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Thompson County Park Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan Task 2 Check-In

October 25, 2018



Agenda



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- Review Existing Conditions
- Community Engagement Highlights
- Confirmation of Issues & Opportunities
- Discuss Vision & Guiding Principles

Review Existing Conditions



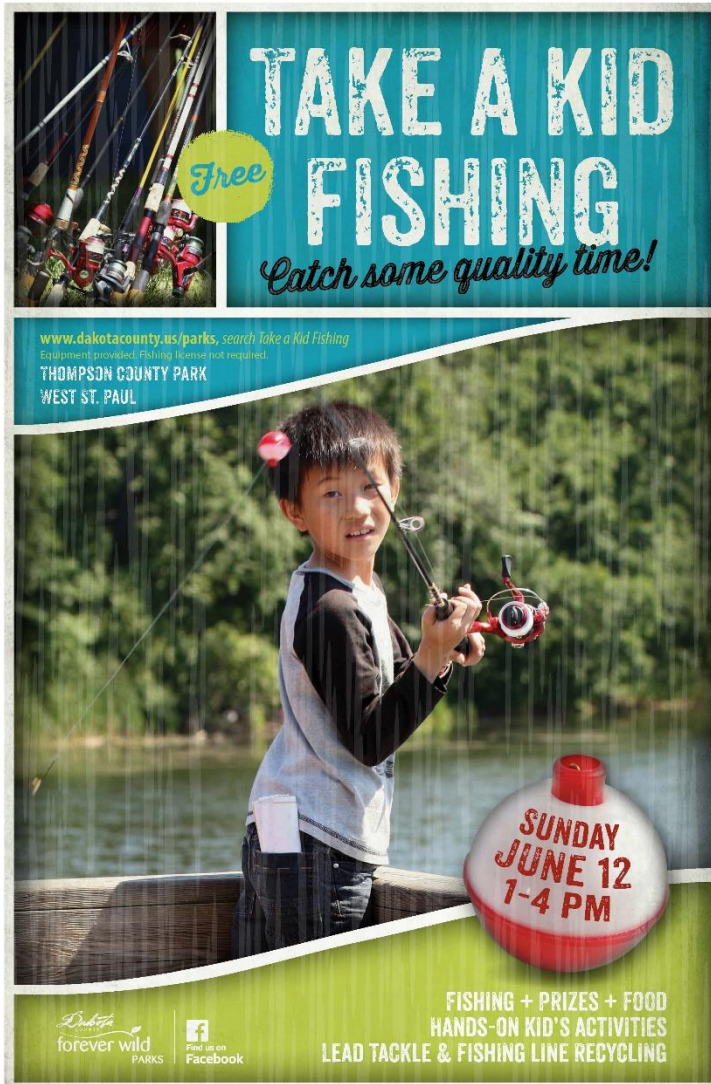
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Review Existing Conditions



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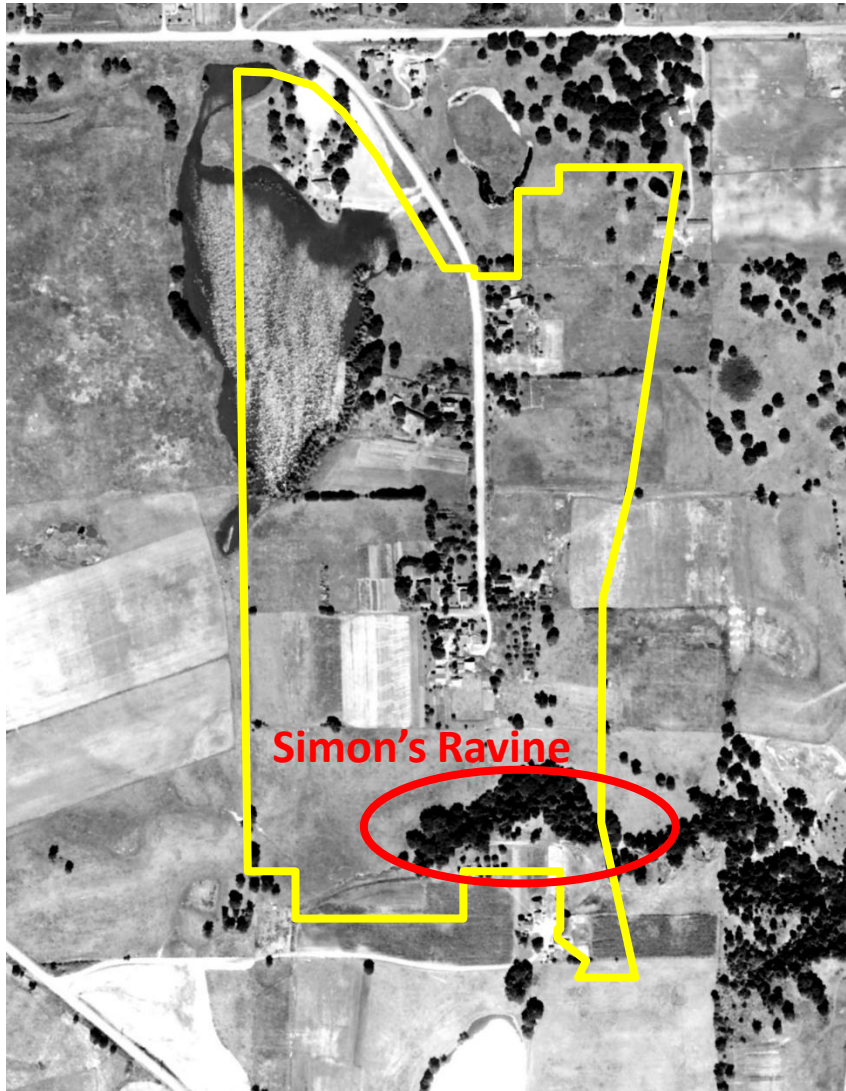
Outdoor Education

- Two outdoor recreation-based events each year
- The park also hosts a variety of classes and programming that take advantage of the outdoors; however, few of these offerings actually focus on natural resource-based topics or outdoor education specifically
- Thompson Park Activity Center offers a variety of activities and clubs

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Known Cultural Resources

- An archaeological site consisting of a lithic scatter near the southeast corner of the park identified as Simon's Ravine
- No architectural history properties or traditional cultural properties have been identified



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1945

Review Existing Conditions



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Natural Resources

Oak Savana



Farmed



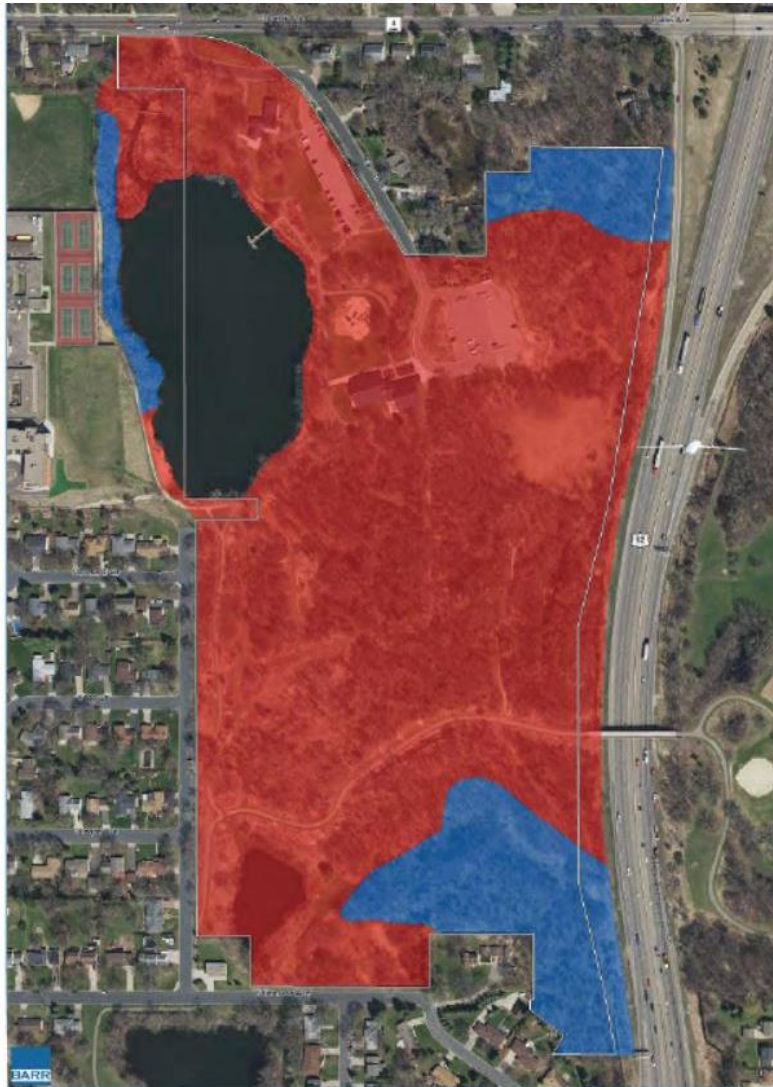
Low quality forest



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Ecological Quality

Ecological Quality

 Medium

 Low

 Park Boundary

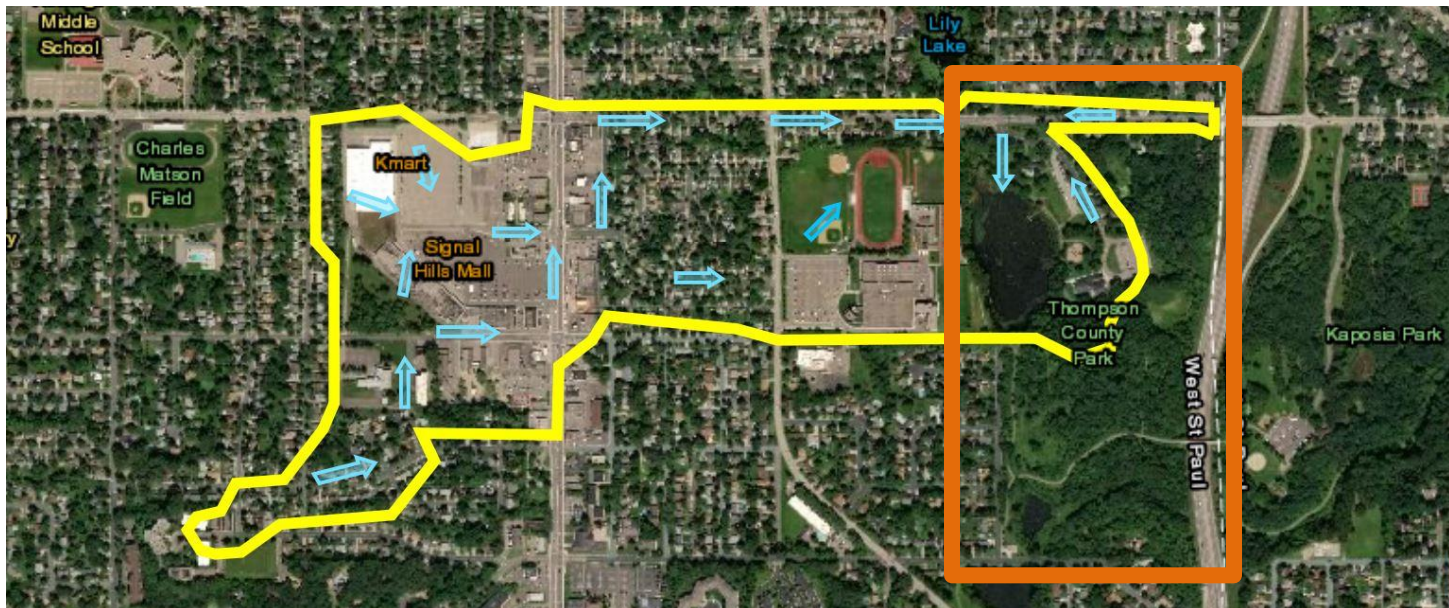
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Water Resources

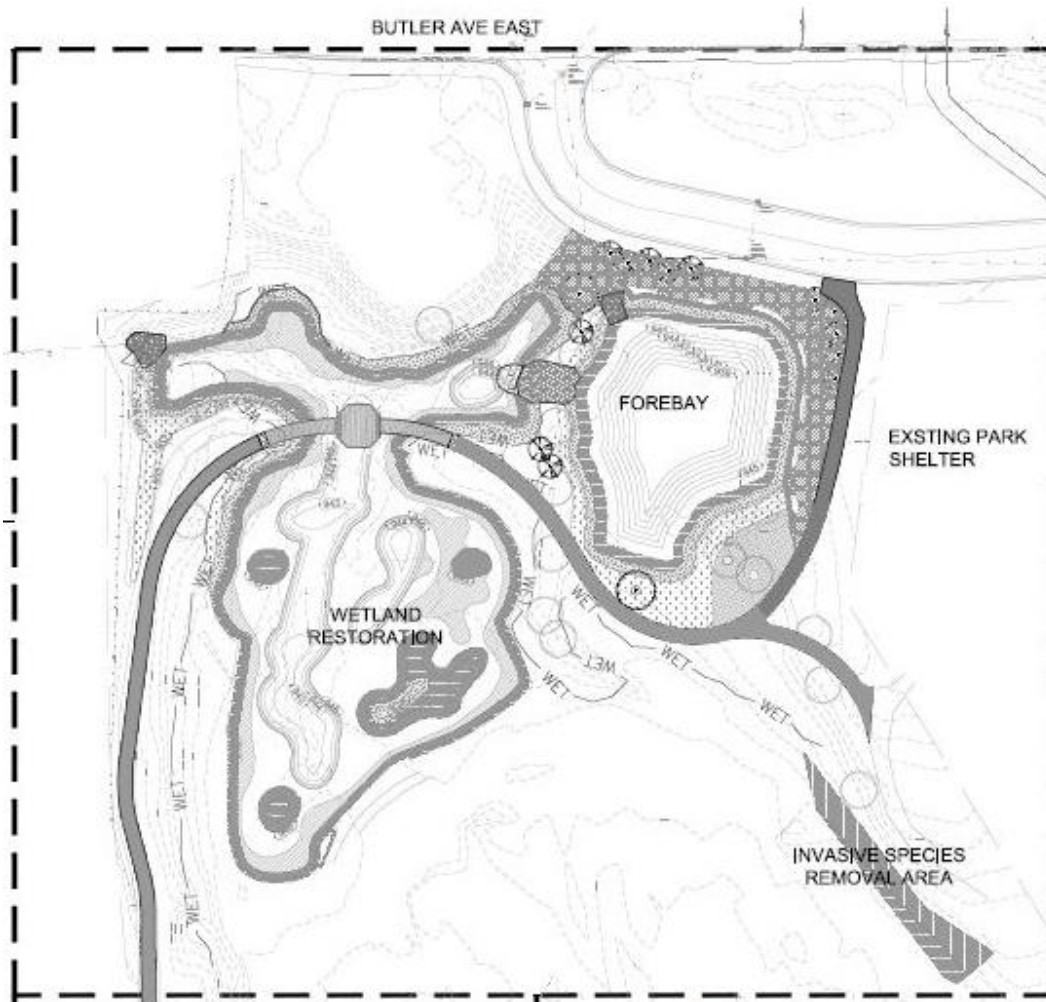
- The watershed of Thompson Lake is 169 acres comprised of mixed urban land uses (residential, commercial, and institutional)
- Inflows are primarily from stormwater
- Outflow is an adjustable outlet structure at the south end of the lake
- All lake outflows pass through a storm sewer to Emerson Pond at the southwestern corner
- Emerson Pond discharges to a pipe that runs under Simon's Ravine and under Highway 52, and eventually to the Mississippi River



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Engineering Drawings provided by Tetra Tech, Inc.

Water Resources

- Thompson Lake is impaired for recreational use due to excessive nutrients and salts, and is on the MPCA's 2014 Impaired Waters list
- A new system of stormwater pre-treatment is being constructed at the north end of the lake
- The project will reduce phosphorus loading to the lake by 39%, achieving the waste load reduction identified in the TMDL
- The project will provide additional public benefits

Review Existing Conditions

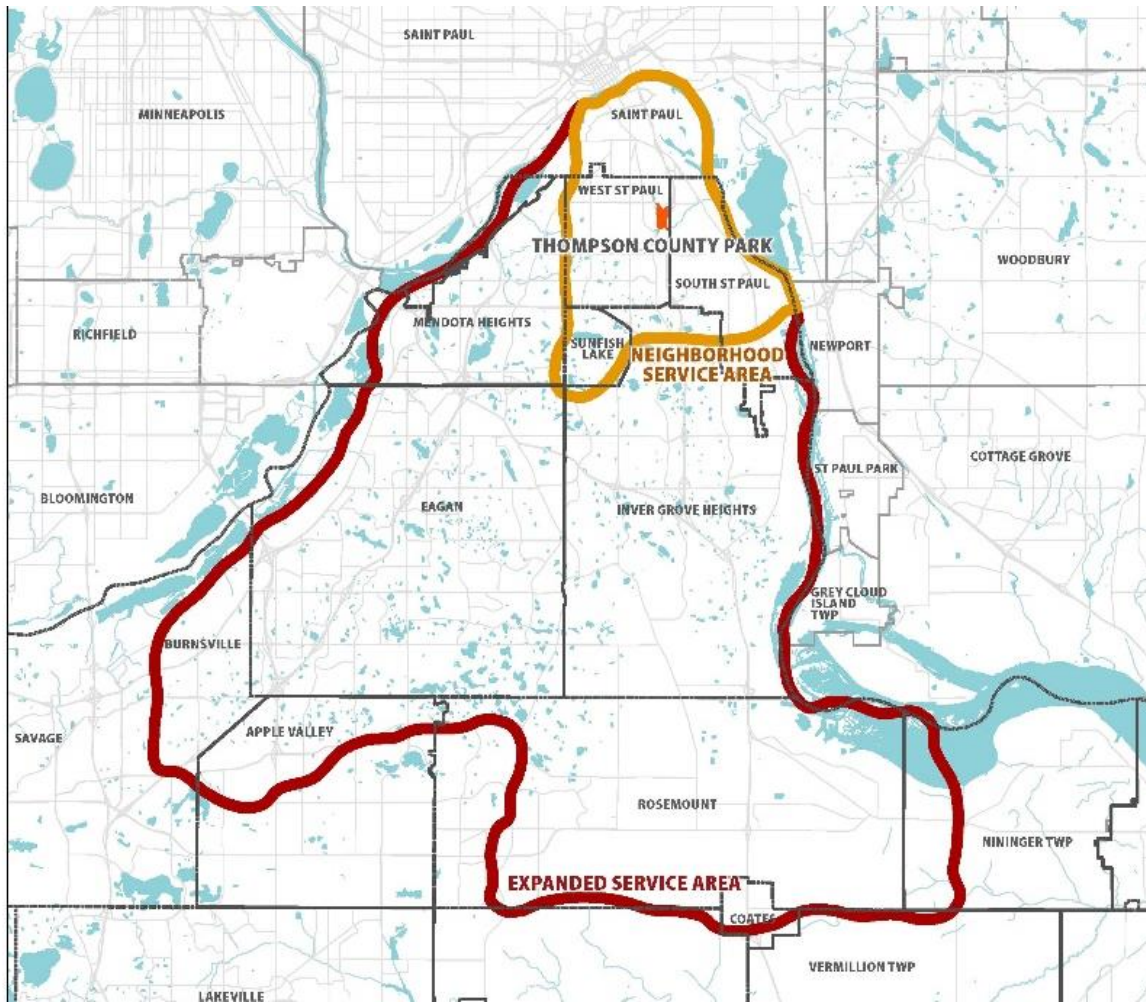


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Demographics

Park Service Areas

- A 16-square mile “neighborhood” service area
- A 134-square mile “expanded” service area



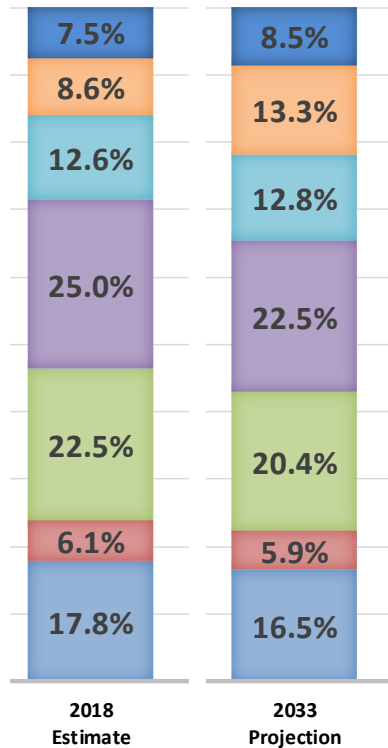
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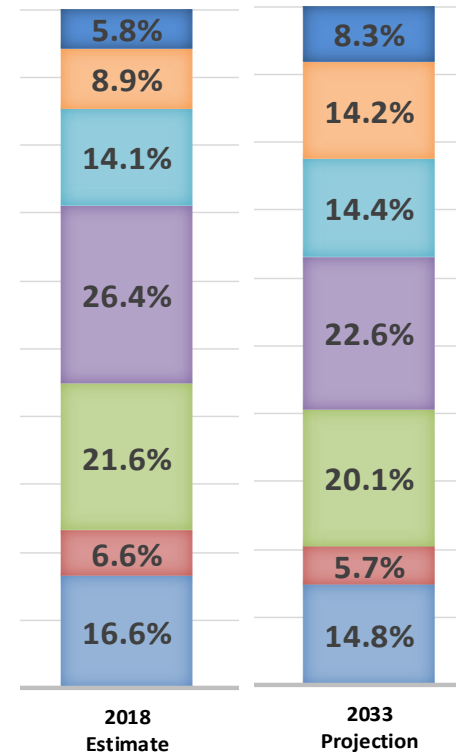
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Demographics

Population by Age Segment



Neighborhood Service Area



Expanded Service Area

■ 0-12 ■ 13-17 ■ 18-34 ■ 35-54 ■ 55-64 ■ 65-74 ■ 75+

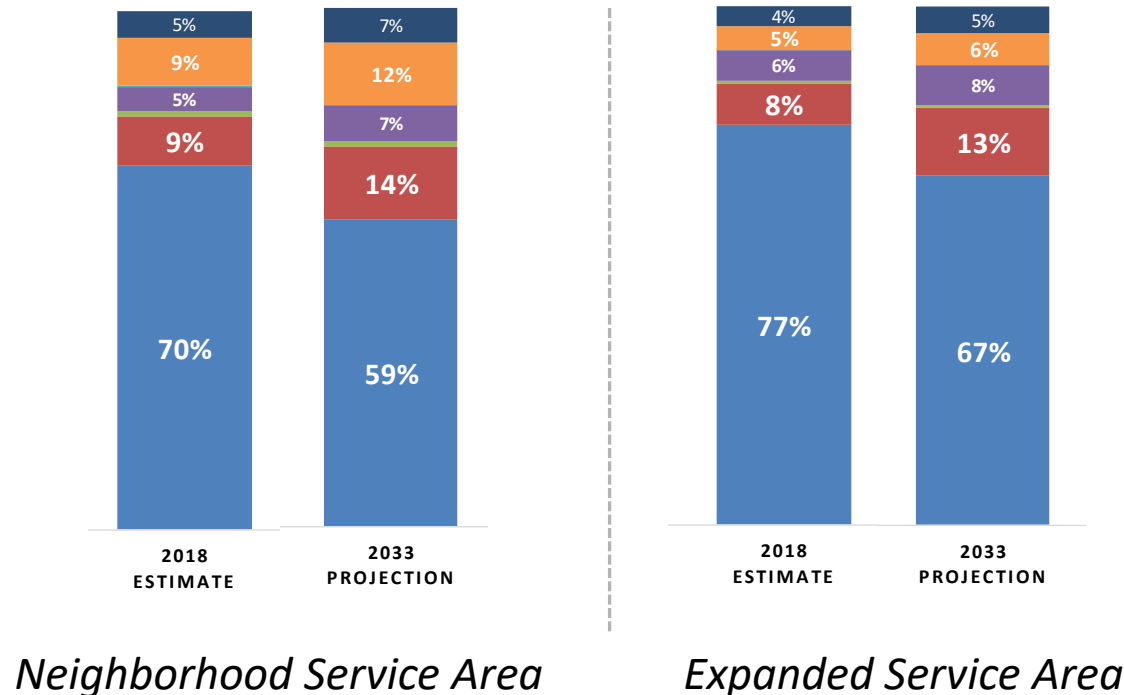
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Demographics

Population by Race



■ White Alone ■ Black Alone ■ American Indian ■ Asian ■ Pacific Islander ■ Some Other Race ■ Two or More Races

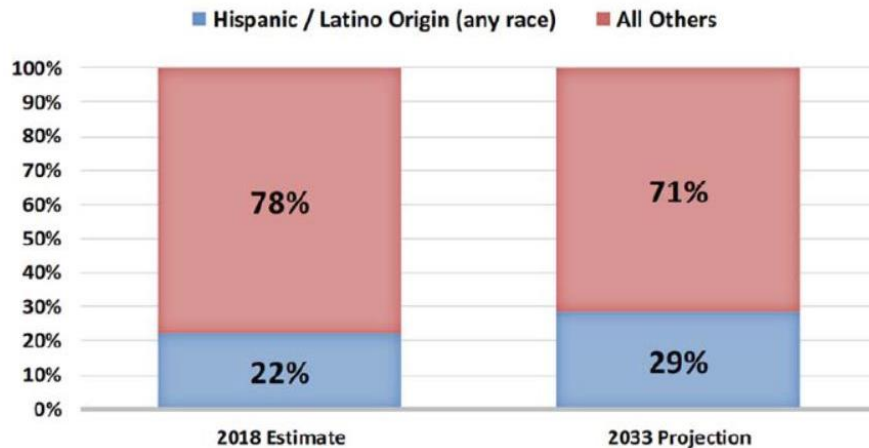
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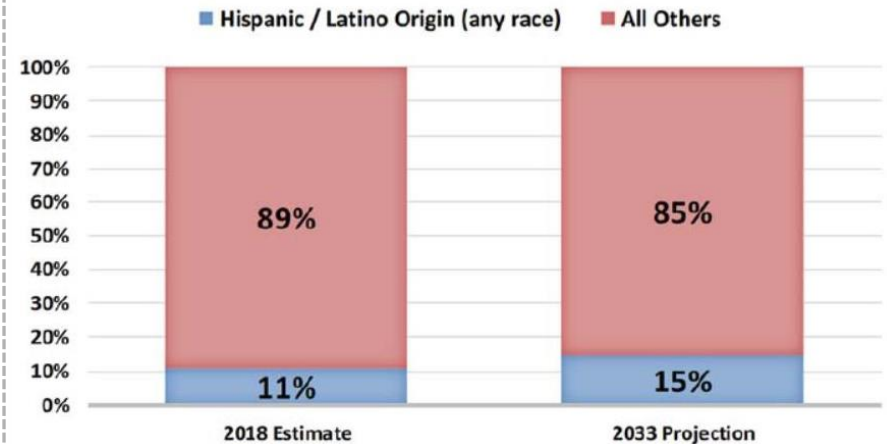
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Demographics

Hispanic Population



Neighborhood Service Area



Expanded Service Area

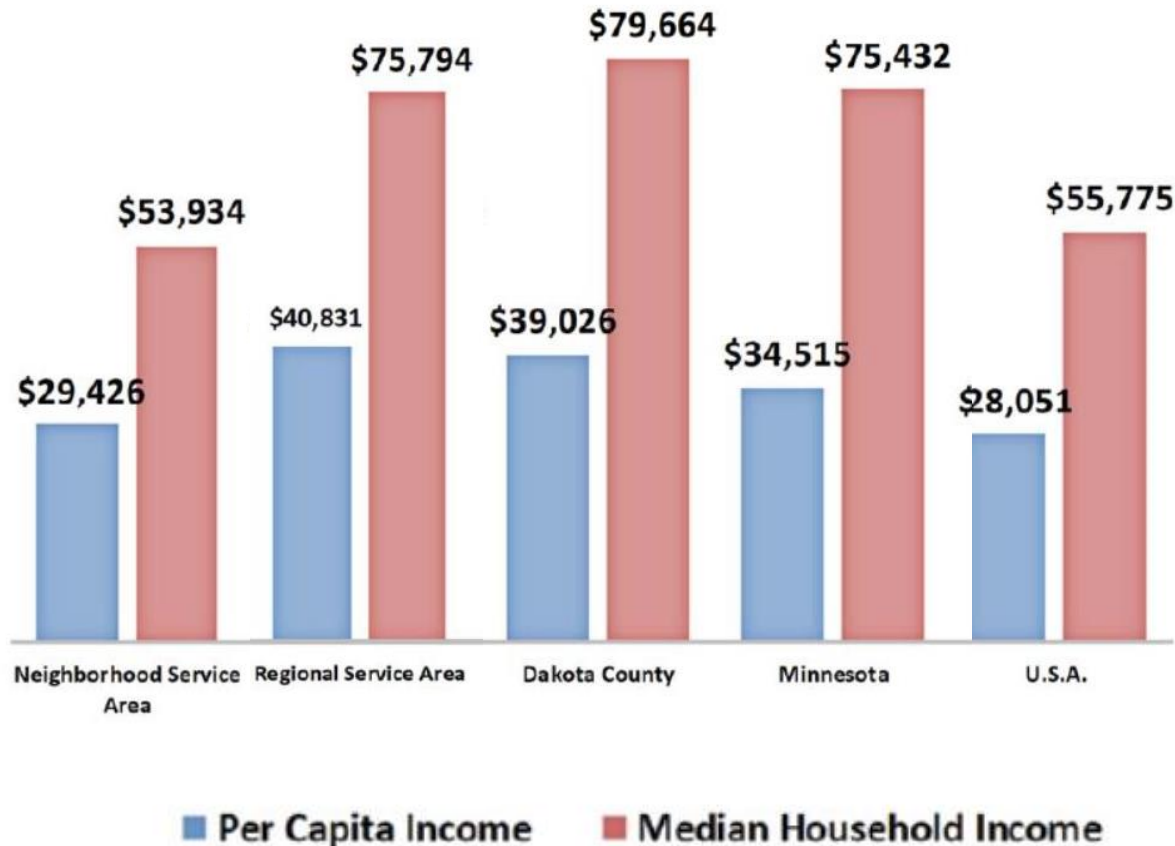
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Demographics

Income

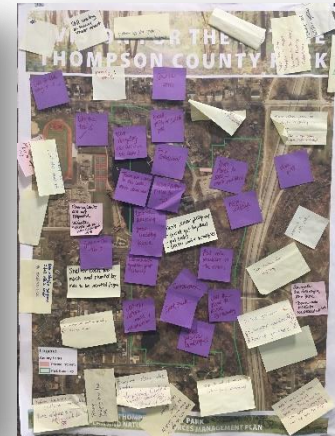


Community Engagement Highlights



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- More than a **dozen** activities and nearly **1,000** people
 - *Take a Kid Fishing*
 - *Safe Summer Nights*
 - *West St. Paul Days (2)*
 - *Kaposia Days*
 - *Garlough Collaborative*
 - *Thompson Activity Center (2)*
 - *Accessibility and Inclusion Walk*
 - *Stakeholder Meetings (2)*
- Letters sent to approximately **500** neighbors
- Flyers provided for **700** Night to Unite participants in West St Paul, South St Paul and Inver Grove Heights
- More than **61** responses to the Survey Monkey survey sent to past renters of Dakota Lodge and the North Picnic Shelter
- **93** surveys and **32** comments posted from more than **275** viewers of the Social Pinpoint website



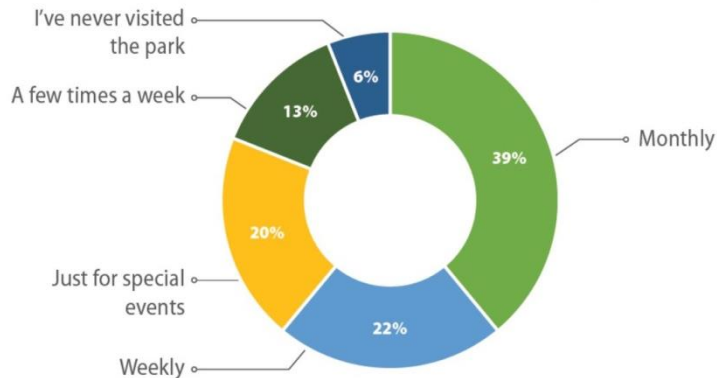
Community Engagement Highlights



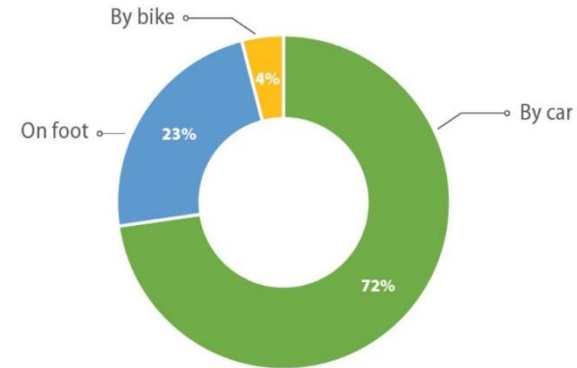
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Social Pinpoint Survey (93)

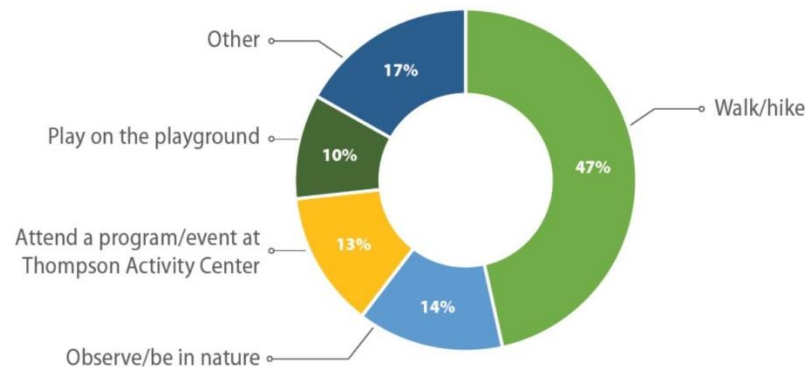
How often do you visit the park?



How do you usually arrive at the park?



What do you like to do when you visit the park?



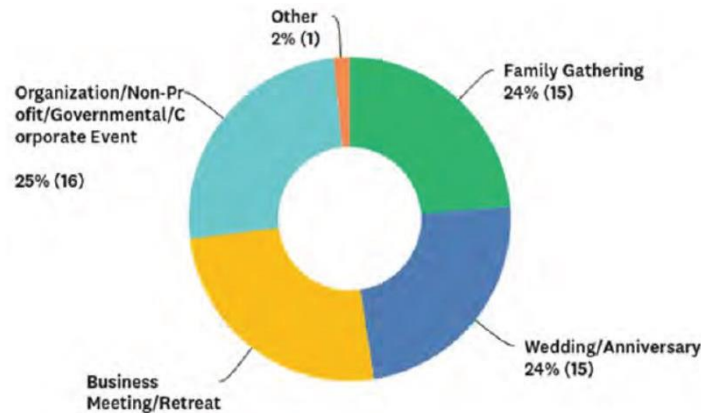
Community Engagement Highlights



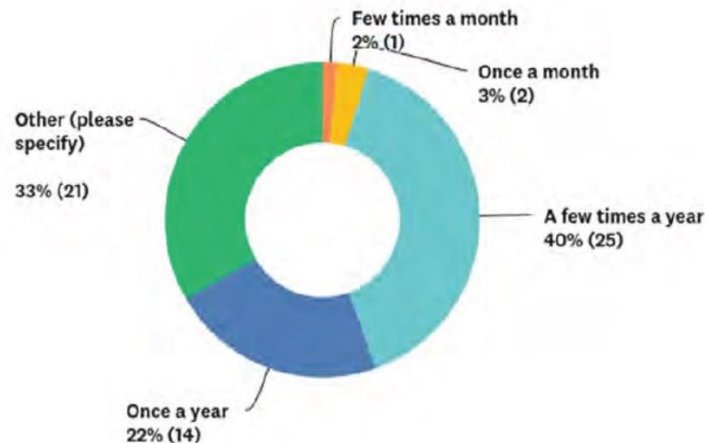
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Survey Monkey (61)

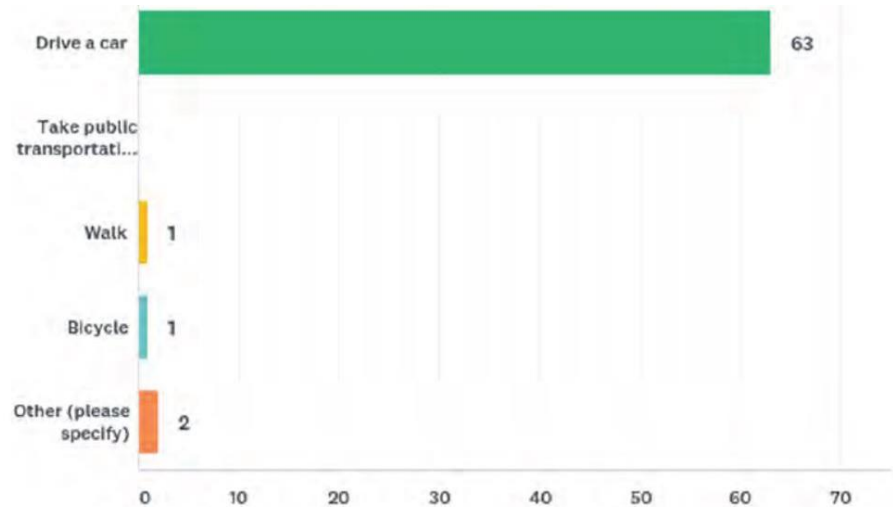
What was the purpose of your rental?



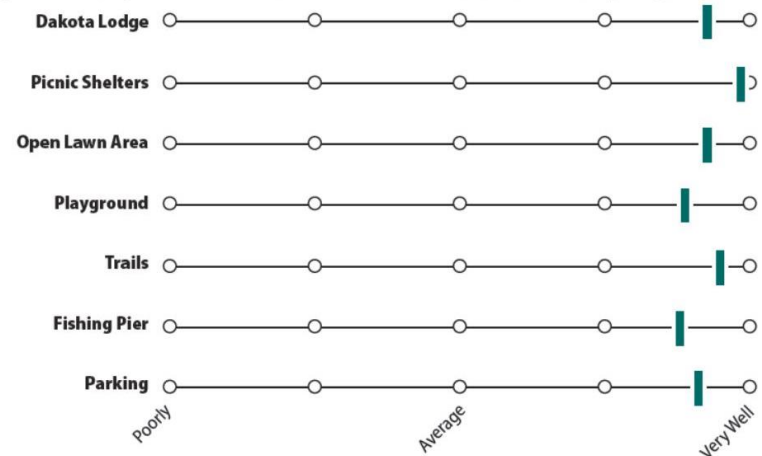
How often does your group visit TCP?



How do members of your group usually arrive?



How well do each of the facilities work for your group?

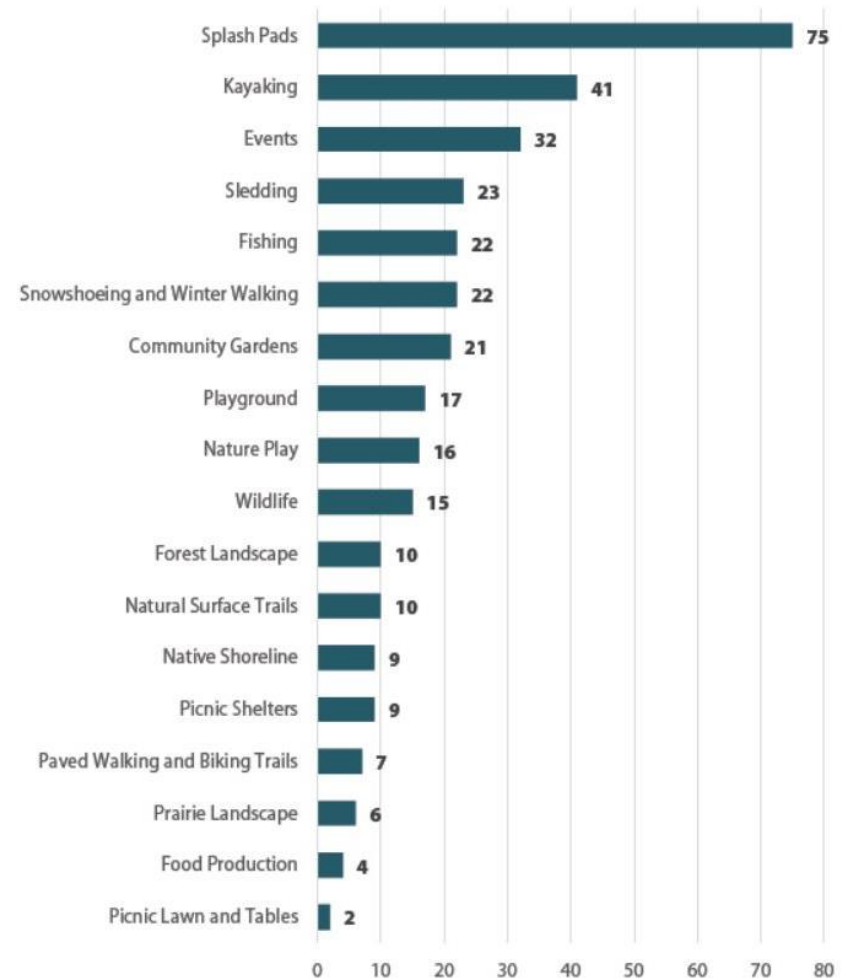
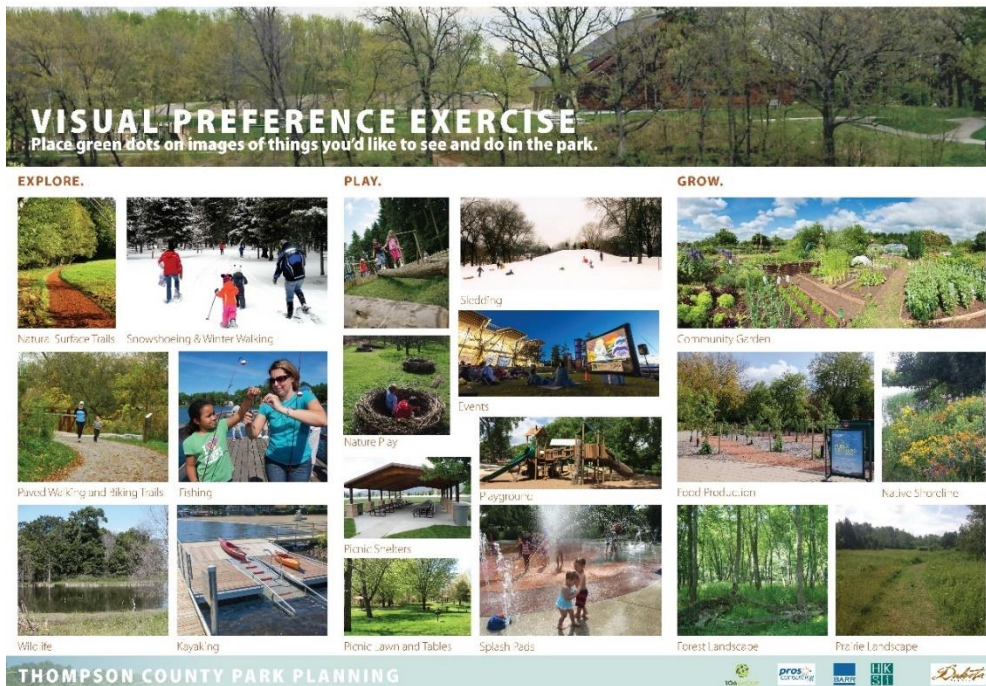


Community Engagement Highlights



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Pop-Up Event



Community Engagement Highlights



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- Retention and improvement of the natural areas
- Recreational use of the lake
- Expanded recreation
- Resolve parking confusion and safety concerns
- Visitor amenities
- Focus on accessibility
- Expanded winter use
- More events
- Park maintenance improvements
- Continue to expand partnerships

Confirmation of Issues & Opportunities



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EXISTING CONDITIONS



Issues

- Access, Circulation and Wayfinding
- Natural Resources
- Social Gathering
- Recreation
- Education
- Park Use
- Demographics

Confirmation of Issues & Opportunities



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Opportunities

- Retain Natural Resources as Foundational
- Increase Interaction with Thompson Lake
- Utilize the Entire Park
- Ensure the Park Serves the Community
- Contribute to Regional Systems
- Increase Collaboration and Expand Partnerships



Vision & Guiding Principles



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Existing Vision

Thompson County Park is envisioned to be a blend of facilities for individuals and small and large groups, with recreation and education focused on the natural resources setting. The Park is an active park in picturesque pastoral setting and a flexible stage for destination passive park uses like group gatherings, walking, biking, in-line and ice skating and picnicking. Dakota Lodge is the events and program destination around which outdoor uses are organized. The outdoor area around the Lodge transitions to and is offset by a natural component to quiet solitude. The transition area takes cues from the Park's history and celebrates the rich cultural diversity of the surrounding diversity of the surrounding communities. The primary objectives are to create a high designed, pastoral landscape in the active areas that transitions to the seemingly more rustic natural area composed of the forest and trails, and to develop program elements that support outdoor extension of Dakota Lodge use. Dakota Lodge inspires an exciting palette of exterior materials for the construction of picnic shelters, warming huts, retaining walls and bridges.

Vision & Guiding Principles



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Existing Guiding Principles

1. Think of the Park as an urban oasis for all seasons
2. Make Thompson Lake a model for innovative stormwater treatment
3. Make Dakota Lodge the “nucleus” of the Park’s activities
4. Enable the Park to be a “stage” for community life and celebration

Vision & Guiding Principles



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Potential Vision

Thompson County Park is a natural place that inspires and fosters vibrant and healthy people, is responsive to the community, and encourages people to discover nature.

Vision & Guiding Principles



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Proposed Guiding Principles

1. Create a welcoming and safe environment
2. Provide activity and purpose year round
3. Promote social gathering
4. Connect the community to the park
5. Enhance the lake as a focal point
6. Improve natural systems within the park and beyond the park's boundaries
7. Inspire learning

Next Steps



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Upcoming Tasks for Planning Process

- Refinement of Issues, Opportunities, Vision & Guiding Principles
- County Board Update
- Development of Concepts

Reference Slides if Needed from this point forward

Thompson Maps



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Thompson and Kaposia Park Map



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0 0.125 0.25 Miles

THOMPSON COUNTY PARK AND KAPOSIA PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS



Vision & Guiding Principles



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Potential Vision

Thompson Lake County Park reflects the community's rich cultural diversity and encourages people of all interests and abilities to be active, discover nature, connect with others, and become environmental stewards. Part of the River to River Greenway, the park's varied ecosystems, lake, and ravine contribute to the larger ecological corridor extending to the Mississippi River and provide a quiet retreat from the surrounding urban neighborhoods.

Vision & Guiding Principles



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Proposed Guiding Principles

1. Integrate the park with the surrounding neighborhood and improve connections to Kaposia Park
2. Improve and expand natural resources to contribute to the greenway corridor and watershed
3. Transform Thompson Park Center into a visitor center that visually connects to the lake
4. Formalize the park as a trailhead for the River to River Greenway
5. Inspire exploration of the park's natural areas
6. Broaden visitors' depth of experience
7. Improve accessibility to expand the diversity of visitors and enhance their experience
8. Implement sustainability initiatives and show how visitors can apply lessons themselves
9. Support community initiatives around health and active living