Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda (limited to 5 minutes)

IV. Approval of the Agenda

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

VI. Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan – Public Engagement Review
   (Lil Leatham – Planning Office)

VII. Park Ordinance – Review and comment
   (Steve Sullivan and Jeff Bransford – Parks)

VIII. Orange Line Study – Review and comment
   (Joe Morneau - Transportation)

IX. CDA Consolidated Plan – Review and comment
   (Maggie Dykes - CDA)

X. Update on County Board Actions/Projects
   • Accepted Met Council grant for Lake Byllesby Regional Park improvements

XI. Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>CSAH 78 Reconstruction Open House</td>
<td>Nov 25, 4:30pm-6:30pm</td>
<td>Castle Rock Town Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cliff Road (CSAH 32) Study Neighborhood Meeting</td>
<td>Nov 25, 5:00pm-6:00pm</td>
<td>Lebanon Hills Visitor Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cliff Road (CSAH 32) Study Open House # 3</td>
<td>Dec 3, 4:30pm-6:30pm</td>
<td>Lebanon Hills Visitor Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSAH 26 and CSAH 63 Reconstruction Open House</td>
<td>Dec 18, 5:00pm-7:00pm</td>
<td>Veterans Memorial Community Center Inver Grove Heights</td>
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XII. Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates

XIII. Topics for next meeting, Dakota County Western Service Center, December 19, 2019.
   • Dakota County Land Conservation Plan – review draft plan
   • Thompson County Park Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan - adoption

XIV. Adjourn
AGENDA ITEM: Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan Research and Vision Summary.

PURPOSE
Provide Planning Commission an opportunity to:
1. Review the research summary and community engagement highlights
2. Confirm key issues and opportunities
3. Discuss and provide input on the draft vision and guiding principles

BACKGROUND
The Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan process is occurring in four phases during 2019–2020: 1) Organization (summer 2019); 2) Research and Vision (summer–winter 2019); 3) Park Concepts (winter 2019–spring 2020); and 4) Preferred Concept and Plan (summer 2020–winter 2020).

The second phase of the project, Research and Vision, is complete. This phase included inventory and analysis of existing recreation activities, natural resources, cultural resources, community demographics, current recreation trends, and review of Dakota County Parks Systemwide plans to ensure consistency. Community engagement reached nearly a thousand participants and included stakeholder meetings, pop-up events at existing community events, and online input. An open house was held in the park on October 14, 2009. Effort was made to connect with demographic groups underrepresented in Dakota County Parks, including older adults, youth, Latinos, indigenous people, and people living with disabilities.

Key findings include:
- Spring Lake Park Reserve’s high-quality natural assets and unique cultural landscape present an opportunity to build on current park uses and provide visitors with signature, destination park experiences.
- There is a strong desire to enhance the park’s natural resources.
- Today, park visitors enjoy spectacular views of the Mississippi River Valley, bird and wildlife observation, events at the picnic shelter and the gathering center, archery, biking, hiking, and cross-country skiing.
- The park is part of the National Mississippi River Trail, within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, along the Mississippi River State Water Trail, and as part of the Regional Park System. This creates opportunities to attract visitors from across the region, state and beyond.
- Today, many Dakota County residents are unaware of Spring Lake Park Reserve and its offerings.
- Though the park is along the Mississippi River, there is limited physical access to the river.

ATTACHMENTS
1. Phase 1 Research and Vision
2. Phase 1 Community Engagement

QUESTIONS
The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

1. What key research findings stand out as important for guiding the development of plan alternatives in the next phase of the project?
2. Are there key issues and opportunities that are missing?
3. Do you feel the draft vision and guiding principles capture the unique qualities of this park? Do you feel they will serve as a foundation for development of the Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan? Do you have suggestions for changes or additions?
This summary outlines the findings of Phase 1: Research & Vision, initial Community Engagement outcomes, and identifies Issues & Opportunities from the Spring Lake Park Reserve master plan. The master plan update is guided by the 2008 Park System Plan, 2017 Visitor Service Plan, and the 2017 Natural Resource Management Plan. Drafts of the Natural Resource Overview, Cultural Resource Overview and the updated Vision and Guiding Principles for Spring Lake Park Reserve are also included for consideration by the Planning Commission.

CONTEXT
Spring Lake Park Reserve is one of the 56 regional parks and park reserves that make up the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Regional Park System. The park is located in the northeastern portion of Dakota County and on the south shore of the Mississippi River’s Spring Lake. Spring Lake Park Reserve is 1,200 acres and one of only five park reserves within a 20 mile radius (Murphy-Hanrehan, Lake Elmo, Hyland-Bush Anderson Lakes, Miesville). This designation of park “Reserve” signifies the rich ecological and cultural assets exhibited at the park. The interplay of the ecological, cultural, and scenic assets makes it one of the most unique parks in the regional system.

The park is located in the City of Rosemount and in Ninninger Township with the City of Hastings just to the east. Access from the north and south is US Highway 52 or State Highway 61 to Highway 55 and County Road 42.

In addition to its role as a regional park in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, Spring Lake Park Reserve is also a part of the broader state and national parks and trails system. Specifically, it is referenced as a destination within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area due to its natural history, cultural significance, wildlife watching, and family-friendly activities. The park is also situated along the southern most segment of the Mississippi River State Water Trail, from Minneapolis to Hastings. Maps for the Water Trail note the hazards of stumpfields and submerged logs along the stretch that borders Spring Lake.

At the national level, it hosts part of the National Mississippi River Trail section that passes through Minnesota. Of the 5 sections described in the National Trail, Spring Lake Park Reserve sits within the “Forest Floodplain” section where the river begins to lose its urban character, the bluffs get higher and the river widens. Dakota County has designated the segment of the national trail that runs through the county as the Mississippi River Greenway. The trail connects Spring Lake Park Reserve to the City of Hastings with existing connections to Red Wing. Once a remaining one-mile segment of the regional Greenway is completed, trail users will be able to connect with other regional trails in St. Paul. Planned future connections included Lebanon Hills and Whitetail Woods Regional Parks.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE
Spring Lake Park Reserve includes both historic vernacular landscapes associated with early EuroAmerican settlement, development of the town of Nininger, and local agriculture; and ethnographic landscapes associated with living Indigenous communities.

Significance is the meaning or value ascribed to a structure, landscape, object, or site based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. The National Register of Historic Places recognizes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that fulfill at least one of four criteria of significance and possess integrity. Although there are currently no portions of the study area that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this framework can be used to evaluate the potential significance and integrity of historic resources within the park.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT VERNACULAR LANDSCAPE
The McCarriel’s Mill site may be locally significant under Criterion A related to the local history of Nininger township. It is associated with early Euroamerican settlement patterns along the Upper Mississippi River, as well as the boom town of Nininger which existed within and adjacent to the study area. Following the decline of Nininger, the mill continued production under the McCarriel family until construction of Lock and Dam No. 2. The proposed period of significance associated with the McCarriel’s Mill Site is 1854 to 1932, beginning with construction of the mill and ending with its demolition following construction of Lock and Dam No. 2.

The McCarriel’s Mill site may also be significant under Criterion D. Due to the presence of extant and mapped historical structures at the mill site, it was estimated by a 2019 cultural resources literature review and assessment as possessing moderate to high potential to contain intact post-contact archaeological resources that may be associated with these structures and with the historical use of the site.

In addition, the entire study area has potential to yield archaeological information and therefore potential significance under Criterion D. There are seven archaeological sites associated with early Indigenous occupation within the study area, and one post-contact archaeological site. The presence of such a high concentration of archaeological sites, along with the location of the study area along the major water sources of the Mississippi River and Spring Lake, indicate that the study area possesses moderate to high potential to contain intact archaeological resources associated with Indigenous occupation and use.

Spring Lake Park Reserve also contains remnants of late 19th and early 20th century EuroAmerican agricultural development. These include a cluster of farm buildings dating from the early to mid-20th century at the former Schaar farm; a foundation possibly associated with the 1857-1858 Blakely property; a group of structures dating from the early to mid-20th century at the former Wasserman farm; an 1880 structure at the former Klink property; and a foundation associated with the former Hanner property. Individual buildings that are retained from this period have been disconnected from their agricultural context by park development and efforts to restore prairie and oak savanna vegetation, and do not appear to retain adequate integrity to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. However, these features have important local connections, and it may be appropriate to consider opportunities to preserve or adapt them to acknowledge the previous inhabitants and land use.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ETHNOGRAPHIC LANDSCAPE
Potential ethnographic significance of the landscape will be reviewed by Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of associated Indigenous tribes and nations for inclusion in the master plan update.

The landscape of Spring Lake Park Reserve is potentially culturally significant as a place where the ancestors of today’s associated Indigenous communities lived and are buried. It may also be significant as part of an area surrounding the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, Bdote, that has deep significance to many Dakota communities.

The Mississippi River valley was a regional center where people came together for ceremonies and events to reinforce communal ties and to forge alliances. “Bdewakantunwan Dakota elders tell of the creation of humans occurring in our homeland of Minisota Makoce, but specifically at the place called Maka Cokaya Kin, or the Center of the Earth. This place is at Bdote, which means the joining or juncture of two bodies of water and in this instance refers to the area where the Minnesota River joins the Mississippi. The significant area of the Bdote extends beyond the immediate area of the confluence, including the locations known today as Historic Fort Snelling, Mni Si (Coldwater Spring), Oheyawahi (Pilot Knob), Iminižaska, the white bluffs along the river upon which

1 106 Group, Ltd., Cultural Resources Literature Review and Assessment for the McCarriel’s Mill Site at Spring Lake Park Reserve, Dakota County Parks Department, 2019.
2 The term Bdote (also rendered as Mdote or Mendota, meaning “confluence”), is used by some Dakota groups to describe where the rivers meet. Documentation of the importance of the Bdote to Indigenous Peoples is part of the oral history of all four Minnesota Dakota communities. A list of published sources will be included in Chapter 3 of the Master Plan Update.
3 Dr. Chris Mato Nunpa, Phd and Dave Larsen, Dakota elder, Bdote Memory Map, bdotememorymap.org.
are numerous mounds (Indian Mounds Regional Park), and several other significant sites along the Mississippi and Minnesota river corridors.

The study area also has adjacencies to significant Indigenous historic village locations at Pine Bend and Grey Cloud Island, and the original location of Inyan Sa (Red Rock).

Traditional stories and the natural features of the landscape are mutually supporting as part of the existence of the culture of the Dakota; rather than a distinction between “natural” and “cultural.” The interconnectedness of everything is Mitakuye Owasin. This includes the land, earth, rocks, sky, rivers, animals, plants, ancestors, and living descendants. All are one together, not considered to be separate parts but one whole entity.1

The property is potentially eligible for National Register listing as a culturally significant site associated with indigenous communities. It is recommended that further guidance be sought from Minnesota Dakota communities and other potentially associated tribes to clarify this significance.

**SUMMARY SITE HISTORY**

**THE WATERS PROVIDE: INDIGENOUS OCCUPATION AND USE, CA. 10,000 BCE - CE 1847**

Humans have lived within the area that would become Spring Lake Park Reserve for thousands of years, supported by the rich resources of the river, forest, and prairie landscape. Understanding of this vast time period is drawn from the oral history of the living communities and extant important sites associated with their ancestors, as well as the remnants left behind in the archaeological record.

**ca. 10000–6000 BCE: PaleoIndian Period**

With the retreat of the glaciers, the climate became warmer and drier. By approximately 8,000 BCE, the ecosystem of southeastern Minnesota was dominated by forests comprised primarily of oak, maple, elm, and ash trees. Prairie expanded into east central Minnesota as the climate continued to warm over the next 2,000 years. By about 6000 BCE, the area now known as Dakota County was predominantly prairie, aside from river valley deciduous forests. Megafauna became extinct and were replaced by bison as the primary food source for local people.2

**ca. 6000–1000 BCE: Archaic Period**

After approximately 6000 BCE, the climate once again became wetter and cooler, leading to an expansion of the forest, which reached its approximate present-day extent between approximately 2500 and 1200 BCE. During this time, the people living in the region likely became more locally-oriented, taking advantage of the wide range of plant and animal resources in the region through hunting, gathering, and fishing.3 Within the study area, people were likely living in at least two locations, both situated on terraces overlooking Spring Lake.4 Archaeological sites associated with the Archaic Period include Lee Mill Cave, Bremer Village Site, and the Ranelius Site.

**ca. 1000 BCE – CE 1100: Woodland Period**

Over the next 1,000 years, people living in the region formed large, complex, and increasingly sedentary communities located along waterbodies. Agricultural practices developed and cultivation of wild rice intensified, supplemented by continued hunting, gathering, and fishing.

Archaeological investigations within the park suggest that there were two occupations during this period. The first occupation, between about 200 BCE and CE 300, appears to have been related to a cultural tradition referred to by archaeologists as “Hopewell Havana,” which is associated with the practice of mound building.5 The mounds within Spring Lake Park Reserve were likely constructed during the second period of occupation, between CE 300 and 1100.6 Archaeological sites associated with this period include the Sorg Site, Lee Mill Cave, the Ranelius Site, Bremer Mounds, and the Bremer Village Site.

**ca. CE 900-1650: Late Precontact/Oneota Period**

Archaeologists categorize occupants of the site during this period with the Oneota material culture. To members of today’s Chiwere Siouan speaking tribes, including the loway, Otoe, Missouria, and Winnebago, they are ancestors. Scholars and tribal elders indicate that these groups split from a common ancestor.7 During this period, people in this region lived in larger permanent settlements on terraces above rivers, supported by agricultural cultivation within the floodplain, particularly corn, beans, and squash, and animal resources such as fish and bison. Within the study area, sites associated with this time period appear to have been temporary encampments, rather than permanent settlements.8 Associated sites include Lee Mill Cave, the Hamm Site, the Ranelius Site, and the Bremer Village Site.

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2. Fleming et al., *An Archaeological Survey of Dakota County*, 37
7. Lance M. Foster, *The Indians of Iowa*.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

CE 1650-1847: Contact with Early EuroAmerican Settlers
Although not recorded within the study area, Dakota villages were located throughout the region during this time. Villages were generally situated near lakes and rivers to provide transportation and access to wild rice, and also moved seasonally to follow game animals and harvest winter plants.

By the late 1600s, French exploration and trading was common along the upper reaches of the Mississippi River. At the time of French contact, there were four primary Dakota groups within the region: Mdewakantons, Wahpekutes, Sissetons, and Wahpetons. In the 1830s, Dakota villages were established at nearby Grey Cloud Island and Pine Bend. The vegetation of the study area during this period would likely have been a mosaic of upland forest, savanna, and prairie on the bluff tops and slopes, with forest and wetland in the floodplain. The distribution of vegetation within the site depended on soils, topography, and especially fire, which is affected by topographic elements such as lakes, streams, and steep slopes that provide fire breaks. Fire was frequently used as a vegetation management tool by Indigenous peoples.

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1 Anfinson, River of History, 57.
3 Thompson Webb and Edward Cushing, Holocene changes in the vegetation of the Midwest, 162-163; and Gilbert Leisman, “The Vegetation of the Spring Lake Area,” in Spring Lake Archaeology, 1.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

THE LAKE RISES: EARLY EUROAMERICAN SETTLEMENT, CE 1847-1928

EuroAmerican settlers were drawn to the Spring Lake area due to financial opportunities provided by the Mississippi River as a power source for mills and transportation route for grain, lumber, and other goods. The first EuroAmerican settler at Spring Lake was Louis Belanger, who arrived in the late 1840s and built a log cabin on an island near the eastern end of the study area.\(^1\) Belanger was quickly followed by other land claims, and in 1854-1855 the Spring Lake Mill was constructed by Daniel W. Truax and John Blakely. After construction of the mill, the water level in Spring Lake rose, and would never be as shallow again as it was prior to 1855.\(^2\)

Land investors Ignatius Donnelly and John Nininger, capitalizing on a prime location along the Mississippi River, platted the City of Nininger in the eastern portion of the study area in 1856. Nininger grew quickly from 1856-1858, but despite its early commercial success, the city was short lived, and was considered a “ghost town” as early as 1860.\(^3\)

After the decline of Nininger, economic activity in Nininger township continued to be dominated by agriculture. Throughout this period, the Spring Lake Mill continued operation to process grain.\(^4\) Additional development within the area included rock quarries along the bluffs, a beer cellar and store, a line of the St. Paul Southern Electric Railway Company, and the Jeremy Sawmill (in location of Truax’s Mill).\(^5\)

Frustration resulting from unkept promises related to the Treaty of 1837 and treatment of Dakota people by the US

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6. The locations of these features have not been identified by the project team at this time.
Government and new settlers erupted into the US-Dakota War of 1862. In May of 1863, many Dakota were sent into exile, moving west to the plains and north to Canada. Beginning in the 1880s, small bands of Dakota returned to their homes in Minnesota.\(^1\) It would be several decades before the four Dakota communities in Minnesota (the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, the Prairie Island Indian Community, the Upper Sioux Community, and the Lower Sioux Indian Community) would be recognized by the Federal government. Accounts from the residents of Nininger Township suggest that Dakota people continued to live in the vicinity of Spring Lake into the 1890s, although no villages are recorded within the park boundary during this time.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Coleman and Camp, *The Great Dakota Conflict*; Gary Clayton Anderson and Alan R. Woolworth, *Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862*. This is a brief summary of complex events; for more information visit [http://www.usdakotawar.org/](http://www.usdakotawar.org/).


Agriculture continued as the dominant land use within the study area during this period. Primary agricultural use included inholdings, agriculture, and woodcutting. \(^3\) The Spring Lake Mill (McCarriel’s Mill) was abandoned and demolished shortly after the flooding.\(^4\)


CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

production shifted from grain to dairy in the 1940s. In 1942, Bud Josephs opened Bud’s Hunting and Fishing Resort on the south end of Spring Lake.

A series of archaeological investigations were conducted as part of the Spring Lake Archaeology Project from 1952 to 1956 by the Science Museum of Minnesota. Lee Mill Cave, the Sorg Site, the Ranelius site, Bremer Village, Bremer Mounds, and the Bud Josephs site were excavated as part of this project. The majority of site specific collections from Dakota County are curated at the Minnesota Historical Society. Comparable materials from Spring Lake are also known in the private collection of Kenneth Klink.

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE, CE 1973-PRESENT

Spring Lake Park Reserve was first proposed as a County park in the 1970 Dakota County Parks and Recreational Facilities Plan. Property acquisition for the new park began with the Carl and Dorothy Schaar property in 1973, and Park additions and boundary revisions continued through the 1970s and 1980s. The park was given regional designation in 1975, and the first master plan was developed in 1983. Following guidance from the 1983 master plan, the archery range and youth camp were constructed in 1993. In addition, Dakota County has undertaken extensive ecological restoration projects to preserve and reintroduce prairie and oak savanna on the bluff top throughout the length of the park. The Schaar’s Bluff Gathering Center was constructed in 2006. In 2017, the Mississippi River Greenway (MRG), a designated bicycle and pedestrian trail connecting along the Mississippi River, was extended through the length of the park.

Numerous archaeological investigations have been conducted over the past 40 years, including at Lee Mill Cave (1996), Bud Josephs Site (1995), Schaar’s Bluff and Sorg Site (2005), Ranelius Site (2010), Bremer Village (1996; 2011-2013; 2014), Bremer Mounds (2010), and the Spring Lake Park Bluff Site (2012).

1 Brauer and Associates, Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, 6.15.
2 Brauer and Associates, Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, 6.15.
3 Johnson and Taylor, ”Spring Lake Archaeology: The Lee Mill Cave.”
4 Fleming et al., An Archaeological Survey of Dakota County, 25, 73.
5 Brauer and Associates, Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, 2.1
6 Brauer and Associates, Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, 2.1; Memorandum, Dakota County Parks Director, May 25, 1976.
7 Brauer and Associates, Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, 2.1
9 URS, 2006
10 Fleming et al., An Archaeological Survey of Dakota County.
POTENTIALLY CONTRIBUTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES
Contributing features are elements of a landscape that date to the periods of significance and contribute to its historic significance. Potential periods of significance for the Spring Lake Park Reserve cultural landscape are:

- Vernacular landscape of McCarriel’s Mill Site: CE 1854 to 1932
- Ethnographic landscape associated with Indigenous occupation and use: ca. 6000 BCE to CE 1847 (to be confirmed through coordination with THPOs)

NATURAL SYSTEMS AND TOPOGRAPHY
Primary alterations to the natural systems and topography include quarrying operations that modified the edge of the bluff in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and cut and fill associated with the MRG. In addition, rising water levels have altered the relationship of the bluff and cliffs to the floodplain, expanding the extent of Spring Lake and inundating the marshes and island present before construction of the Spring Lake Mill in 1854 and construction of Lock and Dam No. 2 in 1930. Potentially contributing features include:
- Mississippi River
- Spring Lake
- Topography of bluff and floodplain
- Caves
- Springs

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION
It is possible that the Indigenous habitation and mound sites on the terraces above the floodplain had important proximity to and views over the river valley. The prominent orientation of the current park facilities to the MRG is departure from this historic organization, which would likely have emphasized relationships to the bluff and lake. This connection is also impacted by the encroachment of woody vegetation, which blocks visual connections to the water and sky. The spatial organization associated with Indigenous occupation and use will be discussed with THPOs over the course of the project.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

Spatial organization of the McCarriel's Mill site has been impacted by the demolition of the Mill building, addition of new structures after the end of the period of significance, and water levels that have risen since use of the Mill.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES
Documented archaeological sites within the study area are a physical manifestation of continued ties to living communities. Potentially contributing features include:
- Known and unknown village/habitation or use sites (Lee Mill Cave, Ranelius Site, Sorg Site, Bremer Village, Bud Josephs Site, Hamm Site, and Spring Lake Park Bluff Site)
- Known and unknown burial sites (Bremer Mounds)

VEGETATION
Although the vegetation types present within the park today are different from those present during the periods of significance, extensive efforts have taken place over the past several decades to restore prairie and oak savanna to the blufftop. Potentially contributing features include:
- Remnant/restored prairie and savanna/oak openings
- Remnant/restored mesic forest/oak forests

VIEWS
Woody vegetation was sparse on the blufftop during the time of Indigenous use and occupation, when the prominent vegetation type in this area was prairie or oak savanna, allowing for expansive views to Spring Lake, the river valley, and the sky above. Today, views are restricted by encroaching woody vegetation, with only select points providing views out over the bluff or to the sky. Precise locations of key views during the Indigenous use and occupation period are not known, however existing viewpoints do not correspond to recorded village or mound sites. Views related to the McCarriel's Mill site have also been modified since the period of significance following flooding due to Lock and Dam No. 2.

CIRCULATION
Two known historic routes are evident within the study area landscape. During Indigenous use of the site and early EuroAmerican settlement, water routes would have been an important mode of transportation. Today, the park does not provide river or lake access. Potentially contributing features include:
- Road remnant (Wagon Trail) from Schaar’s Bluff to McCarriel’s Mill Site
- Route of Hilary Path

BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, SMALL-SCALE FEATURES
Although there are no remaining buildings from periods of Indigenous use of the site, several habitation sites and village sites have been identified within the study area. Post-holes discovered at the Sorg site and Bremer Village suggest that a structure was present in this location.

Several buildings related to late 19th and early 20th century agricultural development are retained in the study area, but do not retain integrity as part of the cultural landscape.

MCCARRIEL’S MILL SITE
The 2019 Cultural Resources Literature Review and Assessment indicated based on visual assessment that all standing structures appear to retain sufficient integrity to be evaluated for potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Additional research would be needed to determine if the site’s resources possess sufficient historical significance to be NRHP-eligible. The age and date of placement of the boat are not known. Potentially contributing features include:
- House (1860)
- “Icehouse” (ca. 1860-1907)
- “Fish Pond” (before 1936)
- Retaining wall (ca. 1860-1907)
- Garage (c. 1950s)
- Metal Shed (ca. 1966)
- Lumber Shed (ca. 1966)
- Saw Shed (ca. 1966)

SOURCES
106 Group, Ltd. Cultural Resources Literature Review and Assessment for the McCarriel’s Mill Site at Spring Lake Park Reserve. Dakota County Parks Department, 2019.

1 106 Group, Ltd. McCarriel’s Mill Site, 12-14.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Issues
• Mill Site is in disrepair.
• Tribal survey of significant sites is incomplete.
• Need to protect location information of significant sites but also ensure disturbance or development near those sites is avoided.
• Some of the artifacts collected from the site are currently held off-site, limiting visitors accessibility to these resources.

Opportunities
• Create vision that helps Dakota people reconnect to this landscape.
• Explore the reintroduce of wild rice.
• Reintroduce culturally important plants through traditional/medicinal gardens.
• Explore methods of interpretation that do not necessitate physically visiting a site.
• Connect to the broader Mississippi River stories and themes.
• Connect people to the Mill Site and its history.
NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT
The park is fascinating to explore with its limestone bluffs, forests, prairies, shoreline, and ravines. It comprises an ecosystem that has become rare in the region due to extensive urbanization and agriculture. The park sits within the Mississippi Flyway; a major migratory route linking central Canada and the Gulf of Mexico, and hosts a diversity of waterfowl that feed in Spring Lake. To the south the park mostly borders agricultural land with privately owned woodlands and homesteads. Looking down from 10,000 feet the park is a jewel of habitat anchored along the Mississippi River while set in a developed landscape near the metro Twin Cities.

WATER RESOURCES
Spring Lake is an impoundment of the river resulting from the construction of Lock and Dam 2 at Hastings, Minnesota in 1930. In pre-European times this area was a floodplain forest and marsh. Today, Spring Lake is a shallow water area (2-6 feet deep) swept by wind and battered by boat-generated waves that creates high turbidity as seen on the aerial photos. The resulting high turbidity has led to the exclusion of aquatic plants except for in the shallowest areas and areas sheltered by islands, and impacted fish and waterfowl habitat. The Minnesota River has a profound effect on the Mississippi River, both on its size and water quality. The Minnesota River significantly contributes to the sediment load of the Mississippi, including Spring Lake where slow moving water holds and eventually drops its fine sediment. Wildlife management groups are lobbying the Corps of Engineers to temporarily lower the water level of the lake for a significant part of a growing season to expose mud flats and regenerate aquatic vegetation. This has not yet occurred.

Five significant ravines have formed in the park over time as water moving from south of the park has etched its path into the geological layers of the park. These ravines are somewhat stable with the exception of the large, branched central ravine which is experiencing erosion due to large volumes of water that occasionally enter the park from the agricultural land beyond its borders. Since the park is entirely vegetated and has very limited impervious surface, the surface water quality is high. A great percentage of precipitation landing on the park infiltrates into its permeable soils.

Because of the park’s position along the cut of the Mississippi River, water seeps through layers of limestone within its bluffs and leaks out the cliff face. This has allowed for the evolution of unique plant communities, especially on the north facing bluffs that benefit from the near continuous supply of calcareous water. A good place to see these seeps are in the area of Church’s woods. A significant spring exists in the large central ravine just to the south of the new regional trail bridge. Groundwater pours to the surface of the ground in the ravine yet just up slope it is dry. Here a unique and lush wet meadow plant community thrives.

TOPOGRAPHY
Bluffs
As illustrated in the map below, the park exhibits a dominant bedrock cliff, Schaar’s Bluff, which rises 150 feet from Spring Lake. This bluff is characteristic of the Upper Mississippi River basin, whose banks are controlled by iconic bedrock strata that were deposited in ancient beach and sea floor environments. Deposition and wave action along the shores of ancient Late Ordovician produced Saint Peter Sandstone, a friable sandstone with extremely well-rounded white grains. As sea levels rose into the Devonian (fourth Paleozoic period), the remains of organisms with carbonate shells were precipitated and lithified atop the Saint Peter, which was at the sea floor. These carbonate strata now form the fossiliferous Platteville Limestone layer visible in the park bluff.

The striking bluffs visible at Spring Lake Park are the direct result of the differing resistance to physical erosion between the friable Saint Peter Sandstone and the indurated and durable Platteville Limestone. The Platteville protects the Saint Peter from erosion from above, allowing the bluffs to stand high above the river valley. However, the weak foundation of the Saint Peter forms a base that is easily eroded by the lateral migration of the Mississippi and the stream power along its banks. This erosion undercutts the rigid cap of the Platteville producing evidence of geology in action in the form limestone rock falls at the base of the bluffs. The cliff area is an exemplary location that captures the geologic history of the Upper Mississippi’s response to, and influence on, Minnesota geology. In addition to providing dramatic views of the river, lake, and surrounding landscape, the cliff area also harbors several unique plant communities such as the fern and Canada yew colonies near Church’s
Woods. Possible animal species that occupy the bluff habitats in the park may include cave and big brown bats (although not documented within the area). Birds that utilize the bluffs include red-shouldered hawk, red-tailed hawk, broad-winged hawk, bald eagles, turkey vultures, and also nesting birds such as swallows and swifts.

Ravines, Slopes, and Terraces
In addition to its bluffs, Spring Lake Park Reserve also holds other dramatic landforms that add to its natural qualities. Formed over the millennia by glacial activity and erosion, the topographic changes across the site create ravines and terraces that give the park outstanding landscape features that complement the river, lake, and cliffs. Although not as readily observable from a specific viewpoint, these features nonetheless are integral to the unique experience that is offered by the park.

As illustrated Topography figure below, the landforms along the river are characterized by steep slopes, rolling terraces, and bluff lines; many slopes well in excess of thirty percent. The topographic changes across the park create a series of terraces from the river up to the bluff land. These terraces are the result of the planation and abandonment inherent in the footprint the historic Mississippi River left on the land. Specific to the park, three main terraces are carved in the Saint Peter Sandstone and form a contrast to the steep bluffs on the east end of the park. The contrast and formation of these terraces represent an area where the thick Platteville Limestone cap that protects the eastern bluffs was thinner and more readily eroded, allowing the river more freedom in its bedrock valley to planate the Saint Peter below. As base level for the Mississippi lowered over geologic time the river bed was sequentially abandoned in three main episodes, leaving behind the three terraces characteristic of the park today. This lowering of the river water level in turn lowered the local base level for small tributary streams in the park. These streams have since carved small, steep sided ravines into the Saint Peter sandstone as they drop in elevation to the meet the base level of the Mississippi.
TOPOGRAPHY
Spring Lake Park, Rosemount, MN
FIGURE X

Spring Lake Park
Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers
20-ft Contours
10-ft Contours
Steep Slopes
Bluffs With Slopes Greater Than 1:1

TOPOGRAPHY
Spring Lake Park
Lakes, Ponds, and Rivers
20-ft Contours
10-ft Contours
Steep Slopes
Bluffs With Slopes Greater Than 1:1

Natural Resource Overview

NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW
NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

VEGETATION
The map below highlights the ecological communities of the park as they exist today. Much of the park has evolved from a pre-settlement landscape of oak savanna (an open landscape of widely dispersed oaks, scattered shrubs, and within a matrix of prairie grasses and wildflowers) to forest. With peoples’ suppression of fire and the elimination of elk and bison, forest has established. Over two hundred acres of prairie has been restored and is being managed in the park since 1995 through diligent work of park managers.

WILDLIFE
The wildlife composition of the park has degraded along with habitat quality within the park, but has also degraded because of adjacent land use changes with regional destruction of habitat. The incredible value of the park is its position along Spring Lake and within the Mississippi National Flyway. A great diversity of waterfowl feed in Spring Lake and beautiful passerines such as the warblers feed in the prairies and forests of the park as they migrate. Some stay in the park to nest. Mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects also abound in the park even though their numbers and diversity have dwindled since the time of settlement. Of note are recent sightings of Fishers in the park that may have taken up residence. The NRMP will focus on the further enhancement of habitats in the park. Preliminary public surveys show that natural habitat is a primary value of this well situated park.
NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW
NATURAL RESOURCE OVERVIEW

ECOLOGICAL QUALITY
The ecological quality of the park has degraded due to past activities such as cropping, intensive cattle grazing, logging, as well as development; home, road and trail construction. Soils, natural drainage, and native plant communities have been impacted. That said, much of the park holds good ecological quality thanks to preservation efforts by Dakota County Parks.

The ecological quality of communities in the park (see map below) have been ranked as:

A. High Quality - Important to Protect and Preserve. Highest quality plant communities with less than five percent invasive plant species. There is little or no evidence of human disturbances such as logging, grazing, or soil compaction. These communities should be preserved, and disturbance such as placement of trails should be undertaken with extreme care. Monitor these areas for invasive species and control as they establish.

B. Degraded Remnant Native Plant Communities - Excellent Potential for Restoration to Enhance Biodiversity. Natural communities that show signs of disturbance since the time of Euro-American settlement but are still clearly recognizable as native plant communities. Invasive species encroachment is currently low (5-50%). Primary natural disturbances such as intentional use of fire and mob grazing by bison have been suppressed in recent times. These areas should be carefully managed to avoid further damage. Native plant community restoration is highly feasible.

C. Lowest Quality Native Plant Community - Require Aggressive Stewardship to Increase Plant Diversity, Wildlife, and Aesthetic Value. Sites that were highly disturbed by a previous land uses such as clearing and over grazing, and therefore plant species diversity is very low. The shrub and/or groundcover layers are dominated by invasive species (>50%), and these communities generally have a low diversity of native plant species. Natural processes have been altered by soil disturbance through tilling or compaction, fire suppression, or altered hydrology. The community may not resemble any naturally occurring community (one described by DNR Natural Heritage Database). In forested areas mid-story and ground layers consist primarily of invasive species. In grasslands they are dominated by non-native cool season grasses with minimal wildflower diversity and abundance. These communities are restorable but a greater effort is required to restore native plant diversity. These areas are the most appropriate for trails and recreational features.
Ecological Communities

Ranking

Spring Lake Park
Rosemount, MN

FIGURE X

0 500 1,000 1,500 Feet

A  High Quality - Important to Protect and Preserve. Highest quality plant communities with less than five percent invasive plant species. There is little or no evidence of human disturbances such as logging, grazing, or soil compaction. These communities should be preserved, and disturbance such as placement of trails should be undertaken with extreme care. Monitor these areas for invasive species and control as they establish.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Ecological degradation has been addressed through past efforts such as land purchase, dump clean-up, erosion control, and prairie establishment. This momentum can continue as further impacts to the park are addressed. Issues of concern that will be addressed in the NRMP include the following:

Issues
- History of post-settlement human disturbance is significant.
- Habitat fragmentation resulting from the construction of the Mississippi River Greenway.
- Lack of native plant diversity, particularly in the herbaceous layer.
- There are some invasive species concerns along the trails and edges of the park near roadways.
- Lack of variation in certain areas of the site, both physical and biological.
- Ravine erosion that stems from upland uses on private land.
- Loss of key ecological processes across the site such as fire, grazing, nutrient cycling and hydrology.
- Loss or curtailment of ecological services in the region.
- The potential future of increased deer population.
- Climate Change will bring changes in precipitation, temperature, weather events and habitat.
- Many of the large trees on the Schaar’s Bluff picnic area are nearing the end of their lifespan.

Past natural resource management
- Lack of a cohesive and comprehensive natural resource management plan.
  - Lack of recognition that cultural and natural resources are inseparably intertwined.
  - Need for more partnership with adjacent and inholding landowners in a cooperative manner to achieve common goals.
  - Lack of recognition for the need for ecosystem management, on a large scale, that would help shape site specific goals.

Opportunities
- Minimize soil disturbance through careful development of features and thoughtful trail placement and design. Soil protection and regeneration should be part of any project that involves soil disturbance.
- Restoration of a variety of native habitats. Oak savanna was the dominant pre-settlement habitat of the park, yet today only a few acres exist. This and other habitats should be restored to increase ecosystem variation.
- Continue to work with Agency partners and park neighbors to achieve the natural resource goals of the park and to support efforts in the surrounding ecoregion.
- Fund park natural resource management to a greater extent to build on the prairie establishment successes.
- Consider reintroducing bison to the park.
- Continue to restore the park’s natural resources
- Monitor and aggressively manage new invasive species. For example, oriental bittersweet is just establishing in the park. Now is the time to get ahead of the any new invasive species.
- Evaluate current methods of managing long established invasive species such as garlic mustard, common buckthorn and Tartarian honeysuckle.
- Re-introduce extirpated native plant species to increase species diversity.
- Work with adjacent land owners to reduce stormwater runoff volumes from entering the park. Continue to work with Dakota County Soil and Water Resource District to this end.
- Stabilize eroding ravines.
- Continue managing deer to protect rare plant communities.
- Address climate change by funding an adaptive management program that includes a high degree of monitoring to observe climate change impacts as they occur, and then take appropriate actions.
EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW
Spring Lake Park Reserve is a long linear park that is home to a variety of public facilities aimed at serving a range of programmatic needs. Currently the park functions as two defined program nodes, with distinct identities, at Upper Spring Lake Park Reserve (SLPR) and Lower Spring Lake Park Reserve (SLPR). These two ends of the park are connected by the newly completed Mississippi River Greenway (MRG) that runs the length of the park. The facilities throughout are functional but as demands and service level expectations increase, these facilities may not meet the capacity or service level expectation of future users. Spring Lake Park Reserve’s facilities and amenities are outlined on the corresponding enlargement plans to follow.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION, EVENTS & RENTALS
The park as a whole is popular for birding and nature programs, ranging from wildflower walks to owl banding. Some examples of past programming at Spring Lake Park Reserve include a community music festival, high school cross-country running meets and a kite flying festival. Events such as family nature nights, ski lessons, school field trips, adult nature-inspired craft classes and nature-based birthday parties are all popular programs at other Dakota County parks and present an opportunity to be expanded to Spring

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE
General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Size:</th>
<th>1,200 acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inholdings:</td>
<td>17.8 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoreline:</td>
<td>3.33 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographic Change:</td>
<td>150ft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access points:
Idell Ave to 127th St E
Fahey Ave S and Pine Bend Trail
Mississippi Trail and Hilary Path
EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW

Lake Park Reserve. This park also offers rich self-guided interpretive opportunities to tell the stories of the land and the people who have lived on this land for thousands of years. The 2017 Dakota County Visitor Service Plan identified an opportunity for this park to explore recreation equipment rentals including bicycles, snowshoes, and cross-country skis.

OVERVIEW ASSESSMENT

Below are a list of issues and opportunities that have been identified at the scale of the park, relating to circulation and connectivity and interpretation and education.

CIRCULATION & CONNECTIVITY

Issues
• Unpaved trails across the site are not intuitively laid out, are limited in overall distance and are subject to erosion.
• Park boundaries are difficult to decipher from within the park and there is limited signage to indicate the extents of remaining private properties.
• Expressed interest in expanding trails and use (mountain biking) raises concerns about vegetation loss and compositional changes, soil compaction, erosion, and disruption of wildlife.

Opportunities
• Expand the unpaved trail network to create more intuitive summer and winter loops for the day user and for events such as cross country running, mountain biking and cross country ski meets.
• Identity, wayfinding, and branding are all tools that could improve the clarity of the park boundary.
• Close proximity to Hastings is an asset and programming opportunity.
• Future connectivity of the MRG to other trail sections will increase visitorship to and through the park.

PROGRAM & RECREATION OFFERINGS

Issues
• Program and recreation offerings are limited by available facilities in the park. There is an overall lack of things to do besides picnicking, hiking, walking and biking.
• The park is located in a less densely populated portion of Dakota County.
• Dakota County provides limited programming in the park due to limited capacity and low visitation.
• Public river access is very limited.
• The cultural assets of the site are currently hidden and those stories are not being told.
• There is no designated swimming area in the Park.
• There is no facility for shore fishing.
• There is not sufficient 4-season programming.
• The cross country ski trails are short and there is no warming house or changing facility.
• There are no snowshoeing trails.
• The park does not currently host a signature event or have a signature program to draw visitors.
• There is a lack of equipment rental to support group gathering, trail use, and use of the water trail.

Opportunities
• The close proximity to Hastings provides opportunities for partnerships and programming.
• Watercraft or bike rentals would help people utilize the park.
• Expand programming for adults focused on birds, photography and history.
• Provide expanded camping opportunities; these amenities are limited in Hastings.
• Provide camper cabins.
• Expand programming around bird migration, the site’s remote location is an asset because there is more variety and a higher concentration of birds.
• Provide a facility that is open in the winter to support winter recreation activities.
EXISTING CONDITIONS

OVERVIEW

INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION

Issues

• Interpretation is limited to a handful of signs, concentrated around Schaar’s Bluff
• Significant historic and cultural resources are not interpreted.
• There is a gap in service for underserved communities in regional parks and reserves.
• The name of the park is misleading - people do not understand the story of Spring Lake and once visitors arrive, it is difficult to access the Lake and River.

Opportunities

• Provide more interactive and tactile interpretive features to expand audience to reach youth or other users whose ability to read the existing signs may be limited.
• Provide outdoor education year-round.
• Expand interpretation so that more diverse population and underserved populations can see themselves in this place.
• Interpretation should celebrate both the cultural and natural features in an integrated way to ensure that they enrich each other.
EXISTING CONDITIONS
UPPER SLPR | ENLARGEMENT PLAN 1

UPPER SLPR AMENITIES & FACILITIES
Upper Spring Lake Park Reserve (SLPR) is also commonly known as Schaar’s Bluff. This section of the park is the most densely populated with amenities, making it the area most heavily used by visitors. This area includes: Schaar’s Bluff Gathering Center, picnic shelters, a playground, sand volleyball courts, community garden plots, MRG trailhead, and overlook. Additionally, there are benches, fire pits, and interpretive signage distributed throughout. Below is a list of the issues and opportunities identified for this section of the park.
EXISTING CONDITIONS
UPPER SLPR | ENLARGEMENT PLAN 1

Issues

• Park Entry Sequence:
  - Schaar’s Bluff parking lot separates the picnic area from the playground and gathering center – limiting visual and physical connectivity between the primary amenities.
  - The entry drive sequence to Schaar’s Bluff from 127th St East is not intuitive for users, with two separate and disconnected parking lots.
• Existing Bluff fence is visually bulky and in need of repair.
• Schaar’s Bluff Gathering Center: gathering space for 75, lobby with interpretation, serving kitchen, restrooms.
  - As a trailhead, the gathering center lacks the typical offerings a trailhead should provide such as maps and orientation and program information.
  - Office space is small and has no windows, which is a safety concern for staff and limits the ability to increase staff serving this facility.
  - There is no permanent staff presence and limited space to accommodate permanent staff.
  - The facility is only open as a reservation facility currently, which limits its ability to serve the public on a consistent basis.
  - The rentable space is small and can only accommodate parties of 80 people. Larger parties cannot be accommodated.
  - There is a lack of space to serve events and the general public including: a lack of a dedicated dressing room, no mother’s room, and limited kitchen amenities for catering.
• Picnic Area: East and West Picnic shelter, able to accommodate 150 and 80 people respectively. Both shelters have access to electricity, with nearby restrooms and drinking water.
  - Picnic shelters across the park are largely out-dated, limited in the range of sizes offered, and do not provide users with contemporary amenities (electricity, drinking fountains/jug filler, serving kitchen space, refrigeration and food staging areas).
  - Utilities run through the picnic and gathering area at Schaar’s Bluff which may prohibit alterations and uses.
• Playground
  - The Schaar’s Bluff playground is out-dated and under utilized.
  - The playground is far away from the picnic pavilions and does not have much shade.
• District Maintenance Facility / Former Schaar’s Farm:
  - Currently fenced off and disconnected from the Park.
• Fire pits with surrounding benches, distributed in several locations.
• DNR Boat Launch:
  - Open for public use but difficult to access.
  - Access to the DNR boat launch via Hillary Path is minimally maintained and heavily eroded.

Opportunities

• Picnic Shelters should be updated to align with Dakota County Standards and to help increase usage by park visitors.
• District Maintenance Facility will likely be relocated in the next 10 years. The barn, silo and out buildings could serve as new amenities and provide new program opportunities for the park.
• Redesign the entry drive and parking lot sequence to Schaar’s Bluff to be a more intuitive and an aesthetically pleasing arrival experience.
EXISTING CONDITIONS
MIDDLE SLPR | ENLARGEMENT PLAN 2

MIDDLE SLPR AMENITIES & FACILITIES
The center of Spring Lake Park Reserve is largely dedicated to natural resources and the Mississippi River Greenway.

Issues
• The Mississippi River Greenway (MRG) bisects the park into two long, thin halves, reducing the quality of adjacent habitat and reducing connectivity of softscape trails.
• The middle of the park is dedicated primarily to natural resources, with no amenities or access, making connectivity between the two ends of the park difficult.

• The lake is very shallow with an unpredictable current and an abundance of snags and is not suitable for larger boats.

Opportunities
• Introduce a mid-point destination along the MRG with a restroom facility or other amenities to expand use of the trail for shorter distances.
LOWER SLPR AMENITIES & FACILITIES

Lower Spring Lake Park Reserve (SLPR) is the second most amenity-rich section of the park. This area includes: Camp Spring Lake Park Retreat Center, camp ground facilities, MRG trailhead, Bud’s Landing (a former water access point), and fire pits. Below is a list of the issues and opportunities identified for this section of the park.
EXISTING CONDITIONS
LOWER SLPR | ENLARGEMENT PLAN 3

Issues
• **Camp Spring Lake Retreat Center and Camp Ground:** overnight accommodations, 4-season facility for up to 50 people, 10 group campsites, outdoor classroom, amphitheater.
  - Outdoor fire pits are in need of light repair.
  - The facility is exclusively rented during the summer months by the YMCA for a summer camp, excluding usage by the public.
• **Archery Picnic Shelter:** capacity of 150, restrooms, horseshoe pit, grills.
  - The Shelter is outdated and does not match new Dakota County standards.
• **Archery Range:** various distances of targets located in prairie and forest conditions.
  - The archery range is underutilized.
  - The archery trails are open to the public which creates occasional user conflicts.
• **Parking:** gravel road with 90 degree parking spaces.
  - Paving material limits the load capacity for this area of the park to expand its program offerings slightly.

Opportunities
• **Bud’s Landing site on the river** is well situated to provide river access and new facilities.
• Expand partnerships and marketing with the YMCA.
• Expand low ropes course.
• Potential to partner with the Rotary Club for small boat fishing excursions.
• Potential for adventure programming, such as a zipline or rock climbing.
• Provide opportunities to utilize the river for activities for older campers.
• Update Archery Picnic Shelter to comply with Dakota County Standards.
• Partner with regional bow shops to do 3D targets and expand archery events.
• Provide bow and broadhead target rentals to expand audience and increase usership.
DEMOGRAPHICS

To begin the discussion on demographics, specifically relating to race and ethnicity, this report uses the minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting and are defined below:

- American Indian - This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central American), and who maintains tribal affiliations or community attachment.
- Asian - This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black - This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- White - This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- Hispanic or Latino - This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

TWIN CITIES REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Between 2010 and 2040 the Twin Cities Metro population will increase by 824,000 residents (Thrive MSP 2040), a more than 29% increase in the regional population since 2010. This increase in population is projected to require, on average, 13,000 new housing units annually to meet the 391,000 households that will be added to the region. It is projected that one in five of these households will have children and one in five residents will be aged 65 or older, compared to one in nine in 2010. The region is also growing in racial and ethnic diversity; with a projected 40% of the population identifying as a person of color in 2024 versus 24% in 2010.

SERVICE AREA HIGHLIGHTS

POPULATION: 554,464
HOUSEHOLDS: 273,110
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: $85,450
PRIMARY AGE GROUP: 50-59
PRIMARY NONWHITE ETHNIC GROUP: HISPANIC
DEMOGRAPHICS

DAKOTA COUNTY POPULATION
Following regional trends, Dakota County will also see a population increase by 2040. The US Census Bureau estimates that Dakota County’s population will grow from nearly 430,000 (based on a 2018 estimate) to over 500,000 in 2040.

SERVICE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS
Demographic analysis within the Spring Lake Park Reserve Service area gives an understanding of populations who are likely to visit the park. For the purposes of this analysis, the service area is comprised of Dakota County and communities within a 20 mile drive of the park. In the metro area, 86% of regional park visitors travel 20 miles or less from their primary residence; (Metropolitan Council: Regional Parks System Visitor Report. 2016). The analyses are reflective of the total population within the service area, and its key characteristics such as age segments, income level, race, and ethnicity. Refer to Figure 3.2.

POPULATION
Following state and metro-area trends, the service area for Spring Lake Park Reserve is projected to steadily grow. Based on the current population growth from 532,884 in 2010 to 554,464 in 2019, population is anticipated to reach 610,087 in 2024.

While the population is majority white/non-Hispanic, projections show far more growth in groups identified as non-white for the service area. As of the 2019 AICCS estimate, the service area is primarily composed of residents aged 10-14, 35-39, and 55-59, with the latter group projected to grow the most. As population continues to grow, recreation services must expand accordingly.

RACE & ETHNICITY
Based on AICCS Data, race and ethnicity projections in the service area parallel the metro-area growth. According to the data categorization, the black population is projected to grow the most, doubling in population between 2010 and 2024. The Asian, Pacific Islander, Multiple Race, and Hispanic population categories will all see growth between 50 and 65 percent.
DEMOGRAPHICS

INCOME
The 2016 Metropolitan Council Regional Park System Visitor Study Report showed that people with higher incomes are visiting parks more frequently than those with lower incomes. The report defines “higher income” as those earning more than $100,000, which resulted in higher annual visits, fewer/no safety concerns, and greater satisfaction with the quality of facilities, services, and recreation opportunities. The median household income for the Spring Lake Park Service Area is $85,450, falling within the mid-range income level defined by the Metropolitan Council. This suggests that addressing safety concerns and developing unique and welcoming programming or events will be critical to serve the median income groups in the service area. Awareness and physical access to parks are two of the largest hurdles for low income families and individuals. Providing more non web-based promotional materials and occasional public transportation to the park for public events would benefit low income visitors.

EQUITY ANALYSIS
The 2017 Dakota County Parks Visitor Plan identified groups underrepresented in park visits. These groups include:

- Older adults
- Foreign born Latinos
- South Asian Indians
- Youth
- African Americans
- Vietnamese
- People living with Disabilities
- Somalis
- US-Born Latinos

Demographic trends for the service area indicate growth in populations currently underrepresented in park visits including older adults, African Americans, Somalis, and US-born Latinos. Future park improvements and programs will need to provide activities and programs that appeal to these audiences. The population growth in non-white populations and an aging population will require increased capacity and flexibility of park services in the region and county. Increasing the capacity and services of parks in the county will require a clear vision and strategy for the future of park facilities and spaces in order to determine how to better meet the needs of current and future users of the park.
PARK USE TRENDS

NATIONAL RECREATION TRENDS
At a national level, according to the Outdoor Foundation’s 2018 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report, almost half of the American population participated in outdoor activities in 2017. This is number has been slowly increasing over the past three years. The most popular outdoor activities by participation rate are as follows:

1. Running/Jogging and Trail Running
2. Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing
3. Road, Mountain and BMX Biking
4. Hiking and Walking
5. Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV Camping

Some of the above-noted activities are already accommodated at the park currently and others can be considered. Based on feedback from initial community outreach, there is particular interest in camping and mountain biking; two programs that don’t happen now that will have to be considered carefully due to the parks ecological value and classification as a Park Reserve.

STATEWIDE & REGIONAL TRENDS
Notable statewide and regional trends give insight to the long-term prospects for Spring Lake Park Reserve in terms of user base and challenges. Generally, the state and region are seeing an aging population, more localized user base and increasing racial and ethnic diversity in user groups. Specifically, the statewide trends include:

- The fastest growing age group in Minnesota, and the Spring Lake Park Reserve Service Area is the 65-and-older group, which will shift recreation trends. Walking, jogging, stand-up paddle-boarding, and geocaching are all state-wide trends on the rise according to the MN DNR. (Met Council System Analysis of the Regional, Recreation Open Space System Study, 2016)
- The number of non-local visits (visits to regional parks made by people who do not live in the jurisdiction of the respective regional park implementing agency where the park is located) are declining. (Met Council 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan).
- Facilities in regional parks need to be assessed to ensure they help meet the needs of the growing ethnically diverse segments of the population. (SLPR MP 2003)
- Programs and facilities focused on an older adult population will assume a greater importance in the years to come. (DC Parks Visitor Service Plan)
- Technology will continue to have a greater presence in parks and may introduce new recreational activities, such as those using drone, eSports, or GPS dependent activities. (NRPA, Predictions for Parks and Recreation’s Top Trends in 2019)

Nationally Ranked Top Outdoor Activities for Growth:

1. Stand-Up Paddling
   18% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
2. Cross Country Skiing
   13% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
3. BMX Biking
   13% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
4. Adventure Racing
   11% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
5. Boardsailing / Windsurfing
   10% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
6. Kayak Fishing
   10% increase in participation from 2013 to 2016.
REGIONAL BENCHMARKING

A set of peer sites were defined by the master planning team to identify visitorship patterns and investigate approaches to natural and cultural resources at regionally successful parks. Similarities between peer sites included site size, regional location, and thematic likenesses. Factors explored through the benchmarking process included visitorship numbers, sustainable site management, and meaningful site programming and experiences.

1. Lebanon Hills Regional Park (Eagan, MN)
2. Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve (Lino Lakes, MN)
3. William O’Brien State Park (Marine on St. Croix, MN)
4. Marine Mill (Marine on St. Croix, MN)
5. He Mni Can – Barn Bluff (Red Wing, MN)
6. Fort Snelling State Park (St. Paul, MN)
7. Minneopa State Park (Mankato, MN)

Of the peer sites, William O’Brien State Park, He Mni Can – Barn Bluff, Fort Snelling State Park, and Marine Mill were explored for their engagement with cultural resources, Minneopa State Park and Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve were analyzed for their handling and programming of extensive ecological and natural resources. Lebanon Hills Regional Park was studied for recreational programs.

Overall, these peer sites track visitor counts in a variety of methods from seasonal tracking as well to monthly tracking. Of the sites, Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve was the only site that did not track visitorship beyond overall annual attendance. Peer sites reported that visitorship is greater in the spring, summer, and fall, and that winter events and programs are required to draw visitors in the colder months.

Other trends included demand for camping and camper cabin opportunities, as well as nature-based play areas. These requests were also reflected in engagement events for the Spring Lake Park Reserve master plan. Peer sites with a gathering or visitor center or an events space have at least three full-time staff. Facebook was identified as the most useful marketing and outreach tool for the peer sites.

Each peer site had a unique approach to cultural resource management ranging from ongoing engagement events to group site visits to culturally significant spaces. He Mni Can – Barn Bluff has modified trail systems to give more space to indigenous mounds and is working on interpretive signage but does not manage the mounds directly. William O’Brien State Park utilizes space and lack of interpretation as a practice for the protection of indigenous sites.
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SUMMARY
Community engagement events for the first phase of the Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan Update were held throughout October 2019. The events were intended to engage a cross section of Dakota County residents, park users, and stakeholders, as well as people who do not currently visit the park, to collect valuable perspective, input and generate interest in the planning process.

Underrepresented groups identified in the 2017 Parks Visitor Service plan include: older adults, foreign-born Latinos, South Asian Indians, Youth, African Americans, Vietnamese, People living with Disabilities, Somalis, and US-born Latinos. Phase 1 activities that reached out to these groups include:

- Met Council Youth and Parks Research Study (Latino, youth)
- Latino Health / Salud Latina Community Health Fair, Burnsville (Latino, youth)
- Reality Store Resources Outreach, Dakota County Technical College (people living with disabilities, youth)
- Hastings Y Pop-up Event (older adults)
- South St. Paul Early Childhood Education (Latina)

KEY THEMES
Below are the key themes that emerged from stakeholder meetings, survey results, conversations with staff and input from pop-up events. A more detailed summary of each event can be found in the Phase 1 Community Engagement Appendix.

The phase one community outreach indicates that Spring Lake Park Reserve is appreciated for its beauty and restored natural areas. The setting, bird/wildlife observation, space rental, trails and archery currently are the main attractions that bring people to the park. Since Spring Lake Park Reserve is mainly accessible by car and is surrounded by farmland, the park is primarily a monthly destination for visitors.

Participants used Social Pinpoint, an on-line feedback tool, to provide feedback. Some of unique finding from locals included:

- Some locals occasionally bike or run from Hastings to the park along the new Mississippi River Greenway.
- Participants are concerned with when the remainder of the Mississippi River Greenway would be completed, indicating that this missing link is affecting user experience.

The following were the reoccurring themes distilled from the input:

- Mississippi River Valley Views – The spectacular views are a primary draw for many visitors and it will be important for the master plan update to protect and continue to enhance these views.
- Natural Resource Enhancement – Users acknowledge that this is a park reserve and plays a major role as bird habitat along the Mississippi River Flyway.
- Trails – People had numerous ideas for how to improve the clarity and length of trails with particular interest in expanding or creating winter trails, running trails, and mountain bike trail offerings.
- Cultural Interpretation – People had positive responses to the interpretive themes outlined in the 2003 master plan. Suggestions on Social Pinpoint and on the activity board requested more interpretation of the unique cultural resources on this site.
- Visitor Amenities – Camping, equipment rental, safer boat launch, improved playground, and more youth programming were desired as well.
- Lack of Awareness - many people at intercept events had not heard of or been to the park and were unaware of its offerings.

Figure 2.0  Wordcloud of Popular Program Ideas at the Open House

HIGHLIGHTS
906 unique individuals engaged with the plan or attended an engagement event between September 23 and November 6th, 2019. Engagement opportunities took the form of stakeholder meetings, open houses, online feedback tools, and pop-up intercepts.

Amount of Feedback:
- 119 Web Comments
- 30 Open House Attendants
- 50 Online Survey Responses
- 40 Intercept Surveys

Total Number of Engagement Events:
- 618 Unique Visitors to the Project Site
- 288 Users Over 13 Engagement Events
### PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Table 3.2  Community Engagement Event Summary
KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Drawing from demographics, recreation trends, inventory of existing conditions, the community engagement process, input from Dakota County staff, elected officials, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and key stakeholders, the following list summarizes the key issues and opportunities present across Spring Lake Park Reserve.

1. The park is a unique cultural and natural landscape that doesn’t harness the full experiential potential of its assets. There is an opportunity to celebrate the park’s unique natural resources and honor the cultural significance to indigenous people to create a signature/destination park experience.

2. Spring Lake Park Reserve is not well known. Taking advantage of the multitude of partnership opportunities across national, state, regional and community organizations would help diversify programming, increase branding opportunities, expand park visitorship and refocus the park’s identity on its natural and cultural assets to enhance experience.

3. The park is on the Mississippi River but has limited connectivity to the water. Improving the physical connection to the river will increase opportunities for education, interpretation, and recreation activities to reach more diverse users.

4. Visitors love the trails, but the offerings are also limited. There is an opportunity to expand the unpaved trail network to improve park user experience and accommodate more diverse trail activities including mountain biking, snowshoeing, shorter family hikes, and nature walks.

5. The natural resources in the park are impacted by forces outside the park boundary, including erosion, water contamination, and viewshed interruptions. Working with landowners on best management practices, considering river management, and conducting study views from the park boundaries will help protect the health of natural resources in the park.
DRAFT VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles set the stage for concept development and initiatives. The Vision describes what the park will be in the next ten years, while the Guiding Principles suggest how the park will achieve that vision.

VISION STATEMENT
Spring Lake Park Reserve is a regional destination where visitors experience integral relationships between humans and the changing landscape, inspiring respect to guide present and future needs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
1. **Protect and manage natural resources.** Respect Spring Lake Park as a “reserve” with a maximum development footprint of 20% of the park land. Ensure natural resources are protected and remain intact, regardless of new recreational and educational programming introduced.

2. **Be a gateway to the treasures of the Mississippi River Valley.** Preserve and enhance existing habitat for birds and wildlife, preserve bluff views, and give visitors an opportunity to access and experience one of the greatest regional and national assets.

3. **Become a regional, four-season destination.** Develop programming and facilities that are welcoming to visitors of all ages and abilities throughout all four seasons. Connect to the regional tourism network.

4. **Celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the area.** Maximize educational opportunities to tell the past, present and future stories of the park’s cultural and ecological assets.

5. **Integrate Ecological, Cultural, Educational and Recreational Experience.** Consider innovative approaches to integrate recreational and educational activities with resource preservation and protection for a more connected park. Strengthen connectivity through the park to increase access and provide for more diverse experiences.

6. **Provide Inclusive, Memorable, and Relevant Experiences for All.** Improve the quality and types of access to the unique features of Spring Lake Park Reserve.
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SUMMARY
Community engagement events for the first phase of the Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan Update were held throughout October 2019. The events were intended to engage a cross section of Dakota County residents, park users, and stakeholders to collect valuable perspective, input and generate interested in the planning process.

Underrepresented groups identified in the 2017 Parks Visitor Service plan include: older adults, foreign-born Latinos, South Asian Indians, Youth, African Americans, Vietnamese, People living with Disabilities, Somalis, and US-born Latinos. Phase 1 activities that reached out to these groups include:

- Met Council Youth and Parks Research Study (Latino, youth)
- Latino Health / Salud Latina Community Health Fair, Burnsville (Latino, youth)
- Reality Store Resources Outreach, Dakota County Technical College (people living with disabilities, youth)
- Hastings Y Pop-up Event (older adults)
- South St. Paul Early Childhood Education (Latina)

KEY THEMES
Below are the key themes that emerged from stakeholder meetings, survey results, conversations with staff and input from pop-up events. A more detailed summary of each event can be found in Phase 1 Community Engagement Appendix.

The phase one community outreach indicates that Spring Lake Park Reserve is appreciated for its beauty and restored natural areas. People are primarily drawn to the park for the following:

- The setting
- Bird/wildlife observation
- Space rental
- Trails and archery

Since Spring Lake Park Reserve is mainly accessible by car and is surrounded by farmland, the park is primarily a monthly destination for visitors. Some locals, as indicated on Social Pinpoint (an on-line feedback tool), mentioned that they will occasionally bike or run from Hastings to the park along the new Mississippi River Trail. Other comments included:

- Questions on when the remainder of the Mississippi River Trail would be completed, indicating that this missing link is affecting user experience. The following were the reoccurring themes distilled from the input:
  - Mississippi River Valley Views – The spectacular views at this park are a primary draw for many visitors and it will be important for the master plan update to protect and continue to enhance these views.
  - Natural Resource Enhancement – Users acknowledge that this is a park reserve and plays a major role as bird habitat along the Mississippi River Flyway.
  - Trails – People had numerous ideas for how to improve the clarity and length of trails with particular interest in expanding or creating winter trails, running trails, and mountain bike trail offerings.
  - Cultural Interpretation – People had positive responses to the interpretive themes outlined in the 2003 master plan. Suggestions on Social Pinpoint and on the activity board also requested more interpretation of the unique cultural resources that exist on this site.
  - Visitor Amenities – Camping, equipment rental, safer boat launch, improved playground, and more youth

Figure 2.0  Wordcloud of Popular Program Ideas at the Open House

HIGHLIGHTS
906 unique individuals engaged with the plan or attended an engagement event between September 23 and October 29th, 2019. Engagement opportunities took the form of stakeholder meetings, open houses, online feedback tools, and pop-up intercepts.

Amount of Feedback:
- 119 Web Comments
- 137 Open House Comments
- 50 Online Survey Responses
- 40 Intercept Surveys

Total Number of Engagement Events:
- 1470 Visitors to the Project Site (618 Unique)
- 288 Users Over 13 Engagement Events
# PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Table 3.2  Community Engagement Event Summary
An interactive board of activities was created for participants to place dots on the activities they would like or not like to see at Spring Lake Park Reserve. The choices showed a range of activities that already exist in the park or that could be considered appropriate given the park’s designation as a “park reserve”. An additional prompt was located on the board to ask people what other ideas they had that were not show. Some of the additional ideas people shared were: photography, trail running, winter warming station, amphitheater, equipment rental, fishing, horseback riding trails, climate resilience research, little library, and meditative/silent space.

Below is a chart of the total participant responses from the following engagement events: Spring Lake Park Reserve Open House, DCTC Reality Store, Eagan High School Resources Fair, Latino Health / Salud Latina Community Health Fair, and Hastings Y.

Figure 2.1 Community Engagement Activity Preference Results
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
OPEN HOUSE

SUMMARY
The Spring Lake Park Reserve Open House exhibited several stations to inform visitors of the 2003 Master Plan, the natural and cultural resource contexts, and asked for feedback regarding activities, possible interpretive themes, and bison observation. The following section outlines the feedback received from the activities and comment cards.

On average people were very interested in learning about the interpretive themes outlined in the 2003 master plan. Few people responded to images of existing interpretive features and signage resulting in inconclusive readings of how effective the existing elements are. Further study of the types of information and the way information is represented will be included in a phase 2 focus group engagement meeting.

Figure 2.2 Interpretive Topic Preference Results
Order of Preference:
1. Prairie Management
2. Archeology
3. Mississippi Movement
4. Cultural Traditions Programs
5. Mississippi Flyway

Figure 2.3 Images of existing interpretive features for feedback from Open House participants

Figure 2.4 2003 Master Plan Interpretive Theme Preference Results

### Very Interested (10)
- #2: The Waters Provide
  Average 9.7
- #2: The Lake Rises
  Average 8.75
- #3: The River Rises
  Average 7.6

### Somewhat Interested (5)

### Not Interested (1)
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SOCIAL PINPOINT

Social Pinpoint is an online engagement interface that offers multiple formats for users to share their thoughts and ideas about the park. For the first phase, the website used the map-based comment and survey tools. The link to the site was made available on Dakota County Parks’ Facebook page and distributed via flyer at all other community engagement events. Feedback that was provided at those events was also uploaded to the social pinpoint map feature so that all respondents could see and react to those comments. Over the month of October 618 individuals visited the site and spent an average of 2:26 minutes on the site. 50 participants completed the survey on the site and between individuals that visited the site and attended engagement events, there were more than 119 comments. The following pages summarize the input received.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Spring Lake Park Reserve Survey asked participants about their current use of the park and what their vision is for its future.

The top five most popular activities that bring people to the park are being in nature, enjoying the Mississippi River Valley views, using the trails and observing wildlife. Participants also shared activities they enjoyed at Spring Lake Park Reserve that were not included in the survey list such as: archery, cycling, photography, using the playground and dog walking.
Participants also shared activities they enjoyed at Spring Lake Park Reserve that were not included in the survey list such as: archery, cycling, photography, using the playground and dog walking.
## PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### SOCIAL PINPOINT

### Why is Spring Lake Park Reserve a special place for you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due to its size, habitat, and proximity to the Mississippi, it supports a great variety and number of birds and other wildlife.</th>
<th>Every so often my family brings out dog and he absolutely loves being outside. We also will occasionally go on picnics and snowshoeing. For school dances my friends and I will go and take group pictures out there because it is so pretty.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy the birds along the Mississippi River Flyway</td>
<td>Great archery range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The beautiful prairie with many native MN plants.</td>
<td>Ski trails are not too difficult and good length for me, convenient entrance locations, quiet park with good views and access to Mississippi, variety of hiking/biking trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The habitat is wonderful for birding.</td>
<td>It is absolutely beautiful to hike, bike and snowshoe!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love the spring wildflowers and the summer prairie flowers. I also love walking down in the archery area in the winter.</td>
<td>I got married at the gathering center in October 2018. I chose the venue for the beautiful view of the river and fall colors. The gathering center was perfect for a small, relaxed reception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is great being out in nature and still being in a metropolitan area.</td>
<td>I love the views and riding my bike through the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is so beautiful, and it provides a nice hike for my family.</td>
<td>I got married there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s one of the most beautiful parks I know of! I love the scenic views, variety of trails, option to have bonfires, and also bring people there for photoshoots!</td>
<td>We enjoy getting outside to walk and take hikes while enjoying the beautiful river view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its so beautiful! Can’t wait for the prairies to continue to mature and to see more woodland restorations.</td>
<td>I’m getting married there in May!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scenery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenic, quite. Not crowded.</th>
<th>It is nice to walk the dogs in the woods on cold windy days, as the trees provide enough cover to enjoy some of the colder winter days.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We love the views of the Mississippi River from above and enjoy kayaking and biking in the area.</td>
<td>It is a special place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We go out of our way to go on family bike rides on the trail. It offers excellent views of the river and riparian habit, and the playground is great!</td>
<td>I love exercising, using the hiking trails/path. My husband and I were to be married here so we love reminiscing on the day it was “supposed” to be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love the variety of hiking trails.</td>
<td>It’s not. We (come) once or twice a year. It would be nice to see a place pad for the kids out there, if there was a splash pad like our neighboring communities, we would go every nice day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The views and miles of bike trails.</td>
<td>The park is so big that even if it is busy you can still enjoy the peacefulness of the River Valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The park is so big that even if it is busy you can still enjoy the peacefulness of the River Valley.</td>
<td>It’s my favorite place to bike from Hastings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s close to my house and beautiful.</td>
<td>It’s close to my house and beautiful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### This is one of our favorite places to go with our kids to play on the playground equipment and walk around trails or bring a picnic. The things we wish were different are that there were bathroom facilities closer to the playground since when some kids have to go, they usually can’t wait that long or if you need to change a diaper, you have to drive or walk to the bathroom facility since changing them in a port-o-potty is not ideal. Also some kids are afraid of the port-o-potty. It would also be fun to have an interactive kid trail where they go on a scavenger hunt or have different pitstops with a featured animal along the way or something. |
PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SOCIAL PINPOINT

MAP-BASED COMMENTS
Participants were prompted to place multiple markers on an interactive map of Spring Lake Park Reserve following three categories: “I like this”, “Ideas and Suggestions”, and “This needs works”.

The figure 2.9 gives an overview to the types of markers placed on the map of the existing park. The majority of comments were concentrated near Schaar’s Bluff and the Archery Trail, with some Ideas and Suggestions populating the middle. The section that follows lists the comments received under each category of marker.

Figure 2.9 Social Pinpoint Map-Based Comments
## PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### SOCIAL PINPOINT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I LIKE THIS</th>
<th>(UP VOTES, DOWN VOTES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The park is great for dog walking. My elderly parents roll here. The visitor center is classy and user oriented. (DCTC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The park building is nice. I have not been to the park in over a year. It is hard to get there with the CR42 construction. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love cross country skiing in this park. There is plenty of mileage for me! (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My kids love the bike path, I like the walking trails, my kids use the Y Camp. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We like picnicking - we have used every pavilion in the park. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We enjoy the park. We walk there. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love the rustic part of the park and my kids love the playground. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love the nature - flowers, butterflies, foliage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used to cross country ski in the park, I’m 86 and don’t do that anymore. I go to Florida now! (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve biked to the park from Hastings and been to the park for picnics. It is very nice. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I went to a grad party at the park and another time just because it is a nice place. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love the design details in the park, for example the map on the ground near the Gathering Center. (DCTC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to ski at the park (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We come to the park for family reunions, our kids and grandkids have had their senior pictures taken here, we held my mom’s 80th birthday in the park. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love that the Gathering Center is open for water and restrooms (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We mostly bike and hike at the park. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ride my bike in the park. Minnesota does a great job with the parks and that is one of the reasons I moved here. If we don’t play on the land now, we won’t have it in the future. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love coming here to hike. More hiking would be great! (1,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have enjoyed geocaching in this park. Please keep it open to additional geocaches.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope the cross country skiing will stay and will not be lost in the name of progress. The trail has already been encroached by the bike trail and the snow shoes. There is plenty of bike trails and not enough ski trails!!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We walked the trails in the park about ten years ago (EH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our scout troop went there last weekend (EH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We picnic here and walk. The park is gorgeous and fun to be in (EH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our kids go to Camp Spring Lake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We got married here (EH) (1,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love the solitude of the park (EH) (1,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Y Camp really appreciates not having the bike path connect right into camp. It cuts down on the strangers entering camp while campers are there. By sending the path into the field, we can usually catch bikers and direct them away from camp while campers are there.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love our space for the YMCA Day Camp that is run on this property. We are looked at as an example of what a day camp should look like within the association of the Y- lots of trees, paved paths, climate controlled building, good communication between Y &amp; County, and lots of nice field space. (1,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great archery range (3,1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Phase 1 Community Engagement

## Social Pinpoint

### Ideas and Suggestions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love the Archery Park for bird watching, but wish it could be free for non-archers as the habitat is excellent. It is especially wonderful during spring migration.</th>
<th>(1,0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We bike in the park. Sometimes the Archery restrooms are closed. Sometimes they are like a sauna. I wish Lebanon Hills had a trail for biking (not mountain biking). (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not been to this park but I like bike riding, fishing, and cross country skiing. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback riding would be a nice addition. Back when we rode horses there was a shortage of places to ride. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The current playground is fine and I’d love a nature play area in addition to it. I take my four kids to the park frequently. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would be interested in getting to the water and kayaking (Y).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More programs and facilitated children’s birthday parties. I like the music in the park event. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hike, bike, and cross country ski in the park. I would love to get into birding but would like to participate in a program. I need to learn from people not apps. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love the bike trail and I ride it almost every day. I’d like to see the trail continue north. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like more modern shelters with lower fees. The reservation fee is also high for the Gathering Center (Y).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to rent equipment here. I use the archery restrooms, the bike trails, and snowshoe. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better signage is needed to get to the archery trailhead. I loved it when the Y led a ski program here, I would do that again. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love the parks along the river. If I was going to camp here I would like a place to be near the water, hiking, and swimming. I love Camp Spring Lake (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric bikes are something to consider. The park needs better signage as to if electric bikes and mobility scooters are allowed on the trails and sidewalks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve heard of preliminary plans for an observation tower at Thompson County Park, but I think out of all the Dakota County parks, this one would be amazing for an observation tower. You can see St. Paul from the top of this hill in fall/winter/spring and the Mississippi River valley views would be spectacular. You might even be able to see Hastings!! A tower in this park would be a major attraction and improvement.</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure where to put this comment, but I think there would be sufficient space and enough good topography in this park to be able to fit in mountain bike trails of varying difficulty! There are good trails at Lebanon Hills and at Carver lake in Woodbury and Memorial Park in Red Wing, but having a few good loops here would be awesome as well. Mountain biking is becoming more and more popular in Minnesota every year and the more trails the better.</td>
<td>(1,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree with the others who have posted about adding a mountain biking single track trail. My son loves mountain biking but there is not anywhere close by for him to ride. A trail would help keep kids active and encourage others to try it as well.</td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I suggest a single use Mt Bike Track/Trail, similar to Lebanon Hills be developed. Mt Biking is a MN High School League sanctioned sport. Mt. Biking is one of the fastest growing High School, College, Professional, and novice activities in the world and specifically in the Metro Twin Cities. This trail would co-exists with existing hiking, Cross Country Ski and general outdoor activity.</td>
<td>(16,14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bud’s Landing site is perfect for a boat launch. While the site has been cleaned up access is difficult. Previously, we could hike down the hill and fish at the landing-why not now?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another bathroom next to the playground would be helpful. The current bathroom is little far away when playing children need to go. Also, adding picnic tables next to the playground so parents can watch their children while eating would be nice to have.</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I suggest a campground at schars bluff, I think this would be a great addition, include rv as well as primitive sites.</td>
<td>(0,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS</td>
<td>(UP VOTES, DOWN VOTES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would love more/longer hiking trails. The ones provided are beautiful, but it isn’t enough, please add more. :)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would love to see mountain bike trails added somewhere within the park. The Hastings area is becoming known for biking. It would be great to capitalize on that and add mountain biking.</td>
<td>(2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a roll off roof observatory for Star gazers</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider adding a Roll Off Roof Observatory for Star gazing. This could be anywhere in the Dakota County Park system and not just Spring Lake Park.</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would love to see more programming here for youth, homeschool, families and adults. Lebanon Hills has wonderful programming and I’d love to see it in Hastings too!</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the large wooden fence be removed for better view of the lake? If fence needed, something less obtrusive.</td>
<td>(3,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would be cool to have nature play. The park could be a place for mental health trainings about the benefits of nature. (EH)</td>
<td>(3,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How about an event for adults with disabilities (EH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used to take kids from a group home here. We would watch birds, go to the overlooks and picnic. The park works great. We mostly spent time in the Schaar’s Bluff area (EH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How about an amphitheater</td>
<td>(0,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anything that gets kids in nature is great (EH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be very interested in culture and history programs (EH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We could use access to water- whether its a splash pad, pool, canoe access, or shore fishing or all of the above! Our campers are bused to go do any outside activities and having them right at camp would provide a richer experience.</td>
<td>(2,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mountain bike trails. The park already has a huge paved trail that destroyed a rare Bluff Prairie. Mountain bikes can scare and harm Wildlife and increase erosion, as the trails are widened with use, esp. around curves. Mountain bikes also leave bike parts in use areas, increasing litter and trash. Mountain bikes also do not coexist well with other park users.</td>
<td>(19, 11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some hiking trails here would be very nice. The MRT is not conducive to hiking. The addition of hiking trails would need to consider safety for all while crossing the two bridges over the ravines. Bikes are traveling quite fast (I know I am) after the descent and prep for the ascent on the other side. The current hiking trails do not do justice to the beauty of this park.</td>
<td>(4,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the trail walk as far as I can get. (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would like to see a trail to remainder of MRT. (OH)</td>
<td>(2,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can we work together to further each other’s goals? Hotel being built in the City of Hastings, for example. (Dave and Bruce from City of Hastings) (OH)</td>
<td>(2,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrower hiking trails - soft surface (OH)</td>
<td>(4,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead-end trail here-connect back to the system (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park is long something in the middle not hike same road down to the north (OH)</td>
<td>(1,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would be nice to see a short 1.0 to 1.2 mile loop in east end of park. I coach middle school XC running and would like to run here. (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camper cabins like in whitetail woods (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love the park - hiking longer trails (OH)</td>
<td>(2,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test plot of trees 2050 start planting demonstration for what to plant for climate change (OH)</td>
<td>(5,0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea</th>
<th>Up Votes</th>
<th>Down Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking would be nice (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft surface trails / MTN bike trails (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep wild area here (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to access this area (MRT for bikes) (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camper cabins would be a nice addition (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain biking on west of park (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4,5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize development (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(5,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Track mountain bike trail / boat access/launch (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckthorn control (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish the bike trail (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s welcome people down to the river (OH)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to finish a spur trail or hard surface west from the Western Trailhead to the Pine Bend trail location. This would be such an awesome and valuable addition, adding safety to the existing industrial/gravel roadway.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(5,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope you all enjoy this trail that Dakota County eminent domain from us and you like that they took out many 100 plus year old trees. They cleared out over 250 yards of natural forest to put in this trail. They channeled all of the water flow into our marina. Our marina road is now caved in. Our natural marina is now being filled in by all of the sand from the building of the trail. All for a paved trail that they had to put in before they lost their million dollar paychecks!</td>
<td></td>
<td>(14,4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The current boat launch is not usable unless you have a very light aluminum boat. It gets muddy and is pretty steep to access. Having a concrete ramp with wider turn around would make it easier to come and boat for the day.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Along with all the other activites in the area we would love to see Mountain bike trails. Data analysis and statistical testing reveal that while the impact mechanics and forces may be different from foot traffic, mountain biking impacts are little different from hiking, the most common and traditional form of trail-based recreational activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4,10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would love to see some Mountain bike trails here. With all the options of tar trails around it would be nice to have some Mountain Bike trails in the area as well. What a great way to get more people and kids outside!!!</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2,11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding to this trailhead from Eagan is difficult. I only attempt it on a weekend in the early morning to keep from being run over in Inver Grove Heights or on Blane Ave/140th. Getting this connected to the Mississippi River Trail is vital, or at least fix the pavement on Pine Bend Trail - it’s worse than gravel.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(7,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure the park is not overbuilt with concrete, asphalt, buildlings and turf grass. Keep it natural and keep it “Wild”.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(16,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If play areas were to be added they must be as natural as possible with little to no mowed and non native turf and no pesticide use. The areas should also be educational highlighting the natural world.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(10,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The regional parks were side aside to preserve and protect natural areas from development. The regional parks are the metro’s “state parks” and should be managed to preserve, protect and restore natural resources. SLPR is a PARK RESERVE and as such it must have a high level of natural resource protection. Given its location along the Mississippi River flyway, where 40% of the nation’s Birds migrate through. I strongly support restoring and protecting the park for Birds and other Wildlife.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(11,1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d love to see a campground be put in someplace in the park.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(4,7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS</td>
<td>(UP VOTES, DOWN VOTES)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the original plan for SLPR I believe this area was highlighted for restoration as Prairie and Savanna. Given the recent Audubon report stating almost 400 species of North American Birds are at risk of extinction, esp. due to climate change, it is important to restore and protect habitat.</td>
<td>(19,1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this boat launch Public? I found it on the DNR website as a public launch, but when I looked tried to find it, I found no posted signs, and the road was so washed out I doubt any boat trailer could make it down. More signs indicating public or private and a better road down to the water.</td>
<td>(7,1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be great to see more natural play options for families. Tamarack nature center is fantastic for outdoor play-whitetail woods is attempting some natural play options as well. Lots of families would also appreciate more snowshoe trail options or mountain biking. Another popular idea would be some better overlook points closer to the main building/parking -in addition binoculars stations would be fantastic for wild life watching!! (carpenters added some the kids love)</td>
<td>(9,1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small tent camping for cyclist</td>
<td>(4,12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need to have a better located boat ramp. I thought, that at one time, a boat access was going to be placed where I marked. This lake is already unpredictable and can be dangerous. A boat ramp closer to the islands would be safer.</td>
<td>(10,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A snow shoe/hiking trail in the winter. Every non-paved trail is marked as CC ski only in the winter. It would be nice to have 1 non-paved trail for snow showing or hiking that is not CC ski only.</td>
<td>(13,0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More spots for bathroom facilities. Walking with small children gets dicey when they have to go to the bathroom and we have to sprint across the park for them to pee. Being able to see more of the views of the river would also be nice. It’s grown up a lot in the last few years. It’s a great place to walk a take pictures of the river valley but you definitely can’t see as much as you used to. This is hands down our favorite place to go as a family. It’s an amazing park.</td>
<td>(10,6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to see some single track mtn bike trails developed in the park. There are multiple areas that could support a trail, with the paved trail serving as a connector. With all the people that ride at Lebanon, it would be great to expand it here as well. HS Mt. biking is one of the fastest growing sports in the US - this expansion would open up more opportunities for kids to participate.</td>
<td>(11,17)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
### SOCIAL PINPOINT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THIS NEEDS WORK</th>
<th>(UP VOTES, DOWN VOTES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’d love to see a nature play area. The current playground gets so hot. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We want the MRG to connect north. When is that going to happen? (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The park is hard to find (Y).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More handicapped accessibility at the archery trailhead and the picnic area. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve never been to the middle of the park because there is no access. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade is needed at the playground. I took my grandson here and there were bee hives in the equipment and the equipment was hot. (Y)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastview High School used to take the cross country running team here. We stopped because kids would get hurt on the trails and there was no way to easily get them out. A golf cart or ATV for emergencies would help. (DCTC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends took me to the park once, but I can’t find it. I wish there was better signage and the map app directions are incorrect. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a photographer I have to buy a permit, but many people do not pay it and still take pictures. Either drop the fee or enforce it. (Y)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The playground needs shade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Really hope historical sites like the historic home are recognized in the plan.</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We ski here; the trails are beautiful but you have to be lucky with the conditions (EH)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand on road gets on bike path (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve river/boat access (OH)</td>
<td>(1,0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’d like to use this park quite often for recreation and exercise but if there’s a strong westerly wind, the trailhead and trails in Rosemount off Fahey smell absolutely awful from the toxic haze Spectro Alloys produces. It’s not enjoyable or even useable on the days with a westerly wind, so check the weather before you go. Your eyes burn and it can’t be safe to breathe. It’s too bad considering this is supposed to be a nature preserve.</td>
<td>(3,0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dakota County currently has numerous partnerships with local community organizations which use Spring Lake Park Reserve. To better understand how these organizations use the park and how the park is meeting their needs, a separate survey way created and sent to contacts at organizations including but not limited to: Endless Summer Trail Rn Series, Rocksteady Running, Casa de Esperanza, Hastings Mountain Bike Club, Hastings Sharks, Moms on the Run - Hastings, Upper Midwest Trail Runners, and DCL - Pleasant Hill.

**SURVEY RESULTS**
Participants had largely visited Spring Lake Park Reserve in the last three years, except for one who had not heard of the park before. Many organizations had rented space or held an event or gathering at the park. The responses were positive regarding how the facilities met the needs of each organization however none of the participants had used Camp Spring Lake Retreat Center. Schaar’s Bluff Gathering Center was the most widely used facility in the park. Below are lists of the likes, dislikes, and suggestions provided by the organizations. Several organizations used the park for its trails and thus a request for more trails and trail types was the most common request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you like best about the park?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The park is kept up very well and due to the size of the park it is a one stop shop to do a lot!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The unpaved hiking, running and ski trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Such a beautiful view. It is amazing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural habitat for wildlife and separate trails for wildlife walkers and bikers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use it primarily for running. We enjoy the paved trails and the unpaved. They provide us with variety and beauty close to the city of Hastings. We especially like running here in the winter as the paved trails are some of the best kept trails around!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s so beautiful! And the Gathering Center worked great for our event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The views and the restored prairie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Such a beautiful setting. Plus the gathering center room looks like the great hall of Hogwarts when it’s dark outside and the pendant lights are on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The view and the visitor center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful scenery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you like least about the park?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of hiking and snowshoe trails in the winter. Believe the park could benefit from more single-track type hiking trail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no mountain bike trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being nearly run over by bikers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting the farm odors while in the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not accessible by public transportation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flies in the visitor center.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please describe any changes (or additions) that we could make in the park’s facilities or amenities that would better fit your organization’s needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Request</th>
<th>Proposed Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think what you are currently doing is on target... get more people involved so that they know everything that can happen at the park.</td>
<td>Additional hiking, running and snowshoe trails in portions of the park that do not currently have them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional hiking, running and snowshoe trails in portions of the park that do not currently have them.</td>
<td>The addition of single-track mountain bike trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphitheater, Kayak &amp; Canoe Rental, Playgrounds, and Splash Pad (organization that has never used the park.)</td>
<td>None at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The addition of single-track mountain bike trails.</td>
<td>Bird safe glass in facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at this time.</td>
<td>Extend hours to access the bathrooms at the Gathering Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird safe glass in facilities.</td>
<td>A few more markers on the unpaved trails to show the way to go – there are just a few places that can turn you around because there are so many little loops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend hours to access the bathrooms at the Gathering Center.</td>
<td>More mileage for all season use (i.e., able to use during winter when ski trails are groomed). Requires thoughtful layout so snowshoes and shoe footprints don’t cause issues with groomed ski trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few more markers on the unpaved trails to show the way to go – there are just a few places that can turn you around because there are so many little loops.</td>
<td>Blinds on the top windows to block sunlight on presentation screens. Quieter hand dryers so we can better hear the presentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More mileage for all season use (i.e., able to use during winter when ski trails are groomed). Requires thoughtful layout so snowshoes and shoe footprints don’t cause issues with groomed ski trails.</td>
<td>I like it as is.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you could wave your magic wand, what would you like to see in order to make Spring Lake Park Reserve the best park ever?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Request</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think that it might be against the philosophy of the park but an area where a variety of animals have some open range would be a draw for younger families to visit. (Example: Goats in an area, ducks, etc.)</td>
<td>Additional hiking, running, and snowshoe trails in portions of the park that do not currently have them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional hiking, running, and snowshoe trails in portions of the park that do not currently have them.</td>
<td>The addition of more family activities, free concerts &amp; plays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The addition of more family activities, free concerts &amp; plays.</td>
<td>Some single-track mountain bike trail loops with varying degrees of difficulty to encourage riders off all levels to enjoy the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some single-track mountain bike trail loops with varying degrees of difficulty to encourage riders off all levels to enjoy the park.</td>
<td>Get rid of the times the farm smells are so bad you have to hold your breath. More unpaved trails to explore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get rid of the times the farm smells are so bad you have to hold your breath. More unpaved trails to explore.</td>
<td>More miles for sure. It’s nice to have toilets available early morning (Lebanon Hills doesn’t open them until 7:00 even though the park opens earlier.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More miles for sure. It’s nice to have toilets available early morning (Lebanon Hills doesn’t open them until 7:00 even though the park opens earlier.)</td>
<td>Don’t promote it too much. Masses of people are not necessarily the best metric for the best park ever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t promote it too much. Masses of people are not necessarily the best metric for the best park ever.</td>
<td>Maybe more walking paths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe more walking paths.</td>
<td>If I could work there every day!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mississippi River Water Trail
There is a gap in camping in the metro area along the Mississippi River Water Trail. At minimum it would be great to see some boat camping sites. Sites need a cleared area, picnic table, fire ring and pit toilet. It would also be nice to see a day use area – a cleared area for people to stop and eat lunch.
Any additional camping like tent sites and camper cabins would be a welcome amenity for the water trail.
The MnDNR points out the park on the water trail maps.

Boat Launch
There may be challenges with completely closing the existing boat launch due to the way the land was purchased. It may be possible for the current launch to be walk in only, particularly if there is a second drive in launch.
The DNR does not need to weigh in on new site locations within the park, particularly if they will be providing a higher level of service that the current launch. A new launch should be ADA accessible. It is unclear if or when the MnDNR would be able to help pay for a new launch location.

Future Project Input
Once there are concepts, a meeting might be beneficial, particularly related to the boat launch.

MnDNR – Wildlife
Bob Fashingbauer, Area Wildlife Supervisor, 10/14/19
When the land was purchased for the current boat launch, there was an agreement between Gene Joseph, the County and the DNR there would be a boat launch area provided for future hunters and non hunters alike on Gene Joseph’s land (now part of the park).

Kaposia Archers
Adam Heinz, Kaposia Archers, 10/15/2019
• Kaposia Archers are no longer an organized club. The club declined and ended when the range was not part of the membership. You cannot run a tournament if the tournament fee and range fee are added together. It is too much. The same is true for league fees.
• The range at Spring Lake Park is a nice course, there is nothing wrong with the facility
• Kaposia Archers used to shoot at Spring Lake Park Reserve, but the fees were too high.
• The range needs more advertising. Younger archers to not know it exists.
• Now, people prefer 3-D courses. The targets are $3,000-$5,000 and they need to be maintained.
• Most ranges are run by archery clubs or are part of a gun club. The clubs provide leagues and tournaments which peak interest to become caretakers, provide manpower, and promote the range to get membership.
• Most clubs have a regular practice range.
• Range fees are used for tournaments and leagues. Usage fees are part of club dues.
• There are quite a few clubs in Wisconsin that have tournaments. They travel to each other’s courses and have tournaments. These clubs also provide youth and women’s training programs and run in the summer and winter. Schedule is below.
There is an archery club in Lakeville – South Forty Archers. The range is part of a park and has both a range and a target range.

- Walnut Hill Park Archery Range 999 Wilderness Run Rd Eagan
- Schaffer performance Archery in Burnsville
- Burnsville Archer Park archery range on Zenith Ave near Rudy Kraemer Nature Preserve
- South St. Paul has an archery range and a target range.

**Dakota County Arts Advisory Committee**

10/8/2019

The Arts Advisory Committee was enthusiastic about the Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan, interested in providing input and feedback throughout the year long planning process, and interested in how they could start preparing now to integrate art into future park improvement projects at Spring Lake Park. In addition they expressed interest in expanding art in parks, mentioned that arts and parks are an opportunity to engage and strengthen a stronger community connection, and the arts and parks collaboration provides opportunities for new partnerships.

**Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District**

10/2019

From an SWCD perspective, addressing the gully stabilization(s) is an important part of the natural resource management planning process. We have talked about including the gully erosion in the plan before as a means to plan and budget.

**Hastings Family Service**

10/28/2019

Maddie Milliren, Program and Administrative Assistant

Hastings Family Service provides a variety of emergency and supportive services to persons in Independent School District 200. Services include a food shelf, a thrift store, transportation for grocery shopping, meals on wheels, emergency assistance, and school supplies.

Some of the barriers for visitors to Spring Lake Park Reserve are awareness, transportation, and cost. Incentives to attend/participate – for example a free meal or a free program will draw people.

Events or outings for older adults living in Oakridge Court, Rivertown Court or Mississippi Terrace may be interested in events at the park if transportation is provided. In the Summer, transportation is provided to meals served at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church. It is very popular and the older adults love the event because it is mixed ages with many children in attendance. Potential ways to reach people through Hastings Family Service are a paper survey or comment box in the lobby. December would be a good time to seek input as there is a lot of traffic for the North Poll Room for Christmas shopping and the Adopt a Family program. The holiday event is December 11-13 and December 17-19. People will be more likely to participate if there is an incentive.

Other organizations that Dakota County Parks could consider reaching out to include:

- The Equity Board – Derrick Jaeger with the YMCA is on the board
- Our Savior’s Lutheran Church
- Lewis House & Outreach Services – 360 Communities
South St. Paul Early Childhood Family Education Parent Group
11/5/2019 Parent Time; group of 8 mothers

Spring Lake Park Reserve

Parents were given a brief overview of the Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan project and asked what activities or improvements they would like to see at the park.

- Two of the participants had been to Spring Lake Park Reserve.
- Improvements suggested by those who had been to the park:
  - Improve the playground
  - Add a nature center
  - More nature-based education programs for children
  - Camper cabins like those at Whitetail Woods
  - There was enthusiasm for restoring the Minne Lee House and one participant suggested contacting This Old House to do the restoration.

What makes a park welcoming?

- Clean and good condition, kid friendly, paved trails, clean indoor bathrooms, indoor space, garbage cans with compost and recycling options, shade, picnic tables, parking, a map so you can see what is available at the park.
- Along trails, points of interest to draw you along a trail, signs, or a scavenger hunt
- Open space but not too secluded from other people. The park should be well lit, especially in winter.
- Dakota County Parks are clean and well maintained. Not all Hennepin County Parks are as well maintained.

What prevents you from visiting a park in the Dakota County Park System?

- Distance
- Don’t know about all of the parks and their offerings
- A problem with Dakota County Parks is that there is not enough to do. The parks department should partner with local businesses to make people aware of offerings near the park. For example, a visit to Miesville Ravine Park could be paired with a meal at Kings.

How far would you drive to visit a park?

Some participants expressed willingness to travel 30-40 minutes to visit a park with a unique experience. One participant traveled to Maple Grove for the skating track and another had been to the Teddybear Park in Stillwater. One participant mentioned that they had spent a day at Lake Byllesby Regional Park and would go back – there was enough to do for the day – fishing, boating, and the beach.

What types of activities would you like Dakota County Parks to do more of?

- Camper cabins
- Kids camp-out night, like they do in Lorraine Park in South St. Paul
- Music in the park – that will get the community to come
- A market, rummage sale, or craft bazar at Thompson County Park
What outdoor activity do you and your children enjoy?
We don’t spend that much time outside, play in the park, play with sand, tire swings, playground, children’s programs, just being outside, walking with friends and family.

Spring Lake Park Reserve
Parents were given a brief overview of the Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan project and asked what activities or improvements they would like to see at the park.
  • Boating/boat landing
  • Volunteer planting/restoration projects for kids
  • Paved path for biking
  • Binoculars to see view/birds

What makes a park welcoming?
  • Cleanliness
  • Clean bathrooms, not port-a-potties
  • Space for family
  • Seeing police close, especially at night
  • Posted rules
  • No smoking
  • Grills are very important
  • Garbage cans, dog bags, separate spaces for kids and dogs

What do you feel are the benefits of spending time outdoors?
  • Having fun with kids
  • No noise, quiet, peaceful, relaxing
  • Meeting new people
  • Visiting new places
  • Exercise like walking
  • Trying new activities, like kayaking, with kids
  • The kids are closer to nature
  • Mental health
  • Time to rest and take a break while the kids are playing on the playground

What prevents you from visiting a park in the Dakota County Park System?
  • Time
  • I don’t know about the parks
  • Don’t know about all of the parks and their offerings

How far would you drive to visit a park?
  • Point Douglass Park- the water is clean, there is a large area that isn’t too deep for the kids to play, there are a lot of families, but it is not too crowded
  • Anywhere there is nice sand
  • One participant mentioned that she would travel two hours to go to a park, but then would want to stay two days. She had taken a day trip to Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park and enjoyed visiting the cave and the historic village.
  • There was discussion about where to stay if you spent two days at a park – camper cabins (only if they are really clean, hotel with a pool
Email Comments
Date: October 22, 2019 at 2:08:39 PM CDT
Subject: comments on spring lake park

A comment I have about the park is I see a lot of trees with ribbons on them and it looks like mostly Ash. I’m wondering if there is a plan to cut them due to the ash borer. I’m thinking that there is potential to have a timber sale for those trees if that is the intent. It seems to me there is a resistance to using any trees in the county parks and it seems like a waste of a resource and of money. I have been advocating for a look at the management of the trees in the park as potential to get some work done and as park management dictates and save money. I have seen cottonwood blowdown going to waste, Walnut blow down going to waste, and am curious about the management options that are in the plan for the park. Logs from trail clearing going to waste.

With some alternative plans I think there is potential to use some of this resource without affecting the character of the park or its wildlife. Managing the forest trees can be done in many cases with knowledge of wood products, their value and the mechanism for working with small wood businesses that harvest trees.

So that is my input to a plan that is being developed.
Meeting with the Hastings Sharks

Date: October 31, 2019

Attendees:
• Ray Kennedy – Hastings Sharks - Head Coach
• Lil Leatham – Dakota County Parks - Senior Planner
• Anna Ferris – Dakota County Parks - Outreach Coordinator

About the Hastings Sharks:
• The Sharks are a Special Olympic team based out of Hastings
• The athletes are ages 8 and up and participate in a variety of sports
• Participation has a positive impact on athletes in a variety of ways, socially, physically and improving their health

Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan Update
• The Sharks don’t currently use the park at all
• There are four major events per year: swimming, basketball (summer sports), downhill skiing and snowboarding (winter sports). Those two winter sports are not accessible to all athletes and this year the Special Olympics are adding snowshoeing as a winter sport.
• Last year, to bridge the gap during the winter and provide an option for keeping active, the Hastings Sharks worked with Hasting Community Education to coordinate a Friends and Fitness program. As part of this program they went snowshoeing at Carpenter Nature center twice and about twelve athletes participated. Carpenter provided equipment for this experience. It was a very positive experience.
• There is potential to get families more involved in the parks
• Nature-based fitness stations along trails, such as benches made of tree trunks to do sit-ups would be a great addition.

Awareness and Promotion Plan:
• A good way to get the word out would be to send information to the Heads of Delegation of the different Special Olympics teams in the county
• Messaging – “Improve your health” is messaging that resonates. Some people might not intuitively connect time outdoors with health.
• Some athletes use social media and some don’t, the Sharks have a Facebook page (younger people tend not to use Facebook)
• Events
  o Hastings Police has done events focused on building relationships with people with disabilities. Special Olympics also participates in the Polar Plunge in Burnsville.
  o Accommodations for events could include early opens
  o Busy events can be challenging because there can be potential for running and getting lost in the crowd
  o Sometimes closed-in spaces can be beneficial as it is easier to keep track of people
  o Helpful information to know ahead of time would be the number of expected participants at an event and what will be available

Spring Lake Park Reserve as a potential practice venue for the Sharks:
• The snowshoeing season will be from December-February with the competition taking place in February.
• The number of athletes would be around 10-15
• It is very important for there to be equipment available for the athletes to use, especially at the beginning, before they
have their own snowshoes.

- Race lengths are 25, 50, 100 and 200 meters, however it is not important that trails be measured to those lengths for training. When they need to do time trials, they can bring equipment to measure and mark the lengths (for example, removable flags).
- The best times for practice would be weekends, during late morning or midday, too early or late in the day it could be too cold
- They would be open to practicing at Schaar’s Bluff or Camp Spring Lake
- They would be interested in a private outdoor education program to teach snowshoeing to coaches and athletes

Continued engagement in the SLPR Masterplan and Awareness and Promotion Plan:

- Dakota County staff could come to the first practice to talk to athletes and parents

Other contacts we should connect with:

- Special Olympics teams in West Saint Paul and Apple Valley/Eagan
- Ray can provide points of contact.
Barriers to accessing parks:

- Lack of awareness
- Hastings YMCA could be a potential spot to promote, they let HFS come advertise their offerings
- Could print fliers to be included in the lobby or in food bags. They use short, concise, colorful fliers which they have found to be effective.
- Transportation
- Especially for isolated populations such as seniors.
- Hastings Family Service provides transportation for medical rides.
- If transportation was provided from senior living facilities (for example, Oak Ridge Manor, Rivertown Courts, Mississippi Terrace), people would likely participate. They provided transport to the meals at Our Saviors and seniors participated. They enjoyed getting out and interacting with youth.
- Downtown Hastings could also be an accessible spot to travel from
- Currently there is a circular public transport on Tuesday. Could talk to them about getting Spring Lake Park Reserve added as a stop.
- Cost
- This is a barrier to participation
- Could consider giving out free tickets (for candlelight events for example) then people would be more likely to attend and it is a good way for people to get involved.
- Promotion
- It would be helpful for people to have a motive to entice them go such as free food or a meal
- Ways to engage people in the projects:
- Not a lot of luck with online surveys typically
- Could put out on a board or a survey box for submissions in the waiting area
- Biggest season is the winter holidays – many people come to the North Pole Room to do shopping – Dakota County could set-up a both, more effective if staff are present. Could also bring hot cocoa and cookies. Dates would be December 11-13 & 17-19. Dakota County could staff for 2-4 hours and then leave self-guided boards for people to engage in.
- Main way to communicate with clients is by putting fliers in food bags
- People meet with staff one-on-one before going into the food shelf
- Other organizations Dakota County should reach out to:
- The Louis House
- Our Savior’s Church
- Library
- Sparks Program (coordinated by Hastings YMCA).
Comment Cards
Date: October 14, 2019

What do you like best about the park?
• Everything, especially skiing and biking.
• The park was my childhood home.

What do you like least about the park?
• Loose gravel across the bike path where the gravel roads are – dangerous!

Please describe any changes (or additions) that we could make in the park’s facilities or amenities that would better serve your needs.
• Kayaking, zip line, education, nature walks, dog park
• I would like to have the stories that we siblings have written put in the park so that visitors can read and know the history of this park.
• Maintain what you have. Fix the run offs on Hilary Path the trail has caused. Fix the land slide at the Bauer Farm.

If you could wave your magic wand, what would you like to see in order to make Spring Lake Park Reserve the best park ever?
• Kayaking, zip line, education, nature walks, dog park and a bike trail extension.
• Pub goats in the park to control the weeds.
• Don’t take anymore private property. You haven’t done anything with the property that you already took. You still have done anything Bud’s place and Mike’s Mini Mill.

Phone input 10-16-2019
• I use the park once a week and we just love it.
• The park is beautiful, keep it pristine and natural
• We live in Hastings and have attended many grad parties and picnics at the park. We go to the park in all seasons
• We have grown to the idea of the playground and our grandchildren play there
• Our grandchildren go to programs at Carpenter Nature Center, they would go to programs in the park if offered
• We rented the gathering center for our anniversary party, it is a wonderful space and the communication with staff was great. The gathering center is used a lot, it is the best addition.
• We have not used the fire pit area
• We were happy to see the wind turbine removed
• Keep the park safe. Make sure to patrol it – we have noticed more activity in the park and it is very remote
• It is surprising how many people in Hastings don’t know much about Spring Lake Park Reserve.
• Keep the park natural
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

MEETING MINUTES

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETING
09.04.2019

Attendees:
DC: Lil Leatham
TEN x TEN: Maura Rockcastle, Rachel Salmela

Inholding Meetings + Engagement

1. DC to reach out to owners of remaining three inholdings by the end of the week (9/6)
   • DC doesn’t need anything from TEN x TEN to prepare for these meetings.
   • Master Plan update not to touch existing inholding.
   • In order to protect ravine outlets, currently within inholdings, the park boundary may need to shift over time.
2. DC is considering having a separate engagement opportunity with adjacent property owners (around 1.00) to hear concerns. These are likely the folks who will come to the Open House so DC is still working to determine whether this type of engagement is necessary.
3. DC will send invitations to the surrounding 500 households near the park for Open Houses (total of 3).

TAG Meetings

1. DC would like to ensure tribes are part the engagement process but also include other voices—question is how best to achieve this.
   • TAG could be used to make sure there are multiple advisors for the process, but current list of members is large.
   • Option to use focus groups instead of TAG. This was decided as the preferred approach.

ACTION ITEMS

• TEN x TEN to create themes and proposed schedule for focus group meetings.

Stakeholder Meetings

1. DC typically holds focused meetings with stakeholders and stacks them over one day.
   • The format of stakeholder meetings is open. Discussed option for bigger workshop format vs. typical stacked meetings.
   • DC and TEN x TEN agree that a mix of workshop and focused meetings will likely be most appropriate strategy.
   • There is a long list of stakeholders and approach for how to engage with them/ manage how they provide input may vary. (i.e. DNR vs. Running Clubs)

ACTION ITEMS

• TEN x TEN will recommend ideas for format and frequency of stakeholder meetings.

Engagement Materials

1. DC would like (1) board with map that can lay flat, (1) 8.5x11 handout, and (1) activity
   • Handout will be sent to inholdings and used at intercept events. This should include project description and map.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

- DOT voting is preferred activity. DC has ability to reprint boards as needed.
- Activity board should include existing and new activity images. Avoid including things/amenities in the image selection.
- Question of whether survey questions should be included on board or as separate handout.

2. Social Pinpoint will be used to host engagement website
   - Include Map of existing site with intro text and short survey.
   - Map feature should be set up in a way that allows concepts to replace base map as project progresses.
   - Demographic survey information that would be helpful to collect include: age, race + ethnicity, how users are traveling to the park, and how far they are traveling.
   - Website might also be used for specialized outreach to users – hunting groups, event users, running clubs, etc.

ACTION ITEMS
- TEN x TEN create handout and provide DC with a template format that can easily be edited as the project progresses.
- TEN x TEN to setup Social Pinpoint site within the next two weeks (by Sept 15).

Schedule Updates

1. Next upcoming milestone is November Planning Commission. All research and analysis to be packaged for review by end of October.
2. Need to complete one open house, a couple intercepts, site walk with Indigenous community members and inholdings meetings before Planning Commission presentation.
3. Need to send invitation to THPOs for site walk. DC to determine if someone from the Office of Archaeology should also be invited.
4. To ensure project is moving forward at a steady pace – TEN x TEN and DC to schedule regular check-in call and invite BARR as needed.

ACTION ITEMS
- DC send additional possible dates for site walk, TEN x TEN to confirm availability.
- TEN x TEN to propose day and time slot for bi-weekly check-in.
MEETING MINUTES

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
THPO SITE WALK
10.18.2019

Attendees:
Maura Rockcastle, TEN x TEN
Aubrey Tyler, TEN x TEN
Brenda Williams, QE
Stephanie Austin Redding, QE
Lil Leatham, DC Planning
Anna Ferris DC Parks
Samantha Odegard, THPO Upper Sioux
Drew Brockman, Upper Sioux
Steve Sullivan, DC Parks
Beth Landahl, DC Parks
Joe Walton, Dakota County
Autumn Hubbell, Dakota County Parks
Noah White, THPO, Prairie Island Indian Community
Franky Jackson, Compliance Officer, Prairie Island Indian Community
Leonard Wabasha, SMSC
Cheyanne St John, Lower Sioux Indian Community
Inez St. John (Cheyanne’s daughter) Lower Sioux Indian Community

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this meeting is to orient the THPO’s to the 2003 Master Plan and highlight the goals of the Master Plan Update as it aims to establish a truly integrated approach to natural and cultural resources. Input and guidance from the THPO’s is essential in being able to accomplish this. The County and Design Team will continue to seek guidance from the THPO’s to direct the project and are deeply thankful for their time and input.

TEN x TEN (TxT) presented the highlights from the 2003 Master Plan, including the three proposed zones of the park and enlargement plans for Schaar’s Bluff, the Boat Launch, and the Village - reviewing which pieces of the plans were completed. TxT then shared an update from BARR with how plant communities have shifted since the 2003 plans and what the health of those communities are currently. This natural resource analysis will help direct where the Master Plan update looks to place new development and where to focus on natural resource restoration. The group discussed ‘missing context’ piece of the river being ‘post-dam’ and how the islands and lake have shifted since the dam.

PRESENTATION + DISCUSSION

1. Contextual history of the lake should not be overlooked
   a. History of wild rice and leeks in this area
   b. The present-day islands were the boundary of the lake pre-dam
   c. There was a stream that came out by McCarriell Mill as well as falls that joined up to the Mississippi

2. Stephanie discussed the changes of the landscape over time
   a. Changes that are being observed and tracked over time
      i. Water
      ii. Erosion
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

9/4/2019

iii. Quarrying
   b. Question posed: What is the relationship of this place to other places on the river? What is important to include when discussing the changes to this place over time? What is not?

3. The park was established to serve the Metro because the Mississippi River ecotype was not in the park system. This ecotype is the “best of the best” for its kind.
   a. 325 restored acres to date
   b. Most of the restoration reflects the indigenous Minnesota landscape and it is important to protect and enhance them:
      i. Prairie landscapes
      ii. Woodlands
      iii. Bluff prairie

4. For the park overall, 80% needs to be protected (leaving 20% to be developed, currently the park is at about 17%). This is what the master plan sets out to guide; technical evaluation as well as to develop a vision for this place. Currently, people do not know the story of the natural resources here.
   a. Regarding Cultural resources, the most recent master plan stewardship plan does not have a vision nor a clean message. This master plan update will provide that.

5. Discussion on what should be defined as a ‘resource’ and whether everything should be grouped together to reinforce their interconnectedness? Word “resource” is often debated, and one suggestion was to think of them as “gifts”.

6. Question: is there a Bdote Context? Could there be a discussion or exploration of the relationship of people all along the corridor?

7. Leonard and Franky discussed the responsibility THPO’s have to reconnect members of the Dakota community to these sites as they are currently displaced and disconnected. How do we create avenues for reconnection?

8. There is a perceived notion that [members of the Dakota community] know these sites, but that is not the case.

SITE TOUR + DISCUSSION

1. Most extensive dating as far as 10,000 years ago
   i. Lee Mill Cave  
   ii. Bremer Village

2. LEE MILL CAVE
   1. Impacted by human investigation
   2. Signs of flooding historically
   3. Evidence of fishing nets, fish bones, as well as possibly human remains. Leonard asked about the net and whether there were weights on it? Stephanie noted that the evidence was based on similar sized fish bones, suggesting that something filtering fish by size (a net) was used to catch them.
   4. Leonard added that there was a Dakota trail in this area pre-dam.
   5. Very hard to access – should it be accessed? Should the County be monitoring this site or should the indigenous community be monitoring it?
      i. Last evaluated in 2018 for a study by Dakota County to assess bat population
   6. Contents of the cave are disbursed.
   7. Brenda asked whether there were any concerns about the proximity of the overlook, fire pit and trail to the caves?
      i. Leonard suggested looking for evidence of posts in the ground on the bluff above the cave; this could suggest the presence of a scaffold and potentially human remains in the ground. 4 posts

11/06/2019
8. Cheyanne asked whether there is evidence of star knowledge associated with the cave (similar to Wakan Tipi and Indian Mounds bluff)? QE confirmed that they had not seen anything in their research about this.
   i. Cheyanne suggested looking at star maps and overlaying them with a map of SLPR to see if decisions on location were based off the star map. She mentioned that Jim Rock would be a good resource to discuss this further as he has led tribal trainings on this subject. The team needs further direction from the THPO’s in order to determine whether further inquiry is recommended.
   ii. Lil noted that further research on the cave could be done through a parallel process but isn’t currently able to be funded with the current project budget.

3. BREMER VILLAGE + MOUNDS
   1. The village site is an extensive area covering whole terrace along river.
   2. The Bremer Village site on the terrace along the lake and the bluff (Ranelius site) may have been part of one large village. Bremer Village is likely more extensive than maps suggest, each study done in the area reveals more findings.
   3. Above-surface portions of the conical mound was mostly destroyed in the 1950’s excavation. The linear mound is still visible.
   4. There was an overall preference not to bring the large group to the mounds, the THPO’s will come back on their own with GPS and revisit it at a later date. They noted they would like to return with others who are knowledgeable about the plants and the landscape around the mounds.
   5. Standing along the river, Steve asked for help from the THPO’s for what to call these sites? Clearly “Bremer” is not what this village would have been called by the people living here.
   6. Franky stated that the natural and cultural elements are not separate but part of the same system integrated and intertwined together.

4. BUD’S LANDING
   1. Ken Klink has many artifacts – what should happen with those? Steve offered to request a meeting for the THPO’s to meet Ken and see his collection. He even suggested they ask him to return them. The THPO’s said, they don’t want the artifacts back, they would prefer that the County take over them for an interpretive center or museum in the Park to teach people more about their people and ways of life.
   2. Steve noted that last time they were in contact with Ken was in 2005 to assist with the archaeological study. Apparently for the 2018 MRT Trail study, Ken was difficult to get a hold of.
   3. Franky noted that the THPO’s would like to meet Ken and see his collection. They would love to hear more about where he found them and offered that they could share what they know about how some of those objects may have been used. He said they were not ethnocentric and are interested in hearing stories about these places from the other people who lived here.
   4. The group discussed a “cultural center” to display Ken’s collection and possibly other materials.

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION DURING THE TOUR:
   1. Franky asked whether the County would be in support of a planting/foraging strategy and a method for providing permits to allow for harvesting and foraging by indigenous community members on the site? Does the County have any protocols for this at other sites?
   2. Has the County studied the feasibility of bringing wild rice back? Prairie Island is re-introducing wild rice and could be a resource in this. Franky offered to give Dakota County a
tour with the Prairie Island natural resource managers. Dakota County has done feasibility studies on wild rice, but the river water levels and pollution levels are too high.

3. QE asked the THPO’s what plants might be missing here, they asked for the current plant inventory to review.

4. TEN x TEN asked how the THPO’s wanted to be involved in this project going forward but didn’t get guidance on what the process should look like.

5. While driving Sam O. asked if the county has any documentation of lightning strikes in the park. Franky noted that David Macki has done some research and published but the materials are not widely accepted for endorsed by indigenous communities. Macki’s hypothesis has to do with correlation between mound burial locations and lightning strikes.

6. Franky also noted there is new technology (lidar, GPR) that helps with understanding of mound sites through non-intrusive investigations.

7. Franky indicated that the county should contact MIAC to have them develop a mound management plan.

8. The SHPO is planning to do a statewide inventory to identify sites and materials associated with the mounds (similar to Iowa)

9. We stopped at an overlook with an interpretive wayside (Button Factory). The view from the overlook is obscured by vegetation. Team should work with THPOs to consider if any vegetation should be removed/pruned to open the view and if so, how. Leonard spoke about the water spirit. Cheyenne commented that removing trees to open up views may not be something she would support.

10. The THPOS were very interested in the County’s Bison Reintroduction Project and offered to connect County Staff with Prairie Island Indian Community staff who handle bison.

11. The THPOS offered insight into what the land would have looked like pre-dam and pre-Euro-American settlement.

12. Leonard mentioned that he was happy to see indigenous language on the signs near the Gathering Center.

13. Cheyenne made the point that building a relationship with indigenous people is important. She suggested bringing indigenous student groups to the park, getting SLPR on the Minnesota Humanities Center tours, developing a permit for harvesting and foresting as examples of how Dakota County could build the relationship.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. Dakota County to reach out to Ken Klink and set up a meeting for the THPO’s to see his collection.

2. Dakota County to provide the THPO’s with a full plant inventory of all restored landscapes.

3. Dakota County to confirm whether they have any documentation or data on lightning strikes in the park.

4. Dakota County to evaluate next steps and process for developing a Mound Management Plan with MIAC.

5. Dakota County to confirm their interest in allowing harvest and foraging permits for indigenous community members in the Park. Do they have any protocols for this in other sites that could be a model or reference here?

6. TEN x TEN will prepare a draft engagement plan with dates for future engagement and distribute it to the THPO’s for review and feedback.

7. TEN x TEN will follow up individually with each THPO to discuss next steps and hear from each person how they want to be involved in the project going forward. TxT will then formulate a proposed engagement plan for review.

8. QE to follow up with Franky to discuss and review Prairie Island’s oral history transcripts of elders who talk about walking across the shallow waters in this area.
9. THPO’s to confirm and clarify their suggestion regarding evidence of star knowledge associated with the Lee Mill Cave site. Jim Rock was a recommended resource, should Dakota County or the Design Team reach out to Jim to consult on whether further research/documentation would be of value for this project?
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

MEETING MINUTES

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM AND TOURISM STAKEHOLDER MEETING
10.14.2019

Attendees:
Maura Rockcastle, TEN x TEN
Rachel Salmela, TEN x TEN
Lil Leatham, DC Planning
Kurt Chatfield, DC Planning
Anthony Nemcek, Rosemont Community Development
Tracey Kinney, Met Council
Autumn Hubbell, DC
Anna Ferris, DC Outreach
Beth Landahl, DC Parks
David Youngren, Hastings
Amy Rowan, YMCA
Derrick Jaeger, YMCA
Tom Schuster, Rosemont
David Youngren, Hastings
Chris Jenkins, Hastings

OVERVIEW

TEN x TEN (TxE) presented the highlights from the 2003 master plan, including the three proposed zones of the park and enlargement plans for Schaar’s Bluff, the Boat Launch, and the Village - reviewing which pieces of the plans were completed. TxE then shared an update from BARR with how plant communities have shifted since the 2003 plans and what the health of those communities are currently. This natural resource analysis will help direct where the master plan update looks to place new development and where to focus on natural resource restoration. The group reviewed the 2003 master plan mission and goals to understand the direction of the update and discuss what, if any, updated to the goals are needed.

DISCUSSION

Strengths of Spring Lake Park Reserve

1. The park is great for the setting and birding opportunities.
   - The view is spectacular – once people find it, they will come back and the park will grow in popularity.
   - While the view is great, the bluff edge can be worrisome for parents.
   - In comparison to other parks for birding – this park is less popular than those in the Twin Cities due to proximity. The remote quality here is an asset because there is more variety and a higher concentration of birds.

2. Cross County Skiing at SLPR is amazing – some parts of the trail make one feel like they aren’t in the state of Minnesota anymore.

3. The bike trail is used regularly by locals.
   - It would be nice to have parking and trail access near the halfway point of the park for both walkers and bikers.
   - The distance of the park is hard with kids and there is no good loop or turn around point.

4. Spring Lake Park Reserve has large picnic areas and continues to provide good space to picnicking.

5. Archery Range is a fantastic resource.
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• If DC is interested, there might be opportunities to partner with bow shops to do 3D targets and expand events. Most bow shops have their own indoor ranges but are often looking for other things to do.
• Allowing individuals to use/rent broadhead targets would also increase usership. This is a very important part of bow hunting so would expand the audience.
• Camp Streeflind offers slingshot camp for 4th-6th Grade. They have a small range in comparison to SLPR. This could be another opportunity for partnership.

Weaknesses of Spring Lake Park Reserve

1. The term “reserve” might deter people from coming, people think it is a protected area and not open for the public.
2. The shoreline is not as pristine as we would like to think – lots of garbage collects along this shore.
3. Multiple stakeholders mentioned the lack of access to the river as an issue.
   • Visitors think they are going to a Lake. There is an opportunity to interpret that and connect people to the story here.
   • There is no facility for shore fishing.
   • The water level fluctuates with the dam making it a challenging area to address. When the water is low, there are 6-8’ of shoreline that one can walk along.
   • The new Mississippi River Trail bridge over the seep could be a good opportunity to provide water access.
4. The history component of the park is not obvious to visitors and should be promoted more.
   • Ideas included: bring out old history (apple orchard), bring students here to engage with park stewardship
   • Interest in learning if the park had any connection to Lewis and Clark as an interpretive element opportunity.
5. There is concern that the park does not provide enough seasonal programming.
   • Things need to draw people in Fall and Winter.
   • Creating a “Trail Challenge” could be a good draw. Fairbanks Northstar Parks and Recreation.
   • Some group members felt that not many people are utilizing the trails during the summer because of the heat and lack of conditioned space as relief.
   • Having unique events would be a good draw, including more youth programming or reptiles in the gathering center, for example.
   • Opportunity to connect programming with schools. More educational programming here would help build a stronger community.
   • YMCA does events at the retreat center that are open to families and the public. There is an opportunity to expand the partnership and marketing. 75% of kids attending the camp come from Rosemont and Eagan. Fewer people coming from West St. Paul and Hastings.
   • YMCA teens biked from adjacent camp to Schaar’s Bluff but arrived with little to do but walk around. Would be great to have programming at the Gathering Center as a destination.

What are the most successful parks in the Region?

1. One of the main draws of regional parks is camping opportunities
   • Lebanon Hills and places in Washington County now provide great camping options.
   • Camping opportunities are lacking in the Hastings area.
   • In order to have successful camping it is preferable that there are also other things to do – trails, playground and a town close by desirable activities.
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- SLPR is well situated for this as you can go for a two-hour hike and then drive a short distance to Hastings for lunch.

2. St. Croix Bluffs is a great regional park – the draw is mostly the setting of the bluffs, like Spring Lake Park Reserve, and less the amenities.
   - Group acknowledged that St. Croix Bluffs still has good amenities – such as boat launch, swimming area and extensive trail network.
   - If the goal is to increase number of visitors, then adding these types of amenities would help.
   - Hastings no longer has a designated swim area. Having this amenity available at SLPR would be a great way to attract the local community.

3. White Tail Woods and Lebanon Hills offer a lot of programming, but not something that people from the Twin Cities are likely to travel for.

4. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and Namacogen River are good precedents for SLPR.
   - They can provide “lessons learned” regarding camping and law enforcement issues.
   - Boat-in campsites have less issues than drive-in campsites.

5. Hidden Falls, Crosby Farms and the Mississippi River Gateway Dam are regional draws. Each have highly programmed areas with some passive recreation offerings.

6. Pine Point Regional Park Master Plan for Washington County
   - Cultural/historical resource management is doing a nice job so far.

What gaps exist in the regional and local recreational system and could Spring Lake Park Reserve help fill those?

1. There is a gap in camping along the Mississippi River State Water Trail through Minnesota at the National Recreation Corridor.
   - Camping in Anoka is a good precedent to create a network of camping along the river.
   - NPS confirmed that the trend of long “adventure” treks is growing. More camping is needed to support this activity and SLPR would be a nice stopping point.
   - 2003 Master Plan located campgrounds near the retreat center, which would be a conflict for the YMCA camp. Important to the group that any proposal for a campground be located in areas with the lowest conditions of natural resources.

2. Opportunity to turn the YMCA camp into a premier day camp if the YMCA is interested.
   - Indoor facility is already a great asset that most other local Y Camps don’t have.
   - Provide better access to the river and opportunities to utilize the river for activities for older campers. Boat access is not desirable for YMCA camp as campers are bused to Lake Rebecca weekly, which is a more controlled environment and safer. Water current in the Spring Lake and snags are a concern for younger children.
   - Provide swimming or splash pad for campers.
   - Expanding the low ropes initiative would be amazing. Eventually would be interested in giving the public access to these facilities.
   - Provide outdoor education year-round.
   - Rock climbing might be of interest, but the YMCA has safety concerns with implementing this.

3. Watercraft or bike rentals would help people use the park – especially including bike rentals for children.
   - Connect with local community’s police departments to acquire bikes. Will need some updating but might be most effective way to acquire children’s bikes.
   - Zagster might be another source.

4. There is a gap in regional parks that serve underserved communities well.
• Weave in stories of the history of immigration so that people can see themselves in this place.
• 2017 Met Council Report is best resource for understanding what barriers might face different underserved groups.
• Mississippi Gateway Regional Park is a good example of a park that is trying to address this issue. Providing more developed areas create baby-steps into natural resources with more defined spaces with higher level of built areas that interpret natural resources.

What are current challenges facing tourism in the area? What are some of the focus areas for Hastings/Rosemont right now?

1. Hastings is focusing on the Riverwalk. There are three main parts of town and the tourism part is along the river.
2. Access is always a perceived barrier – this park is free.
3. Adopt a Trail programs are popular.
4. Orchards with you pick apples or berries could be fun and connect to agricultural history of this place.
5. There is a need for more adult programming – potentially focusing on photography and history.
6. Including a zipline at the park would be a big attraction.
7. The group asked if there were any river excursions that operate out of this area.
   • While the river is too shallow for most boats it might still be worth exploring for paddling excursions.
   • Potential to partner with Rotary Club to take a pontoon boat out for fishing excursions.

Dakota County Awareness and Promotion Plan

1. Strategy for cross promotion and collaboration:
   • Rosemont is willing to put promotional information up on their website or provide contacts for target audiences.
   • Car shows and other local events are popular and could be an opportunity for both parties to advertise together.
   • There is an annual ride from Prescott to Hastings – opportunity to collaborate with the park.
   • Inver Grove Heights will be finishing their trail segment soon. Opportunity to use Facebook page or other platform to say “visit Hastings.”
   • City – County – Chamber collaborations will help expose the park to the larger public audience.
   • YMCA cross promotion opportunities – brochures in Y Camp lobby, occasionally having DC staff at Family Night events, display calendar of county park events.

2. Building awareness to the people served by stakeholders:
   • Movie series in downtown Hastings could highlight something about a different county park before film starts.
   • YMCA runs a program called “Spark”, currently held at a church in Hastings in connection with local food shelter. DC parks could help provide some programming.
   • DC interested in hosting a kid-oriented activity around the masterplan.
   • Arborists visiting Hastings elementary schools around Arbor Day and give students a pencil and a tree. There could be an opportunity to connect with this program for forestry related programming for the county parks.

3. Best way to engage people in the planning process:
   • Go to the brewery in Hastings – this was a successful strategy for the Hastings 40-year plan.
• Regular in-person and online opportunities help reach a broader audience.
• Plan a “Forever Wild” themed Halloween costume for a community event.
• Provide a board that explains what is happening with DC parks in the YMCA lobby or occasionally have a staff member there to answer questions.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

MEETING MINUTES

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
NATURAL RESOURCES STAKEHOLDER MEETING
10.14.2019

Attendees:
Maura Rockcastle, TEN x TEN
Rachel Salmela, TEN x TEN
Lil Leatham, DC Planning
Kurt Chatfield, DC Planning
Anna Ferris, DC Outreach
Tom Walton, DC Parks
Mike Slovak, Commissioner
Todd Rexine, Great River Greening
Holly Jenkins, Wilderness in the City
Karen Schik, FMR
Irene Jones, FMR

OVERVIEW

TEN x TEN (TxT) presented the highlights from the 2003 masterplan, including the three proposed zones of the park and enlargement plans for Schaar’s Bluff, the Boat Launch, and the Village - reviewing which pieces of the plans were completed. TxT then shared an update from BARR with how plant communities have shifted since the 2003 plans and what the health of those communities are currently. The extensive prairie restoration that has occurred since the 2003 plan has been the greatest ecological contribution and the biggest negative impact has been the creation of the Mississippi River Trail (MRT). Barr’s assessment of the existing plant communities has identified several rare species which will be incorporated into another map that is in progress. This natural resource analysis will help direct where the master plan update looks to place new development and where to focus on natural resource restoration. The group reviewed the 2003 master plan mission and goals to understand the direction of the update and discuss what, if any, updated to the goals are needed.

DISCUSSION

Unique Natural Resources of Spring Lake Park Reserve

1. Church’s Woods, including the limestone bluffs and outcroppings in that area.
   - The Canada yew there is very special and unique to see.
   - Not much buckthorn, healthy native composition.
2. Great place to come for birding – this is central city for the migration corridor.
   - Birds are suffering. Their habitat needs to be improved not harmed.
3. Monarchs and other pollinators used this as a migratory corridor as well. High quality areas are essential so they can get through the Twin Cities with enough habitat.
   - It would be nice to have parking and trail access near the halfway point of the park for both walkers and bikers.
   - The distance of the park is hard with kids and there is no good loop or turn around point.
4. The size of the park is unique – especially now that so many of the areas of prairie are restored.
5. The overall wildlife refuge is a huge asset.
6. The ravines are unique and of concern.
Major blow out event this past spring, while an extreme instance, is the symptom of deep seeded issues.

Overview of Natural Resource concerns

1. Wilderness in the City felt the 2003 Master Plan and its vision were great and has concerns about the updates.
2. Adjacent land use will continue to affect the park. There is a need to continue to strengthen those relationships to preserve the park.
3. Development will threaten the integrity of the park. Specifically, there was concern about the methods for making the park accessible – increasing the area of hardscape too much.
   - Group discussed strategy of splitting up areas to create some more accessible areas and others that are more for the able-bodied.
   - All terrain wheelchairs are becoming more common so it might be worth planning for that future.
   - Church’s Woods came up as an area of the park that the group would like to avoid making accessible.
4. The group wanted to ensure that the planning team was aware of the Critical Area Limits and any other restrictions to protect the bluffs.
   - Limits control paved area, how high development can be, and how close to the water structures can be – which are helpful guides.
   - Floodplain islands have a lot of restrictions – no bathrooms for example.
5. Water access in the park makes sense but idea of creating that access in the middle of the park feels remote.
6. Existing wood fence visually and physically cuts visitors off from the river. FMR recommended that the fence be done differently if possible, to help connect people to the river from above.

Natural Resource issues to be addressed in the park

1. Buckthorn and other invasive species in general
   a. Affects quality and visitation.
   b. Requires an ongoing commitment to management.
2. Climate Change
   a. Urban Heat Island specifically and the how parks help offset this.
   b. Extreme weather and flooding events. Run-off from these events concentrates on the new trail and creates new ravines, rapidly eroding the steep sandy slopes.
3. Upland farms shed water into the ravines
   a. Important to push Agriculture community towards sustainable practices to address water pollution issues.
   b. Heavy rain and snow melt runoff with nothing to hold it back, exacerbating the erosion issues.
   c. This might be a more common occurrence going forward given climate change and highly erodible soils.
   d. Could strategically try to manage these areas with adjacent land owners. Some are more open to it than others.
   e. Lack of vegetation in these areas limits options.
4. It is the mission of Natural Resource Non-Profit agencies to ensure people are aware of these issues.
   a. The group felt educating people on the value of parks like SLPR are part of their jobs.
5. One concern for this park specifically is how to achieve the balance of getting people to know and use the park but also protecting it.
What would be the best way to provide access without threatening the ecological assets?

1. A combination of programs and interpretive signage.
   - Guided hikes help show people what is happening where.
   - People don’t always look at signage since they aren’t coming to the park for that.
2. A public awareness campaign would help.
   - There is a lack of awareness about how parks are funded. Typically based on visitation instead of restoration/ecological integrity.
   - If the goal is to increase number of visitors, then adding these types of amenities would help.
   - Hastings no longer has a designated swim area. Having this amenity available at SLPR would be a great way to attract the local community.

What activities would your organization be interested in partnering with Dakota County on?

1. FMR has been doing activities at the park and would like to continue doing so.
   - Engaging volunteers for restoration planning and implementation projects.
2. FMR has assisted the Town of Nitinger with it’s Comprehensive Plan. This effort is not directly relevant for the this planning process but FMR could assist with advice regarding viewsheds.
   - There are no land-use controls of what happens across the river. Being aware that development changes could impact views/experience on the bluff is important.
3. Wilderness in the City is in the process of updating their website to expand volunteer opportunities and would be interested in participating in restoration activities at SLPR.

What precedents combine natural resource protection and recreation/access well that the planning team should consider?

1. Madison Park Precedent – provides accessible surfaces that are not hardscape.
2. Tamarack Nature Center
3. Eloise Butler – different pockets provide access following different rules.

Bison Study Overview

1. Dakota County presented proposal to bring a bison herd to one of their parks.
   - Three parks have the potential to put together enough habitat to support a herd. No park is
   - SLPR can provide 150 acres of range and support around 30 animals.
   - Story Map can be accessed from DC website and Facebook page – provides information on how bison improve prairies and savannah.

What initiatives would your organization like to see Dakota County take on?

1. FMR would like to see more programming about the indigenous use of the site and more on the history of the site. It would be a very interesting addition.
2. Wilderness in the City would like DC to address the damage done as a result of the MRT construction. Planting trees in front of the rock face or encouraging plant matter to grow on the rock ledges would be a nice first step.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

MEETING MINUTES

SPRING LAKE PARK RESERVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE
DAKOTA COUNTY STAFF STAKEHOLDER MEETING
10.14.2019

Attendees:
Maura Rockcastle, TEN x TEN
Rachel Salmela, TEN x TEN
Lil Leatham, DC Planning
Kurt Chatfield, DC Planning
Jay Biedny, DC CPM
Beth Landahl, DC Parks
Kaylen Retka, DC Parks
Autumn Hubbell, DC Parks
Sean Hagen, DC Parks

OVERVIEW

TEN x TEN (TxT) presented the highlights from the 2003 masterplan, including the three proposed zones of the park and enlargement plans for Skaar’s Bluff, the Boat Launch, and the Village - reviewing which pieces of the plans were completed. TxT then shared an update from BARR with how plant communities have shifted since the 2003 plans and what the health of those communities are currently. This natural resource analysis will help direct where the master plan update looks to place new development and where to focus on natural resource restoration. The group reviewed the 2003 master plan mission and goals to understand the direction of the update and discuss what, if any, updated to the goals are needed.

DISCUSSION

What are the most successful parts of the park?

1. Community gathering – in the past and currently.
   • Picnicking is very popular. The setting is beautiful, so this amenity is used consistently.
   • Easy to sell from a facility’s rental standpoint. It is well-kept and easy to understand and use.
2. MRT is a beautiful trail that is providing new access and expanding users in the park
3. Connects people to the river through big broad viewsheds.
   • The vast views make the park feel much larger and helps visitors feel that the landscape is larger than themselves.
   • Visitors can see the river barges and trains that reflect the scale of the region and city at work.
4. Natural resources are an asset, specifically the prairies - even though there is still work to be done.
   • Variation of plant communities is more diverse than most other parks. North facing slopes to woodland terraces and prairies on top of the bluff.
   • Topography helps create this range of ecological communities and microclimates.
   • Geese and other waterfowl migration and gathering is massive at SLPR.
   • Great place to see raptors and spring ephemerals
5. Great location – remote, quiet, tucked in. It is a nice surprise when people first arrive.
   • People know Skaar’s bluff, but when taken to other parts of the park, they are excited.
6. Volunteer efforts are also great programming opportunities
7. Cultural resources most unique and rich here

What doesn’t work currently in the park?
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPENDIX

STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

1. Circulation near Schaar’s Bluff is not working well. It would be helpful to compare how the 2003 master plan presented it vs. how it was built.
2. Existing picnic shelters and playground are at the end of their life expectancy and will need to be addressed in the master plan update.
3. Parent pick-up and bus access to the Retreat Center should be reconsidered for summer camp purposes.
4. There are currently no major maintenance concerns other than wooden timber steps at Archery Range that needs to be fixed but is expensive.
5. DC is currently planning to rebuild the bluff fence using same design.
6. Hillary Path residents feel road construction by County at the top of the road contributing to the erosion. The erosion is significant, and the road needs to be updated.
7. DNR boat launch at Hillary Path is unsafe. Winds make it difficult for small duck boats to launch safely.
8. Reese Property is a historically significant site and it is in disrepair. As it is a prominent post-settlement site it may be possible to apply for historic designation however it needs assessment to determine if it can be salvaged.
   - Interpretive Plan for the Mill site is an urgent piece of this planning effort.
9. Cultural Trail interesting to revisit as part of this MP update.
10. There is a local branding issues for the park as most locals know it as “Schaar’s Bluff” not SLPR.

How has programming in the park evolved in the last 5-10 years?

1. One event that is particularly successful that was done previously and not lately – was home court for high school cross country events. Meets and Regional Conference was held here. Sense of “home field” was great. 1,000 people here at one time.
   - Reason this shifted was due to parking, restrooms and permitting issues – which could be resolved. Didn’t have the staffing then that they do now, and fees were also too aggressive perhaps.
   - If DC is interested in starting this event again, it would require assessing if existing trails are sustainable enough for this kind of use/volume. This is something DC is looking at in Lebanon Hills.
     - There is a proposed workshop with Ed Quinn from DNR to review current trail conditions and get feedback on trail assembly and durability at Lebanon Hills. It might make sense to do a similar workshop at SLPR as the soils and slopes are different and might not be able to draw from Lebanon Hills exactly.
2. Trail Running Races were held for the first time at SLPR last year with 500 participants.
   - DC staff mow additional trails to get the length required. Staff would like to see better race/running trails to provide 5k, 10k, and 20k loops to expand offerings.
   - Event brings revenue to the county.
   - Easy event to manage and is very popular.
   - Event put it on hold during construction of MRT and hasn’t re-started yet.
4. Candlelight event – was a big success with over 1,000 in attendance. Wind management was the biggest issue, but staff learned from the first event to bring battery operated candles.
   - DC plowed a walking trail after first year the MRT was installed, making the event more accessible and easier.
   - Other night events are difficult since there isn’t extensive lighting and roads are not intuitive.
5. Locals will come here to ski, but it isn’t a destination since there aren’t enough miles to make the drive.
6. Winter hiking is non-existent.
   - There is only one trail spur for winter hiking that is not currently worth it.
7. Weekday work groups are popular, family events, big events (more than 80) are trickier.
   - DC is not tracking how many events are requested that SLPR cannot accommodate.
8. There have been requests for more amenities at the picnic shelters, such as a kitchen and more seating.
   - North shelter at Thompson and the White Tails woods large shelter are examples that are serving this need.
9. DC receives 100 or more requests for weddings at SLPR but cannot accommodate groups of more than 80, which limits the number of requests that can be accepted, but it makes the events easy to manage.
10. Outdoor Ed programming happens at SLPR occasionally but requires a space that is not used for private events most of the time.
    - Staff resources and knowing when programming is ready to grow are two concerns to consider.
    - Carpenter Nature Center is nearby, which might limit the potential for SLPR to grow outdoor education programming. Alternatively, the programming should program something different.

Schaar’s Bluff Gathering Center Needs

1. Entryway amenities are missing (mudroom and coatracks, etc.)
   - Groups renting the facilities need more space – but if becomes awkward when the public enter the lobby space and they feel like they are intruding on an event.
   - If both private and public continue to use this building, then we need to solve this and cue it up for a feasibility study.
2. The office has no windows, which is a safety concern.
3. Storage room is where wedding party gets ready, which is not the ideal set-up.
4. The addition of a multi-use space (such as get ready room or mother’s room), more office space, front desk, separate entryway to the main rental space and a more inviting warming area would all help this building meet the needs of users better.
5. The group acknowledged that the building can’t do everything in such a way that it doesn’t do anything well anymore.
   - DC Staff need to revisit these questions and see what approach would align most with the mission of DC County Parks and SLPR.

Future Facility Needs

1. The group discussed if a new facility at Bud’s landing take on some of the recreational/programming uses to allow the Gathering Center to remain a rental space for private events.
2. Retreat Center could be site for broader environmental education programming. Could think about that site in a different way as well.
   - When the YMCA isn’t using the facility, Scout Groups rent it out most commonly.
3. Hennepin County rents Gale Woods barn for wedding events. The pastoral setting is a selling point that SLPR might also be able to create a similar venue.
4. Archery Range is a great feature, but limited amenities.
   - Cannot host large events currently (deer hunt in the park)
   - How can DC embrace it to make it a true destination?
   - Suggestion was made to provide overnight camping adjacent to the range.
5. DC feels the Bison range will be quite an attraction that will increase the number of visitors to SPLR.
   - Operationally this is a game changer. DC may not have resolution on the Bison before this master plan is complete, but timing is likely to be close.
   - Findings will be presented at a December meeting, present.
   - Once the board decides if they want to move forward with bison, which park that will be at and commits dollars, the bison can be available quickly.
• Current proposal at SLPR requires moving MRT ¾ mile north, through an area of white oak trees that was difficult to move the trail through initially. It is anticipated that this will not be a popular topic.
• Brining a bison herd to SLPR will not displace archery.
• Some voiced concerns about visitors jumping the fence and getting injured.
• Costs are not that large for the bison itself (Joe estimated $600,000 for bison herd all included, potentially with the help of a CPO grant) but are significant for demolishing and reconstruction the trail.
• Consideration for new needs that result from the bison herd will be considered as part of the master plan study including: parking capacity, suitability of Pine Bend Road, bison round-up building and any new amenities that will be required.
• DC should confirm how a bison range will be counted towards the 20% development area allowed in the park.

2003 Master Plan Review

1. Generally the Mission still feels appropriate. This may be in part because it is very similar to the mission for DC County Parks in general.
   • The group discussed if the mission for SLPR should be different than the county mission.
   • If it is to be more tailored, incorporating something specific about the community of the place with its unique ecological conditions could be beneficial.
2. Overall the goals of the 2003 master plan feel very backwards focused. It would be beneficial if the goals where updated to capture the future and looking ahead.
3. The goal of making the master plan proposal “practical and can be implemented, and identifies priorities and strategies for implementation,” is still very important to this update.
4. The group discussed how to address the idea of “balancing ecological and recreational/education” since the county has received push back on this from environmental groups at Lebanon Hills.
   • Joe has a paragraph to help describe what the balance means.
   • The county can prove how much investment has gone into development and ecological restoration to help prove that it was equal/balanced.
   • The current mission also puts ecological and cultural first, which shows our value. Any future iteration of the mission should also maintain this structure.
5. “Evaluates existing and future uses from a regional service perspective,” is important but needs to make sure that this is addressed from an equitable perspective. There is room for the language of this goal to be refined.
6. Updating “Maximize educational opportunities and tell the story of the park’s cultural and ecological history” to include the importance of the next generation, resilience, and climate change will reflect the future condition better.
7. From a programming stand-point “the village” “lodge” and “group camp” areas need to be reconsidered. There is still a desire to expand overnight offerings in the park but in a way that doesn’t conflict with other programming.
8. The area called “the harbor” is held up in a long term agreement so this master plan update should not show any graphics for this area and only include enough language to explain what this property would bring the park in the future.

What ideas do you have for the future of the park?

1. From a Natural Resources perspective – the ecological impact of trails is significant event though the % of the footprint is small. Habitat value goes down if it is divided. The master plan update should consider where and how habitat is divided and minimize new footprints.
2. Everyone wants water access. If we think about programming the river the master plan should consider shallows and stumps from a safety standpoint. Operational details could make or break any proposals to do water programming here.
   - Next steps can map this out. Request for more front-end/feasibility study will determine if DC can safely maintain and operate this infrastructure.
   - Potential for this location to support water level variation research.
3. From trail perspective – developing intuitive loops with clear naming would be helpful for visitors.
   - DC doesn’t do this well in any of the parks currently.
   - The MRT should link and enhance the whole park experience. The master plan update could consider what could this trail offer as a destination along the regional park experience?
4. Explore a third access point near the middle of the park, potentially from Bud’s Landing.
5. Spring Lake is a confusing name. There are many different local names that make it difficult to market.
   - Interested in the Mississippi River being acknowledged in the re-naming.
   - Could ask indigenous communities if they would like to assist in the renaming, but not for this group to pre-determine that name.
6. There is still interested in the “Nodes” talk about at the planning commission tour.
DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Date AGENDA ITEM: Information on Process to Update Dakota County Ordinance No. 107 (Park Ordinance)

PURPOSE
Provide Planning Commission:

1. Information on the process to conduct a comprehensive revision to Dakota County Ordinance No. 107 in 2020.

BACKGROUND
Ordinance No. 107 is a far-ranging document that provides rules and regulations on the public use of County park lands. This includes rules for recreational activities, public safety, fair use, and the preservation of natural resources, among others.

The Ordinance was enacted in 1997, and over the past twenty-two years many changes have occurred in technology and the way that visitors use County parks. New activities, emerging safety and social issues, and other missing topics in the Ordinance have created uncertainty for staff tasked with planning and providing park uses. Furthermore, several areas within the Ordinance require clarification to allow for proper enforcement.

Dakota County initiated a multi-phase project in 2019 to update the Ordinance. Phase I, completed in the fall, was conducted by the Office of Performance and Analysis (OPA) in conjunction with the Parks Department and other internal stakeholders. It included conducting background research to provide a summary of pertinent topics that should be addressed in the update. Phase I also involved a benchmark review of ordinance documents from similar agencies and preliminary research into best practices for managing certain park uses.

Phase II is scheduled to be conducted predominantly in 2020. It will involve the comprehensive development of an updated Ordinance based upon the findings from Phase I. This phase will also include reviews by subject matter experts, public engagement, a future PLANC discussion, and presentation to the County Board for adoption.

ATTACHMENTS
A. Dakota County Ordinance No. 107 (Current Park Ordinance, adopted 6/3/97)
B. Phase I Summary of Findings: Topics for Revision Consideration

QUESTIONS
The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

1. Are there topics beyond those identified in Phase I that should be considered as part of the Ordinance update?

2. What guiding principles should be used when revising the Ordinance? How should potentially competing or conflicting issues be handled?

3. In what ways can equity and inclusion be advanced through the Ordinance update?
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Park Ordinance

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**CHAPTER 1 - PURPOSE/AUTHORITY/DEFINITIONS**

**Section A - Purpose**
The purpose of this ordinance is to further the enactment of the Dakota County Park System’s mission as stated in the Dakota County Park Policy Plan:

“The mission of the Dakota County Park System is to provide for the protection and preservation of land in its natural state, while providing for outdoor natural resource-oriented recreation activities”

In doing so, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners deems it reasonable, necessary, and desirable to enact an ordinance specifying rules and regulations in order to provide: for the safe and peaceful use of park lands and trails; for the education and recreation of the public; for the protection and preservation of the property, facilities, and natural resources; and for the safety and general welfare of the public.

**Section B - Statutory Authority**
The Dakota County Board of Commissioners, under Minnesota Statutes, Section 398.31 - 398.35 in performing its primary duty of the acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of County parks, trails, and related facilities and-providing the means for public access to lakes, rivers, streams and other natural features; is granted full power and authority to acquire and establish the above facilities and to operate, maintain, protect, and improve a park system and implement a recreational program. As aid to the accomplishment of these duties, the Board is granted the authority to enact ordinances and to declare that the violation thereof shall be a misdemeanor.

**Section C - Definitions**
“Alcoholic Beverage” includes any intoxicating beverage as defined by State Statute and includes beer and wine as further defined in this ordinance.

“Amusement Contraption” means any contrivance, device, gadget, machine, or structure designed to test the skill or strength of the user or to provide the user with any sort of ride, lift, swing, or fall experience including, but not limited to, ball throwing contest devices, electronic videos, animal ride devices, dunk tanks, ball and hammer devices, trampoline devices and the like.

“Authorized Adult” means any person who is at least eighteen (18) years of age and authorized by a parent or guardian to have custody and control of a juvenile.

“Barrels” means any various units of volume or capacity, as a liquid measure of 31 to 42 gallons.

“Beer” means any alcoholic malt beverage, including 3.2 beer.

“Board” means the elected members of the Board of Commissioners of Dakota County.

“Case Lot Quantity” means a quantity greater than 12 - 12 ounce containers or a total of 144 ounces of alcoholic beverages. This includes “party balls” containing more than 144 ounces.
“Controlled substance” means any drug substance or immediate precursor in schedules 1 through 5 of Minnesota Statute §152.02.

“County Park” means those parks, park reserves, trails and other areas within the County of Dakota under the control of the Board of Commissioners and designated by them as being a part of the County Park System.

“Dangerous Weapon” means any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, or any device designed as a weapon and capable of producing death or great bodily harm, any combustible or flammable liquid or other device or instrumentality that, in the manner it is used or intended to be used, is calculated or likely to produce death or great bodily harm, or any fire that is used to produce death or great bodily harm.

As used in this subdivision, “flammable liquid” means any liquid having a flash point below 100 degrees Fahrenheit and having a vapor pressure not exceeding 40 pounds per square inch (absolute) at 100 degrees Fahrenheit but does not include intoxicating liquor. As used in this subdivision, “combustible liquid” is a liquid having a flash point at or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

“Designated Area” means an area or facility identified by the Parks Director for use in a specific manner.

“Inhalant” means any substance that releases vapors and which is used by a person for the purpose of inducing symptoms of intoxication, elation, excitement, confusion, dizziness, paralysis, irrational behavior, or in any manner changing, distorting or disturbing the balance or coordination of a person’s audio, visual, or mental processes.

“Keg” means a small cask or barrel containing more than 288 ounces of alcoholic beverage.

“Motorized Recreational Vehicle” means any motorized self-propelled, off-road, or all terrain conveyance including but not limited to a snowmobile, ATVs, mini-bike, amphibious vehicle, go-cart, trail bike or dune buggy.

“Nuisance” means anything which is injurious to health, or indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property.

“Park Director” means the person appointed by the Board to serve as the chief administrative officer of the County Park Department.

“Park Visitor” means any person, firm, partnership, association, corporation, governmental unit, company or organization of any kind within a County Park.
“Permit” means the written permission that must be obtained from the County Parks Department to carry out a given activity.

“Permittee” means an individual, firm, corporation, society or any group to whom a permit is issued.

“Person” or “Persons” means individuals, firms, corporations, societies or any group or gathering whatsoever.

“Possession” in relation to a controlled substance means -
   Physical Possession: Having a controlled substance on one’s person with knowledge of the nature of the substance, or
   Constructive Possession: Having once possessed a controlled substance, continuing to exercise dominion or control over the substance up to the time of arrest, aiding and abetting another in possessing a controlled substance, or being in the condition of having consumed or ingested a controlled substance.

“Special Use” means the use of an area or facility in a County Park for the holding of tournaments, entertainment, or exhibitions; or, in a manner not customary or usual or normally allowed for that area or facility.

“Vehicle” means any motorized, self-propelled, animal drawn or human powered conveyance.

“Watercraft” means any contrivance used or designed for navigation on water, except: (1) a duck boat during the duck hunting season; (2) a rice boat during the harvest season; (3) a seaplane. This definition includes but is not limited to motorboats, personal watercraft or jet skis, paddleboats, canoes, sailboards, and rafts.

“Wildlife” means any living creature, not human, wild by nature, endowed with sensation and power of voluntary motion -- including quadrupeds, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles, crustaceans, and mollusks.

“Wine” means a vinous alcoholic beverage containing not more than 14% alcohol by volume.

CHAPTER II - REGULATION OF PUBLIC USE

Section A - Park Hours
1. Parks shall be open to the public from 5:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. unless otherwise designated by the Park Director. It shall be unlawful for any person to enter or remain in a park between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. or such hours as may be posted by the Park Director or be in violation of Ordinance No. 122, Dakota County Juvenile Curfew Ordinance, except when in possession of a permit to do so or when camping in a designated camping area with a camping permit.

2. Any park or portion thereof may be closed to the public by the Park Director at any time and for any interval of time or to certain uses as the Board or Park Director finds reasonably necessary.
3. Open hours for specific areas or facilities within a County Park may be set by the Park Director and may vary from those listed in Subdivision 1.

Section B - Permits
1. Permits shall be required for the exclusive or special use of park grounds, trails or facilities, or for the use of park grounds or facilities when they are otherwise closed to the public.

2. Permits shall be required for any use which has or which can reasonably be expected to have fifty (50) or more persons involved or for any use that could potentially have a detrimental effect on park property or other park users.

3. Permits are issued by the Park Director or designated representative.

4. Permits are not transferable.

5. The permittee or a permittee’s designated representative shall be in attendance at all times and have physical possession of the permit.

6. A permittee shall be bound by this ordinance and any Department regulations in force as though the same were inserted in said permit.

7. It shall be unlawful for a person to violate any provision of a permit.

8. Any permit granted pursuant to this ordinance may be revoked upon the violation by the permittee, or associated individual(s), of any provision of the permit, State Statute, any County ordinance, or rule or regulation of the County Parks Department.

9. The permittee shall be liable for any loss or damage to County Park property or injury to any person by reason of the negligence of the permittee or associated individual(s).

10. It shall be unlawful for any person to refuse to vacate the area designated as reserved by a permit.

Section C - Fees and Damages
1. The Board shall set fees for the use of designated areas or facilities and activities within the County Park System.

2. It shall be unlawful for any person to use an area or facility or engage in an activity for which a fee has been established by the County Park Department without payment of such fee, unless the payment is waived by permit.

3. The Park Director may assess damages to person or persons responsible for any loss, damage or injury sustained by the County Park System.
CHAPTER III - REGULATION OF GENERAL CONDUCT

Section A - Proper Attire/Exposure
It shall be unlawful for any person to intentionally expose his or her own genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or female breast below the top of the areola, with less than a fully opaque covering while in a County Park, if 5 years of age or older.

Section B - Drug and Alcohol Use
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Serve, possess, consume, sell, barter, furnish, give, purchase or attempt to purchase any alcoholic beverage in violation of State Statutes;
2. Serve, possess, or consume any alcoholic beverage, except beer and wine in picnic areas or other areas designated for such use, unless otherwise authorized by permit;
3. Possess in an unsealed container or consume any beer or wine on County Park properties set aside or designated as a parking area, road or parkway;
4. Possess or bring into a County Park beer or wine in kegs, barrels, or case lot quantities without a permit;
5. Be under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substance;
6. Use or be under the influence by reason of inhaling any substance defined as an “inhalant”; or
7. Serve, possess, consume, sell, barter, furnish, give, purchase or attempt to purchase any controlled substance, except the possession or consumption of such substance with a lawful prescription.

Section C - Gambling
It shall be unlawful for any person to gamble or participate in any game of chance in a County Park except when authorized by permit.

Section D - Nuisance/Private Property
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Commit any act that constitutes a nuisance;
2. Place or park vehicles, equipment or property in a manner or location that interferes with traffic or other park visitor’s enjoyment of the County Park or specific facility therein; or
3. Leave or store personal property.

Section E - Littering
It shall be unlawful for any person to:
1. Deposit, scatter, drop, or abandon in a County Park any bottles, cans, glass or broken glass, sewage, waste, refuse or other materials, except in receptacles provided for such purposes; or
2. Bring into a County Park any materials listed in Section E, subd. 1 or hazardous waste, yard waste, solid or liquid waste for the purpose of disposal in receptacles provided in the County Park or on any County Park Property.

Section F - Possession/Use of Firearms/Dangerous Weapons/Fireworks
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Have in their possession or use a dangerous weapon, or
2. Possess, set off or attempt to set off or ignite any firecrackers, fireworks, smoke bombs, rockets, black powder guns or other pyrotechnics or explosive device.

Section G - Interference with Employee Performance of Duty
It shall be unlawful for any person to impersonate a park employee or to interfere with, harass, or hinder any employee in the discharge of his/her duties.

CHAPTER IV - REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO GENERAL PARKLAND OPERATION

Section A - Commercial Use/Solicitation/Advertising/Photography
It shall be unlawful for any person to:
1. Use any County Park or park property for commercial purposes without a permit;
2. Solicit, sell or otherwise peddle any goods, wares, merchandise, services, liquids or edibles in a County Park except by authorized concession or written permission from the Park Director, or
3. Expose, distribute or place any sign, advertisement, notice, poster, or display in a County Park without permission from the Park Director.

Section B - Noise/Amplification of Sound
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate or permit the use or operation of any loudspeaker, sound amplifier or other device for the production or reproduction of sound, except for special programs or events at dates and times as authorized by permit;
2. Use, operate or permit the use or operation of any radio, phonograph, television set or other machine or device for the production or reproduction of sound in such a manner as to be disturbing or a nuisance to reasonable persons of normal sensitivity within the area of audibility; or
3. Willfully make or continue, or cause to be made or continued, any loud, unnecessary or unusual noise which disturbs the peace or is an annoyance to any reasonable park visitor of normal sensitivity.

The standards which shall be considered in determining whether a violation of the provisions of this section exists shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) level of noise; (2) the intensity of
the noise; (3) whether the nature of the noise is usual or unusual; (4) the level and intensity of the background noise, if any; (5) the type of area within which the noise emanates; (6) the intensity of human use of the area during the time at which the noise emanates; (7) the time of the day or night the noise occurs; (8) the duration of the noise; and (9) interpretation of these criteria by assigned staff of the Parks Department.

Section C - Fires

It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:

1. Start a fire, except a recreational fire or a fire for culinary purposes within containment structures (fire rings, grills, portables stoves) in designated areas;

2. Leave a fire unattended or fail to fully extinguish a fire;

3. Drop, throw or otherwise leave unattended lighted matches, burning tobacco products, or other burning or combustible material; or

4. Dispose of ashes or embers except in containers designated for that purpose.

Section D - Aviation

It shall be unlawful for any person to use a County Park as a starting or landing field for aircraft, hot air balloons, parachutes, hang gliders or other flying apparatus.

Section E - Engine-powered Models and Toys

It shall be unlawful for any person to start, fly or use any fuel- or battery-powered model aircraft, model boat, model car, or rocket or like powered toy or model within a County Park, except in those areas or waters designated by the Park Director for such use.

Section F - Amusement Contraptions

It shall be unlawful for any person to bring in, set up, construct, manage or operate any amusement or entertainment contraption, device or gadget in a County Park without a permit.

Section G - Pets in Parks

It shall be unlawful for any person owning, having control or custody of any pet, excluding animals certified to and assisting persons with disabilities, to:

1. Bring a pet into or have a pet in a County Park without it being caged or under physical control on a leash no more than six feet in length;

2. Allow a pet to enter a swimming beach area, nature center area, youth camp, picnic area, playground, park building, or other unauthorized area within a County Park;

3. Allow a pet to disturb, harass, or interfere with any park visitor, park visitor’s property, park employee, park employee’s property, the employees or property of a contractor of the County, or to endanger the safety of park visitors, park employees, or employees of a contractor of the County;

4. Allow a pet to damage park property, resources, or facilities;
5. Tether a pet to a tree, plant, building or park equipment, or leave a pet unattended in a County Park;

6. Bring a pet into a County Park without possessing and using an appropriate device for cleaning up pet feces and disposing of the feces in a waste receptacle;

7. Lead or control a pet while on in-line skates, skateboard, skis, bicycle or any other means except while on foot, unless authorized by permit in a County Park; or

8. Operate a cart, wagon, dog sled, skijoring device or any other equipment pulled by a pet or other animal in a County Park, unless authorized by permit or as a participant in a permitted special event.

Section H - Unlawful Occupancy
It shall be unlawful for any person to enter in any way any building, installation, or area that may be under construction or locked or closed to public use; or to enter or be upon any building, installation, or area after the posted closing time or before the posted opening time, or contrary to posted notice in any County Park.

CHAPTER V - PROTECTION OF PROPERTY, STRUCTURES, & NATURAL RESOURCES

Section A - Destruction/Defacement of Park Property/Signs
It shall be unlawful for any person to:
1. Intentionally deface, vandalize, tamper with or otherwise cause destruction to park property; or

2. Intentionally deface, destroy, cover, damage, tamper with or remove any placard, notice or sign, or parts thereof, whether permanent or temporary, posted or exhibited by the Parks Department.

Section B - Disturbance of Natural Resources
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Intentionally remove, alter, injure, or destroy any tree, plant, or other vegetation, soil, mineral or other natural resource;

2. Intentionally remove materials from, alter, or destroy an archeological site or resource, or site of scientific significance or interest;

3. Dig trenches, holes, or other excavations;

4. Allow a pet to act in violation of Section B, subdivision 1, 2 or 3;

5. Divert, impound or alter a watercourse; or

6. Introduce, release, abandon or dispose of any plant or animal.
Section C - Disturbance of Wildlife
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Kill, trap, hunt, injure, pursue, feed or in any manner disturb or cause to be disturbed, any species of wildlife, except fishing in designated areas pursuant to the State game laws, and except wounded or escaped animals from outside the County Park which may be captured or otherwise dispatched on park property when lawful and necessary.

2. Intentionally remove, alter, injure, or destroy habitat used by any species, including but not limited to nests, dams, or burrows; or

3. Allow a pet to act in violation of Section C, subdivision 1 or 2.

Section D - Release of Harmful or Foreign Substances
It shall be unlawful for any person to:
1. Place any debris, pollutant or other agent in or upon any County Park lands or body of water in or adjacent to a County Park, or any tributary, stream, storm sewer, or drain flowing into such waters; or

2. Discharge wastewater or any other wastes in a County Park, except into designated containers, drain or dumping stations.

Section E - Interference of Park Property
It shall be unlawful for any person to encroach on park property with such items as fences or gardens, or to disturb the natural landscape, vegetation, or structures on park property or otherwise use park property for private use. All setbacks and other local zoning regulations are in effect and apply against properties adjacent to a County Park as they would against property adjacent to private property.

CHAPTER VI - REGULATION OF RECREATION ACTIVITY

Section A - Camping
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Camp except in areas provided and designated for that purpose;

2. Camp in a designated camping area without a camping permit;

3. Occupy campsites in a park contrary to a camping permit, without payment of appropriate fees, or otherwise violate provisions of the permit; or

4. Camp overnight in a park if under 18 years of age unless accompanied by a parent or authorized adult.

Section B - Picnicking
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Assume exclusive use of a reservation picnic site without a reservation permit;
2. Use a portion of a reservation picnic area without a reservation permit if the area is reserved by another group; or

3. Set up temporary shelters, tents, tarps, canopies and other such devices without authorization by permit.

Section C - Swimming
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Wade or swim except at beaches designated for such use and only at such times when an authorized lifeguard is on duty unless otherwise explicitly posted and designated by the Park Director;

2. Allow a child wearing diapers to swim or wade in a swimming area without waterproof covering over the diaper;

3. Take glass or breakable containers of any kind onto a designated beach, into the water itself, or on any lake; or

4. While in the water, use air mattresses, inner tubes or other flotation devices not approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Section D - Scuba Diving
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Scuba dive in violation of Minnesota Statute §86B.601;

2. Scuba dive in a designated swimming area;

3. Scuba dive within 100 feet of watercraft access point; or

4. Conduct scuba diving instruction without a permit.

Section E - Boating
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Launch or land a motorized watercraft except at locations and times designated for that purpose;

2. Leave unattended any boat or other watercraft except in park areas designated for that purpose;

3. Operate a watercraft in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 86B, and Minnesota Rules Parts 6110.1600 - 6110.2300;

4. Operate a watercraft within a designated swimming area or posted Lake Byllesby Dam warning area;

5. Tow a person on water skis, inner tube or any other device; or use a surfboard or kneeboard in a park designated swimming area or boat launching area; or
6. Launch or remove any watercraft from County Park waters in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 84D.

Section F - Fishing
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Fish in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 97C;
2. Fish in an area designated as a "no fishing" area, or
3. Clean fish without disposing of the fish carcass in a waste receptacle.

Section G - Horseback Riding
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Ride, lead, or allow a horse to be within a County Park except in designated riding areas and trails, at designated hours, and during the designated riding season which is set and posted by the Parks Department;
2. Ride a horse which cannot be held under such control that it may be reasonably turned or stopped; or
3. Ride a horse in such a manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the safety or property of any park visitor, park employee, the rider, or the horse.

Section H - Bicycling
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate a bicycle except on designated bikeways, roadways, or trails, and except as close to the right hand side thereof as conditions will permit, and only during the designated biking season which is set and posted by the Parks Department;
2. Operate a bicycle in such a manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the safety or property of any park visitor, park employee, or the rider;
3. Operate a bicycle at a speed faster than is reasonable and safe with regard to the safety of the operator and other persons in the immediate area;
4. Operate a bicycle in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 169; or
5. Park a bicycle except at a bicycle rack when such a rack is provided, and in instances where bicycle racks are not provided bicycles are to be parked where they will not create hazards to the activities of other park visitors, or disturb park activities.

Section I - Hiking
It shall be unlawful for any person to hike in a County Park on trails or in areas designated for other uses, or in areas closed to public use.
Section J - Roller-skating/In-line Skating/Skateboarding
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate skates or a skateboard except on designated bikeways, roadways, or trails, and except as close to the right hand side thereof as conditions will permit;
2. Operate skates or a skateboard in such a manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the safety or property of any park visitor, park employee, or the skater; or
3. Operate skates or a skateboard at a speed faster than is reasonable and safe with regard to the safety of the operator and other persons in the immediate area.

Section K - Snowmobiling
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate a snowmobile except on designated trails, and except as close to the right hand side thereof as conditions will permit, and only during the designated snowmobile season which is set and posted by the Parks Department;
2. Operate a snowmobile in excess of posted speed limits when present or at a rate of speed greater than reasonable or proper under current conditions;
3. Operate a snowmobile in such a manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the safety or property of any park visitor, park employee, or the snowmobile rider;
4. Operate a snowmobile in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 84, or Minnesota Rule 6100; or
5. Operate a snowmobile in violation of any posted trail sign.

Section L - Cross-Country Skiing
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate skis except on designated trails, and except as close to the right hand side thereof as conditions will permit, and only during the designated cross-country skiing season which is set and posted by the Parks Department;
2. Operate skis in such a manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the safety or property of any park visitor, park employee, or the skier; or
3. Conduct a race or event on cross-country ski trails without a permit.

Section M - Other Winter Activities
It shall be unlawful for any person to ice skate, coast, snowshoe, or downhill ski in a County Park except at such times and in such areas designated by the Park Director.
CHAPTER VII - REGULATION OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES, TRAFFIC, AND PARKING

Section A - Vehicle Operation
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Operate, park, or leave any vehicle except upon roadways, parking areas, or other designated locations;
2. Operate, park, or leave a vehicle in violation of posted regulations, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 169, county or municipal traffic codes, or orders or directions of traffic officers or park employees authorized to direct traffic;
3. Operate a vehicle at speed in excess of 25 miles per hour, or in excess of posted speed limits; or
4. Operate a vehicle that emits excessive or unusual noise, noxious fumes, dense smoke or other polluting matter.

Section B - Parking Vehicles
It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Park or leave a vehicle standing except in a designated area and then only in a manner so as not to restrict normal traffic flow;
2. Park or leave a vehicle standing after posted closing hours without a valid camping permit or other permit;
3. Park or leave a vehicle without a handicapped parking permit in view in a handicapped parking space; or
4. Park or leave a vehicle without a boat trailer in a parking space designated for vehicles with boat trailers, or leave a vehicle with a boat trailer except in a designated boat trailer parking area when such area is provided.

Section C - Maintenance of Motorized Vehicles
It shall be unlawful for any person to wash, grease, change oil or perform other maintenance on any motorized vehicle in a County Park.

Section D - Motorized Recreational Vehicles
It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motorized recreational vehicle within a County Park except in such areas and at times as designated by the Park Director.

CHAPTER VIII - ENFORCEMENT

Section A - Park Patrol Authority/Authorized Agents
1. Designated Park employees may enforce the provisions of this ordinance and eject from the County Parks persons acting in violation of this ordinance.
2. Law enforcement authorities where County Park property is situated shall have jurisdiction to patrol and enforce the Dakota County Park Ordinance on County Park property. They also shall have jurisdiction to enforce any violation of state law or local laws which shall occur on County Park property.

Section B - Additional Rules and Regulations
The Park Director or Board shall have the right to issue rules and regulations relative to this ordinance. No person shall violate rules and regulations that may be established by the Board or Park Director.

Section C - Fines and Penalties
Violations of the provisions of this ordinance or failure to comply with any of its requirements, or rules and regulations established by the Board or Park Director, shall constitute a misdemeanor and shall be punishable as defined by law.

Section D - Permit Revocation
1. If any person shall be found guilty in a court of competent jurisdiction of the violation of any provision of this ordinance the conviction shall operate as a revocation of any permit granted by the County Park Department without further action.
2. The Park Director or designee shall have the authority to immediately revoke for good cause any permit or reservation issued by the County Park Department.

CHAPTER IX - MISCELLANEOUS

Section A - Exemptions
All park employees, contractors, emergency and enforcement personnel while acting in the performance of their assigned duties are exempt from the provisions of this ordinance.

Section B - Repeal
All ordinances pertaining to the regulation of Dakota County Parks enacted prior to this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section C - Enactment
This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication according to law.

Section D - Notification
It shall be the responsibility of Dakota County to provide for adequate notification of the public, which shall include placement of a sign at each public watercraft access outlining essential elements of the ordinance, as well as the placement of necessary buoys and signs.
Section E - Severability
The provisions of this ordinance shall be separable and the invalidity of any section, paragraph, subparagraph, subdivision, or other part thereof shall not make void, impair, invalidate or affect the remainder hereof.

Section F - Amendment
This ordinance may be amended from time to time by the Dakota County Board of Commissioners and such amendment may be shown by either marking the section amended, attaching the amendment to this ordinance, or reprinting the ordinance publication.

CHAPTER X - EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall be effective upon passage and publication by the Dakota County Board of Commissioners.

Passed by the Board of Commissioners on this 3rd day of June 1997.

ATTEST: COUNTY OF DAKOTA, STATE OF MINNESOTA

Mary Scheide
Clerk to the Board
Date: 6-9-97

Joseph A. Harris, Chair
Dakota County Board of Commissioners
Date: 6-9-97

Approved as to Form and Execution

Andrea G. White
Assistant County Attorney
Date: 6/10/97
May 13, 1997

Mr. Jade Templin
Physical Development Planner
Dakota County - Office of Planning
14955 Galaxie Avenue
Apple Valley, MN 55124-8679

Dear Mr. Templin:

We have reviewed the ordinance that you submitted on behalf of Dakota County Parks. The ordinance would place restrictions on boat launching, water skiing, swimming, scuba diving and snowmobiling.

I hereby approve those sections which are subject to Department of Natural Resources review, provided the following technical changes are made.

Section C - Swimming should read “It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:”. In Number 4, you should eliminate all language after “U.S. Coast Guard.”

Section D - Scuba Diving should read “It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Scuba dive in a County Park in violation of Minnesota Statute §86B.601;” and “4. Conduct scuba diving instruction from a park without a permit.”

Section E - Boating should read “It shall be unlawful, when in a County Park, for any person to:
1. Launch or land a motorized watercraft except at locations and times designated for that purpose;” and “3. Operate a watercraft in a County Park in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 86B, and Minnesota Rules Parts 6110.1600 - 6110.2300;”. Also, if Lake Byllesby Dam is not in a County Park, it should have a separate ordinance. If it is in a County Park, this part is fine.

Section K - Snowmobiling you either need to put the County Park qualifier before the list of numbers (as in Section D and E above), or refer to the County Park in each number. In Number 1., you need to define the designated snowmobile season, or remove this
language if there is not a season designated by the County Parks. Number 4 should read “Operate a snowmobile in violation of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 84, or Minnesota Rule 6100; or”

Tibor Gallo from the Attorney General’s Office also had some concern about Chapter VIII - Enforcement, Section A - Park Patrol Authority/Authorized Agents and also Chapter IX - Miscellaneous, Section A - Liability. He thought your County Attorney should take a look at these two sections. If you have questions, you can call him at (612) 296-0694.

Please remember that it is the responsibility of Dakota County to mark the public accesses with signs and notify the public of the conditions of this ordinance.

We will have a personnel change starting on Thursday, May 15, 1997. After the County has adopted the ordinance, please send a final copy to: Marcella Jerome, Boating Staff Specialist, Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4046.

If you have any questions, please contact her at (612) 297-5708.

Sincerely,

Rodney W. Sando
Commissioner

cc: Paul Rice - Region VI Enforcement
    Nancy Huonder - Enforcement
    Dale Homuth - Region VI Hydrologist
    Kim Lockwood - Water Access Section
    Duane Shodeen - Region VI Fisheries
    Bill Johnson - Region VI Trails and Waterways
    Tibor Gallo - Attorney General’s Office
    Brian McGinn - Dakota County Sheriff’s Department
## Phase I Summary of Findings: Topics for Revision Consideration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Potential Revision</th>
<th>Ord. Ch.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I – PURPOSE/AUTHORITY/DEFINITIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>Add definitions for items not currently covered.</td>
<td>I. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II – REGULATION OF PUBLIC USE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenway</td>
<td>Consider hours of use for commuters; language on pet leash requirements.</td>
<td>II. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>Add language on provisions for lawful assembly.</td>
<td>II. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>Consider allowing Director discretion to waive or reduce fees.</td>
<td>II. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III – REGULATION OF GENERAL CONDUCT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol and Drug Use</td>
<td>Allowances and enforcement clarifications.</td>
<td>III. B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handbills</td>
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<td>III. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Property, Semi-Permanent and Abandonment</td>
<td>Evaluate use of semi-permanent property in parks; allow towing cars, removal of abandoned items.</td>
<td>III. D, VII. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Littering</td>
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<td>III. E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firearms, Possession</td>
<td>Update language to cover permit to carry.</td>
<td>III. F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tobacco/E-Cigarette Use</td>
<td>Review and update language to conform to existing policy.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER IV – REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO GENERAL PARKLAND OPERATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography, Commercial</td>
<td>Add language covering commercial photography.</td>
<td>IV. A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amplified Noise</td>
<td>Review language.</td>
<td>IV. B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Grilling</td>
<td>Add definition; address provisions for outdoor grilling.</td>
<td>IV. C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drones/Unmanned Aircraft Systems</td>
<td>Consider language covering appropriate use.</td>
<td>IV. D, IV. E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Carts</td>
<td>Consider use of pulling carts.</td>
<td>IV. G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets, Impoundment of</td>
<td>Add language expanding authority to remove and impound pets.</td>
<td>IV. G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms, Use of</td>
<td>Prohibit loitering in restrooms and inappropriate use.</td>
<td>IV. H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping in Vehicles</td>
<td>Add language that specifically addresses sleeping in vehicles.</td>
<td>IV. H, VI. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER V – PROTECTION OF PROPERTY, STRUCTURES, &amp; NATURAL RESOURCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage to Park Property</td>
<td>Add language covering damage from skates/skateboards.</td>
<td>V. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammocks</td>
<td>Add language protecting natural resources from misuse.</td>
<td>V. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving Benches/Tables/Other Property</td>
<td>Add language prohibiting the relocation of certain property.</td>
<td>V. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals, Dumping of</td>
<td>Add language covering the dumping of earthworms or other bait.</td>
<td>V. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeological Digging</td>
<td>Address provisions for digging.</td>
<td>V. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foraging</td>
<td>Consider allowances for the collection and use of certain items by visitors.</td>
<td>V. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>Add language concerning organized hunts.</td>
<td>V. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood</td>
<td>Add language on visitors collecting firewood for use within County Parks.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Detecting</td>
<td>Add clarification language, and allow for certain types of detecting.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic Invasive Species</td>
<td>Review whether AIS statues are enforceable in County Parks.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER VI – REGULATION OF RECREATION ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabins &amp; Campgrounds</td>
<td>Further define the allowances for enforcing park rules.</td>
<td>VI. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping in Vehicles</td>
<td>Add language that specifically addresses sleeping in vehicles.</td>
<td>IV. H, VI. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflatables</td>
<td>Review definition of inflatables.</td>
<td>VI. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangerous Games</td>
<td>Add definition; address provisions for dangerous games.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc Golf</td>
<td>Address provisions for disc golfing.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geocaching</td>
<td>Add language concerning the placement of geocaches.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>Address provisions for golfing.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER VII – REGULATION OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES, TRAFFIC, AND PARKING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Enforcement</td>
<td>Allow for citation of parking violations and towing.</td>
<td>VII. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Vehicle Use</td>
<td>Consider allowances for certain electric vehicles on trails.</td>
<td>VII. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility Devices</td>
<td>See Electric Vehicle Use</td>
<td>VII. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER VIII – ENFORCEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>Review guidelines on enforcement procedures and authority.</td>
<td>VII. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Offenses</td>
<td>Reclassify certain offenses as administrative.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permits, Failure to Display</td>
<td>See Authority.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>Clarify enforcing the failure to abide by signage. See Authority.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Safety</td>
<td>Allow for the authority to enforce supervision of children.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Date AGENDA ITEM:** Update on the METRO Orange Line Extension Study

**PURPOSE**
Provide Planning Commission:
1. A review and interpretation of the analysis conducted
2. An overview of recommendations and future actions for developing an extension

**BACKGROUND**
The METRO Orange Line Extension Study has evaluated needs and options for an extension of the METRO Orange Line between Burnsville Parkway and Lakeville. Routing, stations, projected ridership, operational needs and costs were considered to provide direction on timing, funding and coordination for the future development of the extension.

**ATTACHMENTS**
- Map of Orange Line Extension study area
- Presentation slides

**QUESTIONS**
The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

1. What should be the top consideration for the decision to proceed with developing the Orange Line Extension? Should it be current need or potential for greater success in the future with redevelopment near the station areas?

2. Estimated ridership for the Orange Line Extension is near the lower end of expectations for transitway investments in the region. Should this be the key measure in a decision to proceed with developing the Orange Line Extension?

3. Should the primary role of the Orange Line and Orange Line Extension for County residents be more as a commuting service to downtown Minneapolis, or for trips in both directions to stations and connecting transit services across the entire line?
METRO Orange Line Phase 1

- BRT between Minneapolis and Burnsville
- 12 transit station pairs
  - Amenities similar to LRT
- All-day, reliable, frequent service on I-35W
- Service begins December 2021
The Extension (OLX)

Two or More Additional Stations South of Burnsville Parkway

- Burnsville Center Station Area
- Kenrick Park-and-Ride
- Considered additional stations near Crystal Lake Rd. and CSAHs 50, 60, 70

Study Management

- Oversight by Project Management Team and Technical Advisory Committee
  - Burnsville and Lakeville
  - Metro Transit and MVTA
  - Dakota County, Met Council, MnDOT
Study Components

- Public involvement
- Evaluate locations for stations
- Identify routing and operations needs
- Capital and operations needs
- Ridership analysis
  - Consideration of future conditions
Public Involvement

- Targeted meetings
  - One-on-one with stakeholders
  - Info table at local events
- Online
  - Project website
  - Social media
- Open Houses
  - October 2017
  - November 2019
Burnsville Central Station

- Evaluation showed north or west side of mall are preferred locations for station
  - Considered both BRT and local bus operations
- Uncertainty with redevelopment and changed traffic patterns
- Two concepts developed
Burnsville Central Station

- Accommodate all bus operations, access, facilities
- Different footprints give options to adapt to redevelopment
Burnsville Central Station

- Total costs: $3.0M - $5.1M
- Recommend delayed decision on layout and location until other public and private improvements are known
Routing

• Preference to operate on I-35/I35W to the greatest extent possible
• Leave options open to establish station near CSAH 50 & 175th St.
• 1-2 additional buses to extend to Burnsville Central Station
• 4-5 additional buses to extend to Kenrick Park and Ride
Ridership

Estimation Purpose and Process

• Understand whether ridership at Burnsville Central Station and Kenrick Park and Ride is near regional standards for transitways
• Developed model with Metropolitan Council guidance
• Estimated for 2020, 2040, and 2040 scenario with redevelopment
Ridership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2040</th>
<th>2040 (redevelopment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnsville Central Station</td>
<td>220-240</td>
<td>270-290</td>
<td>490-510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenrick Park &amp; Ride</td>
<td>220-240</td>
<td>260-280</td>
<td>320-340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Passengers per in-service hour (PPISH) for 2020

- 9 for extension to Burnsville Central station
- 6 for extension to Kenrick Park & Ride

Separate process used for estimating ridership at CSAH 50, 60 and 70

- CSAH 50 station may be feasible due to low additional expense
- Insufficient demand for CSAH 60 & 70 stations
Ridership

Regional Standards
• Station boardings: 200 or more
• PPISH, entire line: 25 or more

Considerations
• Focus on performance of entire line, or the increment?
• Kenrick ridership almost entirely to downtown – is BRT the answer?
• Uncertainty with ridership estimation process
Draft Recommendation

• Extension of Orange Line to Burnsville Central Station with Conditions
  • Public and private commitments toward redevelopment of Burnsville Center Mall area
  • Understanding of Orange Line ridership and usage following opening of Phase 1 in 2021
• Kenrick Park & Ride not recommended for service in near or mid term
Study Conclusion and Next Steps

2019
• Finalize Study Documentation

2020
• Seek local resolutions of support
• Seek amendment of regional Transportation Policy Plan

2020-2023
• Monitor progress of redevelopment near Burnsville Center
• Evaluate performance of Orange Line following service launch
Thank You

Joe Morneau
952-891-7986
joe.morneau@co.dakota.mn.us
AGENDA ITEM: Review and Discuss Draft 2020-2024 Dakota County Consolidated Plan and 2020 Action Plan (Information)

PURPOSE
Provide Planning Commission:
1. Draft Executive Summary for the 2020-2024 Dakota Consolidated Plan and 2020 Action Plan
2. An opportunity to provide input and react to the proposed objectives and goals for use of federal entitlement funds for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Programs

BACKGROUND
Dakota County receives federal funds to help address affordable housing and community development needs. The federal funds for the CDBG, HOME and ESG programs are made available to provide decent affordable housing; suitable living environments; and expand economic opportunities; for principally low- and moderate-income households. In order to use the funds, the County must develop a five-year plan and corresponding annual plans that detail the goals, objectives, and strategies for the County. The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) administers the funds on behalf of Dakota County and is responsible for ensuring the County adheres to all federal requirements.

ATTACHMENTS
1. Dakota County CDA Memo
2. 2020-2024 Dakota County Consolidated Plan and 2020 Action Plan Executive Summary
3. Dakota County Federal Entitlement Programs Background
4. PowerPoint presentation

QUESTIONS
The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

1. Do the objectives and goals align with the mission of Dakota County?
2. Are there any objectives you strongly recommend not be pursued?
3. Are there any objectives missing that should be pursued?
4. Are there any other gaps in the Plan?
MEMORANDUM

To: Dakota County Planning Commission
From: Maggie Dykes, Asst. Director of CED, Dakota County CDA
Date: November 21, 2019
Re: Draft 2020-2024 Dakota County Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan

The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) is required to prepare a Consolidated Plan spanning five years for the use of funds for the following federal programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). The intent of the Consolidated Plan is to establish the objectives, priorities, strategies and outcomes to be undertaken with the foundational objective in mind “the future welfare and well-being of the Nation and its citizens depends on the establishment and maintenance of viable urban communities” (Housing and Community Development Act of 1974). The CDA administers the federal funds on behalf of Dakota County. More information about the federal funds is attached.

The CDA is seeking feedback from the Commission on the Draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Action Plan. The draft Executive Summary is attached.

2020-2024 Consolidated Plan
The Consolidated Plan has two functions: (1) the application to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the above-listed federal funding resources; (2) the planning document to strategically implement the funding as federal resources for housing and community development are limited and are not of sufficient levels to address all of the needs. The 2020 Action Plan details the intended expenditure for the three programs.

Dakota County is entitled to receive CDBG, HOME and ESG annually from HUD based upon its designation as an “Urban County”. A formula which factors in the percent of poverty, population and overcrowding is used to determine the total amount Dakota County will be awarded each year.

CDBG
The Community Development Block Grant was created in 1974 as part of the Housing and Community Development Act. The CDBG program is the most flexible in the terms of its use, but is focused on the needs of low- and moderate-income people and
communities. Funding can be used to provide a wide range of activities from infrastructure and public assets such as ADA accessibility improvements to public services and housing like after-school programs for low-income youth and housing rehabilitation loans. The intent is to allow communities the flexibility to choose the program activities that best fit the needs of their community.

Dakota County allocates 75% of CDBG funds each year to cities and townships in a two-tier pool. Municipalities with a population of 10,000 or more are awarded a direct sub-allocation. Smaller cities and townships apply for funding from a competitive pool. The remaining 25% goes towards a Countywide pool that is intended to have a broader benefit and for the overall administration of the program.

HOME
The HOME Investment Partnerships Program was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 to address the affordable housing crisis. The HOME program can only be used to increase the supply of affordable housing for low-and moderate-income households. There are four eligible activities under HOME compared to 80+ eligible activities for CDBG.

Dakota County receives HOME funds as part of a consortium consisting of Anoka County, Ramsey County, Washington County, and the City of Woodbury. Each consortium member decides how to distribute HOME funds within its jurisdiction. Dakota County designates 75% of HOME funds for the development of affordable housing, 15% is set-aside for a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), and the remaining 10% towards administration of the program.

ESG
The Emergency Solutions Grant was authorized as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 and reformed as part of the HEARTH Act in 2009. The purpose of ESG funds is to assist households that are either currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The program has five components: street outreach, emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing assistance, and HMIS; as well as administrative activities (up to 7.5% of the total award can be used for administrative purposes).

Approximately 70% of ESG funds go towards rapid rehousing assistance and stabilization services, with the remaining funds being used for administration of the program and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) licenses. The HMIS is a required software program that acts as a central database for people served by homeless services in the region.

The CDA will be presenting to the Dakota County Physical Development Committee in February and March 2020, and a public hearing will be scheduled for April 21, 2020, with approval by the County Board anticipated on May 5, 2020.

Please contact me at 651-675-4464 or mdykes@dakotacda.state.mn.us if you have any questions. There is much more detail that could be provided beyond the overview presented above, so please do not hesitate to contact me.
Executive Summary
ES-05 Executive Summary - 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

In 1974, Congress enacted the Housing and Community Development Act or HCDA, stating the nation’s cities, towns and urban communities faced critical social, economic and environmental problems resulting from:

- Population growth and concentrations of lower income persons;
- Inadequate investment and reinvestment in housing and other physical facilities resulting in the growth and persistence of slum and blight; and
- Increased energy costs which undermined the quality and effectiveness of the local community and housing development.

The response was to consolidate several overlapping competitive community development funding programs for communities, into one consistent system of federal aid with communities (entitlement jurisdictions) directly allocated a portion of financial assistance on an annual basis.

Dakota County first became eligible to receive a direct allocation of federal funding in 1984 after being designated an “Urban County”. An Urban County is defined as a county with a population of 200,000 or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population of Dakota County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thousands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884, Urban County Designation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to receive federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Dakota County is required to prepare a Five-Year Consolidated Plan, as well as subsequent Annual Action Plans and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports (CAPERs), for the following entitlement programs:
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME); Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Dakota County does not receive HOPWA funds.

The Consolidated Plan lays out the objectives, priority goals and outcomes Dakota County has established to provide decent affordable housing; suitable living environments; and expand economic opportunities; for principally low- and moderate-income households over a five-year period.

Dakota County receives CDBG and ESG funds as an entitlement jurisdiction and receives HOME funds as a part of a consortium that include Anoka, Ramsey and Washington Counties and the City of Woodbury.

Dakota County is designated as the lead agency for the Dakota County HOME Consortium, assuming the role of monitoring and oversight of the HOME funds for the Consortium. As the grantee of CDBG funds, Dakota County directly works with the various cities within the County to provide access to this funding stream (municipal subrecipients) but provides the managerial oversight of the numerous activities implemented with CDBG resources.

The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) has been the administering entity for these federal funds on behalf of Dakota County since Dakota County became an entitlement jurisdiction. Each of the three entitlement programs have eligible activities for which the funds can be used. The CDA is charged with ensuring the statutory requirements of all three programs are met. This is done through an annual agreement with the County.

2. Summary of the objectives, priority goals and outcomes identified in the Plan

The primary objective of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act is the development of viable urban communities. To achieve this, Congress stated three basic goals for the entitlement programs: provide decent housing, provide a suitable living environment, and expand economic opportunities to benefit predominantly low-and moderate-income persons. The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low-and moderate-income households as having an annual gross income at or below 80% of the area median income. For 2019, the area median income for Dakota County was $100,000 for a four-member household.

With the outcomes established by Congress in mind and guided by the mission statements of Dakota County and Dakota County CDA, the following objectives were identified to achieve the housing and community development needs of Dakota County communities.
1. Increase the affordable housing choices for low-and moderate-income households.

2. Preserve and improve existing housing to maintain affordability.

3. Increase access and quality of living by providing public services and supporting public facilities and infrastructure.

4. Support community development that revitalizes neighborhoods and removes safety and blight hazards.

5. Support economic development that enhances the workforce and businesses.

6. Support planning efforts that address the housing, community and economic development needs of Dakota County and continue to foster partnerships with community stakeholders.

The following illustration shows how the proposed County objectives align with the National Objectives laid out by Congress.
As part of determining the priority goals for the five-year Consolidated Plan, HUD requires the jurisdiction to look at the needs of the community. The Dakota County CDA reviewed U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) data, and the projection of future household growth by both the Metropolitan Council and State of Minnesota Demography Center. Additionally, the CDA commissioned a housing needs assessment study in 2019 completed by Maxfield Research & Consulting and conducted a survey of Dakota County residents to solicit their opinions of the priority needs.

The priority goals and the strategies to achieve the desired outcomes of decent housing, suitable living environments and economic opportunity were then developed to serve the broad range of households and to provide benefit to as many persons possible given the parameters of the funding programs.

To support the County’s objectives for the federal programs, specific strategies are needed that will help the County meet its goals. The strategies are further refined into specific outcomes. The chart on the following page details the proposed strategies and outcomes for the three programs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Support planning efforts that address the housing, community and economic development needs of Dakota County, support fair housing choice and continue to foster partnerships with community stakeholders. | 1 | Increase the affordable housing choices for low- and moderate-income households. | Reduce Homelessness | a. Support the implementation and operation of coordinated access entry sites for families, youth and singles  
   b. Support housing stabilization initiatives for homeless populations  
   c. Support the operation of emergency shelter facilities | a. Support all of the goals and strategies with planning and administration  
   • 200 Households provided Rapid Rehousing Assistance  
   • 100 Homelessness Prevention |
| | 2 | Preserve and improve existing housing to maintain affordability. | Affordable Rental Housing | a. Assist households to secure housing through new construction  
   b. Improve energy efficiency of rental units  
   c. Rehabilitate and preserve affordability in multifamily units  
   d. Support fair housing activities | • 360 Rental Units constructed  
   • 20 Rental Units rehabilitated |
| | 3 | Increase access and quality of living by providing public services and supporting public facilities. | Public Facilities | a. Assist in the development of centers and recreational parks for Low/Mod Areas  
   b. Assist MI homeowners with street assessments  
   c. Improve sidewalk accessibility and safety, in compliance with ADA  
   d. Improve accessibility for Public Facilities, in compliance with ADA | • 13,000 Persons benefited from public facility or infrastructure improvement |
| | 4 | Support community development that revitalizes neighborhoods and removes safety and blight hazards. | Neighborhood Revitalization | a. Address vacant or substandard properties that may or may not be suitable for rehab  
   b. Address water and sanitation hazards, such as sealing abandoned wells or replacing failing septic systems | • 150 Households assisted  
   • 3 Buildings demolished |
| | 5 | Support economic development that enhances the workforce and businesses. | Economic Development | a. Support work initiatives that assist residents to access living wage jobs  
   b. Support initiatives that help low-income people gain work skills, jobs and employment history  
   c. Provide financial assistance to businesses to address building deficiencies (exterior façade improvements) | • 2 Façade treatment/business building rehabilitation |
3. Evaluation of past performance

Dakota County has done well in meeting or exceeding most of the goals that were established in the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. As the fifth year of the Consolidated Plan and final year action plan nears completion, the following narrative and graphics highlight the outcomes Dakota County was able to achieve with CDBG, HOME and ESG funding.

Note for the reader: The program year for the funding sources discussed in this plan operate from July 1st to June 30th. Because the 2019 program year will not be completed until June 30, 2020, the accomplishments highlight the beneficiaries and the attainment of goals through a designated period of the 2019 program year.

- Homeowner Rehabilitation Program

As of November 2019, there were over 340 single family homes rehabbed throughout Dakota County. Approximately $7.28 million in CDBG funds has been used to provide low-to-moderate income homeowners rehab loans to complete projects including window, roofing and siding replacement, HVAC updates, and kitchen or bathroom remodels. The loans are zero percent interest and deferred until the homeowner sells the home or refinances their mortgage. Because the loan does not accrue interest, the homeowner only pays back the principal amount loaned.

Thus far this program year (FY2019), 33 homeowners have completed rehabilitation projects on their homes, receiving an average loan of $28,064.
First Time Homebuyer Program

For households looking to become homeowners, the first-time homebuyer program has provided homeownership assistance to 99 homebuyers from 2015 through September 2019. In previous Consolidated Plans, HOME funds were the traditional funding source used to finance the program. Currently, CDA General Funds are the primary source of funding, along with HOPE funds (a CDA-levy funding source).

The other funding sources invested into the homebuyer program allow for households to be serviced above the 80% area median income threshold.
• **New Affordable Housing Construction**

Dakota County has prioritized spending HOME funds, approximately $540,000 each year, on the development of new affordable housing units. By the middle of PY2019, 695 new units of affordable housing had been added in Dakota County, with new housing developments still in the pipeline. At the end of the current Consolidated Plan, almost 700 units will have been added, exceeding the goal of 365.

![Image of new affordable housing units](Photo provided by Dakota County CDA)

Additional developments close to completion in 2019 will add 43 more units for those who have incomes at or below 80 percent of area median income. Cahill Place started construction in September 2019 and is anticipated to be completed late 2020. This is a 40-unit property with four units designated as HOME units. Prestwick Place, shown in the photo below, was completed in October 2019 adding 40 workforce housing units.

![Image of new affordable housing units](Photo provided by Dakota County CDA)
- **Rapid Re-Housing Assistance**

For households in Dakota County that are currently homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless, ESG funds have been assigned to conduct rapid rehousing activities, data collection, emergency shelter, and administration. The rapid rehousing activities include assistance with application fees, security deposits and first month’s rent, in addition to on-going rental assistance payments to provide households permanent housing. Payment of rental arrears is also an approved action to help a household gain access to permanent housing.

Dakota County began receiving ESG funds as a direct allocation in 2013. In PY2018, 231 households were provided assistance with ESG funds.

- **Well Sealing Grant Program**

The Countywide well sealing grant program reimburses Dakota County homeowners a portion of the total cost to seal an unused and/or abandoned well. Unused or abandoned wells are a potential threat to health, safety and the environment. Wells can provide safe water for many years, but as wells age, they may deteriorate and lose their ability to keep contaminants out of groundwater. A total of 160 wells have been properly sealed over the last five years (as of November 2019), with an average reimbursement grant of $1,036 for the property owner. This program leverages private funds with CDBG funding by requiring the homeowner to provide a one-to-one match. The total amount of $165,000 of CDBG funding that has been expended since 2015 including has leveraged an additional $165,000 in private funding.
4. Summary of citizen participation process and consultation process

The process followed to develop the current Consolidated Plan included citizen participation along with stakeholder consultation to assist in identifying community needs and strengthen partnerships. Staff developed an outline for the process in January 2019 and began collecting citizen and stakeholder input in June 2019. The process identified for the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan was first to identify the needs of the community by soliciting input from the community and then analyze various data sources\(^1\) to complete the needs assessment.

I. Citizen Participation (Ongoing).

A majority of the feedback received from citizens was received in the summer of 2019. The following highlights the engagement process conducted:

1. Dakota County Fair (August 2019) – The Dakota County CDA had a booth located on one of the main thoroughfares at the Dakota County Fair. Staff members requested fairgoers complete a short survey on priorities for their community. The survey was completed by placing a dot on the issue that the citizen deemed most important. Additionally, a postcard was available if individuals wanted to provide more information or take a visual preference survey. A total of 56 responses were received at the Fair.

2. Community Needs Survey (June – August 2019) – Dakota County CDA designed a visual preference online survey for any citizens to complete. The survey was distributed and marketed multiple ways
   - More than 600 printed flyers were mailed to all public housing residents in Dakota County through the Dakota County CDA.
   - A survey link was prominently displayed on the front page of the Dakota County CDA website.
   - A link to the survey was e-mailed to the Affordable Housing Coalition (AHC), the local advisory body for several housing issues and funding, most notably the Continuum of Care. The e-mail list-serve includes service providers, elected officials and advocates of affordable housing in Dakota County. Recipients were encouraged to notify their clients to complete the survey via the Dakota County CDA website.

\(^1\) US Census and American Community Survey (ACS) data; Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data; Metropolitan Council; State of Minnesota Demography Center; Dakota County Needs Assessment Study completed by Maxfield Research Inc.
The survey link was e-mailed to current city council elected officials requesting their participation; city and township community development/planning staff; and Dakota County staff.

A press release was created and e-mailed to all the cities in Dakota County to publish on their city websites or use in their social media to advertise the survey.

Post cards with the survey link were available at the front desk of the CDA office.

A total of 250 citizens and community partners completed the survey.

Of those that participated in the survey, 33 percent of the respondents identified themselves as having a low-to-moderate income, 39 percent identified themselves as over 80 percent AMI, and the remaining portion chose not to answer the question.

II. Community partners consultation (July 2019 – December 2019).

1. The development timeline and process of the Consolidated Plan were discussed at the annual CDBG workshops held between November 14-21, 2019. Each
municipality is required to formally apply for CDBG funding and request funding for activities that would best serve their community needs. Applications were provided to city staff mid-November 2019, and were placed on the CDA’s website. Applications were due back to the CDA by January 17, 2020. It should be noted that 2020 applications for CDBG funding were first guided by the priorities established in the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan and reviewed with the priorities proposed in the current Plan.

2. CDA staff regularly attend the monthly meetings held by the Affordable Housing Coalition and consulted the members of the coalition, specifically at its meeting of October 28, 2019. The meeting was dedicated to identifying affordable housing needs for the Consolidated Plan. This discussion and feedback were helpful in better understanding the needs of the communities today and during the next five years.

3. CDA staff attended the September 2019 Township Hall meeting and shared information about the Consolidated Plan. No comments were received.

4. CDA staff consulted with the following Dakota County departments on the goals and objectives: the Physical Development department, specifically, the Environmental Resources division, and the Community Services department. The departments provided feedback on the proposed goals and objectives.

5. The Dakota County Planning Commission will review the draft Executive Summary at its meeting of November 21, 2019. Comments from the Commission will be included.

6. The following additional public meetings will be held to receive comments about the proposed Consolidated Plan and Action Plan:
   a. The City-County Economic Development group – November 2019 and February 2020
   b. The Affordable Housing Coalition – February 2020
   c. The Dakota County Physical Development Committee – February 2020, March 2020
   d. Dakota County Board of Commissioners – the public hearing is slated for April 21, 2020, and expected approval on May 5, 2020, barring any adverse public comments.
5. Summary of public comments

The CDA will continue to solicit public comments on the draft Consolidated Plan but the official public comment period for the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan will open in March 2020. Comments received during the public comment period will be recorded and included in the final 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Action Plan.

6. Summary of comments or views not accepted and the reasons for not accepting them

All public comments received will be accepted.

7. Summary of Program Year 2020 Funds and Activities

The activities for 2020 have not yet been determined. These are expected in January 2020.
DAKOTA COUNTY FEDERAL ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

Annually, Dakota County (the County) receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds, and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds from the federal government as an entitlement jurisdiction. The funds are received through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Dakota County Community Development Agency (the CDA) administers the funds on behalf of the County. The federal program year starts July 1st and ends the following June 30th.

CDBG
The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. As an urban county with a population of at least 200,000, the County receives a direct CDBG allocation annually. The County Board has decided that 75 percent of the funds should be allocated to the cities and townships, and 25 percent should go towards countywide programs. The County first became eligible to receive a direct allocation of CDBG funding in 1984.

A city in a metropolitan area with a population of 50,000 or more is also considered an entitlement community and can receive a direct CDBG grant. There are four entitlement cities in the County: Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, and Lakeville. These cities have chosen to be part of the Dakota County program because of the partnership between the cities, the County, and the CDA. CDBG funds are allocated to cities as determined by a HUD formula based on overcrowded housing, population and poverty. Overcrowded housing means more than one person per room in a residential structure. The 12 largest Dakota County cities (including Northfield) with a population of more than 10,000 receive direct CDBG allocations. Remaining funds are set aside in a competitive pool for cities and townships with populations less than 10,000. Finally, a portion of funding is set aside for countywide projects. The CDBG funds must be spent within four years from the award date.

HOME
The HOME program provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use - often in partnership with local nonprofit groups - to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. The County receives HOME funds as a part of a consortium of counties and a city that includes Anoka County, Ramsey County, Washington County, and the city of Woodbury. The County is designated as the lead agency for the Dakota County HOME Consortium (the Consortium), which was formed in 1994. The County has assumed the role of monitoring and oversight of the HOME funds for the Consortium. Each Consortium member is responsible for developing, selecting and approving activities in their jurisdiction. HOME funds are to be committed to a project within two years from the end of the month the award agreement was signed; however, Congress has suspended the commitment deadline for HOME and CHDO funds allocated until Program Year 2021. Though this rule is currently suspended, the Consortium will strive to meet this deadline annually. Funds must be expended five years from the end of the month the agreement was signed.

ESG
The ESG program provides funding to: (1) engage homeless individuals and families living on the street; (2) improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families; (3) help operate these shelters; (4) provide essential services to shelter residents, (5) rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families, and (6) prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless. ESG funds may be used for five program components: street outreach, emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing assistance, and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); as well as administrative activities. The CDA and the County Department of Community Services work together to assist people that are eligible for the program. The Affordable Housing Coalition, an independent, public/private collaboration that facilitates countywide planning of homeless services and resources, provides advisory comments on the ESG program. The ESG funds must be spent within two years from award date or the funds will be forfeited to HUD.
2020-2024 Dakota County Consolidated Plan

For CDBG, HOME and ESG funding
Purpose of Consolidated Plan

- Required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive:
  - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
  - HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)
  - Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

- Referred to as “Entitlement Programs”
Three basic objectives for entitlement programs:

- Provide Decent Housing
- Provide a Suitable Living Environment
- Expand Economic Opportunity

Must benefit predominantly low-and moderate income households

Outcome: the development of viable urban communities
Purpose of Consolidated Plan

- Analyze need, collect citizen input
- Consolidated Plan lays out:
  - Objectives
  - Priority Goals
  - Strategies
  - Outcomes
- Plan covers five years
Purpose of Consolidated Plan

Five Year Consolidated Plan
Determines needs, sets priorities, determines resources, & sets goals

Year 1 Annual Plan
Year 2 Annual Plan
Year 3 Annual Plan
Year 4 Annual Plan
Year 5 Annual Plan
Year 1 CAPER
Year 2 CAPER
Year 3 CAPER
Year 4 CAPER
Year 5 CAPER
Community Survey

- Conducted June - August 2019
- 250 Respondents
- 33% of respondents identified themselves as low-to-moderate income
Supporting Data

2019 Community Survey - Highest Priority Activities

Homelessness: 80%
Senior Transportation: 75%
Subsidized Child Care: 70%
Public Services: 65%
Rehab of Housing: 60%
Job Training: 55%
Well Sealing: 50%
Homeowner Rehab: 45%
Downpayment Assistance: 40%
Housing is primary concern for residents

- 46% of Dakota County renter households earn less than 60% AMI
  - 83% spend more than 30% of income on housing
  - 54% spend more than half of income on housing
- Rent increases greater than 10% in 9 Dakota County cities since 2010

Source: Minnesota Housing Partnership
Insufficient Affordable Housing Supply

• Over 1,400 people on CDA’s family workforce housing waitlist
• Landlord participation in Section 8 program decreased since 2013
• Current rental vacancy rate - 1.8 %
  o Tighter private rental market means higher rents

Source: Dakota County CDA, Maxfield Research Inc.
Total Housing Demand 2020-2030
27,690 units

For-Sale Demand
17,744 units

Rental Demand
9,946 units

General Occupancy
8,535

Market Rate
4,155

Affordable
2,330

Subsidized
2,050

Senior
1,411

Market Rate
680

Affordable
202

Subsidized
529

Single Family
13,760

Modest
6,100

Move Up
7,100

Executive
560

Multifamily
3,984

Modest
1,692

Move-Up
2,292

Source: Dakota County CDA, Maxfield Research Inc. (2019 draft)
2020-2024 Con Plan Proposed Goals

- Increase the affordable housing choices for low- and moderate-income households, and reduce homelessness
- Preserve and improve existing housing to maintain affordability
- Increase access and quality of living by providing public services and supporting public facilities
- Support community development that revitalizes neighborhoods and infrastructure, and removes safety and blight hazards
- Support economic development that enhances the workforce and businesses
- Support planning efforts that address the housing, community and economic development needs of Dakota County and continue to foster partnerships with community stakeholders
Proposed Goals

- Reduce Homelessness
- Affordable Homeowner Housing
- Affordable Rental Housing
- Public Facilities
- Public Services
- Suitable Living Environment
- Economic Opportunity
- Decent Housing

- Planning & Administration
- Economic Development
- Neighborhood Revitalization
Proposed Strategies

- **Reduce Homelessness**
  - Affordable Homeowner Housing
  - Affordable Rental Housing

- **Decent Housing**
  - Fair Housing
  - Energy Efficiency

- **Rapid Rehousing**
  - Support Operation of Shelter Facilities
  - Create/Renovate Shelters

- **Fair Housing**
  - Increase Supply
  - Rehab/Preserve Single Family Units
  - Rehab/Preserve Multifamily Units

- **Energy Efficiency**

- **Homeless Prevention**
  - New Construction

- **Homelessness Prevention**
  - Homeless Prevention

- **Operation of Shelter Facilities**

- **Shelter Facilities**
  - Support Operation of Shelter Facilities
  - Create/Renovate Shelters

- **Support Operation of Shelter Facilities**

- **Increase Supply**
  - New Construction
Proposed Strategies

Suitable Living Environments

Neighborhood Revitalization

Public Service

Public Facilities

Contamination Clean Up

Sanitation Hazards

Acquisition/Demolition

Sanitation Hazards

Youth

Basic Needs

Seniors

Transportation

Community Centers, Parks

Street Assessments

Water/Sewer, Improvements

Sidewalk Accessibility & Safety (ADA)
Proposed Strategies

- Support Skill & Employment History Initiatives
- Support Living Wage Initiatives
- Financial assistance
- Economic Development
- Planning and Administration
- Economic Opportunity

Support all of the strategies
Proposed 5-Year Outcomes

- 300 Homeowner Units rehabilitated
- 6 Homeowner Units (re)constructed
- 360 Rental Units constructed
- 20 Rental Units rehabilitated
- 200 Households provided Rapid Rehousing Assistance
- 100 Homeless Prevention Assistance

Reduce Homelessness

Affordable Homeowner Housing

Decent Housing

Affordable Rental Housing
Proposed 5-Year Outcomes

- 150 Households assisted
- 3 Buildings demolished
- 13,000 Persons benefited from Public Facility or infrastructure improvement
- 15,000 Persons benefited from Public Services

Suitable Living Environments

Neighborhood Revitalization

Public Services

Public Facilities
Proposed 5-Year Outcomes

- Undetermined number of plans to be supported
- 2 Business buildings rehabilitated
Five-Year Forecast of Activities

- **ESG**
  - Rapid Rehousing
  - Homeless Prevention
  - Emergency Shelter
  - HMIS
  - Grant administration

- **HOME**
  - Build/rehab affordable housing (rental and owner-occupied)
  - Grant administration

- **CDBG**
  - Rehab SF homeowner housing, some multi-family housing
  - Assist Public Services and Public Facilities
  - Other community and economic development activities
  - Planning and Grant administration
Comments/Questions?

Thank you!