



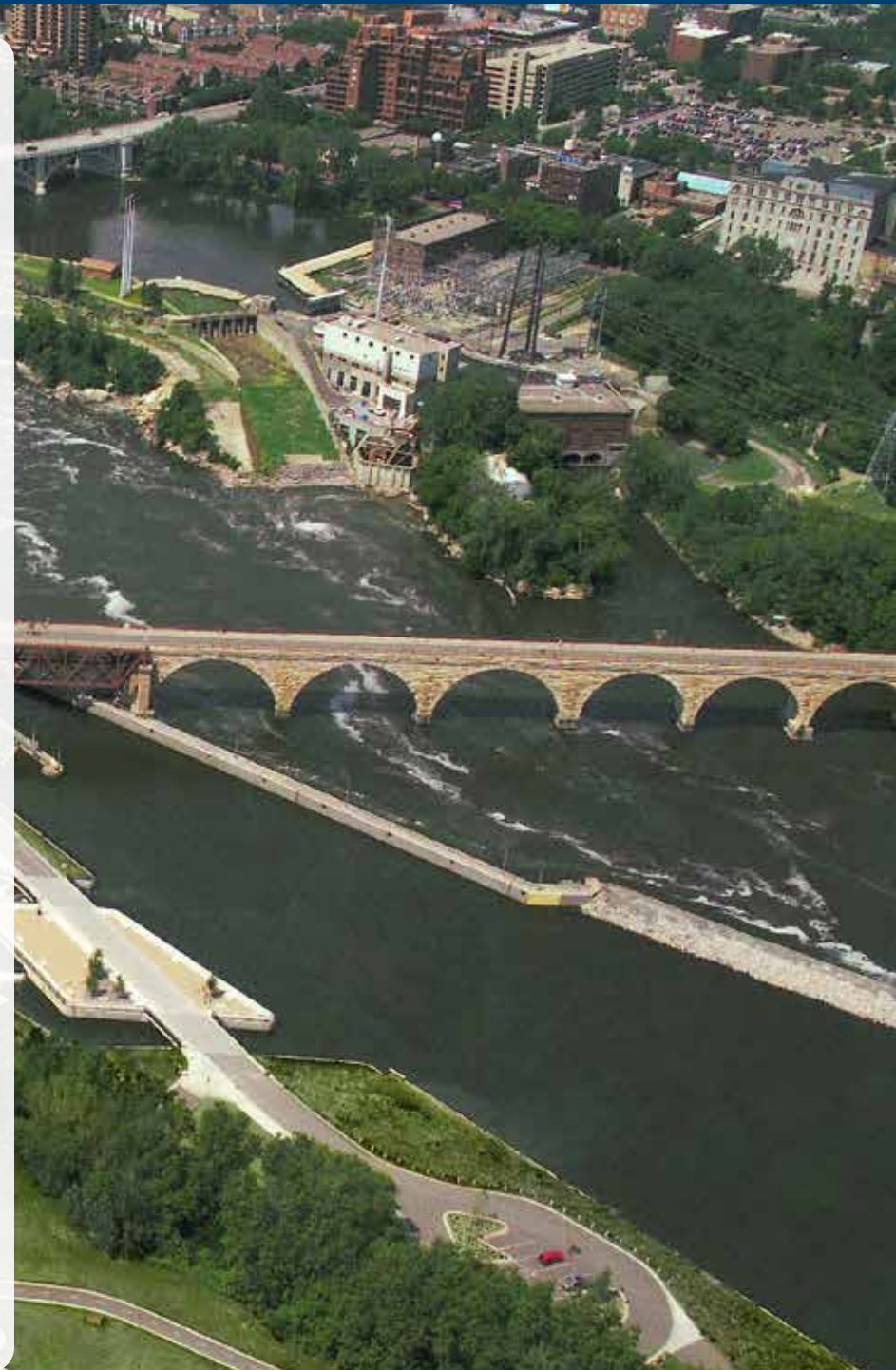
PARKS FOR ALL

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board **Comprehensive Plan**



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Dear MPRB Community,

During the Parks for All planning process in the spring of 2020, global impacts including a pandemic and racial justice uprisings changed the course of our work and how we see our future as a park and recreation system. As our communities and work have been dramatically impacted by COVID-19 and the murder of George Floyd, the policy ideas emerging in our comprehensive plan have also certainly been impacted by this unique time in our history. In the midst of this changing world, with the uncertain future of our budget in this challenged economy, we are naming that the priorities of our system need to be clear. As we think about the future of our system, we are keeping the youth of today and the future in the center. The children and the most vulnerable in our communities need to be held in our focus as we move into the future.

Parks clearly became necessary spaces in the time of COVID-19, even without many of our formal programs, events and activities. Parks are critical to our mental and physical wellbeing now more than ever. They provide solace, spaces to safely gather outdoors and venues for the public to convene for social change. Our city and organization are faced with an uncertain financial situation, and we worry that our community's most vulnerable are being hit the hardest. Lower wealth communities, black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals, people experiencing homelessness and the elderly are disproportionately impacted by COVID, and this underlines the need to hold our most vulnerable at the center of our work moving forward.

The murder of George Floyd and subsequent uprisings have also made it clear that there is great urgency for us to move forward in our

work to untangle systemic racism and violence from our government systems. We hold onto the realities of these past several months as we set the course of our policy direction for the next decade. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comprehensive Plan has the responsibility to catalyze changes around historic and current inequities. We know that our community has, as have countless others around the nation, experienced trauma and violence both historically and in this unprecedented year. We are taking steps as an agency to reimagine and amplify how the Park and Recreation Board shows up for community through a healing, culture-led, and relationship-based approach to parks for all.

Holding in balance all that has happened in 2020, our staff, community, and commissioners have shaped a strong and inspiring vision for the future of parks and recreation in Minneapolis. The values, futures, goals, and strategies we have identified in this plan offer us bedrock for our work. We are committed to fostering a park and rec system that is true to our values; one that is equitable, sustainable, connected, independent, accountable and innovative. It is with great pride that we set forth a direction for the Minneapolis park system in this Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comprehensive Plan. It is with even greater pride that we invite you to enjoy the Minneapolis park system.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Al Bangoura

Commissioner Jono Cowgill, President



CHAPTER ONE

What is Parks for All?

Parks for All, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 2021 Comprehensive Plan

The following pages represent our agency policy direction based on shared values with community, agency staff and elected officials.

It will provide guidance in developing policy, establishing or changing programs and services, setting the budget and creating park improvements over the next decade.

It is a tool for communicating to our staff, commissioners and the general public about what we do and value.

It will build on what works now while identifying gaps in programs, services and strategies we need to fill in the next decade. Parks for All focuses on the park system as a whole, not specific recommendations for individual parks.

It will build from master plans, other policies and activity plans, strategic directions and the community input gained during the last two years of engagement across the system, all of which incorporate more specific recommendations.

Engagement Process

Parks for All was developed through extensive staff, community, agency partner and commissioner input through an almost two-year process.

The intention of this extensive engagement was to develop a path to our future that reflects the values, expectations and dreams of our community, commissioners and staff. See Appendix X for an overview of the community engagement process.

Thank you to all the workgroup members, forum participants, Youth Design Team, commissioners, staff, and the Community Advisory Committee who worked so hard to develop these policy ideas for the next 10 years of our park and recreation system.



Community Engagement

Implementation

- 1 Starts with a park dream
- 2 We identify system-wide patterns in the comments
- 3 Develop goals and strategies for the plan
- 4 Guides budgets, staffing, policies, and programming

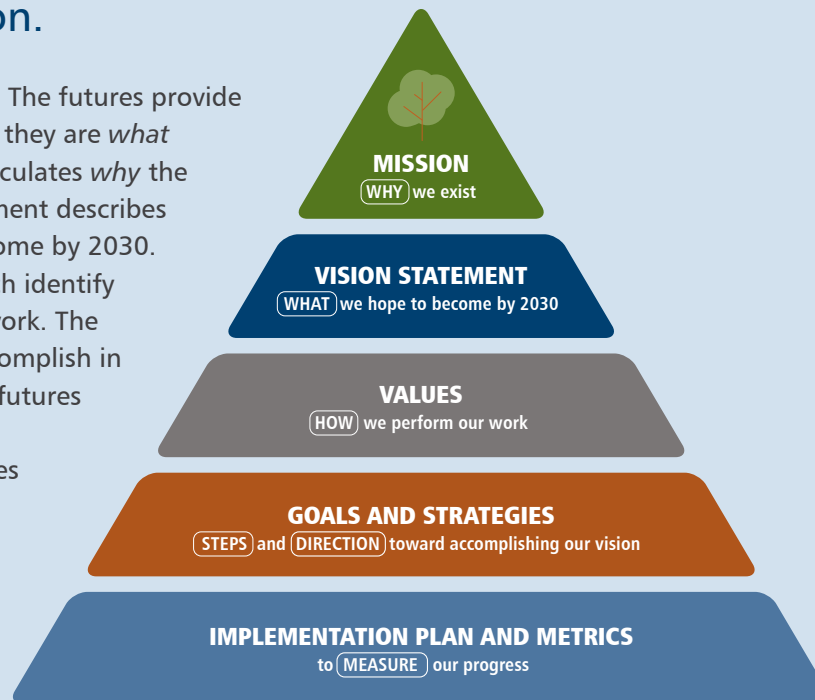
About 5000 people have engaged in providing input on Parks for All



Key Elements

The Comprehensive Plan consists of a number of key elements that complement and support each other to provide simple, concise direction.

Each part of the plan has a function. The futures provide context for our goals and strategies, they are *what* we are planning for. The mission articulates *why* the organization exists. The vision statement describes *what* the organization hopes to become by 2030. This is supported by the values, which identify *how* the organization performs its work. The goals represent what we plan to accomplish in the next decade and connect to the futures that they are responding to and the values that guide them. The strategies provide us with guidance on how to accomplish the goals. Some strategies are policy in and of themselves. The pyramid indicates how these separate statements support each other.



The Comprehensive Plan sets a direction for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board through 2030. It will help guide resources to best meet the park and recreation needs of residents, visitors and workers. The Park Board’s policies, ordinances, and laws predate this plan and address topics ranging from park classification to operating hours. These policies will be systematically updated to assure consistent direction is provided throughout the life of the plan.



Legacy Moment

All those considerations place us at a momentous point in history. If the agency or its Comprehensive Plan is neutral or silent on its commitment to addressing systemic racism and equities at a societal pivot point like the one we are experiencing now, it will play a role in entrenching them. This is a legacy moment for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board began with land. In the mid- to late-1800s, as Minneapolis was booming and expanding, people became concerned that the city was growing too fast and would soon have no room for parks and green spaces. Frustration mounted among community leadership that the City itself was doing nothing to ensure a green, healthy future for the people of the city. The only way forward, they felt, was an independent body dedicated to parks—specifically the acquisition of land for parks.

But why parks? A growing city, it was said then, had more need of sewers, roads, and bridges. Many of the parks boosters in Minneapolis had been inspired by the 1872 visit of landscape architect H.W.S. Cleveland to Minneapolis and his book the following year about urban design in “western” cities. Cleveland was a key practitioner in the city parks movement, which believed green spaces were necessary for the health of urban populations. Eastern cities in particular—the places where the city parks movement began—were smoggy

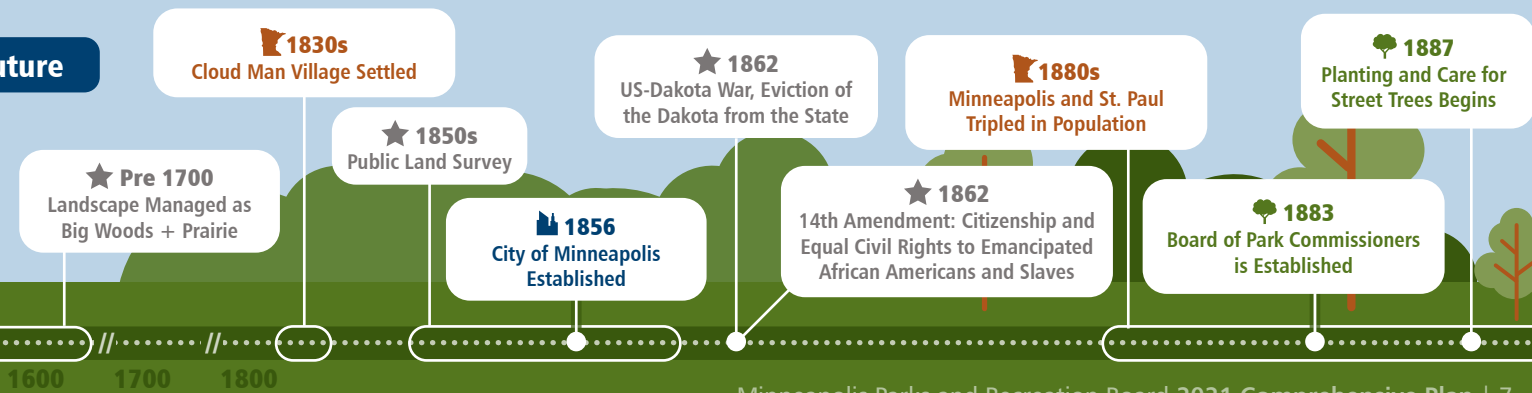


Cyclists on the Grand Rounds Regional Trail

and cramped. As both freed slaves and poor European immigrants came to New York, Boston, and other places, green spaces were seen as healthy antidotes to their lives in industry and tenements. Central Park in New York opened in 1857, Boston’s Emerald Necklace in the 1860s, and landscape architects were traveling the nation making grand plans for systems of interconnected parks—for the good of the whole population.

Timeline: Past, Present and Future

- ★ NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL
- STATE
- CITY
- MPRB



Minneapolis saw itself as a cosmopolitan city and it needed a great park system.

In 1883, an act of the state legislature and a public referendum established the independent Park Board and gave it broad authority for acquisition and improvement of parks—including the ability to assess property owners. That same year, Cleveland returned in 1883 and drew up the first plans for the Grand Rounds. Minneapolis would become one of the very few cities to largely complete its founding parks vision of independence, accountability directly to the public, and an interconnected system of green spaces.

This origin story is the first of several Legacy Moments for Minneapolis parks. Each of these have both positive outcomes and big questions, when viewed through the lens of history. Of course, that first legacy moment is marred by the fact that prior to the existence of Minneapolis, all the land slated to become parks (and

factories and homes and businesses and roads) had been inhabited by Indigenous people for millennia. The land acquired through purchase from landowners by the park board or donation by landowners was assembled to create a park system for everyone to enjoy—but were the original inhabitants included in the definition of “everyone?”

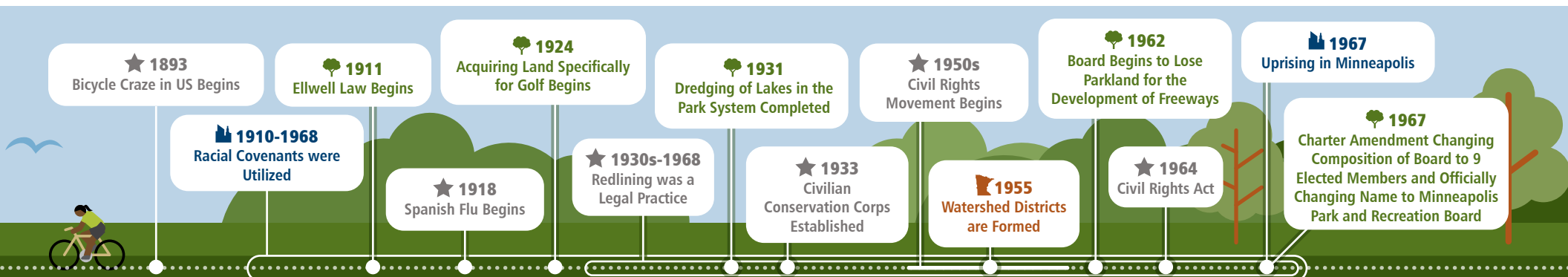
Another legacy moment is the era of Theodore Wirth. From 1904 into the 1930s, Wirth built the park system we see today. He altered the land significantly—dredging lakes, building playgrounds, filling wetlands, grading ballfields. He organized programming in the parks to teach people how to play together. His vision: “Parks for the masses, not the classes” was a critical counterpoint to the still elite membership of the Board of Commissioners.

Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, after the wars and the Great Depression and the baby boom, another legacy moment created the recreation centers and re-envisioned and expanded the Grand Rounds. Social and environmental advocacy and change was in



Summertime on the Chain of Lakes

the air at this time, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (re-named so in 1969) at last stopped relying on its assessment power. Instead it levied taxes and sold bonds to improve parks and build recreation centers across the city. The MPRB recognizes that these historic practices resulted in a reality that in historically lower wealth parts of town, parks were smaller (or nonexistent), and that our work to undo the historic inequities is ongoing.



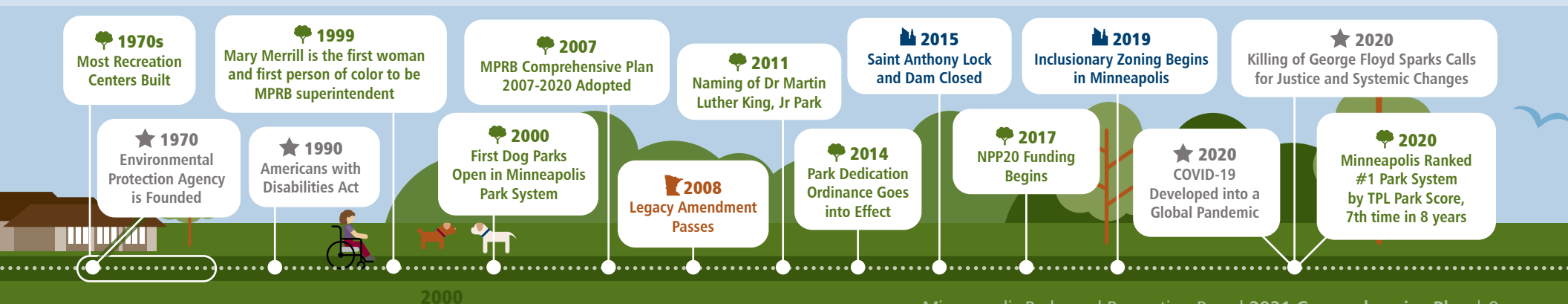
1900

We have also entered into a new legacy moment as we enter into the next decade of the vision set forth by our new comprehensive plan.

The MPRB has struggled with inadequate funding and aging infrastructure for years. In the early 2000s the MPRB worked with City leadership to dedicated additional funding to parks. While success at that time was curtailed by other economic pressures, another attempt in 2015 resulted in a increase for maintenance, operations and improvements for neighborhood parks over 20 years. The 2007 MPRB Comprehensive Plan laid the foundation for this work, which was the first comprehensive plan for the system in over 40 years. Extensive community conversations are leading to long-term visions for every park in the system. We have grown in exciting ways in recent years including the development of empirical, equity driven data metrics guiding decision making, but we are faced with new and historic challenges. The global climate crisis looms. Public access to the Mississippi River is still not complete—with gaps in north and northeast Minneapolis including segments of the Grand Rounds. Densification of the city raises questions about how to serve our increasingly diverse population with excellent parks. MPRB needs to remain focused to continue our work to ensure that the original all-access vision for the system is the true reality on the ground.

In our next ten years, we envision a park system that navigates the balance of equity, ecology, and recreation in new ways through a focus on the following goals:

- Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity
- Goal 2: Steward a continuum of recreation and nature
- Goal 3: Provide core services with care
- Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships
- Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity
- Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections
- Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology
- Goal 8: Cultivate a sustainable and thriving workforce
- Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise



Native Acknowledgement

As part of Parks for All, the MPRB is exploring how to integrate acknowledgement of land and Indigenous peoples into our work, procedures and spaces. We collectively acknowledge that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board system is located on the traditional, ancestral and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. This land holds great historical, spiritual and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region.



Owamni Falling Waters Festival

“

Mni Sota Makoce (Minnesota) is the homeland of the Dakota people. The Dakota have lived here for many thousands of years. Anishinaabe people reside here, too, and reached their current homelands after following the *megis* shell to the food that grows on water (*manoomin*, or wild rice). Indigenous people from other Tribal nations also reside in Minnesota and have made innumerable contributions to our region.

Excerpt from the Land We're On
BY THE NATIVE GOVERNANCE CENTER

MPRB on Gentrification and Displacement

In addition to acknowledging the traditional residents and stewards of this land, the MPRB must look forward to assess how its land development and ownership impacts current and future residents of its communities. Parks are a potentially gentrifying force that could lead to displacement or to an increasing cost burden for residents. Improvements to parks could accelerate these realities. Building off the vision set forth in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to equitably invest in parks across the system, MPRB remains committed to understanding and correcting historic investment imbalances.

Currie Park



This issue is especially important because communities that have lower wealth and are racially and ethnically diverse have often experienced historic disparities in access to economic success and public and social services. Therefore, we must be careful to manage the change that is happening today to support the existing long-term residents of neighborhoods.

“Gentrification” and “Displacement” are often used interchangeably (the former often causes the latter) but they are not exactly the same thing. Gentrification can cause social dislocation, a feeling that one does not belong in one’s own neighborhood, and unspoken pressures to leave. Gentrification can also be a vehicle to increases in generational wealth otherwise not accessible to some families. Displacement causes the physical fragmentation of social networks and support systems, an erosion of cultural traditions, and, often, a financial starting-over for some of the most vulnerable families.

The MPRB needs to understand and take action on gentrification and displacement, powerful impacts at the intersection of land, property, taxes, wealth, housing and access. It must work in concert with its partners including the city, county, state, non-profits and developers to understand the full picture of park-driven gentrification and displacement. It must develop its own policies for major park development. It must ensure the neighborhoods for whom the parks are being improved are those that get to enjoy them in the long term.

GENTRIFICATION:

Refers to the modification of a neighborhood, typically due to an increase in “desirability.” This change often brings increased property values, new and different businesses to the area, and may be signaled by storefront renovations, public works projects, or neighborhood “rebranding.” However, the increased wealth and economic gains are not experienced equally by all residents. New residents are more likely to benefit while existing residents are disproportionately burdened with increased property taxes, and prices of food and necessities.

DISPLACEMENT:

Refers to the forced relocation of a household FROM a neighborhood for reasons beyond their control. Large-scale displacement across a neighborhood can change the community demographically, economically, physically and socially.



Where MPRB is today

The MPRB has accomplished much since the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, which was a critical document that guided the success of our agency over the past 13 years. It was the first MPRB comprehensive plan in 40 years and it set an ambitious vision. Parks for All, the 2021 MPRB Comprehensive Plan, will not only build on the successes of our past decade, but will also work to fill gaps in our work, and to grow through the values, strategies, and goals identified by staff and community members, and elected officials.

Some highlights of accomplishments since 2007 are included in Appendix X.

13
GOLF FACILITIES
 7 golf courses
 3 golf driving ranges
 3 disc golf courses

12 FORMAL GARDENS
4 COMMUNITY GARDENS
6 SKATE PARKS
5 OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE STAGES
7 DOG OFF-LEASH RECREATION AREAS
2 BIRD SANCTUARIES

12 AUTHORIZED BEACHES
10 FISHING PIERS
5 BOAT LAUNCHES
7 CANOE LAUNCHES
380 SAILBOAT BUOYS
542 CANOE/KAYAK RACKS

65
AQUATIC FACILITIES
 1 natural swimming pool
 2 indoor swimming pools
 2 water parks
 3 splash pads
 (2 under construction in 2020)
 59 wading pools

180 PARKS **161 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**
19 REGIONAL PARKS & TRAILS

137
YEARS
 Established
 1883

20.8
MILLION
 Annual Regional
 Park Visits

6
MILLION
 Annual
 Neighborhood
 Park Visits

6,817
ACRES
 Parkland
 & Water

29 COMPUTER LABS

600+ FULL-TIME STAFF

1,500 TEMPORARY STAFF (approximate)

600,000 TREES
200,000 boulevard trees
400,000 park trees

49 RECREATION CENTERS
47 operated by MPRB
2 operated by non-profit organizations

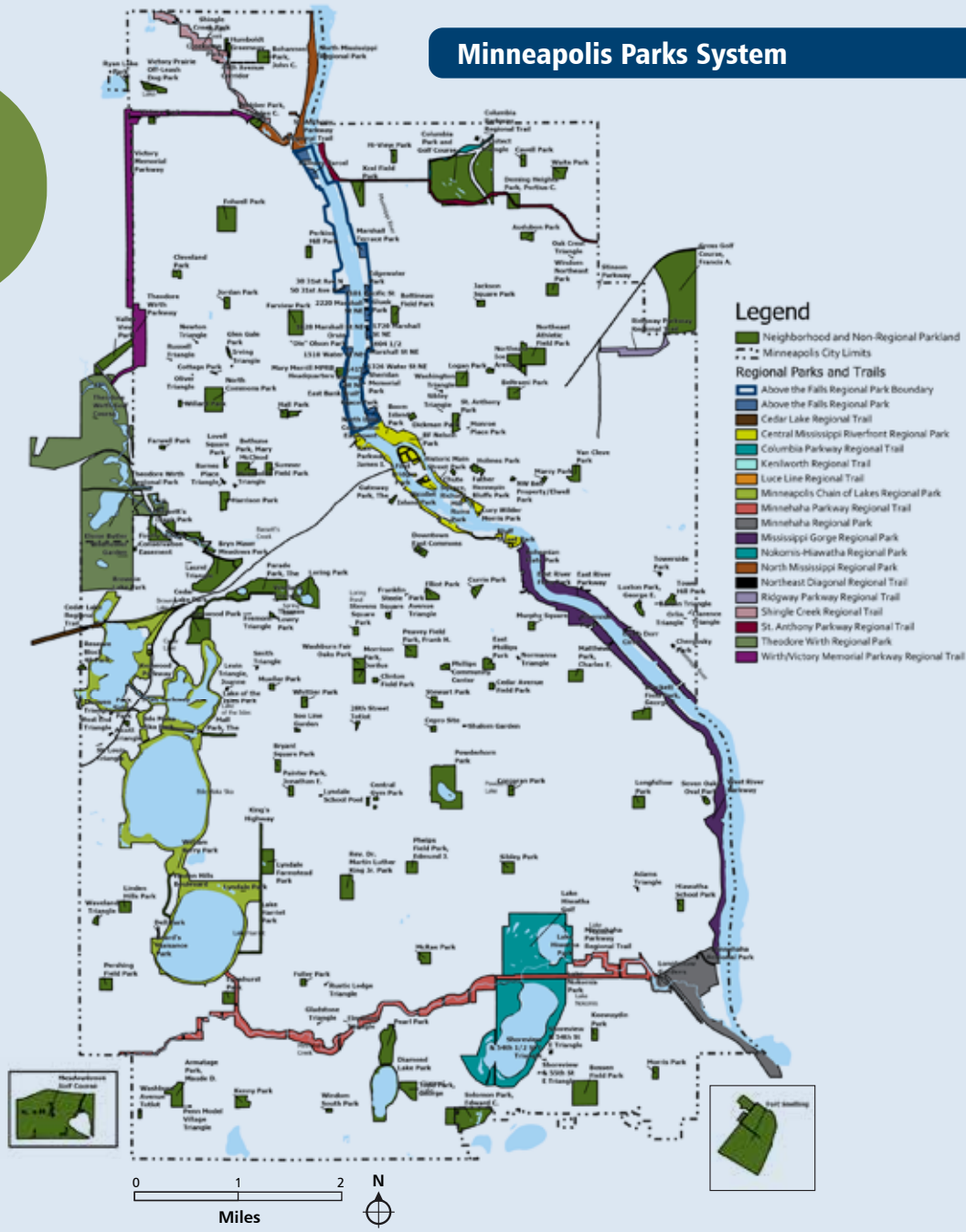
1 WINTER RECREATION AREA
2 INDOOR ICE ARENAS
47 OUTDOOR ICE RINKS

102 MILES OF GRAND ROUNDS TRAILS
51 miles of walking trails
51 miles of biking trails
Miles of parkways: 55

118 PLAY AREAS
398 SPORTS FIELDS



Minneapolis Parks System

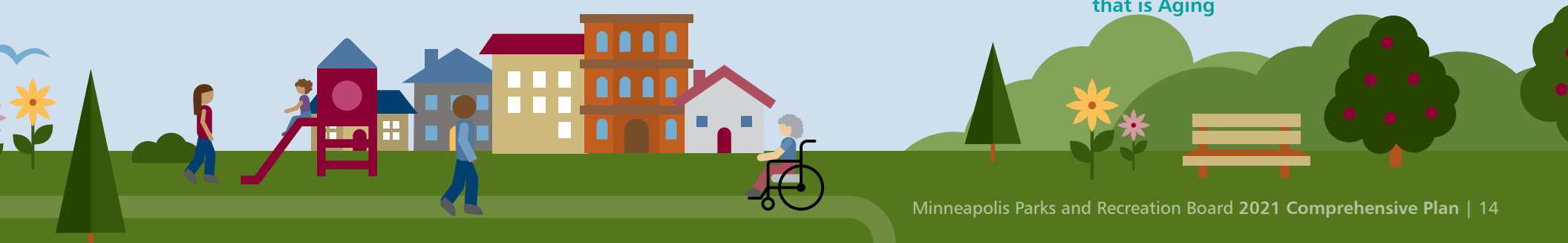
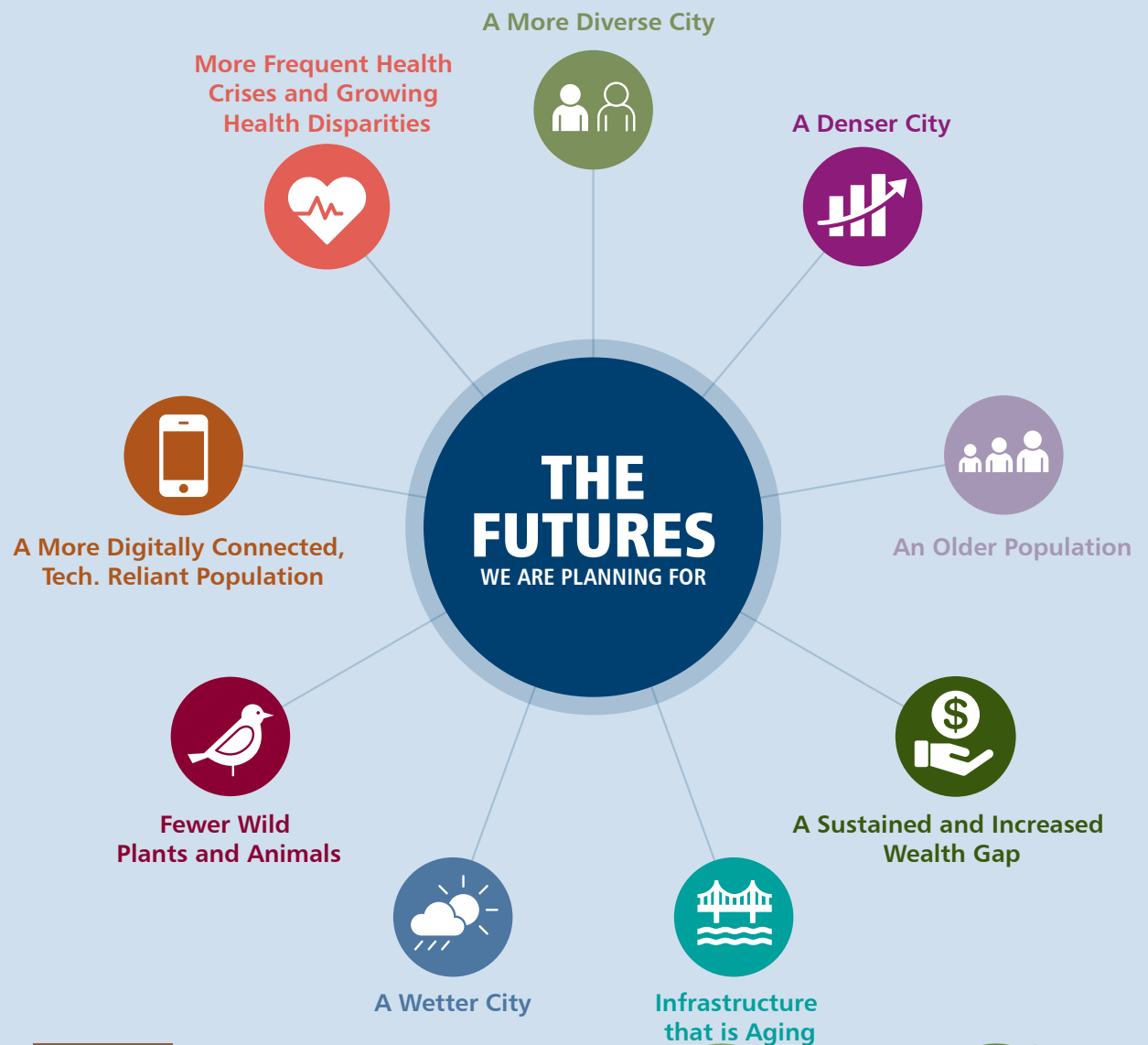


Sources: City of Minneapolis, MPRB

Futures

A plan for the future, such as this one, must accurately consider the specific future for which it is planning, especially for the youth of Minneapolis.

Based on extensive research; conversations with the community, staff, and elected officials; and a deep understanding of our city and system; we developed nine inter-related futures that this plan must address. In some cases, these are projected futures that we hope to shift or mitigate through our policies and work. In other cases, we will focus our work as a response to the futures. We are planning for our future by holding future generations, the youth of our region, at the center of our work moving forward. Our world and city face seemingly innumerable crises, especially in 2020—a devastating and hopefully formative year. Some of these futures are not rosy; all are real. Each offers opportunities and risks. Documenting them here creates a framework and context for moving our park system forward proactively and successfully.



A More Diverse City

Minneapolis saw profound demographic change over the past several decades and this trend is expected to continue. Minneapolis is on pace to become majority BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People Of Color) by 2040, in line with metropolitan areas across the nation.

Source: Metropolitan Council

This continued change will be driven by growth in existing communities of color, such as East African and Latinx/Hispanic, and by additional immigration to the city by climate refugees. Within the United States and across the world, climate change—specifically sea level rise, temperature increases and drought—is affecting traditionally marginalized communities. Minneapolis could become an important destination for those forced from their communities in warmer, drier and coastal areas because it will see lesser impacts from these key climate change effects. As a result, Minneapolis will likely see not just an increase in the number of people of color, but also in the variety of different ethnic and racial groups. The city is poised to become more diverse in the truest sense of the term. The growth of racial and ethnic diversity in our city will be in our youth. Children and youth under 18 years old in households are more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity than Minneapolis as a whole. Of

households with youth, an estimated 57.8% were households with youth of color in 2017 and the total Minneapolis population was estimated to be 36.1% people of color with almost 60% of people under 18 identifying as BIPOC.

These changes will impact our parks by necessitating a greater variety of activities that will bring excitement to parks and vibrancy at all hours of the day. Parks can be a venue for broader multi-cultural and trans-cultural understanding, learning, expression and teaching, as well as a public space for social cohesion. As the needs of the system become more diverse, we are faced with the reality that the amount of park land needed to accommodate an increasing variety of activities may be limited. We also need to rise to the challenge of increasing language diversity and a wider array of programmatic interests in our community.

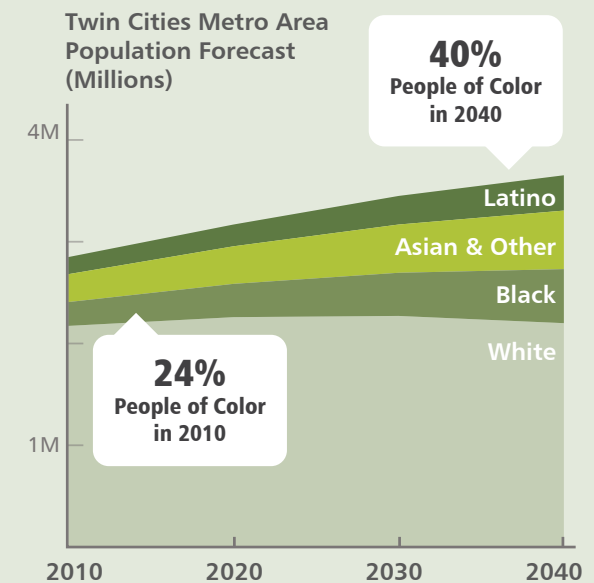
Source: <https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Metropolitan-Council/2019/11-13-19/2019-Update-of-the-Regional-Forecast.aspx>



Hmong Music & Movies at Father Hennepin Bluff Park

Growing Racial and Ethnic Diversity

The City of Minneapolis sits above the regional average and is projected to have nearly **50% People of Color by 2040**





A Denser City

Minneapolis's population is expected to grow from 436,000 in 2020 to 460,000 by 2030 at a growth rate of about 5.5% over 10 years.

Source: Metropolitan Council

The city's land area will not increase, so Minneapolis will become increasingly dense. The most recent City of Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan—Minneapolis 2040—recognizes this fact and allows for density increases nearly everywhere in the city. As in the discussion of a more diverse city, Minneapolis will likely become denser due to growth within existing population groups and in-migration from climate change-threatened areas in the United States and abroad. Resident age, race/ethnicity, and income will continue to be variable across the densifying parts of the city. Currently the densest youth populations in the city are in North and South Minneapolis where youth comprise approximately 40% of the overall neighborhood population in Near-North, Sumner-Glenwood, East Phillips, Jordan, Hawthorne, Midtown Phillips, Folwell, Central, Phillips West, Kenny, and Ventura Village.

The MPRB's comments on Minneapolis 2040 specifically called on the City to partner on a key potential drawback of increased density: park service level. Unless additional parkland can be provided in a way that addresses this density,

all residents will become underserved by parks. While our parks will be activated by more visitors who live in denser housing and supported by more transit options, we will need to keep an eye toward innovation in park development to balance healthy ecological systems and equitable park access. We will need to work hard to keep our parks well maintained and provide expanded service hours in the face of more park users. Densification of more physical development on limited land could reduce habitat and green space availability, making parks even more important for animals, plants, insects and humans.

What is interesting about the projections of density in our city is that Minneapolis's population is still lower than it was in the mid 20th century. However, our current and proposed land use patterns are changing and as we become more dense into the future, it is not just about more people, but also more buildings and impervious surfaces. As job centers, commercial areas, and housing develop across the city, we need to ensure that as our built environment becomes more dense, that our parkland grows with it.



Mill Ruins Park, Red White & Boom



An Older Population

The total number of older adults (65+) in Minnesota is anticipated to double between 2010 and 2030, and by 2035 the 65+ age group will exceed the population of the under 18 age group for the first time in Minnesota history.

Source: State Demographic Center

By then, more than 1 in 5 Minnesotans will be an older adult, including all the Baby Boomers. In Hennepin County, 17.2% of the population will be age 65+ by 2030. (source: Met Council) This is a demographic the MPRB has not historically focused on, in terms of programming and activities, compared to younger groups. Multiple community engagement efforts have identified "seniors" as needing additional services, including access to passive park use, access to wild spaces and additional recreational activities.

Parks have always tried to serve the community's elders, but the Baby Boom generation is unique in several ways. They will live longer than any generation before them, due to advances in health care and lifestyles. This means there will not only be a larger number of 65-year-olds in the future, but many more 75-year-olds, 85-year-olds and 95-year-olds. They will also remain active longer into their lives. They will want (and benefit from) the kinds of amenities, programs and activities parks can offer. Baby Boomer retirements will peak between now and 2030, creating more leisure

time that brings more activity to parks and the potential for more or different hours of operation.

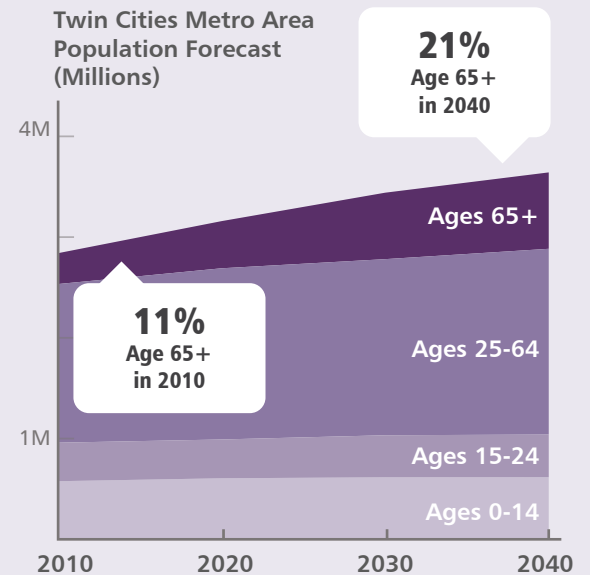
Within the MPRB, a large wave of retirements will create opportunities for advancement and new hiring in ways that meet equity goals and seed new innovators, but this will also cause a loss of expertise, knowledge and institutional memory. This is not to say that youth and young adults are not central to MPRB's programs and facilities into the future. While the 65+ plus population is projected to increase, our youth population will remain steady, and with that our commitment to youth will remain central to MPRB's work.

It is also projected that while we have fewer families with young children proportionate to the past several decades in Minneapolis, we do have a significant young adult population growing in our city and region that will rely on parks as public spaces to gather, recreate, and seek job opportunities. MPRB will work to develop a system that fosters multigenerational access to parks and values our residents aging in place.



Hiker at Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden

Aging of the Population



Source: <https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Metropolitan-Council/2019/11-13-19/2019-Update-of-the-Regional-Forecast.aspx>



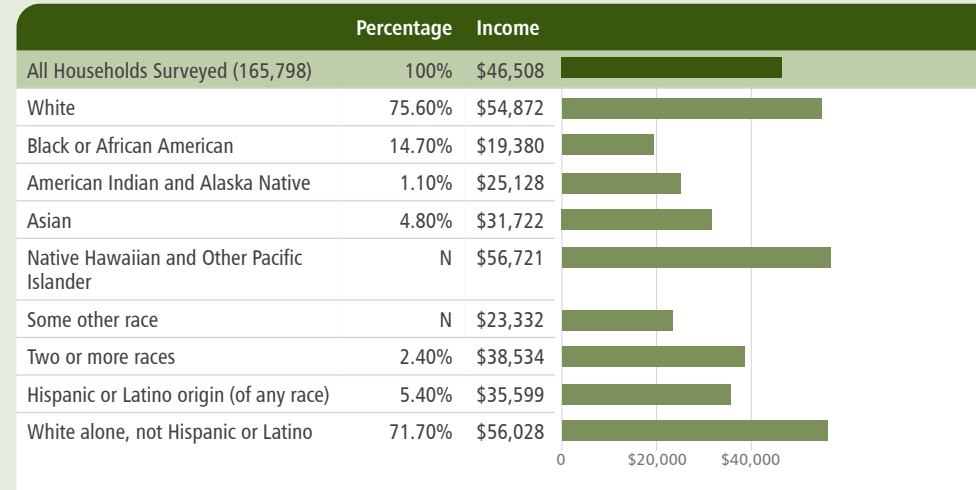
A Sustained and Increased Wealth Gap

The gap between those with significant wealth and those considered “middle class” and “low wealth” is the widest it has been in more than 50 years. The wealth gap between America’s richest and poorer families more than doubled from 1989 to 2016.

Source: Pew Research.

Income inequality in the U.S. is the highest of all the G7 nations, according to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Minneapolis and the Twin Cities metro area are not immune to this reality. **The Minnesota Budget Project reports that the average income of the richest 20 percent of Minnesota households is seven times as large as the poorest 20 percent and 2.5 times as large as the middle 20 percent.** This 50-year trend shows no signs of abating. The rich are getting richer, and people of color are under-represented among the extremely wealthy. Economic downturns like the Great Recession and the economic impacts of COVID hit black and brown families the hardest. Many of the worst impacts are directly tied to generations of racist policies, barriers and systematic disadvantages. Gentrification and displacement are realities of this future that MPRB has a commitment to acknowledging and working to course correct (see statement on Gentrification and Displacement on pg 11).

Household income by race and Hispanic or Latino origin of householder



Source: US Census 2010

The income gap between BIPOC families and white families has existed since the beginning, but it is likely that in the next decade power may not entirely follow wealth. Power is being held and exerted by communities of color in the form of strong organizing, growing electoral success of public officials of color at all levels of government and a rise in actively engaged leadership across all sectors. The wealth gap may gradually narrow over time because of this change in power structure. MPRB remains hopeful that our systems of economic and political power will continue to become more equitable overtime, but also believes that we have a responsibility to acknowledge and address the gaps that exist now and into the future.



Aging Infrastructure

The Minneapolis park system has existed for more than 100 years. Despite rehabilitation over time, much of Minneapolis' recreational infrastructure is well beyond its projected useful life.

Lands near lakes dredged in the 1920s have been subsiding for 100 years. Most recreation centers were built in the 1960s–70s, meaning they will need similar repairs all at once and are similarly limited in programmable space. Courts, sidewalks, playgrounds and parking lots tend to be well beyond normal replacement timelines. Opening aging wading pool equipment for the season is becoming increasingly difficult. Prior to the 20-year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20), the Closing the Gap project identified a maintenance and capital replacement gap that would grow to \$150 million by 2020, if left underfunded. That analysis suggested that approximately \$15 million would be needed annually to keep pace and restore the neighborhood park system. NPP20 was a critical agreement for funding parks, but it only provides a \$10.5 million per year, a continued shortfall. In the regional park system, recent years have brought bonding amounts below what is necessary to improve the system. The state has never met its full obligation to fund 40% of regional park operations and maintenance, shifting those funding gaps to MPRB's responsibility. Current funding levels will not allow MPRB to catch up to the increasing need. This raises concerns about safety, access and

usability of the park system. Failure to rehabilitate or replace facilities in a timely manner could cause exponential increases in operations and maintenance costs as well as limited access and closures.

This issue is not unique to the MPRB. City roads and storm sewers and Metropolitan Council sanitary sewers are all in need of rehabilitation. Much of Minnesota's infrastructure is aging and reaching the end of its expected lifespan. Over the next decade, the MPRB has the opportunity to partner on major construction projects with other agencies to ensure efficient and cost-effective infrastructure upgrades, while employing new and sustainable technologies. The good news is, building off strategies from the 2007 MPRB Comprehensive Plan, MPRB has assessed facilities across the system as part of Closing the Gap and NPP20 and has good knowledge of where improvements are most needed, which allows for strategic prioritization. Furthermore, the community-engaged master planning of the entire system ensures that improvements over the next decade will implement community visions for the parks.

Community-engaged master planning of the entire system ensures that improvements over the next decade will implement community visions for the parks.



Roberts Bird Sanctuary



A Wetter City

Minneapolis and the region will have rainfall over the next decade, on trend with the last seven years of increasingly frequent and larger rain events.

More annual precipitation is occurring as rain instead of snow. With warming temperatures, rain may fall in place of snow, and mixed winter precipitation events, like freezing rain, may become more likely in some areas (source: University of Michigan). This is, according to the Minnesota State Climatology Office, the most tangible and impactful effect of global

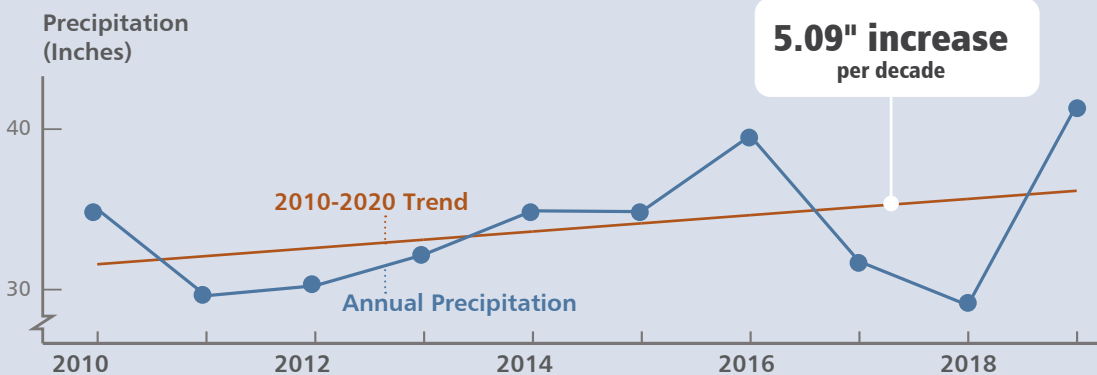
climate change for the upper Midwest in this time period. Temperatures will rise overall, but most of the increases will be in winter low temperatures, not summer highs. That means warmer-than-average winters with fewer bitter cold days, more frequent freeze/thaw cycles, but likely not the dangerous heat waves being



experienced elsewhere. The main issue in Minneapolis will be an overabundance of water.

This directly impacts parks because a significant portion of the city's stormwater infrastructure drains to and through parks and the bodies of water the MPRB manages. Stormwater management and flood mitigation areas in parks can provide beneficial habitat and recreational functions, when creatively designed and thoroughly integrated into all park infrastructure and maintenance projects that will also require additional or new priorities in funding to address. Partnerships with agencies specifically charged with managing regional stormwater will be necessary. Properly managed, the additional water provides regional access to fresh water for drinking, recreation, habitat, food production, residential and commercial uses—in contrast to other regions that will experience drought and water shortages. Recreational programming may also need to adapt to the changing, wetter climate with respect to field use, beaches, ice rinks, and skiing.

Annual Precipitation for Hennepin County 2010-2019



Source: Minnesota Climate Change Tools, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. <https://arcgis.dnr.state.mn.us/ewr/climatetrends/> Retrieved 7/20/2020



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals

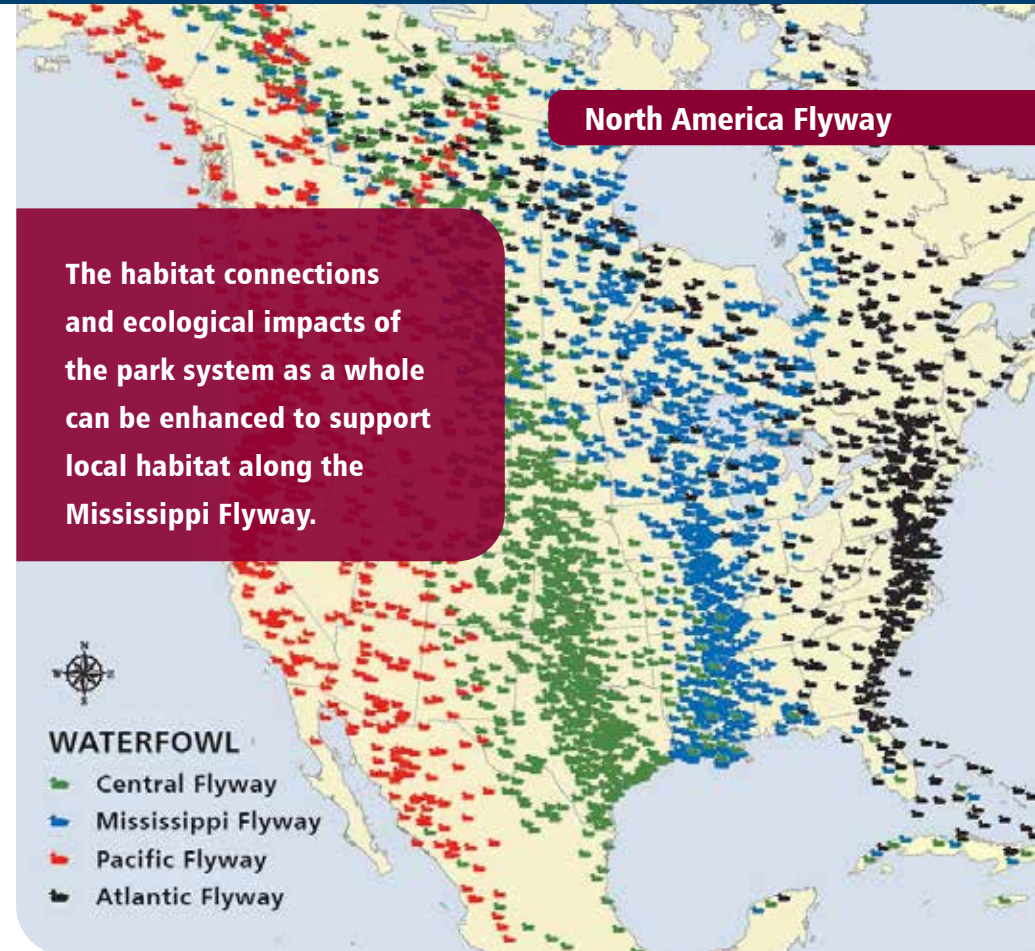
By nearly all scientific accounts, Earth is amidst the sixth significant extinction event in recorded history. Species diversity is dropping precipitously on a global scale, with plant and animal extinctions likely occurring daily.

High-profile cases of near-extinctions, such as wolves, whales, and large cats abound in the news, but some estimates suggest that many insect and amphibian species are going extinct even before they are described by western science.

Decreasing biodiversity – the level of variety of life in our ecosystems – is not the only concern. Overall abundance of many plant and animal species is dropping. A recent report found 3 billion fewer birds now than in 1970 (Source: Audubon). Species overwintering in temperate regions experienced the largest net reduction in abundance. Studies in Europe have catalogued a 60-fold reduction in insects in some nature areas. This loss is related to a combination of factors including habitat destruction, pollution, overharvesting and interruption of food webs. Meanwhile, a smaller number of well-adapted species are rushing in to fill the ecological gaps in these nature areas—species like buckthorn, cattails and starlings regionally.

This crisis is global in scale, but all species are inherently local—requiring space and habitat to survive and thrive. Minnesota is home to more than 2,000 known native wildlife species. Approximately one out of six of these species are identified as Species in Greatest Conservation Need in Minnesota’s Wildlife Action Plan because they are rare, their populations are declining, or they face serious threats that may cause them to decline.

In Minneapolis, increased impacts from diseases and pests could further devastate the urban forest and existing natural areas. The loss of pollinators



could lead to collapse of food systems, including MPRB orchards and community gardens. However, parkland serves as a series of refuges for rare and threatened plant and animal species, protecting species already there, re-establishing lost habitat, and hosting “back-up” populations of threatened species. The habitat connections and ecological impacts of the park system as a whole can be enhanced to support local habitat along the Mississippi Flyway. Furthermore, the resources necessary to steward the natural environment have significantly increased as the ecosystem has become more fragmented and is less resilient to pests and disease.

MPRB programming also plays an important role in stewarding and protecting habitat, including educational programs about the environment, rare species and the importance of healthy ecological systems.



A More Digitally Connected, Technologically Reliant Population

Most transactional activities today can be accomplished online with a hand-held device. This was unimaginable 30 years ago. The pace of technological advancement has been and continues to be extraordinary, and the saturation of technology into everyday lives is both broad and deep.

Three in five youth (58%) use a smartphone and/or tablet. (Source: Pearson Student Mobile Device Survey). Youth born after the year 2000 are considered “digital natives” and much of their social interaction, schoolwork, and recreation already happens on digital devices. At the other end of the spectrum, only 53% of adults 65 and older carry smart phones (Source: Pew Research), though even that number is increasing.

This connectivity does allow for ease of communication, translation, notification and data gathering. Computer access in informal settings outside of school improves school readiness and enhances academic achievement in young children as well as older ones. In the U.S., home computer ownership was associated with a seven percent higher probability of graduating from high school (Source: Pew Research).

While there are many benefits to our increased connectivity and access to information through technology, studies show that those who reported high concurrent usage of several types of media were less able to filter out distracting information in their environment. Social media use has direct correlations to emotional distress and social isolation, especially in young people.

It is unlikely the trend of technological advancement will abate, so the MPRB must consider its role in that context. While there may be negative impacts, including a reduction in youth participation in park programs due to a reliance on technologically-driven pastimes, improvements to technology can increase the ease of program and facility registration, communications and data gathering. With that comes a greater responsibility to manage data privacy needs. Parks can also play a role in removing the digital divide through internet



Boom Island Youthline Summer Kickoff

access in parks and computers in recreation centers. Digital alternatives to in-person community engagement are also on the rise to create pathways for community-informed decision making without having to attend an in-person meeting. This model of engagement offers some limitations, but also has its benefits in terms of improved access for many, especially for people with disabilities, and immobile or immune-compromised populations. Another manifestation of an increasingly virtual life that will continue to influence MPRB on a more internal level is the ability for employees to work remotely. This will influence not only how staff interact with community, but also how staff connect with each other and agency partners. Most important, parks are spaces that can bring people together to counteract social isolation, and we need to embrace technology as a means to create more equitable access.



More Frequent Health Crises and Growing Health Disparities

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a variety of underlying health disparities in Minneapolis and across the country.

Generally across the U.S., access to parks and healthy activities in green spaces has been lower in BIPOC and recent immigrant communities, which correlates with disparities in life expectancy, incidence of diseases like asthma and diabetes, and infant mortality. Race and ethnicity are powerful indicators of health. Data shows that Minnesotans of American Indian, African American, Hispanic, Asian, and African descent experience poorer outcomes in education and economic status, and consequently health, relative to Minnesotans who are white.

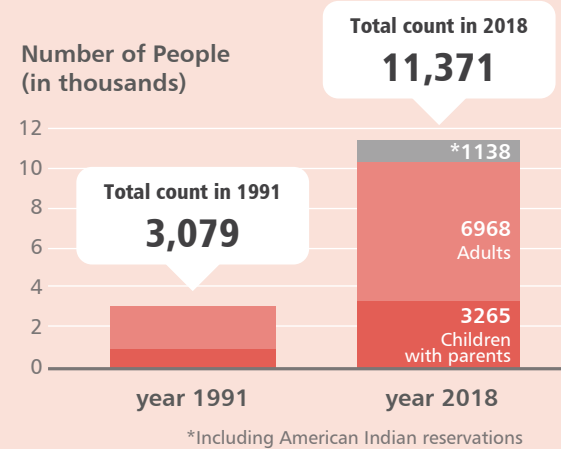
These health outcomes have actually gotten worse over the past decade, as health care costs and the number of uninsured Americans grew. Food access is another disparity highlighted by the current pandemic and unrest following the murder of George Floyd. Many neighborhoods with higher BIPOC populations are also food deserts, and the elimination of just a handful of stores can create a food crisis. In 2020, Minneapolis parks are experiencing significant

use by people experiencing homelessness due to COVID-19, Governor’s orders, and Board actions. The June/July encampment at Powderhorn Park was the largest in state history. Homelessness is also directly related to race. African-Americans represent nearly 40 percent of homeless adults in Minnesota but comprise just 5 percent of the total state population. The constant stress of homelessness leads to a lifetime of health problems. People experiencing mental illness and addiction are also increasing. Opioid addiction is the most notable and recent addiction crisis. Drug use and paraphernalia in parks endangers park users and staff.

Perceived and actual park safety for users and MPRB staff are also impacted by an epidemic of gun violence that has continued to increase. Gun ownership and gun violence has continued to increase—more than 100 people were shot in Minneapolis in June 2020. Currently there is a gun ownership rate of 120 guns per 100 people in the United States.

Children and youth ages 24 and younger are the most likely to be homeless in Minnesota out of all age groups. Nearly half of these children are age 5 or younger. People who are homeless fare worse on nearly every measure of health.

One Night Study of People Experiencing Homelessness



Source: 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study | mnhomeless.org



In a future with more public health challenges, parks will be further recognized as critical health and wellness infrastructure. MPRB has a strong foundation for this future.

Systemic historic racism is at the heart of many of these health issues, and governments are starting to recognize that racism itself is a public health crisis. In Summer 2020 Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis officially recognized this reality. The reality of global zoonotic pandemics like COVID-19 is not going away. A rapidly expanding population, economic and technological development, expansion of land use for agriculture and the resultant encroachment on wildlife habitats increases the number of interactions between humans, livestock and wildlife, which increases the likelihood of the emergence and transmission of these diseases.

Yet, while in the throes of the most challenging public health year in recent memory, people went into their parks in extraordinary numbers. The benefits of parks and green spaces to mental and physical health are well studied and well known, and Minneapolitans instinctively went outside in this most recent series of linked crises. They walked the trails and played games and gathered for social change in the parks. In Minneapolis 98 percent of people are within six blocks of a park, which means that access disparity based on simple geography is limited. However, the MPRB park system is not yet complete, with trail gaps along the Mississippi River in north and northeast Minneapolis, and along the "Missing Link."

These gaps, if not filled, will entrench disparities around park access and health outcomes. The MPRB also has extensive social infrastructure serving youth in the parks, including significant investment in BIPOC communities, which creates health and wellness connections into these communities. The MPRB Community Garden Policy is creating healthy food options in food desert areas. And the MPRB is actively working to dismantle historic racism associated with parks, through community engagement, involvement with anti-gentrification and anti-displacement policy work, master plans that reflect community desires and programming that responds to community needs.



98%

In Minneapolis 98 percent of people are within six blocks of a park.

Whittier Youth Garden

CHAPTER TWO

Mission, Vision, Values, Goals and Strategies

The following chapter includes the mission, vision, values, goals, and strategies of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for the next decade of our work.

The mission describes the core functions of the Park Board.

Our vision statement and the nine goals will guide future development, operations and maintenance of the Minneapolis park and recreation system through the next decade. The goals state what we plan to accomplish in the next decade and connect to the futures that they are responding to and the values that guide them. The goals are also grounded in the “Current Context” of the MPRB and the region.

The strategies provide us with guidance on how to accomplish the goals. The goals and strategies were developed in collaboration with community members, agency partners, thought leaders, MPRB staff and elected officials. The strategies were developed through a process of community engagement, trends and innovations research, existing policy analysis and future projections. They were drafted and refined through a participatory policymaking process that included more than 5,000 community and staff sharing their dreams for Minneapolis Parks and more than 150 workgroup and committee members. For more information on the planning process, see Appendix X.

Mission

Why MPRB exists

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board shall permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations of our region including people, plants, and wildlife.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board exists to dismantle historic inequities in the provision of park and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment.

Vision

What is the future MPRB is trying to achieve?

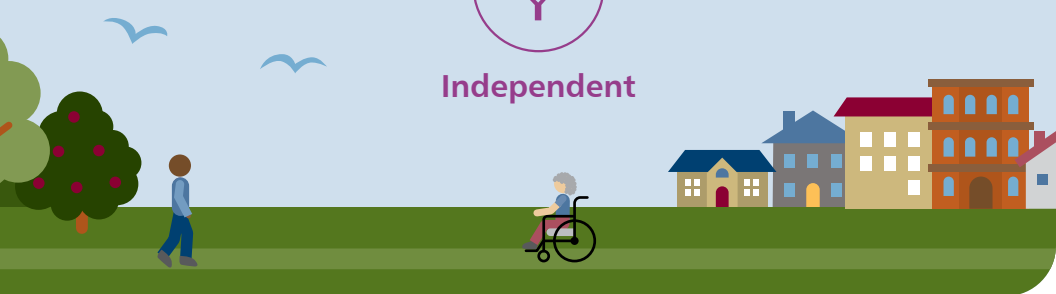
Based on the futures outlined in Chapter 1, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's vision for 2030 is as follows: In 2030, the Minneapolis park and recreation system embodies equitable park and recreation access balanced with ecological health. It is a premier destination that welcomes and captivates people that live, play, work, study in and visit Minneapolis. Natural, cultural, artistic, historical, athletic, and recreational resources cultivate outstanding experiences that break down barriers to health, enjoyment, fun and learning for all people. The park system is equitable, accessible, sustainable, cared for, beautiful and safe. It meets the needs of individuals, families and communities across culture, race/ethnicity, language, ability, geography, generation and gender. Natural areas in the system balance thriving habitat and thoughtful, equitable park and recreation access. Through storytelling and experience, MPRB fosters pride in park users and staff and cultivates a new generation of proud stewards and supporters of an extraordinary park and recreation system.

North Commons Egg Drop



Values

The ways we approach our work and deliver services



Equitable

An equitable park system is one that provides just and fair inclusion for all people across age, race, culture, ability, and gender, but acknowledges that racial equity needs to be the priority in our work to dismantle systemic racism in our city.

An equitable park system honors the unique qualities and needs of each user and neighborhood in design, programming, registration, customer service and management. An equitable park and recreation system is shaped by community and staffed by people who reflect the community.

Sustainable

A sustainable park and recreation system is one that cares for its resources, both natural and financial, across generations.

Environmental sustainability and an ecological focus on the preservation of parklands, natural areas, waters and the urban forest as well as management, design, operations and programming of parks through practices that mitigate and adapt to climate change. Economic sustainability is focused on the short-term and long-term financial stability of the park system.



Connected

A connected park and recreation system operates with contextual awareness of the larger community, economic, political, and natural systems.

It keeps a regional perspective on natural resource management and engages communities and other agencies and organizations in decision making. Connection also includes physical connection of ecological systems and equitable access to parks through proximity for all Minneapolis residents.



Independent

Independence allows the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to focus on obtaining, retaining, and providing the resources necessary to accomplish its mission.

MPRB ensures parks for all and fosters and retains partnerships to meet the broad needs of the community.



Accountable

An accountable park and recreation system is one that stewards community visions toward implementation.

It sustains long-term relationships with the land and community for the betterment of the park system and all living beings. It is a place that creates avenues for employees to engage in decision making and grow and thrive in their workplace.



Innovative

An innovative park and recreation system continually seeks ways to better deliver park and recreation services. Innovation supports responsiveness to changes in community, globally and locally.

An innovative system and its leadership look to national and international inspiration, strives for excellence in all that it does, and relies on data to inform decision making at all levels.



Goals and Strategies

What MPRB plans to accomplish in the next decade

The nine goals described in the following pages will guide future development, operations and maintenance of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation system through the next decade. The goals state what we plan to accomplish in the next decade and connect to the futures that they are responding to and the values that guide them. The goals are also grounded in the “Current Context” of the MPRB and the region. The strategies provide us with guidance on how to accomplish the goals.

Winter Sunset at Fairview Park

Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

Current Context: As we consider the future of our city and region, it is critical to evaluate what it means to create a park system that is accessible, equitable and welcoming to everyone across age, culture, race, ability and gender.

Design, operations and programming are foundational elements to consider in creating an equitable park and recreation system. We also recognize that historic patterns of investment in our city and system have evolved under a premise of white supremacy through a legacy of redlining and racially restrictive covenants. See Map on Parks and Racially Restrictive Covenants and Redlining. Historic land use patterns like redlining and historic funding systems like the Elwell Law have impacted park investments overtime resulting in geographic disparities around park amenities such as trail connections, park size, and rec centers. We also see park gaps in areas that were largely industrial over the past century, and according to Minneapolis 2040, these areas will continue to diversify in form and function over the next decade, and our park system needs to grow in those areas too. Building off our work from the 2007 MPRB comprehensive

plan, we remain committed to understanding and undoing the historical patterns of injustice through a systemic approach.

Parks impact everyone’s quality of life. The MPRB is committed to racial equity in the park system and our workforce. Racial equity is defined by the MPRB as when race is no longer a predictor of access to parks and recreation, health, well-being, and quality of life. We serve as a local and national model for racial equity in parks and recreation through our racial equity tools, criteria, initiatives, and procedures, use of racial equity tools and equity criteria for budgeting park investments and recreation funding. Creating an equitable park system also means filling park gaps and trail gaps where there are has not historically been park investment, but also making sure that when improvements happen in parks, that community can stay in place to enjoy those improvements.

- 

A More Diverse City
- 

A Denser City
- 

An Older Population
- 

Wealth Gap
- 

Digitally Connected Population
- 

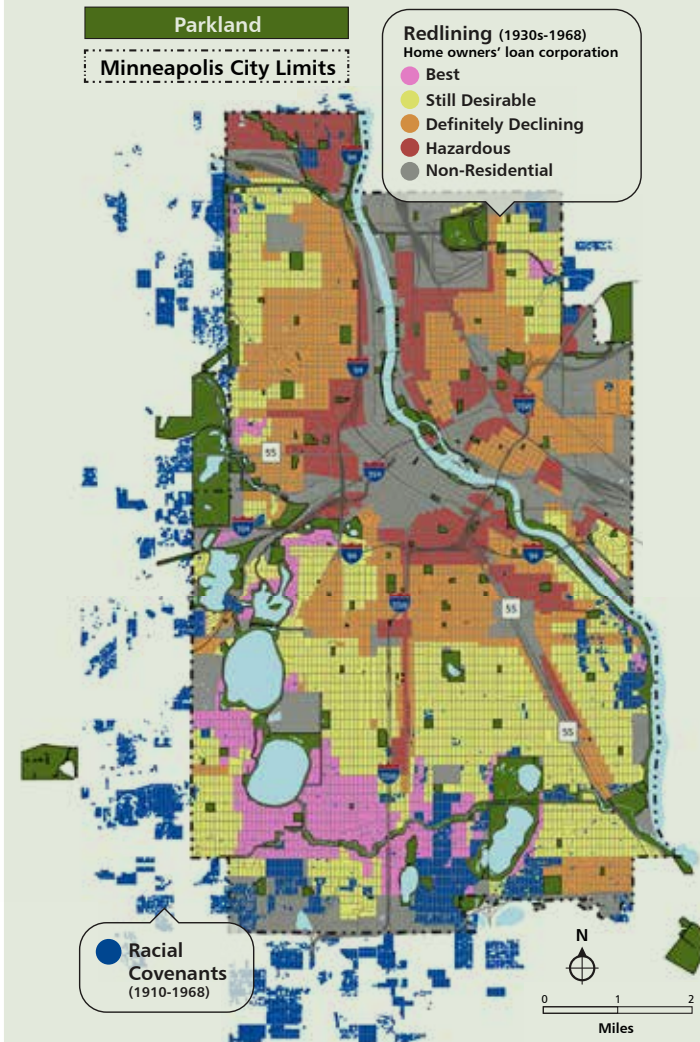
Health Crises and Disparities
- 

EQUITABLE
- 

CONNECTED
- 

ACCOUNTABLE

Parks & Racially Restrictive Covenants and Redlining



Historic inequities have impacted park development through land use patterns, legal systems and investment like redlining and racially restrictive covenants, which determined where people can live in Minneapolis based on the color of their skin.

Sources: City of Minneapolis, Mapping Prejudice Project, MPRB

Two centerpieces of belonging in Minneapolis are connecting with the natural world—parks and recreation—and connecting through arts and culture.

Belonging is about people feeling connected to a place and people. Parks can foster belonging through land management, services, facilities, volunteer and job opportunities, activities and decision-making. As our community becomes more racially and ethnically diverse, this is a critical focus for us, as a public agency, in order to create responsive and accessible systems that foster belonging for all residents of Minneapolis and park users. The parks of the future also need to center the needs of youth and seniors. Serving the youth of Minneapolis and the region is core to MPRB, and our region has a growing senior population, so it is critical that our system prioritizes both generations' needs.

Minneapolis has been ranked one of the best park systems in the nation according to the Trust for Public Land over the past 10 years, and this in large part has to do with the fact that 98% of Minneapolis residents live within walking distance of a park. Because of this foundational aspect of our system, open space is in proximity to all residents in Minneapolis. We can leverage that strength by deepening the connection to nature through education, programming, design and operations. We also have a thriving creative economy that outpaces even professional sports as a leading economic engine of our city (source Creative Vitality Index). Arts and culture have the potential to not only transform our physical spaces in parks, but also entertain, create jobs and tell our stories.



Minneapolis has been ranked one of the best park systems in the nation according to the Trust for Public Land over the past 10 years

Painter Park Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting

Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

STRATEGIES

01

Recognize parks as a unique venue to support the creative sector and celebrate the diversity of our city.

02

Connect the stories of park history with the stories of today's park users, projects and staff, and promote them widely.

03

Amplify Indigenous stories, histories, cultural practices and connections to land through employment, partnerships, programming, interpretation and community engagement.

04

Provide a wide variety of programs in the parks and activities at events to promote social, multi-generational and cross-cultural interaction.

05

Identify and remove barriers to park access as a way of fostering economic, psychological, social and cultural resilience.

06

Identify and close gaps in environmental education programming opportunities across the city in order to use environmental education as a vehicle for new users to be introduced to the parks.

07

Continually convene conversations between those with different priorities for the parks.

08

Prioritize youth and seniors in programming through ongoing research and embedding innovation in our culture and practices.

09

Continue to evolve community engagement processes to be more inclusive and representative of the diverse populations.

10

Amplify senior and youth perspectives as part of park project process and program development.

11

Create and market programs specifically for transgender and gender non-binary park users.



Snowshoing at North Mississippi Park

12

Cultivate long-term relationships with community members, leaders, and community and cultural organizations to inform design and programming of parks.

13

Develop marketing strategies that center outreach to diverse racial and ethnic communities.

Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

14

Expand and create community-led, culturally-specific programming and amenities.

15

Leverage the park system's accessibility and community connections as an avenue to uplift and effect social change.

16

Support people's ability to age in place through accessible engagement, programming, facilities and passive, low-impact recreation opportunities.

17

Elevate voices of those most impacted by health disparities to inform policies, programming, activities and services in parks.

18

Embed accessibility and universal design as a fundamental aspect of programming, design of park spaces and facilities, and when making temporary changes to park infrastructure and programming.

19

Grow youth violence prevention efforts, foster collaborative restorative justice, build youth/police relationships and continue building pathways to foster park safety and keep youth from entering the criminal justice system.

20

Create and foster a culture that values gender inclusion, recognizes various gender identities and is respectful and welcoming of transgender and gender nonconforming people through staff, programs, registration and facilities.

21

Provide restroom and other facilities that are safe and welcoming for all visitors regardless of age, ability, gender identity and expression, and religious and cultural identity.

22

Create and support activities and welcoming spaces for teens and young adults in the parks for both programmed and unprogrammed activities.

23

Provide meaningful recurring and drop in volunteer opportunities for a variety of abilities that furthers the work of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and fosters connections between neighbors, generations and parks.

24

Empower community to design, create, maintain and steward safe and welcoming parks.



A woman and her children play on the soccer field at Currie Park.

25

Strengthen racial equity as a funding metric across the agency.

26

Improve access to parks and park offerings for a multilingual community.

27

Share narratives and elevate voices beyond dominant cultural context through the development of a public art and memorial collection that reflects the diverse history and current cultural context of our city and park lands and that employs community to increase public art offerings in our parks.

Goal 2: Steward a continuum of recreation and nature

Current Context: Over the past five years, the MPRB developed master plans for all neighborhood parks in Minneapolis. This is the first time in recent history that MPRB has established a detailed system-wide vision all at once for each of our neighborhood parks.

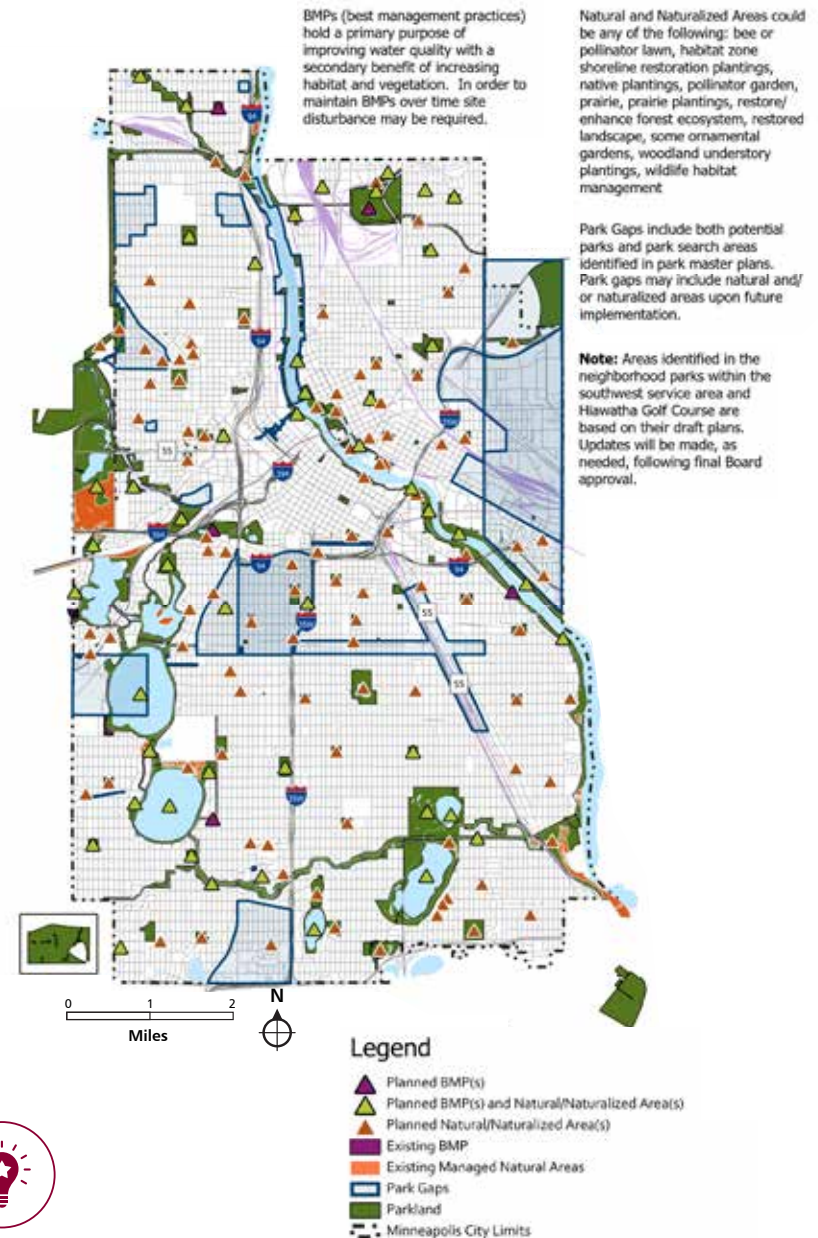
The regional parks have been similarly master planned, with just a few gaps remaining. Each park plan has a unique blend of park features and functions that represents a continuum of nature and recreation. It is both a “nature everywhere” vision as well as “recreation everywhere” vision. We believe that both are critical to an urban park system and we can creatively strike that balance through design and programming. While we consider recreation and natural systems in tandem, we tend to separate them for staffing, management, use and organizational reasons.

In recent years Recreation has been guided through RecQuest outcomes and the six pillars of critical programming. RecQuest is an in-depth project to assess services and facilities offered by MPRB recreation centers to provide a vision for the next generation of programs and facilities. Four programmatic

priorities were adopted by the Board in 2018: active older adults, youth development, access to equitable athletics, and equitable school-age educational programs. The six pillars of critical programming were developed out of the Closing the Gap: Investing in Youth, a 2019 strategic initiative. The six pillars are creation spaces, community-focused youth employment, nature programming, cycling, community gardening, and integrational centers of excellence.

Our natural areas management have been supported by Natural Areas Management Plans that have determined the health and management needs of our current natural areas, along with the recently adopted Ecological System Plan, which lays out an important vision for our natural systems and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Existing and Master Planned Natural and Naturalized Areas



A More Diverse City



A Denser City



Infrastructure that is Aging



A Wetter City



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals



EQUITABLE



SUSTAINABLE



CONNECTED



INNOVATIVE

Goal 2: Steward a continuum of recreation and nature

STRATEGIES

01

Balance preservation of historic, cultural and scenic resources with natural resources and contemporary recreational needs in park management and development decisions.

02

Support both the preservation of higher quality natural areas for ecosystem benefits and access to natural areas for public benefits.

03

Ensure that all water management projects, including regional stormwater projects, include multiple environmental and recreational benefits.

04

Create, interpret and program nature-based experiences across the city, especially in parts of the city that don't have access to regional parks, so that all park users are able recognize the value and benefits of nature.

05

Establish and steward natural habitat areas in neighborhood parks and prioritize in parts of the city that don't have access to regional parks.

06

Improve overall quality of multi-use fields and diamonds, including expansion of premier fields throughout the system.

07

Provide both unprogrammed natural spaces and recreational park amenities throughout the system.

08

Foster a system-wide sustainable trail network that guides user access to parks, protects core habitat, and curbs erosion.

09

Increase the acreage and quality of natural landscapes to provide both ecological and recreational benefits.

10

Establish a new vision for the ecological and transportation potential of the Grand Rounds parkway system.

11

Prioritize new parks and new park amenities that benefit climate resilience and equitable park access.

12

Invest in nature-centered play and programming for all ages.

13

Position golf courses and golf course buildings as welcoming multi-use recreational and ecological facilities.



Walkers on Bde Maka Ska Trails

Goal 3: Provide core services with care

Current Context: In recent years, the MPRB increased focus on a few key areas: capital investments, rehabilitation, and increased maintenance in neighborhood parks; racial equity; and youth.

Since 2016, capital improvements, rehabilitation projects and maintenance activities have increased in neighborhood parks due to a funding agreement with the City of Minneapolis called 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20). The increase in these activities created new jobs and provided a mechanism for equitably distributing capital dollars with annually reviewed equity metrics. The MPRB has also continued to build upon its racial equity work focusing on staff training and the internal influencers program, an internal staff program that fosters a culture of racial equity; equity-based recreational programming funding for staff; access to permits, field reservations, and boat storage assignments; jobs and hiring; a community engagement policy update; and a language access plan.

The following strategies will build off this strong foundation to support MPRB core functions including: customer service, communications, design and planning, recreation, athletics,

events, community engagement and outreach, safety, maintenance, programming, real estate administration, and environmental stewardship. Core functions start with care for our landscape and care for the community when they come to us and conclude with caring for our employees and caring for the future of our system. MPRB recognizes that performing core services with care is a critical aspect of an award winning park system. To care is to provide quality, thoughtful, and equitable solutions for people, wildlife, and the land.


As our city grows, our system will need to grow with it. In our Service Area Master Plans, we have identified several “park gaps” or areas of the City that are underserved in terms of parkland in proximity to residents. As we work to fill these park gaps, we also need to account for the proposed densification of our city through the City of Minneapolis’ 2040 vision.



A Denser City



Infrastructure that is Aging



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals



Digitally Connected Population




SUSTAINABLE



INDEPENDENT



ACCOUNTABLE



INNOVATIVE

City Growth Corridors and MPRB Park Gaps



Sources: City of Minneapolis, MPRB

Goal 3: Provide core services with care

STRATEGIES

01 **Balance geographic distribution** of programming options to reduce duplication while holding local community preference in balance.

02 **Care for existing historic and cultural resources**, public art and memorial collection through planning, staffing, inventory, management and conservation.

03 **Ensure events remain safe** in a densifying city and in the face of violence.

04 **Close the loop** on park maintenance practices to foster more reuse of park, school, and city generated waste materials.

05 **Evaluate all equipment replacements** with sustainable technology alternatives in mind.

06 **Mitigate urban heat** and climate change in park design, planning, programming and management based on industry best practices and innovations.

07 **Implement programming** that sets the standard for all other youth-serving organizations in the city, and strategically align youth programming to fill gaps in city and other partner agency offerings.

08 **Explore avenues** for participatory governance and co-creation with community groups.

09 **Prioritize acquisition of parkland** that completes the Grand Rounds system including Above the Falls Regional Park and Grand Missing Link, park gaps and park expansion areas identified in the Service Area Master Plans to ensure park access for all residents by providing parks within an easy walk from their homes, and to achieve a ratio of .01 acres of parkland per household.

10 **Ensure parcels considered for disposition** meet at least one of the following listed criteria: removing the parcel does not diminish recreation or environmental function of the park system, the parcel is not accessible by the public, the parcel is not part of an adopted park plan, or the parcel is specifically identified for disposition in an adopted master plan.



The Listening Vessel by Craig David

11 **Prioritize options of parkland disposition** that perpetuate public benefit and financial sustainability, with a focus on other park agencies; public good, such as affordable housing; and Indigenous communities.

12 **For disposition of parkland** outside of the city, prioritize capitalization that benefits the Minneapolis park system.

Goal 3: Provide core services with care

13

Position park police practices, equipment, vehicles and language to reflect a community-first relationship.

14

Design and implement parks that are welcoming, playful, beautiful and safe as they age.

15

Increase park staff, safety, programming, operations and design capacity to meet increased demands of park system expansion, including new park acquisition, development, new facilities, increased programs and increased events.

16

Foster excellence in daily maintenance of parks including best practices in waste management, facilities maintenance, and landscaping services.

17

Preserve a dedicated and independent park police department to ensure accountability to park safety/crime priorities, MPRB-supported policies, and community policing principles.

18

Foster community and staff safety through informed decision-making around crimes and emergencies.

19

Ensure that youth athletics are supported equitably throughout the system through a combination of partnerships, activity councils, and MPRB-led programs.

20

Strive to achieve equitable levels of service across the system.

21

Strengthen the specialization of parks throughout the system through the six program pillars and link the system as an interwoven network of facilities and programs.

22

Build and renovate recreation centers with versatility of use as the core principle, large room sizes, ample storage, technology enhancements, sustainable building methods, and comfort in summer heat.

23

Create a vibrant, welcoming and safe environment in recreation centers, through aesthetic upgrades, organization and de-cluttering, enhancing maintenance, a carefully designed entry experience and sight lines, lots of light and windows, and staff customer service training.

24

Encourage, document and reward collaboration and resource sharing between recreation centers and neighborhood and regional parks across the city, as a citywide web of programs and expertise rather than providing all services to all people at all locations.

25

Prevent violence and mitigate impacts on public health, perceptions of safety and safety in the park system.

Youth basketball in Minneapolis Parks



Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

Current Context:

Partnership is a critical part of our work at the MPRB.

We navigate shared space, decision-making, and resources with the Minneapolis Public Schools. We partner on managing the public realm of the City of Minneapolis through our urban tree canopy work and stormwater management. We partner with social service providers to support people experiencing homelessness in parks. We rely on watershed districts for technical and financial partnership around our aligned values. We have just begun to explore the potential of public-private partnership models through

naming, sponsorship and new park development with implementation of the Park Dedication Ordinance. The MPRB has a clear role in the City's charter and a mission that needs to be the focus of our work. It is important for us to provide our core functions with care, but also to know how to build and sustain partnerships in communications, decision-making, management, development, service provisions, training and financial resilience.



Print Artist Luisa with La Luchador



A More Diverse City



A Denser City



Wealth Gap



Infrastructure that is Aging



A Wetter City



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals



Health Crises and Disparities



CONNECTED



INDEPENDENT



INNOVATIVE

Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

STRATEGIES

01

Establish well-defined partnerships with clear goals, evaluated through an equity lens, to increase the MPRB's level of service.

02

Increase awareness of and maximize access to MPRB resources, facilities and programs by connecting with schools, libraries, non-profits, businesses and arts organizations

03

Leverage partnerships with businesses, sponsors, agencies and nonprofits to fill financial and service gaps in facilities, programs and staffing.

04

Establish funding partnerships to subsidize program, permit and rental costs to reduce and eliminate barriers for those with limited financial resources.

05

Seek partnerships and sponsorships to support citywide volunteer projects and events.

06

Expand educational and programming partnerships with a focus on:

- environmental and water quality programs;
- youth education and leadership around climate justice;
- experiential nature-based programs;
- culturally relevant programs and events.

07

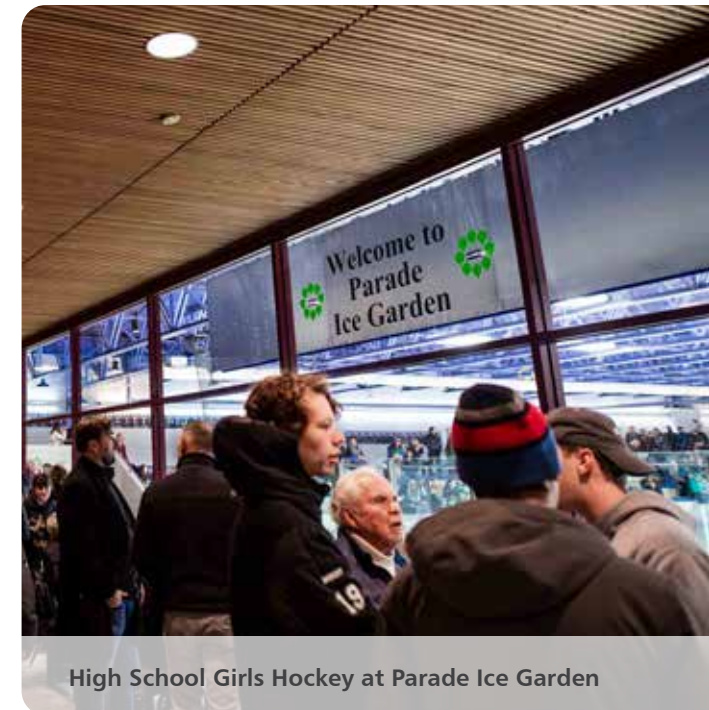
Partner with other government agencies and non-profits to maintain and improve water quality, manage regional and park stormwater, achieve required Clean Water Act standards, and restore natural systems.

08

Create system-wide connections to and through parks for pedestrians and cyclists based on master plans and in collaboration with agency partners.

09

Partner with other agencies and leverage agency relationships to further anti-displacement approaches, mitigate the harmful effect of community development projects and capital improvement projects and advocate for housing availability.



High School Girls Hockey at Parade Ice Garden

Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

10

Strengthen relationships with experts and partner organizations who can deliver services for those experiencing homelessness.

11

Continue to enhance partnerships for emergency operations and reinforce staffing and partnership standards that consider safety and maintenance needs before, during and after events.

12

Establish partnerships to provide training and knowledge around public health and human rights issues in the parks such as substance use, mental illnesses and human trafficking so that MPRB staff can recognize and navigate complex issues and know where to access resources.

13

Collaborate with other agencies to share best practices in parks and recreation, governance, community engagement and public service.

14

Advocate for an increase in city, regional and state funding for park, parkway and trail infrastructure.

15

Advocate for new laws, penalties, prevention, intervention around gun violence, including advocating for a ban on guns in park buildings.

“

Partnerships and volunteers are crucial to maintaining and improving our beloved parks system.”

— Commissioner Bourn at the Trailhead opening in 2018



Naturalist at Bottineau Park

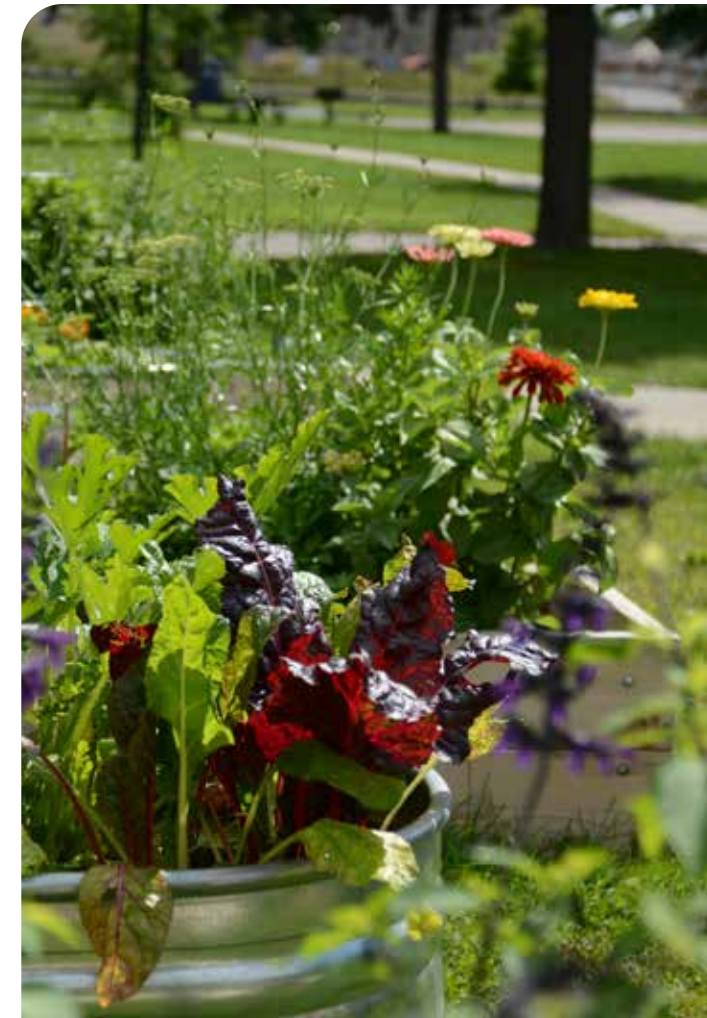
Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

Current Context: Parks are a powerful tool for reducing health disparities in community.

The MPRB needs to consider both proactive and reactive approaches to public health in its work toward physical and mental health and well-being. Parks can contribute solutions through how they are designed, staffed, programmed, preserved and maintained. We will continue to expand our ability to respond to emergencies, including natural disasters, like the 2011 tornado, and in the face of a global pandemic, racial justice uprisings, and encampments of people experiencing homelessness, the MPRB responded quickly and developed new skills and processes in a changing world.

We also know that many of our core services are critical to the health of our communities. We have a broad athletics program, a wide range of diversifying athletic facilities, learn-to-swim

opportunities and free meals at many parks. We recently established land as a resource for food security through our Urban Agriculture Policy and subsequent community garden program. We continue to be amazed by the importance of our parkway and regional trail system for both recreation and transportation needs of cyclists and pedestrians, like the Chain of Lakes Regional Park, which is the second most-visited destination in the state of Minnesota after the Mall of America. These strategies chart a course that centers a health equity approach to public health that include humane responses to the complex public health issues that happen within our parks to ensure the safety of all community members and park users.



Franklin Steele Community Garden



A More Diverse City



A Denser City



An Older Population



Wealth Gap



Infrastructure that is Aging



A Wetter City



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals



Digitally Connected Population



Health Crises and Disparities



EQUITABLE



ACCOUNTABLE



INNOVATIVE

Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

STRATEGIES

01

Increase safety at parks through multiple strategies, specifically:

- master planning and design;
- activation, including by community partners;
- lighting;
- security cameras, with consideration of the balance between safety and identity protection;
- and enhanced technology for crime prevention, intervention and investigation.

02

Improve the health and well-being of older adults through parks and recreation including chronic disease prevention, food security access and opportunities to establish social connections.

03

Support non-motorized access to parks, including the Grand Rounds.

04

Fill gaps and complete links in bike and pedestrian infrastructure in and around parks, including the Grand Rounds, to provide access and limit conflicts with motorized vehicles.

05

Position parks as a trusted information source on health and wellness by improving links between traditional healthcare organizations and parks and recreation, focusing specifically on:

- increasing access to public health professionals and support;
- connecting families and individuals to housing resources;
- working with partners to address substance abuse disorders and mental illnesses;
- fostering social connection and mental health;
- partnering to provide education and techniques on stress relief and management;
- integrate customized health and wellness options into recreation centers.

06

Support initiatives of park adjacent communities to address crime while respecting surrounding communities and cultures.

07

Examine programming, facilities and accessibility through a health equity lens.



Nature Explorers Camp at North Mississippi Park

Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

08

Provide affordable and desirable programs and activities that promote health and wellness, including bicycle safety training for all ages, pathways for participation in multiple sports, including specialty sports, and connections between youth and safety professionals.

09

Develop a response and intervention plan for mental health crises including suicide in parks.

10

Enhance learn-to-swim opportunities and facilities across the city, especially in underserved communities, by expanding programming and lifeguard training, and promoting youth jobs in aquatics.

11

Manage trails and parkways for both non-motorized recreational and commuter uses.

12

Provide culturally-specific options for health and wellness, considering language, culture, race, age, ability and gender identity.

13

Provide resources in underserved areas of the city for access to public health services and infrastructure, including hygiene facilities.

14

Remain knowledgeable and implement best practices around safe and non-toxic material options for artificial turf fields.

15

Connect a diverse and multi-generational audience to the benefits of urban natural areas, through education, programming and accessible facilities.

16

Encourage and support healthy play for all ages and abilities.

17

Increase opportunities for year-round activity in indoor athletics venues, outdoor recreation offerings and season-extending facilities.

18

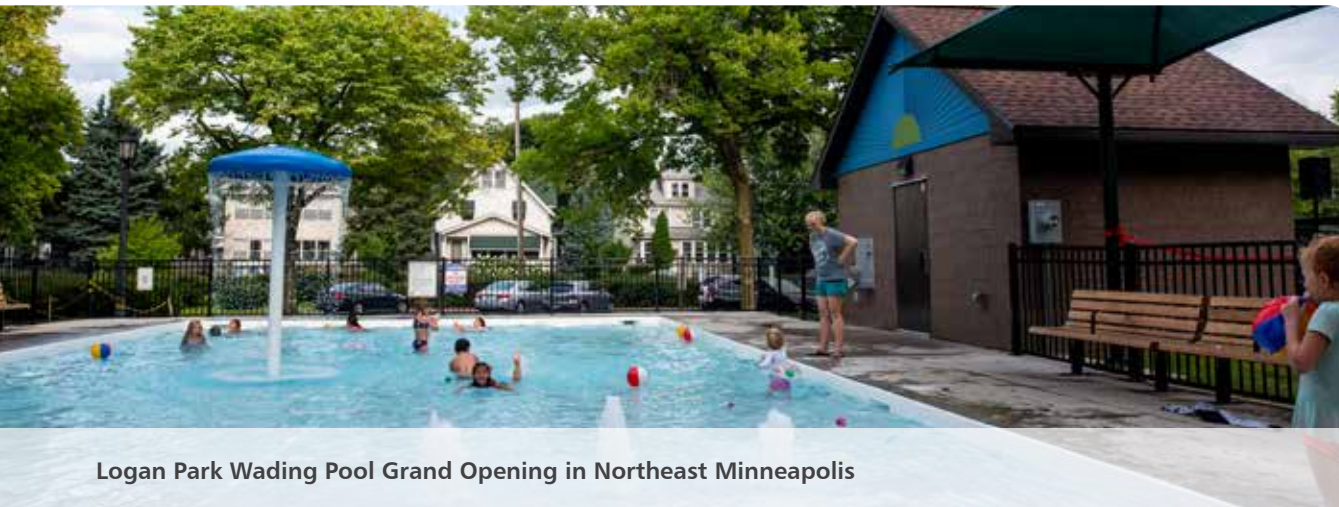
Expand healthy food access through increased programming, updated kitchens and additional community gardens, especially where access to food growing space is limited.

19

Address hot weather health risks and invest in cool-down activities and amenities in parks for use during summer heat waves.

20

Enhance connections between the public transit system and the park system, through station placement, promotion, and linking trails.



Logan Park Wading Pool Grand Opening in Northeast Minneapolis

Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections

Current Context: Water, tree canopy, soil systems, habitat, wildlife, air and plant communities are all critical aspects of our ecological systems.

Many lakes, the Mississippi River and several creeks serve as recreational and natural cornerstones of our park system. The health and accessibility of our water bodies are critical to the health of Minneapolis’ people and land. Water resources include the quality and quantity of our local water bodies, which are also significant to our recreational programming and design. We work in partnership with other agencies like local watershed management organizations and recognize that MPRB actions impact water resources. Our aquatic invasive species work is a critical part of educating and building awareness around water quality with staff and in the community.

Climate change is a defining challenge for both current and future generations. Building on our recent Carbon Footprint study, the Minneapolis

Park System will have to deal with a myriad of impacts ranging from public health to invasive species as greenhouse gases continue to build in our atmosphere. This severity of climate change in both depth and breadth of impacts will touch every person in Minneapolis and every aspect of MPRB operations, from recreation offerings to basic infrastructure maintenance.

MPRB manages the urban tree canopy. We plant, prune and remove all trees on public property. This includes nearly 200,000 *boulevard trees* on 1,100 miles of streets, 400,000 *park trees* on more than 6,000 acres of land, plus trees on other city properties, such as police and fire stations, stormwater retention ponds and Public Works facilities.



A Denser City



A Wetter City



Fewer Wild Plants and Animals



Health Crises and Disparities



SUSTAINABLE



CONNECTED



INNOVATIVE



Longfellow Gardens

The Environmental Stewardship Division manages a diverse mix of natural areas including forests, prairies, shorelines, wetlands and landscaped areas that have been planted with native plants. Environmental Management staff work to maintain the natural areas identified as the nine remnant native plant communities and other natural areas. Management of natural areas primarily focuses on control of invasive species to maintain and assist native plant regeneration. This work is accomplished by staff, seasonal employees and contractors, and is assisted by volunteers.

Habitat connectivity across our system and city is becoming increasingly important as wildlife comes under threat from dwindling areas to forage, nest and migrate through. The Ecological System Plan sets a vision and detailed recommendations related to many of the topics in this goal and provides more specificity on the MPRB's specific actions. One key aspect of the plan is to create a new habitat map of the city. This map is anchored in the nine remnant landscapes identified in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, but uses new "pollinator sweet spot" data analysis to draw multiple new habitat corridors

across the city. Implementation of these corridors will require partnerships, but this is necessary work to affirm the importance of wildlife and Minnesota plant communities.

With this plan, the Mission Statement has been modified to reflect that our work is meant to benefit. Climate change mitigation and habitat connectivity are key ways of achieving that promise.



Dragonfly Snag and Spy program at North Mississippi Park

Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections

STRATEGIES

01

Support a healthy urban ecosystem.

02

Expand natural area protection, restoration and management beyond the nine identified remnant landscapes.

03

Preserve, protect and restore natural areas in parks for the dual purposes of wildlife habitat and human respite and refuge.

04

Enhance habitat and green space connectivity and reduce habitat fragmentation, recognizing the interconnection between street trees and parks.

05

Utilize regional, future-facing, ecological understanding in preserving, stewarding, and improving natural areas, enhancing habitat connectivity, and improving and managing park infrastructure.

06

Preserve and protect animal and plant species, including resident and migratory birds and pollinators.

07

Develop a city-wide, equity-driven tree canopy preservation and enhancement program to mitigate urban heat island effects and improve air quality, ecological connections and the pedestrian experience.

08

Implement strategies to remove and reduce trash and plastic in parks and water bodies.

09

Establish baselines and annual targets for reduction of greenhouse gas and carbon emissions.

10

Increase amount of energy generated from renewable sources.

11

Reduce the acreage of mown turfgrass in the system.



JD Rivers Childrens Garden Farmers Market

12

Foster meaningful connections to natural spaces in our park system through education, programming, interpretation, experiences, volunteerism and facilities.









Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology

Current Context: Connecting through communications and technology is a goal that will help us develop momentum and build capacity in our agency around information sharing and storytelling.

We established new document management and archival systems, grown technological capacity for all aspects of park operations, fine-tuned our registration systems and established our own geographic information systems program. Our large, urban, complex park system requires responsive communications on a daily basis. In recent years our communications team has stewarded us into the 21st century with a redesigned website, streamlined email communications tools and created a new media and social media policy. We hope to continue to build capacity to spend time on marketing and telling our story both locally and nationally through a range of media, including cultural

media outlets, presentations, video, and photography and other creative branding and marketing opportunities.

Communications and outreach are the work of all departments and divisions across the agency. Customer Service provides daily support and resources to park users, and foster a culture of accountability for all staff. Planning leads project based community engagement that requires multiple platforms for dialogue. IT has built incredible capacity for our agency to use technology, and we are poised to integrate data and technology more deeply into daily operations over the next decade.

- 
A More Diverse City
- 
An Older Population
- 
Wealth Gap
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Digitally Connected Population
- 
EQUITABLE
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CONNECTED
- 
ACCOUNTABLE
- 
INNOVATIVE



2019 Owamni Falling Waters Festival

Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology

STRATEGIES

01

Inspire the next generation of park stewards through education and outreach.

02

Create platforms that showcase positive community stories about the parks.

03

Create and disseminate an inclusive expectation of park use that amplifies the expectation that all communities are welcome.

04

Develop public-facing resources to share data, maps and resources relating specifically to: accessibility of parks and park features; public art and arts programming and events in parks; natural areas; multi-generational park facility and program options; park historical resources; volunteer recruitment; park safety.

05

Educate staff and the community on critical issues facing the city and region, specifically:

- health and wellness benefits of parks;
- the benefits of and threats to the urban tree canopy;
- invasive species management and prevention;
- climate change impacts and resiliency;
- shared public responsibility for water quality;
- indigenous history, rights, culture and perspectives;
- park safety and security.

06

Create a transparent, centralized process for external partners to interact with MPRB, specifically:

- artists wishing to teach, work or perform in parks;
- non-profit and community partners;
- and volunteers.

07

Expand and evolve historical understanding of parks, park features and the park system through multiple perspectives.

08

Focus communication strategies on connecting and partnering with community rather than informing community.

09

Improve accessibility of print and online communications with the public, including up-to-date use of digital media.

10

Invest in feedback from program users and community members on the creation and implementation of programs that continually reflect community needs.



Minnehaha—Chief Little Crow Mask Sculpture

Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology

11

Create a sustainable method for community engagement and outreach to foster awareness of and build trust in the park police.

12

Improve outreach to multilingual communities through interpretation, wayfinding and digital technology.

13

Foster sustainable communications platforms and strategies to better connect and communicate with youth and communities of color.

14

Provide support for tourists and visitors to experience the park system by bike, foot and public transit.

15

Improve communications and promotion of hiring and job opportunities in areas most impacted by gentrification.

16

Collect system-wide park user data to aid in decision-making.

17

Clearly communicate to the community the reasons behind safety, operational, technical and budgetary decisions.

18

Streamline internal information sharing, enhance technology access and resolve the internal digital divide to ensure consistent staff access to information and data.

19

Enhance branding of staff uniforms, vehicles, equipment and documents to build public awareness and trust, including in park police.

20

Improve wayfinding between and within neighborhood parks and the regional system, including the Grand Rounds.

21

Improve education around trail speed limits, protocols and etiquette.

22

Invest in computer technology hubs to support computer skill building, creative projects, digital and remote programs and job access.



Parks For All and Community Collaborator outreach at the McRae Winter Solstice event.

Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce

Current Context: The park system functions as a result of the synergy between the different offices and divisions of the organization, the variety of work they are responsible for, and guidance from the elected Board of Commissioners. The Superintendent oversees all staff through five divisions and is hired by the Board of Commissioners.

The MPRB organization exists in five divisions. The Superintendent’s Office is responsible for the executive management of the highly diverse services and operations of the MPRB, with a focus on public safety, communications, and intergovernmental relations. The Deputy Superintendent’s Office provides support to the Superintendent, with a focus on internal support services including human resources, information technology, customer service, and finance, worker safety, data retention, and archives. The Deputy Superintendent also traditionally serves as the Secretary to the Board of Commissioners. Environmental Stewardship

encompasses maintenance of the park system’s physical infrastructure; equipment and fleet services; management of natural areas and water resources; care of boulevard trees and wooded areas; environmental education; and volunteer stewardship coordination. Planning Services provides expertise to lead, engage, advise and guide the development and redevelopment of the Minneapolis park system. Recreation Services provides expertise to lead, provide and create affordable recreation, cultural, educational and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the lives of all Minneapolis residents.

Diversifying the racial/ethnic diversity of MPRB staff across the agency has been a focus in recent years. MPRB has continued its tradition of focusing on youth employment and job training. The MPRB, like many other employers is faced with waves of retirement over the next decade, needs to prepare by training the next generation of MPRB employees and leadership. Green jobs and the thriving creative sector of Minneapolis are unique assets that MPRB can leverage in coming years.

While equitable hiring processes are critical, so is a thriving workplace culture. To support that, the MPRB added staff and dedicated resources to work on safety, workplace wellness initiatives and support for professional development. The MPRB plans to continue to support the physical and mental health of all MPRB employees to create a supportive and healthy work environment.

Breakdown of employment by race/ethnicity and job category from MPRB in 2019

EE04 Category	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Pacific American	White	Two +	% of Total Employees
Officials & Administrators	0%	5.00%	15.00%	0%	0%	75.00%	5.00%	3.64%
Professionals	2.56%	5.98%	12.82%	2.56%	0%	75.21%	0.85%	21.27%
Technicians	0%	0%	11.54%	0%	0%	76.92%	11.54%	4.73%
Protective Service Workers	0%	16.67%	4.17%	0%	0%	75.00%	4.17%	4.36%
Paraprofessionals	1.72%	5.17%	22.41%	1.72%	0%	67.24%	1.72%	10.55%
Administrative Support	6.25%	0%	12.50%	6.25%	0%	62.50%	12.50%	2.91%
Skilled Craft Workers	0%	1.45%	1.45%	4.35%	0%	89.86%	2.90%	12.55%
Service – Maintenance	2.73%	1.82%	15.91%	5.91%	0%	72.73%	0.91%	40.00%
TOTAL	2.00%	3.64%	13.27%	3.82%	0%	74.91%	2.36%	100.00%



A More Diverse City



An Older Population



Wealth Gap



Digitally Connected Population



EQUITABLE



INDEPENDENT



ACCOUNTABLE



INNOVATIVE

Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce

STRATEGIES

01

Increase racial diversity among volunteers and seasonal staff by improving communications about and access to opportunities.

02

Incentivize and reduce barriers for minority-owned businesses to provide services to and partner with the MPRB.

03

Create pathways for local hiring surrounding parks, including youth, community organizations and small businesses.

04

Create welcoming and safe workspaces and an inclusive culture for all MPRB employees.

05

Recruit a diversity of staff across all departments and at all levels of leadership that represents the rich racial, cultural and economic diversity of the city.

06

Implement youth programs across the agency that support deliberate career pathways towards full-time employment with livable wages.

07

Recognize community members for their wisdom, insight and feedback when seeking community input.

08

Improve opportunities and remove barriers to jobs for people experiencing homelessness.

09

Invest in recruitment of aquatics staff who represent the cultural and racial diversity of surrounding neighborhoods and develop learn-to-swim programs to inspire water safety and comfort in diverse communities.

10

Build relationships between youth and park staff across all departments to foster youth employment, development and safety.



Mosaics at Bryant Square Park by Sharra Frank



Youth tennis at Linden Hills Park

Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce

11

Dedicate resources and trained staff to support best practices-driven emergency management planning and implementation.

12

Connect environmental education programs to leadership development and sustainable job opportunities.

13

Grow expertise toward longterm stewardship of natural areas in our parks.

14

Ensure a proactively safe workplace through systems of accountability, training and support.

15

Foster a positive and supportive work community that values work/life balance and creates flexibility in opportunities.

16

Utilize a diverse pool of volunteers to support and strengthen the work of MPRB staff across the organization.

17

Develop and train staff and commissioners on native acknowledgement practices that incorporate the complexities of treaties, tribal differences, personal experience and layered place-based histories.

18

Draw exceptional internal and external employment candidates to MPRB as an celebrated employer.

19

Develop a culture of gender, cultural, racial, generational and linguistic inclusion in a customer service approach across the agency.

20

Prioritize youth leadership and innovation through hiring, shared decision-making, technical training and involvement in community engagement processes.

21

Build agency-wide capacity for self-care and emergency response around public health crises, mental health, violence in parks and trauma.

22

Build capacity for learning and teaching where MPRB park and recreation professionals set the standard of industry excellence locally, nationally, and internationally.

23

Foster equitable park care and programming through staff assignments.



Bohemian Flats Park

Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise

Current Context: Most funding for the Minneapolis park system comes through property tax collection — accounting for approximately 70% of our funding over the last ten years.

Other sources of revenue include local government aid; fees, fines, and other revenue; grants and donations; parking; rent; and charges for service. Since the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, new funding sources have been developed which provide additional funding to the park system. The funding sources include:

- In 2008, The Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment was passed by Minnesotans. It provides a portion of the funding allocated to the regional parks and trails system. The Legacy Amendment also provides funding opportunities through grants, some of which have been used for projects within the Minneapolis park system. This funding is set to expire in 2033.
- In 2011, the MPRB entered into an agreement with the City of Minneapolis Public Works

Department to be reimbursed for providing stormwater monitoring, lake monitoring and water quality education activities.

- In 2014, the park dedication ordinance went into effect. It charges a fee to new residential, commercial and industrial development and provides additional revenue for park renovation and expansion in neighborhoods where fees originate.
- In 2016, MPRB and City of Minneapolis approved ordinances to reverse years of underfunding in neighborhood parks. The 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan (NPP20) is a long-term initiative that will transform the neighborhood park system by protecting current MPRB funding levels, dedicating an additional \$11 million annually through 2036, and allocating funds based on data-driven equity metrics.



A Denser City



Wealth Gap



Infrastructure that is Aging



A Wetter City



Digitally Connected Population



EQUITABLE



SUSTAINABLE



INDEPENDENT



Bryn Mawr Meadows

Funding and budgeting in recent years has become increasingly data-driven and transparent through processes like the revised park Capital Improvement Program that funds park construction projects through a set of equity metrics.

This trend will continue to embed equity in our budgeting processes and build opportunities for staff and community to be more engaged in budgeting processes. Through programs like the Walter Dzedzic Innovation Fund, we have built in avenues for participatory programming. The MPRB has also worked along with the City of Minneapolis in refining our vendor and contracting pool with the Target Market Program that prioritizes work with small and local businesses, and will continue to build pathways for small, local, minority and woman owned businesses to thrive in our region. We recognize the power of the MPRB in the local economy as an employer, funder, taxing authority, client, partner and physical space for microenterprise.



Construction progress at Peavey Park

Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise

STRATEGIES

01

Research innovative approaches for payment options in order to reduce costs to the community.

02

Develop avenues for for community engagement and ownership in Park Board spending.

03

Develop permanent spaces and infrastructure that support safe and economically efficient events within the park system.

04

Consistently apply an equity lens along with a market-driven approach to concessions in parks.

05

Grow ice operations and major athletic venues as enterprises with clear market-driven management.

06

Encourage all staff to take an entrepreneurial approach to MPRB operations and facilities.

07

Explore opportunities for small, local, and minority owned businesses at all parks in the system.

08

Diversify funding streams to leverage existing funding with grants, site-specific revenue generations, sponsorship, and public/private partnerships through an equity lens.

09

Deepen philanthropic relationships to include program support and system-wide park improvements.

10

Create flexible funding and budgeting that always prioritizes core aspects of the agency and supports innovation and expansion.

11

Reimagine Enterprise Fund programs and facilities across the system based on market-driven approaches that balance ecology and recreational uses.



Sledding at Sunset Hill

CHAPTER THREE

Implementation and Measurement

Each direction in the Comprehensive Plan may be achieved by numerous methods. The professional expertise and experience of staff and commissioners will enable the organization to achieve the vision set forth in the plan.

Careful monitoring will allow commissioners and staff to determine if a selected course of action is achieving desired outcomes, allowing for corrections and celebration of successful outcomes.

To comprehensively monitor progress on the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Parks for All Comprehensive Plan, evaluation will be tracked through the Annual Report and the Annual Dashboard. These tools will include a summary of progress on the Implementation Plan as well as any progress on the Comprehensive Plan Metrics.

Measuring Progress

The following metrics are a tool to measure the impact of the Comprehensive Plan. By tracking these factors over time, we can see the impacts of implementing the Parks for All strategies. These metrics should be tracked and shared annually as a Dashboard and through the Annual Report. Step One is completing a study to identify baseline values for each metric. Metrics will be tied to the Implementation Plans to track progress. As new or refined indicators and metrics are identified, the indicators and metrics listed here may evolve or change over time in order to accurately track the progress of the plan.



Goal 1: Foster belonging and equity

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?	EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?
How is MPRB helping foster the creative economy and diversity in the creative economy?	City of Minneapolis Creative Vitality Index
Who is using parks?	Activenet registrations, Team Sideline, Club Prophit, Max Galaxy, drop-in use, permitting, park counts, park event count
What is the variety of offerings in our parks?	Mapping of rec events and programs on an annual basis
Who is volunteering in our parks?	Volgistics
How safe are parks?	Crime Statistics

Goal 2: Steward a continuum of recreation and nature

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?

EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?

How accessible are our parks?

ADA transition plan completion rate

What is the state of the park features and spaces?

Asset quality analysis used for Equity Metrics

How is our water quality?

LAURI data

What is the balance of investment/support of active rec facilities and natural areas?

Funding breakdown of maintenance of natural areas vs active recreational facilities

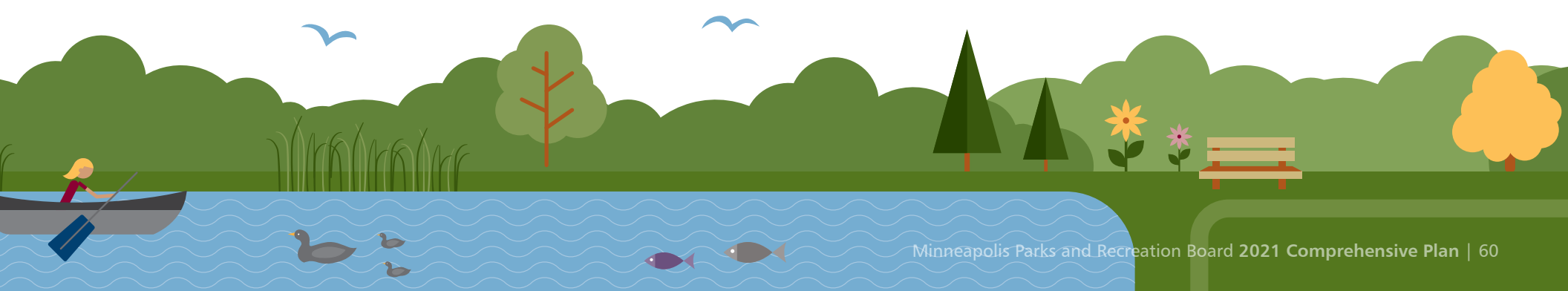
How are we building connections for people to nature?

Program analysis



Goal 3: Provide core services with care

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?	EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?
Has our system grown?	Acreage amounts
What percentage of Minneapolis residents live within walking distance of a park?	TPL Parkscore data
How many “complaints” are we getting?	Feedback log, service requests, and response rate
How satisfied are people with the park system?	City-wide survey
How much waste are we diverting from the waste stream?	Waste reduction data
Are more (young) people engaging in parks programs?	Youth participant numbers
Are types, participants, and amounts of programs offered increasing in rec centers?	Programs Offered and Program Participation



Goal 4: Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?

EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?

How much support do we receive from sponsors? What are we able to do better, differently, or more of as a result of sponsorship?

Funding from partnerships, new programs, events, or facilities, as a result of sponsors

How many formal partnerships does MPRB have?

MOUs, JPAs, and partnership agreements

Are we meeting the goals of our partnership?

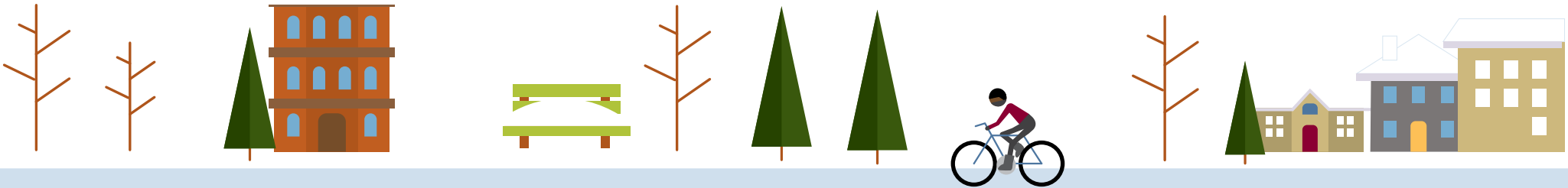
Review of partnership goals

How much of our system has been implemented through partnership?

Service Area Master Plan implementation

What are volunteers bringing to the park system?

Volunteer hours



Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?	EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?
How are our parks contributing to food security?	Number of Community Garden Plots on MPRB land, farmers market permits, food shelves, and free meal program through schools
How are health disparities showing up across race/ethnicity in Hennepin County?	State data on asthma, obesity rates for Hennepin County, SHAPE data from Hennepin County
Are we removing barriers to access to parks?	MPRB City Wide Survey
Are we making our parks safer by bike and foot and transit?	City and County bike/ped crash data adjacent to parks
Are we making our parks more accessible by bike and foot and transit?	Total miles of sidewalk and trail and transit stops/stations adjacent to parks
Are we creating parks that support activity in all four seasons?	Amount of indoor all season facilities plus activity data and Max Galaxy
How is the environmental health of Minneapolis?	Environmental Justice metric



Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?

EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?

How robust is the tree canopy?

Tree canopy data

How have we realized MPRB as an ecological system?

Implementation tracker for Ecological System Plan

What percentage of our system is mown turf?

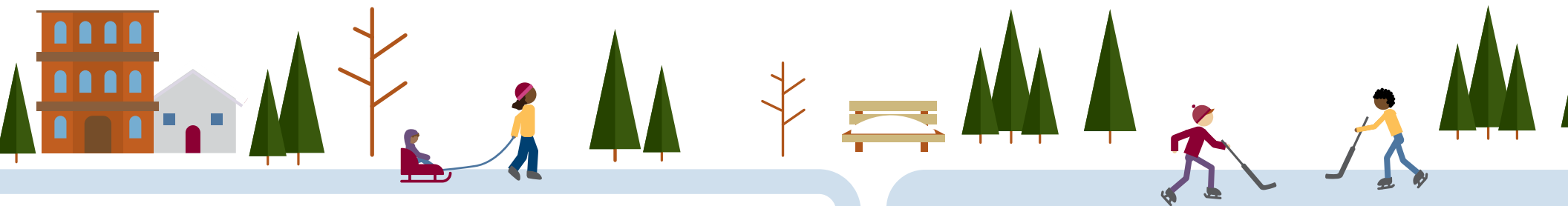
Vueworks

What percentage of parkland is water, natural areas, or habitat?

Vueworks, bodies of water, and habitat corridor completion from Ecological System Plan

What is our carbon footprint?

Carbon footprint analysis



Goal 7: Connect through communications and technology

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?

EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?

What are our user rates and reach on our social media platforms and website?

MPRB website and social media analytics

How well are we sharing information internally?

PB intra analytics, Vueworks requests, Jot form for communications

How well are we engaging and informing community?

Community Engagement Assessments and Plans annually by department

Are we improving the ways in which the public accesses information?

City Wide Survey on how people get info from MPRB

How many resources are we putting toward multilingual outreach and communications?

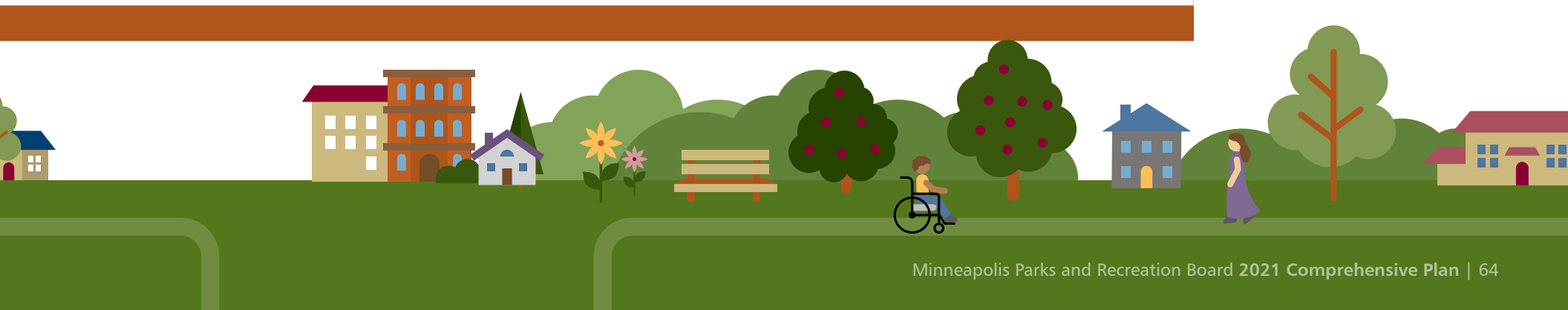
Amount spent on translation at events and of marketing materials and flyers, amount spent on ads or other with multi-cultural media outlets, and translated customer service calls

How responsive are we?

Call records and online forms for public request/interest

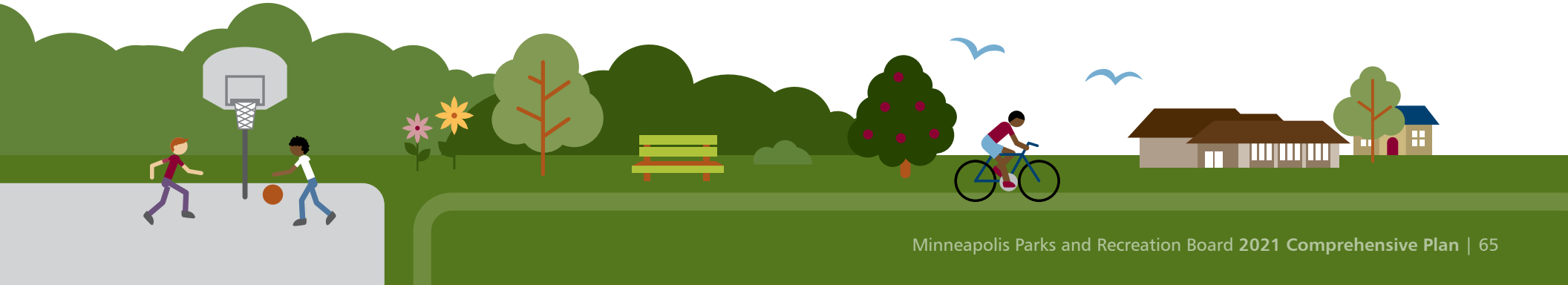
How much historical information from our archives do we share with staff and the public?

Archival research requests



Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?	EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?
Number of staff that transition from part time to full time jobs in the agency	HR tracking
How diverse is our workforce?	Employee demographics
How many youth jobs do we have?	Youth employment rate
How safe is our workplace?	DART data comparing MPRB to industry
How connected do employees feel across departments and across the org to leadership?	Employee survey
How is work life balance for MPRB employees?	Employee survey
How much or how effective is training?	Training data



Goal 9: Operate a financially sustainable enterprise

INDICATOR: What are we measuring?

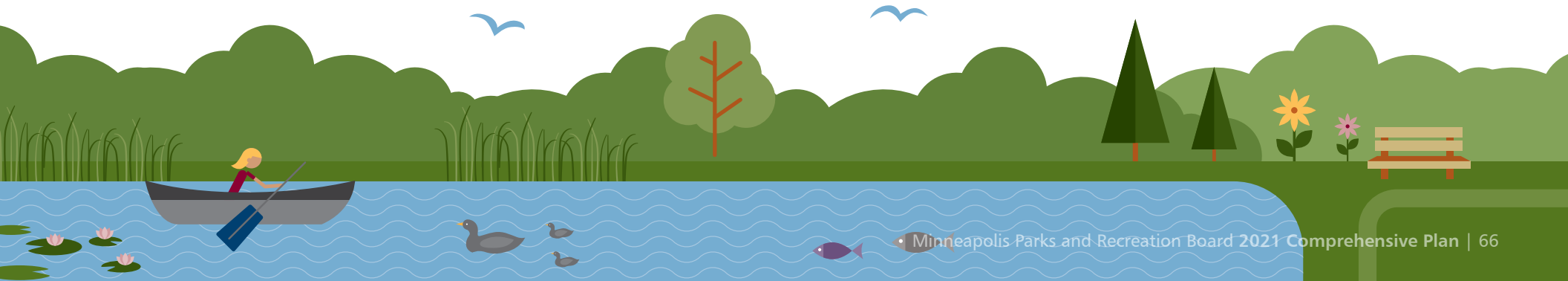
EXAMPLE METRIC: How we are measuring it?

What is our revenue breakdown between enterprise, philanthropy, property taxes, and other sources?

Earned revenue

What is the amount of revenue that Enterprise earns?

Earned revenue



Tracking Progress

The following processes will ensure that the work of commissioners and staff reflects the direction provided in the Comprehensive Plan.

Every Four Years

Strategic Directions and Implementation Plan

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board will rely on Board Strategic Directions and a four-year Implementation Plan that will outline performance goals as a blueprint for achieving the strategies, goals, and ultimately the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. Strategic Directions will be set through selecting priority strategies from the Comprehensive Plan on a four-year cycle coinciding with each newly-elected Board of Commissioners. Following the Strategic Direction adoption, the Superintendent and the Executive Team will establish an Implementation Plan that will include the specific tactics, timetables, staff, metrics and resources necessary to implement the plan. An Accountability Team comprised of staff across the agency will be developed to track the progress on the Implementation Plan. They will meet quarterly to share progress in the various departments and will provide a dashboard of progress to the Board and an Annual Report to the public on an annual basis.

Annually

Annual Budget

Annual budget requests by each department and division will be tied to the values, strategies and goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The budgeting process will allow spending across the organization to relate to both the Implementation Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. Financial reporting will correspond to the plan's values, strategies and goals. The budgeting process will tie spending across the organization to the Implementation Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.

Performance Reviews

Employees move the organization toward the vision set by commissioners and they will be evaluated on the work they do to achieve that vision. Employees will also be evaluated on how their work upholds the values of the organization. This tool will be used to effectively direct the skills of individuals and teams toward achieving the vision of the organization and will include opportunities for personal growth. Reviews will help identify when adjustments should be made and when achievements should be celebrated. Individual performance reviews will also help supervisors monitor workflow and keep their annual work plans on target.

Regularly

Board Actions

Each time a Board action is developed, staff and commissioners will be required to link their resolutions to strategies and goals in the Comprehensive Plan. This will ensure that political actions, projects and other regularly occurring daily functions of the Park Board are grounded in the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Engagement Plan

For any project that involves community engagement, staff are asked to fill out a Community Engagement Plan to examine local demographics, share methods and goals of engagement and report on engagement successes with the Board of Commissioners and the public. Community Engagement Plans require staff to link their engagement work to a Comprehensive Plan Goal, Strategy and Value.

Grant Approvals

The MPRB Grants Committee tracks all grant requests across the agency. Before applying for a grant, employees are asked to request internal approval. This process will prompt employees to link their grant requests to the goals and strategies to illustrate to MPRB and funders how funding requests are mission-aligned.

Hiring

Before a new staff position is hired, the hiring manager will be asked to ground the new staff position in a Goal and Strategy of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that staffing aligns with the direction that the plan has charted.

Travel and Training Requests

When an employee requests funding for training or travel associated with professional development, they need to link their training to a strategy in the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that professional development aligns with the agency goals and direction.



Winter Runner on West River Parkway

Reporting Progress

Reporting the progress of the Comprehensive Plan is a critical part of being an agency that practices the value of accountability, one of the guiding values of the way we work.

The progress on the Comprehensive Plan will be tracked through the above methods, and the progress will be shared with community, staff and the Board of Commissioners annually through a Dashboard and Annual Report. They will both include an update on Comprehensive Plan implementation progress. The Annual Report will employ the above methods to share progress on the Comprehensive Plan, and the Dashboard will focus on updating the metrics. These will be compiled by departments across the agency and live in an online platform.



Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners

Amending the Plan

In order to remain a living, useful document for future park planners, designers, elected officials, partners, and community members, the Comprehensive Plan must be able to change

when necessary. Any departure from the mission, vision, values, goals, and strategies contained in this document must be accomplished by an action of the elected Board of Commissioners according to applicable policies and procedures. The affected community should also be involved in that decision-making, per MPRB

community engagement policy. It is critical that Comprehensive Plan documents and resources are updated after amendment approval, so MPRB staff and the general public have only the most up-to-date plan.

Implementation Guidelines: Recreation Center System

(RecQuest Phase 3)

Extensive community and staff engagement for the past five years, as part of the Service Area Master Plans and Phases 1 and 2 of RecQuest, provides extensive knowledge of the current recreation center system and the vision for where it must go.

The RecQuest project always envisioned a Phase 3, which would provide guidance on the recreation buildings themselves as well as the system of buildings operated by the MPRB. Rather than engage the community and staff in a separate city-wide process simultaneous to Parks for All, we revisited the RecQuest conversation as part of the Parks for All process, building on extensive engagement during Phases 1 and 2 of RecQuest and during the Service Area Master Planning processes. RecQuest identified four focus areas intended to prioritize the delivery services from recreation centers:

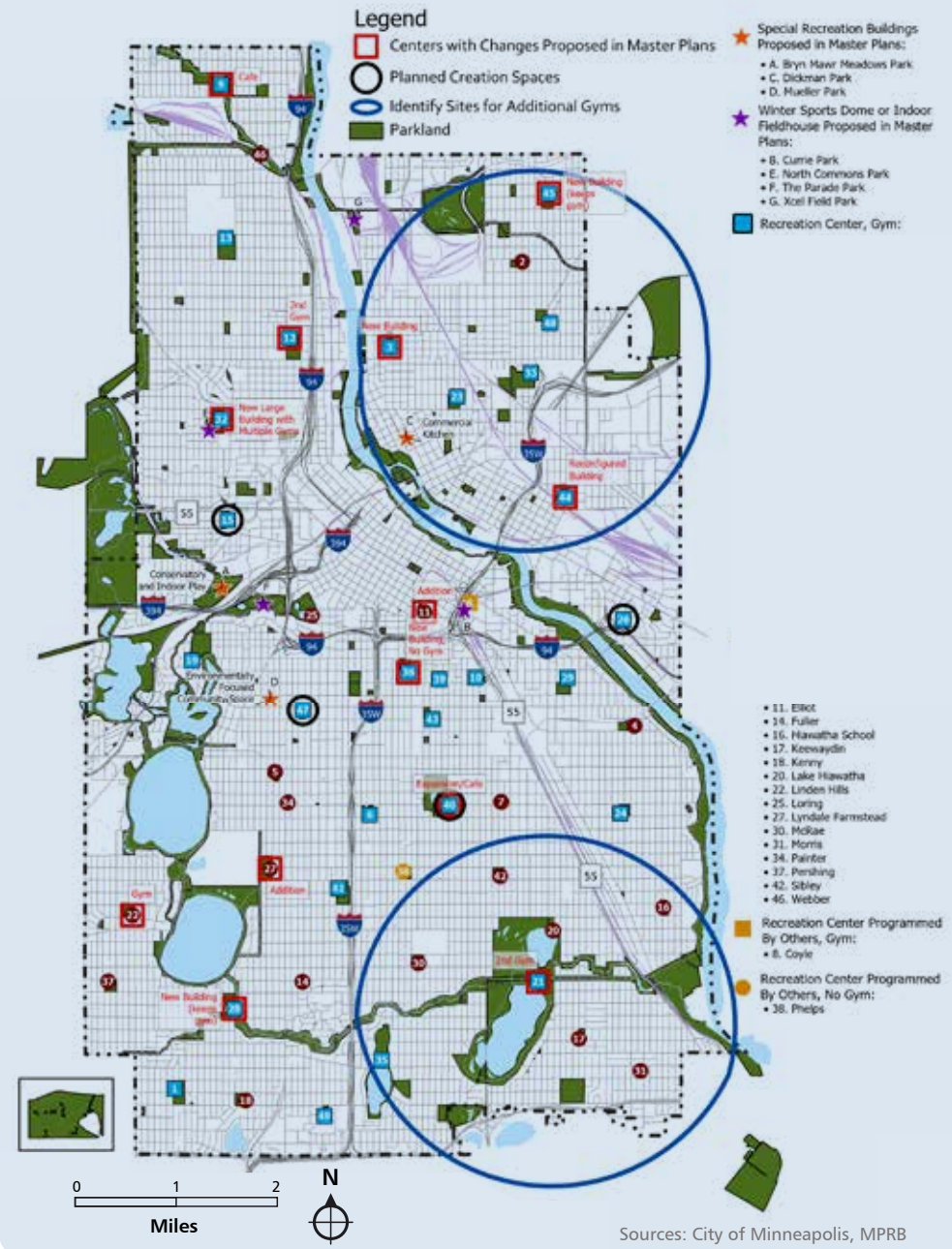
- Active older adults
- Youth development
- Equitable education programs
- Access to equitable athletics

RecQuest: An MPRB recreation center and program assessment and plan to assure that facilities, programs and services align with community needs.

This section is designed to provide further, more detailed guidance in implementing these strategies (Goal 3, Strategies 21, 22, 23, and 24). These are not detailed design guidelines, rather they provide insight into community and staff visions for the recreation centers and the system of buildings and better serve the four focus areas.

The RecQuest engagement appears specifically in Goal 3, Strategies 21, 22, 23, and 24 in the Parks for All Comprehensive Plan.

Recreation Centers



RECREATION CENTER BUILDINGS

The following are guiding principles for physically transforming recreation center buildings:

- Accommodation for comfort in **summer heat** should be considered whenever buildings are built, renovated or have significant upgrades. Much of MPRB programming occurs during the summer, and buildings are often too hot. Heat accommodation most likely takes the form of central air conditioning, which produces harmful carbon emissions. Staff should explore alternative energy generation, passive cooling, high-efficiency units and other environmentally preferable solutions.
- All rooms should be made as **versatile as possible**, without strongly defined purposes. Programs are constantly changing to meet community desires and demographic needs, and the recreation centers must adjust with this change. Rooms should be large and have clear sight lines to staff supervision areas. Open plan buildings that bring individual uses like computer stations and socialization nooks into main entry spaces are preferred.
- **Storage** should be maximized. Even MPRB's newest buildings lack storage for the various specialized equipment necessary to manage the wide variety of programming. Storage space is just as expensive per square foot as the rest of the building and offers little return on investment. Nevertheless, lack of ample

storage leads to clutter in the community spaces, which in turn creates a less welcoming, safe and vibrant environment.

- In order to best serve a wide variety of staff and community desires, recreation centers should benefit from **technology upgrades**. Plenty of outlets, good internet connectivity, changeable welcome screens and retractable presentation screens are a few examples. Surveillance screens are an unwanted technology, especially when they are visible to patrons entering the building. Where surveillance screens are necessary, they should be placed in sight only of staff. This will create a more welcoming environment and also prevent the public from determining where cameras have blind spots.
- **Gymnasiums**, like the rest of the recreation center, should be designed for multiple sports, as well as community gatherings and other events. Flooring is often a concern in this multi-use concept, as gym floors can be ruined by chairs and tables brought in for events. Solutions to this dual use should be explored when gyms are renovated or built. New gyms should be as large as possible, to allow for games for all ages, as well as space for spectators. Retractable basketball hoops, acoustic mitigation, and window treatments (if applicable) will help with multi-sport and multi-purpose use.



Adult Ceramics at Powderhorn Recreation Center



Fundamental Soccer at Bottineau Field Park

- The **restroom** directive, which outlines design guidelines for restroom replacement design, should be carefully followed during all renovations and new building construction.
- **Kitchens** are highly desired and utilized and should remain a fixture of MPRB recreation centers. It is especially important they are attached to rooms used for Rec+, the after-school programs, or pre-school programming.
- **Lines of sight** throughout the building are critical for program supervision and safety. Interior windows are welcome—even into gymnasiums—and the placement of structural details matter.
- The **entry experience** should be considered fully, from exterior trails and parking areas to the rooms visitors will use. This includes the space outside the front door, the configuration of the lobby and welcoming area, and the openness of the building itself. A high-amenity plaza space, with seating, is encouraged outside, with high visibility into the building. Access routes between the exterior and the gym are one of the more important considerations for safety and security. Some existing buildings look very uninviting from the outside, and it is difficult for some patrons to tell what they are. Park signage on the building itself would improve this, as would renovations that modify entry areas to make them more open and welcoming.
- **Teen spaces** should be designed in partnership with teens. These should be spaces that are only occupied by teens and not converted to other uses (like community rooms) at certain times of night.
- **Minor improvements** to the interiors of buildings should be considered. A new coat of paint, clean-up and organization, renovated woodwork, and new flooring can, for lower cost than major renovations, communicate that these are welcoming and exciting spaces.
- Overall, building upgrades and renovations should have the highest **environmental performance** that is financially feasible, when ongoing operating costs are considered. The Ecological System Plan provides guidance on where to explore alternative energy generation, and encourages use of low-VOC, recycled, recyclable, and low-carbon materials. These practices will improve both human and environmental health.



Youth basketball in Minneapolis Parks

RECREATION CENTER SYSTEM

As we learned through Phase 1 of RecQuest, any suggestion of service or quantity reductions in the recreation center system will be met with concern and frustration. Recreation centers are key touchpoints with the community, especially youth that are most in need of guidance as they mature in a city facing health, environmental and societal challenges. In the future, the recreation center system can also become a major part of MPRB’s goals and strategies around health equity. The system as it currently exists, with a mix of large and small buildings and a mix of those with gyms and those without, is a relatively versatile system when considered city-wide, and that flexibility and versatility should be elevated and reinforced.

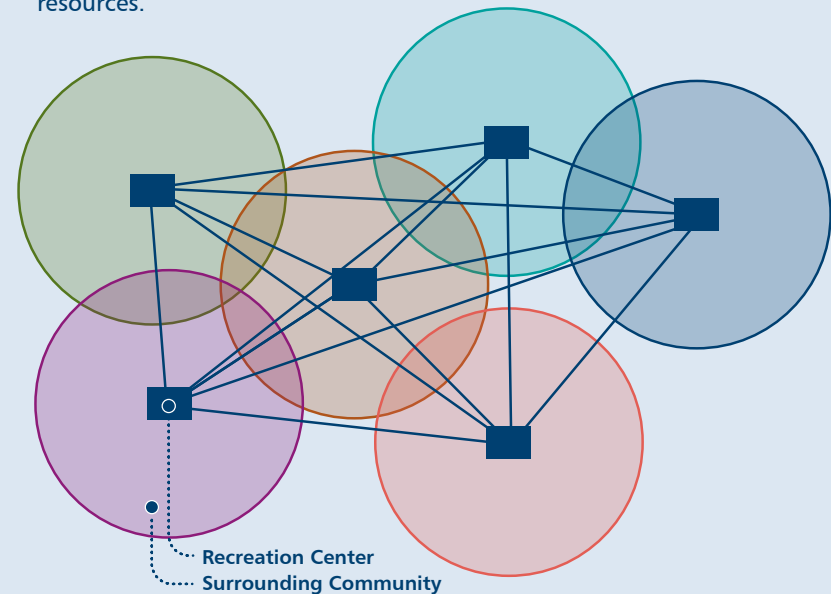
This plan builds on the 2007 Comprehensive Plan by recognizing the importance of strategic and intentional collaboration between recreation centers across the entire city. The 2007 plan re-envisioned what was at the time a system focused on each recreation center serving only the community around it. The 2007 “community center hub model” recognized there were space and staffing limitations to providing every service everywhere, and encouraged connectivity and collaboration beyond neighborhood boundaries and centers to meet all of the needs of communities. The 2021 Parks for All Comprehensive Plan proposes a “citywide web” concept that affirms and enhances the work since 2007. This concept continues the commitment to collaboration across the park system, identifies specific locations for building expansions and enhancements to better serve the public, and sets forth a philosophical process for achieving the concept’s goals.

Affirming a citywide cross-collaborative system does not, however, mean business-as-usual. Greater accountability must be implemented so that recreation center staff actually accomplish collaboration with other neighborhood/community recreation centers and regional resources. There are many instances today of staff collaborating from one service area to another. This must become more common and based on community recreational needs. It must be supported by recreation center-specific and citywide data that guide and challenge staff. It

Recreation Program Models

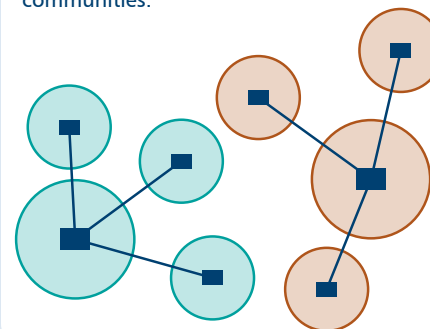
2021 City-Wide Web Model

Recreation centers connect citywide to foster collaboration across the park system, with other neighborhood/community recreation centers and regional resources.



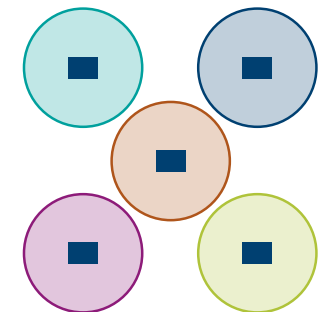
2007 Community Hub Model

Recreation centers connect and collaborate beyond neighborhood boundaries to meet the needs of communities.



1960s Independent Model

Each recreation center serves the community surrounding it.



must be rewarded, promoted and probably even become an aspect of performance evaluation. Care needs to be taken to ensure collaboration does not depend on relationships between staff, but rather the park and recreation needs of community. This citywide work is critical. If recreation centers reinforce connections only within their neighborhoods or small service areas, youth, seniors, adults and staff will never connect across the city's demographic divides, which are the product of deliberate government policy throughout the 1900s.

This concept of the “citywide web” will allow recreation centers to be more agile in the face of changing needs like evolving demographics, public health crises and an aging population. Critical tasks in accomplishing this idea:

- **Deeply understand** recreation center-area demographics and community needs, in the context of the city as a whole. This deep understanding is critical and will align programming and activities with the desires of the whole community—not only those that regularly visit the recreation center. This deep investigation is also more potent than system-wide guidance on service delivery. Service delivery could differ throughout the city. Staff should know not just their own service delivery targets, but also how those differ from elsewhere in our system. *Who is in my center's neighborhoods? What do they want to do in the parks? Who is not visible in the park? Who is not being served? What are their recreational needs? How are they and their desires alike or different from those in other parts of the city?*

- **Connect** with other recreation centers, programs, activities, and expertise both nearby and in distant parts of town, including the regional park and trail system. This could be necessary in order to serve identified needs in a recreation center's area when that recreation center doesn't currently have access to a desired program or facility. Individual recreation centers should still serve as portals for their surrounding communities, but should do more to connect people with the full park system. *Staff should ask: Are there parts of the city where my users never go? What might those other areas have that my area doesn't have? What other staff have I never worked with on programs or facility sharing?*
- Utilize those staff connections to **inspire** community connections. *Staff should ask: How can our programs and facilities help unite Minneapolis? What do we need to learn about each other?*

This plan also envisions system-wide physical improvements, which will be necessary to serve youth, seniors, and community gathering needs. These improvements would both increase the amount of indoor space available, as well as diversify that space through the inclusion of special facilities, some of which do not currently exist in the system. Many of these suggestions rise from extensive community engagement around the Service Area Master Plans. Each of these physical improvement types is likely to serve multiple of the RecQuest programmatic focus areas. For instance, a gym inherently increase

All these improvements, as recommended here and in the Service Area Master Plans, will come with significant cost. It will be necessary for MPRB to partner with the community, businesses, non-profits and regional and state government to make them a reality. However, as city population grows and neighborhoods densify, these additional recreation spaces will become more important than ever.



Parks for All staff workshop at Southside Operations Center

equitable access to athletics while also providing a venue for activities for active older adults. Building additions can provide space for enhanced youth development, equitable education programs, and opportunities for active older adults.

These master plans collectively identify the following system-wide building modifications:

- 7 additional gymnasiums
- 4 building additions to accommodate enhanced use spaces like cafes and community spaces
- 6 new or significantly reconstructed/reconfigured buildings to address current service shortcomings
- 4 indoor winter sports domes
- 3 “special recreation buildings” that go beyond our typical free-standing restroom buildings

Further analysis of these findings leads to several additional recommendations to enhance the system as a whole:

- Sites should be identified for additional gymnasiums in the south service area east of I-35W and in the northeast/southeast service area (see map).
- Additional specialized facilities should be considered, with approximately one location in each of the five recreational service areas (north, southwest, northeast/southeast, upper south, lower south). These specialized facilities should be sited based on pending

building renovations, appropriateness to the community and data analysis, including demographic study and community surveys and engagement. These specialized facilities are:

- Creation spaces (Four are planned currently, at Harrison, Whittier, Luxton and Powderhorn Parks)

- Commercial kitchens (One is planned at Dickman Park and one exists in Wirth Park)
- Indoor play (One is planned at Bryn Mawr)
- Walking tracks separated from sports surfaces (such as on a gym second floor or around the outside of a field in an indoor sports dome)



Appendix X

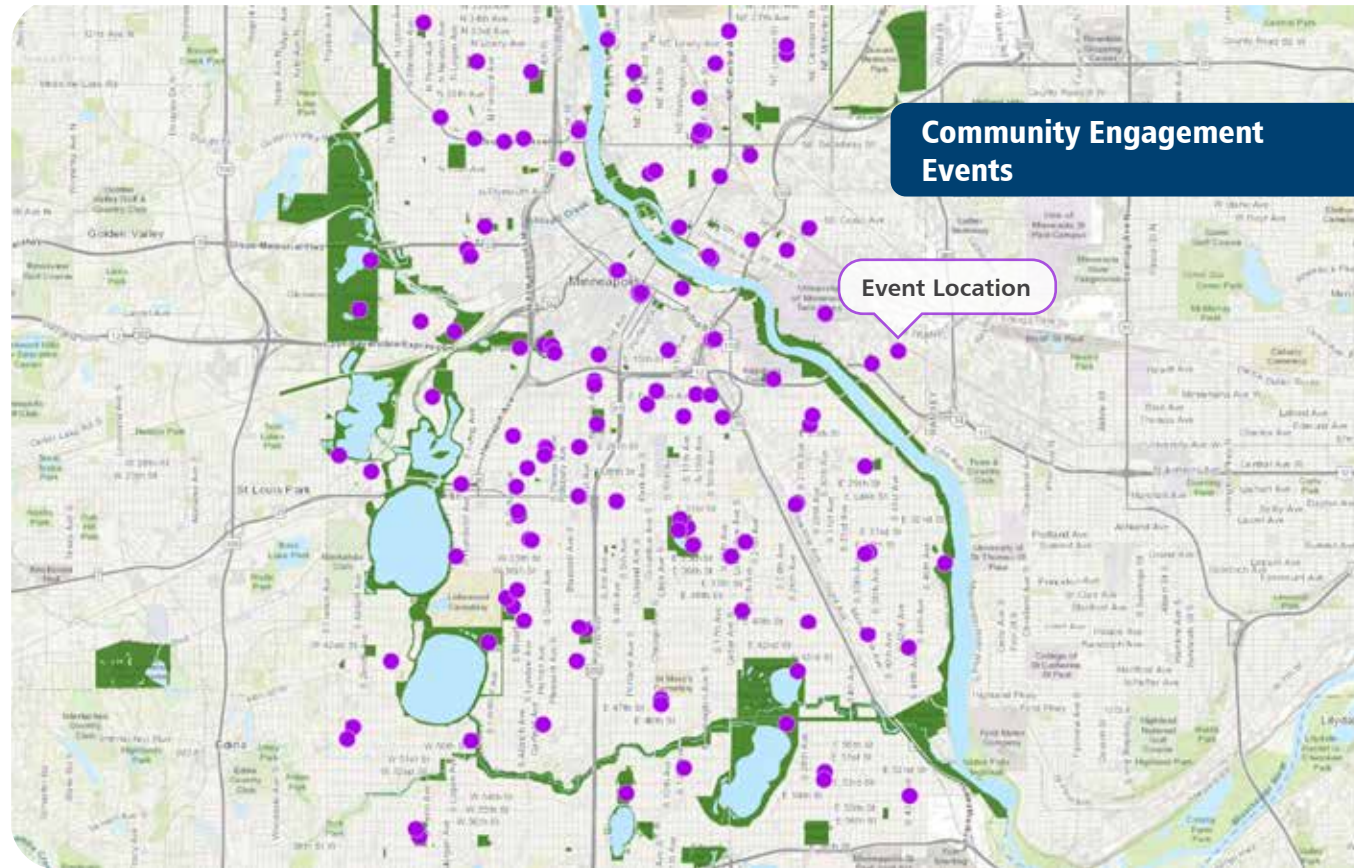
Parks for All Engagement Overview

Updated May 2020

Parks for All has been busy engaging with staff, community, agency partners, and commissioners since the project launched in spring of 2019. There has been a concerted effort to go where groups are already meeting to engage with them about the comprehensive plan. The intention of the extensive engagement is to develop a road map for our future that reflects the values, expectations, and dreams of our community, commissioners, and staff.

As we shifted gears to drafting policy ideas in the spring, the Parks for All staff had to switch to engaging with community, staff, and external partners virtually in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Community Advisory Committee meetings and Workgroup meetings were conducted online. Parks for All staff engaged more deeply in conversations surrounding the topics that Commissioners, staff, partners, and the public identified as important for the next decade of work.

Thank you to all the workgroup members, forum participants, Youth Design Team, Commissioners, staff, and the Community Advisory Committee who have worked so hard to develop these draft policy ideas for the next 10 years of our park and recreation system.



Here is a summary of how we have engaged:

Parks for All Story Map: This interactive website is a great place to go to dive deeper into the engagement that has happened and for more info on how to plug into the process. <https://minneapolisparcs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=d015be295d3f48329278bb23acf65552>

Parks for All website: This is where all the project links and information including the CE Plan, the CAC roster, the video about the process, and the Community Collaborator application are located. https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park_care_improvements/park_projects/current_projects/mprb-comprehensive-plan/

Text Engagement: People were invited to text 612-712-2827 to engage with the project; we heard from 247 voices through text engagement (ended May 1st, 2020)

Parks for All Survey: The survey was open until May 1, 2020, we heard from over 400 people.

City-wide Survey: In addition to the Parks for All survey, the City-wide survey responses will be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. The City-wide survey results will be a meaningful addition to the plan as it is a statistically valid survey, while the other survey methods are more of a snowball sample approach. A summary of the survey can be found here: https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about_us/news/2019-citywide-survey/

Dream Park Cards: Approximately 4,100 individuals have filled out Dream Park Cards since April of 2019. 45.8% of respondents self reported some information about who they are, however there is variation in demographic response rates. Respondents were least likely to report their race/ ethnicity (17.5%) and most likely to report their age (36%). Approximately 50% of the people who reported information about themselves are under the age of 18. Approximately 40% are people of color. These are both reflective of the residential demographics of the City of Minneapolis. Dream Park Cards were available:

- At rec centers, headquarters, golf courses, nature centers and the Trailhead, and AIS booths
- At events in parks and in the community (at 100+ events in summer 2019)
- At standing committee meetings and neighborhood meetings attended by Parks for All staff
- Online on the Story Map

Workgroups: The workgroups, which are also considered our Technical Advisory Committees, kicked off in December 2019 and will meet through summer 2020. They are comprised of MPRB staff, agency partners, and experts in the various fields. Each will meet five times to frame policy recommendations to MPRB around the following topic areas.

- Public Safety
- Public Health
- Climate Resilience
- Arts, Culture, and History
- Gentrification and Displacement
- Multigenerational
- Water Resources

Workgroups will be creating policy directions through the lens of demographics and density, revenue, workforce development, equity, independence, and sustainability. Workgroups were developed by the Executive Team and the Project Advisory Committee. The workgroups came together to meet twice in person, grounding themselves in the project; and then met once virtually in the spring to share policy ideas with one another. The workgroups will also come together at the Park Summit to provide feedback on recommendations developed by each other, the CAC, the PAC and the Commissioners.

What are your dreams for Minneapolis Parks?

Koj tus npau suav txgo Minneapolis Parks, Kev ua Sim yog Dabtsi?
¿Cuáles son sus sueños para los parques de Minneapolis?
Maxaad ku haminaysaa in ay noqoto Minneapolis parks?

Please text your park dreams to 612-712-2827

PARKS FOR ALL
The MPRB 2021 Comprehensive Plan
Parks for All will set the priorities for the next decade of Minneapolis parks and recreation. **We need your voice!**

www.minneapolisparcs.org/parksforall
Please help us shape the future of parks and rec in Minneapolis!

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board



Staff Meetings and Workshops:

Parks for All staff interviewed all directors from across the agency, and are working to engage with all full time employees. Seasonal and part time staff have been targeted through online engagement and as schedules allow. Parks for All staff have also met with the Superintendent monthly during the project as well as with the Executive Team on a quarterly basis. There will also be one-time staff conversations around specific topic areas that emerge during the process. If staff teams are meeting on the topics already, these teams or ad hoc groups will be engaged to provide insights on the topics.

Forums: Forums are comprised of community members, topical experts, and internal staff. These forums will meet once, in a variety of ways, to give input on a specific topic before the plan is drafted or in response to the draft plan as needed. Forums will use an equity lens to examine the conversation. Community Focus Groups will be developed by Commissioners and the CAC and convene in Spring of 2020. Some of these forums met for virtual conversations, some were conducted via online survey, etc. in response to COVID-19. The forums are based on a variety of topics that rose up during engagement as being important to develop policy ideas around.

- Athletics
- Communications and Marketing
- Data Driven Decisions
- Environmental Education
- Gender Inclusion
- Habitat, Ecology, and Natural Space
- Land Management
- Staff Safety and Wellness
- Volunteering

Virtual Park Summit: Originally planned for one day, the Park Summit was a midpoint in the Parks for All planning process that extended over three weeks with more than 200 people engaging virtually through Listening Sessions, Viewing Parties, video, Office Hours, Panel Discussions, a survey and a community comment board.

The Park Summit examined more than 500 policy ideas generated by 150 workgroup and committee members. The ideas were considered for their connections, gaps, differences, and significance. Following the Park Summit, the draft plan was developed that subsequently went out for public comment. Following the public comment period, the plan will be revised based on feedback and brought to the Board of Commissioners for review and approval.

Community Advisory Committee:

The Parks for All Community Advisory Committee started met in December 2019, again in February, and virtually twice in May to talk about how to proceed and to start drafting policy ideas as a group. The CAC charge is as follows:

- Become knowledgeable about the MPRB Comprehensive Plan and process,
- Understand and represent the park and recreation needs of the community and park visitors,
- Act as community liaisons for the project,
- Help identify communities, organizations, user groups, populations, and other that should be consulted in the engagement process
- Provide feedback on a draft plan,
- Help identify values, strengths, and needs within the Minneapolis Park system and within their communities
- Provide insight on the long-term policy direction of the MPRB
- Report back to appointers or appointing bodies, as requested, on the plan process, information presented, and possible recommendations, and
- Engage in working groups and subcommittees as needed.

Youth Design Team: The Youth Design Team has played an important role in the Parks for All process. The Youth Design Team trains and involves youth in MPRB projects to meaningfully participate in park planning, design, and decision-making. There have been approximately 12 youth in the program over the past year. See Youth Design Team profiles and photos for more information. The program includes:

1. Career development for youth: learning from and working with MPRB staff/ departments, design firms, artists and community-based organizations. Learning areas include research and data collection, engagement activities, site analysis, data analysis, environmental design, preparation of presentations, policy development/ recommendations, and social media and art based communications.
2. MPRB connections to community: The Youth Design Team plays an important role in engaging with community on behalf of MPRB including staffing event tables and focus groups, conducting arts-led engagement, focus groups, and presenting to formal committees and the Board. Engagement techniques include community portraits, facilitation, trust building techniques, in-depth circle conversations, event planning, youth-based engagement, as well as intercept surveys in parks. The YDT is, at its core, a form of community engagement with youth that goes beyond project-based engagement.
3. Youth educational and intergenerational engagement opportunities at MPRB: The YDT engages closely with MPRB staff and partners. The process deeply connects Youth Design Team to staff, leadership, and projects or initiatives at the Park Board
4. Workforce development: The YDT introduced youth to careers in the fields of Community Engagement, Policy Making, Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Parks and Recreation. Many of these career tracks are struggling to recruit and train a new generation of park professionals reflecting the communities they serve. The YDT is an opportunity to build a diverse next generation of MPRB employees.



Community Collaborators: Community Collaborators were businesses, institutions, creative collectives, informal groups, nonprofits, and cultural organizations who are interested in envisioning and executing engagement projects designed to broaden the way community engages with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comprehensive Plan. The Community Collaborator initiative is a paid opportunity for groups across Minneapolis to convene their own conversations about parks and recreation to inform the next 10-years of priorities for the park and recreation system. For more information, refer to the Community Collaborator overview.

Thank you to the Parks for All Community Collaborators including:

- Beatrix Jar
- Corcoran Neighborhood Organization
- McKinley Neighborhood Organization
- Bihi Abdirizak
- Hmong Elders Park Elder Care
- Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Organization

Neighborhood and Community Organizations: MPRB staff have reached out to all neighborhood organizations across the City and to hundreds of community organizations to see if they are interested in having staff present about the comprehensive plan to their group. We have presented to approximately half of the 80+ neighborhood organizations and many community groups.

Standing Committees: The City and MPRB have several standing committees that staff will present to and solicit info from on their specific topic areas. Whenever possible, these groups will be met with in lieu of convening a separate focus group.

- Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission
- St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board
- Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (MACOPD)
- Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) Programs & Policies Subcommittee
- Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) 5E Subcommittee
- Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC)
- Animal Care and Control Advisory Board
- Northern Green Zone Task Force
- Transgender Equity Council Regular Meeting
- Southside Green Zone Council
- Minneapolis Arts Commission
- Minneapolis Food Council
- Minneapolis Advisory Committee on Aging
- Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC)
- Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board
- Park Police Advisory Committee
- Minneapolis Advisory Committee on Housing
- Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC)
- Racial Equity Advisory Committee
- Minneapolis Youth Sports Association
- Glyphosate and Integrate Pest Management Community and Technical Advisory Committee

Appendix XX

Sources (in order of appearance)

Chapter 1

page

- 10 Excerpt from the Land We're On by the Native Governance Center
- 15 Metropolitan Council: [https://metro council.org/Planning/Publications-And-Resources/Thrive-MSP-2040-Plan-\(1\)/ThriveMSP2040.aspx](https://metro council.org/Planning/Publications-And-Resources/Thrive-MSP-2040-Plan-(1)/ThriveMSP2040.aspx)
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Chapter 2

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- 31 Creative Vitality Index: <https://cvsuite.org/creative-vitality-index/>
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Appendix XXX

Highlights of 2007 plan accomplishments

- **2008:** The Green Team program begins. It introduces youth ages 14-15 to green industries and nature-based careers.
- **2010:** The RiverFirst Initiative begins. It has guided the development of the upper riverfront along with the Above the Falls Regional Park and Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park master plans. A few projects completed or underway include 26th Avenue North Overlook, new regional park in the works at Upper Harbor Terminal, Hall's Island, and Water Works. The MPRB works in partnership with the Minneapolis Parks Foundation on the continued development of the upper river.
- **2011:** The Community Outreach Department was created to increase communication and interaction with residents and encourage participation in MPRB programs and services.
- **2012:** The Teen Teamworks Park Pathways group launched. It focuses on language and culture education, recycling initiatives and mentoring children ages 9-12 who participate in MPRB athletic teams.
- **2014:** The MPRB joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE). Since then, staff have gone through a Racial Equity 101 and the organization is going through a second cohort of full-time staff throughout the organization who are internal influencers focusing on operationalizing race equity work throughout the organization.
- Technology and software upgrades along with purchasing of new equipment have improved and streamlined processes and communications across the organization.
- Waste management, internal resource sharing through the intranet, public registration system upgrades, urban tree canopy management, pay parking automation, document archival processes, and asset management have all been enhanced to improve organizational function.
- Development of equity metrics for the allocation of funds for:
 - Capital improvements within neighborhood park (**2016**) and regional (**2017**) parks/trails
 - Recreation center funding and programs (**2018**)
- Partnership with St. Stephen's Street Outreach to connect people experiencing homelessness with social services
- **2017:** Phase 1 of the Natural Areas Plan was completed.



Kayakers on Bde Maka Ska on a sunny day in June

- **2017-2018:** Development and implementation of a Racial Equity Action Plan, updated for 2019-2020.
- Implementation of a Park Dedication Ordinance to allocate new parks and new park funding to new areas of development in the city.
- **2018:** Adoption of the Community Gardening policy and revisions to ordinance (**2017**) provide opportunities for community food and foraging of fruit and nut trees in parks.
- The MPRB participated in hosting large nationally recognized sports events including the Super Bowl (**2018**) and Final Four (**2019**).
- **2019:** Park Police hosted its first Teen Academy to bring together young people interested in careers in law enforcement or related fields.
- **2019:** Park Ambassador program launched as a way to welcome people and answer questions at popular park locations and events during the summer.
- **2011:** Community engagement policy developed. It was revised in 2019.
- **2019:** A Carbon Footprint Analysis was completed and the Board adopted new performance goals for the agency.
- **2020:** Ash Canopy Replacement Plan will end. The eight-year plan preemptively replaces a percentage of ash trees annually with a diverse range of new trees.
- In the last seven of the past eight years, the MPRB has been recognized as the number 1 urban park system in the United States according to the Trust for Public Land ParkScore index.



Youthline Beat Lab at Powderhorn Recreation Center



PARKS FOR ALL

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
Comprehensive Plan



Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

For more information about the plan and process,

visit www.minneapolisparcs.org/parksforall.

Printed plans available upon request.

Contact cchristensen@minneapolisparcs.org or 612-499-9129.

