HIDDEN FALLS / CROSBY FARM

Regional Park
Advisory Committee Meeting #1

October 16, 2018

St. Paul Parks & Recreation, Design & Construction Division
Agenda

• Welcome & Introductions
• Committee role and expectations
• Project overview
  • Timeline, context and location, goals
  • Natural Resources Inventory
  • Cultural Resources (history, site significance)
• Engagement to-date
• Online Survey (closes end of October)
• Great River Passage Review
• Priorities identified to date
• Break-out groups
  • Review GRP, share your input, report back to committee
• Wrap up, next steps
Project Overview

• Timeline
  • Public input August to November 2018
  • Second committee meeting November 2018
  • Open House to verify feedback January 2018
  • First draft report late January 2019
  • Revisions February to April 2019
  • Final report approved June 2019

• Approvals by Metropolitan Council, Parks Commissioners
• Pipeline of funding available
Project Overview: Regional Parks

From the Metropolitan Council,

- Regional parks are typically 200-500 acres in size and accommodate a variety of outdoor recreation activities. There are 42 regional parks in the metro area. Hidden Falls is 130 ac, while Crosby is 480 ac.

- The regional parks system draws more than 58 million visits every year – more than the Mall of America. It adds untold value to the livability and attractiveness of our communities. 530,000 people visit this park annually (year-round, data from 2017)

- and Park funds come from a variety of sources, including the State of Minnesota's Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment, and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

- Service area is the whole metropolitan area, far beyond the City of St. Paul
Project Overview: Regional Parks

Regional Parks as of 2014
Project Overview: Location

Help improve our riverfront parks! Share your input with St. Paul Parks and Recreation. See reverse for details.

Envision the Future Hidden Falls/Crosby Farm Regional Park
Contribute your ideas for the 2019 Master Plan
Project Overview: Master Plan Goals

- Required by Met Council
- Allows City to request funding
- Respond to nearby development pressures
- Identify and reach out to new park visitors

Planning Policy:

Promote master planning and help provide integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.

Planning - Strategy 1: Regional park implementing agencies are required to prepare a master plan for each regional parks system facility it owns and/or operates.

Minn. Stat. 473.312 requires a master plan to be developed by each regional park implementing agency in consultation with all affected municipalities. While the statute requires only one master plan per regional park implementing agency, the Council requires individual master plans for each regional park, park reserve, trail, and special recreation feature. Master plans prepared by the regional park implementing agencies are critical in defining the specifics of acquisition, development, and operation of regional facilities.

The plans include the regional park implementing agency's estimates of size and costs. The master plan process allows residents to participate in the development of the plan and other units of government to know what is planned for a park and how it affects them. Collectively, these master plans form the regional park implementing agencies' part of the regional system plan. For a regional park implementing agency to receive a grant for acquisition or development through the Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program, the proposed project must be consistent with a Council-approved master plan.

Master plans will be reviewed by the Council for consistency with this and other Council policies. Inconsistent plans will be returned with comments to the regional park implementing agency, which must be revised, resubmitted, and approved by the Council to be eligible for Council funding.

Minn. Stat. 473.313 provides for the state mandate on master plans; however, it does not provide guidance on breadth of revisions. A plan is revised when the regional park implementing agency submits a master plan amendment to the Council to change its original proposal for acquisition and/or development, or when it has developed significant additional detail. The Council may approve or reject the master plan amendment for cause and return the plan to the regional park implementing agency for revision to address the Council's concerns.

Master Plan Content Requirements and Funding Process

Each master plan for regional parks, park reserves, and special recreation features must include information for each of these items:
- Boundaries and acquisitions costs
- A list of parcels to be acquired and the estimated total cost and schedule for their acquisition
- Information on natural resources, site suitability, special assessments, potential contamination based on data from...
Project Overview: Previous Master Plan
Project Overview: Hidden Falls

[Images of the Hidden Falls area, including a waterfall and surrounding landscape.]
Project Overview: Hidden Falls
Project Overview: Natural Resources

Draft Natural Resources Inventory complete for Hidden Falls (by Great River Greening)

Preliminary findings show that much of the park receives a C or D, no area received an “A” in habitat quality
Project Overview: Crosby Farm
Project Overview: Crosby Farm
Project Overview: Cultural Resources

Completed in 2003
Natural Resources & Volunteer Work

• Several local groups volunteer in the park – including MISS NPS, FMR, GRG

• City works with Conservation Corps of Minnesota – completed 24 acres forest enhancement work in 2017 (Crosby)

• Conservation Corps assisted with 27 acres of herbaceous species management in 2018, and 18.5 acres of hardwood trees were planted in 2016 and 2017 (Hidden Falls)

• 100 trees planted at National Public Lands Day in 2017 (Hidden Falls); 800 trees planted throughout 2017

• Goats grazed 24 acres in 2017
Project Overview: Programs

- Many programs and events are held in the park
- St. Paul Parks & Recreation runs day camps and many partners such as the YMCA and NPS lead events
Project Overview: Recent Investment

- Hidden Falls - minor repairs to the stone stairs (2007) and stream restoration (2011), both less than $5,000
- Proposal for Hidden Falls North Asphalt Drive Replacement – estimated in 2011 to cost $730,000 (not completed)
- Crosby – Elway Parking Lot, ADA curb cuts, and signage – $370,000 – State Legacy Amendment and Watershed District, 2015
- Crosby Pavilion Renovations – $150,000 (approximate cost) – CIB Capital Maintenance, 2012
- Crosby – West Entrance Parking Lot & Trails – $450,000 – CIB/CDBG, 2011
Project Overview: Outreach to date

- Great River Passage (2012)
- National Public Lands Day 2017
- Pulling Together WCCO
- Survey (open until end of October)
- National Public Lands Day/Pop Up Meeting 2018
- West 7th/Fort Road Federation board meeting
- Cleveland and Montreal PHA Resident Council
- Additional Focus Groups in October/November
Survey Preliminary Results (703 responses)

Q3 What do you like best about Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park?

- Mississippi
- Boat Launch Place
- Riverfront Close to Home
- Hidden Falls Location
- Big Paths
- Lake Feels Undeveloped
- Nature Wilderness
- River Middle of the City
- Trails Green Space
- Quiet Variety
- Wild Scenic Peaceful
- Escape Proximity Water Access Scenery

What activities do you typically do at this regional park?

- Walking or Running
- Biking

Please rank these potential improvements from most likely to improve your use of the park (top/lowest number) to least likely (bottom/highest number):

- Upgrade bathroom
- Improve trail surfaces
- Improve river access
Great River Passage

• 2012 Master Plan Approved

• Completed/Ongoing:
  • New GRP Division
  • Crosby entry and parking lots
  • Paddleshare
  • Ongoing invasive species removal
  • Environmental Learning Center
  • Wayfinding

• Additional projects specific to Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm
Great River Passage

Hidden Falls - Great River Passage (2012)
Great River Passage
BREAK OUT GROUPS

Create a “Big Idea” statement for the park (10 mins)
Review previous park plans (Great River Passage) (5 mins)
List your group’s priority improvements (10 mins)
Choose someone to report back on what you discussed
BREAK OUT GROUPS

Report back on the “big idea” and group priorities
Priorities Identified To-Date

- Restore stairs and falls area at Hidden Falls
- Repair boardwalk and lake paths at Crosby Farm, stabilize flooding across paths
- Create a park feature that acknowledges the cultural significance and the meeting of the waters and Bdote
- Restore pavilions and update bathrooms at Hidden Falls
- Add nature-based play area to Hidden Falls
- Wayfinding signs, especially indicating short walking loop in both parks; add more resting points along trails
- Improve entry, enhance safety at Mississippi River Blvd
- Build a weather-proof shelter for larger groups (safety)
Wrap Up / Next Steps

- Focus groups are meeting October to early November 2018
- Next committee meeting November 2018 – review survey results, Natural Resources Inventory for Crosby Farm, and refine priorities list
- Open House January 2019 to review the draft report
- Submit report to Met Council late January
- Complete report approved June 2019
Your Assignment

Please discuss this project with your representative groups and bring back their comments to our next meeting

THANK YOU!

• For up to date information, visit the project website: https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master
Project Overview: Partnerships

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_jWJgXxRlg&feature=youtu.be