



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Date: November 1, 2018
To: Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Mike Richardson, Planning and Economic Development (PED) Staff
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Parks Chapter Update

BACKGROUND

The City of Saint Paul is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, Saint Paul's "blueprint" for guiding development for the next 20 years. Among other city-wide topics such as housing and land use, a chapter is dedicated to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space ("Parks Chapter").

PED staff presented an early draft of the plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission in October of 2017, with an update in December. In March 2018, after another round of revisions, the City released a preliminary draft to the Metropolitan Council and adjacent/affected jurisdictions for their review. City staff also met with district councils and other stakeholders during this review period. Feedback collected through those activities led to the most current draft, which the Planning Commission will distribute as the official public hearing draft.

A delay in the development of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) chapter led to an extension of the Metropolitan Council submittal deadline to June 30, 2019.

UPDATES

Notable updates to the Parks Chapter draft most recently reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission are:

1. Minor text edits throughout
2. Addition of Parks and Trails Inventory in Appendix B
3. Addition of Regional Trail Search Corridor Map and descriptions as Map P-3
4. New policy and revised implementation item recognizing relationship between parks and development intensity.
 - a. Policy PR-18. Ensure that investment in City parks accounts for planned increases in development density.
 - b. Implementation item #10, added "changing development intensity" to criteria for investment.
5. New policy recognizing need for parks within 10-minute walk
 - a. Policy PR-4. Prioritize investment to ensure that residents have access to a park within a 10-minute walk.

Comprehensive Plan Parks Chapter Update

REVIEW PROCESS

October 17, 2018	CNPC completes review of hearing draft
November 2	Planning Commission releases draft and sets date for public hearing
January 11, 2019	Planning Commission holds public hearing
June	City Council public hearing
June	City Council adoption, forward to Metropolitan Council
<i>Note: The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) Chapter is on a slightly delayed review timeline but will be reviewed by the City Council with the other chapters.</i>	

RECOMMENDATION

As the Parks and Recreation Commission, your insight on the draft will be of great value to the Planning Commission. Therefore, the recommendation from PED staff is to review the public hearing draft of the Parks Chapter and prepare a general statement of support or opposition addressed to the Planning Commission, with additional comments or suggestions as needed.

Attachment:

Official Public Hearing Draft of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Parks Chapter dated November 2, 2018

Note: A PDF of the entire Comprehensive Plan can be found in the packet links for the November 2, 2018 meeting on the Planning Commission website:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/planning-commission>

If you have difficulty accessing the plan, please contact Mike Richardson at 651.266.6621 or mike.richardson@ci.stpaul.mn.us.



SAINT PAUL FOR ALL

2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT

November 2, 2018

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PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Introduction

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter sets broad policy to create an equitable, safe, connected and sustainable park system for all users. The Saint Paul park system includes parks, parkways, recreation centers, public spaces and trails. It comprises a large, diverse and vibrant network of people, spaces and facilities that is recognized by Saint Paul residents as one of the city's great shared assets. Together, the system components form a vital connective tissue, facilitating a sense of community, and fostering stewardship of nature and community spaces.

Park facilities and programs improve the quality of life for all residents and visitors. They foster public health by providing opportunities for physical fitness, and promoting mental and social well-being. Parks and Community Centers serve an important role for the city's youth by providing safe and healthy places and activities. Parks connect us to the Mississippi River and lakes by providing access and spaces to enjoy them. Great public spaces are an important component of sustainable economic development, drawing and retaining residents, increasing nearby property values and attracting businesses.

Changes in demographics, technology and development are constant. It will be necessary to periodically evaluate how well the park system is meeting changing needs, challenges and opportunities.

The following goals guide the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space chapter:

1. Equitable allocation of programs, resources and amenities.
2. People, programming and spaces responsive to changing needs.
3. Environmental and economic sustainability.
4. A healthy network of community partnerships.
5. Strong and accessible connections.

Goal 1: Equitable allocation of programs, resources and amenities

Policy PR-1. Ensure equitable access to Parks and Recreation programs, resources and amenities.

Policy PR-2. Reduce barriers to Parks and Recreation facilities and programming, including those caused by financial, physical, language and perception issues.

Policy PR-3. Engage diverse community groups and all potentially impacted stakeholders in setting balanced priorities for park-related matters.

Policy PR-4. Prioritize investment to ensure that residents have access to a park within a 10-minute walk.

Policy PR-5. Prioritize investment in physical assets of Community Centers to ensure that common minimum standards are met.

Policy PR-6. Use mobile recreation to fill park or recreation service gaps, enhance events, and provide quality recreation to neighborhood and community parks.

Policy PR-7. Foster opportunities for community-building and personal connections through Community Center facility use and programming.

Policy PR-8. Ensure that communications are up-to-date, understandable and engaging.

PERCEPTIONS OF “PARK”

Parks mean different things to different people, and those differences are often linked to race and culture (Johnson & Bowker, 1999). For example, white people tend to favor a natural and less managed environment, while African Americans and Latin Americans prefer a more structured park landscape (Kaplan & Talbot, 1988; Ozguner, 2011).

Parks staff have found that some recent immigrants perceive the natural areas of our parks as unwelcoming. It is for this reason that the phrase “open space” is included in the title of this chapter - to signal that the natural, less formal areas are also part of the park system and welcome to all.

The perception of barriers to parks also differs by race and culture. A report released by the Metropolitan Council in 2014 found the following differences in perceived barriers to park visitation by focus group:

Rank	African American	African Immigrant	Asian American and Asian Immigrant	Hispanic/Latino/Latina	Diverse Composition
1	Lack of Awareness	Time	Lack of Awareness	Lack of Awareness	Time
2	Transporation	Lack of Awareness	Language Barriers	Time	Lack of Awareness
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fear/Safety• Map Challenges (tie)• Cultural Insensitivity/ Discrimination (tie)	Transportation	Weather	Cost	Fear/Safety

Source: Metropolitan Council

As the demographics of the city change, it is important to understand and respond to changing perceptions so that the system is welcoming and accessible to all.



THE GRAND ROUND

The Saint Paul Grand Round was conceived of in 1872 by landscape architect H.W.S. Cleveland. He envisioned a park system connecting all parts of Saint Paul with expansive boulevards and luxurious greenery that would serve cyclists and pedestrians.

Although the Grand Round was conceived in the late 19th Century, it was only partially realized in the decades that

followed. In the early 2000s, a focus on completing the system was renewed. This effort was supported by community interest and prioritized through the adoption of planning documents, including the Comprehensive Plan. More than 140 years after it was initially conceived, the Grand Round is finally close to being realized as a unifying recreation, wildlife corridor and transportation asset for the entire city.



Goal 2: People, programming and spaces responsive to changing needs

Policy PR-9. Use customer and resident feedback on needs, satisfaction and trends to improve park experience and bring in new users.

Policy PR-10. Embrace and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends, particularly those that meet the recreational needs of youth, underserved populations and emerging resident groups.

Policy PR-11. Strengthen the cultural competency of Parks and Recreation staff.

Policy PR-12. Ensure Parks and Recreation staff reflect the demographic diversity of a dynamic city to better inform decisions regarding operations and facilities.

Policy PR-13. Account for seasonality and climate resiliency in the design, maintenance and programming of Parks and Recreation assets to maximize activity throughout the year.

Policy PR-14. Support volunteer engagement and participation to enhance stewardship, programming, social cohesion and ownership.

Policy PR-15. Innovate in park design and maintenance, while making use of best practices.

Policy PR-16. Improve safety in existing and future parks through design, maintenance and programming.

Policy PR-17. Support innovative and sustainable transportation options that enhance access to and use of Parks and Recreation facilities, such as electric vehicles, bike share and ride share.

Policy PR-18. Ensure that investment in City parks accounts for planned increases in development density.

Goal 3. Environmental and economic sustainability

Policy PR-19. Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of parks through strategies such as shared, stacked-function green infrastructure; best management practices in stormwater management; increased tree canopy; increased plant diversity and pollinator-friendly plantings.

Policy PR-20. Closely monitor invasive species on park property and respond to threats.

Policy PR-21. Ensure that programming and facilities support public health and personal improvement efforts, such as education, job training, and fitness and nutrition programs.

Policy PR-22. Model sustainable practices in park construction and operations when possible.

Policy PR-23. Perform routine and preventative maintenance on park assets to protect them and maximize the service life of structures and natural resources.

Policy PR-24. Develop shared-use facilities as a first option when contemplating new or replacement indoor recreation facilities.

Policy PR-25. Strive to make programming financially self-sustaining.

Policy PR-26. Use data-driven evaluation of park assets to develop a maintenance and replacement schedule, and plan for future budgetary needs.

Policy PR-27. Rate future building investments as they are presently but with additional weight given to cost benefit analyses and return on investment principles.

Goal 4: A healthy network of community partnerships

Policy PR-28. Collaborate with other public and private entities to maximize use and create operational efficiencies of existing facilities and programming when there is a net benefit to the public.

Policy PR-29. Seek out partnerships with private entities to finance capital and maintenance costs of Parks and Recreation facilities without compromising good design solutions or over-commercializing the public realm.

Policy PR-30. Encourage and support private landowners and developers to create and maintain privately-owned public space (POPS) and green infrastructure, especially as land use intensity and activity levels increase.

Policy PR-31. Support community gardens and private landscape beautification efforts where physically and financially feasible.

Policy PR-32. Encourage business partnerships that provide value-added services to park users, cover city costs, and generate revenue to enhance and expand programming.





Policy PR-33. Coordinate with Saint Paul Public Schools to reduce redundancies, and become more efficient in maintaining physical plants and managing fields.

Goal 5: Strong and accessible connections

Policy PR-34. Prioritize safety and equity when filling gaps in the trail and bikeway system to ensure seamless connections throughout the city for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

Policy PR-35. Integrate parkways and trails with the city's broader transportation network to provide convenient and safe access to the park system.

Policy PR-36. Pursue strategic acquisitions to fill existing gaps and address changing needs in the parks system.

Policy PR-37. Improve and encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections between park facilities and other significant destinations, such as lakes and rivers, schools, transit facilities and Neighborhood Nodes.

Policy PR-38. Emphasize safety, convenience and comfort when designing new trails or rebuilding those that already exist.

Policy PR-39. Provide interpretive elements to educate users about unique aspects of the park system.

Policy PR-40. Provide consistent wayfinding signage in each project or park so that it is recognizable as part of the broader City system.

Policy PR-41. Involve staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation from the beginning of discussions regarding large-scale land redevelopment sites.

Policy PR-42. Address physical park encroachments that impair use through effective parkland management and protection.

Appendix A

Map P-1: Regional Parks and Trails 100

Map P-2: Existing and Proposed Local Parks 101

Map P-3: Regional Trail Search Corridors 102

Appendix B

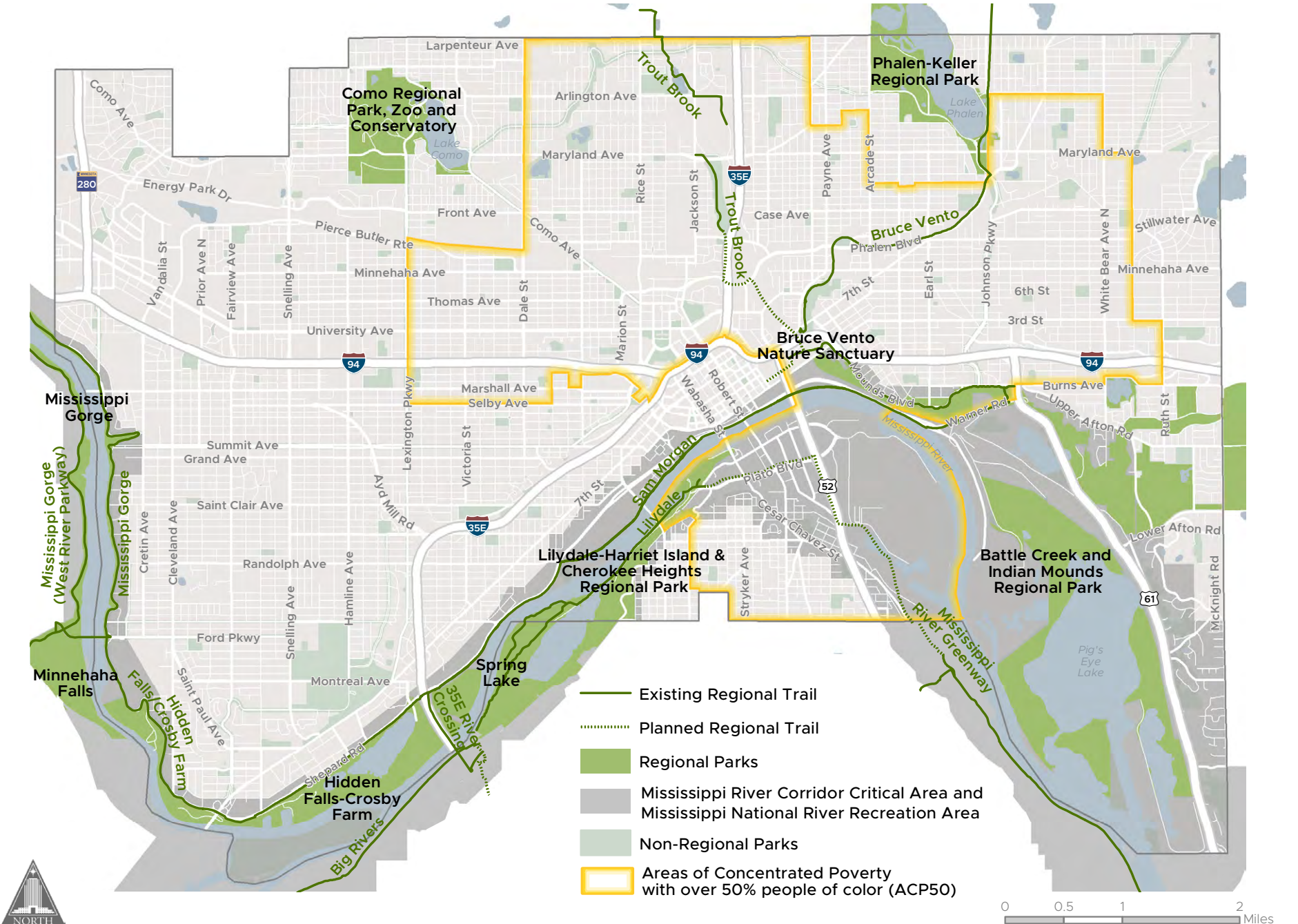
Figure P-1: Park and Trail Inventory 104

Notes:

1. ACP50 data for all from Metropolitan Council via MN Geospatial Commons, from annual release (2/5/2018). Other data as noted.

2. The City of Saint Paul is in the process of redesigning its Capital Improvement Budget Process. An improvement plan from Parks and Recreation will be developed once the new process is in place and will be shared with the Metropolitan Council at that time.

Map P-1: Regional Parks and Trails



Sources: Metropolitan Council, City of Saint Paul

Map P-2: Existing and Proposed Local Parks



Map P-3: Regional Trail Search Corridors



Regional Trail Search Corridor Descriptions

1. Mississippi - Como, Como - Phalen, Johnson Parkway

These three search corridors constitute the northern segment of the Grand Round, a city-wide loop originally conceived of in 1872 by Horace W.S. Cleveland. They would provide the connections between the Mississippi Gorge, Como, Phalen, and Indian Mounds Regional Parks.

2. Point Douglas

The Saint Paul segment of the Point Douglas search corridor extends from Indian Mounds Regional Park to the southern boundary of the city, generally paralleling Highway 61. The corridor will contain the main trail on the east side of the Mississippi River east of downtown, with the planned terminus being the Mississippi River Regional Trail in Washington County.

3. Summit Avenue

The Summit Avenue search corridor extends from the Mississippi Gorge Regional Park in the west to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail near downtown in the east. The search area includes two National Historic Districts and two City of Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Districts and parallels Grand Avenue, one of the City's major commercial streets.

4. Lexington Avenue

The Lexington Avenue search corridor runs north and south and connects the Rice Creek North Regional trail to Hidden Falls - Crosby Farm Regional Park, and passes through Como Regional Park. Significant commercial and residential areas are present along the corridor, including Energy Park, the Green Line, Central High School, Oxford Community Center, and Grand Avenue.

5. Mississippi Gorge - Samuel Morgan (Proposed)

The Mississippi Gorge - Samuel Morgan corridor (also known as the Midtown Greenway Extension or the Saint Paul Greenway) parallels Interstate 94 and Ayd Mill Road, and would connect the northern reach of the Mississippi Gorge to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail near Island Station.

6. Hidden Falls - Samuel Morgan (Proposed)

The Hidden Falls - Samuel Morgan corridor (also known as the Canadian Pacific or Ford Spur) would connect Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail near Island Station and link neighborhoods within the West 7th and Highland planning districts of Saint Paul. The Ford Spur was originally used to serve the Ford Twin Cities Assembly Plant (Ford Site), which closed in 2011. With the railway no longer in use and considering the physical barriers to the Samuel Morgan trail, there is potential for the Ford Spur to serve as a community and regional asset, providing opportunities for transportation, recreation, and economic development for the neighborhoods along the corridor.

Note: Local trails not associated with regional system are not included in this map or descriptions. For more complete information on the trail system in Saint Paul, please see Map T-3, Bikeways or the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan.

Appendix B

Regional Park and Trail Inventory

Regional Park Name	Acreage
Como Regional Park, Zoo and Conservatory	441.29
Hidden Falls - Crosby Farm Regional Park	569.49
Battle Creek and Indian Mounds Regional Park	624.39
Lilydale-Harriet Island & Cherokee Heights Regional Park	609.42
Mississippi Gorge Regional Park	87.63
Phalen-Keller Regional Park	505.28
Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary	26.95
Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary	39.34
TOTAL	2903.79

Regional Trail Name	Mileage
Bruce Vento Regional Trail	6.53
Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail	11.24
Trout Brook Regional Trail	0.72
TOTAL	18.49

Non-Regional Park and Trail Inventory

Note: Totals do not represent the entirety of City-owned and maintained park and open space land.

Park Name	Acreage
Alden Square Park	0.59
Aldine Park	1.76
Alice Park	0.55
Ames Lake Park	8.81
Arlington Arkwright Park	20.44
Arlington Hills Community Center	4.82
Baker Field	5.59
Battle Creek Rec. Center	12.72
Bay Triangle	0.56
Belvidere Park	7.89
Bluff Park	6.21
Bluff Preservation	7.44
Bohland Triangle	0.18
Boyd Park	1.53
Burns Avenue Park	3.97
Cambridge Triangle	0.07
Capital View Park	0.28
Carty Park	3.62
Cathedral Hill Park	1.42
Cato Park	0.29
Cayuga Park	1.7
Central Village Park	4.14
CHS Field	10.58
Clayland Park	0.88
Cochran Park	0.55
College Park	5.19

Park Name	Acreage
Commonwealth Park	1.05
Como Ave Horseshoe Courts	0.77
Concord Park Field	2.79
Conway Field Rec Center	21.63
Crocus Hill Terrace Park	1.87
Crocus Triangle	0.23
Cromwell Square	0.15
Culture Park	0.44
Dawson Park	1.99
Dayton's Bluff Rec. Center	5.99
Depot Tot Lot	0.17
Desnoyer Park	2.14
Dickerman Park	2.42
Douglas Park	1.63
Dousman Park	0.47
Duluth and Case Rec. Center	11.42
Dunning Sports Complex	20.53
Eagle Street Plaza Park	0.39
Eastview Rec. Center	6.08
Ecolob Plaza	0.5
Edgcumbe Rec. Center	7.08
El Rio Vista Rec. Center	5.68
Feronia Square	0.01
Forest Street Triangle	0.03
Fountain Park	0.45
Frogtown Park and Farm	12.77

Non-Regional Park and Trail Inventory (Continued)

Park Name	Acreage
Front Field	3.72
Frost Lake Park	6.76
Furness Parkway	23.4
Gordon Square	0.06
Griggs Field	3.07
Groveland Rec. Center	3.73
Hamline and Hauge Park	0.58
Hamline Park	2.15
Hamm Memorial Plaza	0.13
Hamm Park	0.41
Hampden Park	3.08
Hayden Heights Rec. Center	8.31
Hazel Park Rec. Center	9.62
Hendon Triangles	0.93
Henry Park	11.15
High Bridge North Park	0.85
Highland Park	248.16
Highland Park Comm. Center	5.92
Highwood Preserve	18.08
Hillcrest Knoll Park	5.93
Holcombe Circle	0.18
Holly Park	0.34
Homecroft Park	3.24
Horton Park	3.48
Howell Park	0.76
Iris Park	1.84

Park Name	Acreage
Irvine Park	1.78
Kellogg Mall	2.78
Kenwood Park	0.19
Kidd Park	0.14
Landmark Plaza Park	0.64
Lane Place	0.93
Langford Rec. Center	9.99
Leroy Triangle	0.05
Lewis Park	2.89
Linwood Rec. Center	19.98
Lockwood Park	1.6
Lytton Park	0.35
Margaret Field	3.65
Maria Ave. Triangle	0.04
Martin Luther King Jr. Rec. Center	2.78
Marydale Park	23.95
Maryland Ave. Open Space	5.04
Mattocks Park	3.69
May Park	0.81
McDonough Rec. Center	0
McDonough Preserve	7.14
McQuillan Park	0.54
Mears Park	2.09
Merriam Park Rec. Center	10.22
Midway Peace Park	5.4
Mounds Park Maintenance Building	4.51

Non-Regional Park and Trail Inventory (Continued)

Park Name	Acreage
Nathan Hale Park	0.5
Newell Park	12.1
North Dale Rec. Center	8.32
Oakland Terrace Park	0.84
Oakley Square	0.01
Orchard Rec. Center	3.97
Oxford Comm. Center	10.66
Palace Rec. Center	5.88
Parque de Castillo	1.11
Pedro Park	0.45
Pelham Triangle	0.18
Point of View Park	0.36
Prospect Park	3.1
Prospect Terrace Park	1.07
Prosperity Heights Park	9.45
Prosperity Park	8.25
Rice Arlington Complex	23.31
Rice Park	1.62
Rice Rec. Center	5.98
Ryan Park	1.18
Sackett Park	13.28
Scheffer Rec. Center	3.65
Skidmore Park	0.39
South St. Anthony Rec. Center	5.98
St. Clair Rec. Center	6.43
Stinson Park	0.88

Park Name	Acreage
Stonebridge Oval	0.21
Summit Overlook	0.44
Summit Park	0.05
Swede Hollow Park	25.56
Sydney Triangle	0.12
Sylvan Park	3.18
Tatum Park	0.62
Taylor Park	3.72
Terrace Park	1.17
Tilden Park	1.61
Valley Park	12.78
Van Slyke Triangle	0.07
Victoria Park	50.19
Wacouta Commons	1.08
Walsh Park	0.78
Webster Park	4.38
Weida Park	1.54
West Minnehaha Rec. Center	10.85
Western Park	4.51
Wilder Rec. Center	3.56
Willow Reserve	22.56
Xinia Triangle	0.22
TOTAL	975.67

Figure I-3: Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter Implementation

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter [\[hyperlink\]](#) sets broad policy to create an equitable, safe, connected and sustainable park system for all users

		Item	Timeline	Funding Sources
Parks, Recreation and Open Space	1	Continue data collection and management efforts using new technology when available, and incorporate into decision-making tools.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkland dedication funds • Minnesota Legacy Amendment funds • Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (limited to high-quality natural areas) • State bonding through Metropolitan Council (for regional parks and trails) • DNR Grants • Watershed District grants • Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants
	2	Seek out customer and resident feedback on needs, satisfaction and trends, and incorporate into decision-making tools.	Ongoing	
	3	Maintain accurate maps that show, at a minimum: service area, property boundaries, transit access and physical barriers.	Ongoing	
	4	Complete projects that enhance the park system.	Ongoing	
	5	Update the Parks and Recreation Vision Plan in response to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.	Short-Term	
	6	Update the Parks and Recreation System Plan in response to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.	Short-Term	
	7	Update annually the Parks and Recreation Strategic Implementation Plan consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.	Short-Term	
	8	Update adopted master plans in response to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.	Short-Term	
	9	Review access and user fees to determine where increases are market-appropriate and where raising or imposing fees would not significantly impact access.	Short-Term	
	10	Develop objective criteria for investment, including, but not limited to, equity, cost-benefit analysis, changing development intensity, and people potentially served.	Short-Term	
	11	Develop objective and updatable methods to identify where there are disparities in accessibility to park assets based on race, ethnicity, income and ability.	Short-Term	
	12	Develop a set of measurable performance standards for all Community Centers.	Medium-Term	
	13	Develop new ways to engage the public in the use of Saint Paul Public Schools and Parks and Recreation Department land and facilities.	Medium-Term	
	14	Coordinate across City departments to achieve city-wide tree canopy goals.	Medium-Term	

General Timeline Guidelines:

Short-Term (0-5 years)

Medium-Term (5-10 years)

Long-Term (10+ years)