



COMO REGIONAL PARK Long-Range Plan

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA | 2024

Submitted by the City of Saint Paul
Department of Parks and Recreation
Adopted September 25, 2024





October 8, 2024

David Ronzani
25 West 4th Street, 400 City Hall Annex
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan – Notice of Council Action
Metropolitan Council Review File No. 50252-1
Metropolitan Council District 14
Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission District G

Dear Mr. Ronzani:

The Metropolitan Council reviewed the City of Saint Paul's Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan at its meeting on September 25, 2024. The Council based its review on the staff's report and analysis.

The Council found that the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, including Planning Strategy 1, and other Council policies.

In addition to the Review Record, the Council adopted the following recommendations.

1. Approve the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan.
2. Advise the City of Saint Paul to consider implementing the recommendations for solar resources and population forecasts in the Advisory Comments section of the business item.
3. Require the City of Saint Paul, prior to initiating any new development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager.

If you have any questions, please contact Colin Kelly, Principal Reviewer at 651-602-1361.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Emmett Mullin".

Emmett Mullin, Manager
Regional Parks and Natural Resources

Attachment

CC: Toni Carter, Metropolitan Council District 14
Anthony Taylor, Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission District G
Patrick Boylan, Sector Representative
Colin Kelly, Principal Reviewer
Kevin Phan, Reviewer
Reviews Coordinator

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Contents

01 Planning Framework

- 5 Introduction
- 8 Project Context
- 10 Park Overview
- 11 Related Project and Planning Documents
- 16 Partner Engagement
- 18 Demand Forecast

02 Existing Conditions

- 20 Project Areas
- 28 Natural Resources
- 36 Park Access
- 37 Historic Sites and Districts

03 Community Engagement

- 39 Equity Analysis
- 45 Public Engagement and Participation

04 Implementation

- 52 Plan Approach
- 54 Project Vision and Guiding Principles
- 55 Project Area
- 56 Development Concept
- 66 Project Priorities
- 67 Estimated Project Costs
- 70 Accessibility
- 71 Wayfinding
- 72 Conflicts
- 73 Boundaries and Acquisitions
- 75 Stewardship Plan
- 76 Public Services
- 77 Operations
- 78 Public Awareness

05 Appendix

Acknowledgments

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Land Acknowledgment

Saint Paul stands on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Dakota homelands.

As we consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that have brought us to current day, we commit to understanding, respecting, supporting, and advocating for Indigenous People and for this land.

Let this land acknowledgment be more than a reminder. Let it be a marker in time of dedicating ourselves to be better and do better. Through this land acknowledgment, let us lead to make changes which respect history.



Partner and Agency Contribution

This icon indicates sections of the Plan that were shaped by contributions from and collaboration with partner agencies during the 90% review period.



Community Feedback Icon

Look for this icon in the document highlighting areas of focus generated by insights, feedback, and concerns from community members throughout engagement.



Chapter 1

Planning Framework



Image: Lakeside Pavilion

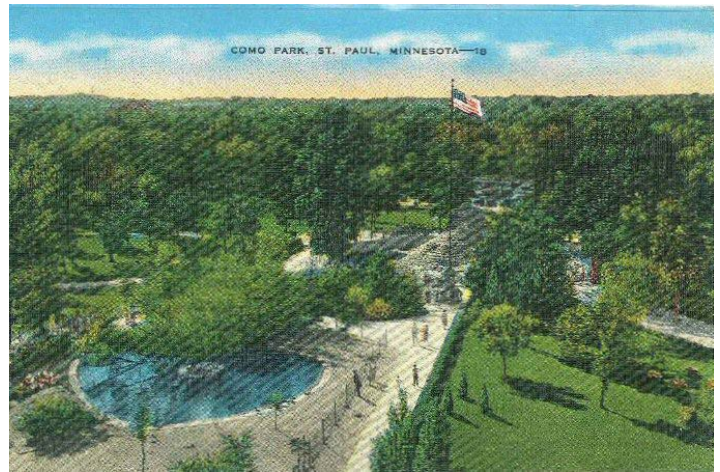


Image: Como Park postcard, ca. 1940

Introduction

Como Regional Park is the most visited Regional Park in Saint Paul with nearly 3.8 million visitors in 2022 and 4.5 million visitors in 2021.¹

This Long-Range Plan identifies issues and opportunities within Como Regional Park, and provides recommendations for prioritization of future projects at the Park. Goals of this Plan include clarifying wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving safety and accessibility for all users, enhancing lake water quality, and promoting equity through design with the intent that the Park can be maintained sustainably and reflect the evolving recreational interests and diversity of Park visitors.

¹ : Metropolitan Council MetroStats. <https://metro council.org/Data-and-Maps/Publications-And-Resources/MetroStats/Land-Use-and-Development/Twin-Cities-Forecasted-to-Reach-Four-Million-Resid.aspx>

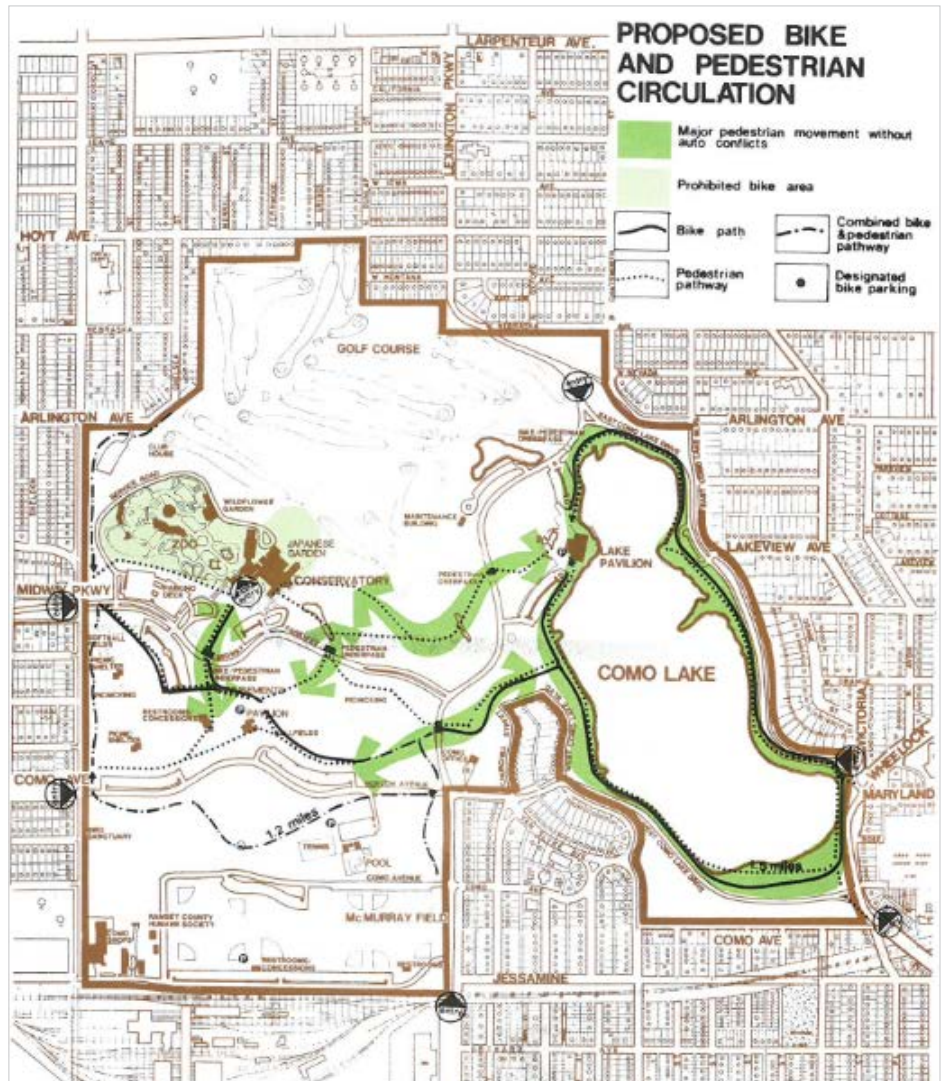
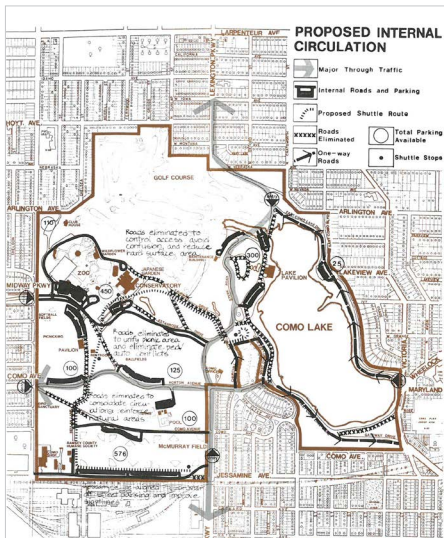
Introduction

1984 Como Park Master Plan

The last long-range planning document for Como Regional Park was adopted by the Saint Paul City Council in 1984. This 'Como Park Master Plan' laid out a vision for future park planning, similar to the process for the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. Updates to the Park since the adoption of the 1984 Plan include:

- Lexington rerouted to reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians; creating more pedestrian spaces near the Pavilion and Lake
- East Como Lake Drive: conversion to one-way heading north to reduce roadway width and create more space for pedestrians and cyclists

- Elimination/simplification of internal Park roads to clarify circulation and reduce conflict zones
 - Transition from mown turf to native shoreline vegetation along the perimeter of Como Lake
- Additional improvements have been implemented throughout the Park since 1984. This Long-Range Plan seeks to build on the original vision of the Park, and update recommendations to meet the needs of current and future Park users.

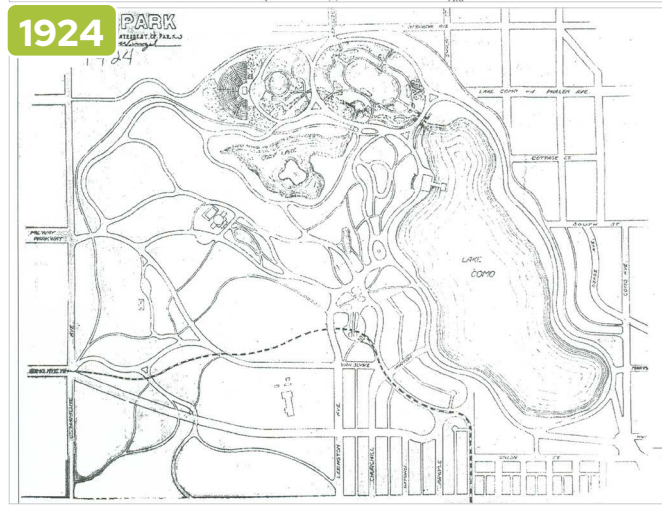
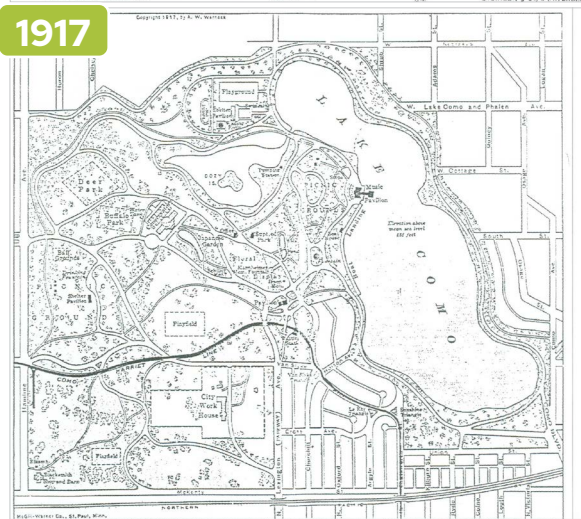
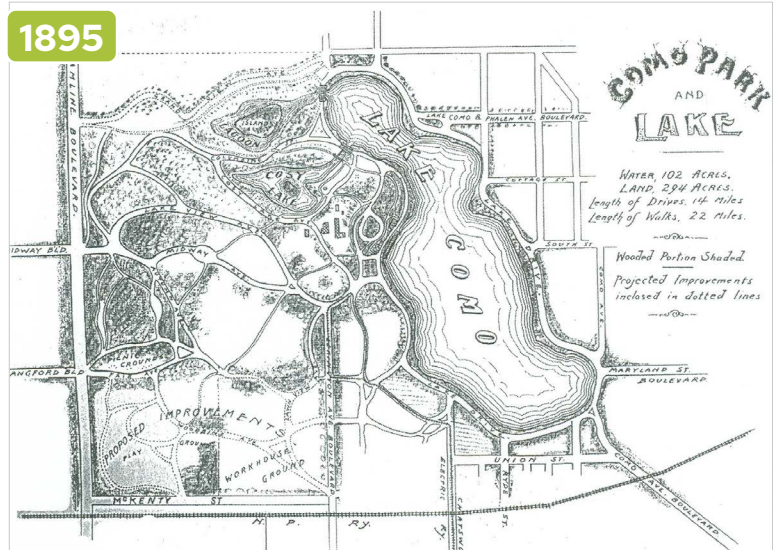
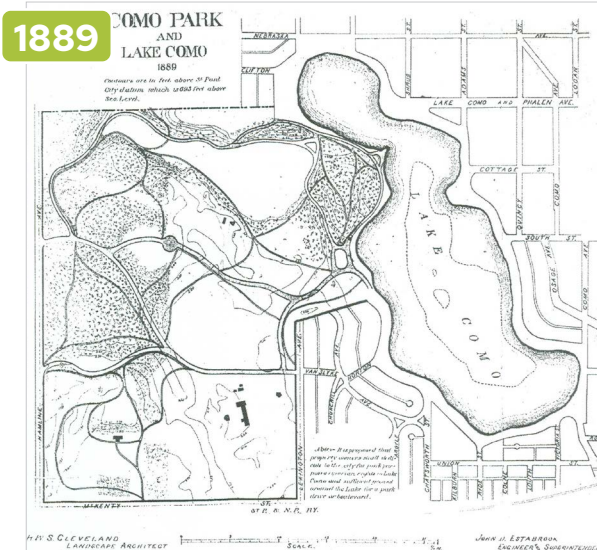


Examples of recommended improvements from the 1984 Como Park Master Plan

Introduction

Previous Park Plans

Since the late 1800s, Como Regional Park has had a well-documented history of development and numerous accounts of the significance of the park space within Saint Paul. Accounts of this landscape indicate that the original Como Lake was much larger and more shallow than what is known today and included an additional open water body known as Cozy Lake. Records show the City of Saint Paul purchased the land for the public park in 1873. Under the guidance of Horace Cleveland's 1885 plan for Saint Paul, the hills and topography overlooking the lake were preserved to provide a respite from urban life in a naturalistic location. Decisions such as the draining of Cozy Lake for the development of the golf course, the expansion and rerouting of Lexington Avenue, and the enlargement of the features of the zoo and conservatory have had major influences on the park landscape. However, preserved woodland areas, meandering recreational pathways, and Como Lake itself still remain as prominent features in the park today.



Project Context

Como Regional Park is located on the Northwest side of Saint Paul within Wards 4 and 5, District 10 (the Como Neighborhood). The Saint Paul Grand Round connects to Como Regional Park at the intersection of Wheelock Parkway and East Como Boulevard, on the east side of Como Lake, and again at Como Avenue and Hamline Avenue North on the west side of the Park.

Lexington Parkway - Regional Trail Search Corridor

Lexington Parkway is designated as a Regional Trail Search Corridor in the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. Search corridors are defined as potential regional connections between other existing or proposed regional amenities. As plans are developed in the future for the Lexington Parkway Regional Trail, planners should

consider connections between the proposed regional trail and the trails at Como Regional Park. A regional trail along Lexington Parkway provides an opportunity to strengthen the connections between Como Regional Park and other local and regional park and trail amenities. Future considerations for the regional trail search corridor should include:

- Alignment with internal trails within Como Regional Park as well as coordination with Saint Paul's Bicycle Plan
- Physical barriers along the Lexington Parkway corridor including topography and existing utilities
- Safe and accessible facilities that encourage users of all ages and abilities to feel comfortable accessing regional parks and trails.

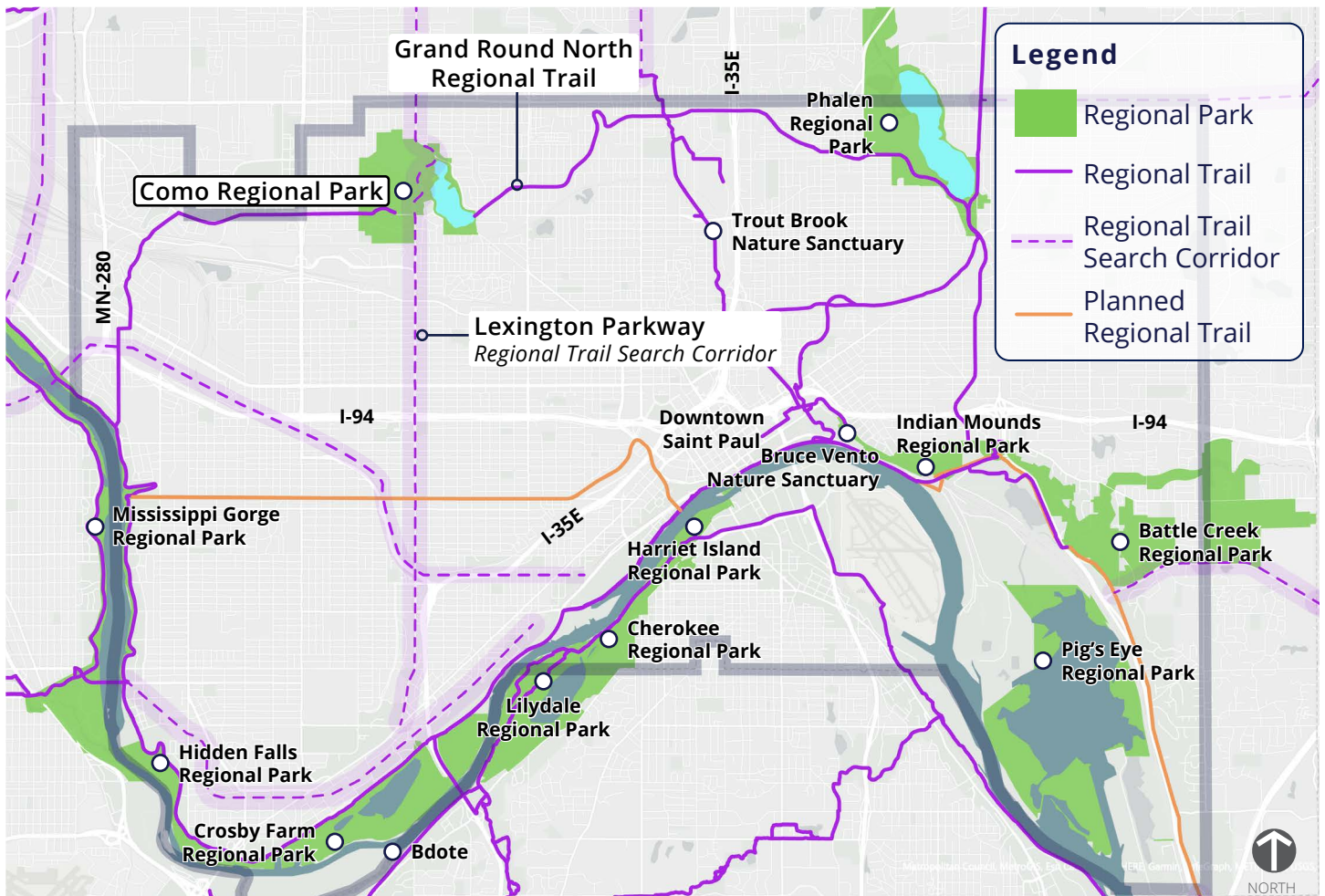


Fig. 1-1 | Regional Parks and Trails

Park Overview

Project Area



Project Focus Areas:

- Como Lake Area**
Lake paths, Streetcar Station, Lakeside Pavilion, fishing pier, Duck Point, Compass Point
- Ballfields**
- West Picnic Grounds**
Midway Picnic Pavilion, play area, mini-golf
- Woodland Outdoor Classroom**
Como Pool, Como Shops, Kilmer Memorial Fireplace
- Central Park Area**
Lilypond, Labyrinth, Excedra

Other Park Features:

- Special Recreation Features**
Como Zoo & Conservatory*
- Enterprise Facilities**
Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*

**Not-included or partially included in analysis*

Fig. 1-2 | Project Area

Areas of the Como Regional Park System

The Como Campus is made up of three units of the regional park system:

- Como Regional Park
- Como Park Zoo
- Marjorie McNeely Conservatory

Special Recreation Features

Both the Como Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory are considered special recreation features and have their own Long Range Plans. Special recreation features are defined as Regional Parks System opportunities not generally found in the regional parks, park reserves, or trail corridors. Special recreation features often require a unique managing or programming effort¹. Como Park Zoo and the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory are two of the eight special recreation features in the Regional Parks System.

Enterprise Facilities

There are two enterprise facilities within Como Regional Park (1) Como Golf Course, (2) McMurray Fields. Enterprise-fund recreation facilities include any facility that is expected to generate sufficient revenue to pay its own costs, such as golf courses, downhill ski areas, and water parks. These facilities are not eligible for regional park funds from the Metropolitan Council because they are expected to raise money for their development and operation in the same way as their private sector counterparts.

†Como Golf Course is a three-season enterprise facility. Winter activities at the golf course are eligible for regional park funding.

¹ : Metropolitan Council, 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, [https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-\(2020-version\)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx](https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-(2020-version)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx)

Related Projects and Planning Documents

The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is being developed within the context of a number of other City, neighborhood, and regional planning documents. These documents provide guidance and recommendations that are incorporated into this planning document in an effort to augment the existing systems and networks within the City, and Como Regional Park. These planning documents are outlined below.

Grand Round Design & Implementation Plan

Adopted by the Saint Paul City Council in 2017, the Grand Round Design & Implementation Plan's vision is as stated: *"The Saint Paul Grand Round connects people to parks, nature, neighborhoods, and businesses with scenic parkway facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists"*.

Several of the paths in and around Como Lake and Como Regional Park are part of the Grand Round network. The Plan also identifies specific areas that overlap with the Como Regional Park Long Range Plan including Como Avenue (Pascal St. to Midway

Pkwy.), Horton Avenue (Midway Pkwy. to Gateway Dr.), and Nagasaki Road (West Como Blvd. to Como Blvd.). Recommendations in the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan for these areas will align with the Grand Round Design and Implementation Plan.

stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Parks%20%26%20Recreation/GR_DraftDesignImplementationPlan.pdf

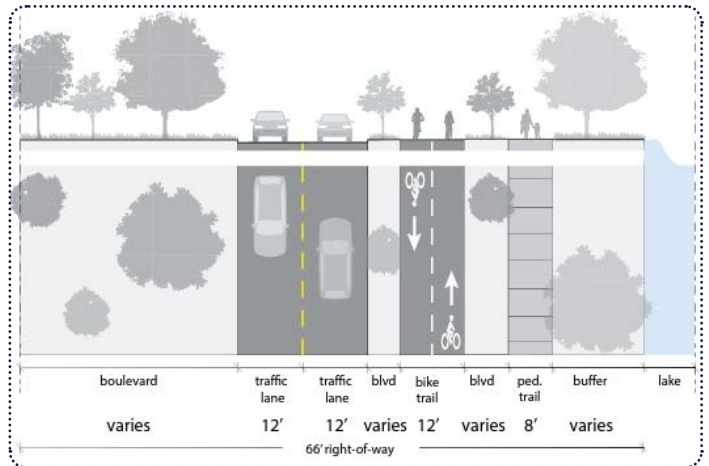


Fig. 1-4 | Recommended cross-section at Nagasaki Rd. (from Grand Round Design & Implementation Plan)

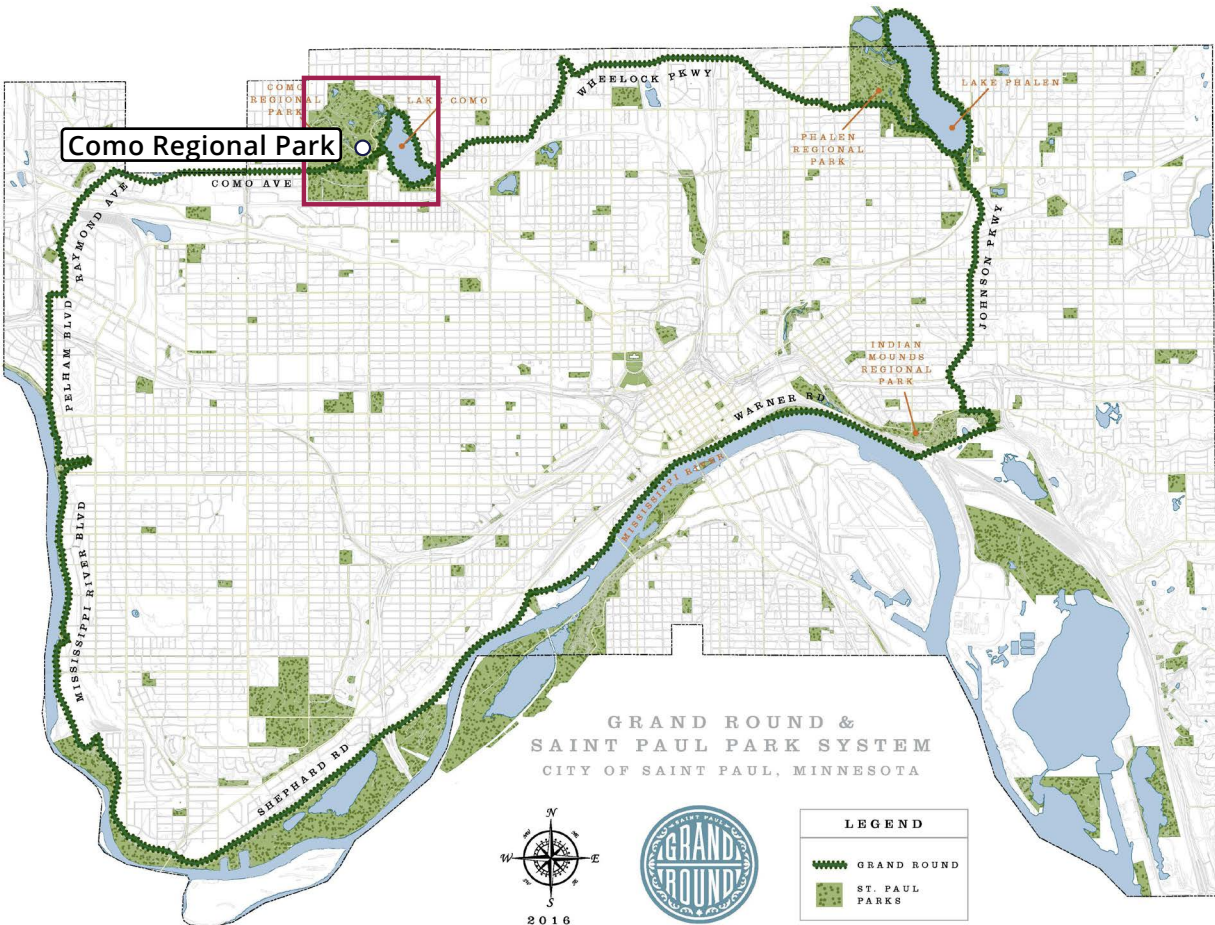


Fig. 1-3 | Saint Paul Grand Round Network Map

Related Projects and Planning Documents

Metropolitan Council 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan serves as a development guide for the regional components of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, including Regional Parks and Trails. Como Regional Park is classified as a Regional Park; Como Park Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory are classified as Special Recreation Features by the Metropolitan Council. This planning document also outlines the requirements for Long-Range Plans to be developed by implementing park agencies.

[metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-\(2020-version\)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx](http://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-(2020-version)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx)

Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is Saint Paul's blueprint for guiding development for the next 20 years, from 2020 to 2040. It outlines policies that address city-wide physical development, and contains chapters on Land Use; Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Housing; Heritage and Cultural Preservation; and Water Resources. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Chapter sets broad policies to create an equitable, safe, connected and sustainable park system for all users. This policy aligns with the Guiding Principles of the Como Regional Park Long Range Plan, found in Chapter 4.

stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/CSP_2040_CompPlan_FinalAdopted_Updated_091322.pdf

Saint Paul Bicycle Plan

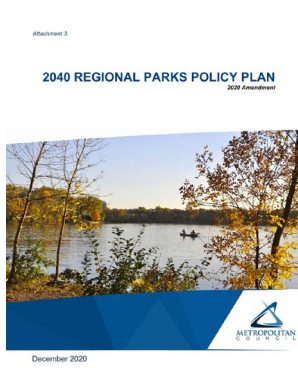
In addition to Como Regional Park's connection to Saint Paul's Grand Round, there are several access points to the park from Saint Paul's major and minor bikeways. These bikeways are part of the bike network described in the 2024 Saint Paul Bicycle Plan. The Bicycle Plan establishes a vision for how and why bicycles will play an important role in the future of the city with the goals to make biking more comfortable, more accessible, and more connected.

stpaul.gov/bikeplan

Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan

The Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan "addresses citywide walking needs such as connecting the sidewalk system, providing safer ways to cross streets, and education and enforcement programs to support safe walking." The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan outlines a number of recommendations that prioritize pedestrian safety including improved pedestrian crossings, connecting incomplete paths, and providing more clear signage and methods of wayfinding in the Park. Other improvements focused on pedestrian safety include additional lighting and wider paths for a more comfortable pedestrian experience within the Park.

stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Public%20Works/Saint%20Paul%20Pedestrian%20Plan%206.13.19%20Compressed.pdf



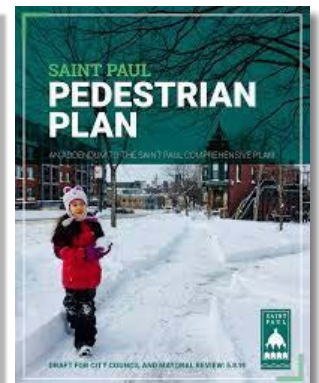
Metropolitan Council 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan



Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan



Saint Paul Bicycle Plan



Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan

Related Projects and Planning Documents

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Como Lake Management Plan

Como Lake is a popular regional destination for recreation including fishing and paddling. Like many lakes within the metro, it has its share of water quality issues ranging from excessive nutrients to invasive species.

Como Lake has experienced poor water quality for decades. Excessive phosphorus loading has contributed to algal blooms leading to detrimental effects on the lake's ecosystem.

The Como Lake Management Plan is CRWD's comprehensive guiding plan that takes a multi pronged approach to improving lake water quality and ecosystem health.

The primary purpose of CRWD's Como Lake Management Plan (CLMP) is to "develop a holistic and adaptive lake management strategy that will be used as a framework for CRWD, local partners, and community stakeholders to improve Como Lake over time."

Goals of the CLMP include:

- Goal 1: Como Lake will be managed as an ecologically healthy, shallow lake.
- Goal 2: Maintain healthy shoreline areas that can support a variety of wildlife and contribute to the ecological health of Como Lake.
- Goal 3: Maintain a variety of year-round recreational opportunities that are appropriate for a shallow urban lake.
- Goal 4: Achieve strong sustained community engagement and stewardship to improve and protect Como Lake.
- Goal 5: Utilize the best science, partnerships, and resources to ensure successful implementation of the CLPM over the life of the plan (20 years).

https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Como-Lake-Management-Plan_2019.pdf

Como Lake Management Plan



Capitol Region Watershed District
Saint Paul, MN

May 15, 2019

Prepared by: LimnoTech



*Capitol Region Watershed District
Como Lake Management Plan*



*Additional information about the
CRWD Como Lake Management
Plan added to final Plan.*

Related Projects and Planning Documents

Saint Paul Climate Action and Resilience Plan

This Plan outlines a series of strategies to achieve the City's ultimate goals of a 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030, and carbon neutrality by 2050. Specific strategies in the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan that align with the goals and objectives in the Climate Action and Resilience Plan include:

- Increase bike and pedestrian infrastructure to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles.
- Ensure equitable pedestrian and bicycle access to the Park with continuous sidewalk that are ADA accessible.
- Maintain and augment the existing tree canopy
- Reduce stormwater runoff and continue to monitor and improve water quality in Como Lake.
- Support electric forms of transportation by providing e-vehicle and e-bike charging stations.

www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayor%27s%20Office/Saint%20Paul%20Climate%20Action%20%26%20Resilience%20Plan.pdf

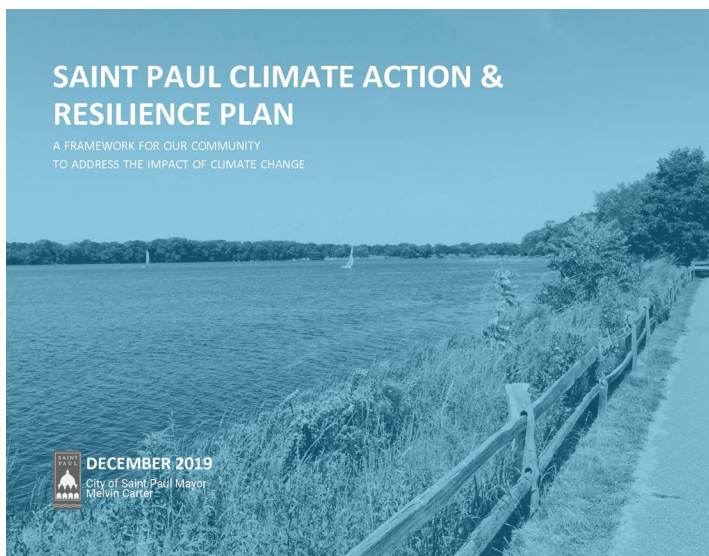
District 10 Como Community Plan

Como Regional Park lies at the center of the Como Park Neighborhood. Largely residential, the neighborhood also houses a commercial district, businesses, schools, and borders the Minnesota State Fair Grounds. This plan has been submitted by the neighborhood to provide a cohesive path for future development that considers the needs of the various neighborhood stakeholders.

district10comopark.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/District-10-Como-Community-Plan-2015.pdf

Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan

Como Regional Park has a variety of signage types. Wayfinding and navigating the Park will improve after key areas for signage and added "standard" signs are implemented. This plan describes signage standards, hierarchy, and suggested locations for signage at Como Regional Park. The Como Long Range Plan will follow the guidelines set forth in the Signage and Wayfinding Plan.



Saint Paul Climate Action & Resilience Plan



District 10 Como Community Plan

Related Projects and Planning Documents

Safe Routes to School, August 2023

Considering Como Regional Park's proximity to both Como High School and Como Elementary School, the paths in and around the park should be considered important connections for students and staff to get to and from school. The Safe Routes to School Plan indicates that the intersection of Como Ave and Rose Ave W is a high priority opportunity zone for Safe Routes to School. The Plan recommends "a pedestrian crossing on the south side of the intersection, including high-visibility crosswalks, median refuge island, and school crossing signs, as well as a connection to the Como Lake trail."¹ Priorities within the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan include the recommendations from the Safe Routes to School Plan.

stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/Como-Park-SRTS-Plan.pdf

Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan

Concurrent with the development of the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation worked with a consultant to analyze the Como Lakeside Pavilion and create a vision to upgrade and improve the facility to better accommodate public use and operations. Design goals for the Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan are as follows:

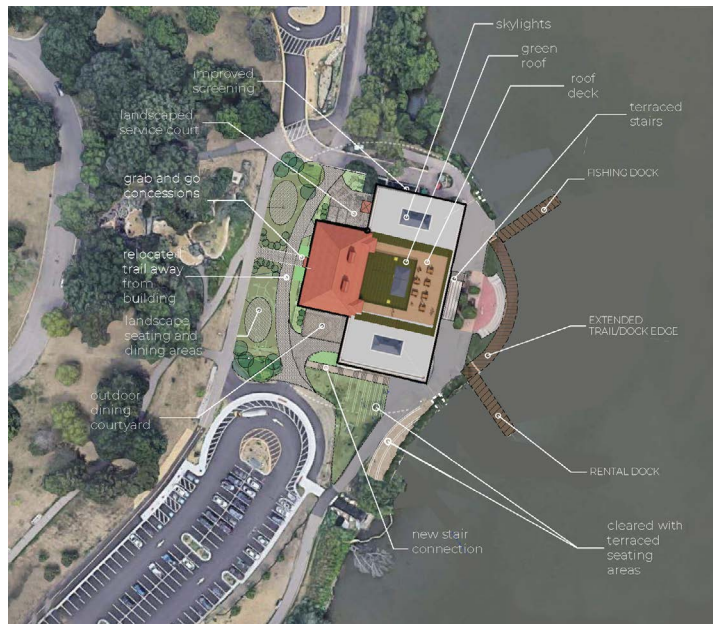
- Renovate and relocate bathrooms for accessibility.
- Maximize all space for public use.
- Add vendors and services for year round use.
- Appropriately size spaces to meet community needs.
- Maintain the historic quality of this landmark building and upgrade overall aesthetics.
- Promote community events and connection to Como Lake.
- Direct amplified sound toward natural sound breaks.

As identified in this Long-Range Plan, the Lakeside Pavilion is an integral piece of the Regional Park, and provides opportunities for community events, recreation, and leisure on Como Lake. The Long-Range Plan recognizes the need for improved circulation and accessibility near the Pavilion, while the Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan aims to provide a more in-depth look at the building, site, and programming of the Pavilion and how improvements to the building can provide better public facilities to serve more Park users.

Infrastructure Recommendations



Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Recommendations for areas near Como Regional Park



Plan view concept from Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan



Scope of Lakeside Pavilion process clarified in final Plan.

Concept rendering from Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan

Partner Engagement

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) group was comprised of multiple professionals from different City divisions including Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development, and Public Works. Individuals shared their expertise in the planning process by giving feedback and proposing ideas for the Long-Range Plan.

TAC members attended two meetings with project staff during the project.

Meeting 1:

Project overview, update on community engagement, group discussion.

What we heard:

- Discussion about wayfinding signage and need for updates to existing signage (parking lots)
- Discussion of potential dog park location on west side of Park; consider parking, proximity to other Park amenities
- Discussion about CRWD stormwater project and potential location west of Lexington Parkway
- Discussion about benefits of connecting isolated trail along Lexington Pkwy, as well as potential conflicts with Golf Course
- Discussion about closure of East Como Lake Drive: concerns about accommodating traffic on high attendance days or during events; closing the road would solve operational issues; more comfortable space for walkers and bikers without vehicles; ecological benefits to closing the road

Meeting 2:

Update on community engagement, recap from TAC Meeting#1, group discussion.

What we heard:

- Discussion about coordination with Public Works projects - connection to Grand Round, alignment with Bike Plan update, etc.
- Potential closure of E. Como Lake Dr. - differing priorities - closure would benefit ecological function of Como Lake, more space for pedestrian and bicycle safety; concern about high vehicular traffic on event days or for other large events (traffic study needed to assess benefits/drawbacks of road closure)
- Discussion about Lexington Pkwy Regional Trail Search Corridor - valuable regional and local connection
- Sidewalks connections needed between Park and adjacent neighborhoods
- Discussion about shared-use trail along Horton Avenue to provide a more direct connection to the Lake from the West
- Discussion about east/west trail connection on south side of Golf Course
- Discussion about e-bikes and future transportation needs - rules and regulations, enforcement, charging
- Potential locations for temporary restrooms (south end of Lake, Duck Point parking lot)



Partner and Agency Contribution

This icon indicates sections of the Plan that were shaped by contributions from and collaboration with partner agencies during the 90% review period.

Partner Engagement

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD)

The Capitol Region Watershed District has placed a high priority on improving the water quality of Como Lake. Their commitment has been demonstrated with several management plans and studies focusing on Como Lake water quality improvements, ongoing project partnerships with Saint Paul Parks, project collaborations within the Como Lake Subwatershed, and representation on the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan Design Advisory Committee. CRWD is currently working with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation on a proposed storm sewer diversion project for a future harvesting and reuse system with a goal of improving the water quality and reduce phosphorus loading to Como Lake. The proposed best management practices (BMPs) will collect stormwater runoff from the upstream drainage area via the 48" trunkline located within Lexington Parkway and reusing that water to irrigate the softball and soccer field. The system is proposed to be placed adjacent to McMurray Fields along Wynn Avenue. Additional collaborations and management plans include:

- Como Lake Strategic Management Plan (2002)
- Como 7 Subwatershed Analysis (2003)
- Arlington-Pascal Stormwater Improvement Project (2005)
- Como Park Stormwater Inventory and Watershed Analysis (2016)
- Como Lake Water Quality Drivers Analysis Study (2017)
- Como Regional Park Stormwater BMPs Feasibility Study (2018)
- Como Lake Management Plan (2019)
- Como Golf Course Wetland Delineation (2019)
- CRWD 2021-2030 Watershed Management Plan (2020)
- Como Lake Long-Term Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan (2020)
- Stormwater treatment at Como Golf Course (2020)
- Como Lake Fishery Management Plan (2021)
- Como Lakeshore Management Plan (2022)
- Alum Treatment of Internal Phosphorus (2020)
- Curly-leaf Pondweed Management with Herbicide treatments (2020, 2021, 2024)
- Common Carp Management (2022-2024)
- CRWD's Targeted Watershed Program (TWP)

- Ongoing Como Lake shoreline restoration Projects
- Ongoing lake water quality & aquatic plant monitoring with Ramsey County
- Updated Interpretive Signage (2024)

Saint Paul Public Works

Collaboration with Public Works staff has helped guide the development of this Long-Range Plan. Specific topics of coordination with Public Works include:

- Alignment with the Saint Paul Grand Round
- Coordination with Saint Paul Bicycle Plan
- Discussion about sidewalk connections between Como Regional Park and adjacent neighborhoods
- Discussion about streets and traffic on Nagasaki Road and East Como Lake Drive and the potential for future improvements to these streets to increase safety for all modes of transportation, and to benefit the ecological functions of Como Lake

Continued coordination with Public Works and other City departments will be necessary as projects within and around the Park progress through design and implementation.

Demand Forecast

Current Park Use

Como Regional Park is the most visited park in Saint Paul, and the second most visited park in the Metropolitan Council Regional Park System. Visitation for the last two years is included below:

2021 Visitation¹

- The Regional Park System received an estimated 64.9 million visitors, a 2.6% increase from 2019 and the highest estimated visitation to date.
- Overall trail visits in the system grew 11% compared to 2019.
- Saint Paul Regional Parks and Trails received 13.4 million visitors.
- There were a total of 4.6 million visitors to Como Regional Park, Como Zoo, and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory (second-most visited regional park).

2022 Visitation¹

- The Regional Park System received an estimated 69 million visitors, a 6.4% increase from 2021 and the highest estimated visitation to date.
- Overall trail visits in the system grew 14% compared to 2021.
- Saint Paul Regional Parks and Trails received 8.7 million visitors.
- There were a total of 3.8 million visitors to Como Regional Park, Como Zoo, and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory (second-most visited regional park).

2023 Visitation¹

- 69.4 million system visits – a .2% decrease from 2022
- Overall trail use dipped slightly by 1.4%, primarily driven by the long-term temporary closure of the Mpls. Kenilworth Regional Trail. However, trail use continues to grow across the system.
- Saint Paul Regional Parks and Trails received 8.7 million visitors.
- There were a total of 3.5 million visitors to Como Regional Park, Como Zoo, and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory (Third-most (tied) visited regional park).

City Population Trends

Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan includes the following estimates on the City's forecasted population trends² :

- The overall population of Saint Paul is

expected to increase by approximately 9.2% between 2020 and 2040.

- Saint Paul is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of people of color in Saint Paul increased from 36% to 46%. This trend line suggests Saint Paul became majority people of color in 2017.

Regional Population Trends

A 2021 report from the Metropolitan Council predicts that between 2020 and 2050³:

- The Twin Cities region will gain 818,000 residents.
- Black, Latino, and Asian populations will more than double.
- The population of residents over 75 years old will double by 2030, and triple by 2050.
- By 2050, 44% of Twin Cities residents will be people of color, and that 22% of Twin Cities residents will be over the age of 54.

A 2016 visitor survey conducted by the Metropolitan Council found that 80% of regional trail users come from within five miles of the trail. Consequently, population growth in Saint Paul and the greater Metropolitan region is expected to increase usage of the Como Regional Park Trails, and visitation to Como Regional Park over time. To accommodate this increase in visitation, this document supports changing recreational and programming trends, proposes improvements to safety and accessibility, protects the park's natural resources, and aims to become more accommodating to both communities of color and to older adults by identifying and lowering perceived barriers to visitation. This plan also proposes improvements that increase the capacity of Parks Operations to keep up with the maintenance demands resulting from higher visitation and aging infrastructure.

¹ : Metropolitan Council Annual Use Estimates. <https://metro council.org/Parks/Research/Annual-Use-Estimates.aspx>

² : City of Saint Paul, 2040 Comprehensive Plan. www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/CSP_2040_CompPlan_FinalAdopted_Updated_091322.pdf

³ : Metropolitan Council MetroStats. <https://metro council.org/Data-and-Maps/Publications-And-Resources/MetroStats/Land-Use-and-Development/Twin-Cities-Forecasted-to-Reach-Four-Million-Resid.aspx>

Chapter 2

Existing Conditions



Image: Dock on east side of Como Lake



Image: Como Park picnic shelter

Como Regional Park serves as a recreational hub for residents of Saint Paul and the Twin Cities region, as well as visitors from around the world.

Existing amenities in the Park include:

- Como Park Zoo and Conservatory
- The Lakeside Pavilion and other picnic shelters
- Paved and non-paved trails
- McMurray Athletic Fields
- Como Lake, fishing pier, boat launch, and recreation rentals
- 18 Hole Golf Course and Mini Golf
- Outdoor Classroom
- Historic Streetcar Station
- Ski Center
- And many others

Using a variety of scales, this chapter analyzes the existing conditions within and adjacent to the Park including circulation and access, natural resources, and the historic and cultural history of the Park and region. On the next page, project areas are identified, named after the distinguishing features within them. These are used throughout this document to provide a more detailed analysis of the components of the Park.

Through the community engagement process, opportunities and challenges were identified within the existing conditions of the Park. Feedback from community members is noted on the following plans and has guided the project priorities outlined throughout this Long-Range Plan.

Existing Conditions

Project Areas

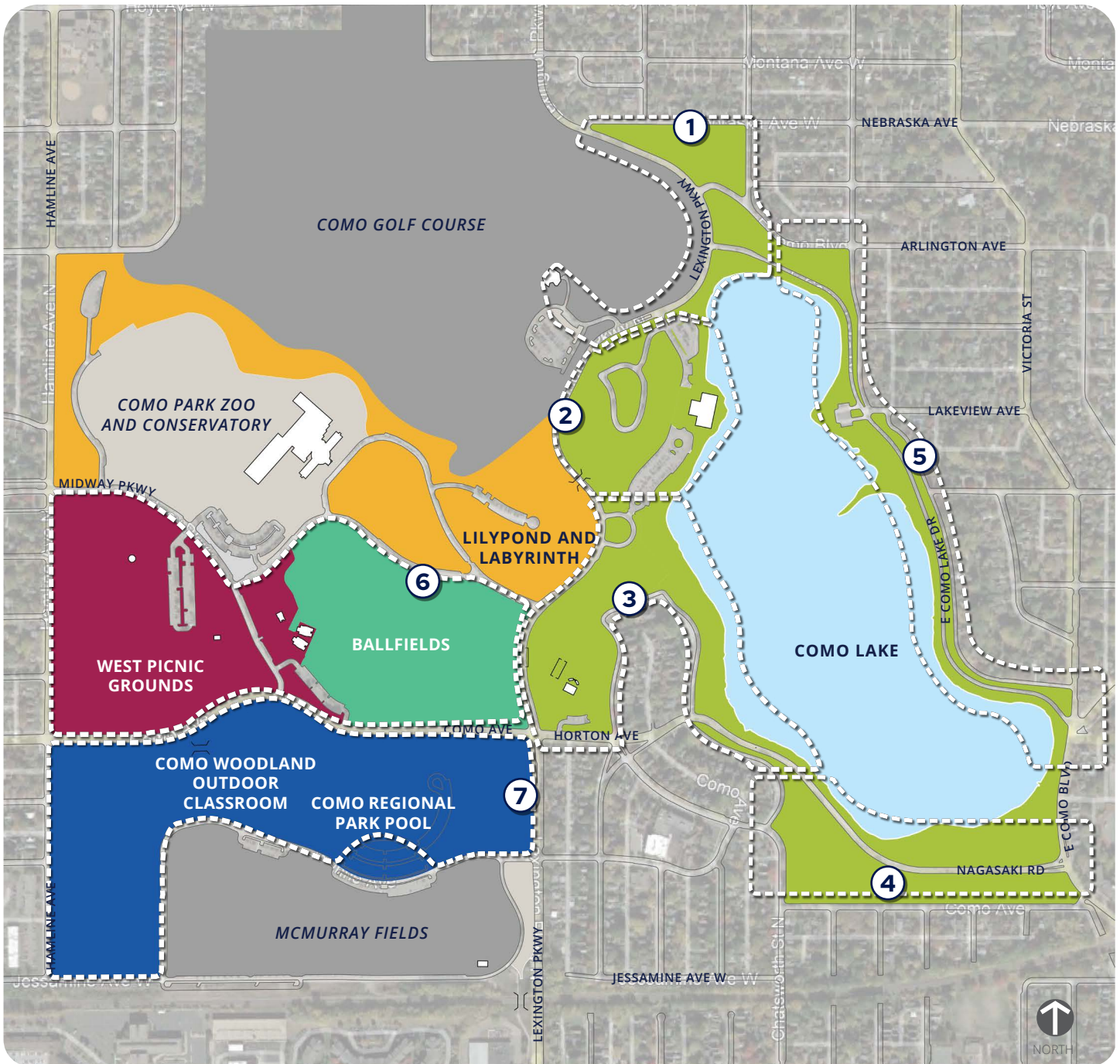


Fig. 2-5 | Overall Park Map

FOCUS AREAS

- ① Como Lake North
- ② Lakeside Pavilion Area
- ③ Historic Streetcar Station
- ④ Nagasaki Road
- ⑤ East Como Lake Drive
- ⑥ Picnic Grounds
- ⑦ Woodland Outdoor Classroom and Aquatic Facility

Special Recreation Features
 Como Park Zoo & Conservatory*

Enterprise Facilities
 Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*

*Not-included or partially included in analysis

Existing Conditions

Como Lake North

Key Map

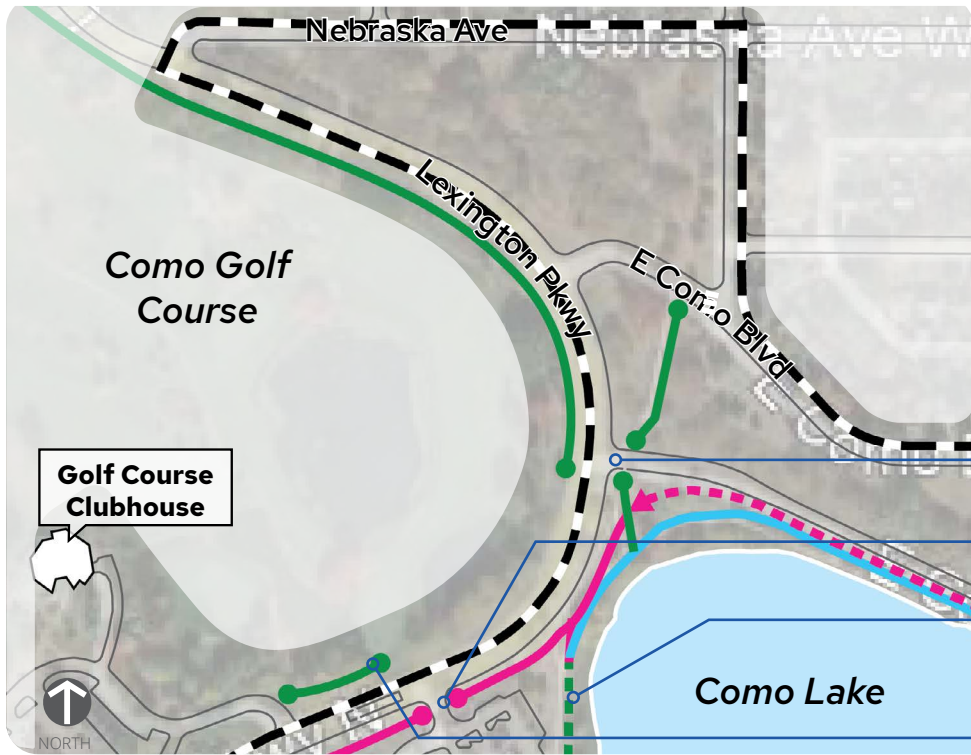


Legend

- Park Boundary
- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

This area serves as the northern gateway to the Park. Although this is an important pedestrian connection between the neighborhood and the park, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is lacking. Community feedback indicated that priorities for this area are improving intersection safety for all modes, and improving connections between the Park and the neighborhood



"This crossing needs flashing lights"

Difficult intersection for bikes and pedestrians

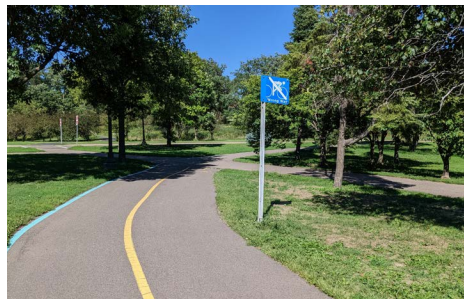
"Shared path needs striping"

Isolated segment

Fig. 2-6 | Como Lake North | Existing Conditions



Facing north; trail crossing at E Como Lake Dr



Facing east; near Lexington Pkwy and E Como Lake Dr



Facing SE; intersection of Chatsworth and E Como Blvd

Existing Conditions

Lakeside Pavilion

Key Map



Legend

- Park Boundary
- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

The Lakeside Pavilion serves as the anchor of this section of the Park. Community feedback indicated that circulation to and around the Pavilion should be improved to provide a welcoming and publicly accessible amenity here. Circulation should be improved to provide two-way trails for bikes, and more effective wayfinding signage should be provided for all modes.

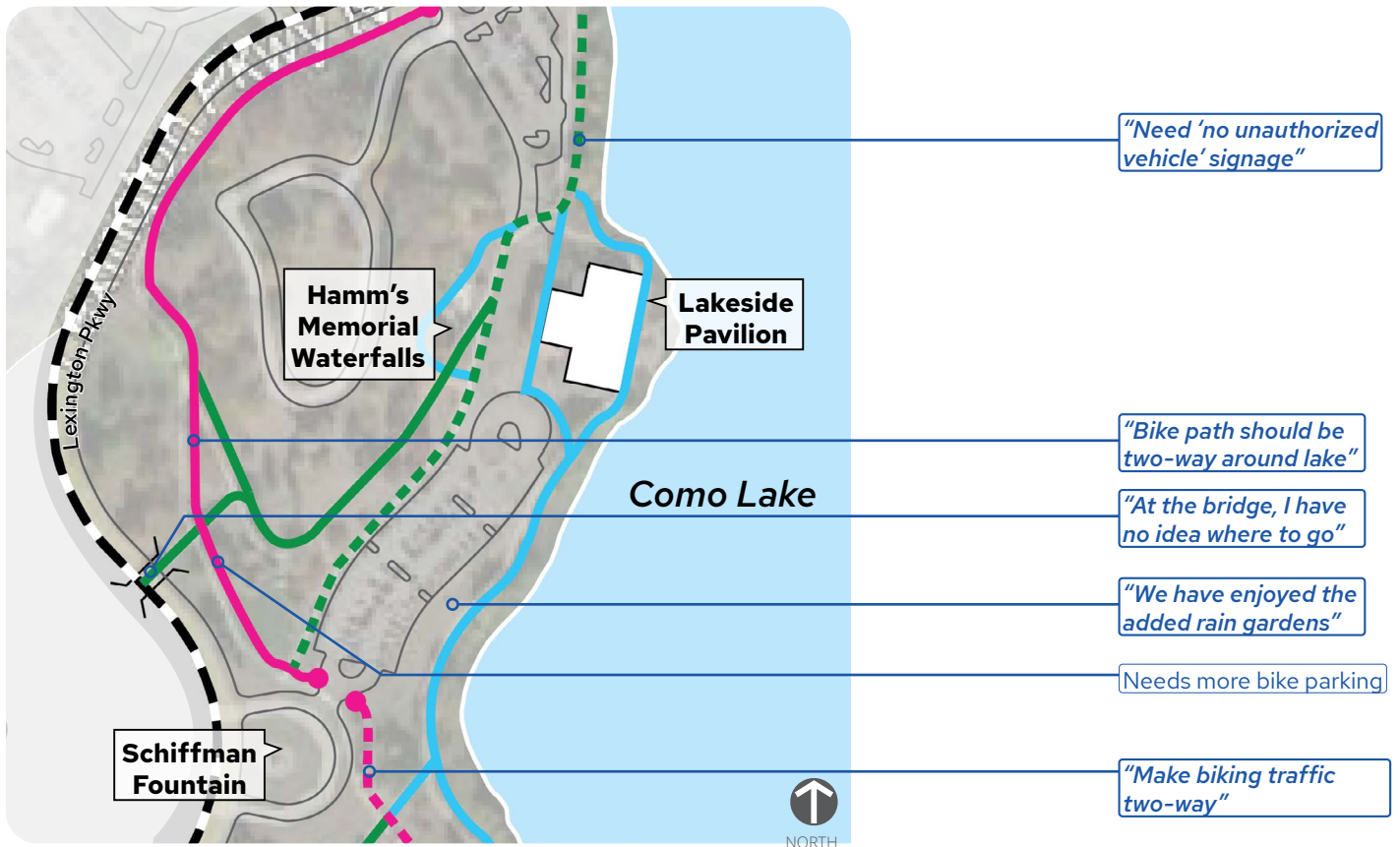


Fig. 2-7 | Lakeside Pavilion | Existing Conditions



Facing east; Lakeside Pavilion



Facing north; Pavilion parking lot

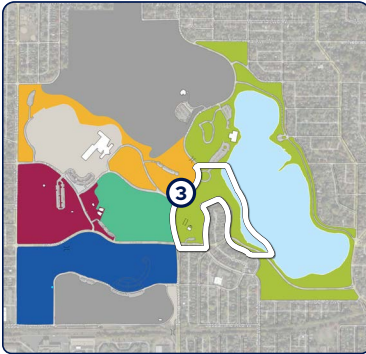


Facing south toward Schiffman Fountain

Existing Conditions

Streetcar Station

Key Map



Legend

- — — Park Boundary
- — — Two-Way Bicycle
- - - One-Way Bicycle
- — — Pedestrian
- — — Shared-Use
- - - One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

Like other areas of the Park, community feedback indicated a desire for two-way bicycle traffic and more clear and accessible paths in this area. Connections to other bike facilities such as the Grand Round and potential future Lexington Parkway Regional Trail are also critical here.

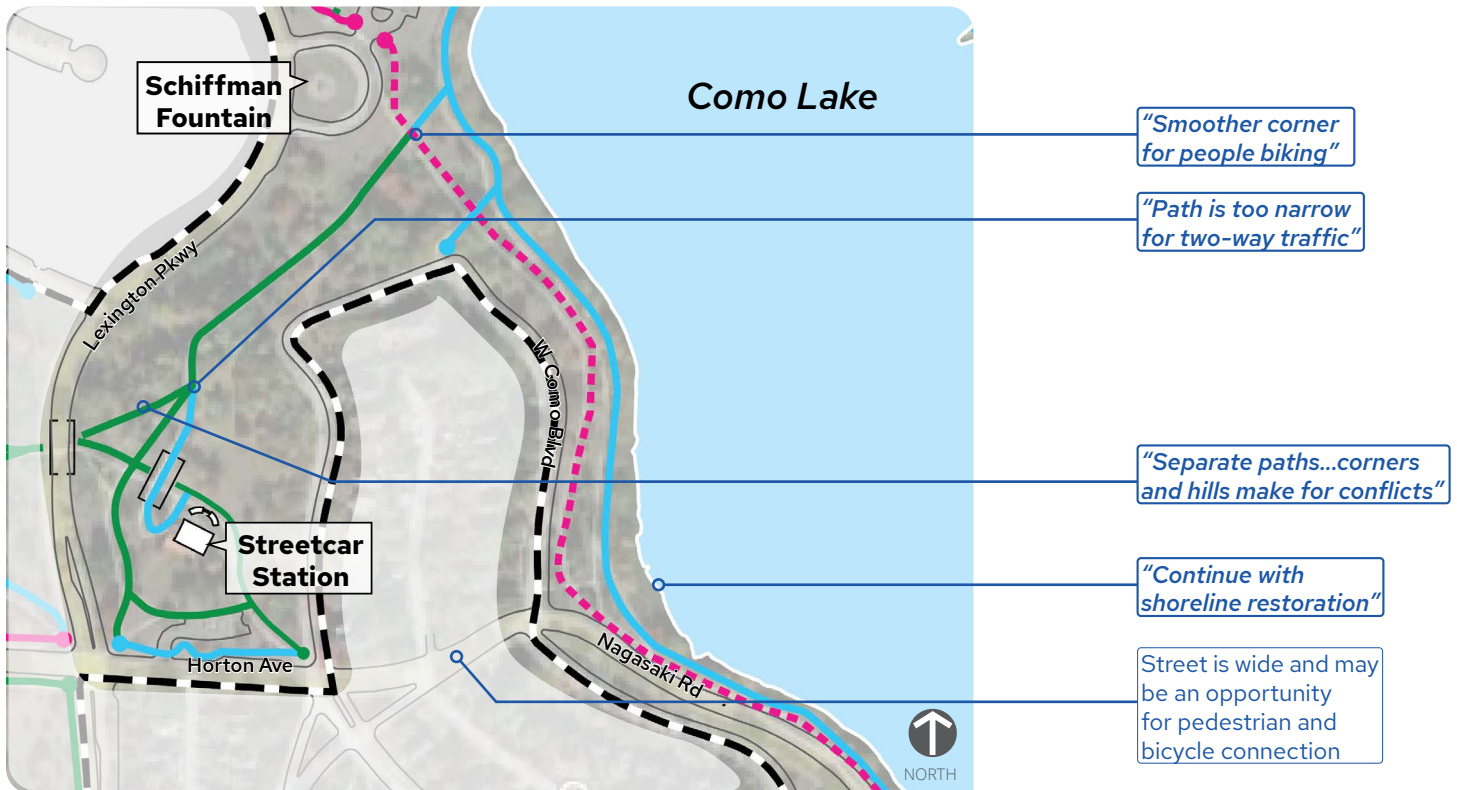


Fig. 2-8 | Streetcar Station | Existing Conditions



Facing NW toward Lexington Pkwy bridge



Facing east toward Lake along Horton Ave

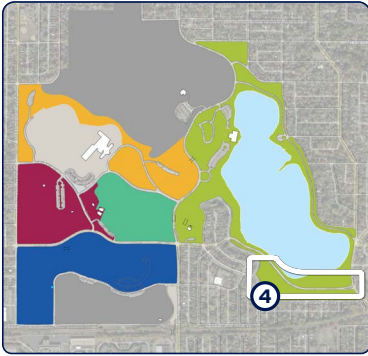


Facing SE; Melan Arch on the left

Existing Conditions

Nagasaki Road

Key Map



Legend

- — Park Boundary
- — Two-Way Bicycle
- - - - One-Way Bicycle
- — Pedestrian
- — Shared-Use
- - - - One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

The south side of Como Lake provides an important connection to the Grand Round - a connection point to the citywide bike network. The narrow space between the lakeshore and Nagasaki Road where the pedestrian and bike paths are located form a bottleneck, making the future improvements to these facilities a challenge. Conflicts with traffic along this road, and at the intersection of Nagasaki Road and E. Como Boulevard are critical, along with other safety upgrades including lighting.

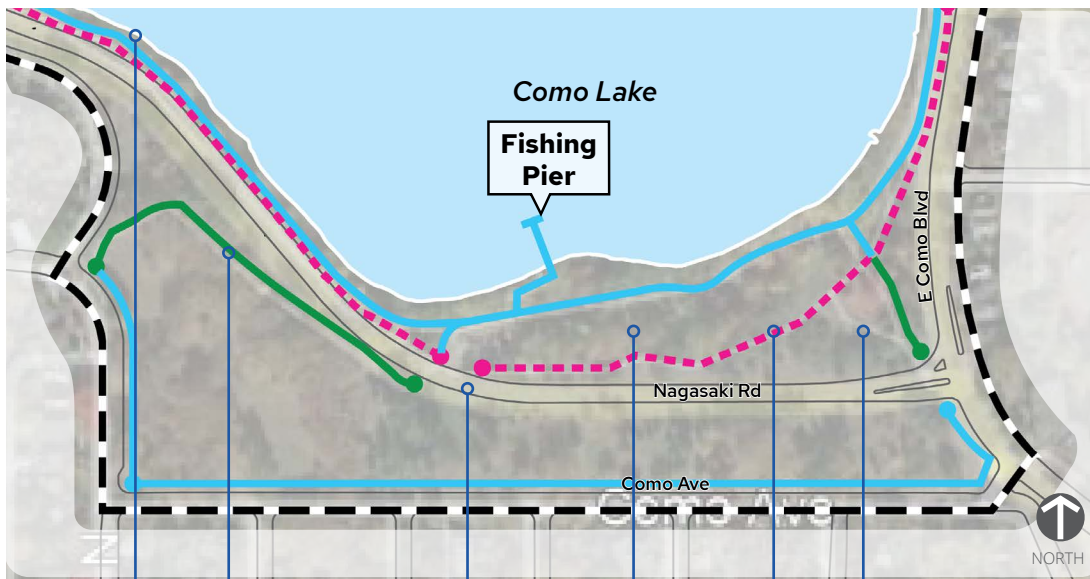


Fig. 2-9 | Nagasaki Road | Existing Conditions

- "Continue with shoreline restoration"*
- "Path too narrow for intended use"*
- "Traffic calming needed this side of Como"*
- "I avoid this area due to lack of light"*
- "Southern path needs ability to head west"*
- "Bikers ride here, please pave this path"*



Entrance to fishing pier



Facing east; paths along south side of Lake



Facing north; paths along SW side of Lake

Existing Conditions

East Como Lake Drive

Key Map

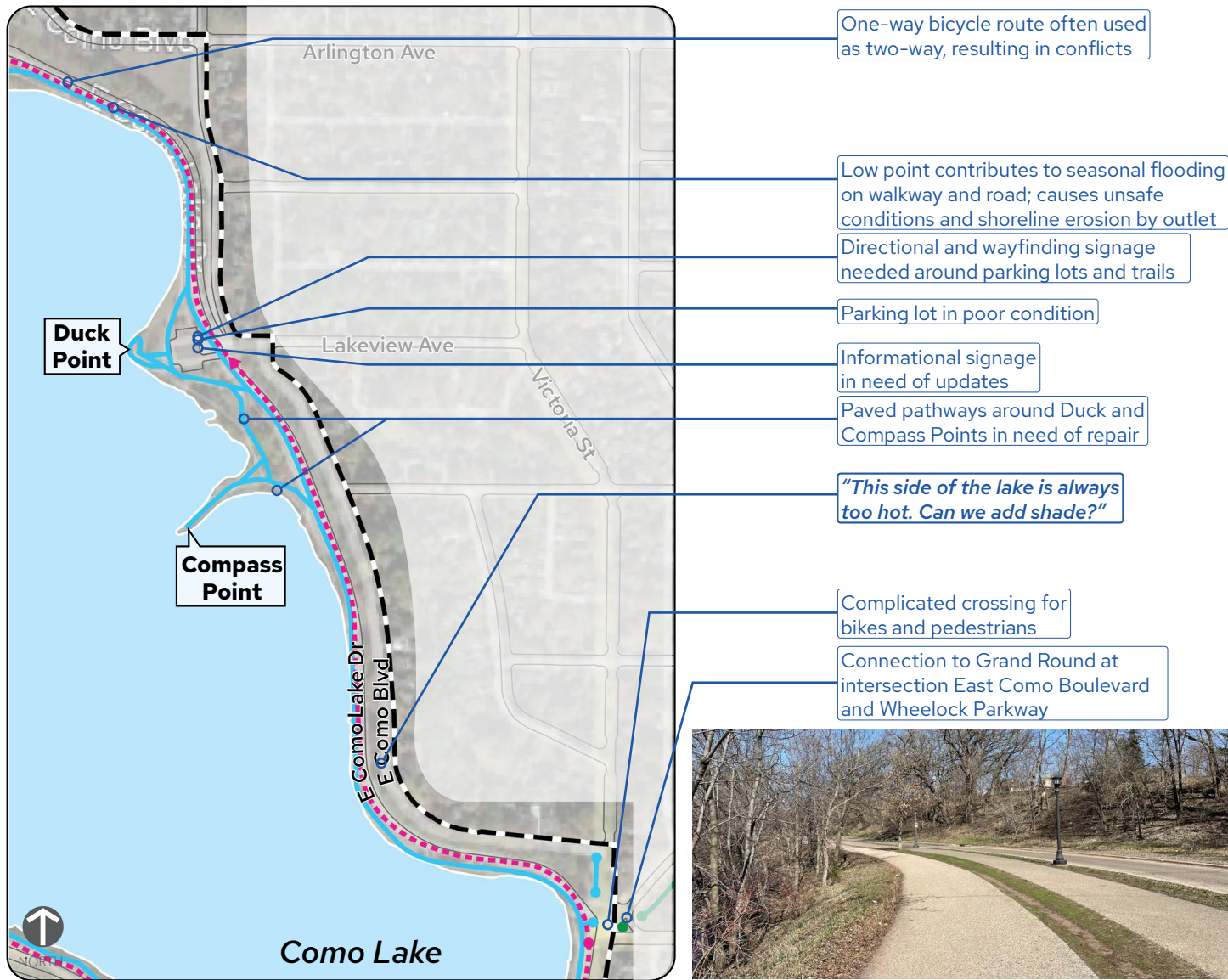


Legend

- Park Boundary
- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

Similar to the paths along Nagasaki Road, space is limited for the pedestrian and bicycle facilities between the lakeshore and East Como Lake Drive. Feedback received during community engagement reflected interest in closing East Como Lake Drive to vehicular traffic to create wider paths and dedicate more space to shoreline restoration and supporting other ecological functions of the Lake.



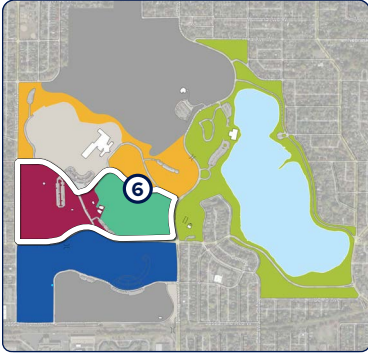
Facing north; bike and pedestrian paths

Fig. 2-10 | East Como Lake Drive | Existing Conditions

Existing Conditions

Picnic Grounds

Key Map



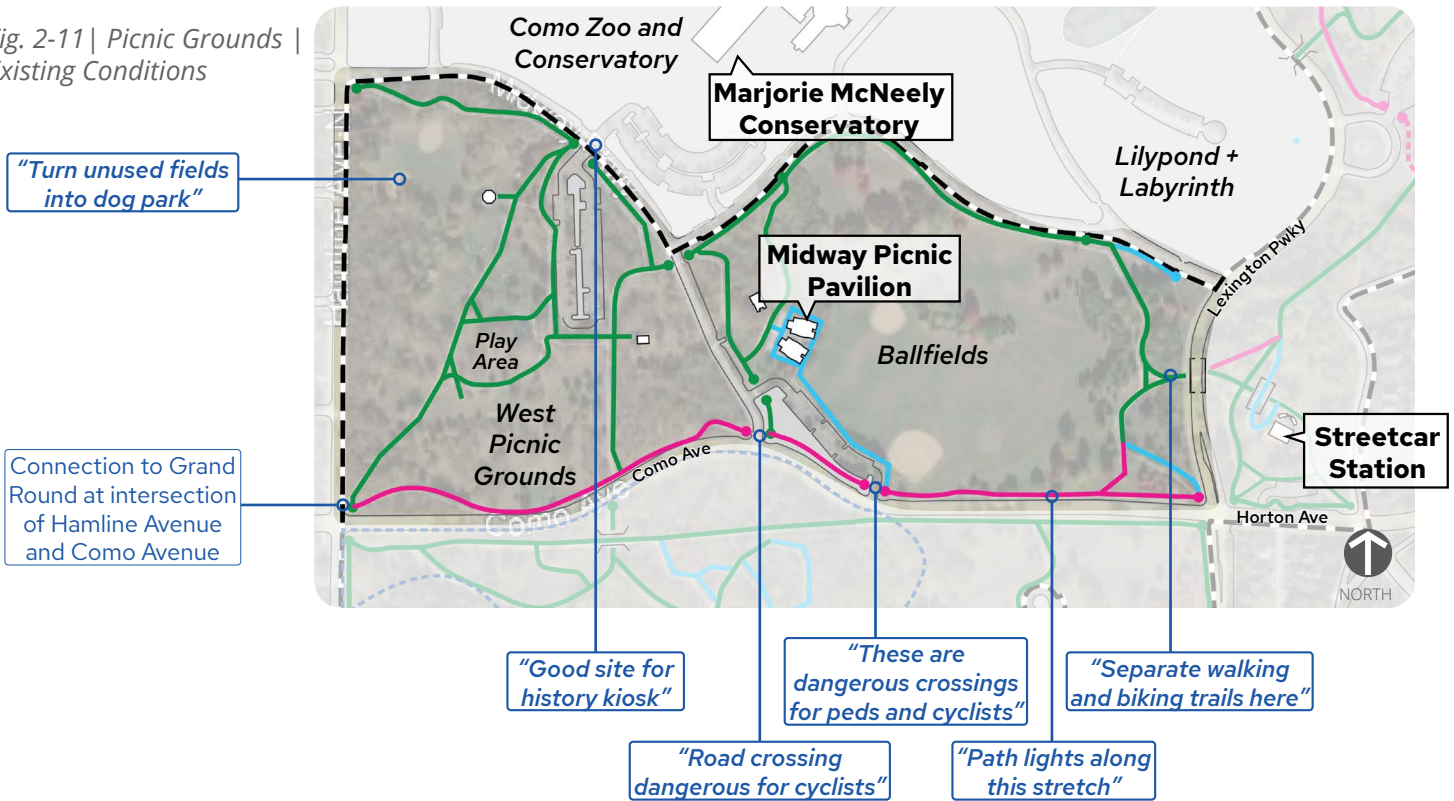
Legend

- — — Park Boundary
- — — Two-Way Bicycle
- - - One-Way Bicycle
- — — Pedestrian
- — — Shared-Use
- - - One-Way Shared

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

This area of the Park includes the west picnic grounds, ball fields, a play area, the Midway Picnic Pavilion, open greenspaces, and connection to the Grand Round at the intersection of Como Avenue and Hamline Avenue. Community comments in this area focused on pedestrian safety measures including increase pathway lighting, safer crossings at intersection and parking lots, and separation of pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Fig. 2-11 | Picnic Grounds | Existing Conditions



Facing west; play area



Facing east; restroom building



Facing east; Grand Round trail

Existing Conditions

Woodland Classroom

Key Map



Legend

- Park Boundary
- Two-Way Bicycle
- - - One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- - - One-Way Shared
- - - - - Woodland Outdoor Classroom Boundary

Annotations in quotations reflect feedback heard during community engagement.

This area of Como Regional Park includes many popular and well-loved features. These include Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom, Como Regional Park Pool, and McMurray Fields. Community feedback indicated that improvements to signage frequency and clarity are needed in this area to direct Park users to other Park features, including the Como Park Zoo. Other safety and accessibility needs were also noted during community engagement.

"A map to illustrate paths and signage"

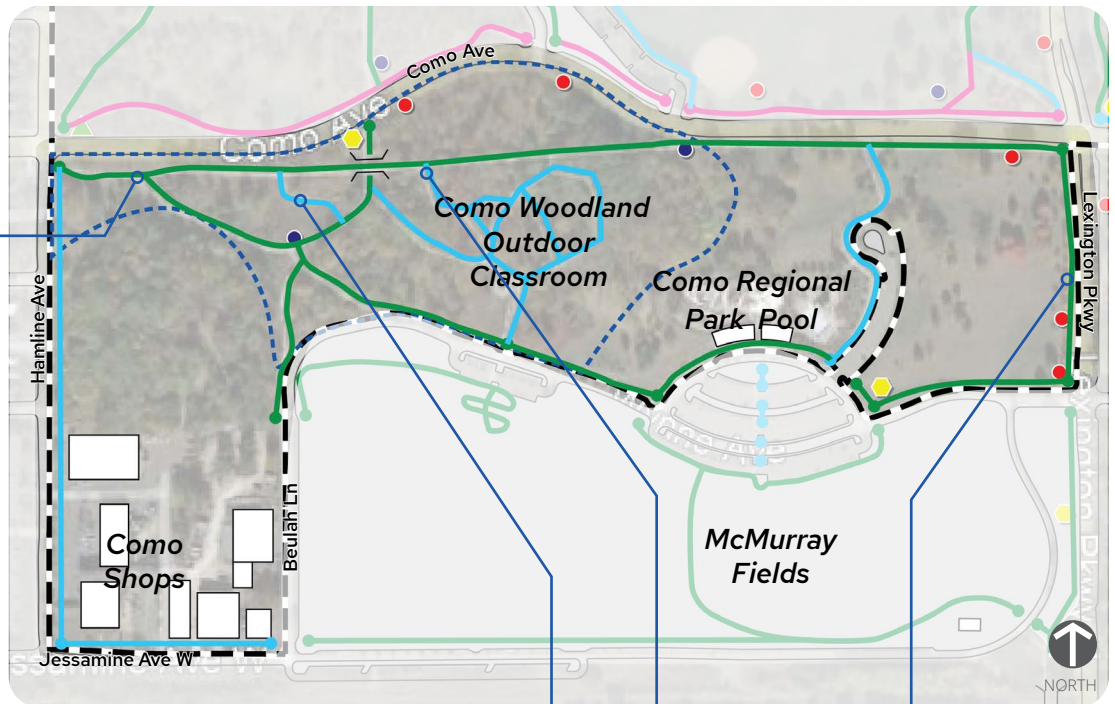


Fig. 2-12 | Woodland Classroom | Existing Conditions

"Very dark here. Need lighting."

"Paths along Lexington in poor condition"

"Need a convenient way to get between trails"



Incorrect wayfinding signage



Community Garden in Outdoor Classroom



Missing sidewalk connection on Beulah Ln

Natural Resources

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)

Land Cover

The information on the map below illustrates the land cover of the project area and beyond. Most of the Park is identified as “Southern Dry Prairie,” with a small area of “Southern Mesic Oak-Basswood Forest” north of the Como Zoo, a small area of “Southern Dry-Mesic Oak (Maple) Woodland” near the Como Pool and Woodland Outdoor Classroom, and a small pocket of “Northern Bullrush-Spikerush Marsh” on the east side of the Lake.

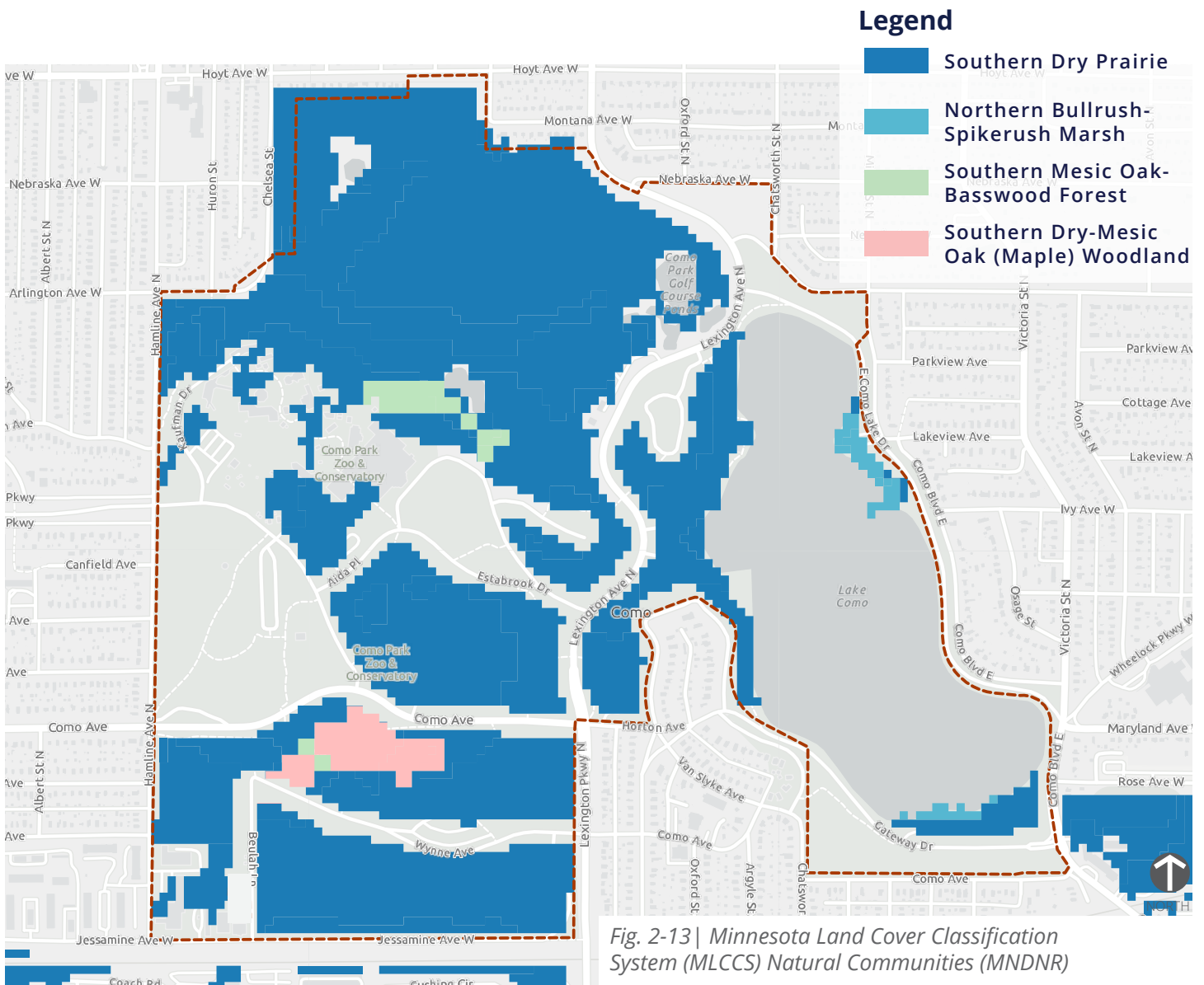


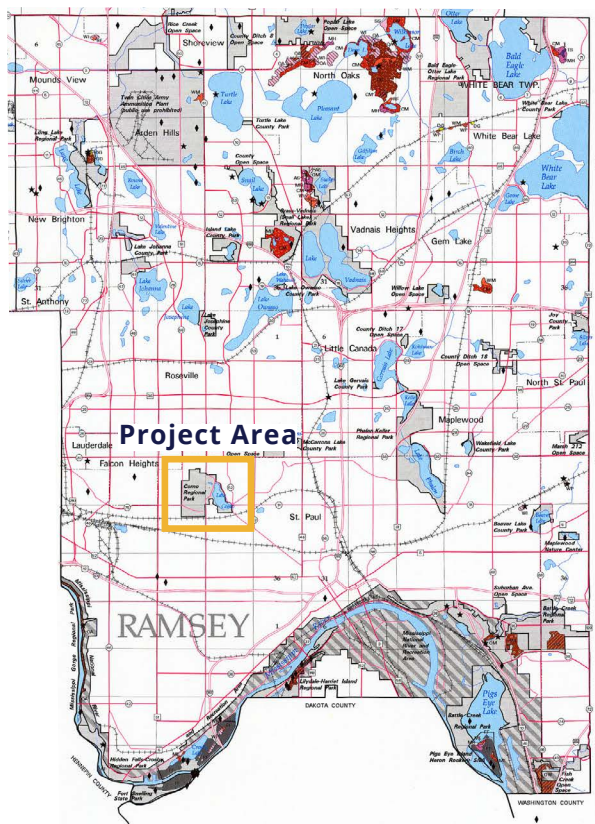
Fig. 2-13 | Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) Natural Communities (MNDNR)

Natural Resources

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)

Native Plant Communities

Data from the Minnesota County Biological Survey provides information about native plant communities in Ramsey County. As shown in the map below, no native plant communities are mapped within or adjacent to Como Regional Park. Per information from the MN County Biological Survey, “uncolored areas represent land where the natural communities have been seriously altered or destroyed by human activities such as farming, logging, draining, and development”¹.



Rare, Endangered, and Threatened Species

The Minnesota DNR’s Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) provides information on rare, endangered, and threatened species throughout the state. Como Regional Park is located within Ramsey County, which according to NHIS is the location of 98 known species that share this designation. According to the MNDNR’s Rare Species Guide, the land cover types found within Como Regional Park provide habitat favorable to support approximately 57 of the listed species within Ramsey County. Some of these species have been located within the Park’s vicinity.

To protect these rare species from poaching and similar threats, specific information about these species and their location is not publicly available. A list of the 57 species who prefer habitat similar to what is found within the park can be found within the appendix of this document. To view species the DNR is aware of in and around Como Regional Park, you may submit a DNR NHIS data request by following the links below.

How to obtain NHIS Data (state.mn.us)
<https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/nhnrp/obtaining-nhis-data.pdf>

Natural Heritage Review Program | Minnesota DNR (state.mn.us).
<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/nhnrp/natural-heritage-review.html>

¹ : Natural Communities and Rare Species of Anoka and Ramsey Counties, Minnesota County Biological Survey.
https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/mcbs/maps/anoka_ramsey.pdfadopted_04-06-2022.pdf

Natural Resources



Image: Walkers on the east side of Como

Priority Waters - Como Lake

Priority Waters are defined by the Metropolitan Council in order to sustainably manage waterbodies within the Metro region. Rivers, streams, and lakes included on the Priority Waters List provide significant use and benefit to the region based on seven categories:

1. Recreation and tourism
2. Healthy habitat
3. Drinking water protection
4. Tranquil connection
5. Equity
6. Industry and utility
7. Science and education

The Priority Waters list helps allocate resources to management of these waterbodies, and helps to develop policies that align with and inform the Water Resources Plan. Como Lake is included on the Priority Waters list due in large part to its recreation and tourism value¹.

Tree Canopy

The Metropolitan Council, in partnership with the Nature Conservancy and Tree Trust, have developed an interactive mapping tool that includes data on tree canopy cover in the metro area. The tool provides data and analysis on how existing tree canopy relates to the issues of climate change, environmental equity, and others. Below is information from this “Growing Shade” mapping tool regarding the Como Park neighborhood (including Como Regional Park):

- Como Park has an existing tree canopy coverage of 33.6% (2021). The average tree canopy coverage in Saint Paul is 30.7%; the regional average is 37.6%.
- Como Park has an average temperature on a hot summer day of 94.1F; the regional average is 93.5F.
- Percentage of people with income <185% of the poverty threshold in Como Park is 19.2%; the regional average is 18.2%.

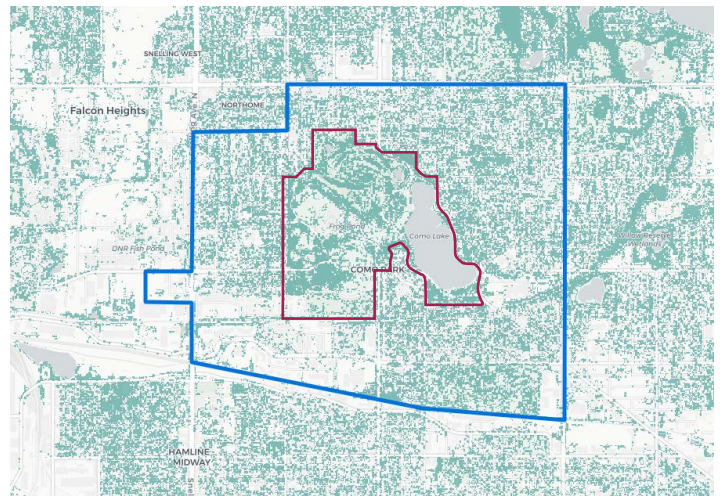


Fig. 2-14 | Existing Tree Canopy

Legend

- Existing Tree Canopy
- Project Area
- Como Park Neighborhood

¹ : Metropolitan Council, 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, [https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-\(2020-version\)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx](https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-(2020-version)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx)

² : Growing Shade Tool, <https://metrotransitm.n.shinyapps.io/growing-shade/>

Natural Resources

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD)

Como Lakeshore Management Plan

The Como Lake Management Plan (CLMP) was developed in 2019 with the help of partners and the community to define issues, goals, and strategies for achieving water quality and ecosystem health goals for the lake. The CLMP utilizes an adaptive management approach and identifies strategies for both watershed and in-lake management to work toward improvements in Como Lake following decades of poor water quality. Developed by the CRWD, the Como Lakeshore Management Plan seeks to build on previous plans to focus on improving the ecological health, resilience, aesthetics, and functionality of the strip of land immediately surrounding Como Lake.¹ The Management Plan assesses the existing conditions of the Como Lake lakeshore, identifies issues and concerns, outlines goals and objectives, and includes recommendations and strategies for implementation.

¹ : Capitol Region Watershed District. (2022). Como Lakeshore Management Plan. https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Como-Lakeshore-Mgmt-Plan_adopted_04-06-2022.pdf

Lakeshore

Como Lake's lakeshore areas were fully restored to native plantings in the early 2000s by the City of Saint Paul with community support after a century of turf grass going down to the waters edge. Native shorelines serve an important role in lake water quality and ecosystem health by providing habitat, stabilizing soils, preventing erosion, and capturing and treating surface runoff before flowing to the lake.

Developed by the CRWD following its recommendation in the Como Lake Management Plan, the Como Lakeshore Management Plan focuses on improving the ecological health, resilience, aesthetics, and functionality of the lakeshore, or the strip of land immediately surrounding Como Lake.¹ The Management Plan assesses the existing conditions of the Como Lake lakeshore, identifies issues and



Additional information about CRWD and their work at and around Como Lake was added to the final Plan.

concerns, outlines goals and objectives, and includes recommendations and strategies for implementation.

Como Lake and the shoreline is managed by CRWD, in collaboration with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation. This Long-Range Plan recommends alignment with the CRWD Watershed Management Plan, which focuses on improving the health, resilience, aesthetic, and functionality of the strip of land immediately surrounding Como Lake.¹ The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan has also identified potential areas where shoreline can be increased for greater ecological and water quality benefit in coordination with the Capitol Region Watershed District Shoreline Management Plan.

The upland zone of the shoreline differs significantly from the in-lake zone. Existing shoreline vegetation predominantly includes canopy and sub-canopy trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses, vines, and managed turf areas. Riprap currently protects most of the shoreline. The CRWD in partnership with the City of Saint Paul has implemented management plans aimed at restructuring the system and replacing non-native vegetation with a more native planting palette. This initiative is intended to directly enhance the habitat, creating a more diverse and beneficial environment for wildlife.

Natural Resources



Fig. 2-15 | Como Lakeshore Management Areas (CRWD Como Lakeshore Management Plan, 2022)



Fig. 2-16 | Como Lakeshore Access Paths (CRWD Como Lakeshore Management Plan, 2022)

Natural Resources

Wetlands

The map below depicts the 'Circular 39' classification system of the updated National Wetlands Inventory, developed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This system categorizes wetlands predominantly based on depth and vegetation.

Como Park encompasses six designated wetland areas. Como Lake is categorized as having an unconsolidated bottom, with open waters directly adjacent to it featuring emergent vegetation acting as a filtration strip. This vegetation serves to intercept contaminants before they reach the lake.

Water Quality

Como Lake has a long history of poor water quality due to excessive phosphorus and associated algal blooms. Algal growth has led to odor problems, reduced oxygen conditions in the lake, and winter fish kills. Phosphorus is the primary driver of water quality problems. Como Lake has consistently exceeded the State shallow lake water quality standard in this region for phosphorus (60 µg/L). The long-term mean total phosphorus (TP) concentration in Como Lake is 173 µg/L, which is three times the State standard. Previous

studies and analyses have determined that a 60% reduction in watershed TP loads, and a 95% reduction in internal TP loads will be required to meet the State water quality standard.

The characteristics of the watershed have significant influence on the amount of runoff and what pollutants are being delivered to the lake. Stormwater runoff carries excess pollutants like nutrients and sediment from the watershed to the lake, making the watershed a pollutant source. The Como Lake watershed (1,711 acres) includes Como Regional Park and portions of three cities (St. Paul, Roseville, and Falcon Heights). It has 13 major subwatersheds that generate runoff to an extensive network of storm sewer pipes that discharge directly to Como Lake through twenty-two storm sewer outlets. The watershed contributes a significant portion of TP to Como Lake in addition to other pollutants of concern including chloride, sediment, and trash.



Additional information about CRWD and their work at and around Como Lake was added to the final Plan.

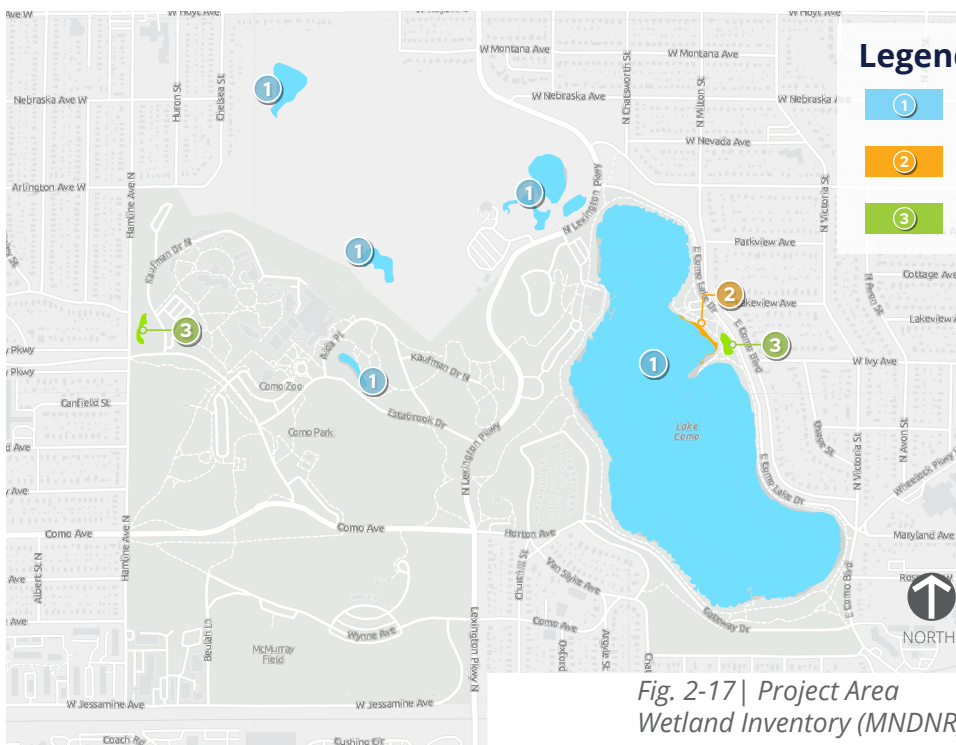


Fig. 2-17 | Project Area Wetland Inventory (MNDNR)

1 : Capitol Region Watershed District. (2022). Como Lakeshore Management Plan. https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Como-Lakeshore-Mgmt-Plan_adopted_04-06-2022.pdf

Natural Resources

Capitol Region Watershed District and the City of Saint Paul are committed to improving water quality in Como Lake. Significant efforts have been made since 2002 under the direction of the Como Lake Strategic Management Plan (CLSMP) and the 2019 Como Lake Management Plan (CLMP) to meet water quality and ecosystem health goals, which will continue into the future using an adaptive management approach.

Aquatic Health

The habitat quality in Como Lake has been one-dimensional, lacking diverse planting communities that could positively impact natural habitats. The lake currently consists mainly of submergent aquatic vegetation, with minimal emergence of vegetation that it once had included elodea, coontail, and native water milfoil. The absence of diverse vegetation communities limits the variety and amount of wildlife that will thrive in and around Como Lake.

An invasive aquatic plant known as curly-leaf pondweed has caused significant water quality problems in Como Lake. In early summer, curly-leaf pondweed is able to spread plant buds called “turions.” Each plant produces up to 100 turions that fall off and settle to the lake bottom to grow new plants. Over the winter the new plants begin growing under the ice, allowing them to outcompete native plants that begin their growing season in May.

Curly-leaf pondweed was first observed in Como in the early 1990s and was possibly introduced by boats, boot treads, or aquarium plants. Curly-leaf pondweed thrives in murky water. The conditions in Como Lake are just right for curly-leaf to be highly successful and out-compete native species.

Prior to herbicide treatments in 2020 and 2021, it had come to dominate 90% of the plant community in the lake. Visitors to Como Lake might notice a strong odor in the summer as all the curly-leaf pondweed dies off for the season and decomposes in the water. Controlling curly-leaf pondweed is a critical step for restoring balance in Como Lake’s ecosystem.

Common carp are another concern for the native aquatic plant community in Como Lake. Common carp are invasive fish that contribute to poor water quality by stirring up the lake bottom while searching for food. During feeding, they uproot plants, muddy the waters for native fish, and allow excess nutrients stored in the lake bottom to be released and later consumed by algae. Common carp are one of the most damaging aquatic invasive species due to their wide distribution and severe impacts in shallow lakes and wetlands. Capitol Region Watershed District has conducted surveys of common carp in Como Lake and found their population to be above the critical threshold for water quality.



Additional information about CRWD and their work at and around Como Lake was added to the final Plan.

Natural Resources

Invasive Species and Vegetation Management

Invasive animals pose significant challenges to natural areas, and in some cases, controlling their impact is more realistic than complete eradication. Some invasive animals, like invasive earthworms, are difficult to remove or manage cost-effectively. The primary invasive animals affecting or having the potential to impact the Como Lakeshore are as follows:

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB): Since 2010, the City of Saint Paul through its EAB Management Program has been working to mitigate the devastation caused by the Emerald Ash Borer. A strategy of “Structured Removal” of ash trees has been used to significantly reduce the number of ash trees on boulevards and in Saint Paul Parks. In 2024, the majority of the ash tree removals and new tree plantings within Como Park have been completed.

Spongy Moth (formerly “gypsy moth”): A federally- and state-regulated pest, the Spongy Moth is rare in Minnesota, but has been detected in nearby Twin Cities communities. Careful management of cut trees is important in preventing further spread of the moths¹.

Invasive Earthworms: Present in City forests and presumed to be around Como Lake, these non-native, invasive animals were introduced, in part, through discarded fishing bait. Recently, the emergence of “jumping worms,” another invasive earthworm species, has been identified in the Twin Cities. These earthworms exhibit aggressive consumption of organic matter on the soil surface, altering soil structure and composition. As a result, they change the quantity and variety of plants thriving on the forest floor, with unknown effects on the regeneration of the future forest tree canopy. Effective management strategies are needed to address these invasive earthworms and mitigate their impact on the ecosystem.

Additional Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Como Golf Course Best Management Practices (BMPs): Engineering design is currently underway to install several stormwater management practices within the Como Golf Course. An iron-enhanced sand filter will be installed at the northwestern golf course pond that will remove dissolved phosphorus from the water before it leaves the pond.

Additionally, a bioretention basin and underground infiltration system will be created near Hole 7 of the golf course. Together, these best management practices will prevent 55 pounds of phosphorus from the water before it leaves the pond.

Note: Although Como Regional Park is not within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), planners acknowledge the purpose and importance of this designation and its requirements.

¹ : Capitol Region Watershed District. (2022). Como Lakeshore Management Plan. https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Como-Lakeshore-Mgmt-Plan_adopted_04-06-2022.pdf

Existing Conditions

Park Access

Connecting to existing transportation facilities is an important piece of creating an accessible Regional Park. The southern edge of the Park is well-served by bus transit; transit route 3 connects to both downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis while transit route 83 provides a north/south connection across Saint Paul.

The pedestrian sidewalk network is shown on the map below. The green lines represent existing sidewalks. Neighborhoods on the east side of the Lake, particularly the northeast side, have limited sidewalk access between the residential areas and Como Regional Park.

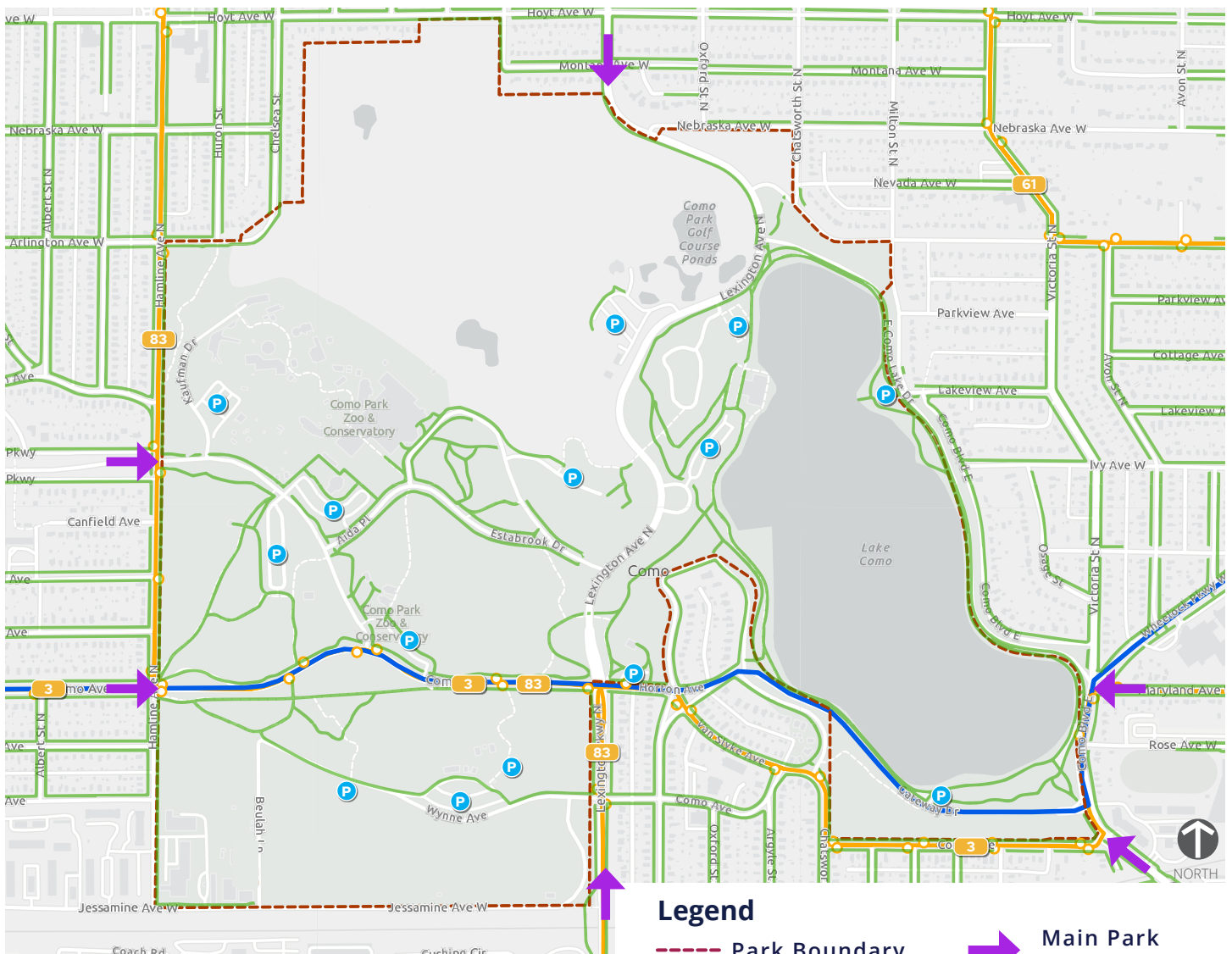


Fig. 2-18 | Park Access

Existing Conditions

Designated Historic Districts and Individual Historic Properties

Historic districts and properties in and adjacent to Como Regional Park may require special consideration at the time of design and implementation for various proposed projects. Two notable historic properties within the Como Regional Park boundary are the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory and two bridges near the Historic Streetcar Station.

When recommendations in this Long-Range Plan become projects for design and construction, the potential significance of historic districts and properties will be evaluated through a process potentially involving local, state, and/or federal reviews. The requirements of these processes will be determined on a project by project basis.



Clarification about review process for historic site and properties added to final Plan.

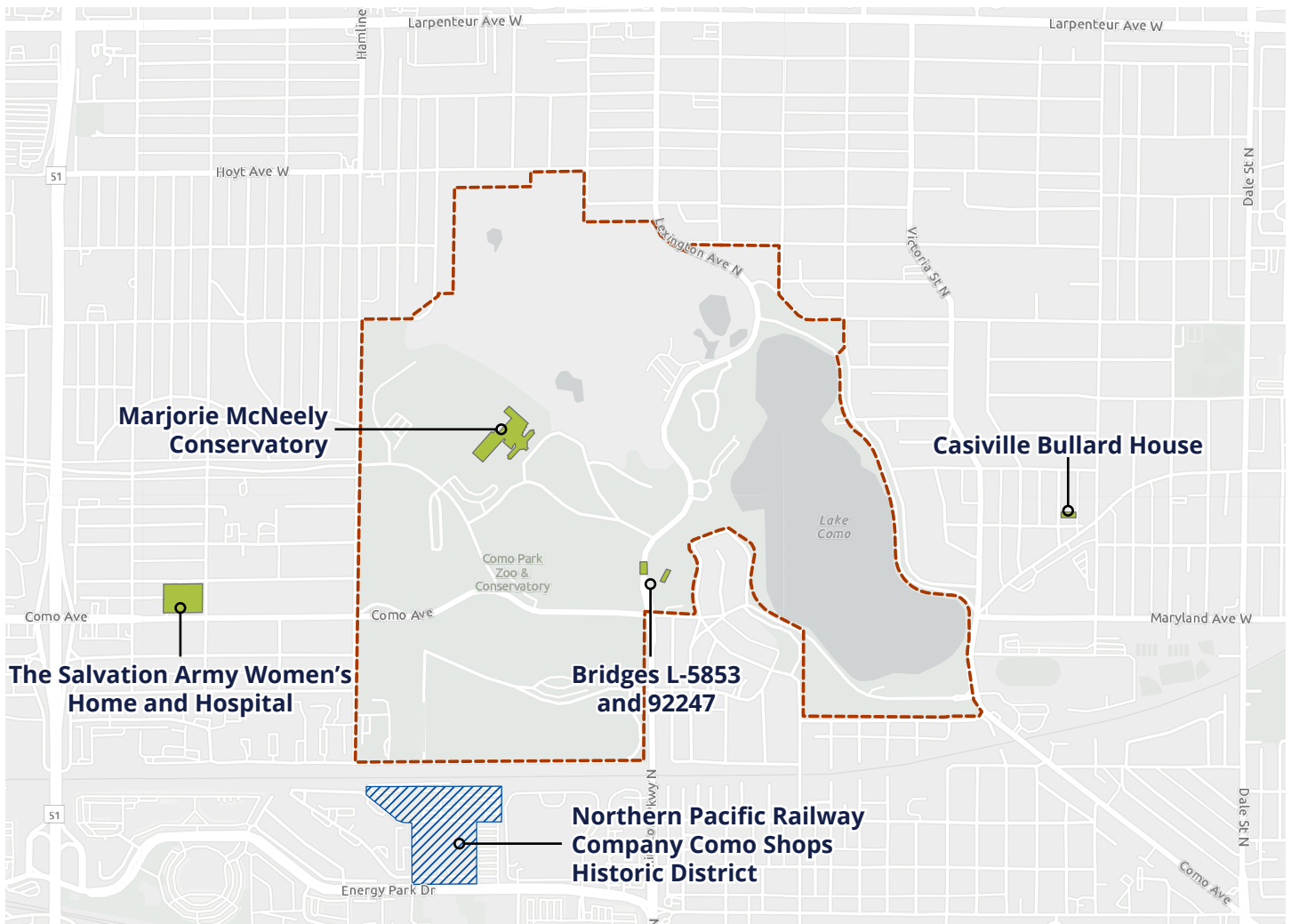


Fig. 2-19 | Historic Sites and Districts (Saint Paul Historic Preservation Commission)

Legend

- - - Project Boundary
- Historic Site
- Historic District
Locally and nationally listed

Chapter 3

Community Engagement



Image: Staff engaging with community members at D10 Ice Cream Social Event



Image: Bike and community members at Open House, October 2024

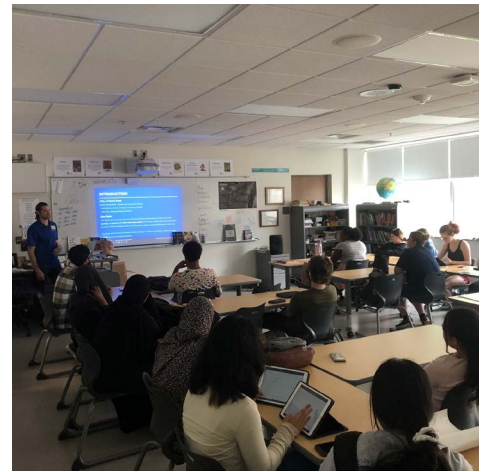


Image: Staff presenting project information to students at the Metro Deaf School

Introduction

This chapter outlines the process and outcomes of the community engagement process for the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. Project staff met with community members, students at local schools, Park neighbors, and hosted an online engagement site visited by stakeholders from across the region to determine priorities for future implementation at Como Regional Park. Recommended projects with priority ranking can be found in Chapter 4. These recommended projects were developed through the engagement process, and their priority ranking was directly influenced by feedback from a variety of community voices.



Community Feedback Icon

Look for this icon in the document highlighting areas of focus generated by insights, feedback, and concerns from community members throughout engagement.

Equity Analysis

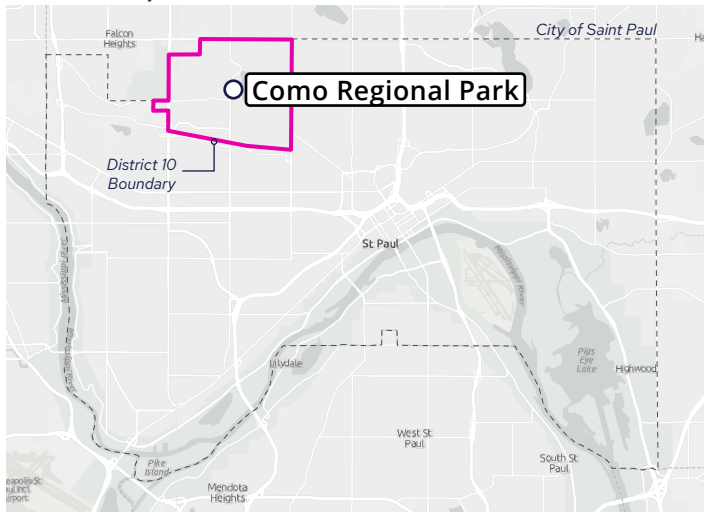
Project Data

Scope: What are the boundaries and demographics of the public engagement area? Please consider neighborhoods adjacent to the park or trail, travel sheds, and agency/regional boundaries.

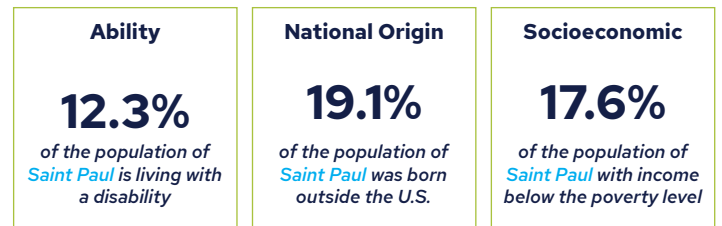
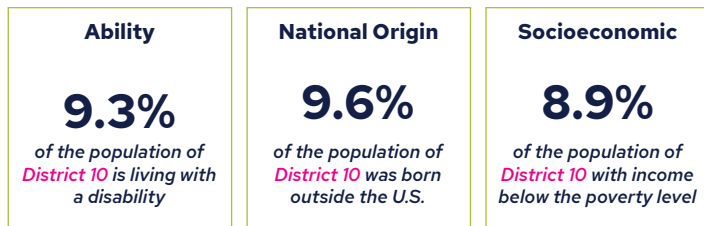
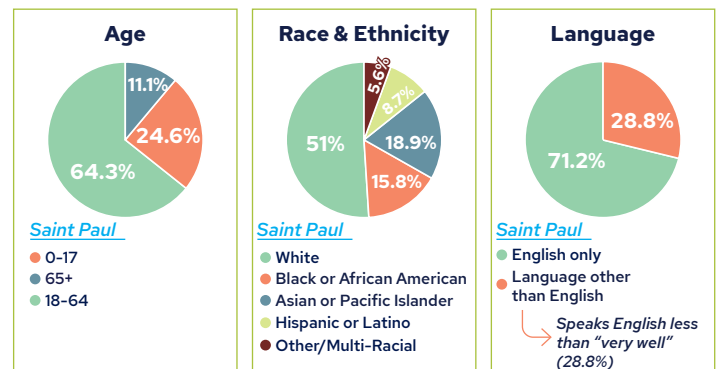
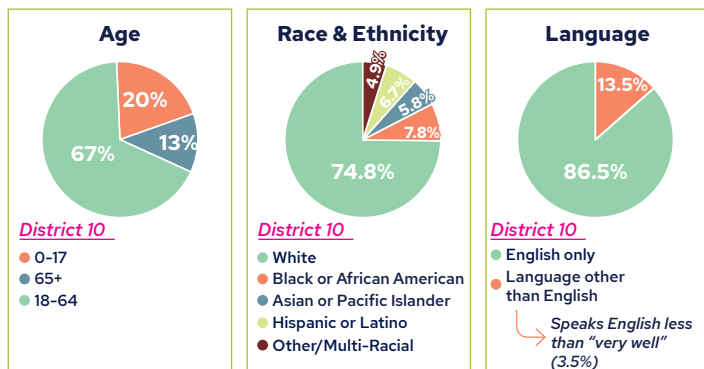
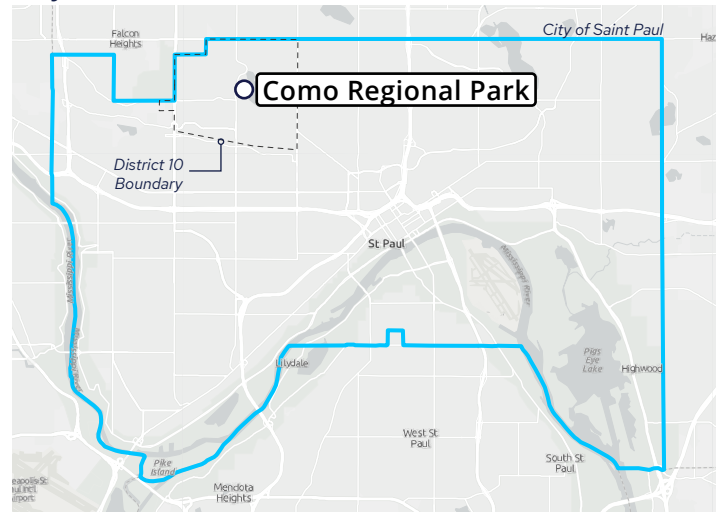
¹ : Minnesota Compass, Saint Paul Data. <https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/city/saint-paul>

Engagement efforts for the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan focused on both a local and regional scale. Como Regional Park is within District 10 which is the Como Park neighborhood. Several focused engagement events were held here, and a majority of the Design Advisory Committee members reside in this neighborhood. At a more regional scale, the project team was able to reach a broader engagement audience throughout Saint Paul and the region through the project’s online engagement platform, and attendance and participation at other community events around the City. The information below includes demographic information specific to District 10, as well as the City at large.

District 10 | Como Park ¹



City of Saint Paul ¹



Equity Analysis

Project Data

Context: What is known about future stakeholders, underserved populations, and how the region's history created present-day inequitable outcomes?

Racial Covenants

Racial covenants are clauses that were inserted into property deeds to prevent people who were not white from buying or occupying land.¹ Real estate developers and urban planners implemented covenants under the idea that “mixed-race residential areas were hazardous and should be eliminated.”¹ The use of racial covenants in the Twin Cities region has contributed to continuing racial inequities, particularly as they relate to homeownership. While white households in Saint Paul constitute 67% of all households in the City, they comprise 82% of home-owning households.⁴ Although racial covenants were deemed unenforceable by the Supreme Court in 1948, property records still include the language used in the covenants.³

Other discriminatory housing practices such as redlining have been used in tandem with racial covenants to restrict homeownership among non-white people. Between 1935 and 1940, federal agents of the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation assigned grades to different areas of cities across the U.S. to reflect “mortgage security,” with cities or neighborhoods receiving a grade from A (minimal

risk to banks), to D (considered hazardous).² These practices were informed by racial discrimination and made homeownership for non-white people more difficult.

Although racial covenants and redlining are no longer enforceable practices, their impacts can still be seen today and highlight the demographic inequities in the City and region. It is critical to recognize the impacts of discriminatory zoning and real estate practices, and consider marginalized residents when planning present and future regional amenities.

¹ : Mapping Prejudice. <https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/racial-covenants/what-is-a-covenant>

² : Mapping Inequality. <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining>

³ : Furst, R., Hargarten, J., Webster, M., & Tribune, S. (2022, June 16). Racial covenants found embedded in Ramsey County property deeds. Star Tribune. <https://www.startribune.com/the-racist-covenants-embedded-in-ramsey-county-deeds/600182442/> <https://www.startribune.com/the-racist-covenants-embedded-in-ramsey-county-deeds/600182442/>

⁴ : Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan, https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/CSP_2040_CompPlan_FinalAdopted_Updated_091322.pdf



Fig. 3-20 | Racial Covenants in relation to Como Regional park

Legend

- Racial Covenant
- Como Regional Park Boundary

Much of this data comes from the Mapping Prejudice project, based in the University of Minnesota Libraries. To date, the project has transcribed 80,000 property deeds in Hennepin and Ramsey counties.

Equity Analysis

Future Stakeholders

The Metropolitan Council projects that the population of Saint Paul will grow by 30,000 residents, 13,000 households, and 20,000 jobs between 2020 and 2040. The population of Saint Paul and the Metro Region is also projected to become more diverse over this period of time. Between 2000 and 2015, the percentage of people of color living in Saint Paul increased from 36% to 46%. During this same time period, the percentage of people of color living in Ramsey County has increased from 13% in 2000 to 30% in 2014. The Metropolitan Council estimates that by 2040, people of color will comprise 40% of the region. The Metropolitan Council projects that people aged 65 and older will be the fastest growing segment of the region's population, and will be one in five of the region's residents by 2040 (21% of the population).¹ Based on these estimates, it can be inferred that future stakeholders will be older, and more racially and/or ethnically diverse than Park users are today.

Public Engagement and Participation

Participants: Which stakeholders discussed above contributed to the planning effort?

Project staff connected with a variety of groups during the engagement process for the Long-Range Plan, with a focus on future stakeholders and under-represented groups. Project staff engaged with youth at local schools including Como High School, Metro Deaf School, and the Hmong College Prep Academy, as well as members on the Saint Paul Youth Commission. Additionally, engagement with adjacent community groups played a significant role in shaping the Plan. Staff were able to connect with residents of District 10 at a number of local community events and through online surveys. The demographics of District 10 as a whole are included in page 34 of this document.

Engagement: What engagement, outreach, and communication was conducted for stakeholders described in above?

In an effort to connect with as many stakeholders as possible, engagement opportunities were posted on both the City webpage as well as an interactive website for users to take surveys, make notes in a project map, ask questions, or share concerns. The project team participated in community events organized by others, and also held events with groups of community members that focused on future stakeholders and underserved populations. The purpose of this engagement was to learn more about the recreation preferences of these groups, to help minimize barriers, and to make Como Regional Park a more welcoming space for all. A summary of the types of engagement events is below:

- Engagement held in conjunction with other community events
- District Council meetings
- On-site and online surveys
- Engage Saint Paul engagement website
- Transportation Committee (comprised of residents and City representatives)
- Safe Routes to School meetings
- Design Advisory Committee (comprised of resident representatives)
- Community Open House

The design team bolstered their community engagement phase by focusing extra attention on connecting with historically underrepresented groups. A summary of this focused engagement, and the priorities identified during meetings with those groups, is outlined on the following pages. Full agendas and meeting minutes can be found in the appendix.

¹ : Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan, https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/CSP_2040_CompPlan_FinalAdopted_Updated_091322.pdf

Equity Analysis

Public Participation: What did you learn from the engagement conducted in 2b?

After the project team met with the groups listed above, feedback was compiled and project improvements were categorized into the following themes:

- Paths and Trails
- Programming
- Habitat
- Streets and Intersections
- Miscellaneous

The suggested improvements under these categories were then included onto a score sheet to determine stakeholder priorities. Highest priority would receive a score of 5, while lowest a score of 1. The project team went back to the focused engagement groups listed on the previous page and asked stakeholders to share their feedback on project priorities.

Overall Project Priorities

The projects that received the highest average score from participants are as follows*:

1. Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; increase measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.
2. Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native prairie and plantings for native habitat.
3. Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.
4. Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and to other park features.
5. Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.

*A full list of recommended projects that were included in the survey can be found in Ch. 4 of this document.

raised map (relief) for deaf blind kids to "feel" the map

Project Priorities

Mark on the line to rank the proposed project priorities: high, medium, or low

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY
STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS	
1. Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.	LOW
2. Update Hagans Road to provide more space for off-street pathways; improve intersection at Como Avenue.	LOW
3. Combine efforts with Saint Paul Public Works to expand sidewalk infrastructure and improve access to park.	LOW
4. Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; include measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.	LOW
MISCELLANEOUS	
5. Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more water friendly; improve access to shoreline; provide shade and shelter; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility.	LOW
6. Improve bike parking and storage such as permanent secure facilities, electric bike charging stations, and racks to accommodate larger cargo bikes and trailers.	LOW
7. Alternative recreation addresses: i.e. dog park, mini park, dog park, bike pump track, fitness stations, pickleball courts, etc.	LOW
8. Public Art: For example, murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington Parkway.	LOW
9. Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed.	LOW
OTHER	
WHAT'S MISSING? Describe other items that may not have been covered and should be considered for the project.	

Partner with MDS to design & paint mural in the tunnel

Remainder signs for areas that can be/are reserved

Como Regional Park Long Range Plan September 2023

After school, breakfast the park by Gabe' to tunnel experience heavy traffic with bikes, joggers and runners.

Project Priorities

Mark on the line to rank the proposed project priorities: high, medium, or low

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY
STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS	
1. Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.	LOW
2. Update Hagans Road to provide more space for off-street pathways; improve intersection at Como Avenue.	LOW
3. Combine efforts with Saint Paul Public Works to expand sidewalk infrastructure and improve access to park.	LOW
4. Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; include measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.	LOW
MISCELLANEOUS	
5. Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more water friendly; improve access to shoreline; provide shade and shelter; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility.	LOW
6. Improve bike parking and storage such as permanent secure facilities, electric bike charging stations, and racks to accommodate larger cargo bikes and trailers.	LOW
7. Alternative recreation addresses: i.e. dog park, mini park, dog park, bike pump track, fitness stations, pickleball courts, etc.	LOW
8. Public Art: For example, murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington Parkway.	LOW
9. Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed.	LOW
OTHER	
WHAT'S MISSING? Describe other items that may not have been covered and should be considered for the project.	

Program closer to MDS

Create a new running path specifically designed for running - prevents injuries.

Como Regional Park Long Range Plan September 2023

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Add more green space/open opportunities for the youth to clean up the area replant.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

I feel like you add more fields for different types of sports like soccer (recreation), basketball etc. There should also be handball courts or tennis courts or badminton courts. There should also be a lot of space for a game table. There's a lot of cones, so I feel like there should be a lot of events and transitions for friends or give money with good service, make a game a job for teens like myself. I would love to work for "comp" during my hang. Thanks you! to

9. Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed. LOW

WHAT'S MISSING?
Describe other items that may not have been covered and should be considered for the project - additional space on next page

Included space for additional sports aside from golf + pickleball. Sports like tennis, basketball (maybc), etc.

Sample of surveys received from Youth Commission members and staff at the Metro Deaf School

Equity Analysis

Priorities by Engagement Group/Event

Open House (Community Members)

1. Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.
2. Design paths for improved snow plowing
3. (tie) Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and to other park features.
3. (tie) Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more visitor friendly; improve access to lakeshore; provide diverse seasonal interest; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility.
5. Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; increase measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.

Metro Deaf School (staff)

4. Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; increase measures to prevent vehicle entry on pathways.
5. Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and to other park features.
6. Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.
7. Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed.
8. Seed and stabilize shoreline with native plantings to reduce erosion.

Saint Paul Youth Commission (9th-12th grade Saint Paul students)

1. Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.
2. Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native prairie and plantings for native habitat
3. (tie) Improve wayfinding; improve path

markings and other wayfinding signage for all users. Improve signage accessibility *including raised relief maps and tactile strips*.*

3. (tie) Additional temporary/seasonal restrooms needed.
 5. Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more visitor friendly; improve access to lakeshore; provide diverse seasonal interest; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility.
- *The raised relief maps and tactile strips were added to the survey after the Metro Deaf School Visit.

What We Learned:

- The top priorities for the groups taking the survey differed, though safety and accessibility were primary concerns for many participants.
- Categories that received the highest average scores were improvements to the paths and trails, and habitat around Como Lake.
- Many youth were unfamiliar with the Grand Round.
- Though there was overwhelming support to close East Como Lake Drive, it only ranked as a 'medium' priority compared to other project priorities.
- Winter programming was also a consistent theme, though it was also ranked a 'medium' priority.
- Lexington Parkway and East Como Lake Drive are barriers for activities and users could benefit from safety improvements, particularly at crossings.

Evaluation Summary

Transparency: How did the public participation from 2c impact the decisions and policies made?

The project priorities identified during the community engagement phase of the planning process informed the proposed projects outlined in Chapter 4 of this document. Projects that community members ranked higher, will be a higher priority for funding and implementation after the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is approved and funding becomes available. Comments received are documented in this Plan, and will guide future development and improvements to the Park.

Equity Analysis

Accountability: How will the planning effort create better outcomes?

Through the community engagement process, a number of current barriers to underserved communities were identified, most notably safety and accessibility with Como Regional Park. To create a park that is more welcoming and that better confronts the needs of future users, this Plan aims to address the issues identified by engagement participants and to serve as a guide for future development.

Level of Public Impact (International Association for Public Participation’s Public Participation Spectrum)

The table below illustrates the key types of engagement used by the project team during the planning process, as well the outcomes of this engagement, and the level of public impact for each of these engagement types.

Engagement Events	Level of Public Impact	Outcomes
Online Engagement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> StPaul.gov Project Website 	<i>Inform</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project staff shared updates on the project and upcoming events. Meeting minutes, presentation materials, and other documents were available to be viewed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Saint Paul Engagement Website 	<i>Consult/ Involve</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public could share comments and ideas about the project, pin ideas on an interactive project map, and participate in surveys. Survey data and public comments identified project priorities and community ideas for the Long-Range Plan.
Community Partner Events		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour District 10 Ice Cream Social District 10 Harvest Festival District 10 Community Council Meeting 	<i>Inform/ Consult</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project staff connected with community members who attended these events to share information about the project and answer questions. Feedback from community members was documented and then influenced recommendations in this Plan.
Project Specific Engagement Events		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Advisory Committee Meetings (3) Community Open House Engagement with Youth <i>(Metro Deaf School, German Immersion School, Hmong College Prep Academy, Como High School, Saint Paul Youth Commission)</i> 	<i>Collaborate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued engagement with these groups allowed project staff to share details about the project, and ask for feedback and ideas from these focused groups. The Design Advisory Committee (DAC) helped shape the overall priority themes for this document, and all participants shared their priorities for future projects. Priorities shared by this group have directly influenced this Long-Range Plan.

Public Engagement and Participation

Design Advisory Committee (DAC)

The Design Advisory Committee served an important role in the shaping of the Long-Range Plan. At the beginning of the project, the project team selected 15 representatives to be members of the DAC. The committee was made up of residents of the Como area, community leaders, representatives of local organizations, and other stakeholders. The role of the Design Advisory Committee was to:

- Help determine the community needs and desires for the site
- Review plan concepts and provide input on major design elements and themes
- Bring suggestions from the community, stakeholders, and respective organizations to the attention of the project team
- Help communicate project progress to community members
- Provide guidance to City staff on final design recommendations for the project
- Ensure that the full range of issues were discussed during the design process

DAC members attended three meetings with project staff during the course of the project. The full meeting agendas, presentations, and minutes can be found in the appendix of this document. Feedback summaries for each meeting are included below:

Meeting 1:

Meeting Goals:

Introduce the project, review existing site conditions, group discussion.

What we heard:

- Improve trail hierarchy; reinforce with improved signage and wayfinding.
- Activate Park during winter season: improve winter path maintenance, consider fat tire biking, luminary events, etc.
- Improve access to and circulation around the lakeside pavilion.
- Consider the closure of East Como Lake Drive.
- Include amenities on south side of the lake.

Meeting 2:

Meeting Goals:

Project overview, update on community engagement, review of DAC meeting #1, review proposed improvements, group discussion.

What we heard:

- Clarify path types; retain natural surface paths in woodland outdoor classroom; ensure accessible loops exist throughout the Park; reduce impervious surfaces where possible
- Concern about dog park near zoo; suggestions for recreation near West Picnic Ground include a disc golf course, bicycle pump track, and skills course for young or new bicyclists
- Additional Park amenities including restrooms, drinking fountains, play area near lakeside pavilion, and bicycle parking are needed
- Consider closure of East Como Lake Drive
- Improve winter maintenance of Park trails
- Wayfinding, accessibility, and signage are critical for Park improvements

Meeting 3:

Meeting Goals:

Project overview, update on community engagement, review of DAC meeting #2, review proposed improvements and project focus areas, group discussion.

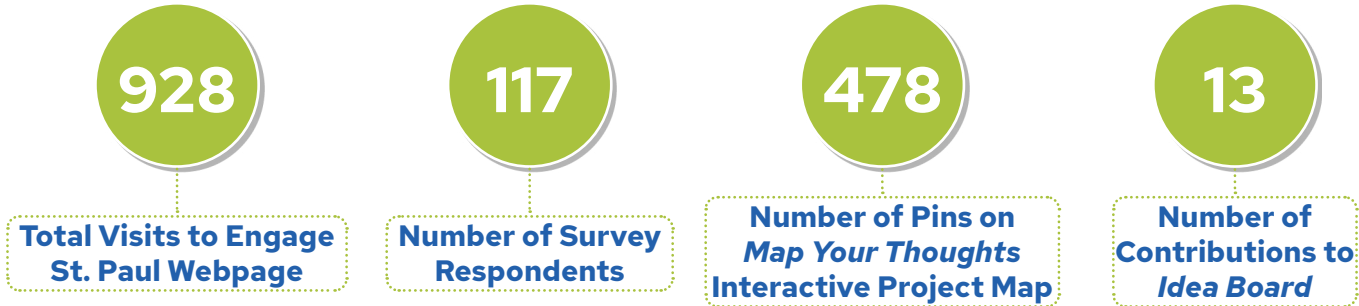
What we heard:

- Better understand indigenous history and current significance of the Dakota Land on which the Park sits, and work with local indigenous groups for a cultural study and future considerations for interpretation and representation.
- Incorporate access to Lake from pavilion.
- Provide paths to connect isolated trail sections and to connect to the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Improve crossings to reduce conflict points between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Align trail types in Como Park with the Grand Round.
- Coordinate proposal at the Park with the CRWD Watershed Management Plan.
- Make existing paths wider and more accessible, improve trail markings, implement two-way bicycle traffic to safely separate bicycles and pedestrians.

Public Engagement and Participation

Online Engagement

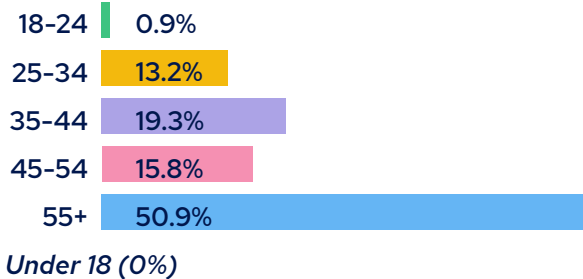
Summary of Online Participation:



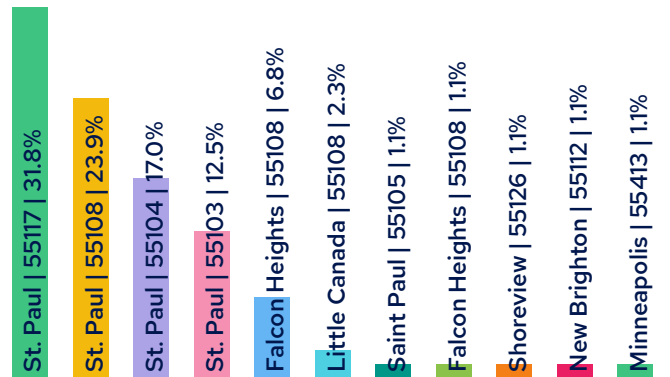
Online Survey Response Summary

Community members were invited to participate in an online survey to share ideas, concerns, and feedback about the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. The survey responses below were collected between August 2022 and December 2023. In total, the survey received 117 responses. Responses to the survey are below and on the following pages.

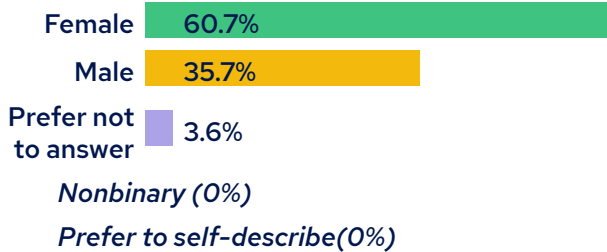
Please select your age.



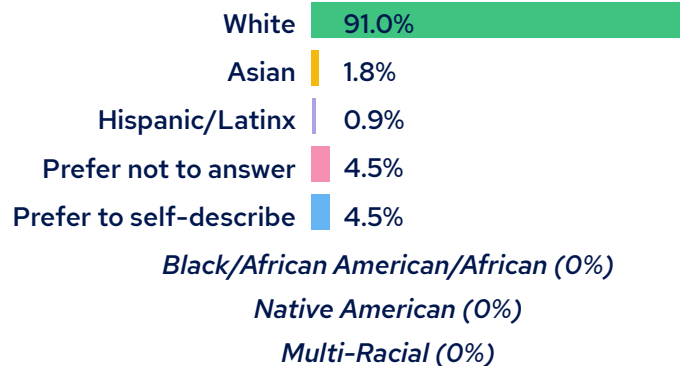
Please enter your zip code.



What gender do you identify as?



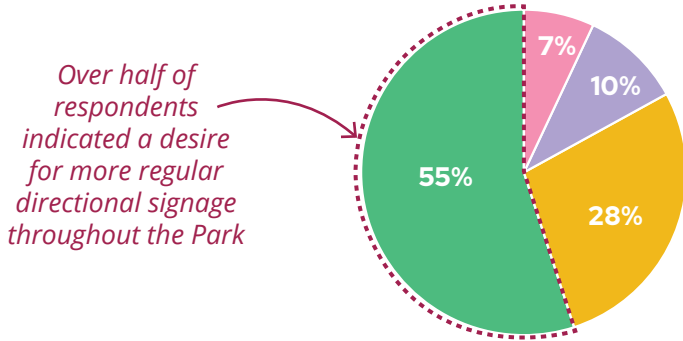
What best describes your race/ethnicity?



Public Engagement and Participation

Online Engagement

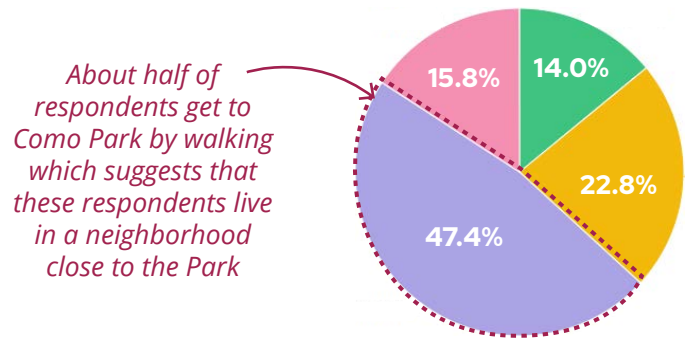
What would help you navigate Como Regional Park more easily?



Over half of respondents indicated a desire for more regular directional signage throughout the Park

- Regularly placed directional signs and map kiosks
- Color-coded paint on trails indicating different routes to attractions.
- Noticeable thresholds between areas of use of different "themes" to define each area
- Other

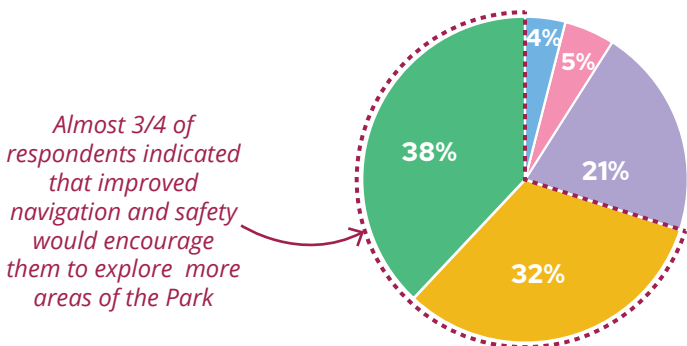
How do you get to Como Regional Park?



About half of respondents get to Como Park by walking which suggests that these respondents live in a neighborhood close to the Park

- Drive/shuttle
- Bike
- Walk
- Other

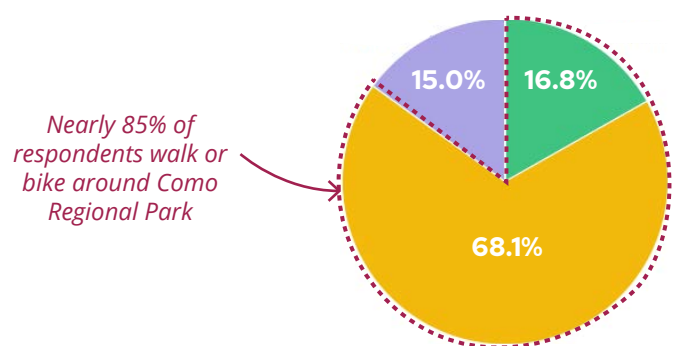
Which of the following would encourage you to explore a new area of Como Regional Park?



Almost 3/4 of respondents indicated that improved navigation and safety would encourage them to explore more areas of the Park

- **Navigation** - awareness of interesting, unique attractions or amenities I know how to reach
- **Safety** - routes I feel comfortable taking alone between dawn and dusk
- **Maintenance** - poor conditions keep me away from certain areas of the Park
- **Access** - example: I am unsure if I can visit the ballfield/pool area if I don't want to participate in those activities
- **Parking** - additional vehicles spaces allow me to explore smaller pieces of the Park

Once you've arrived, how do you get around Como Regional Park?



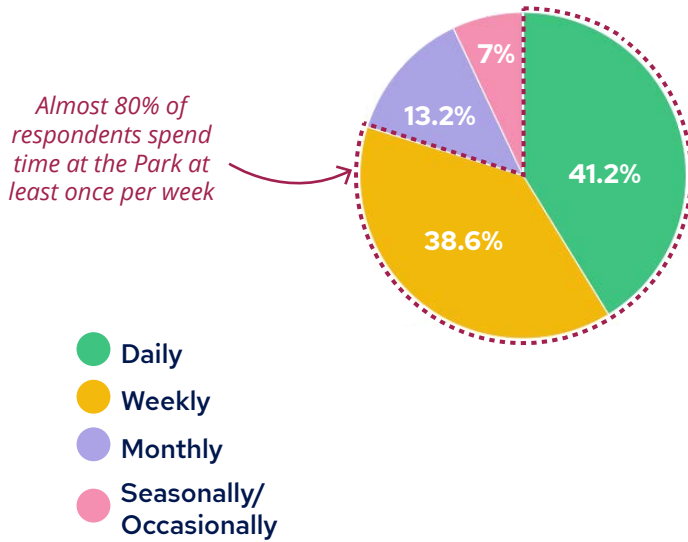
Nearly 85% of respondents walk or bike around Como Regional Park

- Bike
- Walk
- Other

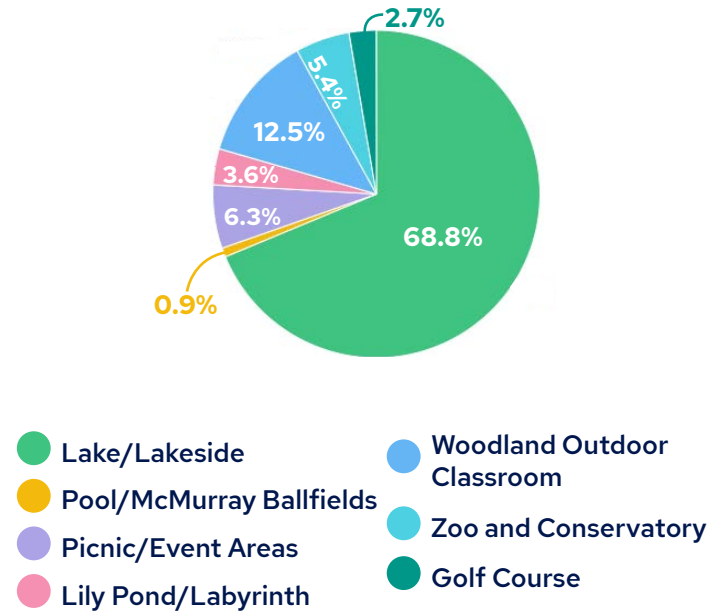
Public Engagement and Participation

Online Engagement

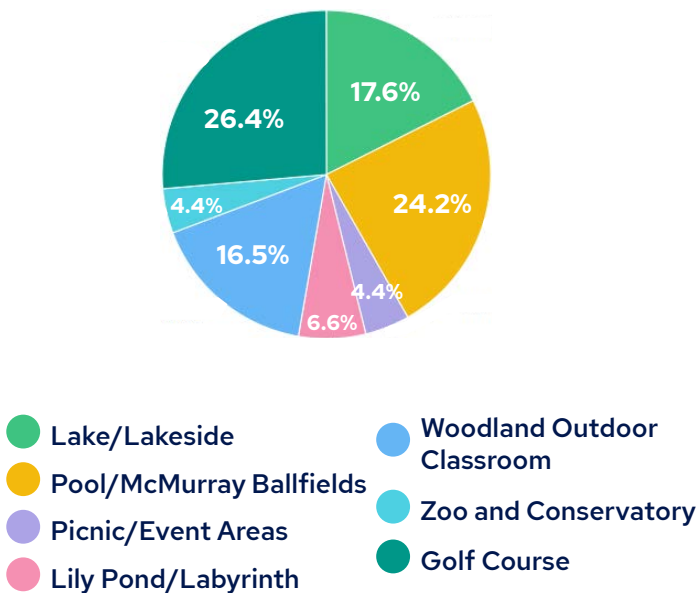
How often do you spend time at Como Regional Park?



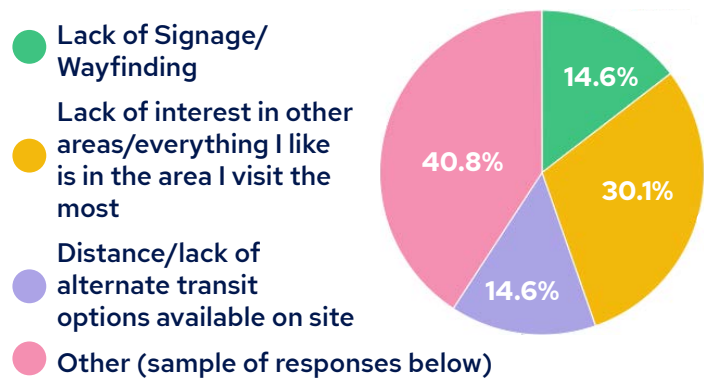
Which area of Como Park do you visit most often?



Which area do you believe is the most difficult to access from the area you visit most?



What keeps you from reaching the other areas of Como Regional Park?



"There are broken links in paths that make it much more difficult for walking/biking from one area to another"

"Lack of convenient paths between points"

"Traffic from cars"

"Many of the bike trails are currently in poor condition, poorly maintained, don't have good signage, and feature rough, unsafe crossings at parking lots and other crossroads. All sidewalk and path crossings should feature smooth, raised crossings to slow down traffic and give priority to people walking and biking in this PARK."

"Circuitous, indirect trails without wayfinding signage"





















"Lack of sidewalks leading to lake from neighborhoods"

Public Engagement and Participation

Online Engagement

Idea Board

The online idea board allowed visitors to make comments and share ideas for the Park. The comments received are included below.

 a year ago I'd like to see dedicated walking trails in the park, so we walkers don't always need to be alert to bicyclists coming up from behind. Share 2 Comments 1 	 a year ago To serve park users of all ages -- elderly or younger adults with children or pets in tow -- I'd like a shuttle service throughout the park. Share 0 Comment 0 	 a year ago Portapotties and garbage/recycling containers at regular intervals would be helpful to visitors and regular walkers. Creature comforts Share 0 Comment 0 
 a year ago Improved trail surfaces for roller-skiing and inline skating Some trail sections are rough for roller-skiing and inline skatin... Share 1 Comment 1 	 a year ago Parking lot signs not helpful The illuminated availability signs for parking spaces at picnic a... Share 0 Comment 0 	 a year ago Improved trail surfaces for roller-skiing and inline skating Some trail sections are rough for roller-skiing and inline skatin... Share 0 Comment 1 
 a year ago One section on the bike/ped trail (that I am aware of) needs lighting. Not sure if this issue applies to this particular survey... But o... Share 0 Comment 0 	 a year ago Better bike connection to lake I'd like to see a better bike connection between Como Lake and th... Share 1 Comment 2 	 2 months ago A lot more people in the neighborhood have dogs. An off leash dog park would be a great addition. Share 0 Comment 0 
 a year ago I would like to see stop signs on the bike trails wherever there is a stop sign on the road. Too many bikers don't stop at intersections. Dangerous when bikers don't stop Share 2 Comments 0 		

Public Engagement and Participation

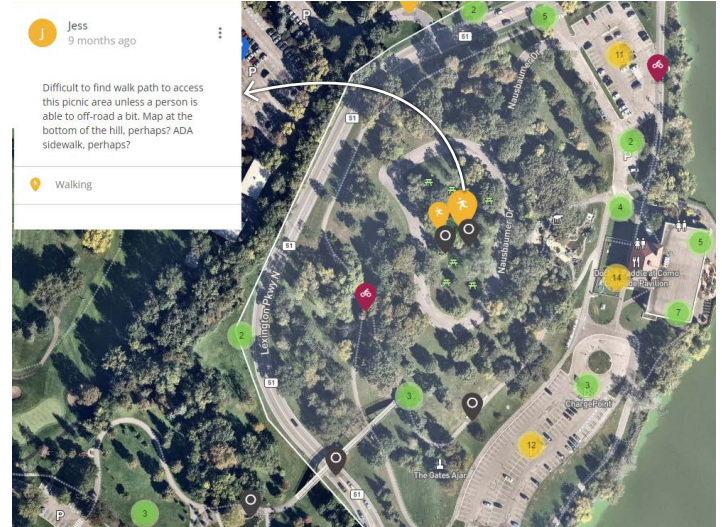
Online Engagement

Interactive Map

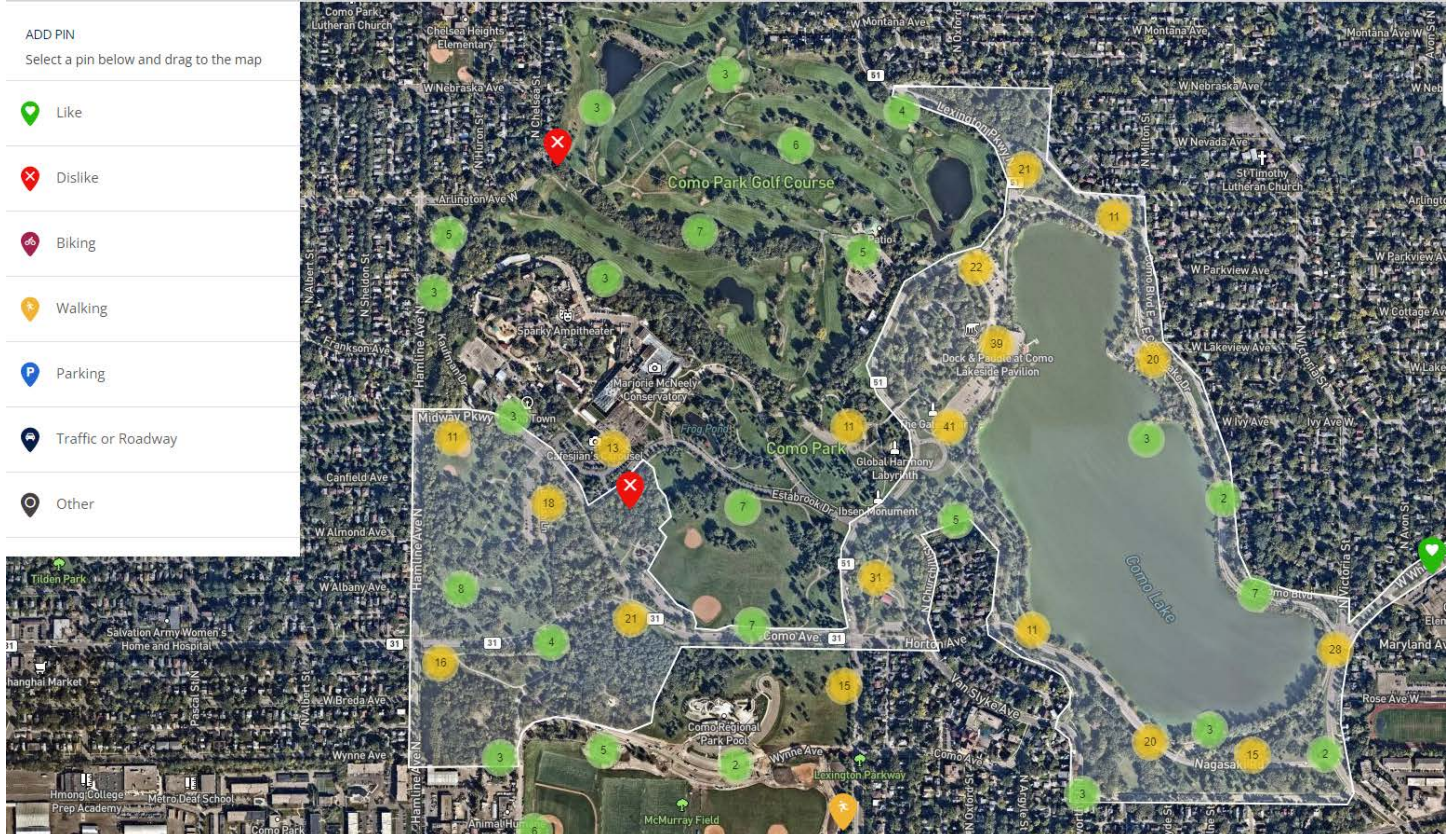
Located on the project engagement website, an interactive project map invited website visitors to post pins related to the following categories:

- Like (37 pins)
- Dislike (110 pins)
- Biking (80 pins)
- Walking (72 pins)
- Parking (57 pins)
- Traffic or Roadway (34 pins)
- Other (87 pins)

Many of the comments from the interactive map can be found in Chapter 2 on the focus area maps of existing conditions. These ideas also influenced the project priorities, particularly with areas and ideas that received multiple comments. The map below shows an overview of comments received on the 'Map Your Thoughts' activity. The numbers within the colored circles represent the number of comments within the approximate area of the circle.



Example comment from 'Map Your Thoughts' Activity



Public Engagement and Participation

Online Engagement

90% Long-Range Plan Document Draft Comment Period

From March 25, 2024 - April 26, 2024, a 90% draft of the Long-Range Plan was made available for public review and comment. To collect feedback, community members were encouraged to complete a survey ranking potential future projects at Como Regional Park. The responses were added to earlier survey responses regarding project priorities and have shaped the project priorities listed in Chapter 4 of this document. Additionally, respondents were able to provide general open ended feedback about the Long-Range Plan. Feedback themes from the comment period are summarized below:

- **Lakeside Pavilion:**
 - ◇ Concerns about Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Plan and strong feedback that community engagement is needed before any changes are implemented. Comments were largely focused on how the space is currently used, the value of a large performance space, and updates needed to restrooms and accessibility.
- **East Como Lake Drive:**
 - ◇ Both support and opposition to closing East Como Lake Drive to vehicular traffic; concerns about traffic on adjacent streets if road is closed; support for wider and safer pedestrian and bike paths, as well as expanded shoreline restoration if road is closed
- **Lighting and Safety:**
 - ◇ Concern about current lack of path lighting
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure:**
 - ◇ Overall support for improvements to existing paths to promote safer and more accessible facilities
- **Park Programming:**
 - ◇ Support for additional recreation facilities including roller skating, disc golf, pickleball, a play area near Como Lake, and winter recreation; both support and opposition for a dog park
- **Restrooms:**
 - ◇ Support for improvements to existing Pavilion restrooms and additional restrooms (temporary or seasonal) around the Lake

Comments received during the 90% comment period between March and April 2024 can be found here:

» www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/Como%20Regional%20Park%20Long-Range%20Plan%20-%2090%25%20Public%20Comments.pdf



Public comments received through the 90% comment period included in the final Plan.

Chapter 4

Implementation



Image: Paddler kayaking in Como Lake

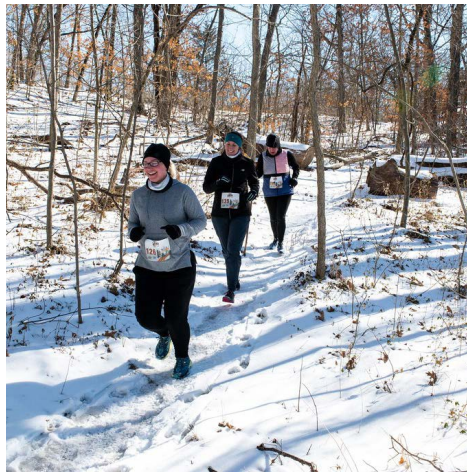


Image: Winter runners in Como Park



Image: People riding bicycles, surreys at Como Park

Plan Approach

The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is the result of a collaborative effort and multi-faceted approach to planning. The recommendations in this chapter have been shaped by community engagement, and further explored by City staff and technical professionals. Previous planning documents including the 1984 Como Master Plan, the Metropolitan Council 2040 Parks Policy Plan, and other documents outlined in Chapter 1 provide the framework for this and other long-range plans.

Throughout this chapter, Como Regional Park is explored at different scales, and from different perspectives. Themes identified through community engagement guide the recommendations made, and help define priorities for future implementation.



Plan Approach

The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is meant to guide development at Como Regional Park for the next twenty years and beyond. The recommendations included in this document consider the current needs of Park users, and try to anticipate the needs of future Park users in the coming decades. Considerations for both current and future Park users are outlined below:

Current Park Users

- Design for people of all ages and abilities; use principles of Universal Design to accommodate all users.
- Focus on safety and comfort for all.
- Ensure water quality, habitat management, and environmental stewardship are incorporated into all Park projects.



Future Park Users

- Design for Park users that are becoming older, and more racially and ethnically diverse.
- Consider different forms of transportation such as e-bikes.
- Design for climate resilience; plan for more severe weather events including extreme heat, flooding, and drought.
- Plan for flexibility and anticipate change.



As outlined in Chapter 3, community feedback has been a foundational piece in the development of this Long-Range Plan. The planning team worked with a variety of community groups, students at local schools, and technical advisors to identify project priorities at Como Regional Park. Through this chapter, different areas of the Park are highlighted, and the proposed improvements within those areas are noted. Project priorities that were discussed throughout community engagement are included, ranked by low, medium, and high priority, along with the associated project cost estimates. Other overall Park improvements that support the project goals are outlined in this chapter, such as wayfinding and accessibility. Additional information regarding Park boundaries and acquisitions, operations and maintenance, and stewardship are also included near the end of this chapter.

Development Concept

Project Vision

Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional Park in Saint Paul. The Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan will serve as an update to the existing planning documents and provide a framework for design to guide the future growth, development, and maintenance of Como Regional Park.

The focuses of the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan are to review and improve the trail system within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections to Saint Paul's Grand Round trail network, as well as to identify and prioritize additional amenities for future inclusion within Como Regional Park.

The improvements included in the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan are intended to impart clarity for pedestrians and bicyclists, improve safety and accessibility for all users, enhance the water quality of Como Lake, promote equity in design, and to provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably to support the evolving recreational interest and diversity of park visitors.

Guiding Principles

- Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience, and comfort.
- Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas.
- Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park.
- Design, program, and maintain to promote year round activity.
- Welcome, embrace and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends.
- Reduce barriers caused by financial, physical, language and perception issues.
- Provide interpretive elements to educate.
- Improve wayfinding and reinforce Grand Round branding within the existing Como Regional Park wayfinding system.
- Coordinate improvements with regulatory agencies as well as previous plans and studies.

Implementation Toolkit

These icons can be found throughout the Development Concept to organize recommendations by the general themes outlined here:



Improve Wayfinding



Provide Consistent, Intuitive Trails



Implement Two-Way Bicycle Traffic Around the Lake per the Grand Round Implementation Plan



Update Existing Park Amenities



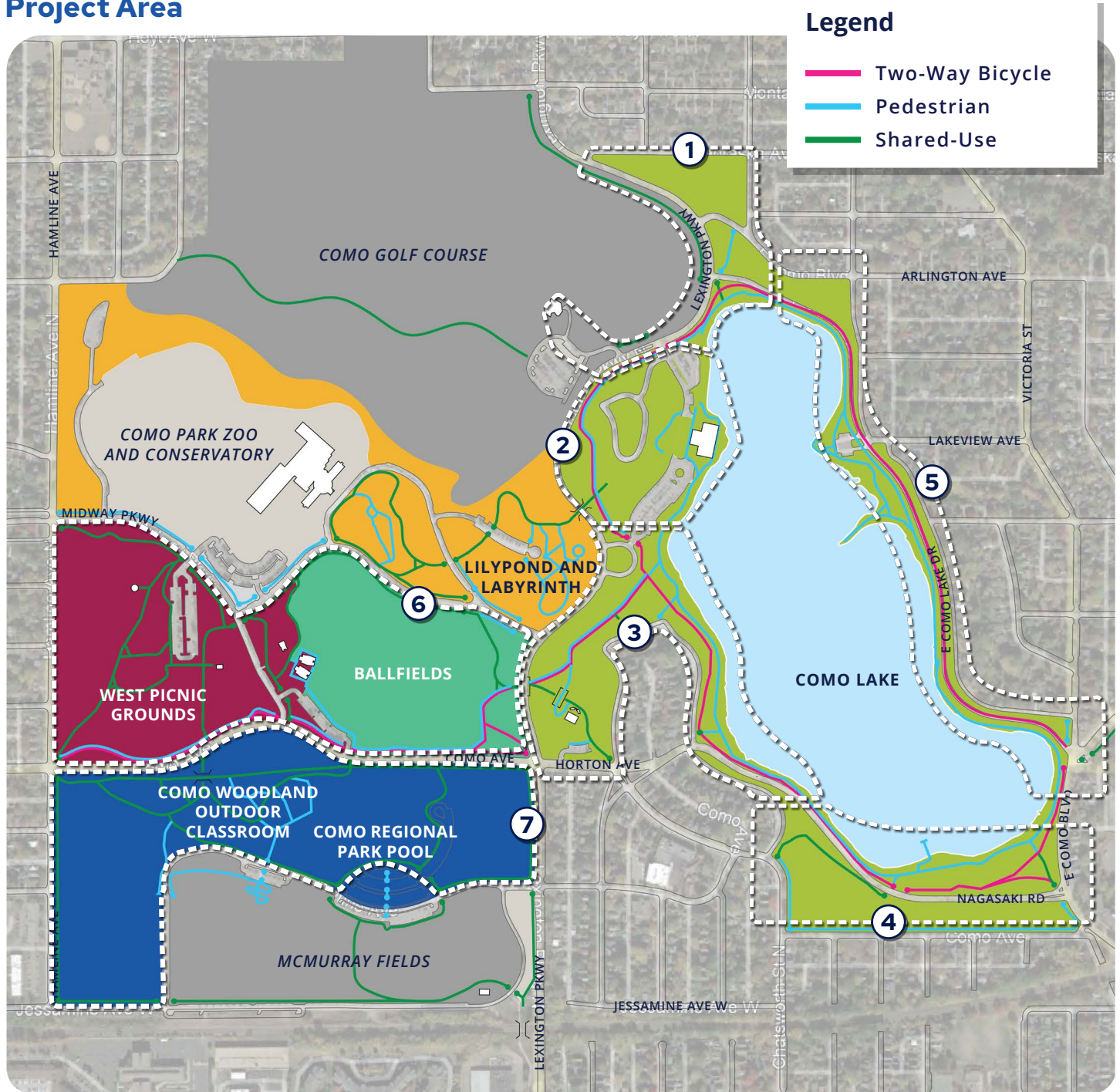
Improve Safety and Accessibility



Improve Water Quality, Manage Stormwater, and Restore Shoreline per CRWD's Watershed Management Plan

Development Concept

Project Area



Legend

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use

Fig. 4-21 | Overall Park Map

FOCUS AREAS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Como Lake North | 5 East Como Lake Drive |
| 2 Lakeside Pavilion Area | 6 Picnic Grounds |
| 3 Historic Streetcar Station | 7 Woodland Outdoor Classroom and Aquatic Facility |
| 4 Nagasaki Road | |

- **Special Recreation Features**
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory*
- **Enterprise Facilities**
Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*

*Not-included or partially included in analysis

Development Concept

Como Lake North

Key Map



SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Connect incomplete trail segments
- Implement two-way bicycle traffic around Como Lake
- Provide sidewalk connections to Park from adjacent neighborhoods
- Improve safety for all modes at intersections

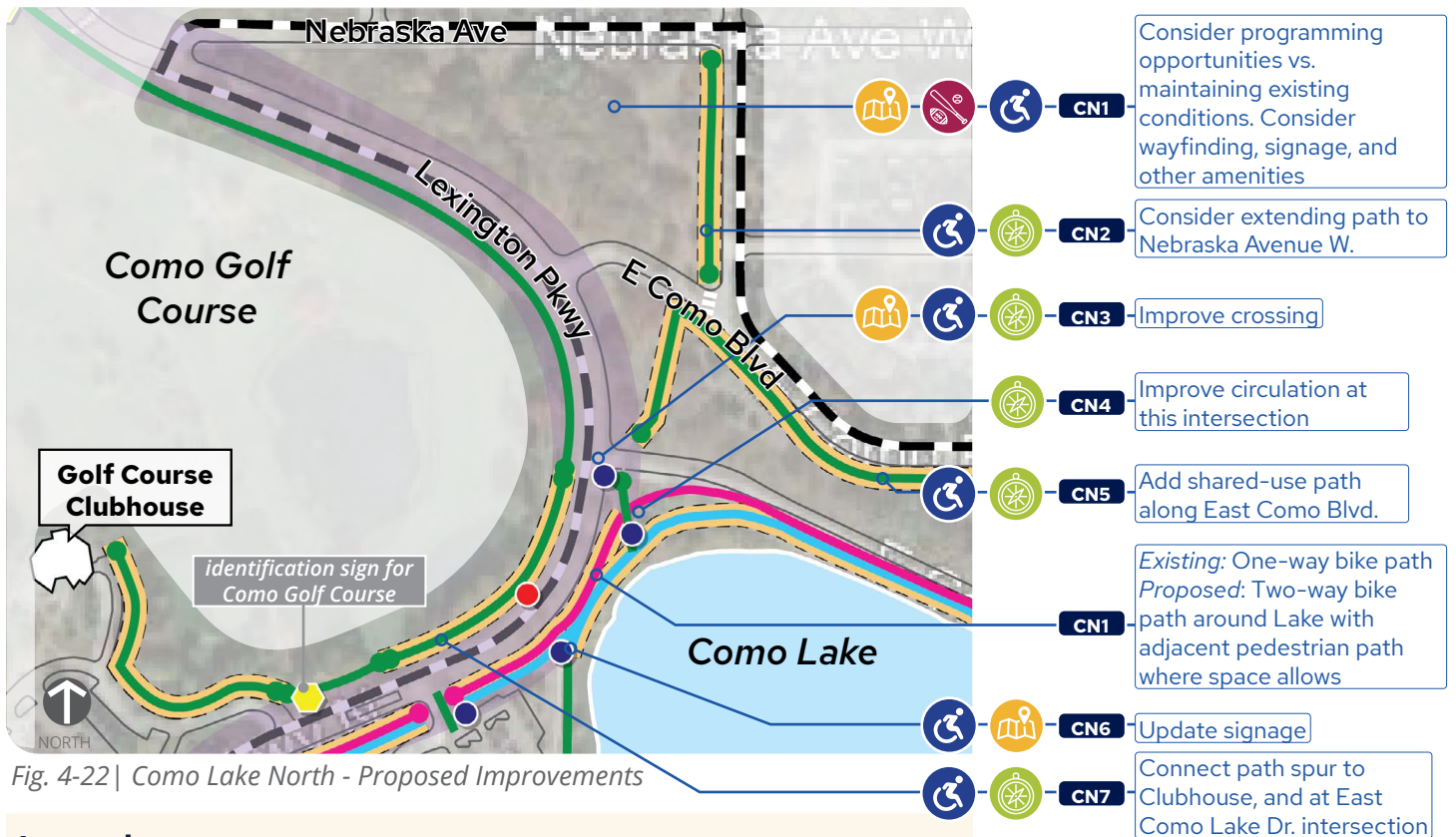
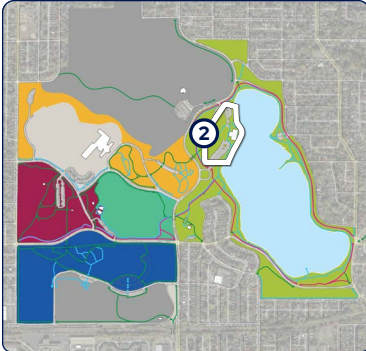


Fig. 4-22 | Como Lake North - Proposed Improvements

Development Concept

Lakeside Pavilion

Key Map



Legend

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway -
Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed Signage*

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ⬠ Identification Sign
- ▲ Historic Specialty Plaque

**Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan*



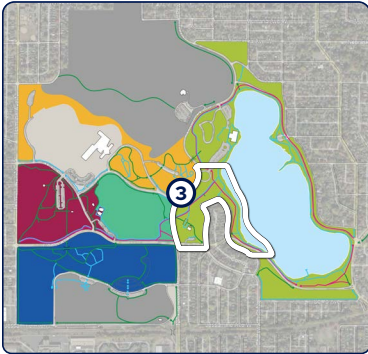
SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Implement two-way bicycle traffic around Como Lake
- Clarify paths by removing redundancies and improving wayfinding signage
- Improve circulation around Lakeside Pavilion

Development Concept

Streetcar Station

Key Map



Legend

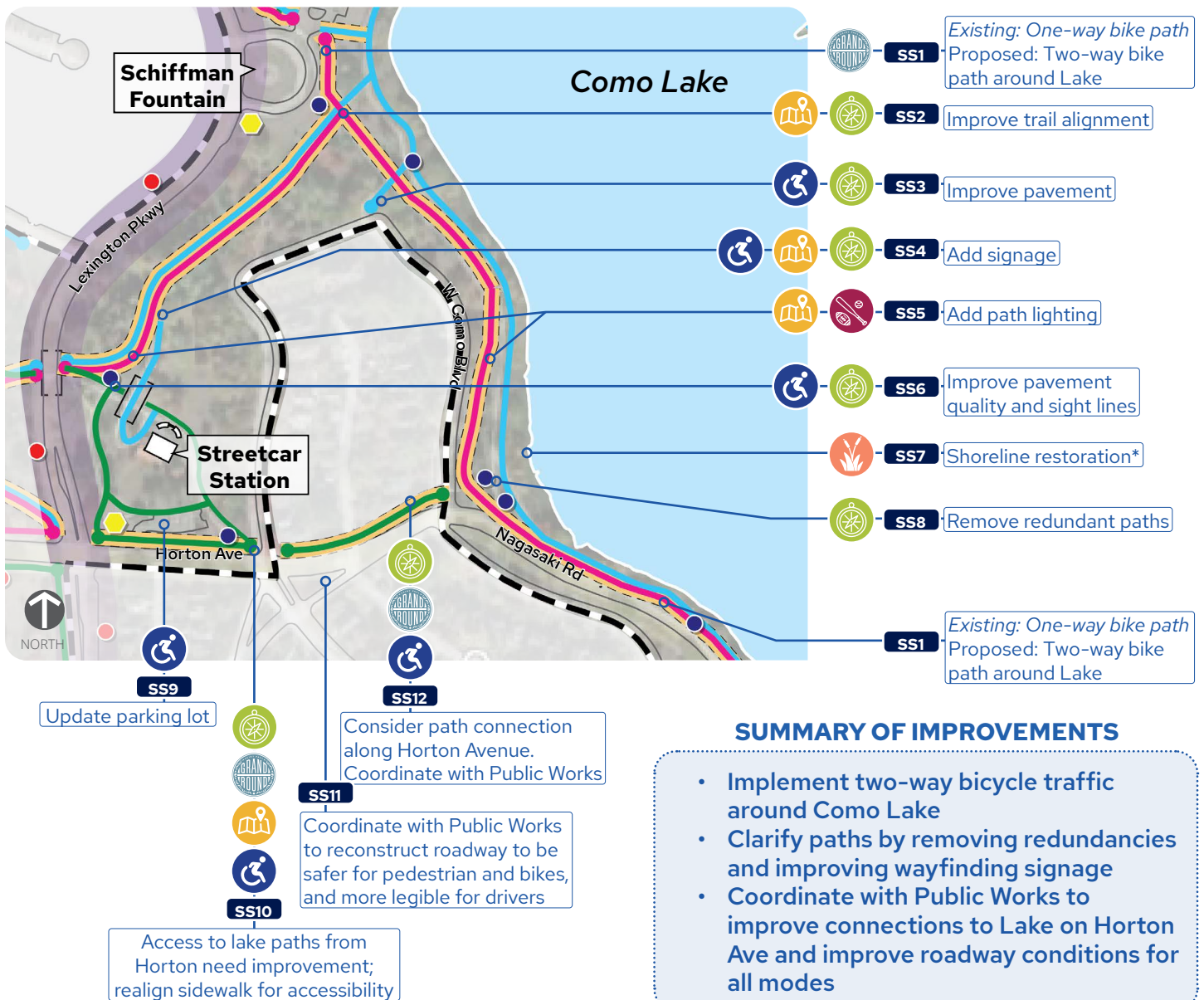
- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway -
Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed Signage*

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ◆ Identification Sign

**Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan*

**Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD*



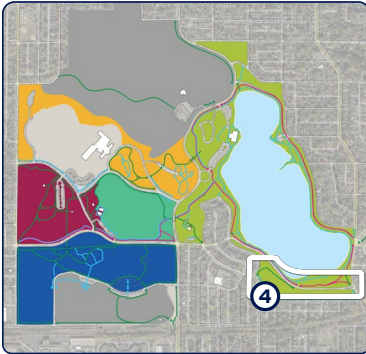
Development Concept



Updates made to final Plan reflect alignment with Safe Routes to School Plan.

Nagasaki Road

Key Map



Legend

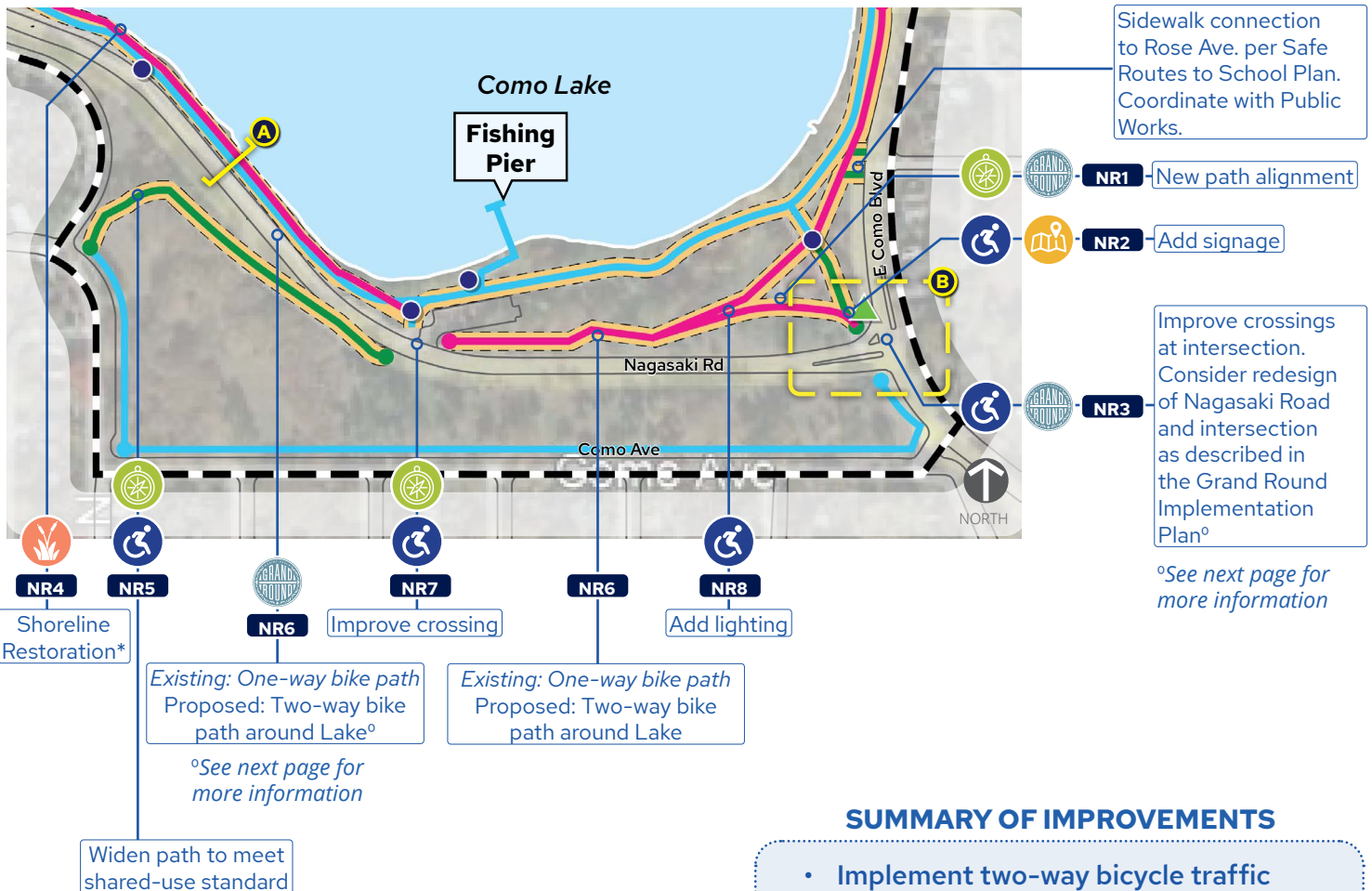
- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway - Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed Signage*

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ◆ Identification Sign
- ▲ Historic Specialty Plaque

*Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD

*Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan

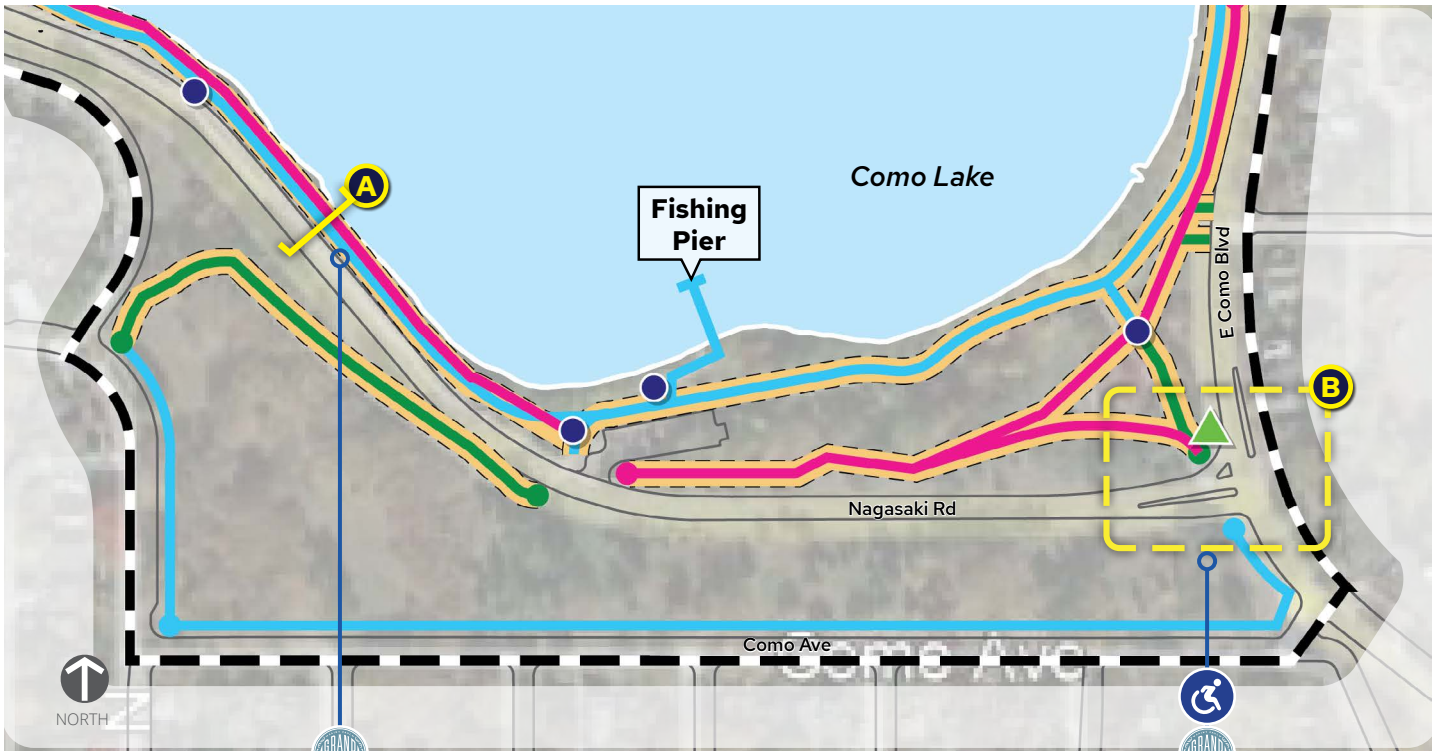


SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Implement two-way bicycle traffic around Como Lake
- Add lighting and signage to increase safety and clarity
- Update trails to be more accessible; add new trail connections where necessary

Development Concept

Nagasaki Road (continued)



Two-way bike

Improve crossings at intersection. Consider redesign of Nagasaki Road and intersection as described in the Grand Round Implementation Plan

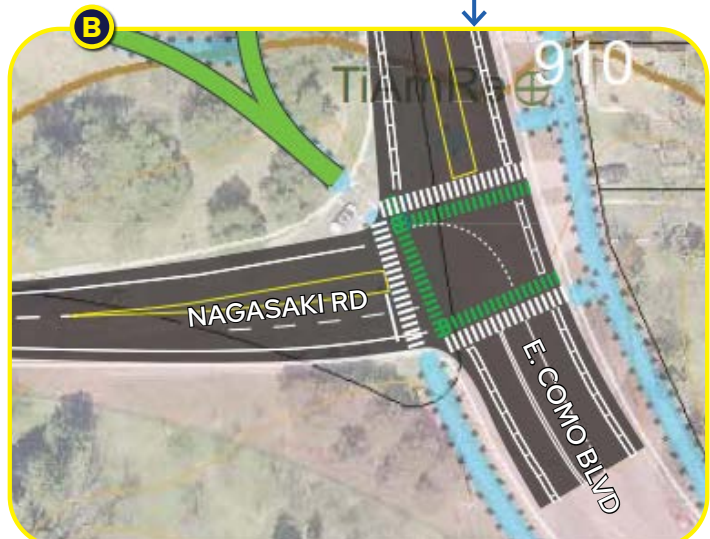
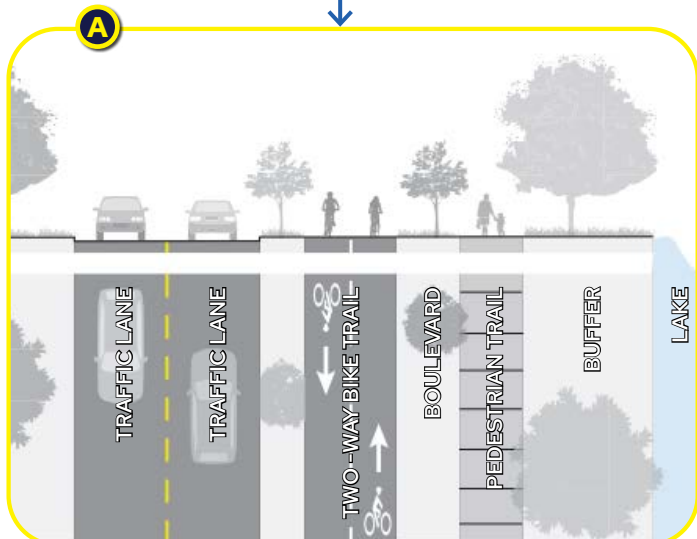


Fig. 4-24 | Grand Round typical section along Nagasaki Road near Como Lake

Fig. 4-23 | Intersection re-alignment from Grand Round Implementation Plan

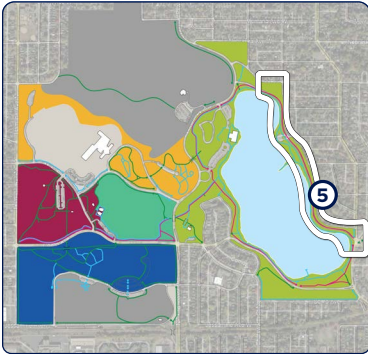
Development Concept



Updates made to final Plan to include restroom at Duck Point.

East Como Lake Drive

Key Map



Legend

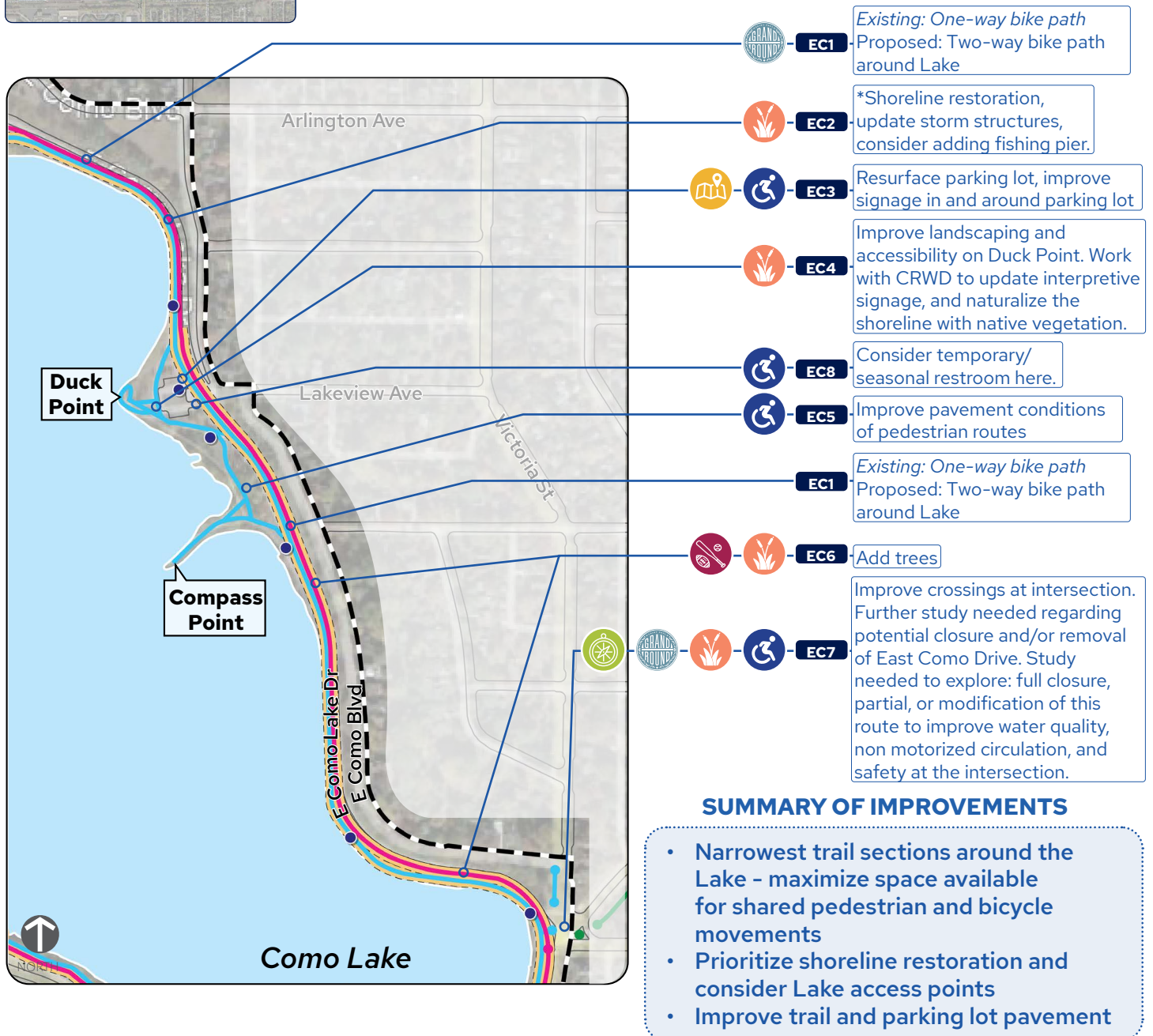
- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway - Regional Trail Search Corridor

*Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD

Proposed Signage*

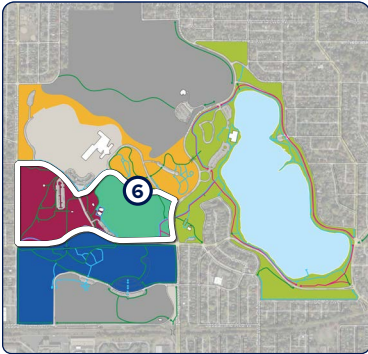
- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ◆ Identification Sign

*Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan



Development Concept

Picnic Grounds



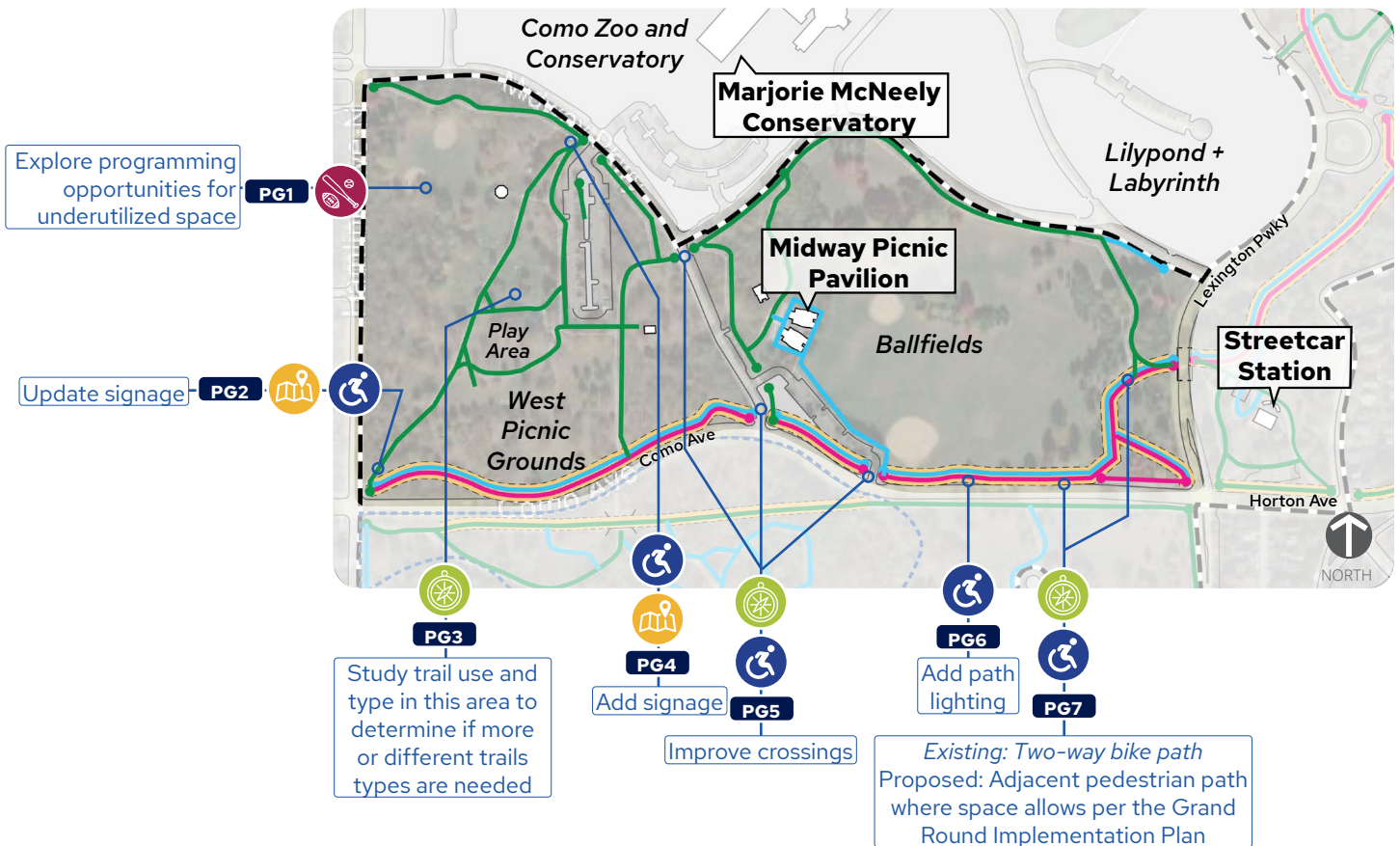
Legend

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway -
Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed Signage*

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ◊ Identification Sign
- ▲ Historic Specialty Plaque

*Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan



SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Include path accessibility - add and clarify signage, improve crossings, add lighting
- Study trail use - determine if redundant trails exist or if additional trails are needed

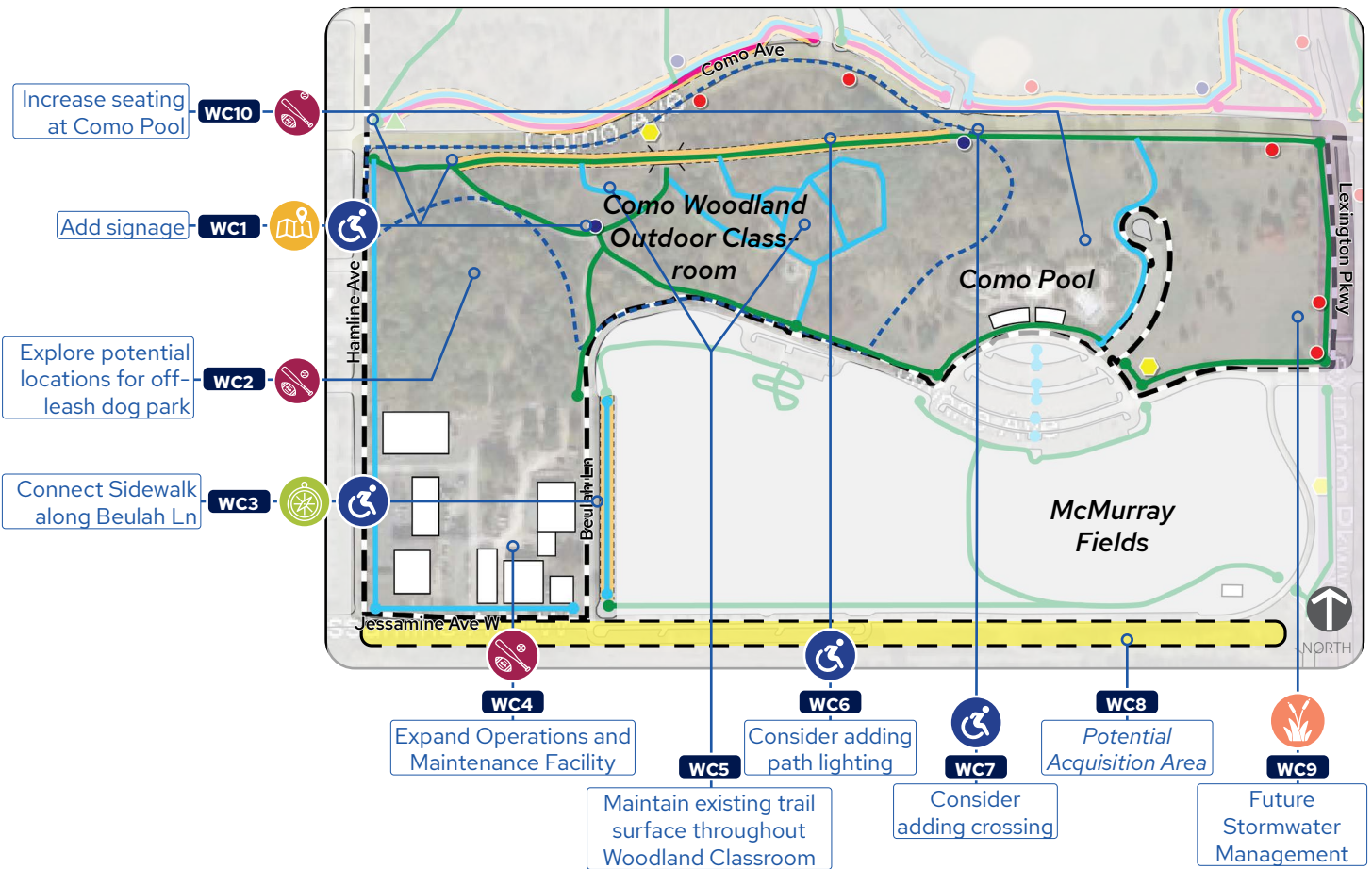
Development Concept

Woodland Classroom

Key Map



Legend		Proposed Signage*	
	Two-Way Bicycle		Pedestrian Directional
	Pedestrian		Vehicular Directional
	Shared-Use		Identification Sign
	Improvements		Historic Specialty Plaque
	Lexington Parkway - Regional Trail Search Corridor	*Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan	
	Woodland Outdoor Classroom Boundary		



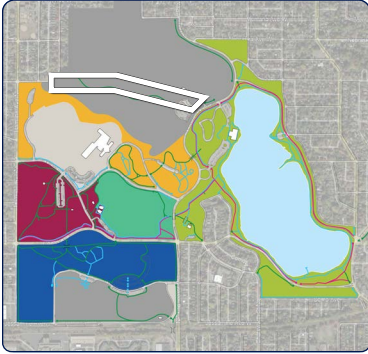
SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Clarify path signage
- Provide missing sidewalk connections; maintain natural trail surface in Woodland Outdoor Classroom

Development Concept

Additional Considerations | Winter Recreation at Como Golf Course

Key Map



Legend

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements
- Lexington Parkway -
Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed Signage*

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicular Directional
- ◊ Identification Sign
- ▲ Historic Specialty Plaque

**Proposed signage locations were identified in the Como Park Recommended Signage and Wayfinding Plot Plan*



GC1

Provide path connection to parking lot (Wolf Lot)



GC2

Explore potential locations for warming house



GC3

Update existing path from Chelsea Street N. to provide pedestrian access to regional park features

SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

- Improve 'Hogsback Trail' through golf course to provide access to regional park features and provide accessible connection to parking area
- Support winter activities in golf course; explore potential for warming house and snow making for winter recreation

Development Concept

Facility Capacity

This Long-Range Plan does not propose changes to the capacities of any existing structures or buildings within the Park. New or improved facilities are listed below with their anticipated changes in capacity.

Pedestrian and bicycle trails: As noted in the document, specific segments of trails will be widened, and/or separated by uses to support ADA accessibility and increased safety. Updated shared-use and bicycle paths will follow the guidelines included within the Minnesota Bicycle Facility Design Manual. This change may support an increase capacity of pedestrian and bike facilities throughout the Park.

Lakeside Pavilion: No decisions regarding the Lakeside Pavilion are stated in the Como Regional Park Long Range Plan. The final design and capacity of this facility will be determined with community engagement during the design and development phase of the Como Lakeside Pavilion Vision Planning process.

Maintenance Facility: The proposed maintenance facility intends to serve primarily as vehicle and equipment storage with an estimated size of 45,000 square feet. Capacity of this structure will be determined in the final design and based on the occupiable area of the space in compliance with the International Building Code (IBC).

Warming House: The size of this facility has not yet been determined. Capacity of this structure will be based on the occupiable area of the space in compliance with the International Building Code (IBC).

Capacities of all facilities within Como Regional Park must adhere to the current local zoning and building codes. Capacities of all structures and buildings will comply with the appropriate occupancy rules based on use, size, and other determining factors.

Project Priorities

Long-Range Plans for Regional Parks are meant to guide development for 20 or more years after Plan adoption. To represent both the current needs of Park users as well as the anticipated needs of future users, project staff met with community members of different ages, abilities, and backgrounds to understand the priorities of current Park users, and potential challenges for those who don't currently visit Como Regional Park. Feedback gathered from community members directly informed the projects included in this chapter as well as the proposed prioritization of these projects for future implementation.

Identification of Priorities

The projects listed below are the culmination of feedback heard from community members during in-person and online engagement, recommendations from City and agency staff including members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and ideas from members of the Design Advisory Committee (DAC).

Ranking of project priorities

After compiling project priorities and organizing them by general theme, project staff asked community members to rank the projects from 1 (low) to 5 (high) to reflect how they feel each project should be prioritized. The following groups gave feedback by ranking potential projects:

- Staff at the Metro Deaf School
- Members of the Saint Paul Youth Commission
- Open House Attendees
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members
- General Public (survey available via website link during 90% public comment period)

The project priority rankings below are based on the feedback from over 700 respondents from the events above. Also included in the table below are estimated project costs for the identified projects. These costs are approximate and are subject to change.

Project Implementation Timing

The proposed timing for implementation of each project included correlates to its priority as either 'high', 'medium', or 'low'. An estimate of project timing is included below:

- Projects ranked '**high**' priority - implementation within 10 years
- Projects ranked '**medium**' priority - implementation within the next 10 - 15 years
- Projects ranked '**low**' priority - implementation within the next 15-20 years

Other factors that may change the proposed timeline include funding source and availability, project sequencing, and logical combinations with other City projects.



Public comments received through the 90% comment period included in the final Plan.

Project Priorities

Keynotes here reference the specific projects noted on pages 50-58.

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY RANKING	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	KEYNOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS
PATHS AND TRAILS			
A1 Consolidate trail system, remove unnecessary paved surfaces, resurface and widen paths to accommodate appropriate designations. Improve accessibility to lakeshore and to other park features.	MEDIUM	\$894,000 <i>does not include Grand Round segments</i>	EC5 NR5 SS8 LP4 SS3 SS10
A2 Increase pedestrian lighting for safety; add site furnishings such as benches, bike parking, picnic tables, drinking fountains where appropriate.	HIGH	\$900,000	WC6 SS5 PG6 NR8
A3 Connect incomplete trail segments: west side of Lexington Pkwy, trail connection to Golf Course club house, sidewalk at Beulah Lane.	MEDIUM	\$568,000	CN2 WC3 CN7 NR1
A4 Implement two-way bike traffic along Grand Round route and around the lake.	LOW	\$14,500,000	EC1 CN6 LP6 SS1 NR6 LP1 PG7
A5 Improve wayfinding: Improve path markings and other wayfinding signage for all users. Improve signage accessibility including raised relief maps and tactile strips.	LOW	\$680,000	CN6 PG2 WC1 LP2 PG4 SS4 LP5 NR2
A6 Design paths for improved snow plowing.	MEDIUM	-	<i>Route to be determined by proposed path improvements</i>
PROGRAMMING			
B1 Increase seasonal programming opportunities. Example: create groomed trails for winter activities.	MEDIUM	\$25,000	<i>Route to be determined by proposed path improvements</i>
B2 Reserve areas for unprogrammed greenspace.	HIGH	-	CN1 <i>Cost determined by annual maintenance requirements</i>
HABITAT			
C1 Plant and maintain trees for added shade and add more native prairie and plantings for native habitat.	HIGH	\$85,000 <i>for trees</i> +\$20,000 <i>annually for establishment and maintenance of native habitat</i>	EC6
C2 Incorporate stormwater best management practices with added improvements to trail infrastructure.	HIGH	\$4,660,000	EC4 <i>Includes approximate cost for future stormwater BMP. Other items incorporated into trail costs.</i>
C3 Seed and stabilize shoreline with native plantings to reduce erosion.	HIGH	\$20,000 <i>annually for establishment and maintenance of native habitat</i>	EC2 SS7

Project Priorities

Keynotes here reference the specific projects noted on pages 50-58.

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY RANKING	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	KEYNOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS
STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS			
D1 Consider closure and/or removal of East Como Lake Drive to improve water quality and bike/pedestrian safety.	LOW	\$12,000,000	EC1 EC7
D2 Update Nagasaki Road to provide more space for off-street pathways; improve intersection at Como Avenue.	MEDIUM	\$1,000,000 <i>Stand alone project</i> \$6,800,000 <i>paired with roadway improvements</i>	NR6
D3 Combine efforts with Saint Paul Public Works to expand sidewalk infrastructure and improve access to park.	MEDIUM	\$3,100,000	SS12 SS11 CN5
D4 Improve safety at trail crossings and transitions; update ramps to match trail width; improve ADA accessibility; include measures to prevent vehicle entry on to pathways.	HIGH	\$950,000	CN3 LP1 WC7 PG5 NR7
MISCELLANEOUS			
E1 Lakeside Pavilion: Update to make more visitor friendly; improve access to lakeshore; provide diverse seasonal interest; improve bike and pedestrian circulation around facility. <i>Note: further study is needed to develop scope, cost, and timeline for improvements.</i>	MEDIUM	\$10,000,000 - \$35,000,000 <i>scope dependent, TBD</i>	LP3
E2 Improve bike parking and storage such as permanent secure facilities, electric bike charging stations, and racks to accommodate larger cargo bikes and bike trailers.	LOW	\$120,000	
E3 Alternative recreation activities: i.e. disc golf, skills park, dog park, bike pump track, fitness stations, pickleball courts, etc.	LOW	\$65,000 - \$800,000	WC2 PG1
E4 Public Art: For example, murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington Parkway.	LOW	varies	
E5 Additional temporary/seasonal restroom facilities needed.	HIGH	\$12,000 - \$1,200,000	EC8

Project Priorities

Keynotes here reference the specific projects noted on pages 50-58.



RECOMMENDED PROJECT	ESTIMATED PROJECT COST	KEYNOTES AND ASSUMPTIONS
UNRANKED		
F1 Acquire area south of Jessamine Ave to support facilities on west side of Park.	\$422,000	WC8
F2 Parks Operations and Maintenance Facility: Expand building, improve circulation, remediate soil, provide additional on-site parking.	\$4,300,000	WC4
F3 Improve parking areas.	\$380,000	EC3 SS9
F4 Construct warming house for winter activities.	\$1,950,000	GC2
F5 Conduct cultural landscape study.	\$500,000	
F6 Update existing path from Chelsea Street N. to provide pedestrian access to regional park features.	\$590,000	GC3
F7 Provide path connection to parking lot (Wolf Lot)	\$60,000	GC1
F8 Increase Seating at Como Pool	\$166,000	WC10



Total and annual project costs added to final Plan.

Total Project Cost: \$57,902,000 (Low)
\$96,435,000 (High)

Additional Annual Programming, Operations, and Maintenance Cost: \$65,000

Accessibility

An important component of the Long-Range Plan is ensuring that all areas of the Park are accessible to all, regardless of ability. A number of strategies will be implemented through the park to ensure compliance with accessibility guidelines:

- Improve pavement conditions so all trails meet ADA accessibility requirements.
- Improve accessibility of signage by including relief maps and braille text where appropriate.
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle ramps at all grade changes.
- Clearly delineate trail uses through signage and pavement markings.
- Provide accessibility upgrades at all intersections through implementation of curb ramps, landing areas, and tactile warning strips.
- Increase frequency of bench placement and consider benches and seating areas near amenities and along trails to provide areas for rest.
- Ensure wayfinding signage adheres to accessibility guidelines.
- Create comfortable pedestrian and bicycle trails for users of all ages and abilities.
- Provide connections to existing sidewalks, pedestrian and bicycle trails with familiar design queues and signage to encourage users to feel safe and comfortable.
- Provide adequate parking near trail access points and Park amenities.
- Update parking areas to provide the adequate number of parking stalls, loading zones, EV charging stations, and accessible ramps throughout the Park.
- Add lighting to path segments with low visibility.
- Provide ADA accessible restrooms, seasonal or temporary.



Improve pavement conditions



Improve accessibility at crossings



Improve crossings



Clarify path markings



Update wayfinding



Connect dead end paths



Improve parking lot pavement

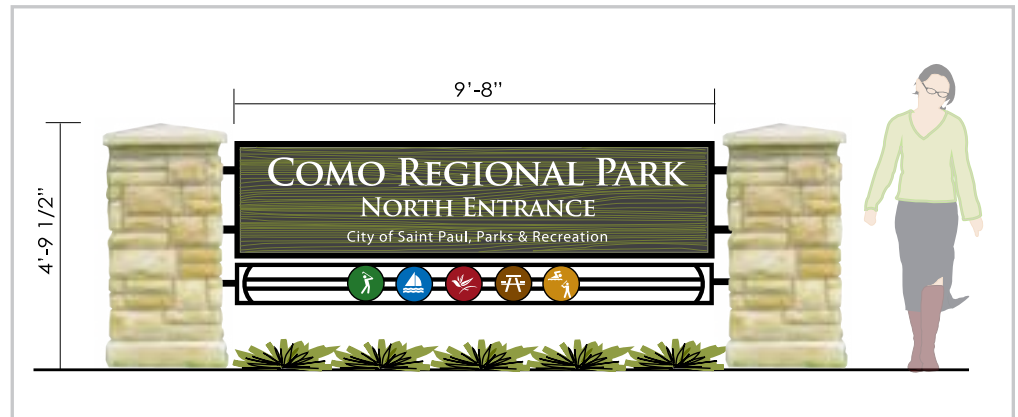
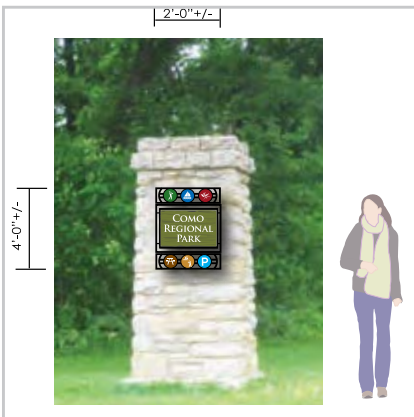
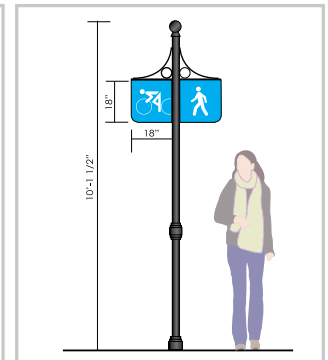
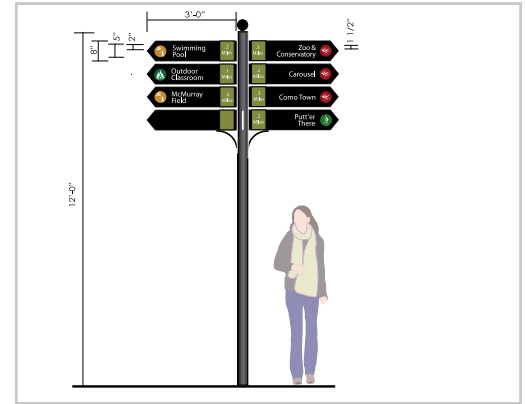


Update path markings

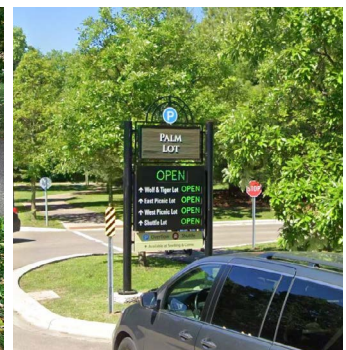
Wayfinding

Overall wayfinding recommendations:

- Remove and replace existing wayfinding signs that are incorrect or irrelevant.
- Add signage at trail decision points where wayfinding does not currently exist.
- Where appropriate, add colored striping, pavement markings, and tactile strips to provide visual and tactile indications of path use type and intersections; delineate pedestrian/bicycle paths to reduce conflicts between uses.
- Como Regional Park wayfinding signage locations, branding, and hierarchy to be based on the Exterior Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan (2012).
 - ◊ Signage identified in the Exterior Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan that has not been implemented should be installed as part of future Park improvement projects.
- Wayfinding signage located along the Grand Round to follow the recommendations included in the Grand Round Implementation Plan (2017).



Selection of sign types identified in the Exterior Signage Design & Standards Document



Existing direction and wayfinding signage and striping at Como Regional Park

Conflicts

Balance of Uses Within the Park

Como Regional Park is comprised of a collection of several highly programmed facilities including the Como Zoo, Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, Como Pool, the Como Park Golf Course, McMurray Fields, and the Lakeside Pavilion, as well as other picnic, recreation, and education spaces. Through community engagement, staff heard a desire for additional program spaces including a dog park and pickleball or other sport courts, but also heard a desire for more unprogrammed spaces and the importance of maintaining unprogrammed and more “natural” areas of the Park. As both programmed and unprogrammed spaces attract millions of visitors annually, and since this Park serves both a regional and local population, the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan seeks to balance the desire for programmed, high-use spaces while also maintaining the Park’s original vision as a space for respite from the surrounding urban environment.

Other considerations related to Park uses include coordination with other staff and vendors at the Como Regional Park facilities, as well as City and agency staff who manage the Park. Examples of this include:

- Partnerships with vendors at Golf Course and Lakeside Pavilion
- Unique management and operations needs at the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory
- Partnership with Capitol Region Watershed District regarding Como Lake the lakeshore

Roadway and Vehicular Conflicts

The larger volume roadways within and adjacent to the Park provide an accessible way for visitors to enjoy all parts of Como Regional Park. However, vehicular traffic can also create conflicts with pedestrian and bicycle traffic around the Park and Como Lake. A consistent

theme throughout community engagement was the need for safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Clearer signage and wayfinding to reduce conflicts between uses, additional lighting, and improved safety at crossings were top priorities among the group that shared feedback for the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan.

Lexington Parkway: Lexington Parkway is a high volume roadway that bisects the Park. Bridges that cross the road in some areas help create safe crossing areas for pedestrians and bicyclists, but conflict areas still exist. Improvements for pedestrian and bicycle safety are recommended along Lexington Parkway.

Nagasaki Road: Pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular uses are in very close proximity along Nagasaki Road. Future improvements on Nagasaki Road led by Saint Paul Public Works should be coordinated with Parks and Recreation to ensure safe facilities for all users in this area while also considering the impact that roads and paths will have on the lakeshore.

East Como Lake Drive: Feedback from some community members and Technical Advisory Committee members has indicated a desire to close East Como Lake Drive to vehicular traffic. Eliminating vehicles from this area would provide the opportunity to enhance pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure here. Removal of the road would provide more space for shoreline restoration adjacent to the Lake. Concerns have also been raised by community members and members of the TAC about the potential traffic impacts that this might have on other roads, and on the neighborhoods on the east side of the Lake.

Boundaries and Acquisitions

Park Boundaries

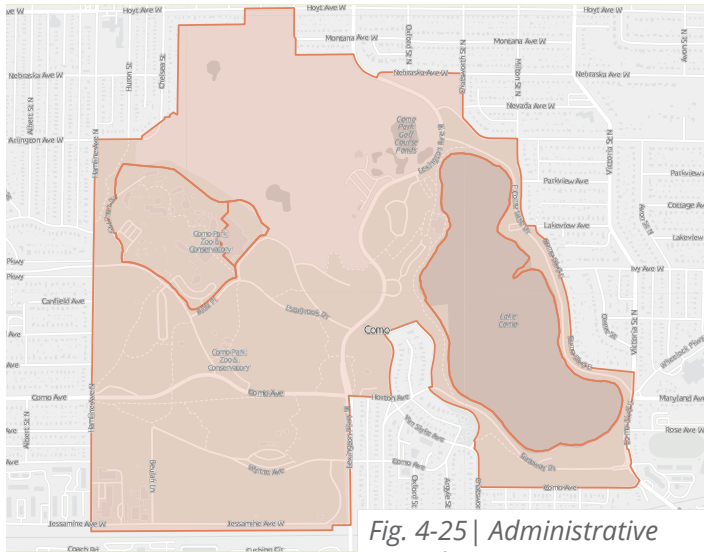


Fig. 4-25 | Administrative Boundary

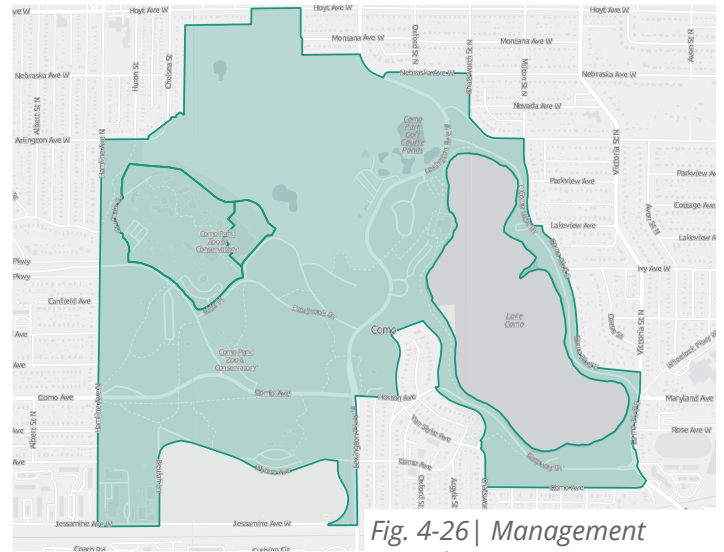


Fig. 4-26 | Management Boundary

Administrative Boundary

The administrative boundary includes all areas of the Regional Park including enterprise facilities and special recreation features.

Management Boundary

The management boundary excludes McMurray Fields and Como Lake but includes special recreation features.

Como Regional Park is bisected by two county roads; Como Avenue which runs east-west, and Lexington Parkway North that runs north-south. Additionally, Lexington Parkway is a considered Regional Trail Search Corridor. Regional Trail Search corridors are general search corridors intended to connect for new regional trails to connect to existing regional parks and trails. This regional trail search corridor was approved by the Metropolitan Council as part of previous Regional Parks Policy Plans and also approved as part of the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.¹ This plan will support future opportunities for alignment of the Lexington Avenue search corridor as it passes through Como Regional Park. The Grand Round North Regional Trail extends through Como Regional Park along Como Avenue, and continues to the east along Wheelock Parkway.



Administrative and management boundaries for the Regional Park added to the final Plan.

¹ : Metropolitan Council, 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, [https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-\(2020-version\)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx](https://metrocouncil.org/Parks/Publications-And-Resources/POLICY-PLANS/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-(2020-version)/2040-Regional-Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx)

Boundaries and Acquisitions

Acquisitions

The parcel bordering the south side of Jessamine Avenue is currently owned by BNSF Railway Company. This parcel, (tax ID: 272923140028) section 27, Town 29, Range 23, is 10.6 acres in size and is currently utilized as an active railway corridor. Acquisition of this narrow parcel should be considered and would be beneficial for use as visitor parking for programming and large events such as the Hmong Freedom Festival held annually at McMurray Fields. Adding this space would help alleviate the pressures put on the surrounding neighborhood streets during these times and help an otherwise underutilized space. The proposed acquisition area is described on the map below.



Parcel ID	Total Parcel Area	Acquisition Area	Total Estimated Cost
272923140028	10.6 acres	2.87 acres	\$421,603

Stewardship Plan

Vegetation Management

The City of Saint Paul will continue to manage and maintain the vegetation and habitat areas within the Park by working through available grants, volunteer opportunities, and partnerships. Continued coordination between Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, City and State Natural Resource Offices, the Capitol Region Watershed District, and others will ensure the natural vegetation areas will be maintained through the implementation of future projects.

Water Resources

The Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) completed the Como Lakeshore Management Plan in 2022 (see pg. 12). This document focuses on improving the ecological health, resilience, aesthetics, and functionality of the strip of land immediately surrounding Como Lake.¹ The Plan also describes an ecological approach to restoring and managing the natural areas. Parks and Recreation will continue coordination with CRWD to implement the recommendations of the Como Lakeshore Management.

Historic and Cultural Resources

A cultural landscape study is needed at Como Regional Park to fully understand the history of this Park and the surrounding area, particularly the Indigenous history prior to European settlement. As additional layers of history are revealed, in a similar way that the post-settlement history is well-represented in the Park through architecture and site design, indigenous and natural history should also be highlighted and integrated into the design of new features and amenities. Consultation with indigenous community and advisory groups should be conducted to understand perspectives and priorities for culturally appropriate Park features.

Stormwater Management

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) identifies several best management practices for stormwater management including flow controls, vegetation stabilization, bioengineering, structural stabilization, rip-rap stabilization, and filtration practices. All future projects at Como Regional Park will comply with the MPCA regulations, and the requirements of the City of Saint Paul, Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD), and other agencies.

¹ : Capitol Region Watershed District. (2022). Como Lakeshore Management Plan. https://www.capitolregionwd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Como-Lakeshore-Mgmt-Plan_adopted_04-06-2022.pdf

Public Services

Roadways

Saint Paul Public Works manages several roads adjacent to and within the boundary of Como Regional Park. Throughout the engagement process for this Long-Range Plan, questions, concerns, and feedback have been noted about specific roadways related to Como Regional Park.

Lexington Parkway

As mentioned previously, Lexington Parkway is a Regional Trail Search Corridor. As planning occurs for a future regional trail here, considerations for safety regarding the roadway should be studied as part of the proposed regional trail, as well as for existing paths in Como Regional Park.

Nagasaki Road

In this area, the roadway, the pedestrian and bicycle trails, and the lakeshore are in very close proximity. As improvements occur to Nagasaki Road in the future, considerations of these other uses should be taken into consideration.

East Como Lake Drive

Closure and/or removal of this road has been discussed throughout community engagement, as well as by City and partner agency staff. Future studies should be conducted to explore the benefits and drawbacks of closing this road. Considerations should include traffic patterns and volumes, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and water quality and habitat.

Sewer Interceptor System

Managed by the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES), interceptor systems collect and convey wastewater flows to treatment plants. A sewer interceptor line currently exists along the east side of the Park, following East Como Lake Drive, Nebraska Avenue, Montana Avenue, and Hoyt Avenue. Coordination with MCES is recommended as projects begin design.

Lighting

One of the highest ranked priorities for community members is the need for lighting throughout the Park. Existing lighting should be inventoried and augmented where lighting levels are inadequate. Existing lights that are no longer working should be fixed or replaced. Currently, copper wire theft and vandalism to lighting in parks and throughout the City are creating issues regarding comfort and safety in many Saint Paul Parks, including Como Regional Park. As solutions to prevent or deter wire theft and vandalism become available, safety considerations, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists, should be prioritized.

Water

Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) is the public drinking water utility for the city of Saint Paul and surrounding suburbs. All potable water services within Como Regional Park, both existing and proposed, connect to the SPRWS utility. The water SPRWS provides is sourced from the Mississippi River and the surrounding watershed. SPRWS also maintains a series of groundwater wells pumping from the Prairie du Chien-Jordan aquifer as a backup supply system.

Amenities

- Accessible Restrooms (seasonal and/or temporary)
- Bicycle storage
- Seating, especially shaded
- Drinking fountains
- Other park amenities such as dog park, pickleball court, etc.

District 10 Como Park Annual Ice Cream Social, July 2023. Held at Como Street Car Station.



Operations

Operations Overview

Como Regional Park is currently maintained and operated by the City of Saint Paul, Department of Parks and Recreation. Funding for general Operations and Maintenance (O&M) comes from the City of Saint Paul general fund which is approved through the annual budgeting process. The budget for Como Regional Park is currently limited and as use of the park increases, new sources of funding will need to be identified to keep up with the maintenance needs of the park.

Building Trades, Park Maintenance, and Natural Resources are the three primary work units with O&M costs for Como Regional Park. Currently, Building Trades (heating, masonry, electrical, plumbing, painters, and carpentry) is budgeted for approximately \$4.2 million annually for the entire Parks system, which includes vehicle expenses. Annually, approximately 25% (\$1.05 million) is needed to support Como Regional Park. This does not include any operational expenses for Como Zoo and Conservatory and any other lease facilities that are operated by other agencies on Parks and Recreation properties. Como Regional Park does receive a higher volume of visitation year-round because of the many amenities that are nearby. Expenditures are significantly higher in the summer to support seasonal amenities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, benches, gates, and repairs from winter months. Park infrastructure is nearing the end of its lifespan, and with a number of proposed improvements, the Building Trades group will require an increase of \$750,000 for labor costs, vehicles, maintenance, and upgrades to existing infrastructure.

In addition, Park Maintenance and some supporting maintenance efforts are budgeted for approximately \$6.3 million annually for the entire parks system. Annually, approximately 12.5% (\$790,000) is needed to support the Como regional system.

The following is a list of items included in annual park maintenance:

- Plowing snow (Nov- April)
- Salt/sand for ice
- Portable toilet rental
- Mow grass (May-Oct)

- Weed whip (May-Oct)
- Minor tree maintenance
- Storm damage cleanup
- Litter pick up (May-Oct and Oct-April)
- Empty trash barrels (1 or 3 times per week depending on season)
- Clean restrooms and shelter
- Custodial supplies
- Amenity upkeep/repair
- Clean out culverts
- Patching/pothole repair
- Pressure wash shelter (2 times per year)

Lastly, the Natural Resources work unit manages all natural areas and flowering beds across the city. They provide a great deal of support to the natural resources side of park maintenance and rely on several grants and partnerships for supporting the environmental management work at Como and other parks. The annual Natural Resources budget is approximately \$1.5 million for the entire parks system. Approximately 10% (\$150,000) is needed to support Como Regional Park for Natural Resource Management, which does not include any additional grant funds that vary from year to year.

Currently, there is no comprehensive recycling/compost program that supports the entire park system. Saint Paul Parks and Recreation desires to provide recycling more consistently. Efforts are made to work with groups to have recycling receptacles for the duration of special events. If a future budget allows for additional labor and vehicle time, it is recommended that Parks and Recreation provide the option for recycling and compost facilities to give visitors the ability to responsibly handle waste generated in the parks.

The City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation follows B3 guidelines with new construction, and supports other green initiatives when it comes to HVAC, lighting, water supply needs, irrigation, and strives to meet the City of Saint Paul carbon goals. This has been a challenge with aging infrastructure and increasing maintenance demands.

One of the proposed functions of the new stormwater BMP project with CRWD will be to capture stormwater runoff that would normally drain into Como Lake for reuse as irrigation for the athletic fields and greenspace.

Operations

Public Awareness

Notices are posted to the facility websites if park closures occur. Occasionally, park facilities or trails may be closed due to a permitted event:

- Como Regional Park <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/como-regional-park>
 - » Como Central Services Facility
 - » McMurray Fields
 - » Como Picnic Areas
 - » Como Aquatics Center
 - » Como Lakeside (Pavilion is leased by another entity)
 - » Como Streetcar Station

Information about Como Lake, Como Lakeside Pavilion, and Como Park Zoo and Conservatory are also linked on this webpage. Como Park rentals, reservations, and picnic information can also be found here.

Currently, closures of the Lakeside Pavilion for events, performances, and private rentals are not always published or publicly advertised. As projects are implemented, particularly improvements to the Pavilion or other event spaces, improvements to public communication are needed.

Rules and Regulations

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Rules and Regulations apply to all parks in Saint Paul, including Como Regional Park. A list of rules and regulations can be found on the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation website:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks/parks-and-recreation-rules-and-regulations>

In conjunction with the above Rules and Regulations, City ordinances also apply to Saint Paul Parks. Saint Paul's Code of Ordinances can be found at the link below:

https://library.municode.com/mn/st._paul/codes/code_of_ordinances

Appendix

Contents:

- A1 Plan Approvals and Recommendations**
- A2 Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting Materials (Presentation Slides and Minutes)**
- A3 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting Materials (Presentation Slides and Minutes)**
- A4 Online Engagement**
- A5 MNDNR Rare Species Guide Search Results**
- A6 Letters of Support**

A full list of meeting materials including meeting agendas, presentation slides, and discussion notes can be found on the project engagement website:

» <https://engagestpaul.org/como-trail-master-plan>

Comments received during the 90% comment period between March and April 2024 can be found here:

» www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/Como%20Regional%20Park%20Long-Range%20Plan%20-%2090%25%20Public%20Comments.pdf

A1. Plan Approvals and Recommendations

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number 24-18
date June 7, 2024

WHEREAS, in accordance with the City's Administrative Code Section 105.06.(c), the Parks and Recreation Commission has referred the proposed Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan to the Planning Commission for its recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission, having reviewed the proposed Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan and a memorandum containing analysis provided by Parks and Recreation Department staff, provided a recommendation for consideration by the Saint Paul Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Planning Commission, having reviewed the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Committee's recommendation, finds the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan to be supported by the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, in particular policies in the Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Water Resources chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Parks and Recreation chapter of the District 10 Como Community Plan; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that the City does not have a distinct "capital allocation policy" but does have a variety of policies and procedures regarding capital resources allocation, and that capital is not being allocated to the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan implementation at this time but could be allocated at some future time for infrastructure projects in accordance with adopted City policies, the Saint Paul Planning Commission finds no present conflicts with any City policies or procedures regarding capital allocation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Planning Commission, under the authority of the City's Administrative Code, that the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan is recommended for approval; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this recommendation be conveyed to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to the City Council for their consideration.

moved by Holst

seconded by Martinson

in favor Unanimous

against _____

A1. Plan Approvals and Recommendations



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JAZMIN GLASER-KELLY, CHAIR

City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Tel: 651-266-6400

RESOLUTION #24-05 Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission is an appointed body established to advise the Saint Paul Mayor and the Saint Paul City Council on long-range and city-wide matters related to the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, Section 105.06 of the Saint Paul Administrative Code outlines the Parks and Recreation Commission's duty to review and comment on regional park master plans and the process that it must follow; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission held a public hearing on May 9, 2024 where it sought recommendations from all interested residents concerning the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan ("Plan"); and

WHEREAS, the Plan is a visionary document to guide future development at Como Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation assembled and facilitated a series of community and key stakeholder meetings, and worked across City departments and partner agencies to develop Guiding Principles for the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan contains information required by the Regional Parks Policy Plan and otherwise conforms to regional policy; and

WHEREAS, local and regional plan approval will make Como Regional Park eligible for regional capital funding to construct improvements proposed in the Plan, and for regional operations and maintenance funding to operate all areas open to the public; and

WHEREAS, the park is the City's most-visited regional park and is expected to remain an important part of the Regional Park System; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a recommendation from the City of Saint Paul Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee on May 22, 2024 finding the Plan's consistency with the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Commission received a recommendation from the City of Saint Paul Planning Commission on June 7, 2024 recommending the Plan for approval and conveying it to the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council; and

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
MELVIN CARTER, MAYOR
STPAUL.GOV

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION &
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



A1. Plan Approvals and Recommendations



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JAZMIN GLASER-KELLY, CHAIR

City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Tel: 651-266-6400

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Saint Paul Administrative Code the recommendation of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee and the Planning Commission have become part of the official record of the proposed plan; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommends the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan be approved; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission submits this recommendation to the City Council along with the entire official record including minutes of the public hearing and the recommendations of the Saint Paul Transportation Committee and the Saint Paul Planning Commission.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on June 13, 2024:

Approved:	Yeas	5
	Nays	0
	Absent:	3

Resolution #24-05

Attested to by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Lee McDonald".

Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation



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

Committee Members (listed alphabetically)

Britta Belden	Grant Cooper	Zach Mensinger
Theodore Budd	James Cowles	Dave Montgomery
Joni Chacich	Kevin Dahm	Christopher Tabisz
Dillon Clements	Amy Gage	Greg Williams
Allison Cole	Sasha Mackin	Han Zhang

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

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

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.

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

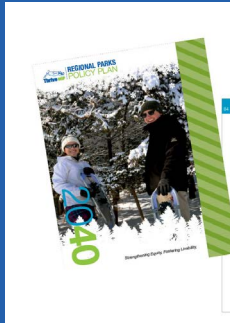
PROJECT OVERVIEW - Como Master Plan

- 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

Planning Policy
 The City of Saint Paul is committed to providing high-quality parks and recreation facilities for all residents. This Master Plan provides a framework for the development and management of the City's parks and recreation system over the next 20 years. The plan is based on the following principles:

- 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.

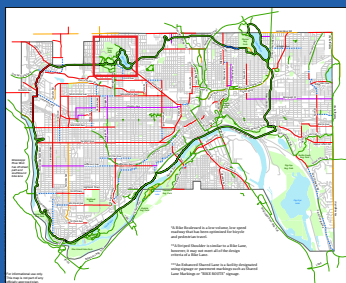
Master plans are critical in defining the specifics of acquisition, development, and operation of regional facilities.

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.

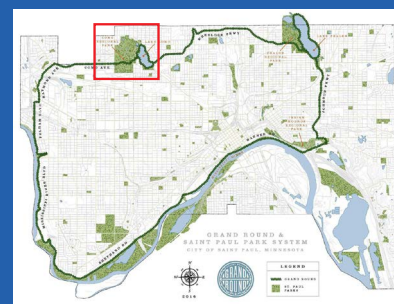
The Met Council provides demographic data for the region and their jurisdictions. The data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, household income, ability, age, educational attainment, and gender, to help identify communities who may be under-served by the regional parks system.

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

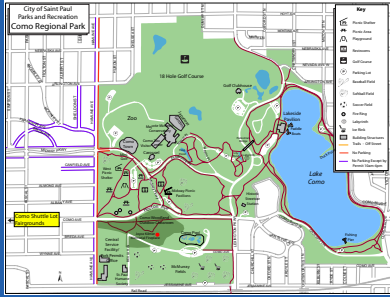


- #### Saint Paul Grand Round
- 27.0 miles of Scenic Parkways
 - Connects outdoor landmarks (Lake Phalen, Lake Como, Mississippi River, over a dozen parks)
 - First envisioned 125 years ago by Horace Cleveland.

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

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

D10 Report Summary

SIGNAGE
 Signage @ Events
 • Campus wide pedestrian wayfinding needed
 • Master Map w/ key attractions
 • Review 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

AMENITIES
 Parks Recommendations
 • Reduce speed limits around crosswalk at key locations
 • 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
 Trail Recommendations
 • Prioritize trail segments for repair or rebuild
 • Study impacts of Lake Como trail from on to two-way. Consider following in winter
 • Add trail canopy & wayfinding
 • Reconnect east-west north and south trail between Lakeside Pavilion & eastside of Grand Round
 • Consider adding north-south trail across Estabrook Dr. west of Lexington
 • Enhance crosswalk safety connections to Grand Round - Maryland/Wheelock (east) & Como/Hamilton (west)

Other Notes:
 Wayfinding priority to pedestrian bridge over Lexington Hwy.
 *Red dot - Potential items to be included in the Golf Course & Lakeside Pavilion Parking Lot project scope of work.
 Trail segment to be combined with Lakeside Pavilion Parking Lot Project

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Existing Conditions and Considerations

- E Como Blvd may already be two way vehicles - on the eastern road (light 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?

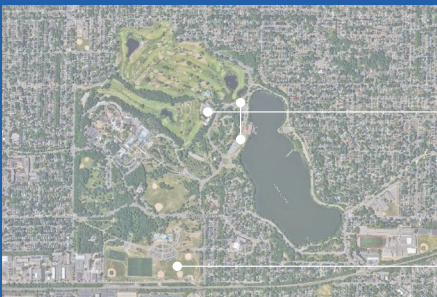


Circulation

- 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

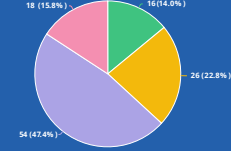
278 Unique Pins

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

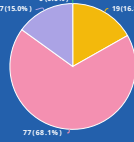
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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?

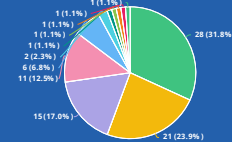


Question options: Drive / Shuttle, Bike, Walk, Other (please specify)

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

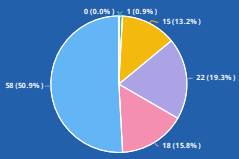
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Please enter your zip code



Question options: Saint Paul, MN 55117, Saint Paul, MN 55108, Saint Paul, MN 55104, Saint Paul, MN 55103, Falcon Heights, MN 55108, Little Canada, MN 55117, Saint Paul, MN 55105, Falcon Hgts, MN 55108, Shoreview, MN 55126, New Brighton, MN 55112, Minneapolis, MN 55413

Select Your Age



Question options: 18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55+, Under 18

• 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

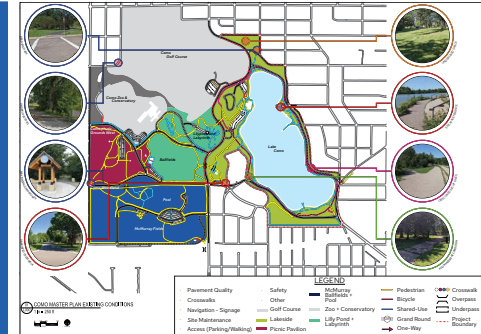
BIKING

- 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

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DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

EXISTING CONDITIONS - Photos



Pavement condition



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COMO REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN | MARCH 2023

GROUP DISCUSSION - Priorities

PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED TO DATE:

- Improve path and trail wayfinding
- Update pathways to appropriate with for intended use.
- Provide 2 way bike and pedestrian circulation for Grand Round connecting pathways
- Improvements to circulation around the lakeside pavilion.
- Provide additional connections, fill in gaps within trail system.
- Expansion of Park Maintenance Facilities.
- Designate space for a dog park.
- Improve Pathway trail conditions.
- Provide safer trail crossings.
- On-site amenities such as restrooms and trash receptacles
- Shoreline and water quality improvements
- Add shade on the east side of the lake

WHAT ARE WE MISSING?:

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-



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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?



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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



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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://district10.comopark.org/>

CAPITOL REGION WATERSHED DISTRICT

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



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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




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COMO REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN | MARCH 2023

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Notes



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Como Master Plan Design Advisory Committee Meeting #1- Meeting Notes
Meeting Date: March 7, 2023
Meeting Time: 5:00-6:30pm
Location: Como Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy N, St. Paul, MN 55117

Committee Members Present: Britta Belden (CRWD), Dillon Clements (resident), Allison Cole (resident), Grant Cooper (MnDOT), James Cowles (resident), Amy Gage (Friends of the Parks and Trails), Sasha Mackin (former president, Hamline-Midway Coalition), Dave Montgomery (resident), Greg Williams (chair, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission), Han Zhang (resident)


St Paul Parks and Recreation Staff: David Ronzani (Project Manager), Anne Gardner & Max Sell

Presentation was conducted with questions interjected throughout. Presentation topics are numbered while discussion items are shown using bullet points. Discussion points are grouped by topic for simplicity.


- 1. Meeting Agenda, Framework, Guiding Principles and Committee Introductions**
 - Meeting length will likely increase from 1 ½ to 2 hours moving forward
 - Future Meeting Dates are tentative. Final dates and times to be determined by DAC member poll
 - DAC members represent interests of their communities, not just their own
 - Members are encouraged and expected to hold conversations within their Communities between DAC meetings and share added community input with City staff
- 2. Project Overview and Goals**
 - Met Council requests updating every 20 years. The current Como Regional Master plan was adopted 36 years ago
 - \$150,000 available funding
 - Improve connections between Park trails to Saint Paul Grand Round
 - Update Master Plan with changes for adoption by Met Council

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1



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- 3. Master Plan Process**
 - Critical to defining specifics of acquisition, development, and operation of regional facilities
 - Adherence to Met-council approved master plan process necessary to secure grant funding
 - Equity component – enabling people of all ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, abilities, and communities to share in the opportunities and challenges of growth and change
- Master Plan**
 - Authority – boundaries of existing plans. Work to determine which plan takes priority in areas of overlap
 - Research additional available grants and funding sources
 - Potential to develop Park branding & Identity (possibly based on areas within the park)
 - Strengthen identity of park at entry points. Currently each entry point is a different experience and conveys a different identity
- 4. Regional Connections**
 - Grand Round – Como regional park is a part of the grand round with direct connections on the east and west side of the park
 - 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
 - Como Regional Park pathways and visitor counts
 - 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. (Behind Minneapolis Chain of Lakes)
 - Reference to City Bike Plan ([Saint Paul Bicycle Plan.pdf \(stpaul.gov\)](#))

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- Access**
 - Improve trail hierarchy for easier orientation within park
 - Additional trail section(s) around golf course are needed- extend path that crosses Lexington to clubhouse
 - Wayfinding sign hierarchy
 - Trail speed limits
 - Identify landmarks for orientation within park
 - Walkability – preserve appeal and usability for all ages
 - Diversify 55+ demographic group into 10-year ranges (55-64, 65-74, etc.) on surveys and other materials for more accurate input
 - Prioritize pedestrians
 - Expand single track trails for runners
 - Reach out to nearby public housing and Senior Living Centers to understand current use and needs
 - How will we address needs of public transit users?
 - Are current park users arriving by public transit satisfied with their experience?
 - Could more be done to encourage additional users to access Como Park using public transit?
- Winter Activation Suggested**
 - Loppet Organization Precedent
 - Plowing paved paths - pedestrians and cyclists sharing one path in winter
 - What are the costs to plow both paths in winter?
 - How can bike/ped traffic get separated?
 - Single track trails (snowshoeing, fat tire biking)
 - Add Ice rink on lake- historic precedent
 - Luminary events- winter celebration to activate the park space and improve community connection

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- 5. Previous Studies**
 - Over one dozen plans and studies conducted since previous master plan adoption, covering:
 - Comprehensive Campus Planning
 - Shoreline Restoration and Stormwater Management
 - Enhancements to Existing Paths and Trails Vehicle Transportation Plans
 - Specialty Area Plans (Golf Course, Zoo & Conservatory, McMurray Fields)
- 6. Notable Studies of Last 5 Years**
 - District 10 Como Park Campus Analysis: Recommendations for signage, trails, and other park amenities. Significant building block for current Como Master Plan process: [D10 Como Community Plan | Saint Paul \(stpaul.gov\) | Como pathways report-short version \(district10comopark.org\)](#)
 - East Como Lake Drive Study: Underutilized and redundant traffic route. Closure to vehicle traffic, expanded pedestrian and bicycle use could be better use of space by also affording additional green space to intercept stormwater runoff before reaching lake
 - Park Changes since 2020: Parking Area improvements, McMurray Field reconfiguration projects concentrated work on areas West of Lexington with clear activities (McMurray Fields, Golf and Pavilion Lot Improvements). Lakeside most frequently visited part of Como (excluding Zoo and Golf Course) and warrants attention for improvements to user experience
- 7. Community Engagement**
 - Tools used for engagement include in-person events, surveys, Website platform: Engage St. Paul [Como Regional Park Trail Master Plan | Engage Saint Paul \(engagestpaul.org\)](#)
 - Survey Responses
 - Walking and Cycling: Most users access the park by either foot or bike, though most use the park for walking once there – Demographics and Areas:
 - Como serves visitors from beyond its immediate surroundings

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4

A2. Design Advisory Committee


DAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Notes

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- Como appeals to all age demographics, with a majority identifying as 55+ (based on survey responses)
- c. Key Takeaways
 - Navigation and safety enhancements are needed for all users (walk, bike, vehicle)
 - Improving pavement condition at crossings and transitions are key for bicycle safety
 - Pedestrian and bike paths must be kept free of vehicles (signage, bollards may be needed at locations near parking areas)
- 8. Existing Conditions**
 - Map analysis- work will exclude golf course, zoo+ conservatory areas though connection to key entry points at golf course and zoo can be included
 - Existing condition photos showing pavement condition, current wayfinding markings and signage, and moments of uncertainty along trails
- Private Vendor Operations**
 - Lakeside Pavilion- study for improvements within existing building structure
 - Public/private space delineation could improve experience
 - Additional activities suggested: chess tables, rentals
 - Current study is just beginning to examine possible building improvements
 - Golf Course
 - Trail connection to club house
- Bicycling**
 - Two-way traffic areas, south of lake at least, around entire lake if possible (space is constrained on east side of lake) are needed to facilitate commuters, Grand Round users
 - When traveling east to west the shortest route is along south side of lake, but current one-way circulation dictates going around to the north
 - Southern trails could be widened in existing park space. Current trail configuration east of lake could not facilitate additional trail width without sacrificing green space or repurposing East Como Lake Drive

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- Fat tire winter biking – expanding trails
 - Golf Course – groomed trails similar to cross-country skiing currently provided in this area of the park
 - Lakeside – grooming unplowed paths for snow use
- Skills Park – possible location within Como
- Curb cuts and crosswalks matching trail widths
 - Recent trail improvements have made paths wider than existing curb cuts (trail north of pavilion cited as example)
- Parking and storage – Examine Universities, European cities as precedents for innovative bike facilities
 - Requiring temporary events to feature additional bike storage options
 - Offering discounts to event attendees who arrive by bicycle
 - Permanent secure facilities (lockers, cages, cameras)
 - Electric Bike charging stations
 - Move away from typical round bike parking rack- accommodate larger cargo bikes and burleys
- 9. Group Discussion**
 - Priorities identified to date:
 - Improve path and trail wayfinding
 - 2-way bike and pedestrian circulation for Grand Round connecting pathways
 - Improve Lakeside Pavilion circulation
 - Add safe trail crossings (appropriate widths and signage)
 - Selectively locating additional trail connections while not over-paving park
 - Creating shade on east side of lake
 - Targeted Outreach
 - District 10 Community Council
 - Lower Phalen Creek Project
 - Major Taylor Bikes
 - Karen Organization of Minnesota
 - Como Park Senior High
 - Hmong College Prep Academy

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- Youth Commission
- Saint Paul Parks Commission
- Public Works
- Area Events Coordinators
- c. Next steps
 - Meeting schedule discussion: Next meetings May, 2023, July 2023
 - Staff to send out Microsoft Form for meeting schedule
 - Project schedule discussion
 - Goal for adoption of Master Plan by June 2024
 - Members to reach out to representatives (neighbors, friends, colleagues, etc.) to generate ideas for further discussion
- Miscellaneous**
 - East Como Lake Drive Study: Road Closure potential per previous studies
 - Creates additional area for stormwater treatment
 - Creates additional space for walking and bicycle trails
 - Traffic route – where is traffic rerouted if street is closed?
 - Dog Park – size and location, area need
 - If included, size of dog park must be adequate for dogs and humans to move sufficiently (park at Unčī Makhā identified as too small)
 - Location ideas within Como included Ballfield space near West picnic grounds, area south of Woodland Outdoor Classroom
 - Local wildlife in these areas require special consideration (ex. coyotes have denned around Woodland Classroom site). Signage, other means of wildlife awareness needed.
 - Nearby Off-Leash Dog Parks areas and distances from Como:
 - Arlington/Arkwright – 4.5 Acres | 3.5 Miles
 - High Bridge – 4.5 Acres | 4.3 Miles
 - Lowertown – 0.3 Acres | 4.4 Miles
 - Meeker Island – 5.1 Acres | 4.7 Miles
 - Unčī Makhā – 0.3 Acres | 7.1 Miles
 - Include On-site amenities such as restrooms, drinking fountain on south side of lake

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Meeting End: 6:40 PM


Notes:

- Meeting minutes are intended to capture overall participation and summarize comments from City Staff and Advisory Member participants.
- Visit (www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/como-regional-park-trail) for more information and presentation graphics.

This document shall serve as the official record of the community meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Max Sell via email max.sell@ci.stpaul.mn.us by 3/15/2023

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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation



TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Meeting Framework
3. Project Overview
4. Community Engagement
5. DAC Meeting #1 + CE Key Takeaways
6. Map Analysis - Existing and Proposed
7. Small Group Discussion
8. Crossing and Signage Precedents
9. Assignment #2 and Next Steps

SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA | PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION | COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | MAY 2023

INTRODUCTION

City of Saint Paul
Parks and Recreation
David Ronzani | Project Manager
Anne Gardner | Supervisor
Max Sell | Landscape Design Associate

Committee Members (listed alphabetically)

Britta Belden	Grant Cooper	Zach Mensinger
Theodore Budd	James Cowles	Dave Montgomery
Joni Chacich	Kevin Dahm	Christopher Tabisz
Dillon Clements	Amy Gage	Greg Williams
Allison Cole	Sasha Mackin	Han Zhang

Thank You For Being Here!

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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 – 7:00 PM

• Meeting #3: 7/11/23*

*Tentative time - subject to DAC member approval

SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA | PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION | COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | MAY 2023

PROJECT OVERVIEW | GOALS

Parks & Recreation:

- Plan will focus on reviewing and **improving the trail system** within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections 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.
- **Goal:** Update guiding plan with changes for **adoption by Metropolitan Council.**

Metropolitan Council:

- For a park agency to **receive a grant** for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a **Met Council-approved guiding plan.**
- Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is **required** to have its own **guiding plan.**
- Project Funding: Legacy Grant, Met Council - **\$150,000**

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PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2040 Comprehensive plan:


- Core Values: Celebrate parks, community/public health, transportation – safety and accessibility for all users, sustainable and equitable maintenance, environmentally- sustainable design.

2015 Bicycle plan (2023 is nearly adopted):

- 6.11- "Work to close gaps in the trail system to ensure seamless connections for bicycles and pedestrians of all ages"

2019 Pedestrian plan:

- Equity is at the foundation of the plan.



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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

PROJECT OVERVIEW | NAME CHANGE

FROM METROPOLITAN COUNCIL -

"Master plans" are referenced regularly throughout the Regional Parks Policy Plan and those words appear on the cover of most plans for units in the Regional Parks and Trails System.

There was a common understanding among the group that "master" has a negative connotation and has roots in slavery in the United States.

Council staff propose using "long-range plan" in place of "master plan" for all future planning efforts for the Regional Parks and Trails System.

This proposed change will also be reflected in the Regional Parks Policy Plan, part of the Council's Regional Development Guide, to be considered for approval by Council committees and the full Council in late 2024.

PROJECT OVERVIEW | 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.

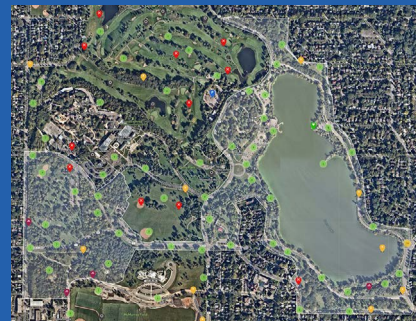
- Act as the **liaison** between project and community.

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.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | SUMMARY



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

114*

Surveys to complete January close

715

Informed participants

337

Unique Pins

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | SUMMARY

ENCOURAGE EXPLORATION

- Navigation And Safety
- Directional Signs, Intuitive Trail Marking (Paint)
- Information Kiosks

PEDESTRIAN

- 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

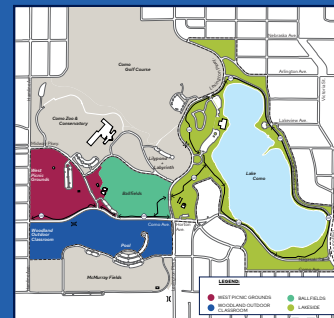
BICYCLING

- Two-Way Traffic Around Lake
- Pavement Crossings And Transitions
- Pavement Surfacing (Corners)

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

- Shoreline Restoration
- Dog Park
- Add Amenities -South Side of Lake
- Skills Course

PROJECT BOUNDARY



Areas Of Focus

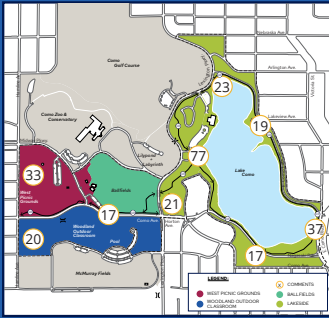
- Lake
- Ballfields
- West Picnic Grounds
- Woodland Outdoor Classroom & McMurray Fields*
- Zoo And Conservatory*
- Golf Course*

*Not-included or partially not-included in analysis

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

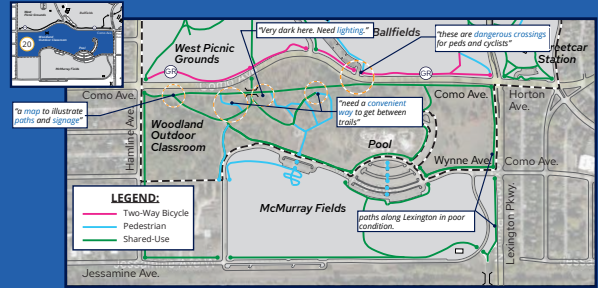
EXISTING | MAP COMMENTS



Frequent Parkwide Comments

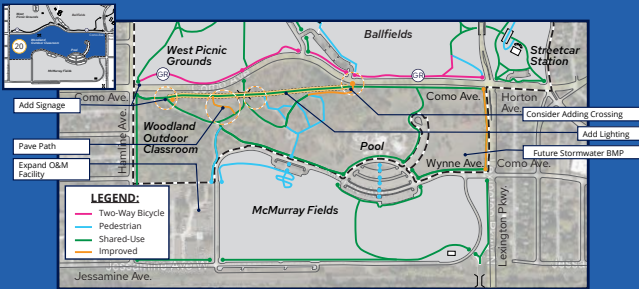
- Wayfinding/Signage
- Grand Round And Park Trail Improvements
- Pedestrian And Bicycle Crossings
- New Amenities
- New Paths And Connections

WOODLAND | EXISTING

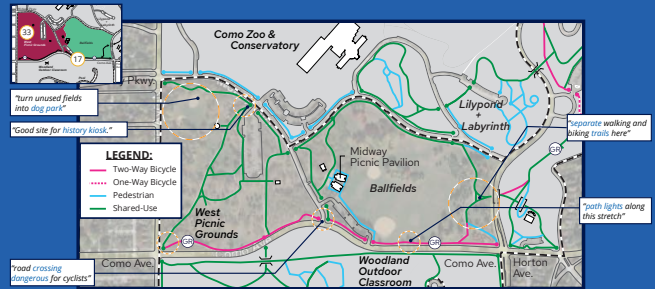


*Comments From Community Feedback

WOODLAND | PROPOSED

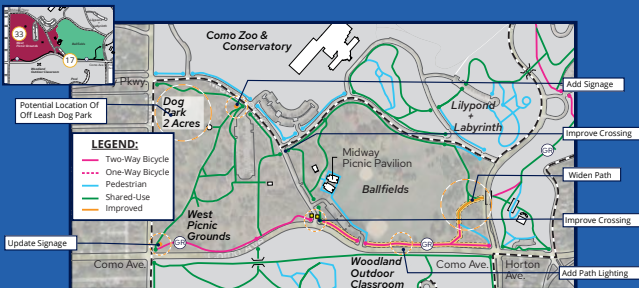


PICNIC AREA AND BALLFIELDS | EXISTING



*Comments From Community Feedback

PICNIC AREA AND BALLFIELDS | PROPOSED



Note: Dog park footprint is shown only for scale. No design decisions for a dog park have been made at this time.

LAKE-NORTHWEST | EXISTING



*Comments From Community Feedback

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

LAKE-NORTHWEST | PROPOSED

- Improve Crossing
- Consider Extending Path To Nebraska Ave. W
- Improve Circulation At This Intersection
- Shared-Use Path
- *Shoreline Restoration
- Update Signage
- Add Path Markings
- Improve Circulation Around Pavilion. Improvements To Pavilion Also Needed.
- Provide Signage
- Two-Way Bike

Connect Path Spur To Clubhouse. And At E. Como Intersection

LEGEND:
 - Two-Way Bicycle
 - One-Way Bicycle
 - Pedestrian
 - Shared-Use
 - One-Way Shared
 - Improvements

*Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD

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LAKE-SOUTHWEST | EXISTING

- "make biking traffic two-way"
- "smoother corner for people biking"
- "path is too narrow for two-way traffic"
- "continue with shoreline restoration"
- "separate paths, corners and hills make for conflicts"

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LAKE-SOUTHWEST | PROPOSED

- Two-Way Bike
- Improve Trail Alignment
- Improve Pavement
- Improve Pavement Quality And Site Lines
- *Shoreline Restoration
- Shared-Use Area

Widen Path

Add Signage

Add Lighting

Access To Lake Paths From Horton Needs Improvement

LEGEND:
 - Two-Way Bicycle
 - One-Way Bicycle
 - Pedestrian
 - Shared-Use
 - One-Way Shared
 - Improvements

*Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD

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LAKE-SOUTHEAST | EXISTING

- "this side of the lake is always too hot. Can we add shade?"
- "continue with shoreline restoration"
- Complicated Crossing For Bikes/Pedestrians
- Path too narrow for intended use
- "Bikers ride here, please pave this path"
- "avoid this area due to lack of light"
- "traffic calming needed this side of Como"
- "Southern path needs ability to head west"

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LAKE-SOUTHEAST | PROPOSED

- *Shoreline Restoration
- Add Lighting
- Widen Path To Meet Shared-Use Standard
- Two-Way Bike
- Improve Crossing
- Improve Crossings At Intersection. Further Study Needed Regarding Potential Closure Of E. Como Drive. Study Needed To Explore: Full Closure, Partial, Or Modification Of This Route To Improve Lake Water Quality, Non Motorized Circulation, And Safety At The Intersection.
- New Path Alignment
- Improve Crossings At Intersection. Consider Redesign Of Nagasaki Road And Intersection As Described In Grand Round Implementation Plan.

Add Trees

LEGEND:
 - Two-Way Bicycle
 - Pedestrian
 - Shared-Use
 - Improvements
 - Removed Path

*Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD

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LAKE-NORTHEAST | EXISTING

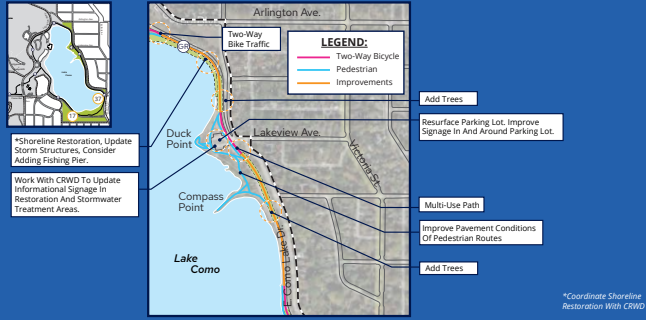
- Low Point Contributes To Seasonal Flooding On Walkway And Road. Causes Unsafe Conditions And Shoreline Erosion By Outlet.
- Parking Lot In Poor Condition
- Paved Pathways Around Duck And Compass Points In Need Of Repair
- Informational Signage In Need Of Update
- Directional And Wayfinding Signage Needed Around Parking Lot And Trails.
- One-Way Bicycle Route Often Used As Two Way, Resulting In Conflicts.

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DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

LAKE-NORTHEAST | PROPOSED



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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Please discuss which improvements that you like and why?
2. What additional improvements would you like to include?

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CROSSINGS: TABLED CROSSINGS



Along Wheelock Pkwy, Tabled Crossings Are Frequently Used along the Grand Round

Introducing A Tabled Crossing Requires Close Consideration Of Physical Constraints On Site, Including:

- Drainage
- Utilities
- Sight Lines
- Operating Speeds
- Sag And Crest Curves
- Maintenance Needs

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CROSSINGS | RRFBS



What Are Rrfbs?
Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons (Rrfb) Are **Visibility Enhancements** Used To Improve Safety At Marked Crosswalks.

Agencies **Shall**:

- Avoid **Overuse** Of RRFBs As It May **Diminish Their Effectiveness**.

Agencies **Shall Not**:

- Use Rrfbs Without The Presence Of A Crossing Warning Sign.
- Use Rrfbs For Crosswalks Across Approaches Controlled By Yield/ Stop Signs Or Traffic Control Signals.

U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration

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SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING | SYSTEM



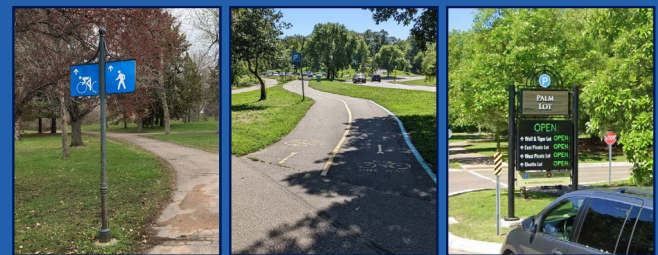
Kiosks
• Maps • History • Community Info

Blade Signs
• Attractions • Distances • Direction

Pavement Markings
• Use • Route • Direction

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SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING | COMO PARK



Trail Signage
• Use • Direction

Pavement Markings
• Use • Route • Direction

Parking Areas
• Availability • Direction

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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING | CRWD + DNR



Water Quality
• Hydrological Cycle • Watershed Info



Shoreline Restoration
• Educational • Informational



Fishing Areas
• Invasive Species

NEXT STEPS

- DAC Meeting #3 July 11, 2023 (tentative)-
Discuss updates to Concept Plan
- Open House - August 2023 (tentative)
- Target for Long-Range Plan Adoption-
December - June 2024

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


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

ASSIGNMENT #2

1. Share the meeting materials with your colleagues, provide feedback for Meeting #3.

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Notes



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Como Long-Range Plan - Design Advisory Committee Meeting #2 - Meeting Notes
Meeting Date: May 9, 2023
Meeting Time: 5:00-7:00pm
Meeting Location: Como Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy N, St. Paul, MN 55117

Committee Members Present: Britta Belden (CRWD), Joni Chacich (resident), Dillon Clements (resident), Allison Cole (resident), Grant Cooper (MnDOT), James Cowles (resident), Amy Gage (Friends of the Parks and Trails), Sasha Mackin (former president, Hamline-Midway Coalition), Zack Mensinger (St. Paul Bike Coalition), Dave Montgomery (resident), Greg Williams (chair, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission), Han Zhang (resident)


St Paul Parks and Recreation Staff: David Ronzani (Project Manager), Anne Gardner (Supervisor) & Max Sell (Landscape Design Associate)

Presentation was conducted with questions interjected throughout. Discussion points are grouped by topic for simplicity.


- 1. Meeting Agenda, Introduction, Framework**
 - Meeting length has increased from 1 ½ to 2 hours. Meeting #3 to be 2 hours as well.
 - Final DAC meeting date is tentatively set for July 11th. Final date and time to be determined by DAC member poll.
 - Final DAC meeting will take place in person, with Como streetcar station the preferred location. Members have requested that a portion of the meeting take place outside.
- 2. Project Overview: Metropolitan Council Goals, Guiding Principles, Name Change**
 - Provide update to existing Master Plan for Como Regional Park for adoption by Metropolitan Council.
 - Met Council requests plan updates every 20 years. The current Como Regional Park Master plan was adopted 36 years ago.

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- \$150,000 available funding for planning and development. Construction funds may be applied for following plan adoption.
- Improve connections between Park trails to Saint Paul Grand Round.
- Include potential amenities for visitors and other items for city operations and maintenance staff.
- New park plan must mesh with larger city vision, including 2040 Comprehensive plan, 2015 Bicycle plan (2023 bicycle plan near adoption), and 2019 pedestrian plan.
- While a mission statement is in development for the new park plan, it must reflect the design values of the City, including universal accessibility, equitable maintenance, and sustainable design.
- The Metropolitan Council proposes use of term "long-range plan" in place of "master plan" for all future planning efforts for the regional parks and trails system. Parks is hereby referring to this project as the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan.

3. Project Overview: Design Advisory Committee Role and Principles


- DAC members represent interests of their communities, not just their own.
- As representatives of their communities, the DAC serves as one voice- along with others like Operations and Maintenance - to provide guidance to Parks toward desirable outcomes for the planning process.
- Members are encouraged and expected to hold conversations within their Communities between DAC meetings and share added community input with City staff.

4. Community Engagement Summary


- Review methods for community engagement. Emphasis placed on Engage St. Paul site, which allows for real-time commenting, organic dialogues, and the most current feedback. Feedback on Engage St Paul site was positive, one inquiry asking about its possible use at Ramsey County.

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- Review common comment groups (pedestrian, bicycling, traffic, intersections, exploration, and future considerations). Not everything mentioned in comments is included on the slide but gives a general sense of types of improvements people are interested in.
- Project approaches Como Regional Park by breaking park down into smaller areas for closer examination of characteristics and contents (Woodland Outdoor Classroom, West Picnic Grounds, Ballfields, and Como Lake).
- Comment concentrations are shown to highlight areas of particular interest. The areas with the most comments were around the Lakeside Pavilion; near the intersection of E. Como Blvd/Maryland Ave/ Wheelock Pkwy/Victoria St; and in the West Picnic Grounds.

5. Woodland Outdoor Classroom


- Existing conditions show area is comprised of:
 - A shared-use East-West trail along Como Ave.
 - A shared-use loop from a fork on the Western edge of the park leads to the pool, connecting back to the East-West trail near the intersection of Como Ave. and Lexington Pkwy.
 - Many paths within the Woodland are pedestrian-oriented and may be unpaved or use a loose aggregate for stability.
 - Users of this space enjoy the wild character of the area, feeling like "an area of woodland within the city."
 - Maintenance facilities located along Jessamine utilize some of the space for storage, result in unsightly construction material being found in Woodland.
- Potential improvements shown to the committee include:
 - Lighting along the East-West shared-use path.
 - Improving trail surfacing.
 - Additional signage.
 - An Expanded Operations and Maintenance facility.
 - Future stormwater BMP.
- Suggestions made by committee members included:

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- Removal of debris in Woodland (City staff to follow up with Operations & Management).
- An additional sidewalk connection along the West side of Beulah Ave. toward Jessamine Ave. to the South. Vehicles often park along Beulah for sporting events, forcing pedestrians into unsafe areas.
- Dislike of the idea of paving paths in this area, contradicting identity of area. If path improvements are necessary, consider types of pavement (permeable, aggregate, etc.) carefully.
- Use of aggregate material or leaving paths unpaved cause accessibility issues. Ensure there is an accessible loop for this area at minimum.
- Speak with organizations who program at the Woodland Classroom to find out need for accessible pathways.

6. West Picnic Grounds and Ballfields

- Existing conditions show area is comprised of:
 - The Grand Round trail runs East-West along the North of Como Avenue, turning North to travel beneath Lexington Pkwy toward the lake.
 - Interior trails are shared use.
 - Perimeter trail along Southern edges of Midway Pkwy and Estabrook Dr. are shared use and primarily connect to parking areas and picnic locations.
 - Many paths within the Woodland are pedestrian-oriented and may be unpaved or use a loose aggregate for stability.
 - The northern portion of the picnic area holds a large parking lot and miniature golf course.
- Potential improvements shown to the committee include:
 - A dog park is shown overlaid on the ballfields in the northwest corner of the picnic area. The size and location of a potential dog park have not been determined at this time.
 - Lighting improvements consistent with adjacent stretches of Grand Round.
 - Path widening appropriate to intended use.
 - Additional wayfinding and park history signage.
 - Crossing improvements.

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4

A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Notes

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c. Suggestions made by committee members included:

- The path on the West of Lexington Pkwy. and South of Wynne Ave. is often covered in snow drifts and could use a wind break. This pathway also needs resurfacing.
- A dog park in this location is too close to the zoo. Its location should be reconsidered. The dog area needs to be more than just a fenced field and should consider design elements to make play for dogs safe.
- One alternative use for this space could be the beginning of a disc golf course. This could get people moving through the park in different ways. Some members of the committee expressed reservations about needing to be mindful of flying objects while on the picnic grounds.
- Another suggestion for repurposing the Northwest ballfields was for a bicycle pump track, or skills course for young riders to learn proper bicycle safety techniques.
- Balance introduction of new impervious surfaces – minimize new paved pathways, introduce only if needed for accessibility reasons.
- Consider exploring a temporary or partial closure of Midway Pkwy. between Como Ave. and Estabrook Dr.


7. Como Lake - Northwest

a. Existing conditions show area is comprised of:

- A small section of the bicycle trail along Lexington Pkwy. Is two-way, with the remainder of bike circulation signed as one-way. There is a strong demand from the public that the bike trail is made two-way around the lake, while the Grand Round is intended to facilitate two-way traffic throughout.
- A sidewalk spur North of E. Como Lake. Dr. dead ends before meeting the surrounding neighborhood on the Northwest edge of the park. There is some ambiguity to whether this area is part of the park or part of the neighborhood. Work with Public Works on sidewalk additions.

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b. Potential improvements shown to the committee include:

- Improved crossing at Lexington Pkwy. and E. Como Lake Dr. intersection.
- Connecting path spur North of E. Como Lake Dr. to new sidewalk toward Nebraska Ave.
- Connecting path spur West of Lexington Pkwy. to clubhouse and adjacent trail to the north.
- Wayfinding signage at bridge over Lexington Pkwy.
- Circulation improvements around pavilion.
- Continued shoreline restoration.

c. Suggestions made by committee members included:

- The picnic area to the West of the pavilion feels disconnected and could use a direct pedestrian path.
- In addition to continuing the sidewalk North to Nebraska Ave from the spur at E Como Blvd., add sidewalk to East along E Como Blvd.
- The pavilion is one of few areas within the park with sufficient bike parking. More bike parking could be considered at underserved areas such as the streetcar station.
- Rental equipment such as surreys available at the park are too large for two-way shared use paths and may need to be reconsidered.
- A small play area near the lakeside pavilion would help keep children occupied. Presently, many use the Hamm's fountain for recreation.
- Work with County on traffic calming measures along Lexington Pkwy.


8. Como Lake - Southwest

a. Existing conditions show area is comprised of:

- The confluence of paths to the Northwest of the streetcar station combined with a lack of signage and topography make this area challenging to navigate as intended. A clear path of travel has been worn into the grass that cuts the right angle turn to the North cyclists are expected to make.

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a. Existing conditions show area is comprised of:

- The intended Grand Round route has several right or acute angle turns that make navigation difficult.
- One-way, counterclockwise bicycle traffic around lake.
- Separated pedestrian paths, though within a constricted space along Nagasaki Rd. that leaves the two separated by less than a foot in some areas.

b. Potential improvements shown to the committee include:


- Two-way bicycle traffic around lake.
- Path widening where two-way bike traffic and pedestrian traffic converge.
- Lighting near Lexington Pkwy. underpass.
- Wayfinding signage where trails meet to the North of streetcar station.

c. Suggestions made by committee members included:

- Drinking fountains are needed (or need to be upgraded) in this area at places of congregation, such as the streetcar station, near the trail entrance along Nagasaki Rd. and in areas further South along the lake.
- Bathroom locations needed, possibly porta-potty with enclosures.
- Wintertime plowing needs to be clarified, as it forces bikes and pedestrians onto one trail. Requests for clearing both trails continue, but the path clearing should be at least remain consistent around the lake.
- White Bear Lake is suggested as a precedent to examine the use of trails which alternate being at street level and along pedestrian paths (something we may need to consider in areas of tight spatial constraints, such as that along Nagasaki Rd.).
- One committee member asked about separating pedestrian paths as well, with speed between walkers and runners being mentioned as one potential criteria.
- Signage to address behavior – larger walking groups need to make room for smaller groups or individuals.

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9. Como Lake - Southeast

a. Existing conditions show area is comprised of:

- Area features two complicated intersections: at Nagasaki Rd/E. Como Blvd., and the five-way intersection between E Como Blvd., Maryland Ave., Victoria St., E. Como Lake Dr., and Wheelock Pkwy.
- One-way bicycle route running counterclockwise.
- An underutilized area south of Nagasaki Rd., which features a perimeter sidewalk along its Southern edge and an undersized shared-use path leading to a crossing toward the fishing pier.
- Stretches along the East side are exposed to sun and wind.

b. Potential improvements shown to the committee include:


- Two-way bike traffic around lake.
- Additional tree planting.
- Shoreline restoration pursuant to CRWD plan.
- Improved bike path alignment at Nagasaki Rd./E. Como Blvd. intersection.
- Improved intersection crossings, which may include full or partial road closures, route modifications, non-motorized circulation, and other safety considerations.
- Improved or repaired lighting in area South of fishing pier.

c. Suggestions made by committee members included:

- The decorative brick gates at Nagasaki Rd. make site lines for drivers very difficult, particularly for those making a right onto Nagasaki Rd. Need to adjust traffic routes (either vehicular or bicycle) to improve lines of sight.
- Nagasaki Rd. is a route used by commuters/cyclists who prefer to operate above trail speed limits. Need a way for their route to be safe as well, possibly by working to reduce size of travel lanes or create a dedicated bike lane on one side of Nagasaki Rd.
- Committee is questioning whether additional signage would be helpful or more confusing for users at complicated intersections. This area may be a good place to study reducing directives for faster decision-making.
- Committee suggests continuing to explore closing E. Como Lake Dr., though are open to a non-permanent closure as well (seasonal, weekends, specific times, or events, etc.).

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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Notes

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- Bathroom or porta-potty should be included along the southeast or southwest side of lake.

10. Como Lake - Northeast

a. Existing conditions show area is comprised of:

- One-way bicycle route running counterclockwise around lake.
- Constrained space for bike and ped paths. Most of these paths are adjacent to one another and are separated by a space between <1-6'.
- Low point along E. Como Lake. Dr contributing to seasonal flooding along path and erosion by stormwater outflow.
- Parking lot pavement in poor condition.
- Paved trails in need of repair or replacement.
- Meandering pedestrian paths between Duck and Compass points.

b. Potential improvements shown to the committee include:



- Additional tree planting where space allows.
- Working with CRWD to improve stormwater treatment areas and updated informational signage.
- Improved pavement conditions.
- Exploring possible use of shared-use paths in areas with restrictive spatial constraints.

c. Suggestions made by committee members included:


- Crossing the parking lot aprons on bike is one of the worst experiences for cyclists circling the lake, as they are below the grade of the path and cause for an uneasy feeling while riding.
- Parking area access is confusing. Simplifying this lot to one shared entry and exit point is preferable to its current configuration.
- Tree maintenance is just as important as tree planting. Committee would like either more active maintenance routines or longer-term warranties on trees included in a long-range plan.
- A possible volunteer tree planting event would provide an educational experience for participants and instill a sense of responsibility for trees within the park.

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11. Group Discussion

a. Committee was split into two groups to discuss 1) whether there were additional improvements they would like added to plan, and to discuss 2) which improvements they liked and why.

b. Additional improvement responses:



- Disc golf preferable instead of dog park
- Bike pump track or skills park
- Wayfinding
- Children's play area near pavilion
- Drinking fountains with water bottle filling stations
- Get rid of unneeded paved surfaces, such as former statue pads
- Murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington (like Dodge Nature Center)
- Better secure bike parking
- Be sure to align Grand Round w/ new Bike Plan
- Organize/formalize community volunteer group for trail stewardship
- Work to ensure good ADA/ accessibility
- Fitness areas with pull up bars, etc.
- Replace grass with native gardens
- Close golf course, repurpose as mountain biking area
- Pavilion as warming area for ice skating in winter
- Pickleball courts
- Accommodation of different speeds of use – do we need separation/signage/consideration of different modes of transportation?
- Addition of more native prairie, maybe near ballfields
- Public Art
- Playground near pavilion (maybe geared toward younger kids)

c. Please discuss which improvement you like and why?


- Two-way bikeways
- Signage, wayfinding, and general info
- QR codes that link to different languages
- General trail condition improvement
- Planting and maintaining trees

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- Close E. Como Lake Dr. – gates to close off street that can be opened for maintenance, seasonal closures
- Remove one-way [bike] signage. It is naturally used as two-way already
- Improved snowplowing
- Improved crossing/path along Lexington to Golf Course. Finish sidewalk to somewhere
- Combine efforts with St. Paul Public Works to improve sidewalk access to park

Meeting End: 7:00 PM

Notes:



1. Meeting minutes are intended to capture overall participation and summarize comments from City Staff and Advisory Member participants.

2. Visit (stpaul.gov/como-regional-park-projects) for more information and presentation graphics.

This document shall serve as the official record of the community meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Max Sell via email max.sell@ci.stpaul.mn.us by 5/17/2023

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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #3 | Meeting Presentation



TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Project Overview
3. Community Engagement
4. DAC Meeting #2 Review
5. Focus Areas
6. Discussion
7. Next Steps



INTRODUCTION

City of Saint Paul

Parks and Recreation
David Ronzani | Project Manager
Anne Gardner | Supervisor
Katie Hamerlinck | Landscape Design Associate

Committee Members (listed alphabetically)

Britta Belden	Grant Cooper	Zach Mensinger
Theodore Budd	James Cowles	Dave Montgomery
Joni Chacich	Kevin Dahm	Christopher Tabisz
Dillon Clements	Amy Gage	Greg Williams
Allison Cole	Sasha Mackin	Han Zhang

Thank You For Being Here!



PROJECT OVERVIEW | 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 | GOALS

- Parks & Recreation:**
 - Plan will focus on reviewing and **improving the trail system** within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections 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.
 - **Goal:** Update Long Range Plan with changes for **adoption by Metropolitan Council**.

- Metropolitan Council:**
 - For a park agency to **receive a grant** for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a **Met Council-approved guiding plan**.
 - Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is **required** to have its own **guiding plan**.
 - Project Funding: Legacy Grant, Met Council - **\$150,000**



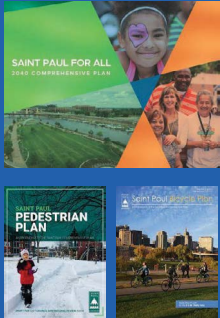
A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #3 | Meeting Presentation

PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

BIG IDEA

Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional park in Saint Paul. Our Long Range plan will impart clarity in wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycles traffic, improve safety and accessibility for all users, enhance lake water quality, and promote equity in design to provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably and reflect the evolving recreational interests and diversity of park visitors.



SAINT PAUL FOR ALL 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SAINT PAUL PEDESTRIAN PLAN

SAINT PAUL BICYCLE PLAN

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PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES


GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience and comfort.
- Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas,
- Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park.
- Design, program, and maintain to promote year round activity.
- Embrace and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends.
- Reduce barriers caused by financial, physical, language and perception issues.
- Provide interpretive elements to educate.
- Improve Wayfinding and Grand Round reinforcement and branding within the existing Como Regional Park wayfinding system
- Coordinate improvements with regulatory agencies, previous plans, and studies.


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PROJECT OVERVIEW | HISTORY

CULTURAL HISTORY



INDIGENOUS SETTLEMENT OF NORTH AMERICA






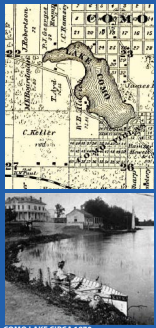
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PROJECT OVERVIEW | HISTORY

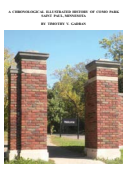

CULTURAL HISTORY



PARK PLAN FROM 1889-1890



COMO LAKE CIRCA 1870

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PROJECT OVERVIEW | CLARIFICATIONS

3 UNITS OF THE COMO REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM-

- Como Regional Park (Includes Como Pool)
- Como Zoo*
- Como Conservatory*

*Both Como Zoo and Como Conservatory are Special Recreation Features and require their own Long Range Plan.



Enterprise Facilities

- 2 enterprise facilities within Como Regional Park - Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields.
- Enterprise-fund recreation facilities include any facility that is expected to generate sufficient revenues to pay its own costs, such as golf courses, downhill ski areas, and water parks.
- These facilities are **not eligible for regional park funds** from the Council because enterprise-fund recreation facilities are expected to raise money for their development and operation in the same way as their private sector counterparts.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW | CLARIFICATIONS

PRIORITY WATERS -Lake Como is considered a Priority Water

- The Metropolitan Council developed the Priority Waters List to help sustainably manage Twin Cities metro area waterbodies.
- Waterbodies classified as Priority Waters have been determined to be regionally significant based on the benefits these waterbodies provide
- The benefits to the region are based on seven categories: **recreation and tourism, healthy habitat, drinking water protection, tranquil connection, equity, industry and utility, and science and education.**
- The Priority Waters List:
 - Guides Met Council allocates resources.
 - Provides a key lens for developing policies and activities to include in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan (2050 WRPP).
 - Offers insights to other organizations as they prioritize projects and spend their resources.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | UPDATE



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

114*
Surveys Complete
January close

715
Informed participants

337
Unique Pins

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | UPDATE

- MAY TO JULY COMPLETED OUTREACH**
- Como Park High School (2 visits)
 - Hmong College Prep Academy
 - German Immersion School
- EVENTS**
- Ice Cream Social- District 10
- ONGOING - Follow Up needed**
- Hmong College Prep Academy
 - German Immersion School
 - Indigenous
 - KOM
 - Metro Deaf School



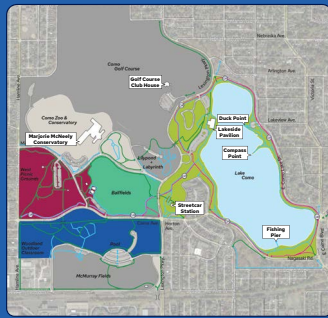
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | SUMMARY

- FEEDBACK SUMMARY**
- Education about the Grand Round
 - Attention to intersection crossings on E Como Blvd. and Lexington Ave.
 - Wayfinding needed west of Lexington bridge (Ballfield Area) and past Streetcar Station
 - Pickleball Courts
 - Consider programming winter programming such as Skijoring
 - Coffee Shop in the Pavilion and expanded hours
 - Update Golf Clubhouse with the ability to be set up as a wedding venue. Include restaurant at club house.
 - Provide access to lakeshore from pavilion
 - Reserve areas within the park as flexible unprogrammed green space
 - Community garden
 - Close E Como Drive to improve Pedestrian and bicycle paths
 - Add Drinking fountains and benches around the lake
 - Add sidewalk connection between McMurray fields parking lots.

DAC MEETING #2 | REVIEW

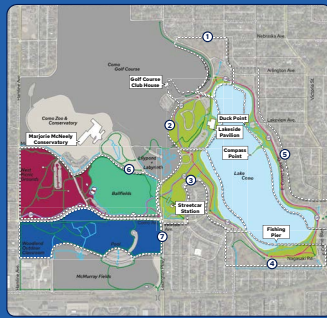
- ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENT RESPONSES:**
- Disc golf preferable instead of dog park
 - Bike pump track or skills park
 - Children's play area near pavilion
 - Drinking fountains with water bottle filling stations
 - Get rid of unneeded paved surfaces, such as former statue pads
 - Murals on the walls of the tunnel under train tracks along Lexington (like Dodge Nature Center)
 - Better secure bike parking
 - Be sure to align Grand Round w/ new Bike Plan
 - Organize/formalize community volunteer group for trail stewardship
 - Fitness areas with pull up bars, etc.
 - Replace grass with native gardens
 - Close golf course, repurpose as mountain biking area
 - Pavilion as warming area for ice skating in winter
 - Pickleball courts
 - Accommodation of different speeds of use – do we need separation/signage/consideration of different modes of transportation?
 - Addition of more native prairie, maybe near ballfields
 - Public Art
 - Playground near pavilion (maybe geared toward younger kids)

PROJECT BOUNDARY



- PROJECT AREAS**
- Lake
 - Ballfields
 - West Picnic Grounds
 - Woodland Outdoor Classroom
 - Special Recreation Features
 - Como Zoo & Conservatory*
 - Enterprise Facilities
 - Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*
- *Not-included or partially included in analysis
- PROJECTWIDE IMPROVEMENTS**
- Proposed changes for all areas within Specified boundary
 - Additional lighting
 - Improve crossings, improve ADA accessibility
 - Clarify path types and uses; implement two-way bicycle facilities
 - Trail and crossing improvements per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
 - Re-align and widen paths to make trail more accessible
 - Improve pavement conditions
 - Work with CRWD to update informational signage in restoration and stormwater treatment areas
 - Explore opportunities for stormwater BMPs and improved access to Lake. Coordinate with CRWD.

FOCUS AREAS | OVERVIEW



- FOCUS AREAS**
- ① Como Lake North
 - ② Lakeside Pavilion Area
 - ③ Historic Streetcar Station
 - ④ Nagasaki Road
 - ⑤ E Como Lake Drive
 - ⑥ Picnic Grounds
 - ⑦ Woodland Outdoor Classroom
- IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT**
- ① Improve Wayfinding
 - ② Provide Consistent, Inclusive Trails
 - ③ Implement Two-Way Bicycle Traffic Around the Lake per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
 - ④ Update Existing Park Amenities
 - ⑤ Improve Safety and Accessibility
 - ⑥ Improve water quality, manage stormwater, and restore shoreline per CRWD's Watershed Management Plan

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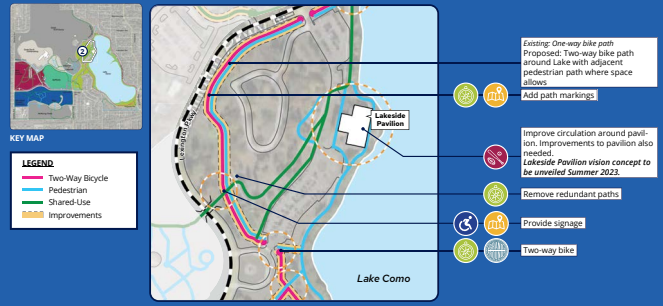
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FOCUS AREAS | COMO LAKE NORTH



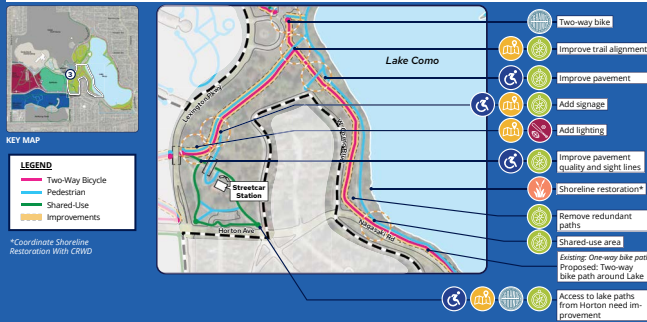
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FOCUS AREAS | LAKESIDE PAVILLION



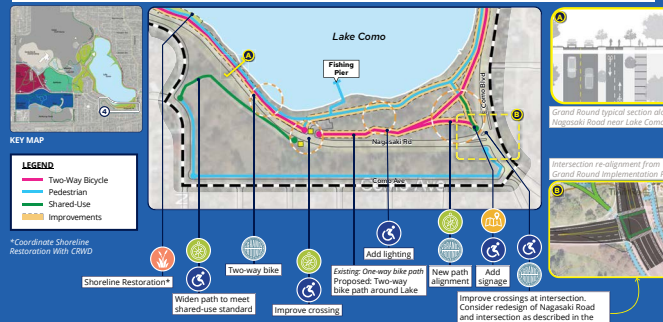
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FOCUS AREAS | STREETCAR STATION



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FOCUS AREAS | NAGASAKI ROAD



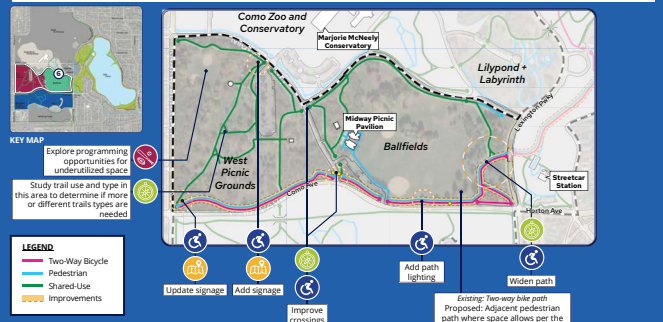
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FOCUS AREAS | E COMO LAKE DRIVE



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FOCUS AREAS | PICNIC GROUNDS

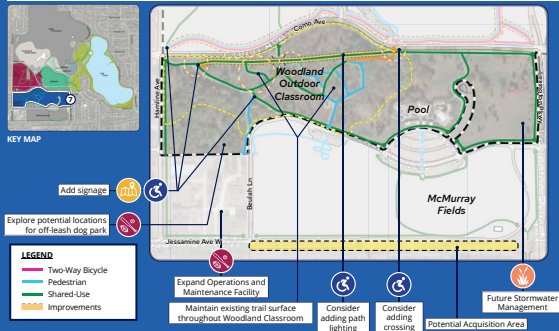


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FOCUS AREAS | WOODLAND CLASSROOM



GROUP DISCUSSION

• In your view, do Big Idea and Guiding principles describe the intent of the project?

NEXT STEPS

- Open House - August 2023 (tentative)
- Target for Long-Range Plan Adoption - December - June 2024


THANK YOU!

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

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A2. Design Advisory Committee

DAC Meeting #3 | Meeting Notes



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Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan | Design Advisory Committee Meeting # 3
Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: July 19, 2023
Meeting Time: 5:00-7:00 pm
Meeting Location: Como Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy N, Saint Paul, MN 55117

Committee Members Present
Britta Beldon (CRWD), Theodore Budd (resident), Allison Cole (resident), Grant Cooper (MnDOT), James Cowles (resident), Sasha Mackin (former president, Hamline-Midway Coalition), Zack Mensinger (St. Paul Bike Coalition), Dave Montgomery (resident), Christopher Tabisz (Twin Cities German Immersion School / resident)



Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Staff
David Ronzani (Project Manager), Anne Gardner (Supervisor), and Katie Hamerlinck (Landscape Architect)
Presentation was conducted with questions interjected throughout. Discussion points are grouped by topic for simplicity.


Introduction and Project Overview

- Introduce "Big Ideas" – what is driving this Plan?
 - Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional Park in Saint Paul. Our Long-Range Plan will identify and provide prioritization of projects that will clarify wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, improve safety and accessibility for all users, enhance lake water quality, and promote equity in design to provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably and reflect the evolving recreational interests and diversity of park visitors.
- Introduce Guiding Principles
 - Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience, and comfort
 - Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas
 - Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park
 - Design, program, and maintain to promote year-round activity
 - Embrace and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends
 - Reduce barriers caused by financial, physical, language, and perception issues
 - Provide interpretive elements to educate
 - Improve wayfinding and Grand Round reinforcement and branding within the existing Como Regional Park wayfinding system
 - Coordinate improvements with regulatory agencies, previous plans, and studies
- Cultural History
 - Discussion of Como Regional Park as Dakota homeland and its significance to the Dakota people in the past and in the present

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- Design team to continue process of understanding indigenous history and providing opportunities for interpretation and representation through planning process and design.
- European settlement, City acquisition of parkland
- Original park design by Horace Cleveland
- Other sources for historical information can be found on the District 10 website (<https://district10comopark.org/history/>), and on the City website regarding the Woodland Classroom (https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Parks%20%26%20Recreation/C_WOC_Guidebook.History_March2017.pdf).

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Question** – is there an active project working on integrating indigenous history and interpretation at Como Regional Park? **Response** – previous work has looked into history of Como and this can be listed as a future project to include. The City has done work throughout the system to interpret, include, understand indigenous culture and will apply to project work for the Como Area.
- Question** – has the design team been in touch with MIAC? **Response** – yes, the design team has been in touch with MIAC.
- Committee members can provide contact information for indigenous groups and individuals who may be able to provide additional information.


- Units of the Regional Park System
 - Special Recreation Features have their own master (long range) plans and are not included in this long-range plan. This includes the Como Zoo and Conservatory.
 - Enterprise Facilities fund their own activities and are not eligible for Met Council fundings. These are also not included in the long-range plan. This includes McMurray Fields and the Como Golf Course.

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Question** – are these areas (special recreation features and enterprise facilities) off limits for this project? **Response** – this long-range plan will not be proposing major changes in these areas, some small improvements may be allowed. For example, a sidewalk connection will be considered as part of this Plan. The design team will seek clarity from Met Council. Note: even if Met Council cannot provide funding for these improvements, other funding sources can be considered.

Community Engagement Update

- Engage Saint Paul website: not much traffic since last DAC meeting, website link was advertised at Ice Cream Social Event – people from this event may take the survey or visit the website in the coming weeks.
- Engagement with other groups:
 - Completed:
 - Como High School
 - Hmong Prep Academy
 - German Immersion School
 - Events:
 - District 10 Ice Cream Social



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- Ongoing – Follow-up needed:
 - Hmong Prep Academy
 - German Immersion School
 - Indigenous groups
 - Karin Organization of Minnesota
 - Metro Deaf School

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Lots of people don't know about the Grand Round – how can the City be more intentional about outreach?
- Lexington Pkwy is a barrier for use for school groups
- Wayfinding is needed
- Winter programming is important
- Desire for access to lakeshore from Pavilion (Lakeside Pavilion Vision coming this summer for public review)
 - Pavilion doesn't seem as busy or popular as other local park restaurants (Sea Salt at Minnehaha Regional Park)
- Updates to golf course clubhouse needed
- Ensure areas are reserved in Como Park for unprogrammed greenspace
- Site furnishings are needed around the lake (benches, drinking fountains, etc.)


Focused Map Analysis

- Como Lake North**
 - One-way/two-way trails are confusing
 - Proposal to provide clarity and align with Grand Round design standards (two-way bike traffic with adjacent, separated pedestrian sidewalk)
 - Connect spur on Lexington Pkwy to fill in gap in paths

*** Committee Discussion:**

- There are beautiful fragrant trees in this area – desire to protect these
- Add sidewalk that goes east of existing path 'stub' (east on E Como Dr.)
- Consider closing access of E Como to Lexington Parkway – It was suggested that Nebraska and other routes are sufficient for traffic needs.
- On-street parking is rarely used here (E Como connection to Lexington Area)
 - Staff will discuss this with PW as planning and design progress
- Trail crossings at North Pavilion parking lot are not as wide as trail - Improve crossing experience by matching curb cut to trail width for accessibility and safety.
- Vehicle access near the Pavilion was not done during the parking lot improvements – this area is in very bad shape and should be a priority.
- With new construction projects, include trail improvements to address crossings, trail wayfinding, and safety. Find ways to identify these issues ahead of a planned project so they are included.
- Discussion about crosswalks across Lexington Pkwy – coordination with District 10

- Lakeside Pavilion**
 - Circulation improvements proposed throughout this area
 - Consolidation of redundant trails



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- Improved wayfinding
- Continue Grand Round style trail (as space allows)
- Two-way trail exists in this area but does not have adjacent pedestrian path – study to determine best alignment for all uses.
- Add path markings to provide clarity

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Engagement – could signs with the website QR code be put up around the lake? This way people walking/biking around the lake could add comments as they are thinking of them
- Where will information about the Pavilion update to unveiled?
 - Council president Brendmoen is leading the visioning project – aiming to have August event at the Pavilion with concepts and renderings of ideas
 - Anne will relay information to the DAC – date, time, and location are still TBD
 - Project goals include more accessible restrooms, more welcoming to the public, more options for food and refreshments, etc.
- Desire to improve crossings where trail crosses the entrance to the parking lot
 - Drivers don't stop at the stop sign
 - Drivers coming from the parking lot are only looking for other cars coming from the roundabout, not for bikers and pedestrians.
 - Ideal for tables crossing here – more tactile and noticeable for drivers.
 - Include signage for drivers to watch for pedestrians/bikers

- Streetcar Station**
 - Two-way bikeway along lakeshore, attempt to keep pedestrian path close
 - Reduce redundant paths
 - Remove unnecessary impervious surfaces
 - Incorporate stormwater BMPs – new impervious surfaces will necessitate this

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Consider Grand Round trail continuing straight on Horton to meet up with Lake paths
 - Staff to study this area more closely
- Trail under bridge – very icy in the winter due to poor drainage
 - Could permeable pavers be considered in this area? Improvements to the bridge or area around path may be another solution.


- Nagasaki Road**
 - Continue Grand Round alignment. Potential for space within existing right of way to provide more space for updated bike/ped paths.
 - Steep slopes around lake – may need retaining wall
 - Pinch point – narrow area to fit pedestrian path, two-way bike path, and roadway
 - Lots of overstory trees here, makes it difficult to grow understory plants to stabilize slopes

*** Committee Discussion:**

- CRWD:

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DAC Meeting #3 | Meeting Notes



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- o Lakeshore Management Plan – long term plan for CRWD – management of resources, Considerations include runoff, habitat, providing shading to water and pedestrians
- o Trees being removed this winter, more invasive removals coming over the next few years
- o Vegetation inspection in this area happening now
- o Ecosystem types have been determined for each section of shoreline, more information coming soon.
- o CRWD working with the City this fall on seeding and plantings along the shoreline
- o Fall 2024 – stormwater outfall project happening – 18 of 31 pipes that drain into the lake will be replaced
 - Largest impacts will be near eastern parking lot
 - Impacts to paths and lakeshore
 - Erosion control will be important
 - Project will impact entire lake
- o Timing of this Plan should be considered with timing of CRWD project
- o Question about CRWD project requiring road closure?
 - Most likely, on south side of lake
 - Will E Como Blvd be closed? Timing of this would be helpful to monitor how this impacts traffic patterns during non-pandemic times.
 - Trail detours will be important for people bike-commuting
- o Largest improvements will most likely take place in late fall (balance of lower water levels and lighter traffic)
- o Suggestion to widen pedestrian path around 'the wedge' – this is heavily used by people in the neighborhood.
- o Roadway (Nagasaki) could change
 - If roadway is reduced, it would be challenging for bikers to share the road with drivers
 - Could do an "enhanced shared lane" – staff to discuss this with Public Works
- o Eliminate slip lane at intersection
- o Could a roundabout be considered here?

- **E Como Lake Drive**
 - o Consider closing the road here
 - o Benefits would include water quality improvements, bike/ped. safety, and shade opportunities.
 - o Analysis/study required to determine feasibility.
 - o Grand Round alignment (two-way bicycles adjacent to separate pedestrian path)

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Include sidewalk connection south of dotted line at the top of the map
- Triangle at NE feels like a forgotten space
 - o Could add signage, furnishings, amenities here
- CRWD outfall repair occurring in this area
- Major goal of the lakeshore plan is to formalize and stabilize information paths



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- o Potentially using boulders to provide better access to the lake and reduce erosion (similar to Lake Nokomis)
- o Select more heavily used points for these improvements; close off less used access points
- o Funding is available for this project
- Will swimming ever be available in Lake Como?
 - o Lake is shallow – likely full of aquatic plants
 - o Most of the water comes from stormwater
 - o No beach or lifeguards currently
 - o In terms of water quality – this lake is perfectly safe, the main water quality issue is phosphorus which is not harmful to health (although it can cause harmful algae blooms).
- Can dog waste bags be put around the lake?
 - o Probably not, management of these is difficult
- **Picnic Grounds**
 - o Continuation of Grand Round
 - o Ballfields are underutilized – this is an item that will be brought up with the TAC to determine the best use for this space.
 - Disc golf, dog park, pickleball, are potential uses
 - o More study of the trails around the picnic grounds is needed
 - Many of these trails don't have clear beginnings or endings and wayfinding is difficult.
 - o Provide crossings where necessary.
 - o Include pedestrian lighting along Como Avenue per Grand Round Implementation Plan.
- **Woodland Classroom**
 - o Woodland classroom has its own long range plan
 - o Clarify wayfinding and signage.
 - o Long range plan looks to acquire area of land south of Jessamine, north of train tracks for future uses, such as additional parking space.
 - o Future stormwater management areas within this area.
 - o Maintain open, unprogrammed space here

*** Committee Discussion:**

- Can trees grow on stormwater BMP areas?
 - o Depends on the BMP type, but often not. Trees can make access and maintenance difficult for equipment and roots can sometimes be harmful to infrastructure.
- Desire for sidewalk on Beulah – would provide necessary connections.
- Additional pedestrian bridge over train tracks leading to Beulah would be nice – would lead to schools and other destinations
 - o Challenging to coordinate combined infrastructure with railroad
 - o Staff to review Bike Plan draft and coordinate with proposed bike routes

*** Committee Discussion – General comments:**



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- Make paths wider, separate modes, improve crossings, close E Como Lake Dr – these ideas are priorities and support first guiding principle
- Accessibility improvements are needed throughout the park
- Putting porta potties throughout the park during the pandemic made parks more useable year-round – consider restrooms for increased use
- If paths could be designed to make plowing easier, more paths could be plowed (bike and pedestrian)
- 'WELCOMING' is missing from guiding principles
 - o Como Park is one of the friendliest parks
 - o There is something for everyone here
- Additional bike parking is missing from plan
 - o Identify location for bike parking that makes sense with traffic patterns
 - o Secure bike parking is important
- Desire for more seating with sun protection, especially near Pavilion
- People like to hang out at the dock but it's difficult for people to use
- Picnic tables are heavily used – it is obvious that people want to be in these spaces.
- Create spaces where people want to hang out for a long time
- Park needs more drinking fountains
- Water fountain (decorative) in roundabout is nice, but not accessible, consider this during planning
- It is difficult to find out about events at Como Park. Each space has a separate website which is frustrating to use.

Meeting End: 6:45pm

Notes:

- Meeting minutes are intended to capture overall participation and summarize comments from City Staff and Advisory Member participants.
- Visit (stpaul.gov/como-regional-park-projects) for more information and presentation graphics

This document shall serve as the official record of the community meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Katie Hamerlinck via email at katie.hamerlinck@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation



PROJECT OVERVIEW - Como Long-Range 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

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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.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW - Long-Range 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.

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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.

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LOCAL 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)

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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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

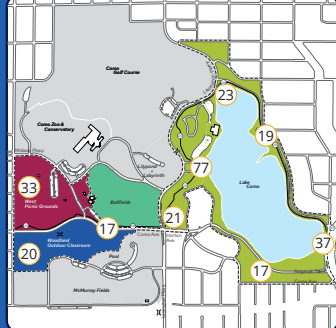
114 Surveys complete

549 Informed participants

278 Unique Pins

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COMMENT LOCATION- ENGAGEMENT



Frequent parkwide comments:

- Wayfinding/Signage
- Grand Round and Park Trail Improvements
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings
- New amenities
- New paths and connections

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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

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - DAC

DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE - Consists of **15 Community Members**.

- 3 total meetings over a 4 month period between February and June 2023.

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.

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.

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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?

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GROUP DISCUSSION - Priorities

PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED TO DATE:

- Improve path and trail wayfinding
- Update pathways to appropriate with for intended use.
- Provide 2 way bike and pedestrian circulation for Grand Round connecting pathways
- Improvements to circulation around the lakeside pavilion.
- Provide additional connections, fill in gaps within trail system.
- Expansion of Park Maintenance Facilities.
- Designate space for a dog park.
- Improve Pathway trail conditions.
- Provide safer trail crossings.
- On-site amenities such as restrooms and trash receptacles
- Shoreline and water quality improvements
- Add shade on the east side of the lake

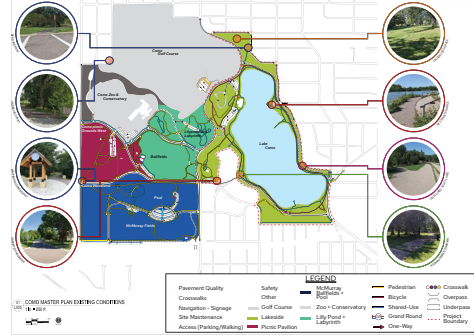
- Como Lakeside Pavilion Improvements
- McMurray Stormwater BMP
- Como Lake Storm Sewer Repairs

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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

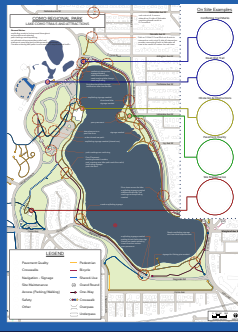
TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation

EXISTING CONDITIONS - Map Analysis



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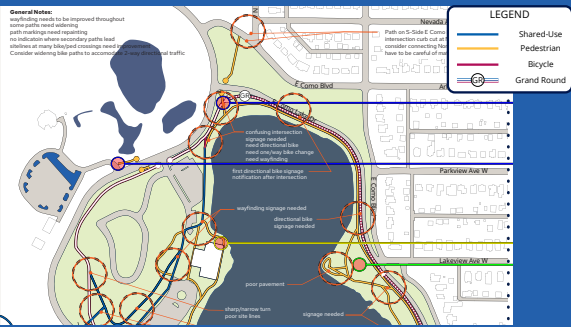
LAKE COMO - OBSERVATIONS



- Site lines and canopy improvements
- Additional lighting
- Amenity signage
- E Como Lake Dr and Maryland Ave intersection
- Path widths not suitable for use
- Conflicting bike trail markings
- Trail alignment geometry
- Additional wayfinding signage in shared-use areas

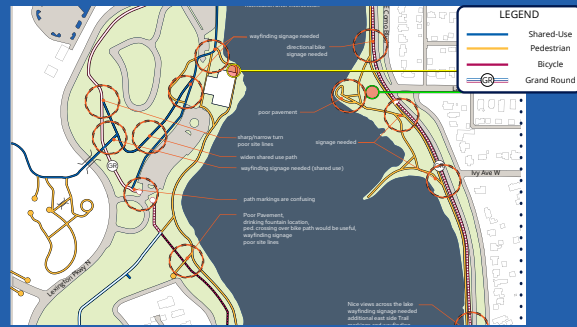
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LAKE COMO - NORTH



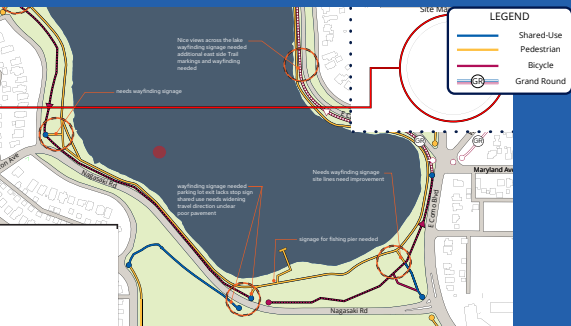
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LAKE COMO - PAVILION



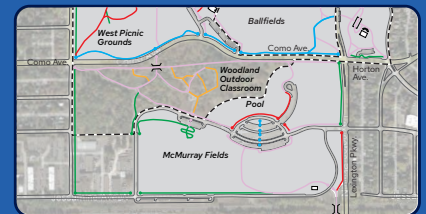
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LAKE COMO - SOUTH



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WOODLAND | EXISTING CONDITIONS

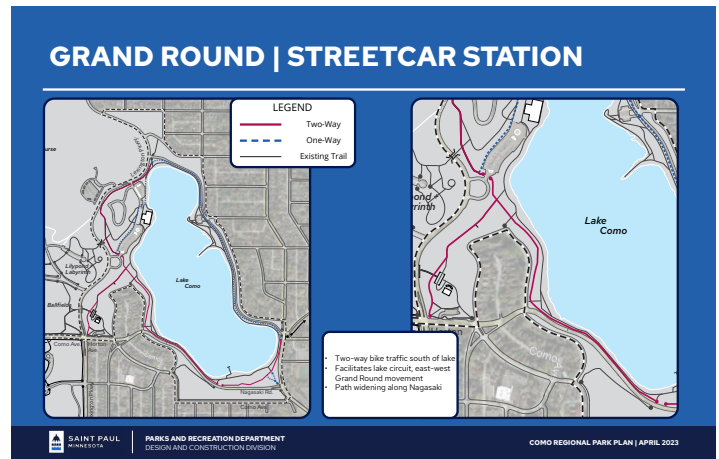
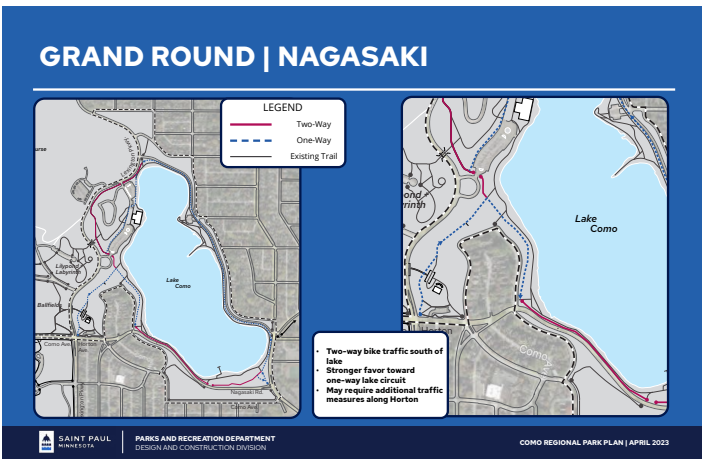
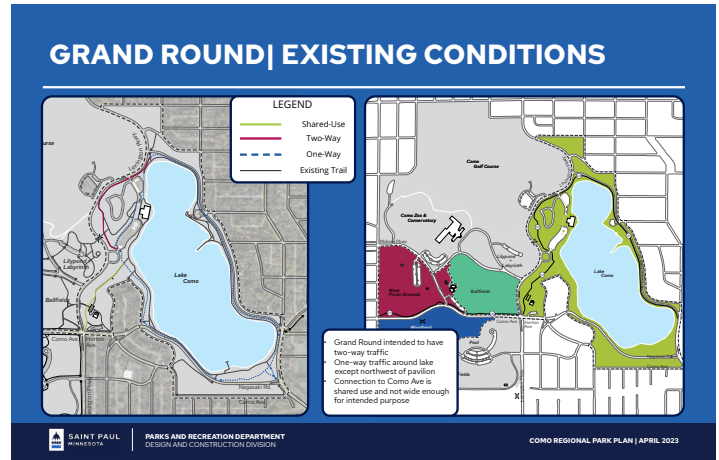
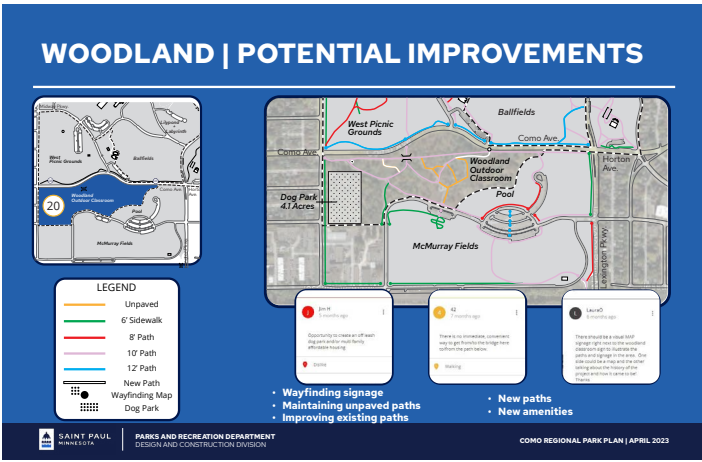


- Unpaved - gravel trails in outdoor classroom
- 6' Sidewalk - typical concrete city sidewalk
- 9' Path - asphalt, less frequented routes of travel
- 10' Path - asphalt, most common width interior park path for pedestrians, acceptable for shared-use
- 12' Path - asphalt, often striped for two way bike use

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TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Presentation



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GROUP DISCUSSION - Priorities (Revisited)

PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED TO DATE:

- Improve path and trail wayfinding
- Update pathways to appropriate with for intended use.
- Provide 2 way bike and pedestrian circulation for Grand Round connecting pathways
- Improvements to circulation around the lakeside pavilion.
- Provide additional connections, fill in gaps within trail system.
- Expansion of Park Maintenance Facilities.
- Designate space for a dog park.
- Improve Pathway trail conditions.
- Provide safer trail crossings.
- On-site amenities such as restrooms and trash receptacles
- Shoreline and water quality improvements
- Add shade on the east side of the lake

WHAT ARE WE MISSING?:

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT- DAC

- DAC Meeting #2 - Review previous meeting, discuss focus areas, wayfinding signage, concept #1 - May 9, 2023
- TAC Meeting (TBD)
- 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




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TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Notes



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Como Long-Range Plan Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1- Meeting Notes
Meeting Date: April 27, 2023
Meeting Time: 3:00-4:00pm
Location: Virtual – Microsoft Teams Meeting

Committee Members Present: Michelle Furrer (Como Zoo and Conservatory), Nick Fadden (Building & Trades), Tom Hagel (Operations), Tyler McKean (Partnership Agreements), Susie Odegard (Como Zoo and Conservatory), Adam Robins (Environmental Coordinator)


St Paul Parks and Recreation Staff: David Ronzani (Project Manager), Anne Gardner & Max Sell

Presentation was conducted with questions interjected throughout. Presentation topics are numbered while discussion items are shown using bullet points. Discussion points are grouped by topic for simplicity.


- 1. Welcome**
 - Meeting Goal: Provide project overview, discuss priorities sourced from community engagement, solicit feedback from TAC on community identified priorities, items missing from previous engagement.
 - Future Meeting date is tentative for the month of May. Will take place between DAC Meetings #2 (May 9th) and #3 (July 11 tentative).
 - TAC assembled as group of city staff who know Como Park to higher level of detail than Parks and Recreation presenting project
- 2. Project Overview – Como Long Range Plan**
 - Met Council requests updating every 20 years. Last updated was in 1984 (39 years, adopted 1987).
 - \$150,000 available funding
 - Project Goal: Improve trail system around Como Lake, articulate connections to Grand Round, and identify other amenities to be included on site.
 - Community engagement to be conducted through Summer, with a December target for adoption of Long-Range Plan.

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- 3. Project Overview – Project Goals**
 - Improve connections between trails – improve pavement quality, widen trails to meet intended usage, update trail wayfinding signage
 - Simplify navigation around lake – codify two-way bike traffic around southern portion; clarify one-way bike, two-way bike, and shared use trails through signage and other trail markings; provide wayfinding tools at points of decision making such as trail intersections.
 - Equity component – enabling people of all ages races, ethnicities, incomes, abilities, and communities to share in the opportunities and challenges of growth and change. As a Regional Park we are required to reach out beyond immediate community, aiming to secure voices from those who travel from further neighborhoods or beyond the border of St. Paul.
- 4. Project Overview – Long-Range Plan Process**
 - Clarification: Met Council has recently changed name from Master Plan to Long-Range Plan. Plan materials are in the process of being updated to reflect the preferred nomenclature.
 - Though there is currently no known need for land acquisition related to this project, any definition of specifics for acquisition and operation of current facilities should be included in this plan.
 - Reiteration of equity component, our need to connect with all residents of the city, providing a platform to contribute to ultimately offer recreation options for all to enjoy within the park
- 5. Regional and Local Connections**
 - Grand Round – Como regional park is a part of the grand round with direct connections on the east and west side of the park. It sits top at the top and center of the Grand Round network, comprised of:
 - 27.0 miles of Scenic Parkways
 - Connects outdoor landmarks (Lake Phalen, Lake Como, Mississippi River, over a dozen parks)

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- Grand Round – Movement through Como Park is a large part of the Grand Round experience, though its movement is constrained within the park, following a counterintuitive path around the lake and an ambiguous connection to the West at Como Ave.
- Como has many trails and amenities already existing within its boundaries. Many of those paths are confusing, even to frequent visitors of the park.


- 6. Community Engagement**
 - Attend on and near-site community events, including St Paul (Bike) Classic and Harvest Festival at Tilden Park
 - Utilization of Engagestpaul website in conjunction with our .gov page. Acting as powerful tool and primary driver of sustained, accessible feedback from the community. Ability to source comments in real time without need to wait for next scheduled event.
 - Shared Map Your Thoughts tool – many of the dots/pins are active conversations between users around Como. Interesting to see what other people are thinking and how dialogue is positively constructed.
 - Working with a DAC. A list of the names of participants was shared with the TAC during the meeting
 - Working on targeted engagement as well, attempting to talk to people who don't normally participate in engagement events
- 7. Community Engagement Key Takeaways**
 - Sharing non-comprehensive list with areas of focus on encouraging exploration, walking, biking, crossings/intersections, traffic, and future amenities.
 - Safe navigation is the highest priority and what we've heard most through engagement efforts. People want to know where they are and where they're going. Signage and trail markings will aid visitors in orienting themselves at the park.
 - People want two-way biking around the lake and frequently ignore the intended circulation route. Paths should be widened where possible to service their intended uses.
 - Several additional ideas for the park have arisen, including a dog park, additional shoreline restoration around the lake, and a dialogue over whether charging or

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asking for donations to park a vehicle would improve visitors experience at the park.

- 8. Community Engagement – Design Advisory Committee**
 - 15 community members volunteered, signing up for membership through an application process – a second push using an easy to complete Microsoft form provided us with additional members. No applicants were turned away from inclusion on the committee.
 - Participants represent a wide range of backgrounds and interests
 - Members provide input on major design decisions and themes. They act as liaisons between Parks and Recreation and their respective communities.
- 9. Targeted Outreach**
 - Continue approaching underrepresented groups, participating in their spaces, and asking how we can serve them.
 - Always seeking additional recommendations or feedback on sourcing additional groups we have not yet identified.
- 10. Community Engagement – Priorities Identified to Date**
 - Priorities identified between community engagement efforts and DAC including:
 - Updates to existing path ways, including wayfinding measures, pavement widths and surface condition
 - Providing safer crossings where trails intersect vehicular routes of traffic, particularly at roads and parking areas
 - Two-way bike and pedestrian circulation around lake and Grand Round route
 - Filling in gaps within existing trail system
 - Parks staff includes current and future projects that may impact this plan, including McMurray Field stormwater BMP, Como Lake storm sewer repairs, and Como Lakeside Pavilion improvements

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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Notes



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11. Existing Conditions

- Map analysis- work will exclude golf course, zoo+ conservatory areas though connection to key entry points at golf course and zoo can be included
- Map breaks down Como into 5 major areas of interest (the golf course is not included) based on recommendations from District 10:
 - West Picnic Grounds
 - Como Outdoor Classroom/McMurray Fields
 - Como Lakeside
 - Lilypond and Labyrinth
 - Como Zoo & Conservatory

12. Lake Como Observations


- Notes from a recent site visit where he navigated around the lake are shared, with a few points of interest called to attention in areas to the north and south of lake, and near the lakeside pavilion. Points of attention included
 - Site line and canopy improvements along the southern portion of the lake
 - Additional lighting
 - Trail alignment geometry, refining sharp corners along bike trails
 - Points of conflict in intended traffic direction for bicycles
 - Additional wayfinding signage in shared-use areas

13. Woodland - Existing Conditions


- Examination of the woodland classroom is shared as a proof of concept and demonstrates the direction parks intends to examine the other areas of the park with the DAC at their upcoming meeting on May 9th.
- Long-Range plan is focused on area around lake and its connections to the Grand Round, but cannot exclude areas of large interest adjacent to areas designated by the design directive.

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14. Woodland Potential

- Suggestions taken from Community Engagement pins are applied to existing conditions of specific area, with intent to ask DAC members their thoughts on implementation.
- Dog park is shown for scale only, with no design for size and shape having been conducted. DAC members suggested a size comparable to other dog parks within our system (examples: 4.0-5.0 acres at High Bridge, Arlington/Arkwright, Meeker Island). The new dog park at Uñtí Makhá (0.3 acres) was identified as being too small.

15. Lake Como Existing Conditions and Improvements

- Draft images shared as further proof of concept
- Focus on bike and ped trails interaction at points of adjacency
- Parking area conditions around Duck and Compass Point
- Previous meeting with Public Works concerning the closure of E Como Lake Drive is mentioned, expanded upon in detail during group discussion.

16. Grand Round Existing Conditions and Improvements


- One-way trails along east and south sides of lake, with two-way traffic confined to area north of pavilion
- Arriving at Lake Como (from Maryland Ave on east side of park) the route of traffic becomes one-way, counterclockwise around lake. This is a counterintuitive movement as the shortest distance of travel is along south of lake.
- Transfer areas on West side of lake are examined, with entry/exits near the Historic Streetcar station and at the intersection of Nagasaki Rd and West Como Blvd. are reviewed in more detail.

17. Group Discussion - Priorities Revisited


- Michelle is curious about Frog Pond. Any path work there needs to be configured to avoid tents and other seasonal/occasional activities.
- Michelle expresses an interest in repairs for parking lot signs. One was hit by a car and no longer functions. Can those be included in a wayfinding or transportation plan such as this one?

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- Nick Fadden – Animal Control may move out of their building into space formerly occupied by Humane Society. The location where the dog park was shown [in the woodland classroom area] is used for material storage. Operations would like to keep as much vegetation as possible so as not create an eyesore by keeping their buildings screened from park users. Suggested the corner at Como Ave and Lexington for use as dog park.
- Anne Gardner asks if there is any land acquisition planned in the area?
- Nick and Tom Hagel say no land acquisition is planned. Tom asks if there is any desired or anticipated land acquisition on perimeter of park it should be included in this plan.
- Michelle asks where would people park to use the dog park?
- She also asks if Susie Odegard has experienced any issues with people attempting to bring dogs into the pool area?
- Susie replies yes, suggests keeping these amenities separated as much as possible so people are less inclined to attempt both activities.
- Tom asks if anyone knows where CRWD stormwater shed will take place? The stormwater BMP is planned near McMurray fields and would likely have impacts on the dog park were it moved to that location.
- Dave Ronzani asks the committees opinion on the trail west of Lexington along the north of the golf course – can it be connected to the existing trail spur connecting the north pavilion lot to the west side of Lexington?
- Tyler McKean responds that a short sidewalk along the drive from the existing spur toward the clubhouse would be ideal, but wonders about the advantages/disadvantages of connecting to the north trail insofar as it brings non-golf traffic closer to the course and the hazards of the sport. Is there sufficient reason to direct them to the west side of Lexington?
- Susie suggests we speak to our partner Foursome (operates golf course) as she is concerned about pedestrians being hit by golf balls. She discourages bringing more people to that side of Lexington.
- Dave reiterates that a connection here would make sense as there is no other direct route for peds or cyclists to take north out of the park.

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- Dave brings up the idea of a soft course track for running. His impression that the course is gravel or some other non-paved material. From a maintenance perspective, is this idea worth exploring?
- Nick responds that his concern is these create desire paths, which have uneven elevations to adjacent paths which create tripping or other hazards. He is unsure how to incorporate these into the surrounding area and believes we may be unable to fit an additional track within the footprint we're examining, particularly along the east side of the lake.
- Dave reintroduces the topic of closing E Como Lake Dr, which has come up in both DAC and other Community Engagement sessions. He is unsure how far we will get with that in this process though acknowledges that the idea has been around for awhile and is backed by District 10. He asks if there are any concerns related to maintenance or programming related to that action, or if it is more of a Public Works/ Transportation concern?
- Michelle suggests spending a summer Saturday on E Como Lake Dr to observe traffic flow. This sentiment is echoed by Susie. They see this as a road that is used frequently during large summer events and are concerned its closure would have negative implications.
- Tom thought Public Works was looking at the idea during COVID closures. Michelle counters that park amenities were closed during this time and that traffic flows were not reflective of their averages during regular use. Using these counts would not be a fair estimation of traffic.
- Tom responds that this conversation is a great way in to fixing pathway issues on the east side of the lake. Closing the roadway would solve a lot of operational issues.
- Anne concurs and states that the closure would allow for more pedestrian and bike traffic around the lake. Additionally, it would provide more space for water treatment. Introducing new green space along the lake edge is supported by CRWD. Our next steps are to perform a new traffic count now or in summer in order to help us understand what the possibilities here are. She notes there is a directly parallel redundant road to the north of E Como Lake Dr and thinks that if it could be rebuilt to service high traffic volumes we could satisfy ped/bike users of the park without much alteration to existing traffic patterns.

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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #1 | Meeting Notes



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION
ANDY RODRIGUEZ, CPRP, DIRECTOR

City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Tel: 651-266-6400

- Adam Robins also shares his support for the closure of E Como Lake Dr.

18. Next Steps

- Plan to meet again following second DAC meeting scheduled for May 9th. DAC will have two more meetings concluding in July.
- Anne adds a project idea, mentions she walked around lake with CRWD who are preparing signs for installation there. Looking at east side parking lot, the area needs renovation work, including paving material improvements, parking lot pavement rehabilitation, and additional lakeshore planting.
- We should have the Long-Range Plan adopted in just over a year with funding to follow, likely 3-5 years out.

Meeting End: 4:00 PM


Notes:

1. Meeting minutes are intended to capture overall participation and summarize comments from City Staff and Advisory Member participants.
2. Visit (www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/como-regional-park-trail) for more information and presentation graphics.

This document shall serve as the official record of the community meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Max Sell via email max.sell@ci.stpaul.mn.us by 5/3/2023

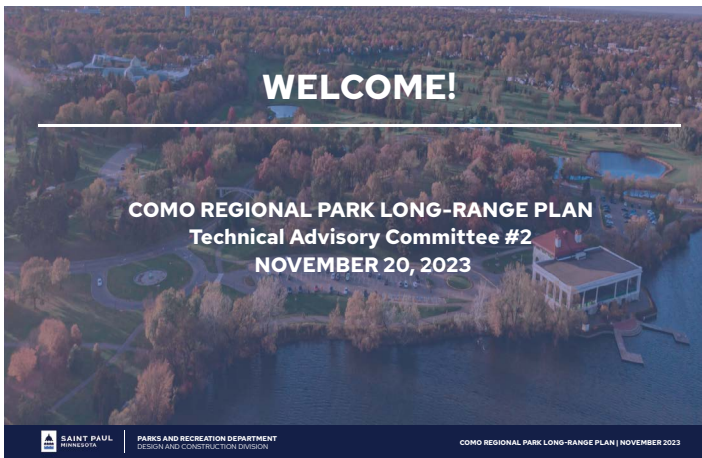
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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation



TODAY'S AGENDA

1. Introduction | 2 min
 2. Project Overview | 10 min
 3. Community Engagement | 10 Min
 4. Focus Areas | 30 min
 5. Group Discussion | 30 min
 6. Project Next Steps | 8 min
- SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA | PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION | COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | NOVEMBER 2023

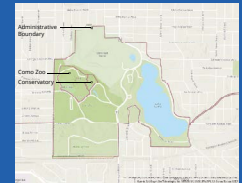
PROJECT OVERVIEW | LONG-RANGE PLAN

- The **Metropolitan (Met.) Council** is the regional policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. The 17-member board guides the strategic growth of the metro area.
 - A **Long-Range Plan** is a conceptual planning document that **provides a framework** for design to guide future growth, development, and maintenance of a space.
 - The project will serve as an **update** to the current "Como 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.
- SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA | PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION | COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | NOVEMBER 2023

PROJECT OVERVIEW | CLARIFICATIONS

3 UNITS OF THE COMO REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM

- **Como Regional Park (Includes Como Pool)**
- **Como Zoo***
- **Como Conservatory***



*Both Como Zoo and Como Conservatory are Special Recreation Features and require their own Long Range Plan.

Enterprise Facilities

- 2 enterprise facilities within Como Regional Park - Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields.
 - Enterprise-fund recreation facilities include any facility that is expected to generate sufficient revenues to pay its own costs, such as golf courses, downhill ski areas, and water parks.
 - These facilities are **not eligible for regional park funds** from the Council because enterprise-fund recreation facilities are expected to raise money for their development and operation in the same way as their private sector counterparts.
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PROJECT OVERVIEW | CLARIFICATIONS

PRIORITY WATERS -Lake Como is considered a Priority Water

- The Metropolitan Council developed the Priority Waters List to help sustainably manage Twin Cities metro area waterbodies.
- Waterbodies classified as Priority Waters have been determined to be regionally significant based on the benefits these waterbodies provide.
- The benefits to the region are based on seven categories: **recreation and tourism, healthy habitat, drinking water protection, tranquil connection, equity, industry and utility, and science and education.**

THE PRIORITY WATERS LIST:

- Guides Met Council allocates resources.
 - Provides a key lens for developing policies and activities to include in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan (2050 WRPP).
 - Offers insights to other organizations as they prioritize projects and spend their resources.
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PROJECT OVERVIEW | GOALS

Parks & Recreation:

- Plan will focus on reviewing and **improving the trail system** within Como Regional Park, particularly around Como Lake and its connections to **Saint Paul's Grand Round** trail network.
- **Clarify** pedestrian, bicycle and mixed-use **routes** throughout Como Regional Park. Improve Safety and Accessibility for all users.
- Identify and prioritize additional **amenities** for **future inclusion** within Como Regional Park.
- **Goal:** Update Existing "Como Master Plan document" with changes for **adoption by Met. Council.**

Metropolitan Council:

- For a park agency to **receive a grant** for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a **Met Council-approved Long-Range Plan.**
 - Each regional park, regional trail, park reserve, and special recreation feature is **required** to have its own **Long-Range Plan.**
 - Project Funding: Legacy Grant, Met Council - **\$150,000**
- SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA | PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION DIVISION | COMO REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN | NOVEMBER 2023

A3. Technical Advisory Committee

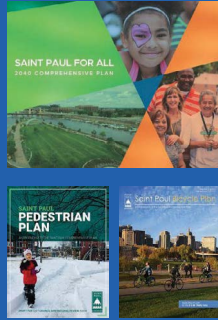
TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

PROJECT OVERVIEW | BIG IDEA

BIG IDEA

Como Regional Park is the largest, most visited Regional park in Saint Paul. Our Long Range plan will:

- Impart clarity in wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycles traffic,
- Improve safety and accessibility for all users, enhance lake water quality, and
- Promote equity in design to provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably and support the evolving recreational interests and diversity of park visitors.



PROJECT OVERVIEW | GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Update trail system emphasizing safety, accessibility, convenience and comfort.
- Promote the ecological function of open space and unprogrammed areas,
- Improve the environmental sustainability and resiliency of Como Regional Park.
- Design, program, and maintain to promote year round activity.
- Welcome, embrace and integrate emerging cultural and recreation trends.
- Reduce barriers caused by financial, physical, language and perception issues.
- Provide interpretive elements to educate.
- Improve Wayfinding and Grand Round reinforcement and branding within the existing Como Regional Park wayfinding system
- Coordinate improvements with regulatory agencies, previous plans, and studies.



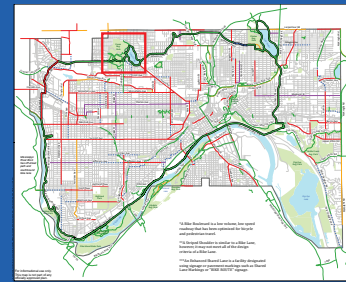
Image Credit: West St. Paul Reader June 11, 2023

PROJECT OVERVIEW | 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 Golf Course Master Plan
- And MANY more.



PROJECT OVERVIEW | CONNECTIONS



Saint Paul 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

Saint Paul Grand Round

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

PROJECT OVERVIEW | 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)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | METHODS



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

A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | EQUITY

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.**



Equity - Ensuring every voice has equal opportunity to share.

Targeted Engagement:

- Schools
- Organizations
- Events
- Ongoing

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | TAKEAWAYS

RECOMMENDED PROJECT	PRIORITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve trail connectivity, including connecting Como Lake North to Lakeside Pavilion and other park features. Improve trail connectivity to Lakeside Pavilion and other park features. Improve trail connectivity to Lakeside Pavilion and other park features. Improve trail connectivity to Lakeside Pavilion and other park features. Improve trail connectivity to Lakeside Pavilion and other park features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Medium Low Low Low
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TECHNICAL ENGAGEMENT | TAC #1

DISCUSSION REVIEW FROM TAC #1

Frog Pond

- Any path work needs to avoid tents and other seasonal/occasional activities.

Signage

- Parking lot signs

Potential of Land Acquisition

Dog Park

- Potential location
- Parking

CRWD Stormwater Project Location

- Connecting Trail West of Lexington by Golf Course
- Advantages/disadvantages

TECHNICAL ENGAGEMENT | TAC #1 cont.

DISCUSSION REVIEW FROM TAC #1 CONTINUED

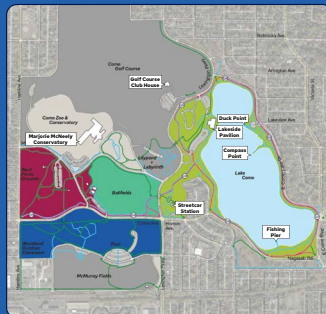
Soft Course Running Track

- Maintenance, space, and safety concerns

E Como Lake Drive

- Weekend Event Traffic concerns
- Would be a positive for operations, environmental/water quality, pedestrian and bicycle,
- Supported by CRWD, District 10
- Updated traffic count and further analysis planned

PROJECT BOUNDARY



- PROJECT AREAS**
- Lake
 - Ballfields
 - West Picnic Grounds
 - Woodland Outdoor Classroom
 - Special Recreation Features
 - Como Zoo & Conservatory*
 - Enterprise Facilities
 - Como Golf Course and McMurray Fields*
- *Not-included or partially included in analysis.
- PROJECTWIDE IMPROVEMENTS**
- Proposed changes for all areas within Specified boundary
 - Additional lighting
 - Improve crossings, improve ADA accessibility
 - Clarify path types and uses; implement two-way bicycle facilities
 - Trail and crossing improvements per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
 - Re-align and widen paths to make trail more accessible
 - Improve pavement conditions
 - Work with CRWD to update informational signage in restoration and stormwater treatment areas
 - Explore opportunities for stormwater BMPs and improved access to Lake. Coordinate with CRWD.

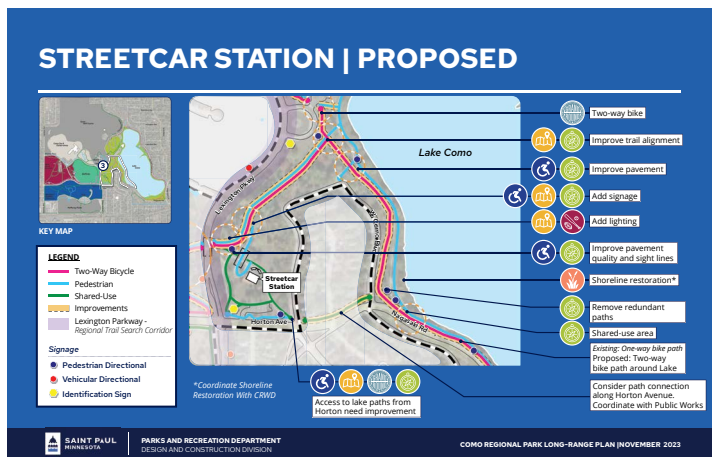
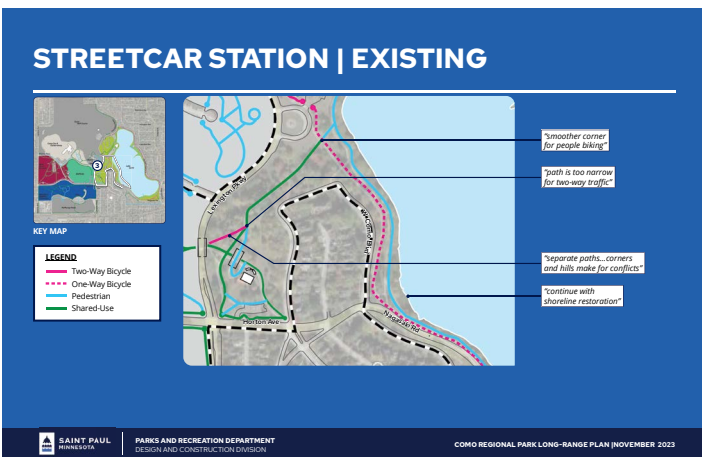
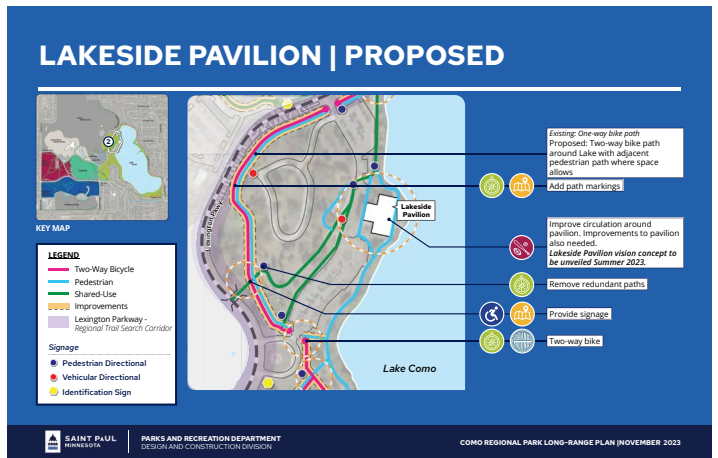
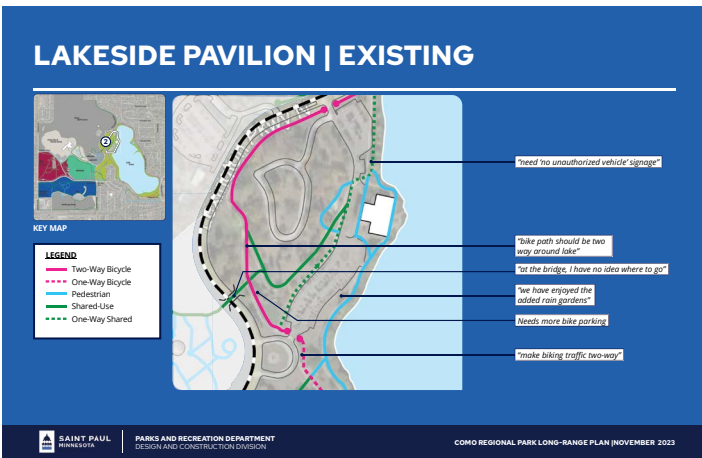
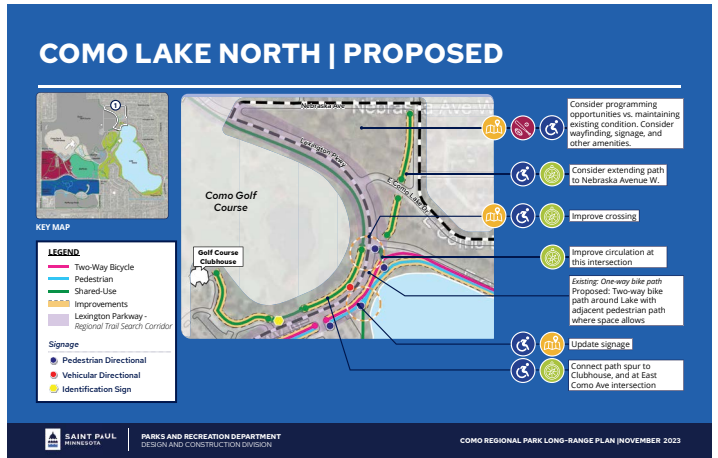
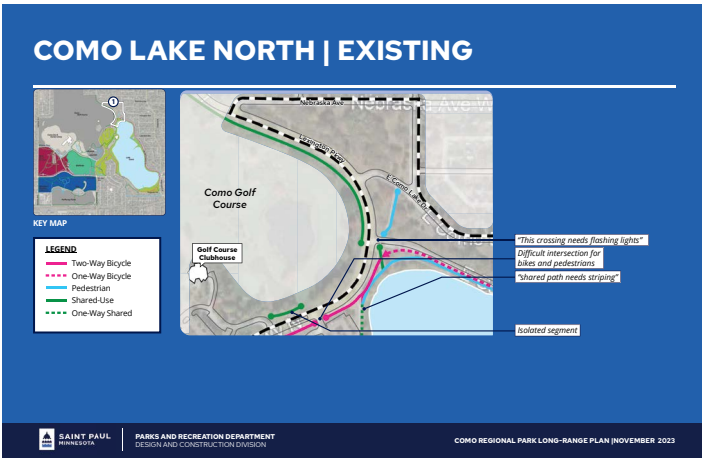
FOCUS AREAS | OVERVIEW



- FOCUS AREAS**
- Como Lake North
 - Lakeside Pavilion Area
 - Historic Streetcar Station
 - Nagasaki Road
 - E Como Lake Drive
 - Picnic Grounds
 - Woodland Outdoor Classroom
- IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT**
- Improve Wayfinding
 - Provide Consistent, Intuitive Trails
 - Implement Two-Way Bicycle Traffic Around the Lake per the Grand Round Implementation Plan
 - Update Existing Park Amenities
 - Improve Safety and Accessibility
 - Improve water quality, manage stormwater, and restore shoreline per CRWD's Watershed Management Plan

A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation



A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

NAGASAKI ROAD | EXISTING

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

Signage

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicle Directional
- Identification Sign
- Historic Specialty Plaque

Annotations:

- "path too narrow for extended use"
- "continue with shoreline restoration"
- "traffic calming needed this side of Como"
- "avoid this area due to lack of light"
- "bikers ride here, please pave this path"
- "southern path needs ability to head west"

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NAGASAKI ROAD | PROPOSED

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

Signage

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicle Directional
- Identification Sign
- Historic Specialty Plaque

Annotations:

- "Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD"
- "Grand Round typical section along Nagasaki Road near Lake Como"
- "Intersection re-alignment from Grand Round Implementation Plan"
- "Add lighting"
- "Improve crossing"
- "Widen path to meet shared-use standard"
- "Improve crossings at intersection. Consider redesign of Nagasaki Road and intersection as described in the Grand Round Implementation Plan"

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E COMO LAKE DRIVE | EXISTING

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

Signage

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicle Directional
- Identification Sign

Annotations:

- "one-way bicycle route often used as two-way, resulting in conflicts"
- "low point contributes to seasonal flooding on walkway and road; causes unsafe conditions and shoreline erosion by outlet"
- "directional and wayfinding signage needed around parking lots and trails"
- "parking lot in poor condition"
- "informational signage in need of updates"
- "paved pathways around Duck and Compass Points in need of repair"
- "this side of the lake is always too hot. Can we add shade?"
- "Complicated crossing for bikes and pedestrians"

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E COMO LAKE DRIVE | PROPOSED

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

Signage

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicle Directional
- Identification Sign

Annotations:

- "Coordinate Shoreline Restoration With CRWD"
- "Shoreline restoration, update storm structures, consider adding fishing pier."
- "Resurface parking lot, improve signage in and around parking lot."
- "Multi-use path"
- "Improve pavement conditions of pedestrian routes"
- "Existing: One-way bike path Proposed: Two-way bike path around Lake"
- "Add trees"
- "Work with CRWD to update information signage in restoration and stormwater treatment areas"
- "Improve crossings at intersection. Further study needed regarding potential closure of East Como Drive. Study needed to explore: full closure, partial, or modification of this route to improve water quality, non-motorized circulation, and safety at the intersection."

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PICNIC GROUNDS | EXISTING

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

Signage

- Pedestrian Directional
- Vehicle Directional
- Identification Sign

Annotations:

- "turn unused fields into dog park"
- "good site for history kiosk"
- "road crossing dangerous for cyclists"
- "these are dangerous crossings for ants and cyclists"
- "separate walking and biking trails here"
- "path lights along this stretch"
- "Explore programming opportunities for underutilized space"
- "Study trail use and type in this area to determine if more or different trail types are needed"
- "Update signage"
- "Add signage"
- "Improve crossings"
- "Add path lighting"
- "Widen path"
- "Existing: Two-way bike path Proposed: Adjacent pedestrian path where space allows per the Grand Round Implementation Plan"

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PICNIC GROUNDS | PROPOSED

KEY MAP

- Two-Way Bicycle
- One-Way Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Shared-Use
- Improvements

LEGEND

- Two-Way Bicycle
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Signage

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Annotations:

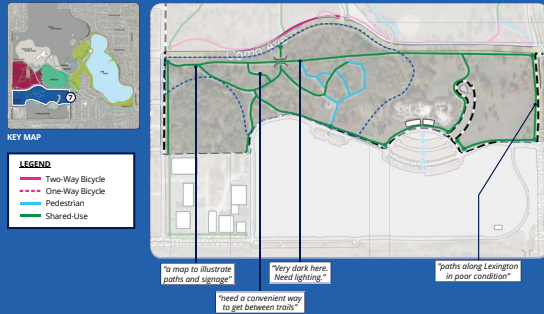
- "Explore programming opportunities for underutilized space"
- "Study trail use and type in this area to determine if more or different trail types are needed"
- "Update signage"
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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

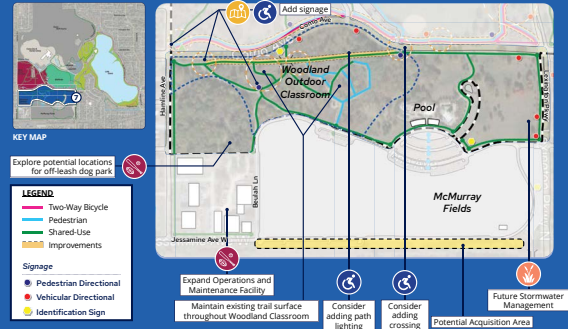
TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Presentation

WOODLAND CLASSROOM | EXISTING



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WOODLAND CLASSROOM | PROPOSED



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CROSSINGS: TABLED CROSSINGS



Along Wheelock Pkwy, Tabled Crossings Are Frequently Used along the Grand Round

Introducing A Tabled Crossing Requires Close Consideration Of Physical Constraints On Site, Including:

- Drainage
- Utilities
- Sight Lines
- Operating Speeds
- Sag And Crest Curves
- Maintenance Needs

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CROSSINGS | RRFBS



What Are RRFB's?
Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons (RRFB) Are **Visibility Enhancements** Used To Improve Safety At **Marked Crosswalks**.

Agencies **Shall**:

- Avoid **Overuse** Of RRFBs As It May **Diminish** Their **Effectiveness**.

Agencies **Shall Not**:

- Use RRFBs Without The Presence Of A Crossing Warning Sign.
- Use RRFBs For Crosswalks Across Approaches Controlled By Yield/ Stop Signs Or Traffic Control Signals.

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GROUP DISCUSSION

- What are your questions/concerns about the project?
- What focus areas would you like clarification on?
- What could use further consideration/analysis?
- What should be considered priorities?
- What's missing?

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PROJECT NEXT STEPS

- Complete LRP Draft Document for review
- Begin Plan Approval Processes
 - Parks and Recreation Commission
 - Transportation Committee
 - Saint Paul City Council
 - Metropolitan Council
- **Long-Range Plan Adoption**
 - December - June 2024



Engagestpaul.org/
como-trail-master-plan



Como Regional Park Long Range Plan Project Website:
stpaul.gov/como-regional-park-projects

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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Notes

Como Long-Range Plan Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 – Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: November 20, 2023

Meeting Time: 9:00-10:30am

Location: Virtual – Microsoft Teams Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Michelle Furrer (Como Zoo and Conservatory)
 Nick Fadden (Building & Trades)
 Tom Hagel (Operations)
 Tyler McKean (Partnership Agreements)
 Susie Odegard (Special Services)
 Adam Robins (Environmental Coordinator)
 Shaina Abraham (Recreation Services)
 Reuben Collins (Public Works)
 Anton Jerve (PED)
 Randy Newton (Public Works)
 Jimmy Shoemaker (Public Works)

St Paul Parks and Recreation Staff:

David Ronzani (Project Manager)
 Anne Gardner
 Katie Hamerlinck

Presentation was conducted with questions interjected throughout. Presentation topics are numbered while discussion items are shown using bullet points. Discussion points are grouped by topic for simplicity.

1. Introductions

- TAC Members
- Project Staff

2. Project Overview

- Long-Range Plan: conceptual planning document, providing a framework for future growth, development, and maintenance of the Park
- Met Council requires Long-Range plans are updated every 20 year
 - Last update for Como Regional Park was done in the 1980s
- Units of the Regional Park System
 - Regional Park (includes Como Pool)
 - Special Recreation Features
 1. Como Zoo
 2. Como Conservatory
 - Enterprise Facilities
 1. McMurray Fields
 2. Golf Course
- Lake Como – considered priority water (Metropolitan Council)
 - Regionally significant based on the benefits this water bodies provides
- **Project Goals:**
 - Improve trail systems particularly around Lake and its connections to the Saint Paul Grand Round
 - Clarify routes and uses for all modes; improve safety and accessibility for all users
 - Identify additional amenities for future inclusion in the park



- **Goal:** update existing “Como Master Plan” with changes for adoption by Metropolitan Council.
- **Metropolitan Council:** for a park agency to receive funding for acquisition or development, the proposed project must be consistent with a Met Council-approved long-range plan.
 1. Project funding: \$150,000
- **Big Idea**
 - Clarify in wayfinding
 - Improve safety and accessibility
 - Promote equity, provide amenities that can be maintained sustainably and support evolving recreational needs
- **Guiding Principles**
 - *Guiding principles can be found in presentation slides*
- Previous Park studies – many previous studies and plans within Como Regional Park will guide and/or complement this long-range plan
- **Connections**
 - Saint Paul has 214.6 miles of bikeway; the trails within Como area an important piece of the city’s connected network
- 4.6 million visitors to Como Park in 2021 (Met Council)
 - Question for Michelle – how are visits calculated (4.6 million per year)?
 - Met Council does counts in regional parks every year
 1. Factors in special events and events
 2. Uses formula to estimate year round visits for each regional park entity

3. Community Engagement - Updates

- **Methods**
 - On-site and neighborhood event
 - Engage St Paul website
 - Surveys
 - Pin Map
 - Site Signage
 - Advisory Committees
 - Targeted Engagement
- **Equity**
 - Targeted engagement: Schools, organizations, events, ongoing
- **Takeaways**
 - Priorities – still collecting responses from community members.
 1. What are the priorities of the TAC?
- Review from previous TAC meeting
 - **TAC priorities/Public works priorities**
 1. Connection on Horton, Bike Plan update, Grand Round on south side of Lake
 2. E Como Lake Dr – potential closure – moving the needle on that conversation about the potential removal of that portion of that street



3. Will continue conversation in upcoming slides

4. Focus Areas

- Project Boundary and Project Areas – excludes special recreation features and enterprise facilities
- Project-wide Improvements:
 - *Project-wide improvement can be found in presentation slides*
- **Como Lake North**
 - Connect missing path on the west side of Lexington
 - Two-way to one-way bicycle traffic areas – very confusing
 - Lexington – regional trail search corridor
 1. Jimmy - This would be a very valuable connection to make for the bike network
 2. Ensure crossings for proposed paths are at intersections so cars can anticipate peds and bikes
 - a. Action Item- Add note to plan to align crossings and trails
 3. Neighbors in this area want more sidewalks and pedestrian connections for safety
 4. Add sidewalk along the south side of E Como Lake Dr in this area
- Lakeside Pavilion
 - Public Works would prefer the future trail along Lexington to be on the west side of Lexington.
 1. Action Item- Parks to consider adding a line along Lexington (west side)
- **Historic Streetcar Station**
 - Reminder that Lexington Pkwy is a County Rd – coordination with Ramsey County regarding modifications within the Lexington ROW will be required.
 1. Action Item- Parks staff to meet with County
 - Existing sidewalk along Horton Ave – make this a shared-use path for both peds and bikes
 - Future coordination with Public Works and Parks to look at roadway alignment – roads seems very wide, car traffic is fast
 - Opportunity for Park gateway in this area
- **Nagasaki Road**
 - Mention Safe Routes to School Plan in this area; review recommendations specific to the Como area
 1. Action Item- Include reference and plan in Como LRP
- **E Como Lake Drive**
 - Mixed feelings about closure of E Como Lake Dr. – would benefit ecological function of Lake and ped/bike safety, would create pressure points in other parts of the park (especially on high attendance days or for large events)



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A3. Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Meeting #2 | Meeting Notes

Meeting End: 10:36 AM

Notes:

1. Meeting minutes are intended to capture overall participation and summarize comments from City Staff and Advisory Member participants.
2. Visit (www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/como-regional-park-trail) for more information and presentation graphics.

This document shall serve as the official record of the TAC meeting and information shared. If there are additions or modifications that are required, please contact Katie Hamerlinck via email katie.hamerlinck@ci.stpaul.mn.us by 12/1/2023.

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
MELVIN CARTER, MAYOR
STPAUL.GOV

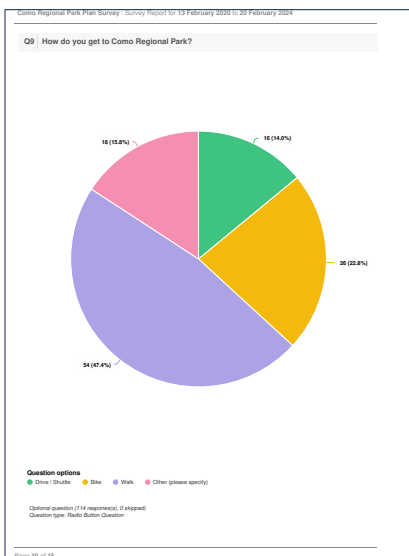
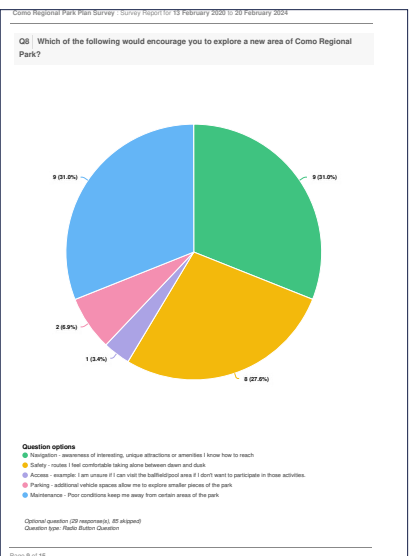
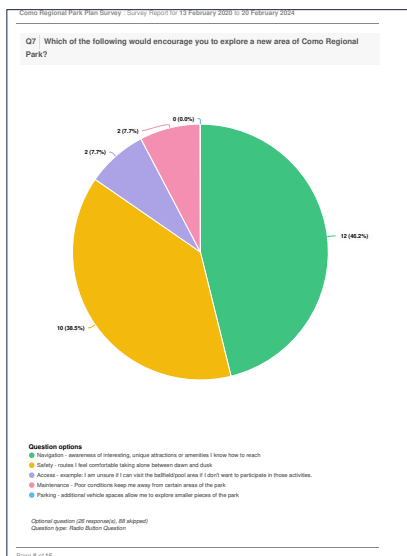
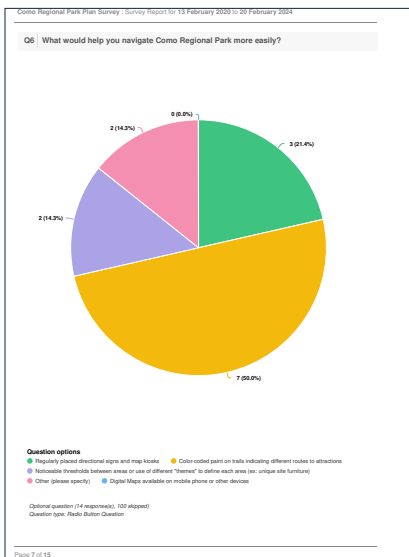
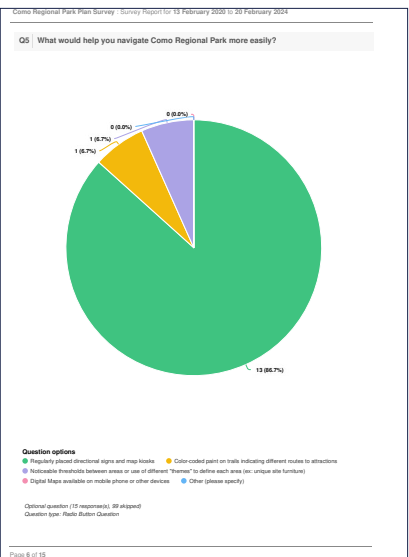
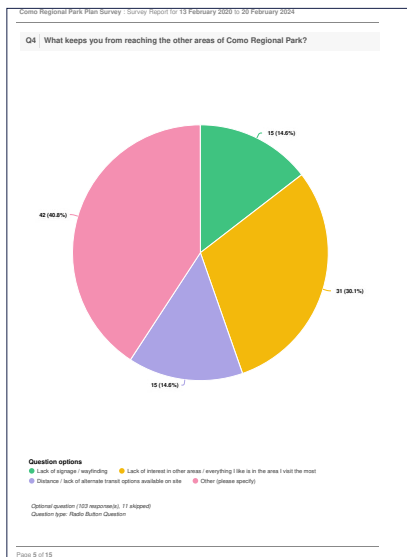
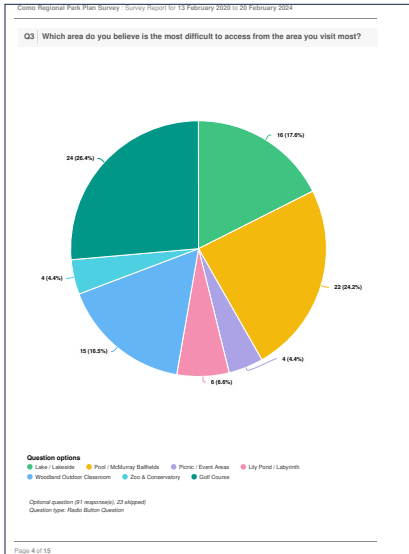
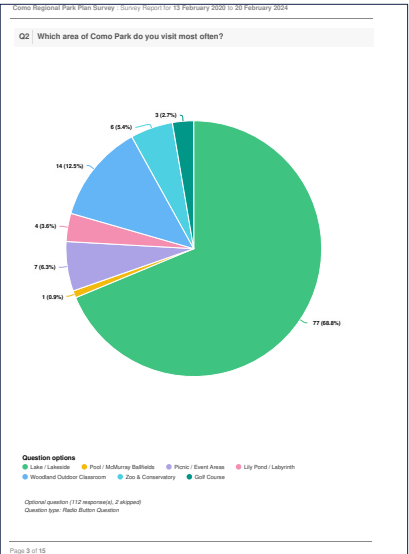
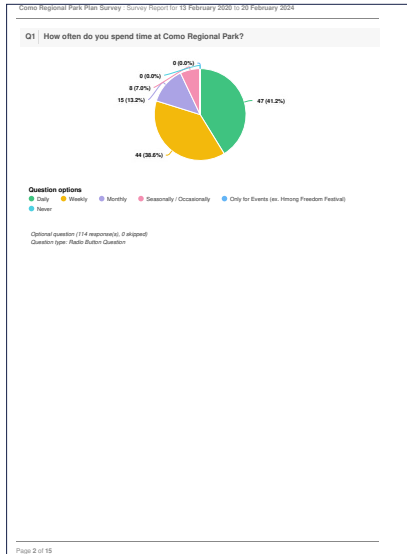
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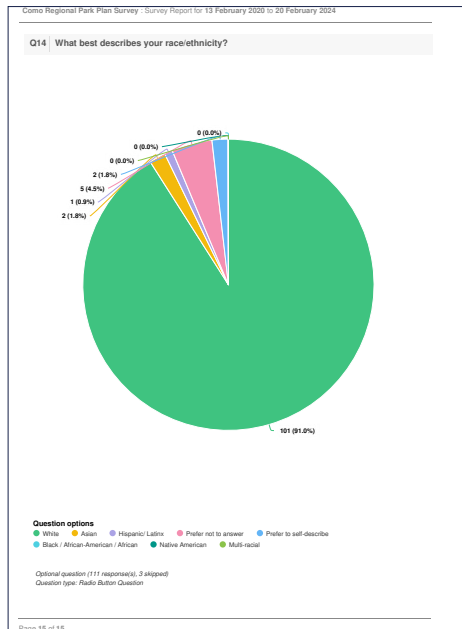
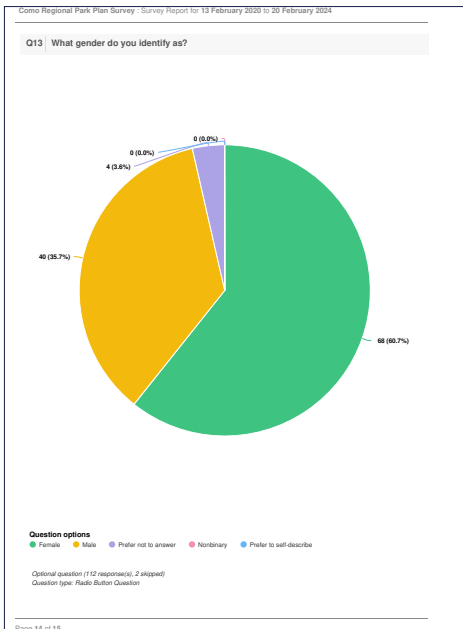
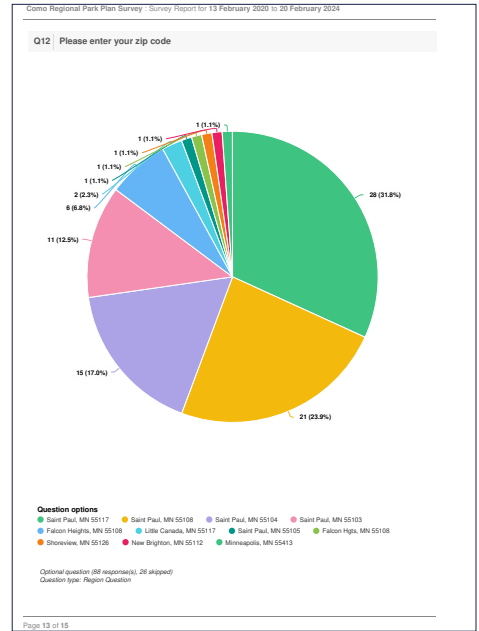
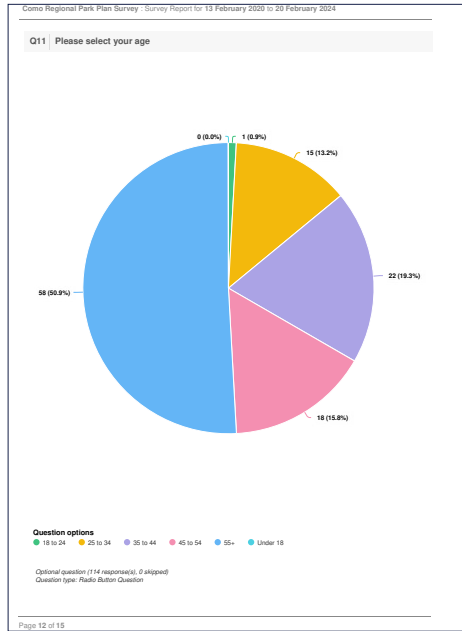
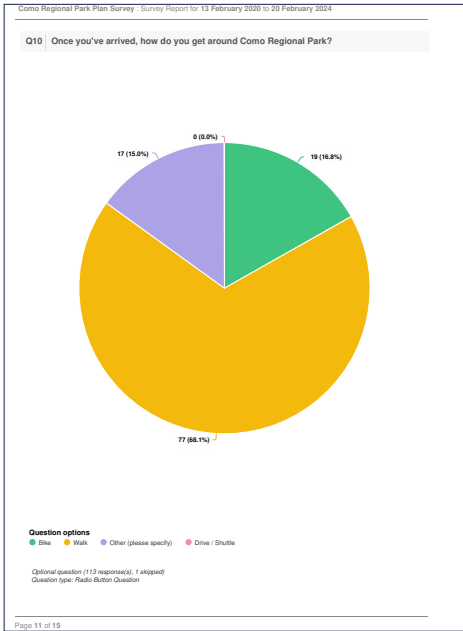
A4. Online Engagement

Survey #1



A4. Online Engagement

Survey #1



A5. MNDNR Rare Species Guide Search Results

Rare Species Guide: Filtered Search				
57 result(s) for:				
Locations : Ramsey County.				
Habitats: Mesic Hardwood Forest; Upland Prairie; Lowland Prairie; Lake Shore; Deep Water Zone of Lake; Littoral Zone of Lake; Marsh; Minnesota endangered; Minnesota threatened; Minnesota special concern.				
Common name	Scientific name	Group	Federal status	State status
A Jumping Spider	Paradamoetas fontanus	spider	none	special concern
A Species of Fungus	Psathyrella rhodospora	fungus	none	endangered
Acadian Flycatcher	Empidonax virescens	bird	none	special concern
Autumn Fimbray	Fimbristylis autumnalis	vascular plant	none	special concern
Beach Heather	Hudsonia tomentosa	vascular plant	none	threatened
Bell's Vireo	Vireo bellii	bird	none	special concern
Big Brown Bat	Eptesicus fuscus	mammal	none	special concern
Blanchard's Cricket Frog	Acris blanchardi	amphibian	none	endangered
Blanding's Turtle	Emydoidea blandingii	reptile	none	threatened
Butternut	Juglans cinerea	vascular plant	none	endangered
Canada Frostweed	Crocotanthemum canadense	vascular plant	none	special concern
Clinton's Bulrush	Trichophorum clintonii	vascular plant	none	threatened
Discoïd Beggarticks	Bidens discoïdea	vascular plant	none	special concern
Diverse-leaved Pondweed	Potamogeton diversifolius	vascular plant	none	endangered
Eastern Spotted Skunk	Spilogale interrupta	mammal	none	threatened
Few-flowered Spikerush	Eleocharis quinqueflora	vascular plant	none	special concern
Forster's Tern	Sterna forsteri	bird	none	special concern
Gophersnake	Pituophis catenifer	reptile	none	special concern
Handsome Sedge	Carex formosa	vascular plant	none	endangered
Hill's Thistle	Cirsium pumilum var. hillii	vascular plant	none	special concern
Iowa Skipper	Atrytone arogos iowa	insect	none	special concern
Jointed Rush	Juncus articulatus	vascular plant	none	endangered
Kentucky Coffee Tree	Gymnocladus dioicus	vascular plant	none	special concern
Kitten-tails	Synthyris bullii	vascular plant	none	threatened
Lake Sturgeon	Acipenser fulvescens	fish	none	special concern
Lance-leaf Violet	Viola lanceolata	vascular plant	none	threatened
Lark Sparrow	Chondestes grammacus	bird	none	special concern
Leadplant Flower Moth	Schinia lucens	insect	none	special concern
Least Darter	Etheostoma microperca	fish	none	special concern
Little Brown Myotis	Myotis lucifugus	mammal	none	special concern
Louisiana Waterthrush	Parkesia motacilla	bird	none	special concern
Mudpuppy	Necturus maculosus	amphibian	none	special concern
Narrow-leaved Water Plantain	Alisma gramineum	vascular plant	none	special concern
Northern Long-eared Bat	Myotis septentrionalis	mammal	endangered	special concern
Northern Sunfish	Lepomis peltastes	fish	none	special concern

A5. MNDNR Rare Species Guide Search Results

Obovate Beakgrain	Diarrhena obovata	vascular plant	none	endangered
Olive-colored Southern Naiad	Najas guadalupensis ssp. olivacea	vascular plant	none	special concern
One-flowered Broomrape	Orobanche uniflora	vascular plant	none	threatened
Plains Hog-nosed Snake	Heterodon nasicus	reptile	none	special concern
Plains Pocket Mouse	Perognathus flavescens	mammal	none	special concern
Plantain-leaved Sedge	Carex plantaginea	vascular plant	none	endangered
Pugnose Shiner	Notropis anogenus	fish	none	threatened
Rattlebox	Crotalaria sagittalis var. sagittalis	vascular plant	none	special concern
Red-shouldered Hawk	Buteo lineatus	bird	none	special concern
Regal Fritillary	Argynnis idalia	insect	none	special concern
Seaside Three-awn	Aristida tuberculosa	vascular plant	none	threatened
Slender Naiad	Najas gracillima	vascular plant	none	special concern
Small White Lady's-slipper	Cypripedium candidum	vascular plant	none	special concern
Spike	Eurynia dilatata	mussel	none	threatened
Swamp Blackberry	Rubus semisetosus	vascular plant	none	threatened
Toothcup	Rotala ramosior	vascular plant	none	threatened
Tricolored Bat	Perimyotis subflavus	mammal	none	special concern
Trumpeter Swan	Cygnus buccinator	bird	none	special concern
Tuberclad Rein Orchid	Platanthera flava var. herbiola	vascular plant	none	threatened
White Wild Indigo	Baptisia lactea var. lactea	vascular plant	none	special concern
Whitney's Underwing	Catocala whitneyi	insect	none	special concern
Yellow Pimpernel	Taenidia integerrima	vascular plant	none	special concern

A6. Letters of Support



District 10 Como Community Council
1224 Lexington Parkway North
Saint Paul, MN 55103
651.644.3889
district10@district10comopark.org
www.district10comopark.org

08/29/2024

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission (MPOSC)

cc: david.ronzani@ci.stpaul.mn.us, anne.gardner@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Re:

Support for Como Regional Park Long Range Plan

Como Community Council - District 10 is writing in support of the City of Saint Paul's Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan, a framework for development of a regional park that will serve the region and our evolving communities.

The Como Community Council Board voted August 20, 2024 to approve the following motion:

Moved: District 10 Como Community Council supports the Como Regional Park Long Range Plan and emphasizes the need for additional engagement before projects are implemented.

This plan identifies existing conditions and opportunities within Como Regional Park, and provides recommendations for prioritization of future projects at the Park.

District 10 serves the Como neighborhood of Saint Paul that surrounds Como Regional Park and frequently partners with the city and other community partners to coordinate community initiatives in and around the park, including four Como Lakeshore Cleanup events annually. Our office is also located at the Como Streetcar Station within Como Regional Park.

We shared notice in our weekly newsletters throughout the plan process as well as the opportunity for community members to attend our August 20 Community Meeting where David Ronzani from Parks and Rec was on hand to overview the plan and answer questions neighbors may have.

Interacting with Como neighbors, our work regularly identifies the need for improvements to safety, accessibility, paths, lighting, facilities, and natural resources in the park. Goals of this Plan include clarifying wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving safety and accessibility for all users, enhancing lake water quality, and promoting equity through design with the intent that the Park can be maintained sustainably and reflect the evolving recreational interests and diversity of Park visitors.

Our organization has also heard community concerns regarding some of the projects in the plan, including the Lakeside Pavilion and changes to East Como Lake Drive. As the plan states, we request additional earnest engagement and studies to be performed for plans if and when they are funded and begin to move forward.

We encourage the Metropolitan Council's favorable consideration for adoption of the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. Adoption of this plan will greatly benefit a unique regional and community asset by making it eligible for regional capital funding to construct improvements proposed in the Plan, and for regional operations and maintenance funding to operate all areas sustainably into the future.

Sincerely,

Shevek McKee
Executive Director
District 10 Como Community Council

A6. Letters of Support



August 26, 2024

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission:

This letter is to express deep gratitude to David Ronzani and his team for meeting with Metro Deaf School staff and helping gather feedback from Deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing staff and students. Often this group is not represented in focus groups. This was a wonderful opportunity for our school community to share how we use Como Regional Park and ideas for a long range plan. MDS uses Como Park in numerous ways and staff and students were happy to make suggestions and to show our commitment to our community and neighborhood.

After reviewing the draft of the proposal, staff and students were thrilled to see some of their ideas included in the proposal. We strongly support this long range plan for Como Regional Park. Metro Deaf School sees safety as the number one priority in addition to all the other ideas proposed. We feel it is vital for all visitors to be welcome and for Como to utilize universal design principles. MDS staff and students believe this plan provides inclusive ideas for the millions of visitors to the park. This will encourage everyone to feel safe, have access to wayfinding and maps, and have fun with family and friends while visiting the park.

If your council has any questions about Metro Deaf School's support of this project or to clarify ideas brought forth by students and staff, please do not hesitate to contact me at soutlaw@mdsmn.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan L. Outlaw
Executive Director

1125 Energy Park Drive
St. Paul, MN 55108

www.mdsmn.org

Videophone: 651-964-1630
Voice: 651-224-3995

A6. Letters of Support



Capitol Region Watershed District

595 Aldine Street
Saint Paul, MN 55104
(651) 644-8888 • capitolregionwd.org

August 23, 2024

Andy Rodriguez, Director
St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department
City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Email only

RE: Comment Letter on the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan – 100% DRAFT

Dear Director Rodriguez:

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) is grateful for the decades long partnership that our organizations have had working to improve Como Lake and the greater Como Regional Park. The Park with the Lake as its centerpiece is a tremendous asset to St. Paul and the Twin Cities Metro Area. Together we have been able to make strategic investments in projects that benefit our waters, the environment, and the people of our community. We are excited to think about the future as outlined in the draft Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. CRWD offers the following comments on the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan (100% Draft) below:

1. CRWD's Board President Joe Collins submitted a letter of support of the 90% Draft to Director Rodriguez on behalf of the District on April 17, 2024. This letter of support is for the 100% Draft and is in follow-up to the comments previously submitted in the 90% Draft letter of support.
2. We are very happy to see that much of the previous planning and analysis work CRWD has completed in Como Park and in/around Como Lake was considered in this planning process.
3. The visitation numbers (3.8–4.6 million per year) are impressive and justify a comprehensive long-range plan for the Park. Como Regional Park is a tremendous asset for the City and the Region.
4. We are encouraged to see Como Lake itself being prominent in the plan and also note that the vast majority of the survey respondents indicated they bike or walk around the lake. Given the public's enjoyment of the lake and park is directly tied to lake health, we appreciate you including our suggestion of adding to the 100% Draft a section on Como Lake in the Natural Resource Section that highlights the water quality and aquatic ecosystem improvements over the past several years. Additionally, we appreciate your adjustment to more prominently feature the Como Lake Management Plan (CLMP) that was adopted in 2019 in the 100% Draft. The CLMP provides a comprehensive approach to management and improvement of the Lake and is an important more detailed document to be referenced in long-range planning for the Park in general.

[Our mission is to protect, manage and improve the water resources of Capitol Region Watershed District.](#)

A6. Letters of Support

Director Rodriguez
August 22, 2024
Page 2

5. We are glad to see alignment of the Como Park Plan with CRWD’s Watershed Management Plan in 3 of the 7 Plan Approaches. This is an indication of our strong partnership in the past and into the future. Those 3 Plan Approaches being:
 - a. Ensure water quality, habitat management and environmental stewardship are incorporated into all Park projects
 - b. Design for climate resilience; plan for more severe weather events including extreme heat, flooding, and drought.
 - c. Plan for flexibility and anticipate change (Adaptive Management)
6. We note that in various places in the plan increasing and improving habitat and natural environment is listed as an objective, including increased trees. CRWD strongly supports the transition from turf grass to native vegetation in Como Regional Park in areas that won’t negatively impact park programming or use.
7. CRWD thanks you for adjusting the “Habitat Project C2” listed on page 66 (formerly page 60) to a “High Priority”. The McMurray Field Stormwater Project is the last regional system that is needed in the watershed of Como Lake. The health of Como Lake is so integral to the vitality of Como Regional Park we believe this needs to be a High Priority. Further, \$950,000 of state funding has been secured to help fund this project, making it a high priority in the short term.
8. CRWD also requested that the Plan include additional discussion on stormwater management opportunities in Como Regional Park, the importance of watershed management in improving and protecting Como Lake and operation and maintenance of existing and future stormwater management facilities. Thank you for including these additions in the 100% Draft per our request.

Thank you for the opportunity to have District staff serve as a Design Advisory Team member on this planning process and weigh in on the Como Regional Park Long-Range Plan. CRWD stands willing and ready to continue the partnership with the City of Saint Paul and others on potential future projects in Como Regional Park.

Sincerely,



Anna Eleria
Administrator

cc: *Alice Messer, Design and Construction Manager*
Anne Gardner, Lead Landscape Architect
Dave Ronzani, Project Manager, Landscape Architect