

An aerial photograph of Como Regional Park in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The image shows a large, multi-story building with a red roof and a white facade, situated on a peninsula overlooking a large body of water. The park is filled with trees in various shades of green and yellow, suggesting an autumn setting. There are several parking lots with cars, a bridge, and a small pond in the background. The overall scene is a lush, green park environment.

WELCOME!

COMO REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN DAC MEETING #1 - MARCH 2023

TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Introduction

2. Meeting Framework

3. Guiding Principles

4. DAC Principles

5. Project Overview

- Como Master Plan
- Project Goals
- Master Plan Process

6. Regional Connections

7. Previous Studies

8. Recent Area Projects

9. Community Engagement

- Surveys
- Key Takeaways

10. Existing Conditions

- Map Analysis
- Photos

11. Group Discussion

- Priorities
- Targeted Outreach
- Next Steps

12. Links

13. Assignment

INTRODUCTION

City of Saint Paul

Parks and Recreation

David Ronzani | Project Manager

Anne Gardner | Supervisor

Max Sell | Project Support Staff

David Ronzani (he/him)

Landscape Architect | Project Manager

City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

david.ronzani@ci.stpaul.mn.us |

651.266.6410

Committee Members (listed alphabetically)

Britta Belden

Theodore Budd

Joni Chacich

Dillon Clements

Allison Cole

Grant Cooper

James Cowles

Kevin Dahm

Amy Gage

Sasha Mackin

Zach Mensinger

Dave Montgomery

Christopher Tabisz

Greg Williams

Han Zhang

Thank You For Being Here!

MEETING FRAMEWORK

IN-PERSON MEETING

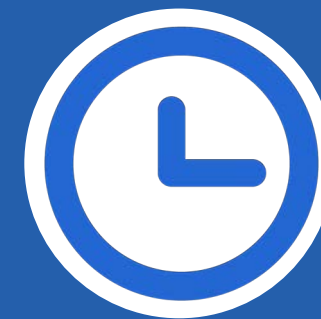
- Participation / Best Practices
- Content Delivery

CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT

- Post-Meeting Resources to DAC & Website
- www.engagestpaul.org/como-trail-master-plan

DISCUSSION

- Meeting Dates + Times
- Virtual Meeting Option
- Other

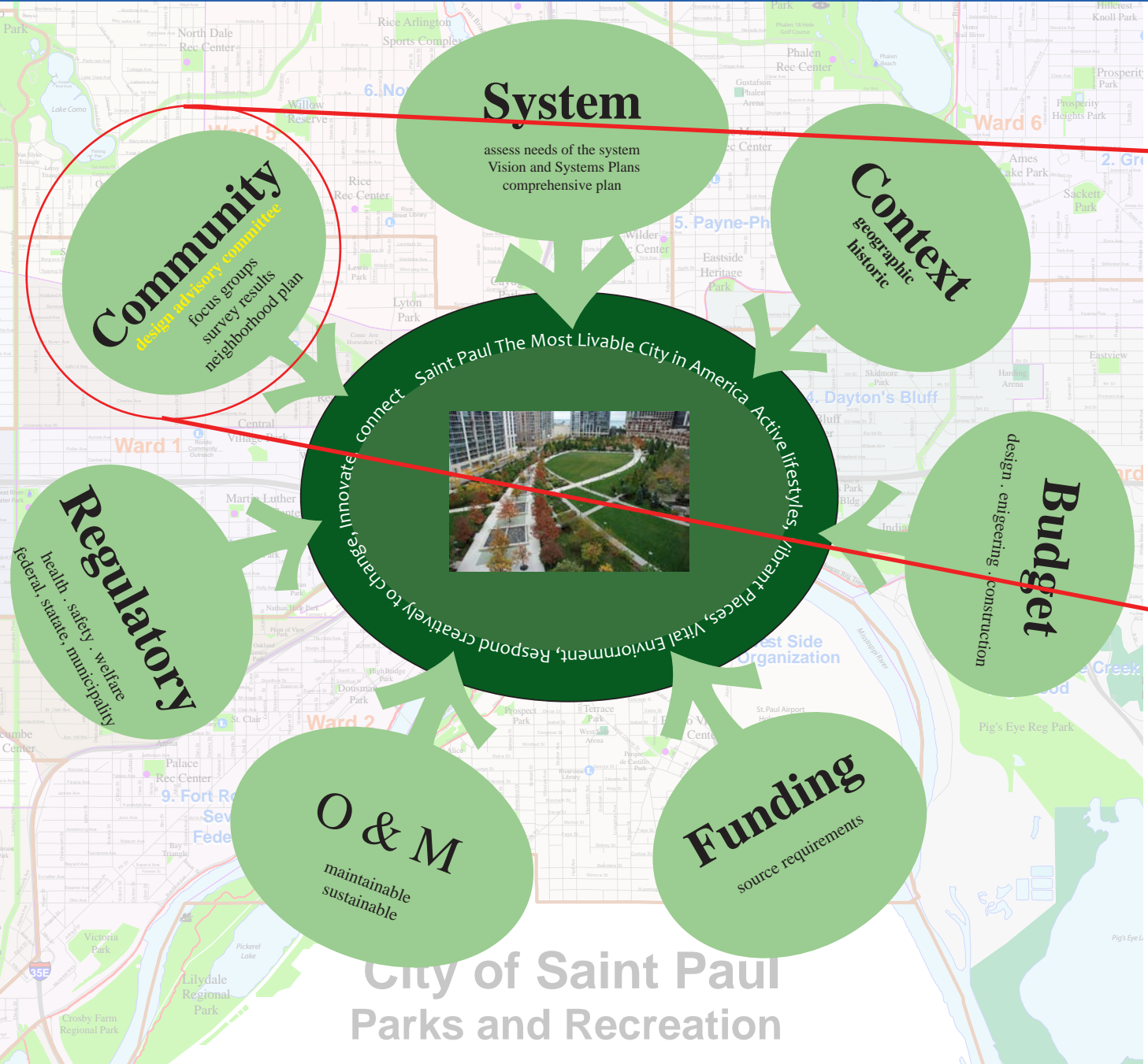


5:00 – 6:30 PM

- Meeting #1: 3/7/23
- Meeting #2: 5/9/23*
- Meeting #3: 7/11/23*

***Tentative Time -
subject to DAC member approval**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



COMMITTEE ROLE

DAC PRINCIPLES

Help to determine the **community needs** and desires for the site.

- Communicate with group(s) you are representing and solicit input.

Review plan concepts and **provide input** on **major design elements** and themes.

- Contribute constructive and respectful suggestions and feedback.

Bring suggestions from community, stakeholders, and respective organizations to the attention of the project team.

- Communicate via email and/or at meetings.

Help **communicate** project **progress** to community members.

- Act as the **liaison** between project and community.

Provide guidance to City staff on final design recommendations for the project.

- Actively contribute through discussion at committee meetings.

Ensure that the full **range of issues** are discussed during the design process.

PROJECT OVERVIEW - Como Master Plan

- The project will serve as an **update** to the current Master Plan.
- The last Master Plan for Como Regional Park was completed in 1984, though many improvements have been made to the Park since.
- Met Council Requires updating master plans every 20 years.
- The focus of the plan will be on reviewing and improving the trail system within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections to the larger Grand Round trail network of Saint Paul.
- Project Funding: Met Council - \$150,000

PROJECT OVERVIEW - Project Goals

- **Improve connections** between the trails within the park to **Saint Paul's Grand Round** trail network.
- **Clarify** pedestrian, bicycle and mixed-use **routes** throughout Como Regional Park.
- Identify and prioritize additional **amenities** for **future inclusion** within Como Regional Park.
- Engage and incorporate **community voices** during design of the project.
- Update Master Plan with changes for **adoption** by Met Council.

PROJECT OVERVIEW - Master Plan Process



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

84

Planning Policy:

PROMOTE MASTER PLANNING AND HELP PROVIDE INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLANNING ACROSS JURISDICTIONS.

Planning – Strategy 1: Regional park implementing agencies are required to prepare a master plan for each Regional Parks System facility it owns and/or operates.

Minn. Stat. 473.313 requires a master plan to be developed by each regional park implementing agency in consultation with all affected municipalities. While the statute requires only one master plan per regional park implementing agency, the Council requires individual master plans for each regional park, park reserve, trail and special recreation feature. Master plans prepared by the regional park implementing agencies are critical in defining the specifics of acquisition, development and operation of regional facilities.

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

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

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

Master Plan Content Requirements and Funding Process

Each master plan for regional parks, park reserves, and special recreation features must include information for each of these items:

- **Boundaries and acquisition costs.** A list of parcels to be acquired and the estimated total cost and schedule for their acquisition, and information on natural resources, site suitability, special assessments, potential contamination based on data from the

FOUR: Policies and Strategies

Asks government organizations to provide a report every 10 to 20 years, listing plans for:

1. Park boundaries and acquisitions
2. Stewardship
3. Demand forecast
4. Park development/improvement concept
5. Potential conflicts
6. Public services (utilities)
7. Operations
8. Public engagement and participation
9. Public awareness
10. Accessibility
11. Natural resources

PROJECT OVERVIEW - Master Plan Process

Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is required to have its own master plan.

Master plans are critical in defining the specifics of acquisition, development, and operation of regional facilities.

For a park agency to receive a grant for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a Met Council-approved master plan.

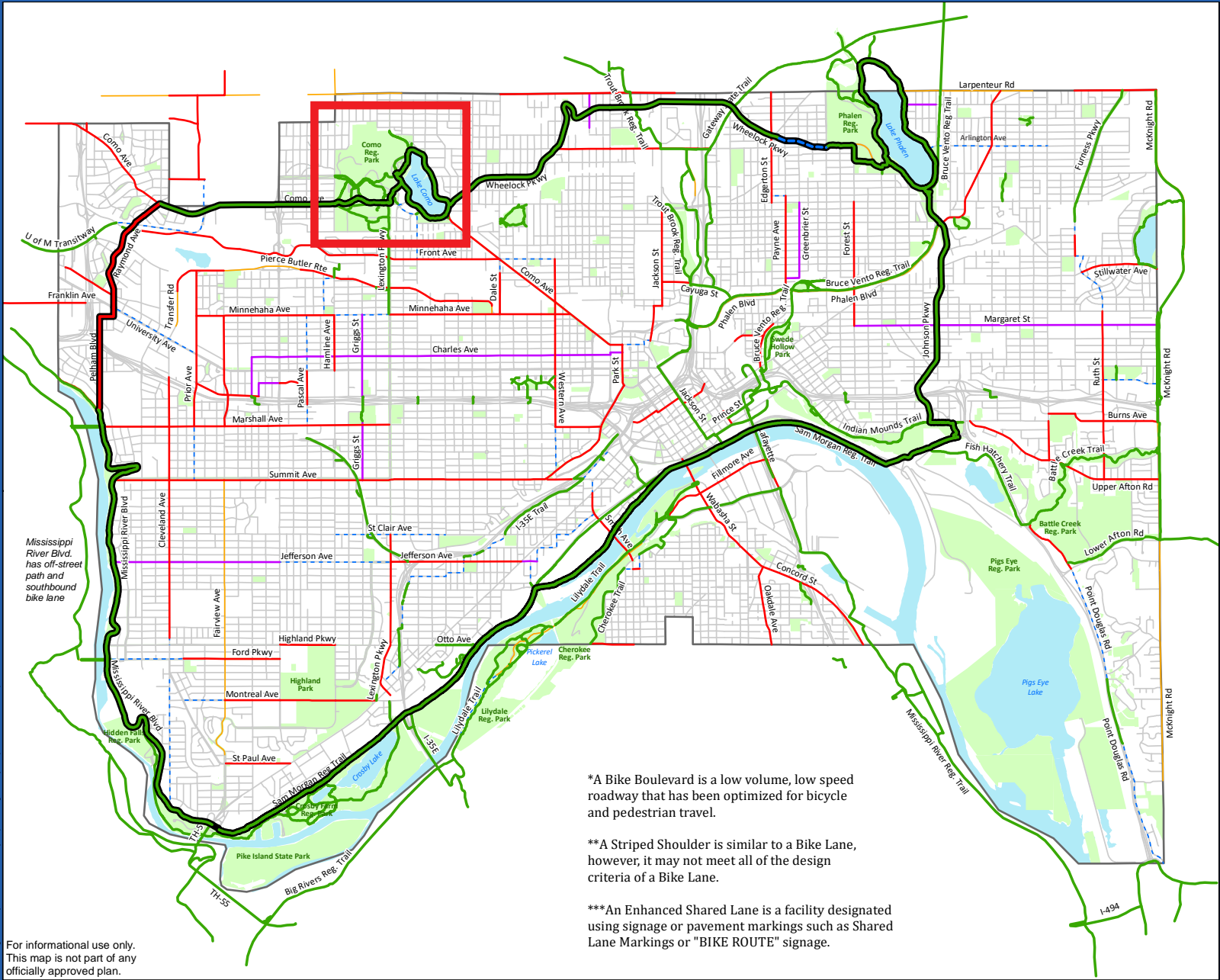
Equity Component - Equity means connecting all residents to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities so that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change.

The Met Council provides demographic data for the region and their jurisdictions. The data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, household income, ability, age, educational attainment, and gender. to help identify communities who may be under-served by the regional parks system.

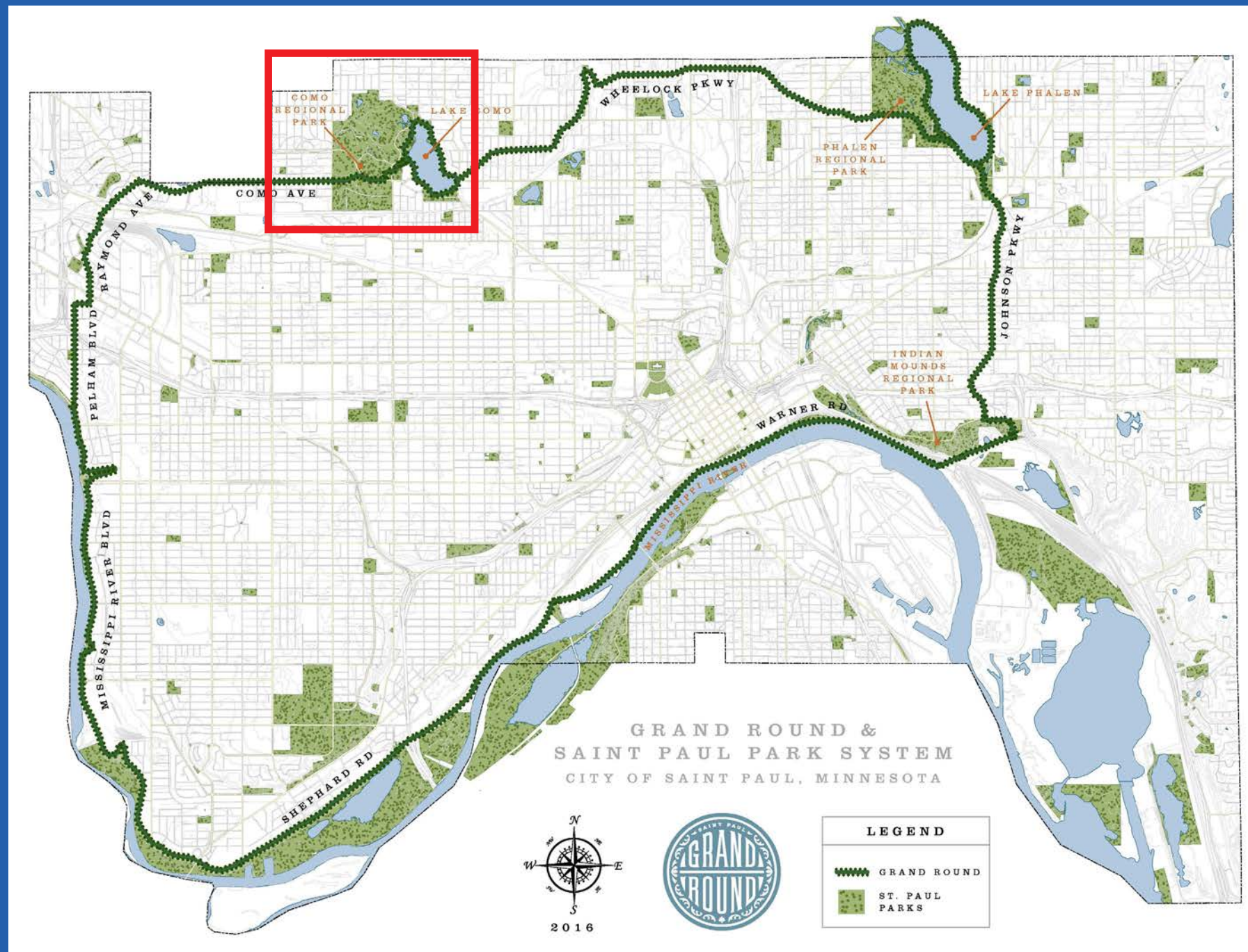
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Saint Paul City Bikeways

- 214.6 miles of bikeway
- 67.2 miles of Dedicated Bike Lanes
- 17.0 miles of Bikeable Shoulders
- 11.1 miles of Bike Boulevards
- 20.9 miles of Shared-Use Lanes



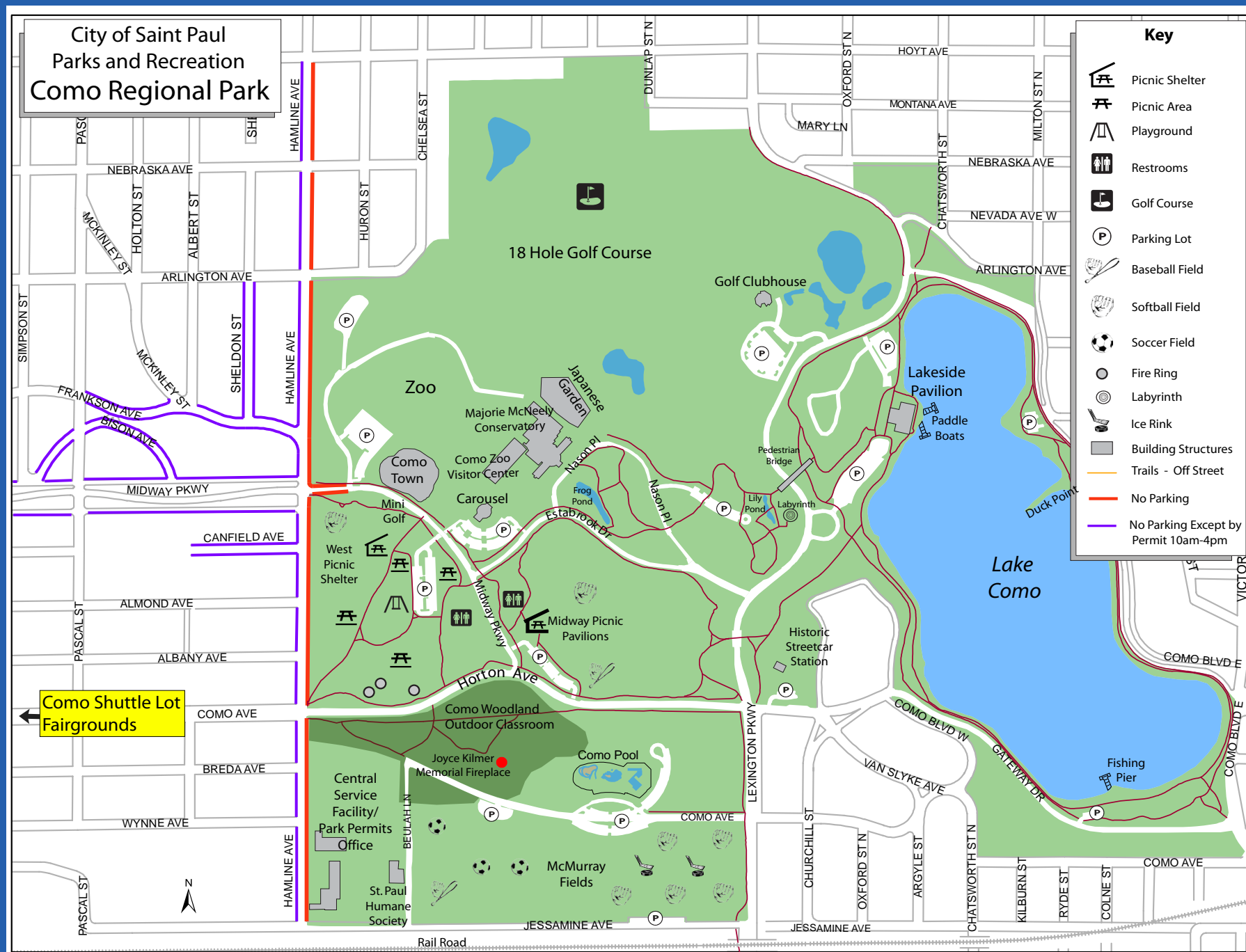
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



Saint Paul Grand Round

- **27.0** miles of Scenic Parkways
- Connects outdoor landmarks (Lake Phalen, Lake Como, Mississippi River, over a dozen parks)
- First envisioned 125 years ago by Horace Cleveland.

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



Como Regional Park

- **2.3** miles of paved walking and cycling paths around lake area.
- **4.6 million** visits in 2021- per Met Council
- 2nd most in Twin Cities Regional Parks System. (Minneapolis Chain of Lakes)

PREVIOUS STUDIES

- Como Park Master Plan (1984)
- Lake Management Plan (CRWD)
- Como Pathways Report (District 10)
- Grand Round Implementation Plan
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Systems Plan
- District 10 Como Community Plan: An Addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Como Stormwater Master Plan
- Como Transportation Master Plan
- Como Woodland Master Plan
- Como Conservatory Master Plan
- Forecourt Master Plan
- Como Gold Course Master Plan
- And MANY more.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

COMO REGIONAL PARK - PARKING IMPROVEMENTS



Background Information

Project Manager: Anne Gardner, Anne.Gardner@ci.stpaul.mn.us

D10 Report Summary

SIGNAGE

Suggestions & Requests

- + Campus wide pedestrian wayfinding needed
- + Master Map w/key attractions
- + Request to divide Como Park to five color coded sub-divisions
- + Kiosks at Key Locations
- + **Lakeside Pavilion and Golf House Signage**
- + Recommendation for icon and color coding
- + Replace trail pedestrian wayfinding & directional signage
- + Striping and arrows on paths

Como Park Sub-Divisions:

- Como Lake
- Zoo & Conservatory
- Picnic & Event Areas
- Golf Course/Skiing
- Pool/McMurray Field/Woodland
- Outdoor classroom/Audubon Woods

Kiosk Locations:

- Lakeside Pavilion
- Zoo & Conservatory
- Midway Parkway @ Hamline
- East side of lake (Wheelock Pkwy Entrance)
- McMurray Field/Pool
- Como/Horton/Lexington Confluence

AMENITIES

Parkwide Recommendations

- + **Reduce speed limits w/tailed cross-walk at key locations (no specified location)**
- + **Add site furnishings along trails (bench, trash receptacles, compost at high-use buildings, water fountain-pet fountain, bicycle racks)**
- + Trail vegetation maintenance
- + **Screening of commercial trash containers**
- + Addition of portable restroom facilities in strategic locations, especially for off-season

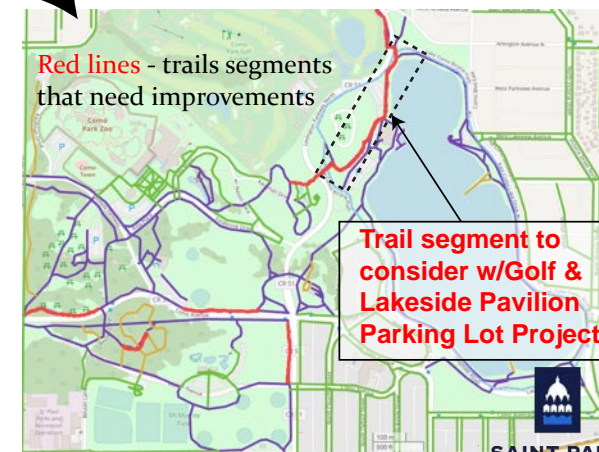
TRAILS

Suggestions & Requests

- + Prioritize trail segments for repave or rebuild
- + Study impacts of Lake Como trail from one to two-way. Consider plowing in winter.
- + **Add trail signage & wayfinding**
- + **Preferred two-way north and south trail between Lakeside Pavilion & crosswalk at Lexington Ave & Como Lake Dr**
- + Consider adding north-south trail across Estabrook Dr, west of Lexington
- + Enhance crosswalk safety connections to Grand Round - Maryland/Wheelock (east) & Como/Hamline (west)

Wayfinding priority to pedestrian bridge over Lexington Pkwy.

*Red text - Potential items to be included in the Golf Course & Lakeside Pavilion Parking Lot project scope of work.

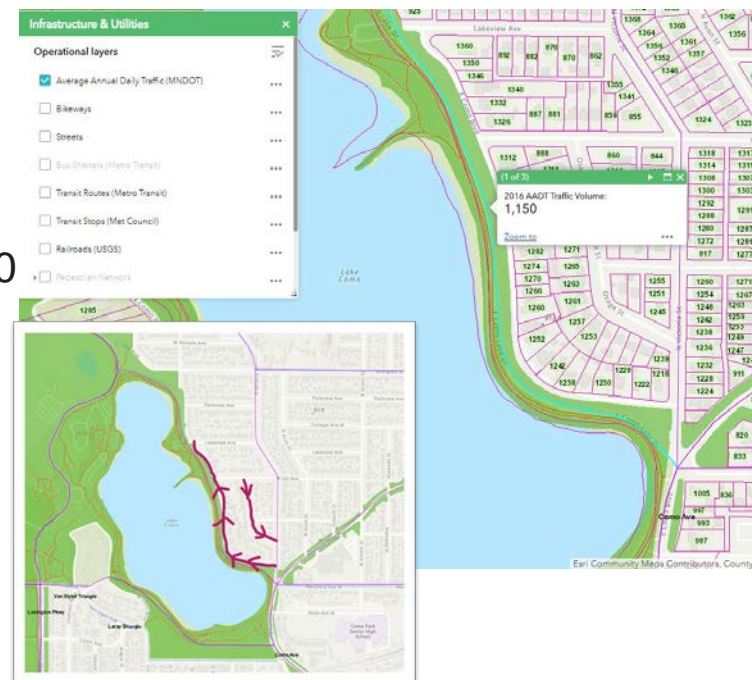


District 10 Campus Analysis

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Existing Conditions and Considerations

- E Como Blvd may already be two way vehicles – on the eastern road (uphill from lake) the signs face both ways
- 2016 AADT Traffic Volume 1,150
- Victoria AADT 2,550
- Como AADT 6,900
- Wheelock 3,400
- Could Griggs and E Como Blvd be a one way pair?



Circulation

- Goal is to two way bike trail all the way around Lake Como
- As part of Master Plan update for Como Reg Park, we should study if two-way is feasible whole way around; for this process focus on getting two-way bikes from Victoria to Lexington Pkwy
- Two-way bikes from Lexington to Como Pavilion is built (confirm)
- New trail along Lexington is two way – goes around and bypasses the Pavilion
- Keep in mind – connections to future Lexington Ave trail are important, there is a Met Council trail search corridor along Lex.

East Como Lake Dr. Closure

RECENT CHANGES



Changes in the park since 2020

2022
Golf and Pavilion Lot Improvements

2020
McMurray Fields

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- On-site + Neighborhood Events
- Engage Saint Paul
- Surveys
- Pin Map
- Site Signage
- Advisory Committees
- Targeted Engagement

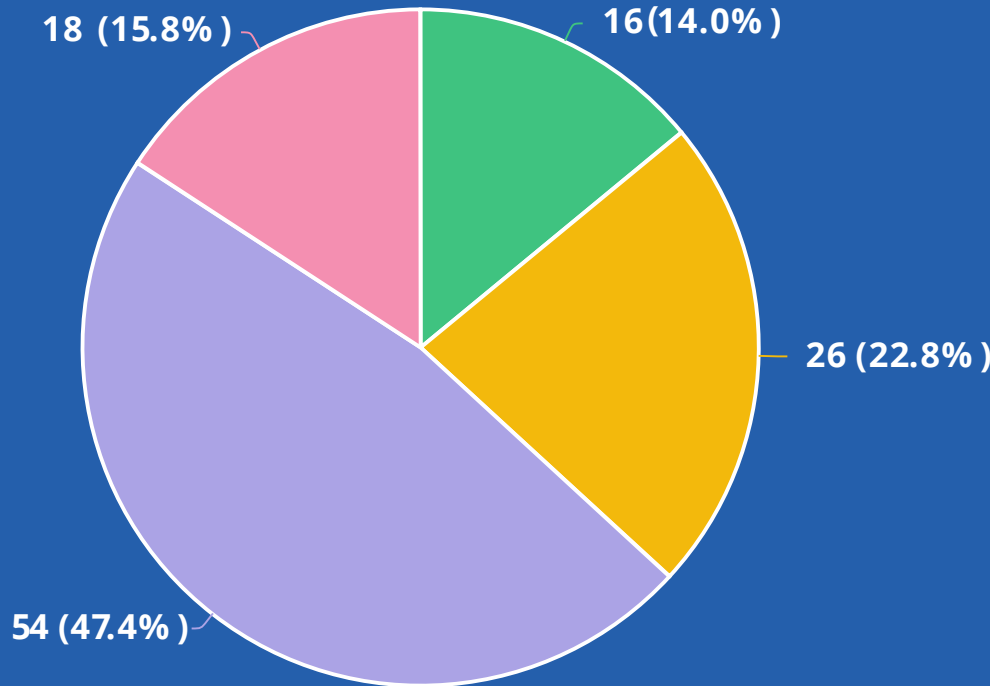
114
Surveys complete

549
informed participants

278
Unique Pins

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

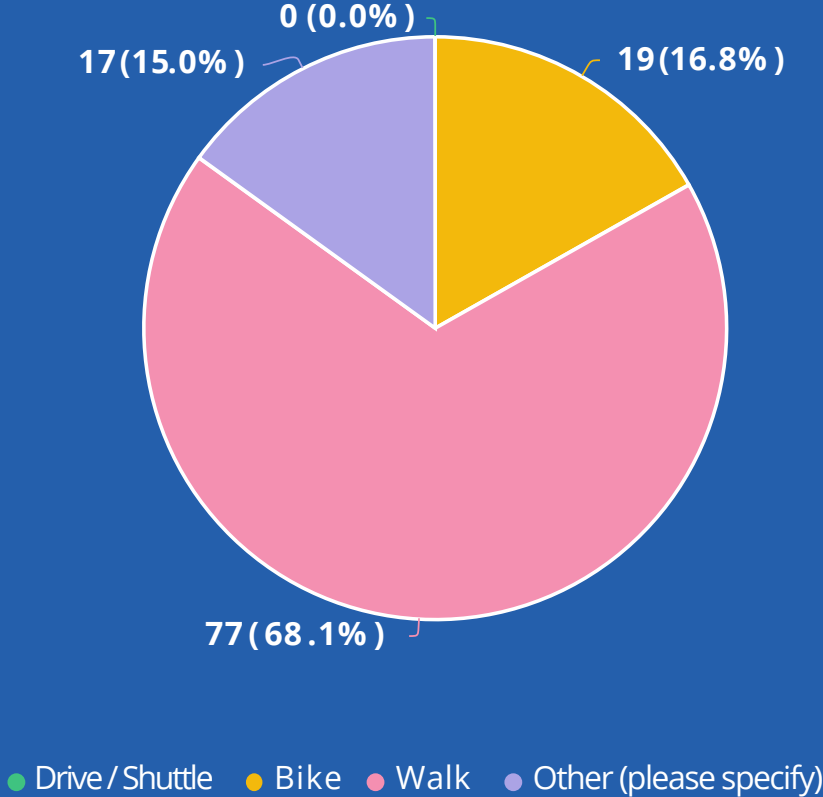
How do you get to Como Regional Park?



Question options

- Drive / Shuttle
- Bike
- Walk
- Other (please specify)

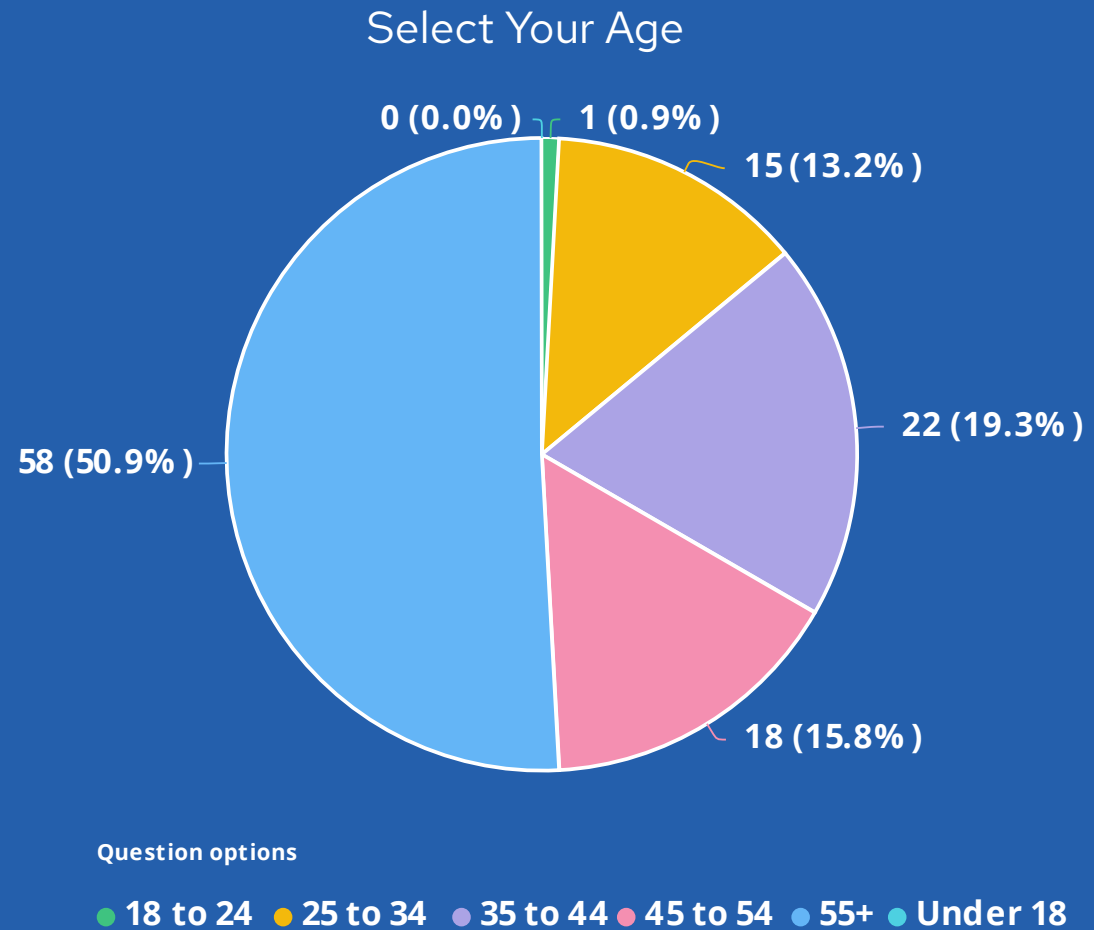
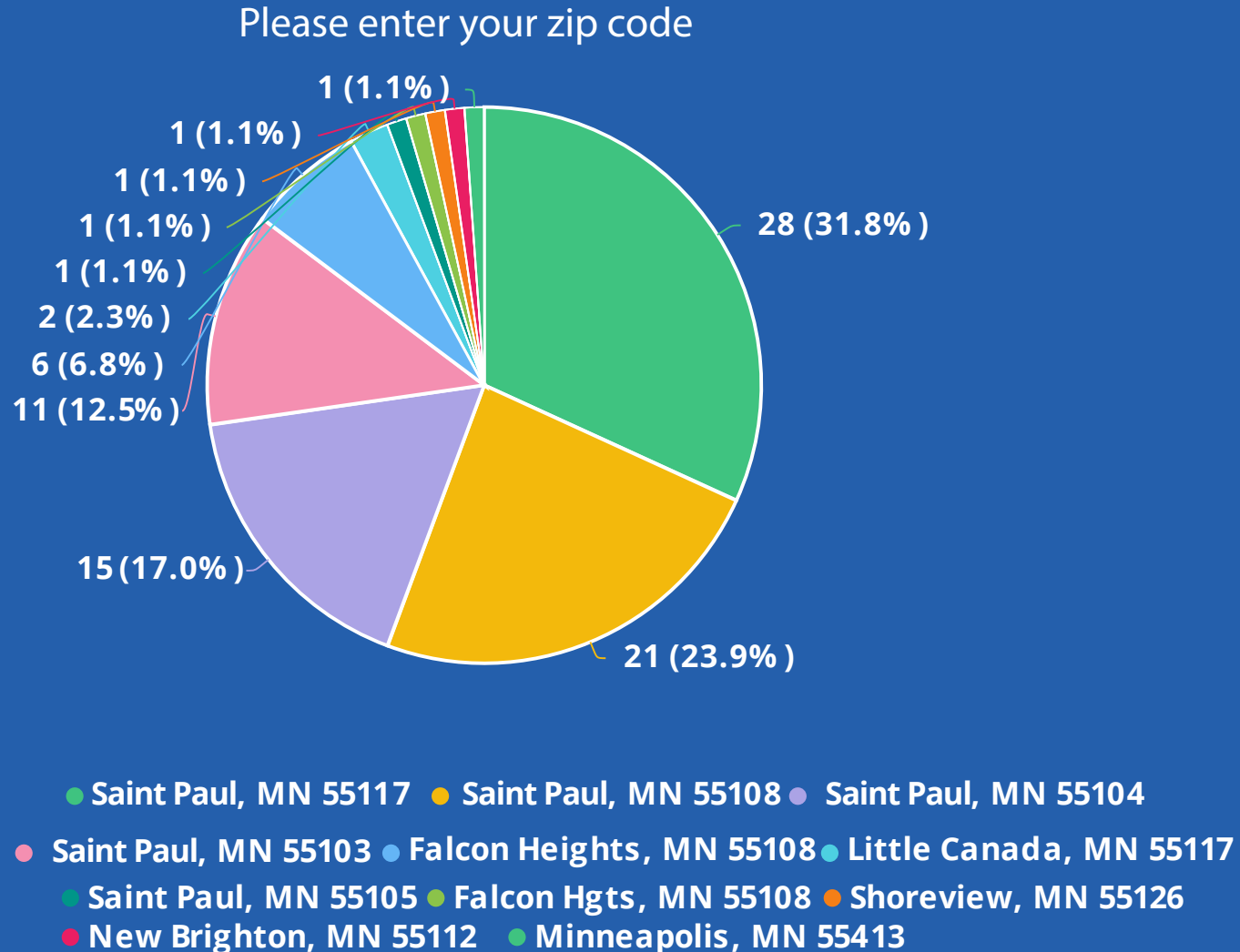
How do you get around Como Regional Park?



- Drive / Shuttle
- Bike
- Walk
- Other (please specify)

- Walking and cycling are major means of transit to and around the Park.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- Como is a Regional Park, serving residents throughout the Twin Cities and beyond

- Como caters to all ages and many types of activity

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - Key Takeaways

ENCOURAGE EXPLORATION

- Navigation and safety
- Directional signs, intuitive trail marking (paint)
- Information Kiosks

WALKING

- Clear signage, information kiosks
- Shade on East Side of lake
- Sidewalk connections out from lake

• TRAFFIC

- Traffic calming measures
- Vehicle stopping across paths
- Speed limit signage

INTERSECTIONAL ISSUES

- East Como Lake Dr. Closure
- Pavement condition
- On-site amenities such as restrooms and trash receptacles

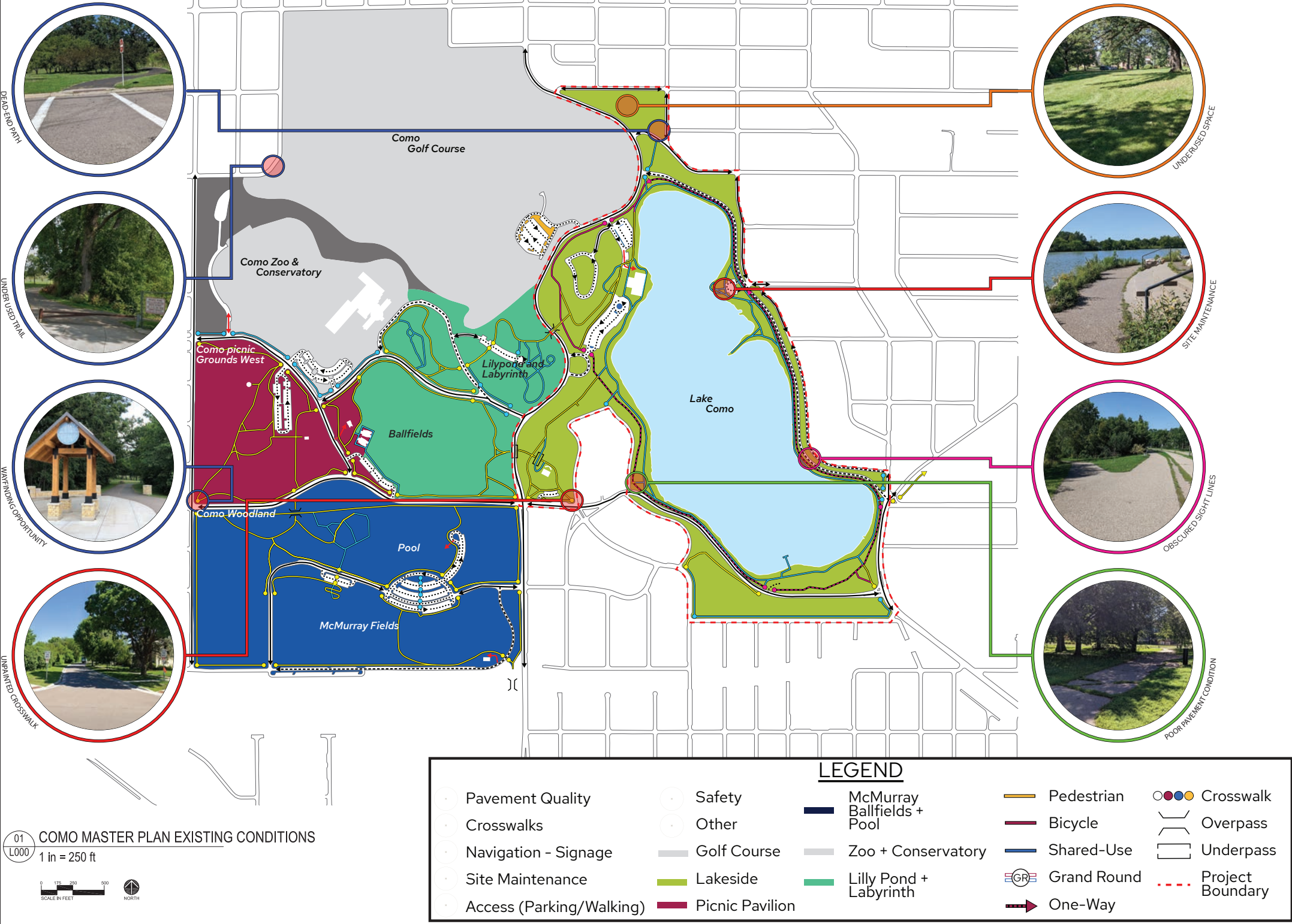
BIKING

- Two-way traffic around lake
- Pavement crossings and transitions
- Pavement surfacing (corners)

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

- Parking fees/donations
- Shoreline Restoration
- Dog park

EXISTING CONDITIONS - Map Analysis



EXISTING CONDITIONS - Photos



Wayfinding markings and signage

EXISTING CONDITIONS - Photos



Ambiguous navigation

EXISTING CONDITIONS - Photos



Pavement condition

GROUP DISCUSSION - Targeted Outreach

- Lower Phalen Creek Project
- Major Taylor Bikes
- Karen Organization of Minnesota
- Como Park Senior High
- Hmong College Prep Academy
- Others?



Equity -
What Groups should we reach
out to?

GROUP DISCUSSION - Next Steps

- **DAC Meeting #2 - Review previous meeting, discuss focus areas, wayfinding signage, concept #1 - May 2023 (tentative)**
- **DAC Meeting #3 - Discuss updates to concept plan, Community Engagement Update - July 2023 (tentative)**
- **Open House - August 2023 (tentative)**
- **Target for Master Plan Adoption - December - June 2024**

LINKS

COMO REGIONAL PARK TRAIL MASTER PLAN

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/como-regional-park-trail>

MASTER PLANS - MET COUNCIL

<https://metro council.org/Parks/Planning/Master-Plans.aspx>

REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS SYSTEM VISITOR STUDY

<https://metro council.org/Parks/Research/Visitor-Study.aspx>

REGIONAL PARKS EQUITY TOOLS

<https://metro council.org/Parks/Planning/Equity.aspx>

REGIONAL PARK USE AMONG COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

<https://metro council.org/Parks/Research/Park-Use-Among-Communities-of-Color.aspx>

DISTRICT 10 COMMUNITY COUNCIL

<https://district10comopark.org/>

CAPITOL REGION WATERSHED DISTRICT

<https://www.capitolregionwd.org/>

ASSIGNMENT #1

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

THANK YOU!

David Ronzani (he/him)
Landscape Architect | Project Manager
City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
david.ronzani@ci.stpaul.mn.us |
651.266.6410