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City in America

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Melvin Carter

400 City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
www.stpaul.gov/parks

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Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Advisory Committee - Meeting #1

Meeting Notes

October 16, 2018

6:30 – 8:00 PM

The Wellington Senior Living - 2235 Rockwood Avenue, St. Paul MN 55116

Goal: Introduce the group. Explain the purpose of the meeting, expected outcome from master plan process. Present overview of the parks and parameters for project, engagement to date and previous studies. Determine priorities. Discuss upcoming timeline and next steps.

1. Welcome & Introductions
 - a. Metropolitan Council Master Plan
 - b. Importance of this place culturally, ecologically, spiritually, socially
 - i. Native American culture celebrates Bdote site – confluence of the two rivers as central to their spirituality
 - c. Consider the park and uses
 - d. Individual introductions – name and who they are representing
 - i. Hank Carlson YMCA- leads youth groups
 - ii. Adam Brunner – fishes the banks
 - iii. Shawn Sheely natural trails advocate – Mississippi River gorge committee. Led efforts to build natural trails
 - iv. Sandra Macguire Lutz – hiking walking
 - v. Barb Lehn – lives on the river – resident
 - vi. Paige DeWees – considers Crosby her church
 - vii. Emily Northy - Fort Road Federation
 - viii. Alicia Uzarek - Friends of The Mississippi River
 - ix. Becky Amidon – resident of Highland – at Hidden Falls every day since teenager
 - x. Gary Bruggeman – lifelong resident, Minnesota historian. Remembers the Crosby Farm. Sibley Caves. His wife Jackie also participated in the meeting.
 - xi. Rebecca Ryan – lives by Beaver Lake now but grew up in Highland– father was on park board when Crosby was designed. Banding bats.
 - xii. Tyler Teggatz – Highland District Council, lives by HF North Gate
 - xiii. Becky Rice – Highland resident 20 years – regular user of the park. Director of MetroBlooms non-profit restores ecology of urban environment



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- xiv. Kristine Gill – transportation committee Metro Council. Ramsey County day job
 - xv. Holly Larson, NPS RTCA
 - xvi. Renee Campion – Sleepy Hollow Montessori – getting ready to open junior high that will be centered on the River.
 - xvii. Karin Misiewicz, St. Paul Parks & Rec Maintenance and Operations
 - xviii. Ellen Stewart - St. Paul Parks & Recreation
 - xix. Barrett Steenrod, NPS RTCA
2. Committee role and expectations (provided on agenda)
 - a. Role is to provide feedback and input
 - b. Bring information back and forth between this group and those you represent as part of the process so that we get a well-rounded understanding/perspective on the community's desires for the park
 3. Project overview – creation of report that will be submitted to MetCouncil
 - a. Timeline, context and location, goals
 - i. November committee meeting
 - ii. Open house in January to verify that we got it all
 - iii. Production of document
 - iv. Reviews and approvals
 - v. Funding requests to follow over the years
 - b. Regional Parks – 7 county metro
 - i. 530,000 visitors at HF/CF RP per year
 - ii. Required to look at development projects, access, attraction of more people to come to the parks
 - iii. 1970s master plan completed
 - c. Funding for the development of the Master Plan from State Legacy Amendment
 - d. Hidden Falls – 130 acres – 1880s Horace Cleveland encouraged city to set aside natural areas for public use
 - i. Variety of structures and facilities within the park
 - ii. Deferred maintenance
 - iii. Access issues
 - iv. Erosion
 - e. Crosby Farm
 - i. was a farm until 1960s.
 - ii. Feels remote
 - iii. Lake, restored prairie, tree/forest replanting, invasive removals
 - iv. Seasonal flooding, lack of wayfinding
 - f. Cultural Resources (history, site significance)
 - i. Two Rivers Overlook acknowledges cultural significance, but we should seek to take this cultural acknowledgement further into the park to recognize the significance of the land
 - g. Natural Resources Inventory required for both HF and CF
 - i. Preliminary findings shows that no areas are in excellent habitat quality currently
 1. Invasive plants
 2. Not native ecosystem

3. Great River Greening updating the inventory for HF, City of St. Paul Natural Resources is updating inventory for CF (in progress, will be shown at next meeting)
 - h. Partners
 - i. Investments
4. Engagement to-date
5. Online Survey (closes end of October) 703 responses to date
 - a. Walking, running, biking
 - b. Upgrade bathrooms
 - c. Improve trail surfaces
 - d. Improve river access
6. Great River Passage 2010-2012
 - a. More Natural, More Urban, More Connected
 - b. Saint Paul's long-term plan to Connect neighborhoods, communities and people to the 17 miles of Mississippi River that runs through the city
 - c. Interdisciplinary team of consultants
 - d. 56 members of Community Advisory and Technical Advisory team
 - e. 28 community meetings
 - f. 5 focus groups
 - g. 2012 adopted by the City Council into the City's Comprehensive Plan
7. Questions:
 - a. Who owns the land near Ford, along the river? Not owned by the City – private property?
 - b. Considering the Ford Dam as part of that discussion?
 - i. Will be something that is part of the City's planning?
 - ii. Leaving as an option to acquire land but not getting into detail; we are reserving the ability to acquire land by putting it in the plan
 - iii. Shoreline changes due to removal of the dams – removal impact is unknown at this time. No hydrological engineers on this project. If anything, it will make the river narrower. No firm commitments to anything around that.
 - c. Watergate? How much will be part of that project?
 - i. Environmental Learning Center part of Great River Passage
 - ii. Division in our Department and more in-depth plans and details will be worked on through that division. We will be working with and around that.
 - d. Shoreline
8. Break-out groups
 - a. 4 groups of 5 max guided by Anne, Barrett, Holly, and Liz
 - b. Create big idea statement for the park – beyond improvements.
 - i. Looking to know and understand what this place should be
 - ii. What gives it its identity?
 - c. Review GRP plans and discuss
 - d. Review priorities from GRP master plan
 - e. Report back to committee
 - i. GROUP 1
 1. Trash cans
 2. Limit parking
 3. Restoration of staircase

4. Improving the falls – daylighting the water feature
- ii. GROUP 2
 1. Big idea – nature preserve – keep it wild
 2. Signage and safety
 3. Resilient trails
 4. Invasive species removal
 5. History – Rumtown and Fort Snelling connection
 6. History – indigenous
 7. Clean and renovate the Hidden Falls Pavilion
 8. Stabilize creek bank at Hidden Falls
- iii. GROUP 3
 1. End to end hiking and cycling trails
 2. Sustainable natural surface trails
 3. Native culture -more prominent
 4. Consistent signage
 5. Boat dock access – improvements and more of it
 6. Police/DNR presence above and below the bluff
 7. Bluff stabilization -especially at Marina
 8. Challenge area for kids – bike pump track near marina
 9. Quiet spaces in the flats should also be a priority
 10. Improving pavilion in Hidden Falls
 11. Bathrooms
- iv. What we have heard before
 1. Shelter that can accommodate groups
 2. Improve entry and enhance safety
 3. Wayfinding
 4. Nature based play area in Hidden Falls
 - 5.

9. Wrap up, next steps

Next meeting will be in November 2018. Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information and details on upcoming meetings.



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**Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan
Advisory Committee - Meeting #2**

Meeting Notes – DRAFT –

November 27, 2018

6:30 – 8:00 PM

The Wellington Senior Living - 2235 Rockwood Avenue, St. Paul MN 55116

Goal: Review the priorities and input received from focus groups, the online survey, and pop-up meetings, for improvements and amenities to add to the park and incorporate in the Master Plan Document. Summary of the Natural Resources Inventory. We will leave this meeting with a clear sense of priorities to be listed in the Master Plan Document (draft in January 2019).

Enhance access and safety to and through the urban floodplain “wilderness” while respecting the cultural heritage and natural resources of this place

1. Welcome & Introductions (6:35 pm)

- a. Recognition of the significance of this place - Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm Park (HFCFP) are within indigenous sacred land. Also, this is significant ecological area for the twin cities region.
- b. Individual introductions
 - Shawn Sheely natural trails advocate – Mississippi River gorge committee. Led efforts to build natural trails
 - Emily Jarrett Hughes - Nibi Water Walks
 - Ed Heimel- Resident and NPS volunteer
 - Whitney Clark - Friends of The Mississippi River
 - Sandra Macguire – hiking walking
 - Barb Lehn – lives on the river – resident
 - Edric Lysne- Ice Climber and outdoor recreation enthusiast
 - Thabiso Rowan - Disability Hub MN
 - Shirley Erstad- Friends of Ramsey County Parks and Trails
 - Kristine Gill – transportation committee Highland District Council
 - Mike Lindsay- Highland District Council Board Vice President
 - Jeff Burton – resident, lives close to the park
 - Emily Dunlap – Parks and Rec- Natural resources
 - Maggie Barnick- Parks and Rec- Natural resources
 - Emily Northey - Fort Road Federation
 - Becky Rice – Highland resident 20 years – regular user of the park. Director of MetroBlooms non-profit restores ecology of urban environment
 - Devin Olson - Minneapolis resident, Mountain bike rider, loves these parks
 - Paige DeWees – resident, lives above Crosby Farm Park
 - Tyler Teggatz – Highland District Council, lives by HF North Gate



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- Steve Pope - neighbor, frequent parks visitor and hiker
- Joe Landsberger – resident, historian, runs the West 7th Garden Tour
- Adam Brunner – resident, lives above HF South Gate, fishes the banks
- JP Lindrud - Watergate Marina, Allied Management Company
- Holly Larson, NPS RTCA
- Barrett Steenrod, NPS RTCA

2. Presentation (6:45 pm)

- Meeting guidelines- Agenda states rules for the meetings- respect each other and assume everyone is coming from a positive place. Work collaboratively and respectfully.
- There was an email claim that discriminatory comments were made at the meeting, which was addressed and handled appropriately by the Highland District Council.
 - City of Saint Paul, Department and Parks and Recreation goals and mission are to give equitable access for all.
 - St. Paul Parks and Recreation is running this project, but this regional park this serves the whole metro area. Reminder that St. Paul Parks is mandated to serve everyone equally and increase equity within the city. We also remind everyone that we should assume everyone has good intentions and work together in this process. If you have questions or concerns, please talk to Anne or Liz.
- Cultural significance of HFCFP- Presentation of map showing the significant Dakota land and sites of current Parks projects.
 - The department has a cultural resources study underway for Indian Mounds.
 - Relationship and process will be developed out of this to inform how HFCFP will proceed.
 - For this project, outreach is ongoing and inclusive but considerate of parallel cultural resources study.
 - Nibi (water) Ceremony led by Sharon Day every Sunday in HF (north lot). Anne participated in one to understand the ceremony and see how the park was used.
- Meeting 1 Review -
 - Derived from the input and discussions of our first meeting, we established the Big Idea for the project:

Enhance access and safety to and through the urban floodplain “wilderness” while respecting the cultural heritage of this place.

- We reviewed the Great River Passage Plans
 - Presentation of a short list of some of the priorities that were identified in discussion
- Engagement Overview
 - Many meetings and events attended, 940 respondents to online survey, many meetings with city departments, 3 focus groups held, more to come.
 - Community Input Summary
 - Online Survey Results and Pop-Up Meeting
 - When asked what do you like about the park, many people responded with words indicating joy, and that they saw the park as an oasis. Some asked us not to make significant changes.
 - Dependent on cars or bike/foot to reach the park. Would like to see more transit access and will try to improve this.
 - Many people use these parks to bike or run, few online survey respondents fish or picnic.

- In contrast, the pop-up meeting results indicated more fishers and picnickers.
 - Pop-up meeting responses also indicated a desire for more programming and winter activities
 - Permitting and Park Use Data
 - Crosby used for smaller events, typically (birthdays, barbecues)
 - Hidden Falls used for larger events, and more frequently permitted
 - Even when controlling for repeat events (deer hunting, Barebones performances), Hidden Falls is still permitted more frequently
- g. Natural Resources Inventory – summary
- Work to finalize the inventory is nearly complete.
 - Map shows habitat quality, which is used by our Natural Resources management team to plan maintenance activities and volunteer group projects
 - Introduced Emily Barnick and Maggie Dunlap, City of St. Paul Natural Resources. Maggie and Emily spoke about the work they do, with a team of three to manage the city's 2,300 acres of parks. Within the last two years 310 acres within Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm has been worked on by their crews, using money from a DNR Conservation Legacy amendment grant. Most of the funding to support natural resource management activities comes from grants like this.
 - Habitat quality map is an assessment by ecologists. Good or poor quality gets defined by presence of invasive species versus what a healthy plant community should be. The maps show abrupt changes between good and poor quality, and some of this is due to topography, or areas of lawn (not a true native habitat). Some of these areas are mapped plant community types, and the assessment of good or bad quality relates to the status of the plants within that community type.
- h. Updated Map
- Revised the map for the two parks to show more accurate trails and features, this will be the base for our master plan map that shows future improvements planned for the park
 - We overlaid the Great River Passage icons and lines on this map to show you how they align
 - We studied the regulatory flood zones in the area, and the map indicates a red line that separates the floodway and flood fringe. The flood fringe is an area where some construction and park improvements are allowed but still subject to rules.
 - Areas for future consideration are shown with circles, as this is a draft of some of the recommendations we are making.
 - Due to many questions about this, we are inserting a post-meeting addition. As a note, the River Learning Center (RLC) / NPS Headquarters:
 - Is a part of the Great River Passage Master Plan, and as a part of that planning process City staff conducted extensive community engagement surrounding the Saint Paul River Learning Center.
 - The Great River Passage Initiative has reviewed that community input and is working with partners to determine whether they will proceed with the project.
 - If the City decides to move forward, staff will begin the design process. This will include engaging the public to determine what the River Learning Center will look like, what programming will be offered at the site, and more.
- i. Questions:
- *The “big idea” and the listed priorities do not mention the river, which is typical of St. Paul to ignore the Mississippi. Why is the word river not in the big idea?*

A: We can revise it, this is a draft and we are looking for your feedback. We felt that the word floodplain implied the presence of the river.

- *Are we responding to Emerald Ash Borer and the threat of that?*

A: yes, we are proactively removing trees. Our Natural Resources Inventory identifies areas of concern. St. Paul Natural Resources is already working to remove infected Ash trees and plant other native species.

- *The summary of priorities does not include what my group talked about in last meeting, can you elaborate on how priorities are decided? In particular we feel like neighborhood connections and safer road crossings to both parks are a priority.*

A: We are taking feedback from a number of groups and trying to distill them down and simplify. In the activity coming up soon you will see that full list. The summary shown from the previous meeting may have been overly simplified.

- *Is this master plan taking into account the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations?*

A: Yes we are doing our best to incorporate all regulatory requirements. We are aware of MRCCA rules.

- *The "big idea" seems to use objective language, and really the whole presentation does this. Instead this process should be about relationship building and bringing people together. Can the big idea be modified to incorporate this?*

A: Yes, we can. If you have suggestions like this, please contact Anne or Liz.

- *We would like the City to consider traffic calming/control for Mississippi River Blvd in anticipation of more population as new developments occur. Existing traffic on these roads is a barrier to bike/ped access to parks. While this may be beyond the scope of what Parks & Rec can do, it underpins the present and future issues as they pertain to equitable access, and the group wants Parks & Rec to communicate this to the other city departments that have a bigger say in road improvements.*

- A: Parks & Rec can communicate this to Public Works and other relevant city departments.

- Transitioned into activity (7:15 PM)

3. Help Us Prioritize (Activity)

- a. Meeting attendees broke into smaller groups of up to 7 people.
- b. We discussed a list of future improvements and recommendations for the park, this list was drawn from various public engagement, city staff recommendations, and items listed in Great River Passage.

- c. Each group took one topic area:

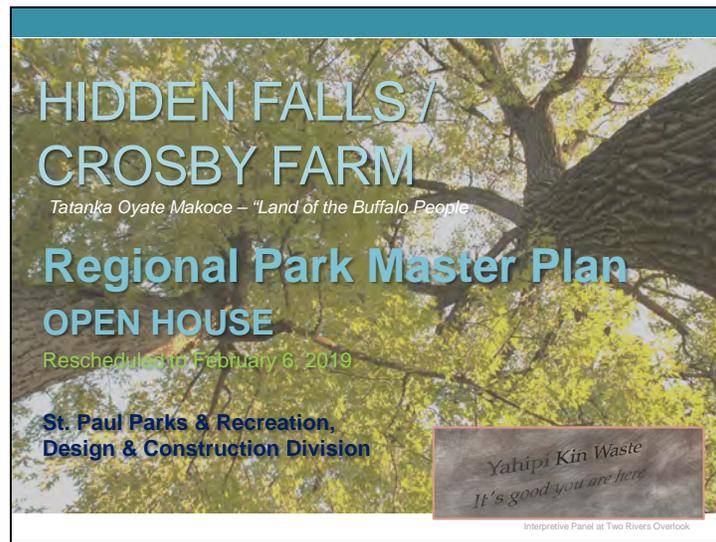
- Management and Recreation Improvements / Use Areas
- Structures and Related Improvements
- Roads and Trails
- Landscape Improvements

- d. We discussed in groups for about an hour, and each individual group covered different topics.

- Instead of wrapping up, we ended the meeting with the discussion groups. Thank you to everyone who came and stayed until the groups dispersed at 8:30 PM

Next meeting will be an Open House in January 2019, to review the draft report. City staff will continue to have meetings internally and with partnership organizations. The written document will be prepared for presentation and review in January, 2019.

Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information.



Anne Gardner, project manager for Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan, gave the presentation. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an overview of the process to date and review the list of improvements and priorities that have been identified from the community engagement sessions and research on the park.

To open the meeting, we welcomed the Nibi Walks / Water Walks group, led by Sharon Day who leads a weekly Sunday morning water ceremony at Hidden Falls.

Sharon described her 2013 walk along the entire Mississippi River, and the evolution of the Nibi Walks group. Everyone is welcome to join every Sunday morning, 9 am at the Hidden Falls boat launch area. From Sharon “You may have seen a small circle of people there. We believe that every living thing has a spirit, but that the water has a spirit that connects us all. We take a small amount of water and keep it during the ceremony, then return it to the river. Water is very important and must be protected.”

Sharon, Emily, and Paul sang an Ojibwe song that speaks of the sacred nature of water.

2

Agenda

- **Welcome & Acknowledgements**
- **Project review**
 - Meeting 1 & 2 Review
 - Community Engagement Overview
 - Updated Map
 - Priorities
- **Next steps**
- **Questions?**

Don't forget to vote on a construction project and fill out a comment card!



PROJECT TEAM

City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Staff

Design & Construction (Landscape Architects):
Anne Gardner
Liz Hixson
Ellen Stewart

Natural Resources:
Adam Robbins
Maggie Barnick
Emily Dunlap

Operations:
Karin Misiewicz
Joe Buzicky
Tom Hagel

National Park Service:
Holly Larson, RTCA
Barett Steenrod, RTCA

Great River Greening:
Todd Rexine

The agenda and project team were mentioned: Staff from the City of St Paul, Dept of Parks and Recreation (Design and Construction, Operations, and Natural Resources), staff from National Park Service, and Great River Greening (prepared the Natural Resources inventory for Hidden Falls)

3

Project Summary

Purpose of the Plan

- ensure that Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm park is meeting the local and regional needs
- adoption of the master plan with the Metropolitan Council
- provides a framework for future improvements and funding requests
- sustain public use and enjoyment of the park

Guiding Principles

Respect the sacredness of his region. Acknowledge and celebrate the indigenous history of this location on the Mississippi River near the site of the Bdote (confluence) the birth of the Dakota nation

Preserve and sustain the ecological functions of these parks by managing and enhancing the critical habitat area

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

Recommend and enhance pedestrian and multi-modal connections to draw regional and local users to the park space

Support partnerships with organizations who assist in bringing new user groups to the park and river and assist in building the ecological resilience of park adapting to a changing climate



Why do we need a master plan

- Required by the Metropolitan Council
- Allows city to request funding
- Respond to nearby development pressure
- Identify and reach out to new park visitors

Met council asks that every 10-20 years they review a plan that lists:

- boundaries and acquisition, stewardship, demand forecast, park development, potential conflicts, operations, public engagement, public awareness, accessibility, natural resources

As we began work on this park, we needed to

- Respect the sacredness and cultural history of this site near the Bdote
- Also preserve and sustain the ecological functions (MNRRA) and bluff habitat for animals, plant communities, and human enjoyment
- Upgrade facilities for safety and improved recreation use
- Acknowledge the changing trends with transportation and recreation and adapt the plan and connectivity of the park to the region
- Continue the relationships and partnerships with all of the organizations who know, love, use, and care of this park both to bring people here and to care for the environment

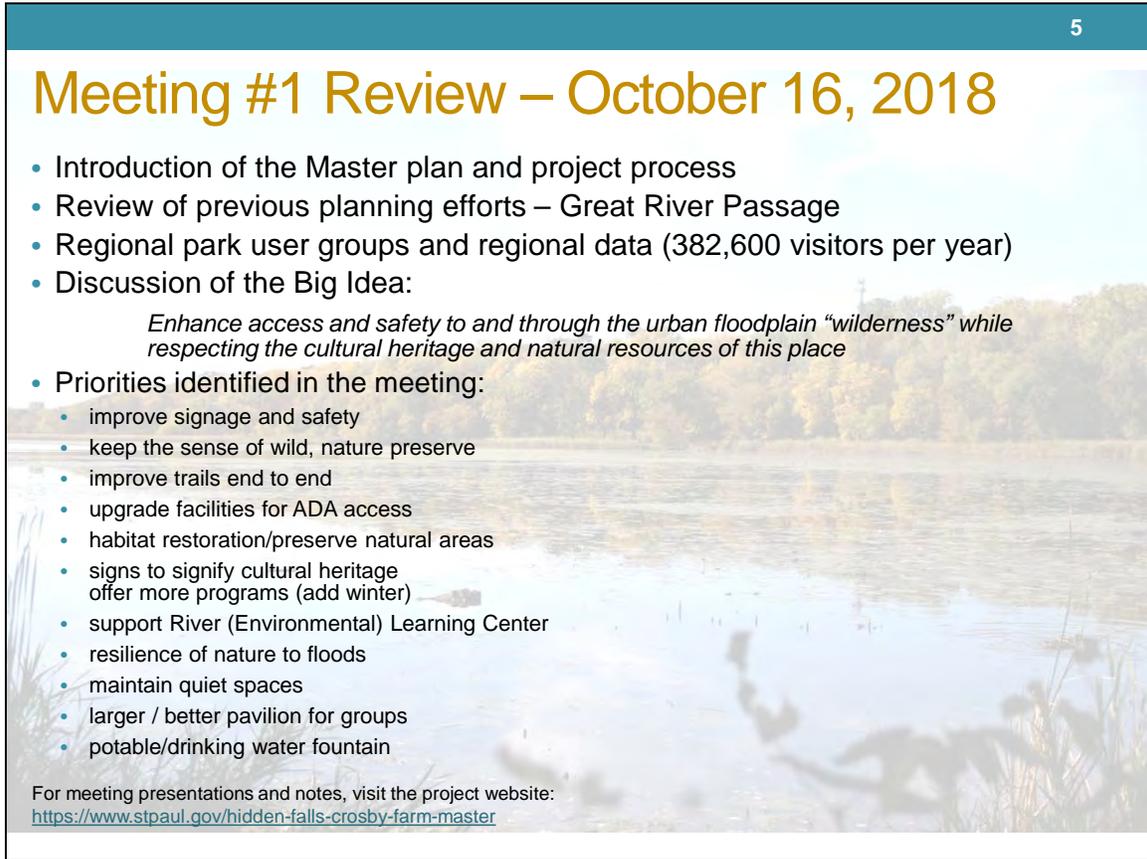
Community Advisory Committee- THANK YOU!

- Shawn Sheely- Trails Advocate
- Emily Jarrett Hughes - Nibi Water Walks
- Ed Heibel- Resident and NPS volunteer
- Whitney Clark - Friends of The Mississippi River
- Sandra MacGuire – hiking walking
- Barb Lehn – lives on the river – resident
- Edric Lysne- Ice Climber and outdoor recreation enthusiast
- Thabiso Rowan - Disability Hub MN
- Shirley Erstad- Friends of Ramsey County Parks and Trails
- Kristine Gill –Highland District Council
- Mike Lindsay- Highland District Council Board Vice President
- Jeff Burton – resident, lives close to the park
- Emily Northey - Fort Road Federation
- Becky Rice – Highland resident
- Devin Olson - Minneapolis resident, Mountain bike rider
- Paige DeWees – resident, lives above Crosby Farm Park
- Tyler Teggatz – Highland District Council
- Steve Pope - neighbor, frequent parks visitor and hiker
- Joe Landsberger – resident & historian
- Adam Brunner – resident and avid fishermen
- JP Lindrud - Watergate Marina, Allied Management Co
- Hank Carlson, YMCA
- Gary Bruggeman, resident
- Becky Amidon, resident
- Renee Campion, Sleepy Hollow Montessori



We formed a community advisory committee after soliciting volunteers and interest through partner groups, public mailings, website postings and communication with neighborhood groups.

Two meetings were held in October and December 2018 - thank you to those who volunteered time and participated in the project.



5

Meeting #1 Review – October 16, 2018

- Introduction of the Master plan and project process
- Review of previous planning efforts – Great River Passage
- Regional park user groups and regional data (382,600 visitors per year)
- Discussion of the Big Idea:
 - Enhance access and safety to and through the urban floodplain “wilderness” while respecting the cultural heritage and natural resources of this place*
- Priorities identified in the meeting:
 - improve signage and safety
 - keep the sense of wild, nature preserve
 - improve trails end to end
 - upgrade facilities for ADA access
 - habitat restoration/preserve natural areas
 - signs to signify cultural heritage
 - offer more programs (add winter)
 - support River (Environmental) Learning Center
 - resilience of nature to floods
 - maintain quiet spaces
 - larger / better pavilion for groups
 - potable/drinking water fountain

For meeting presentations and notes, visit the project website:
<https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master>

A summary (detailed information on the website) of the information reviewed at meeting #1 was shared. In general, the Great River Passage (GRP) was the beginning point for this work and we utilized the base map, suggested improvements, and priority list and built off of those materials.

6

Meeting #2 Review- November 27, 2018

- Summary of Survey Results
- Summary of Natural Resources Inventory by Natural Resources Staff
- Review of Project priorities lists developed from Great River Passage and revised by focus group discussions
- Small group discussion on priorities (reflected in current Priorities Boards 1 & 2)
- Big Idea revised to a Vision Statement:
 - *“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 and will maintain this place of healing and restoration for people and ecology, including those of the City of Saint Paul and the broader Metropolitan region.”*

For meeting presentations and notes, visit the project website:
<https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master>

A summary (detailed information on the website) of the information reviewed at meeting #2 was presented including review of survey results, natural resources inventory, and an in-depth review and discussion of project priorities.

Community Engagement Overview

- Online survey - 940 responders
- National Public Lands Day Pop-up Meeting 133 responders, 200 popsicles
- 6 community meetings and parks ambassador gatherings attended
- 4 focus groups (water, trails, gov. / non-profit, camps)
- 4 internal city meetings (rec centers, operations & maintenance, and Great River Passage division)
- Participation in water ceremonies with Nibi Walk and discussion
- WCCO and Fraser School Pulling Together event brings thousands of people to Hidden Falls
- This process is building on the momentum of Great River Passage, which was in 2012 and had 28 public meetings and 5 focus groups
- The City's Great River Passage Initiative continues to hold events and advocate for projects identified in the plan



An overview of the community engagement process was shared. Generally, parks staff worked through numerous venues to reach users and potential user groups at events, outings, and meetings to gather community feedback.

Related Projects

- Ford Redevelopment
 - <https://www.ryancompanies.com/news/ryan-presents-vision-development-ford-site>
 - <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/ford-site-21st-century-community>
- River Learning Center
 - <https://greatriverpassage.org/projects/environmental-learning-center/>
- Lexington Parkway Realignment
 - <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transit/future-road-construction-projects/lexington-parkway-west-7th-street-reconfiguration>
- Pedestrian Plan
 - <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation/walking-saint-paul>
- Tribal Engagement and Cultural Resources Strategy at Indian Mounds Regional Park
 - <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/indian-mounds-regional-park>



The related projects listed will have an indirect or direct impact on the park space. They are listed above and can be accessed via the website link. They are operating on various timelines and have different funding sources- we will maintain awareness of the projects and work towards understanding the impacts to Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm.

Two additional projects that should be added to the project - Highway 5 potential changes via public works (<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/highway-5-shepard-road-study>) and the Dam Removal study- <https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/MplsLocksDisposition/>

9

Natural Resources Inventory

INVENTORY, MAPPING, AND MAINTENANCE:

- Identify and protect habitat for rare and endangered species
- Importance of the Mississippi Flyway to bird species
- Address stormwater, bluff erosion, and flooding concerns – and recognize the dynamic floodplain and river bluff ecology
- Strategies for maintenance – address invasive species, shelterwood planting, cottonwood regeneration, targeting Emerald Ash Borer
- Volunteer coordination – 248 people volunteered in both parks in 2018 (as recorded by St. Paul Parks & Recreation Natural Resources)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Saint Paul's Environmental Services Unit protects, enhances, and provides access to the City's natural areas. Services include the monitoring and research of natural resources in parks, the restoration and management of vital and unique ecosystems, and the provision of interpretation and education. The Unit also works with citizens, nonprofits, and governmental agencies to coordinate efforts that enhance the natural environment of Saint Paul.
<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/natural-resources>

Habitat Ranking

- B: Good: Areas of native plant communities with moderate disturbance but nearly intact species diversity
- C: Fair: Areas of native plant communities with high level disturbance or invasion of exotic species
- D: Poor: Not an example of a native plant community or threatened by exotic/invasive species
- NA: Not ranked: Due to a lack of recent data
- NA: Due to sparse vegetation

Great River Greening, 2018 St. Paul Natural Resources, 2019 This is a composite of two maps produced for the master plan. At left is a map created by Great River Greening that assesses the habitat quality in Hidden Falls. We added to a map at right created by St. Paul Natural Resources showing the same data for Crosby Farm.

- Endangered species (Threatened: Paddlefish, Mucket, and Purple Wartyback)
- Importance of the Mississippi Flyway to bird species
- Stormwater, bluff erosion, and flooding concerns – the dynamic floodplain and river bluff ecology
- Strategies for maintenance – shelterwood planting, cottonwood regeneration, targeting Emerald Ash Borer
- 248 people volunteered in both parks in 2018 (recorded by St. Paul Parks & Recreation Natural Resources)

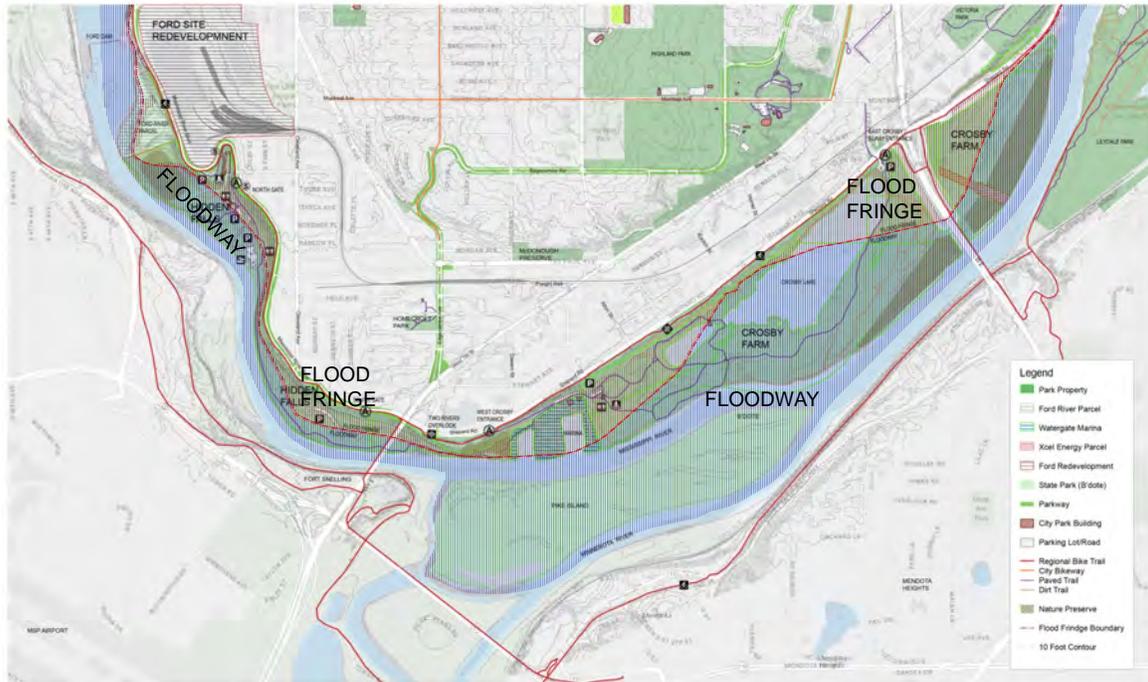
A quick overview of the Natural Resources report was given. The inventory was prepared by Great River Greening (Hidden Falls) and the Natural Resources group. The images on the board show current efforts, including goats grazing buckthorn and shelterwood plantings

This is a dynamic floodplain and the river bluff has a unique ecology.

The inventory guides the following:

- Propose strategies for maintenance
- Identify volunteer coordination and partnerships
- Identify habitat for rare and protected species
- Address stormwater runoff, bluff erosion, flooding concerns

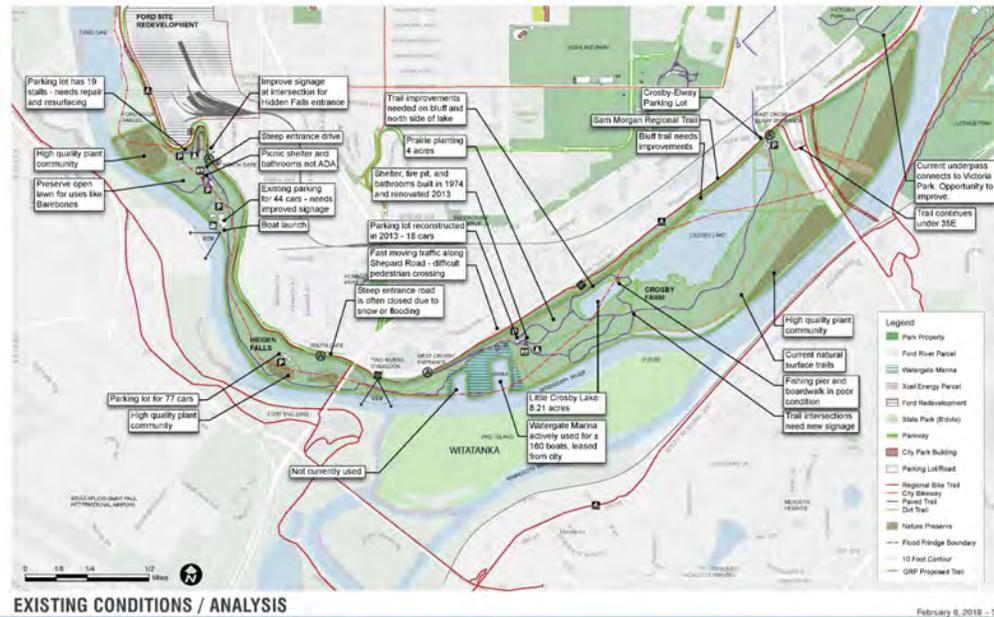
Updated Map – Existing Conditions



Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park - 2019 Master Plan DRAFT - City of St. Paul Parks & Recreation

The study of existing conditions builds upon the Great River Passage map and has added more detail representative of what exists at the park. The floodway shows the limit of where structures can be built as it is the zone for flooding. (see presentation PDF for detailed existing conditions map)

Updated Map – Existing Conditions



Notes on existing conditions map reflect what the project team observed and noted, and heard from community conversations and input.

Project Priorities

Priority Key

- High - near term, very important
- Med-High - within 5 years (+/-), significant
- Medium - within 10 years (+/-), desired but not top
- Low-Med - within 10 to 15 years (+/-), preferred
- Low - must be sequenced with other improvements

Priority	Proposed Priorities
High	Increase budget for invasive species management and coordination. [both]
High	Continue to program cultural events such as "Barebones Halloween Puppet Show". [both] (1)
High	Address the off-leash dog problem by signs and education. [both]
Med-High	Add more bluff-top land to the park, from Ford Site by curve at Mississippi River Blvd. [HF]
Med-High	Install video surveillance to reduce theft from parked vehicles and increase safety. [both]
Med-High	Continue exploring development of a River Learning Center at Watergate location, with partners including the National Park Service, Indigenous communities, and nearby neighborhoods. [CF]
Med-High	Acquire adjacent riverfront land and holdings as they become available. [both]
Med	Add programming on paddling and water safety. [both] (A) (H) (F)
Med	Additional surveillance via police and park security patrol. [both]
Low-Med	Improve transit access by working with adjacent neighborhoods and Metro Transit. [both]

Priority	Proposed Priorities
High	Add looped rustic nature trails, including the mid-kiln trail, that provide a varied experience and connect to existing mile loops. [both] (1)
High	Add rustic trails with access to streamside (shorter-term trails). [both] (2)
High	Alleviate the trail network, improve accessibility throughout, and provide clear access and signage to trail heads. [both]
High	Add new park trails from Watergate to Lower Crosby Farm (east side), connect to new parking areas and to Victoria Park. [CF]
High	Improve and extend park trails at Hidden Falls, improve trail from pavilion to falls area. [HF]
High	Redesign bike and pedestrian trails along entry roads. [both]
High	Improve Shepard Rd. crossings. [CF]
High	Improve all pedestrian access points, giving consideration to neighborhood access, and connections from Victoria Park and redeveloped Ford Site (WPA area (Wicks Progress Administration) staircase.
Medium	Improve safety and sight lines at Mississippi River Boulevard entrances. [both]
Medium	Improve boardwalk and fishing pier. [CF]
Low	Improve parking areas at Hidden Falls (especially near pavilion, which is not emergency vehicle accessible). [HF]
Low	Reduce pavement, by removing some of the access roadway at Hidden Falls at both entrances. [HF]

Priority	Proposed Priorities
High	Add interpretive signage for boat safety, natural history, and cultural history of Native American presence. [both] (K)
High	Improve signage at boat ramp parking lot, provide directions to nearby launches, designate area for boat trailer parking only. [HF]
High	Implement signage and wayfinding systems in Crosby Farm and Hidden Falls (develop short walking tour with clear and easy to follow signs). [both]
High	Add signage/locks to mark entry point to parks (West Crosby Entrance, and along Mississippi River Blvd. Hidden Falls North and South Entrances). [both]
Medium	Improve Hidden Falls pavilion and make restrooms accessible. [HF]
Low-Med	Construct two small boat storage areas at Hidden Falls Park. [HF]
Low	Build a shelter/shelter for summer grills. [HF]
Low	Could be eliminated from priorities if River Learning Center built.
Low	Year-round, minimal maintenance bathroom (composting if food/pain rules allow). [both]

Priority	Proposed Priorities
High	Add gathering area with the pit designed to accommodate and recognize Native American heritage and culture (HF) (similar to Pitt Knolls)
High	Develop linear mountain bike trails using International Mountain Bicycling Association best practices. [both] (M)
Med-High	Add Cross Country (XC) skiing trails to accommodate classic style skiing (use grooming equipment from park system or partner). [both] If feasible, design to be multi-use natural surface trails. (1)
Med-High	Improve boat ramp and trailer parking. Separate casual storage racks and cars without trails from boat ramp area. [HF]
Med-High	Improve meadow near Hidden Falls Pavilion to allow passive recreation and picnic areas for large and small group events. [HF]
Med	Construct a new nature-themed or woody play area (non-traditional). [HF] (1)
Med	Add (2) canoe/kayak landing areas (separate from boat ramp) at Hidden Falls South Gate and Crosby. [both]
Low-Med	Develop public group tent/camping area for permitted events, with a potable water source. [CF]
Not ranked	* Only feasible when River Learning Center is built.
Not ranked	Study feasibility of allowing and improving access for ice climbing.

Priority	Proposed Priorities
High	Reforest open areas, encourage development of a continuous tree canopy, and remove some parking along road at Hidden Falls South Entry. Use this as an area for community engagement. [HF]
Med-High	Remove fallen trees from trails as soon as possible, and emphasize tree canopy management via programs with partners. [both] (1)
Med	Address bluff erosion at cliff-top, following Natural Resources Inventory guidelines (add materials for falls trail) to reduce water flow, resist compaction and disintegration, and reduce water away from trails. Re-vegetate slopes where feasible. [both]
Med	Restore native (scapan and wetland areas, and address erosion near stormwater outfalls, to improve water quality. [both] (1)
Med	Selectively manage understory of invasive vegetation species, in passive security areas. [both]
Low	Restore Hidden Falls Creek to incorporate water quality treatment and habitat enhancement. Plan for this restoration to be timed with Ford Redevelopment. [HF]

The list of priorities is expanded from the Great River Passage.

- 1 management category (red)
- 4 construction categories

The priorities also show a column with the rankings of priorities.

- high- near term- very important,
- med-high- within 5 years,
- med- within 10 years,
- low-med within 10 years,
- low-med within 10-15 low- need to sequence with other projects

The priorities are written out with pictures nearby that illustrate some of the priorities, both existing conditions we want to maintain and new ideas brought up throughout our planning process.

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Activity: vote on a construction project

The City of Saint Paul has requested \$500,000 for "Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Master Plan Implementation" from Parks and Legacy funds (\$100,000 in 2019 and \$400,000 in 2020)

What should the City do with the first \$500,000?

- Add cultural signage and develop wayfinding signage plan
- Trail system: improve rustic trails at bluff and shoreline
- Trail system: redesign bike and pedestrian connections at entry roads
- Add gathering space for indigenous culture events and recognition
- Reduce lawn area and redesign parking area at Hidden Falls north lot

Voting exercise – the meeting participants are asked to vote on construction priorities, these are five items we consider buildable with the first round of grant funding from the Met Council.

Results from the voting:

1. Trail system: redesign bike and pedestrian connections at entry roads- 49 votes
2. Trail system: improve rustic trails at bluff and shoreline- 37 votes
3. Add gathering space for indigenous culture events and recognition- 22 votes
4. Add cultural signage and develop wayfinding signage plan-18 votes
5. Reduce lawn area and redesign parking area at hf north lot- 13 votes



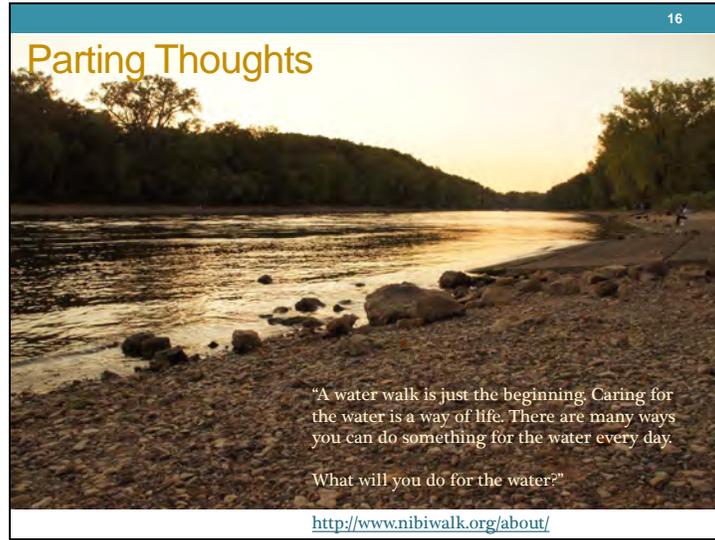
Wrap Up / Next Steps

- Open House January 2019 to review the draft report
- Plans Available February 7 online
- Draft report available Feb 23 - March 22 for public comment
- Submit report to Parks Commission in early March
- Submit report to City Council in mid-March
- Submit report to Metro Council in early April 2019
- Complete report approved June 2019

Please discuss this project with your representative groups and email us with responses or comments

THANK YOU!

- For up to date information, visit the project website:
<https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master>



Questions:

Q - Trails, what do you mean in the description/priorities "rustic" and "engineered"?

A- *"Rustic" means non-paved trails: earthen, gravel, or rock surface. "Engineered" trails will be designed and built with sustainable details and will address erosion and runoff but does not mean all trails are paved.*

Q - Marina, how does it fit in the city, if River Learning Center moves forward, are there private slips left at the site, what happens to all the investments made at the marina, would that open the gates to the public?

A-*This is to be determined. We do not have information on this at this time. Reference the Great River Passage (GRP) website (<https://greatriverpassage.org/>) and sign up for the newsletter for updates.*

Key Points from the Great River Passage Initiative:

- *As a part of the Great River Passage Master Plan process, City staff conducted extensive community engagement surrounding the Saint Paul River Learning Center (formerly Environmental Learning Center).*
- *The Great River Passage Initiative has reviewed that community input and is working with partners to determine whether they will proceed with the project.*
- *If the City and partners decide to move forward, the GRP Initiative will begin the design process. This will include engaging the public to determine what the River Learning Center will look like, what programming will be offered at the site, and more.*
- *Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is currently in discussion with the existing contract partner at Watergate Marina to reach a 2-3 year contract extension agreement.*

Q - Marina has problems with security already, and controlling access. People walking up and using our lawn chairs to go fishing. Anyone can just walk in, what is City doing about security and safety?

A-*Signage is in place on site. The plan does not intend to create new paths into the marina area during the current use in which the site is fenced off. This does not propose to make the marina less secure.*

Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan

Open House – February 6, 2019

Draft Meeting Minutes

Additional Information since the open house: The management agreement with Allied Management Company specifically states, "3.10 ALLIED will provide and be responsible for security coverage for the Property."

Q - Great River Passage, if they are leading the River learning center process, will they have public meetings? When?

A - If the City and partners decide to move forward, the GRP Initiative will begin the design process. This will include engaging the public to determine what the River Learning Center will look like, what programming will be offered at the site, and more.

Q - Are you taking possible Dam Removal into account, what would that change about the plans?

A- We know this is a possibility and are tracking discussions. The Army Corps of engineer website states that it is in Phase II of the disposition study and will release a draft report in June 2019

Q - If GRP and RLC move forward, and you have "improve trail access to the marina" listed on your plans, that makes us feel unsafe. We want to understand how "public" this area will be.

A- We do not have information on this at this time. Reference the Great River Passage website and sign up for the newsletter for updates.

Q - What are you doing about Shepard road and Crosby Farm exit? We want a framework that addresses traffic safety. Bikers don't yield even though they have a stop sign. Want improved safety at road crossings.

A-This is on the list of priority improvements to redesign the intersections and improve safety.

Q - Intersections are very difficult for both parks. Can they be improved? Should be a study of the whole area to figure out. Should be a safe system for peds, bikes, cars. We want safety first.

A- We are proposing that intersections are improved for safe connections for pedestrians and bikers. Some of these projects require a multi-department approach working with PED and Public Works.

Q - The trails are beat up, in rough shape. Is there money to fix them?

A- Trail improvements are a top priority for this park. We will request funding in the future for trail improvements.

Q - How do volunteers sign up? I saw you have 248 last year in the parks

A - Maggie Barnick from St. Paul natural resources answered that there are numerous opportunities to volunteer in the park. Contact the volunteer coordinator for opportunities:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/natural-resources/volunteer-resources>

Q - I saw a note "manage lakes for water quality" on the map. What does this mean?

A- Capitol Region Watershed District has been monitoring the lake in Crosby for water quality. They have provided recommendations for improving water quality by addressing stormwater outflow from adjacent neighborhoods. Some work has been completed (infiltration basins along Sam Morgan Regional Trail), but still need more can be done. The Watershed district is a great partner and we will work with them to find opportunities to fund and implement projects that improve water quality in the park and for the river.