

**Community Advisory Committee:**  
**Hidden Falls North**  
**Entrance**  
**at Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park**

**December 18, 2024**



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### Current Funding for:

- Long-Range Plan improvements
- Repaving of entrance drive

### Design & Planning for Future Improvements identified in the 2019 Long-Range Plan:

- Picnic shelter improvements
- Cultural events space
- Signage and accessibility at boat ramp
- Trail connections
- Wayfinding, signage, and kiosks at entrance
- Habitat and vegetation maintenance

### Community Engagement:

- Project website
- Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

### Project Schedule:



#### MAY-JANUARY 2024:

- Community Engagement and Project Planning
- Community Advisory Committee



#### JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 2025:

- Construction Drawings for Phase 1
- Planning and Design for Future Phases



#### OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026:

- Bidding and Construction for Phase 1



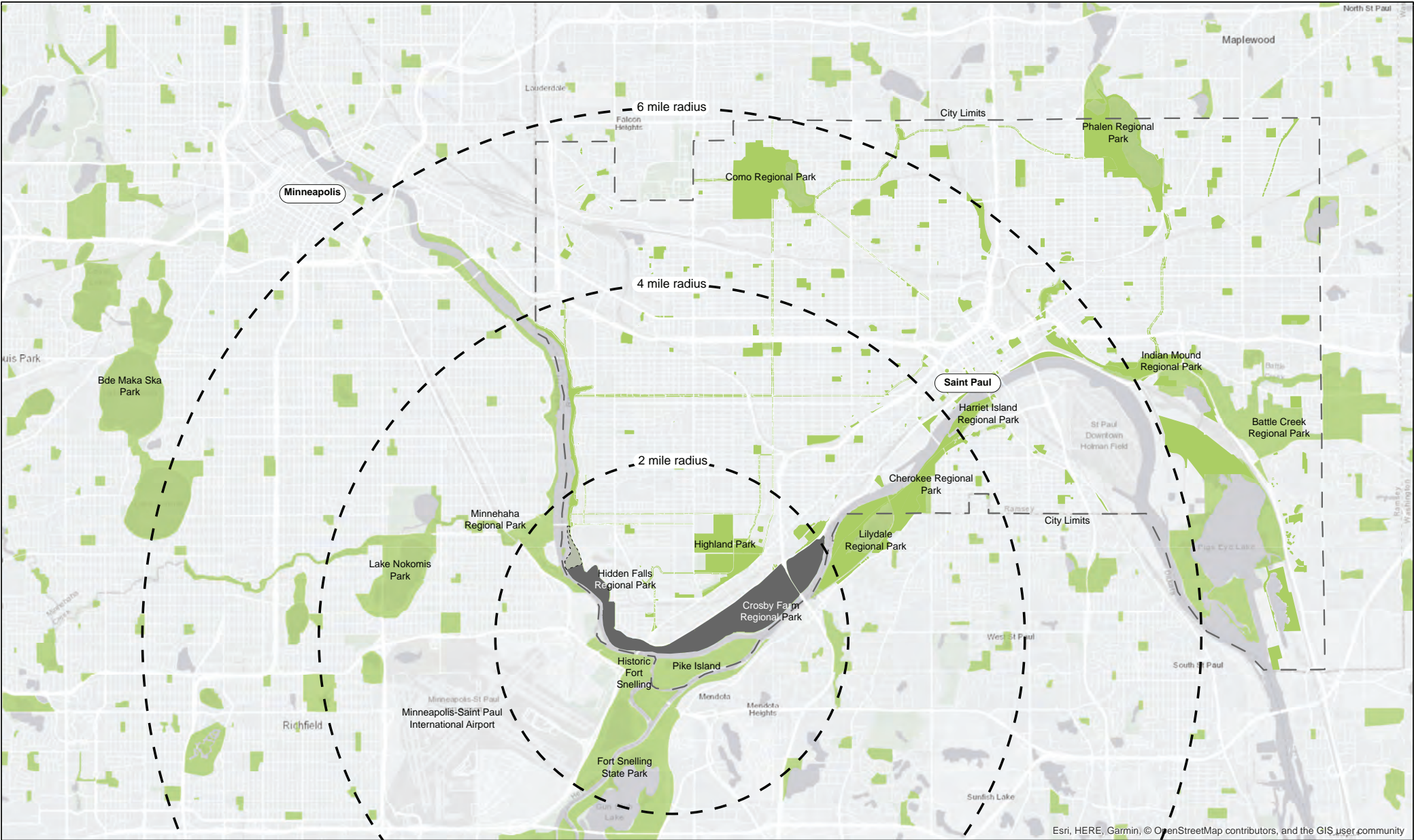
#### 2025-2026:

- Design Development for Future Park Improvements



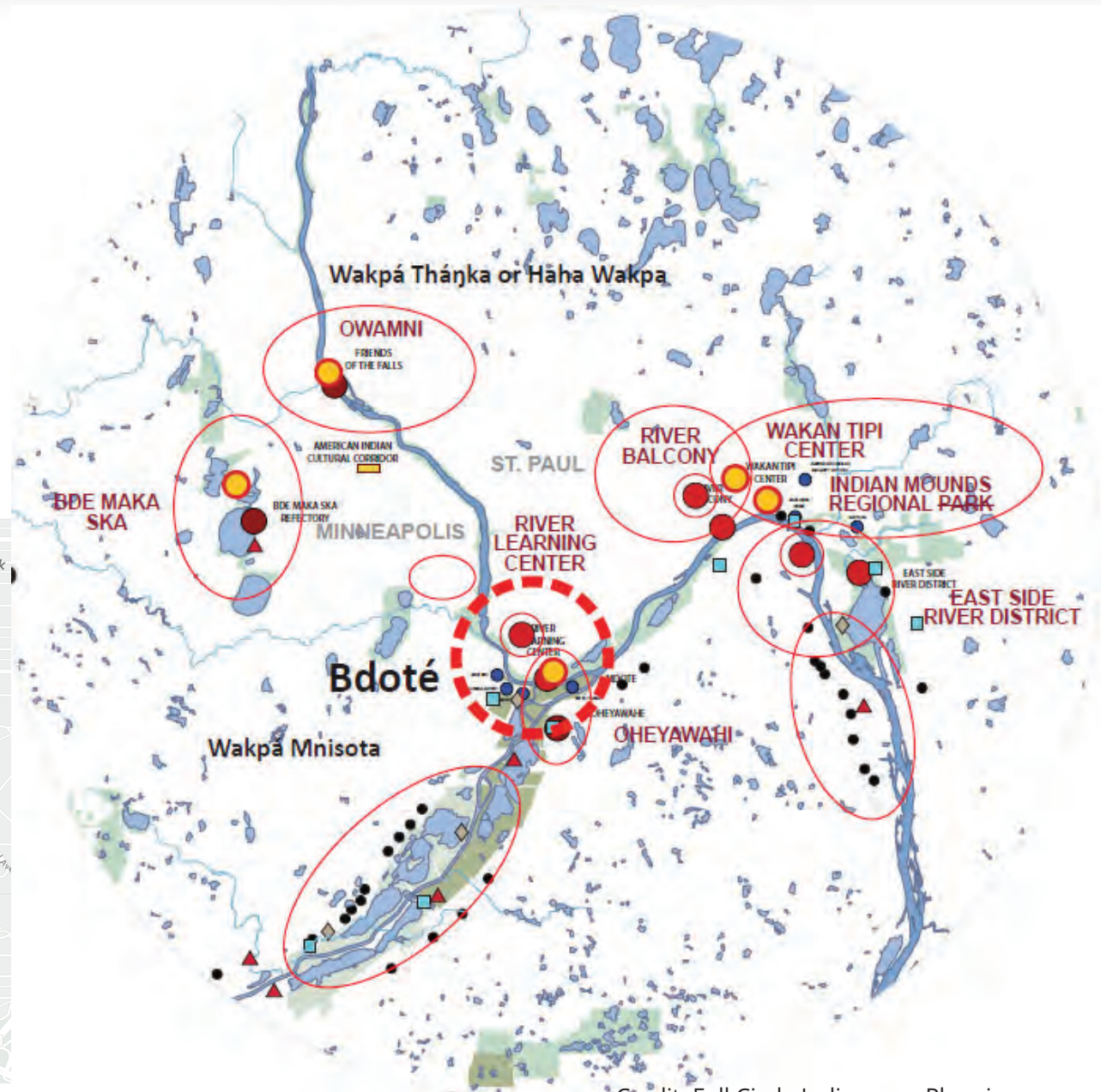
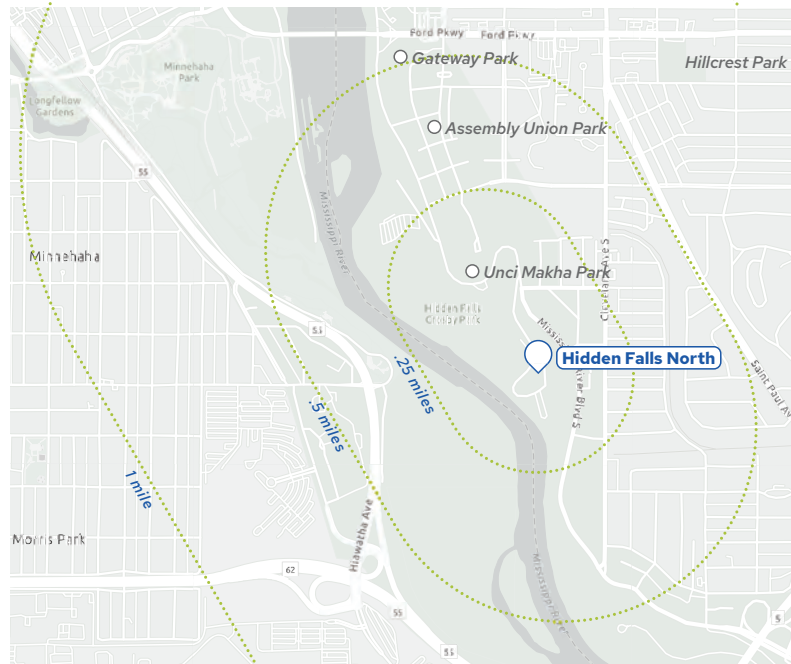


# Hidden Falls North - Regional Park Context





# Hidden Falls North - Regional Park Context




Credit: Full Circle Indigenous Planning



# Hidden Falls Long-Range Plan (Master Plan) - 2019

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND GOALS

## HIDDEN FALLS CROSBY FARM REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN SUMMARY



CONTEXT MAP

**PARK OVERVIEW:** Hidden Falls - Crosby Farm Regional Park is considered one regional park despite having two names and being identified locally as two separate parks. Hidden Falls Park is 131.36 acres and Crosby Farm Park is 480.96 acres (83.63 acres are water). Users enjoy the park for quiet gatherings, hiking, running, walking, biking, bird watching, and boat access to the Mississippi River.

**Hidden Falls - Crosby Farm Regional Park**

- is a part of the 17 miles of linear river shoreline planned in the Great River Passage plan (2012) and comprises 5 miles of contiguous, riverfront, regional park land
- sits within the Bdote, a culturally and historically significant site of the Dakota Oyate (Nation)
- is within a significant ecological area along the Mississippi River for bird migration
- provides access to a floodplain forest at the edge of the Mississippi where people can come to recreate and experience nature within the urban context.

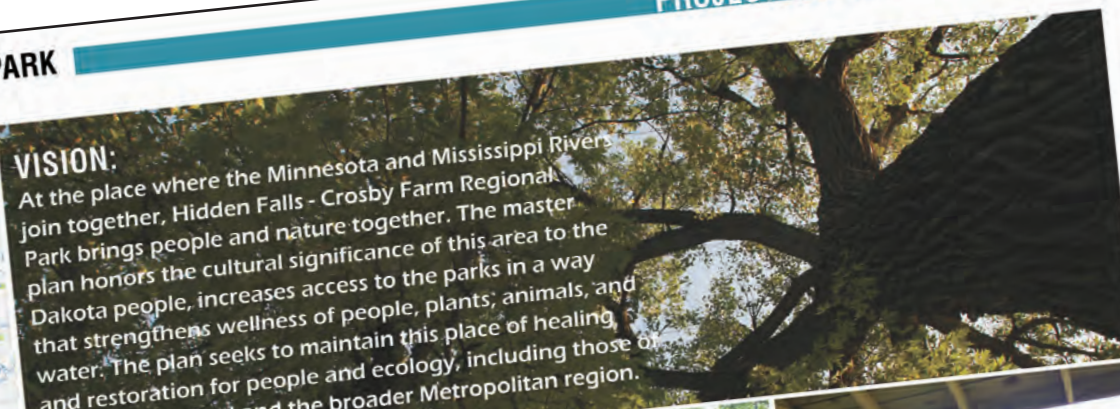
**PURPOSE OF THE PLAN:** The previous Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park master plan was created in 1970 prior to the requirement for Metropolitan Council adoption of Regional Park master plans. The 2019 plan will ensure that Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional park is meeting the mission and vision of the City and needs of the region, and provide a framework for future improvements and funding requests for short term and long range projects to sustain public use and enjoyment of the park.




**PROJECT TIMELINE:**

- July to November 2018 - Public engagement and design advisory committee meetings
- February 2019 - Public open house
- March 2019 - Submit report and plan to St. Paul Parks and Recreation Commission & City Council
- March 4 to April 1, 2019 - Public review and comment on draft report
- April - May 2019 - Submit report and plan to the Metropolitan Council staff and committees
- June 2019 - Final master plan adopted by Metropolitan Council

### VISION:

At the place where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers join together, Hidden Falls - Crosby Farm Regional Park brings people and nature together. The master plan honors the cultural significance of this area to the Dakota people, increases access to the parks in a way that strengthens wellness of people, plants, animals, and water. The plan seeks to maintain this place of healing and restoration for people and ecology, including those of the City of St. Paul and the broader Metropolitan region.








### GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. Respect the sacredness of this region. Acknowledge and celebrate the indigenous history of this location on the Mississippi River near the site of the confluence (Bdote) with the Minnesota River.
2. Preserve and sustain the ecological functions of these parks by managing and enhancing the critical habitat area, and support the ecological resilience of these parks as they adapt to a changing climate.
3. Upgrade park facilities for public use (bathrooms, signage, trails, lighting), improve safety features, and add new recreational opportunities to encourage healthy active lifestyles for all ages in balance with the "natural" character of the park.
4. Recommend and enhance pedestrian and multi-modal connections to draw regional and local users to the park space.
5. Support partnerships with organizations who assist in bringing new user groups to the park and river, and continue to manage the park for the use of all metropolitan area residents.

**Please share your feedback via email, phone call, or online survey on our website. We value your input.**

## Master Plan for HIDDEN FALLS - CROSBY FARM REGIONAL PARK



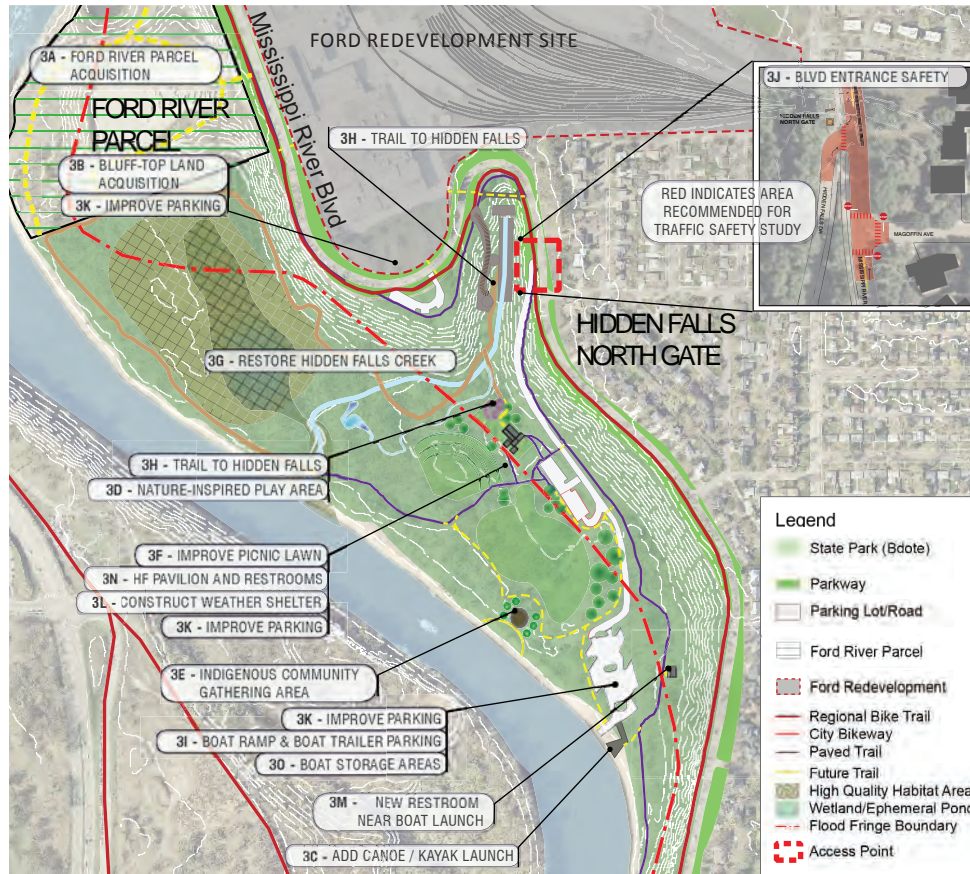
March 2019 - 1



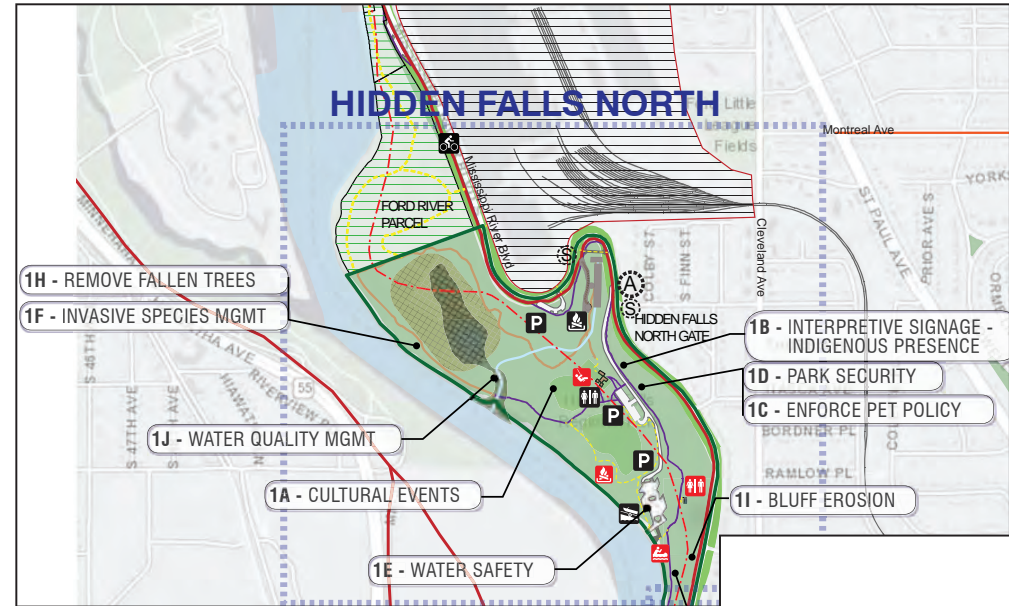


# Long-Range Plan (Master Plan) recommendations - 2019

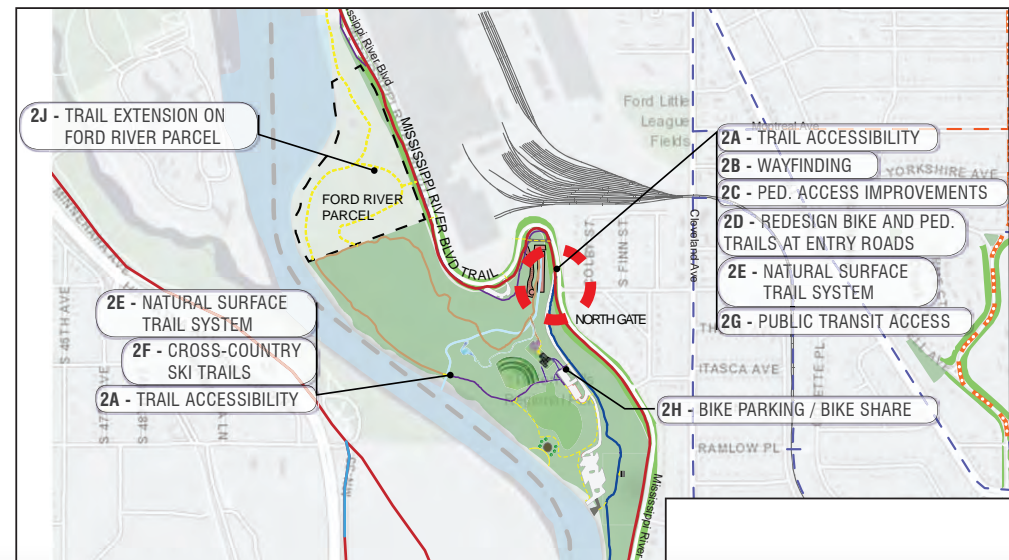
## OVERALL IDEAS



## PARK-WIDE



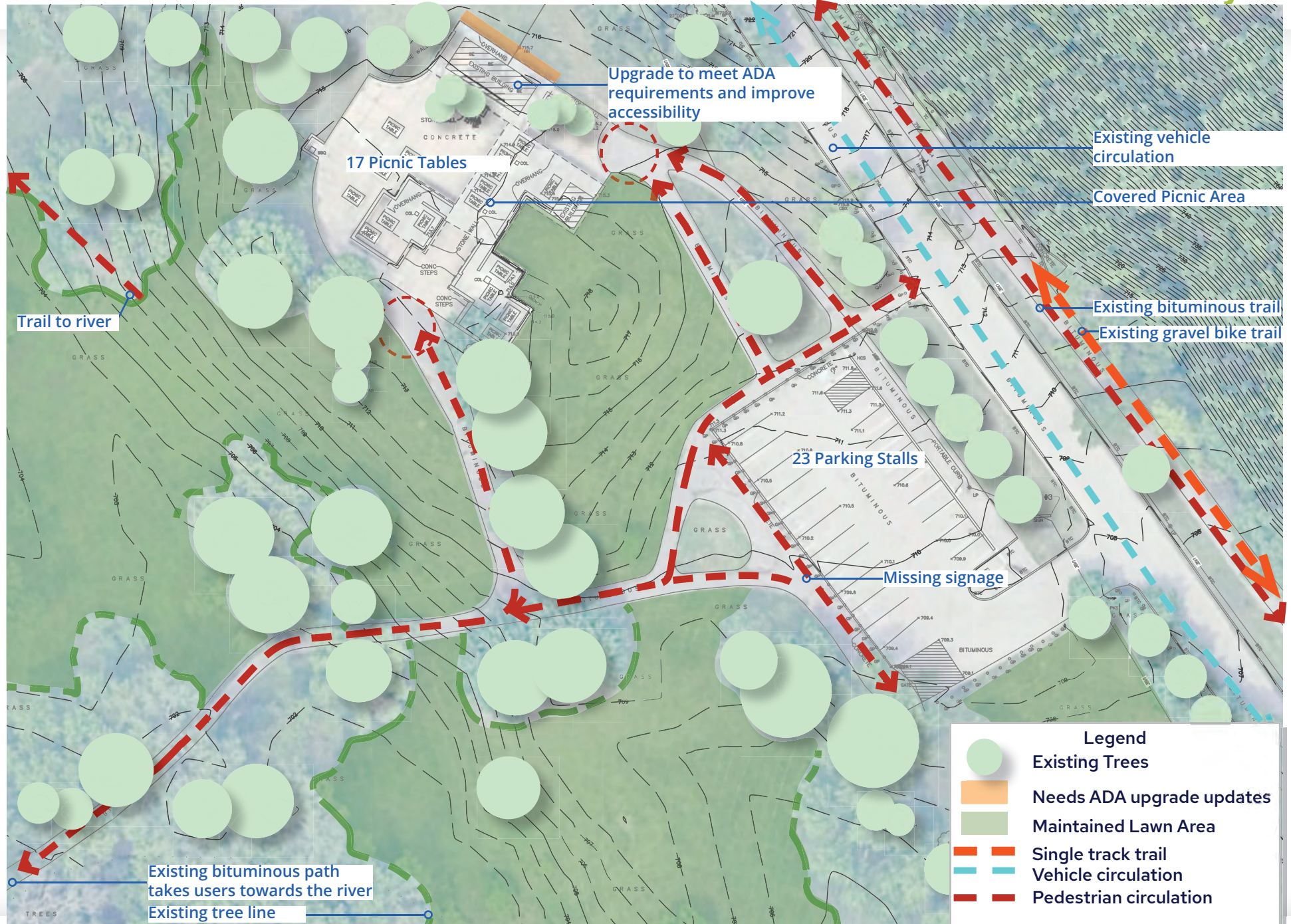
## TRAILS & CONNECTIVITY





# Hidden Falls North - Pavilion Area

## Site Analysis



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# Hidden Falls North - Pavilion Images

## Site Imagery



*Needs an update to meet  
ADA requirements*



*Picnic tables- upgrade to new standard  
and consider relocating*



*This area has great views towards  
the river. Cultural gathering space  
is proposed in this area*



*Reconstruct existing trail  
to Hidden Falls*



*Update pavilion for community  
events*



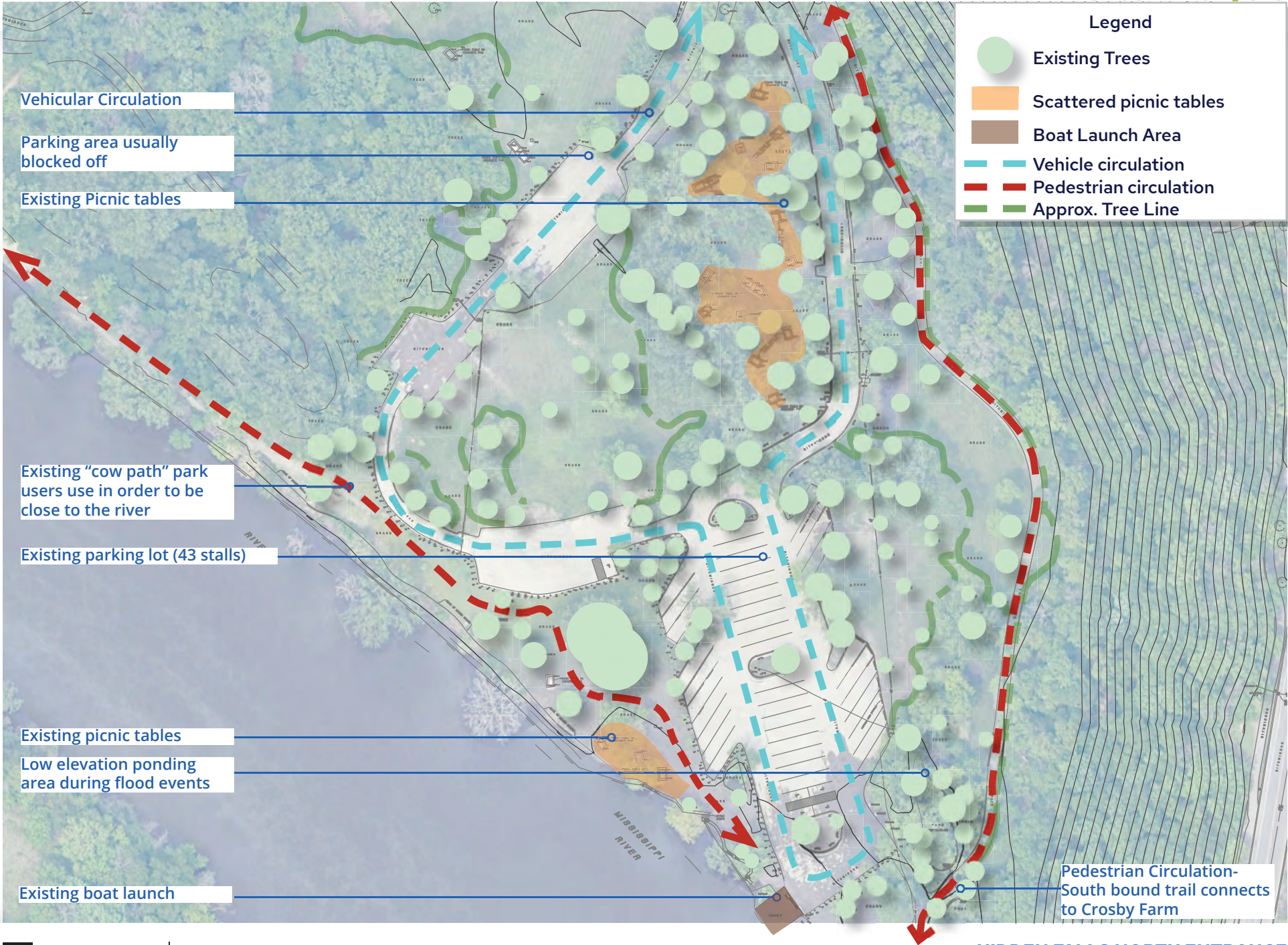
*Reconstruct and expand parking lot and  
adjacent pathways*





# Hidden Falls North - Boat Launch Area

## Site Analysis





# Hidden Falls North - Boat Launch Images

## Site Imagery



*River's edge*



*Protect existing tree*



*Parking lot closed off  
most of the time*



*Improve launch for  
accessibility per DNR  
guidelines*



*Park visitors are able to experience and  
touch the river for recreation (fishing,  
hiking, boating, etc)*



*Maintain current parking close for river  
access. Resurface and improve to meet  
parking needs*



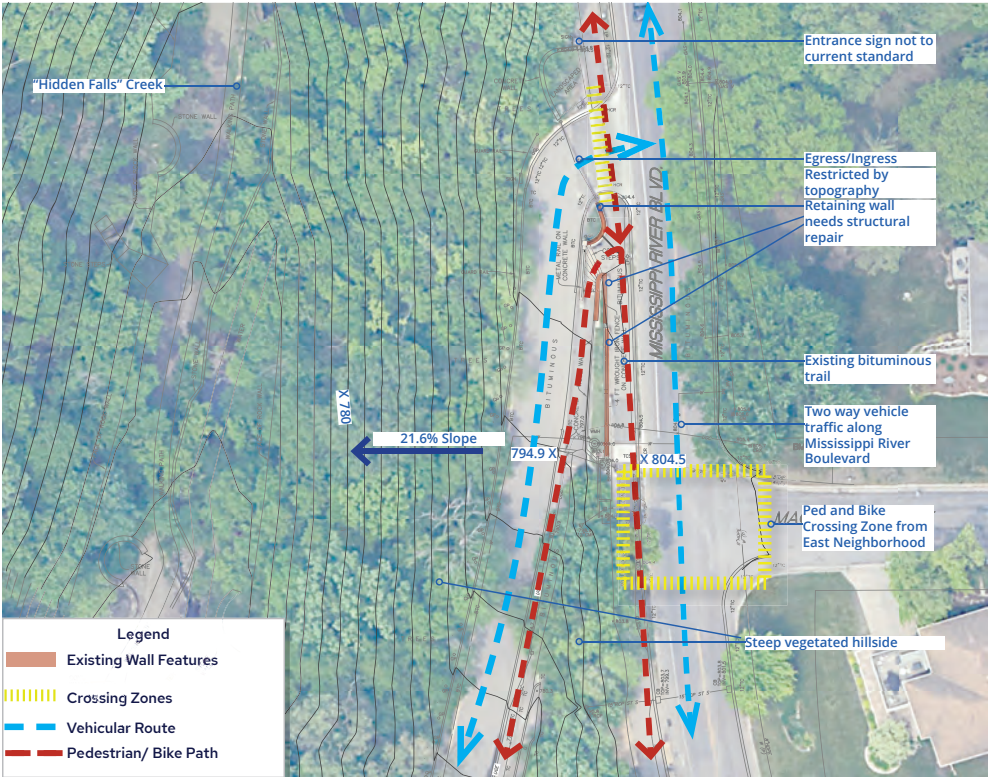
*Park experiences frequent flooding. Design  
to withstand high river water. (Image was  
taken in 2023)*





# Hidden Falls North-Entrance

## Site Imagery



Repair existing walls



Improve accessibility



Update Entrance Sign



Existing bluff condition



Reconstruct safety barrier & curb



# Hidden Falls - Historic Aerial Photos

1923



Photo Credit: Minnesota Historical Society

1945



1953



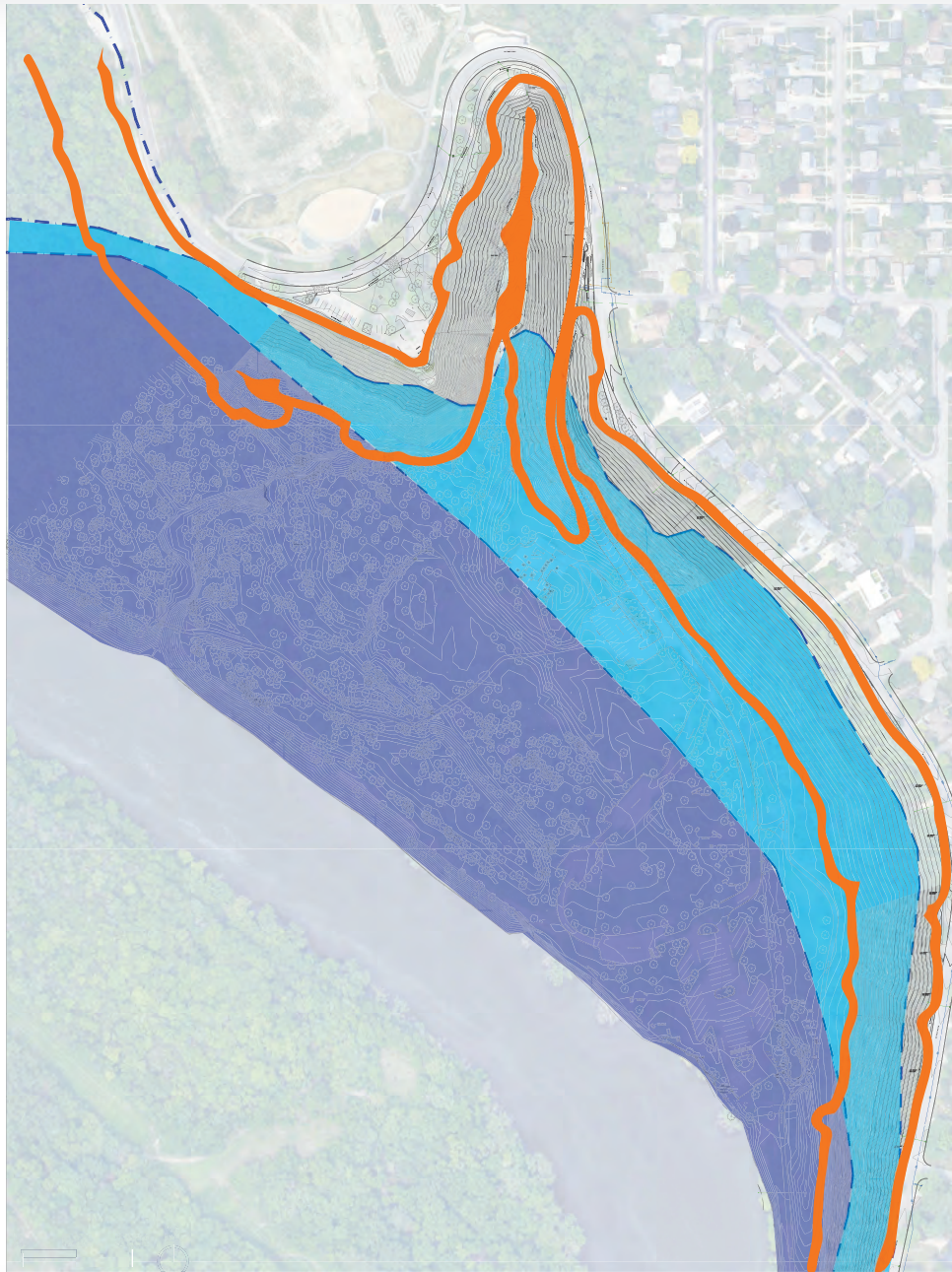
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# Flood Management and Regulatory Considerations



Hidden Falls Regional Park is within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), a 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River through the seven-county metro area. This program helps manage the land within this area to protect the natural, cultural, and scenic resources through development rules.

## Floodway

Floodways are areas directly adjacent to a body of water that are highly susceptible to flooding. These areas help control stormwater and contain valuable habitat areas and ecosystems. **Structures are not allowed to be built in the floodway.**

## Flood Fringe

The flood fringe is the outer edge of the floodplain, outside of the floodway. **Structures are allowed to be constructed within the flood fringe**, as long as they meet local ordinances. At Hidden Falls, the lowest floor elevation of a structure must be at least one foot above the 100-year flood line.

## Bluff Impact Zone

The bluff impact zone includes bluffs and land within 20 feet of bluffs. Bluffs are defined as features that have a slope of 18% or greater. **Structures may not be constructed within the bluff impact zone.** At Hidden Falls, structure setbacks from the bluff are 100'.

Building and Construction Standards:	Rural Open Space (CA-ROS) Hidden Falls Zoning District
Maximum Structure Height	35'
Mississippi River Structure Setback	200'
Bluff Structure Setback	100'



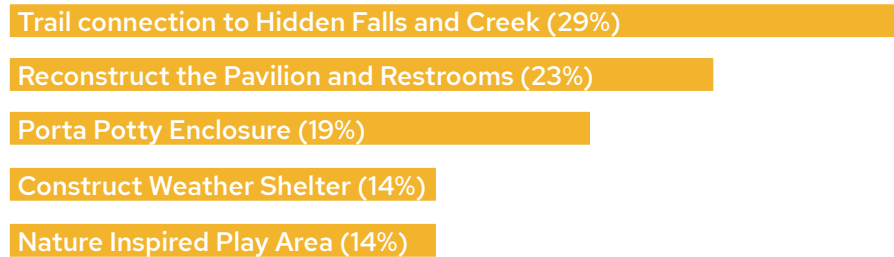
# Community Engagement

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

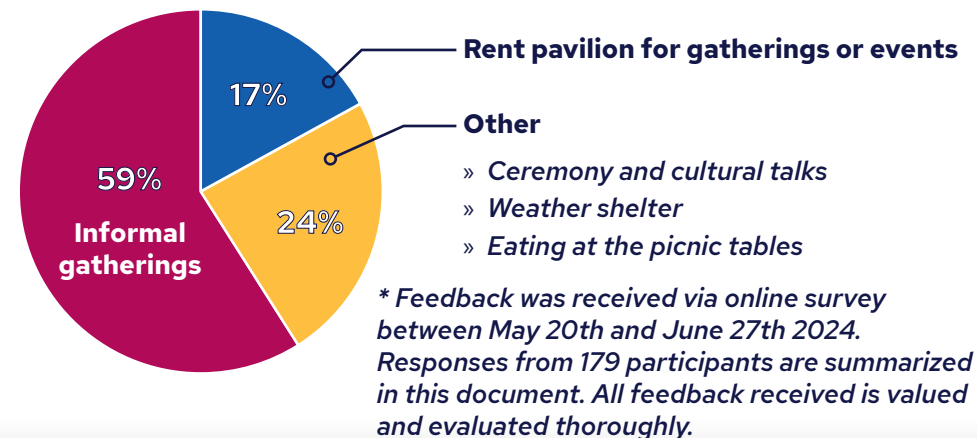
### Priority activity at the Park (top five):



### Priority improvements (top five):



### How do you use the picnic shelter?



good s Falls enjoy water quiet  
gem river Beautiful nature  
area love city park  
use place walking Keep  
family hidden gem hidden falls

## CAC #1 SITE WALK FEEDBACK

### Main Takeaways:

- Safety is a huge issue
- Balance quiet, restful, "hidden" feeling of the park with safety. More people = less bad stuff.
- Improve accessibility with path improvements, restroom upgrades, signage, and wayfinding.
- More information needed about new pavilion building
  - » Folks like the character of the existing building, how it fits into the site.
  - » Current restrooms are not accessible.
  - » Need better understanding of repairs that are critical - understand rationale for rebuild vs. remodel.
- Interest in more information about the creek and how to connect people to it.



# Guiding Principles and Design Strategies

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FROM HIDDEN FALLS CROSBY FARM MASTER PLAN

Respect the sacredness of this region. Acknowledge and celebrate the indigenous history of this location on the Mississippi River near the confluence (Bdote) with the Minnesota River.



**CULTURE AND HISTORY**

Preserve and sustain the ecological functions of these parks by managing and enhancing habitat area (using the natural resource inventory and management plan as a basis), and support the ecological resilience of these parks as they adapt to a changing climate.



**ENVIRONMENT**

Recommend and enhance pedestrian and multi-modal connections to and within the parks, in order to draw regional and local users to the park space.



**CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS**

Upgrade park facilities for public use (bathrooms, signage, trails, lighting), improve safety features, and add new recreational opportunities to encourage healthy active lifestyles for all ages in balance with the “natural” character of the park.



**FACILITIES AND SAFETY**

Support partnerships with organizations who assist in bringing new user groups to the park and river, and continue to manage the park for the equitable use of all metropolitan area residents.



**PARTNERSHIPS**



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# Guiding Principles and Design Strategies

## GUIDING PRINCIPLE THEMES

CULTURE AND HISTORY

ENVIRONMENT

CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS

FACILITIES AND SAFETY

PARTNERSHIPS

## DESIGN STRATEGIES

- Improve lighting to increase safety throughout the Park
- ● Improve pavilion/restroom facility to meet current needs of park users
- ● Improve wayfinding and signage
- Preserve and enhance wildlife habitat
- Integrate stormwater management to manage flooding and runoff
- ● ● Consolidate parking areas to increase safety and decrease isolated paved areas
- ● Update boat launch to meet accessibility requirements
- ● Provide space for cultural events near the River - partner with Indigenous groups who currently use the space to understand current uses and future needs
- ● Update pedestrian paths to include more accessible routes throughout the Park



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# Proposed Site Organization



## Active

*Picnic pavilion and restrooms, nature play area, open lawn space*

- Improve facilities to be accessible and welcoming to all.
- Define nature play area that supports imaginative play activities.
- Continue to support community and organization activities and events in the area.
- Include "trailhead" facilities such as park maps, wayfinding, etc.

## Natural

*Stormwater management, open space, picnic area*

- Preserve and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Construct stormwater management area to capture and treat stormwater and manage flooding.
- Remove parking areas and define open space and picnic area.

## Reflective

*Cultural gathering space*

- Provide gathering space that is close to the River, accessible, and flexible for a variety of uses and group sizes.

## Active

*Boat launch, picnic area*

- Upgrade boat launch to be ADA accessible.
- Support kayaking and canoeing - consider adding small craft launch, boat storage, and boat rental.
- Provide connection to Hidden Falls South, including signage and wayfinding.



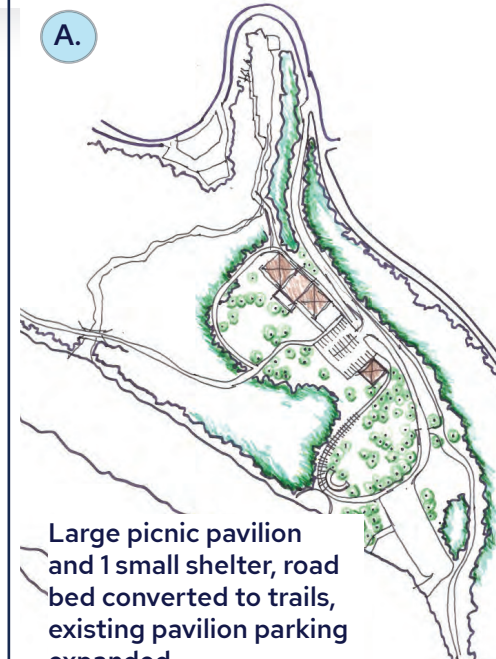
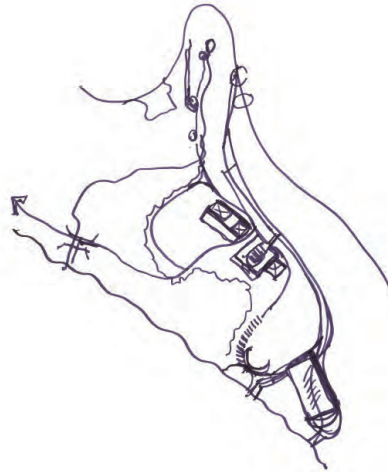
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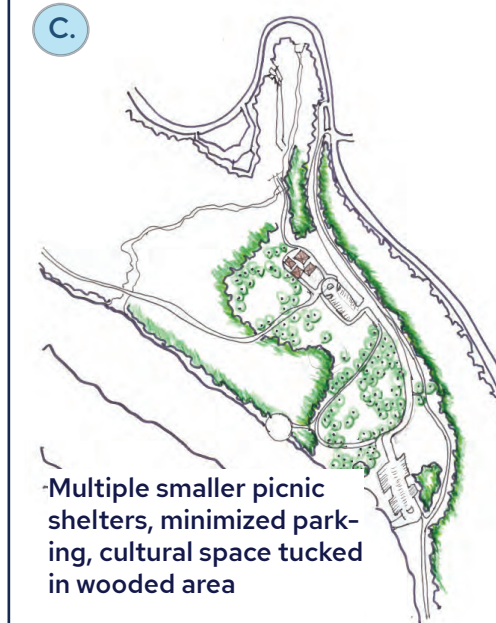
# Hidden Falls - Concept Sketches & Process



A. Large picnic pavilion and 1 small shelter, road bed converted to trails, existing pavilion parking expanded



B. Smaller picnic pavilion and 1 small shelter, development away from eagles nest, cultural space accessible



C. Multiple smaller picnic shelters, minimized parking, cultural space tucked in wooded area



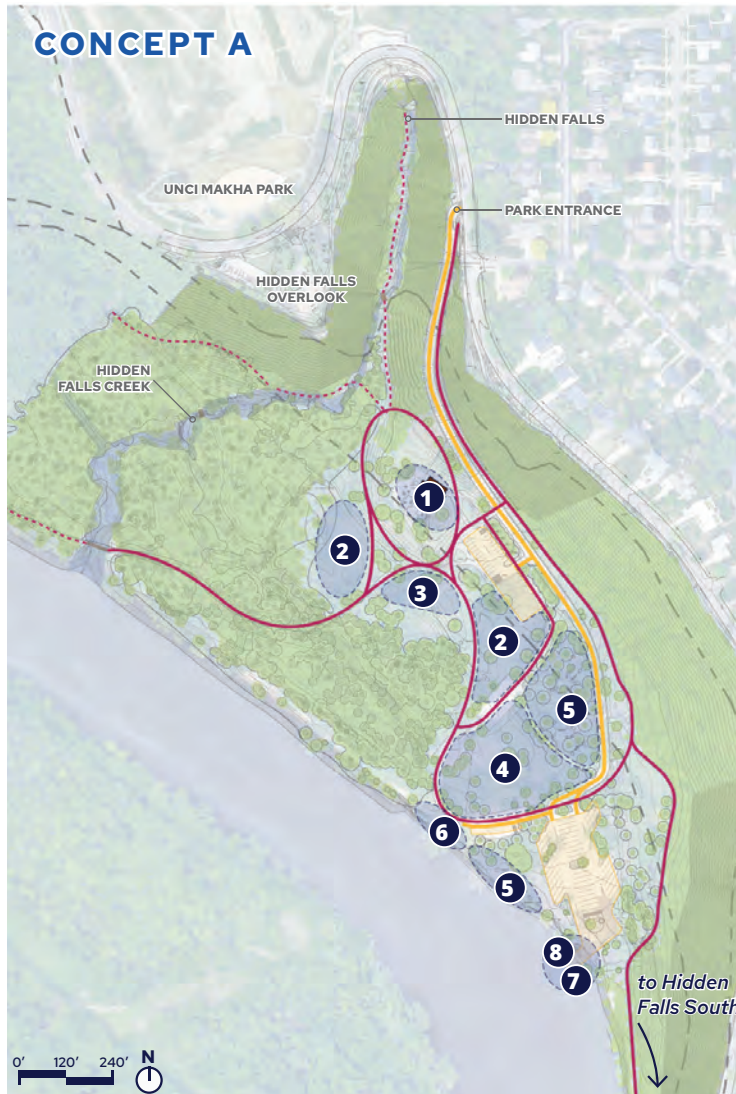
D. Multiple smaller picnic shelters, reorganized parking, cultural space tucked is isolated in forest





# Proposed Site Concepts

## Overall Site



### Legend

- Vehicular Route
- Primary Pedestrian Route (paved)
- Secondary Pedestrian Route (unpaved)
- Parking Area
- Program Zones
- Approximate Existing Tree Canopy

### Program Zones

- 1 Pavilion and Restroom
- 2 Open Space
- 3 Play Zone
- 4 Stormwater Management Area
- 5 Picnic Area
- 6 Cultural Space
- 7 Boat Launch - Motorized
- 8 Boat Launch - Kayak



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# Hidden Falls - Pavilion Precedents



Lilydale - St. Paul, MN



Windsor Park - Victoria, BC



West St. Paul, MN



Whitetail Woods - Farmington, MN

## Pavilion Goals

1. Add ADA Bathrooms (min 2)
2. Seating Capacity 60 (total)
3. Provide Storage
4. Upgrade Electrical Service
5. Consider Weather Shelter
6. Flood Resilience and Sustainable Building
7. Maintain Similar Character



Discovery Meadows Park - McMinnville, OR



Big Marine Park - Marine on St. Croix, MN



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# Hidden Falls North- Budget and Planning

## Priority Projects for Phase I:

- **Picnic Shelter Improvement & Weather Shelter-** *\$1,005,000 from 2019 Plan*
- **Safety Improvements and Parking renovation-** *\$600,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Trail Connections- Paving -** *\$250,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Cultural Events Space -** *\$125,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Nature Inspired Play -** *\$250,000 from 2019 plan*

## Future Phase:

- **Signage and Accessibility at Boat Ramp -** *\$250,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Road resurfacing, Entrance and Trail-** *\$1,000,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Wayfinding, Signage and Kiosks at Entrance -** *\$275,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Boat Storage -** *\$50,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Picnic Lawn Area-** *\$48,000 from 2019 plan*
- **Restore Hidden Falls Creek -** *\$1,400,000 from 2019 plan*

## Funding Sources *(Secured and Potential):*

- **Legacy Funding**
- **State Bonding**
- **Common Cent Sales Tax**
- **DNR Grant**



# Next Steps:

- Schedule CAC Meeting #3
- Develop preferred site design
- RFP for consultant services
- Technical study and design
- Develop phased approach to construction
- Construction document development

