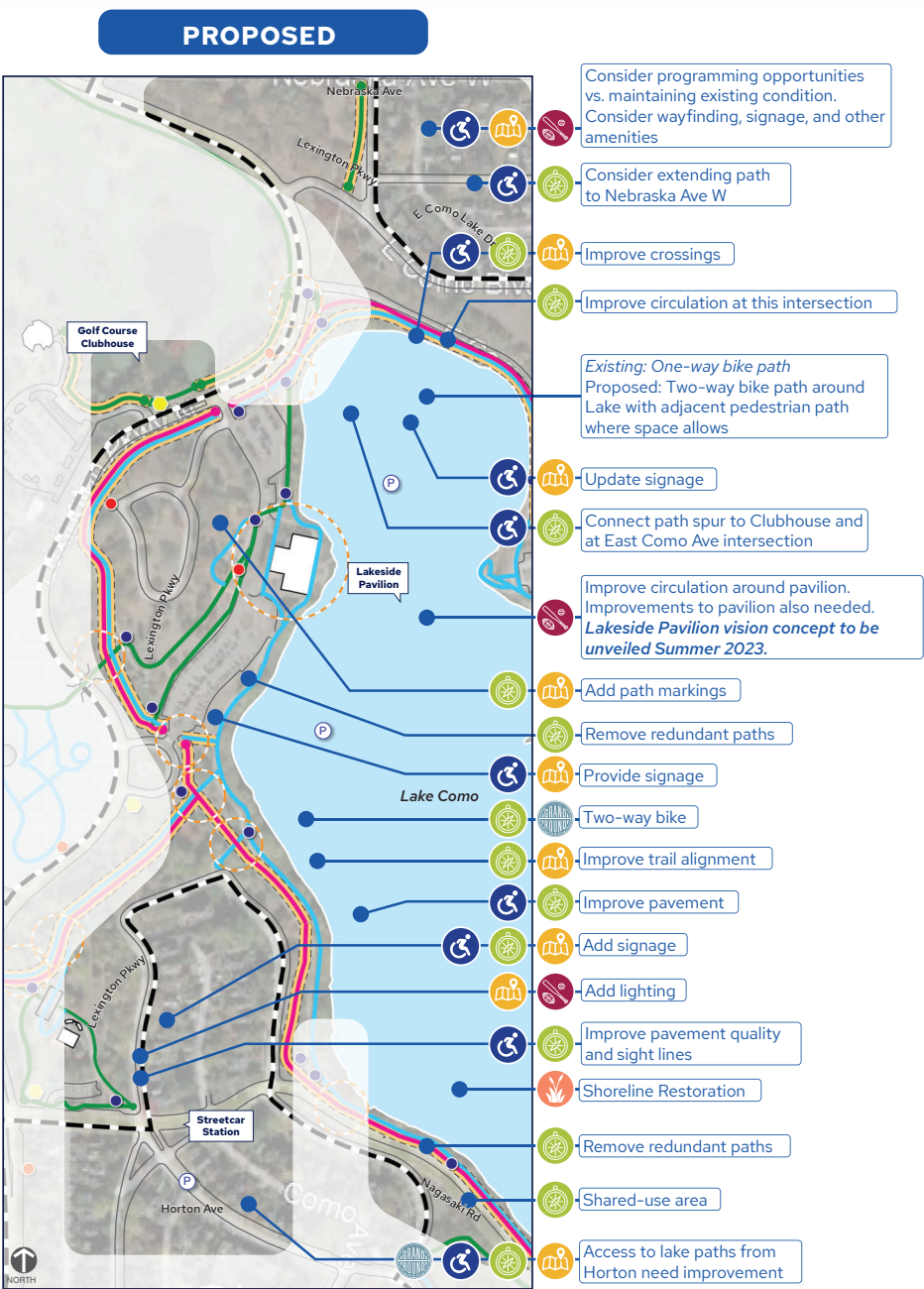
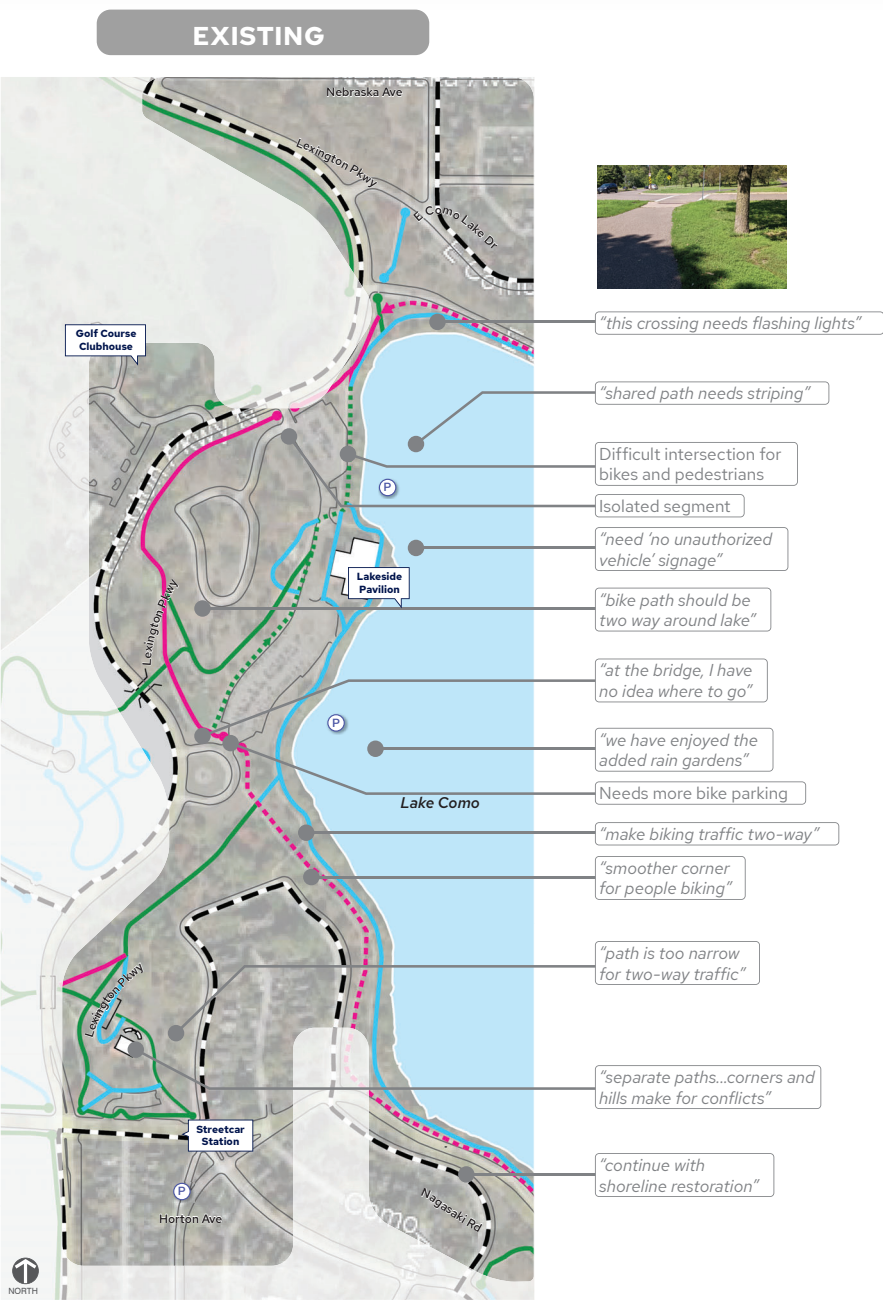


### Implementation Toolkit

- Improve Wayfinding
- Provide Consistent, Intuitive Trails
- Implement Two-Way Bicycle Traffic Around the Lake per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
- Update Existing Park Amenities
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### Map Legend

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






# FOCUS AREAS | PRIORITIES

## Project Priorities

Mark on the line to rank the proposed project priorities high, medium, or low

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

A3



Missing connection on Lexington

A5



Trail Signage

A5



Interpretive/Educational Signage

A5



Wayfinding Kiosk

A5



Directional Blade Signs

A5



Pavement Markings

A6



Grand Round winter plowing

C3



Example of Shoreline Restoration at Lake Phalen



Como Regional Park Long Range Plan

September 2023

# PROJECT NEXT STEPS

- **Complete Targeted Engagement**
- **Complete LRP Draft Document for review**
- **Begin Plan Approval Processes**
  - Parks and Recreation Commission
  - Transportation Committee
  - Saint Paul City Council
  - Metropolitan Council
- **Long-Range Plan Adoption**
  - December - June 2024

**Como Regional Park Long Range Plan Project Website:**  
[stpaul.gov/como-regional-park-projects](http://stpaul.gov/como-regional-park-projects)



[Engagestpaul.org/  
como-trail-master-plan](http://Engagestpaul.org/como-trail-master-plan)



# GROUP DISCUSSION

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**What questions do you have of about the project?**

