

Thompson County Park Master Plan Update and Natural Resources Management Plan

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Overview



Efficient, Effective, Responsive

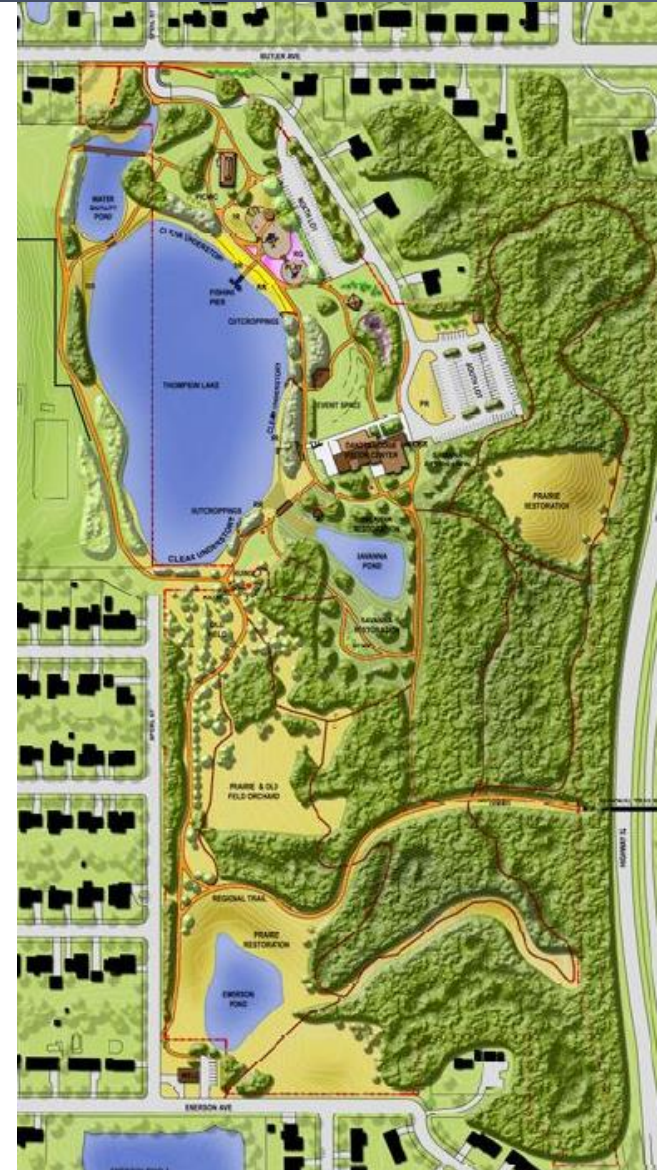
- Project Purpose
- Introduction to Thompson County Park
- Project Process
- Planning Commission Role
- Community Engagement

Project Purpose



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- Update 2005 Master Plan
 - Long Term and 10 Year Plans for recreation and natural resources management
 - Interpretive Framework
 - Business and Operations Analysis
- Develop Natural Resources Management Plan



Dakota County Park System



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Dakota County Park System Vision, 2040

GREAT PLACES: Destination Parks

- * New Whitetail Woods Regional Park in Empire Township
- * More things to do in parks
 - Winter activity area
 - Gathering and celebration areas
 - Swimming and water play areas
- * More popular "park basics"
 - Enhanced picnicking
 - Biking and accessible trail loops

CONNECTED PLACES: Greenway Trails

- * "Bring parks to people" — Linear parks connect parks, schools, lake trails, playgrounds, libraries, and the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers
- * Walking, biking, and in-line skating
- * Public agencies work together to create 200 miles of greenways using mostly publicly-owned land

PROTECTED PLACES: Green Infrastructure

- * Enhance and protect park resources
- * Protect stream corridors in public/private partnerships
- * Protect natural areas and open space in public/private partnerships

DAKOTA COUNTY PARK SYSTEM and COLLABORATIVE OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

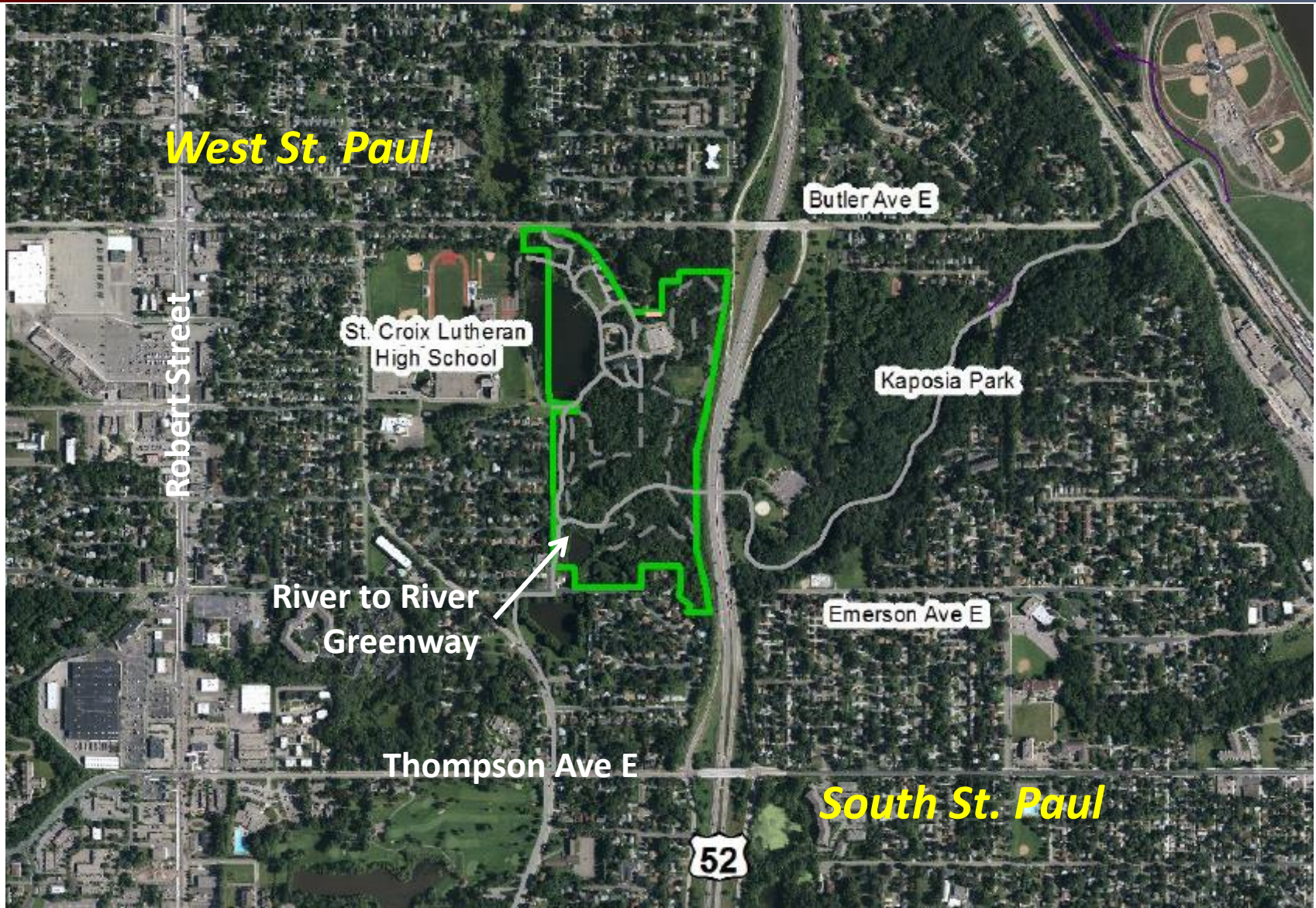
- Dakota County Parks
- Dakota County Park Conservation Areas
- Federal, State, and Other Regional Open Space
- Existing and Planned Regional Greenways
- Stream Conservation Corridors and Greenways



Thompson County Park



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Thompson County Park



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- Primary recreation: picnicking, playground, fishing, trails, events
- Thompson Park Center
 - Dakota Lodge (DC)
 - Thompson Activity Center (WSP)



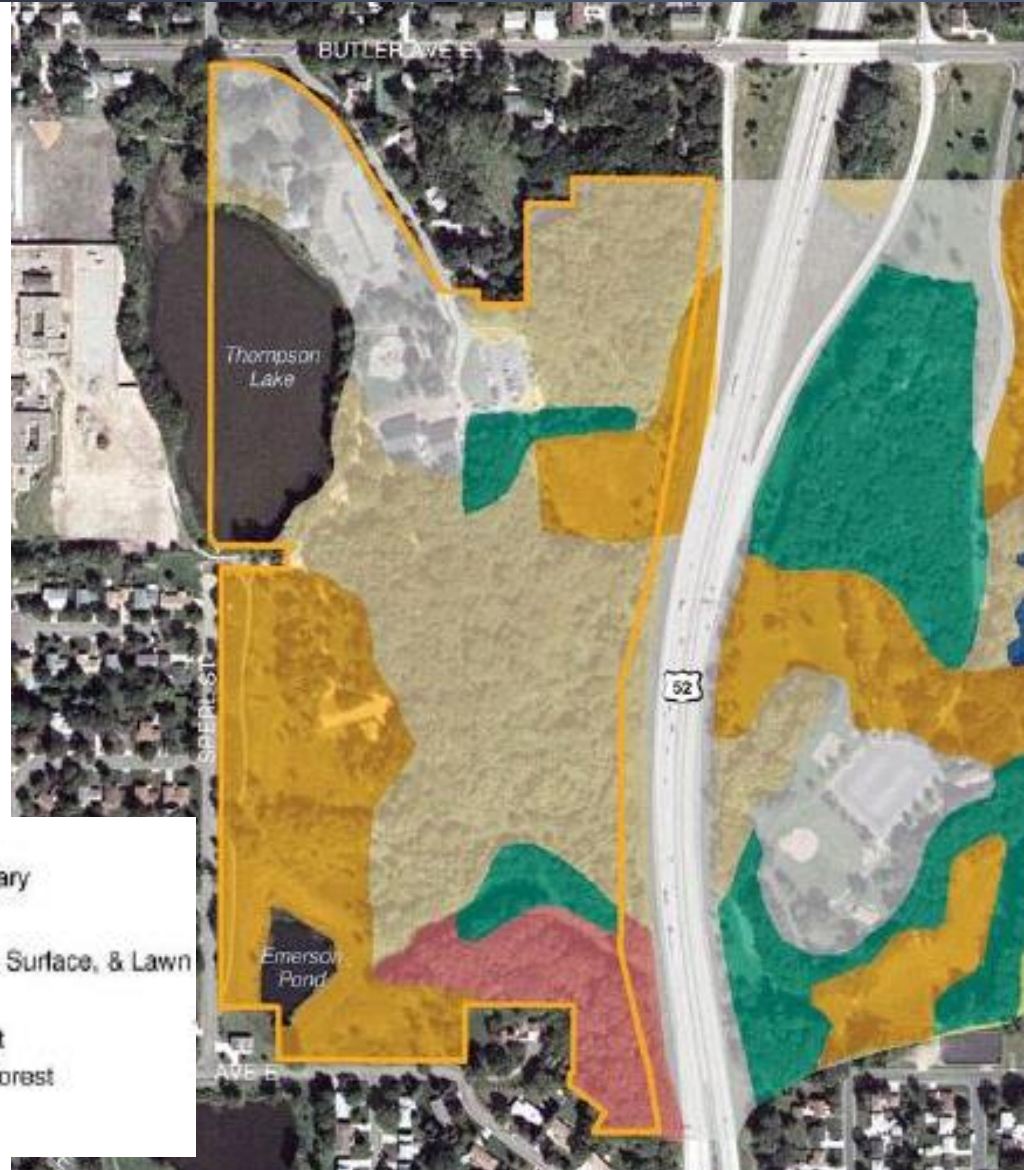
Thompson County Park



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- 90% of park is natural or semi-natural
- Thompson Lake undergoing restoration

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/parks/Improve/Thompson/Pages/thompson-lake-restoration.aspx>



History



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- Home to Dakota people for hundreds of years
- Mid 1800s European settlement
- Farming until the 1960s
- Park established in 1974



Planning Commission Role



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- Advisory Committee for the Project
- Provide input at project milestones throughout the process
- 4-5 Meetings or Workshops



Planning Process



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1. Project Organization (Spring 2018)
2. Research, Findings, and Vision (Spring – Fall 2018)
Community Engagement
3. Concepts (Winter 2018-Spring 2019)
Community Engagement
4. Plan Development and Draft Plans (Summer 2019)
Community Engagement
5. Final Plan and Approvals (Fall 2019)

Level 3 – Involve

- Different perspectives are shared and parties can influence each other and develop consensus.
- Allows the organization and participants to explore and work through issues together, understand each other's perspectives and values, and consistently address concerns.
- Public Engagement Plan
<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/Engagement/Documents/ThompsonMasterPlanEngagementPlan.pdf>

Engagement Techniques



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- Webpage
- On-line input
- Social media – Facebook, Next Door
- Community Open Houses/Workshops
- Pop-up Open Houses – existing events & in park
- Community Groups – input/information at existing meetings
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Individual Interviews



Stakeholders



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- Adjacent Landowners
- St. Croix Lutheran HS
- School District 197
- West St. Paul Senior Center
- Lower Mississippi River Watershed Organization
- City of West St. Paul
- City of South St. Paul
- Dakota County Historical Society
- Existing Recreation Providers/Partners
- Potential Recreation Providers/Partners
- Current Park Users
- Potential Park Users
- Under Represented Audiences
- General Public

Other stakeholders that should be engaged?

Questions and Discussion

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest. The trees are tall and thin, with green foliage. The path is in the foreground, leading into the distance. The text "Questions and Discussion" is overlaid in the center.