

# Battle Creek Regional Park

## Master Plan



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# Planning Framework



## OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan is to guide the long-term development, recreation and programming amenities, boundary expansion and acquisition, engagement, preservation, and management of Battle Creek Regional Park. Battle Creek Regional Park is 1,927.2 acres and is located in the southeast corner of Ramsey County. Battle Creek Regional Park is part of the Regional Parks System, supported by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with cities, counties, and special park districts that was established in 1974.

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan will develop a long-range vision and recommendations for the park, built from input from the public and stakeholders. This was achieved by gathering information on issues and concerns from community members, stakeholders, engaging in design charrettes with the public, and ultimately refining a Master Plan that will guide future park improvements.

This master plan replaces and updates the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park Joint Master Plan for Development. The 2023 Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plans as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Amendment has been developed to act as a separate guiding document from the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment since the Pigs Eye Lake segment is at a different level of development than the Battle Creek segment. The Battle Creek segment is moderately developed with maintained trail systems, signage and other recreational amenities. Pigs Eye Lake remains undeveloped and is guided under the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment. Only the western portion of the Battle Creek segment falls within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Segments of Battle Creek Regional Park that are within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area are subject to the regulations of State statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within the corridor.

The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment has been developed to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendments as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan.

## Planning Framework

### METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Regional parks and trails are developed in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to preserve green space for wildlife habitat and provide a wide range of natural resource related recreational opportunities. Established in 1974, the Regional Parks and Open Space System is managed by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with cities, counties, and special park districts. While the operation of the system is the responsibility of cities, counties, and special park districts, the Metropolitan Council provides support with planning, funding, and advocacy. Each implementing agency, such as Ramsey County, is responsible for the development of a master plan for its regional park, regional trail, and open space components. In 2018 the metropolitan regional park and trail system included 56 regional parks and park preserves totaling more than 54,000 acres, nearly 400 miles of interconnected trails, and 8 special recreation features. The regional park system provides a wealth of opportunities for recreation, exercise, gatherings, and solitude. Our regional parks and park preserves also protect significant green space and wildlife habitat.

Areas selected for regional parks should contain a diversity of nature-based resources, either naturally occurring or human-built. The recreational quality of a regional park is measured by the presence or absence of outstanding natural resources and the ability to provide adequately for a wide range of natural resource related recreational opportunities. Access to water bodies suitable for recreation such as swimming, boating, and fishing is particularly important and most regional parks are focused on lakes, rivers, or streams.

A regional park should be large enough to accommodate a variety of activities, preserve a pleasant natural aspect, and buffer activity areas from each other and from surrounding areas. This is interpreted as requiring 200 to 500 acres of land. Occasionally, because of the quality of the resource, an exception may be made, and a regional park may be as small as 100 acres.

Thrive MSP 2040 is the vision for our region over the next 30 years. Under state law, the Met Council prepares a long-range plan for the Twin Cities region every 10 years. The regional vision includes five desired outcomes: stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability, and sustainability. While each outcome is described below, it is important to note that the five outcomes reinforce and support one another to produce greater benefits than any single outcome alone. The outcomes provide policy direction for the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.

#### Stewardship

Stewardship advances the Council's longstanding mission of orderly and economical development by responsibly managing the region's natural and financial resources, and main strategic investments in our region's future. Stewardship means:

- Responsibly managing our region's finite resources, including natural resources – such as lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, high quality natural habitats, and agricultural soils – financial resources, and our existing investments in infrastructure.
- Pivoting from expanding to maintaining our region's wastewater and highway infrastructure.
- Leveraging transit investments with high expectations of land use.

## Prosperity

Prosperity is fostered by investments in infrastructure and amenities that make our region competitive in attracting and retaining successful businesses, a talented workforce, and strong economic opportunities. Regional economic competitiveness results from our strategic, long-term public and private decisions that build on and grow our region's economic strengths relative to other regions. Advancing prosperity includes:

- Fostering conditions for shared economic vitality by balancing major investments across the region.
- Protecting natural resources that are the foundation of prosperity.
- Planning for and investing in infrastructure, amenities, and quality of life needed for economic competitiveness.
- Encouraging redevelopment and infill development.

## Equity

Equity means connecting all residents to opportunity and creates viable housing, transportation, and recreation options for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities so that all communities share the opportunities and challenges of growth and change. For our region to reach its full economic potential, all our residents must be able to access opportunities. Our region is stronger when all people live in communities that provide opportunities for success, prosperity, and quality of life. Promoting equity includes:

- Using the council's influence and investments to build a more equitable region
- Creating real choices in where we live, how we travel, and where we recreate for all residents, across race, ethnicity, economic means, and ability.
- Investing in a mix of housing affordability along the region's transit corridors.
- Engaging a full cross-section of the public in decision-making.

## Livability

Livability focuses on the quality of our residents' lives and experiences in the region, and how places and infrastructure create and enhance the quality of life that makes our region a great place to live. With abundant and beautiful open space, an active arts community, a range of housing options, and a reasonable cost of living, the Twin Cities region is widely recognized for its high quality of life. Enhancing livability means:

- Increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation through regional parks and trails.
- Providing transportation choices for a range of demographic characteristics and economic means.
- Supporting bicycle facilities to promote bicycling for transportation, recreation, and healthy lifestyles.
- Aligning resources to support transit-oriented development and walkable places.
- Promoting healthy communities and active living through land use, planning, and investments.



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## Sustainability

Sustainability means protecting our regional vitality for generations to come by preserving our capacity to maintain and support our region's well-being and productivity over the long term. The region's investments in prosperity, equity, and livability will fall short over the long term if the region exhausts its resources without investing in the future. Planning for sustainability means:

- Promoting the wise use of water through expanding water conservation and reuse, increasing groundwater recharge, and optimizing surface water and groundwater use.
- Providing leadership, information, and technical assistance to support local governments' consideration of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

Additionally, Thrive identifies the principles of integration, collaboration, and accountability to carry out the Council's work. These three principles reflect the Council's efforts to integrate policy areas, support local governments and regional partners, and promote and implement the Thrive regional vision.

## Integration

Integration is the intentional combining of related activities to achieve more effective results and leveraging multiple policy tools to address complex regional challenges and opportunities. The Thrive outcomes described above are lofty ideals that cut across the Council's functions and responsibilities. Pursuing them demands that the Council use its full range of authorities and activities in more coordinated ways. Achieving integration involves moving beyond organizational silos and coordinating effectively with partners and stakeholders across and throughout the region.

## Collaboration

Collaboration recognizes that shared efforts advance our region most effectively toward shared outcomes. Addressing the region's issues requires collaboration because no single entity has the capacity or authority to do the work alone. For the Council, acting collaboratively means being open to shared strategies, supportive partnerships, and reciprocal relationships. It also represents convening the region's best thinkers, experts, and stakeholders to address complex regional issues beyond the capacity or authority of any single jurisdiction or institution. Additionally, it involves providing technical assistance and enhanced information to support local planning and decision-making.

## Accountability

For the Council, accountability includes a commitment to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and practices toward achieving shared outcomes and a willingness to adjust course to improve performance. Acting accountably means: a) adopting a data-driven approach to measure progress, b) creating and learning from Thrive indicators, c) providing clear, easily accessible information, and d) fulfilling the Council's mission.

Thrive articulates a long-range vision for the region. The vision aims to foster and contribute to the five desired outcomes through the use of the three principles described above. While the focus in Thrive is on the overarching vision for the regions, Thrive provides direction for the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. Thrive specifies that the Council will collaborate with the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, regional park implementing agencies, and state partners to:

- Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, as identified in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high-quality natural resources, increases climate resiliency, fosters healthy outcomes, connects communities, and enhances quality of life in the region.

- Promote expanded multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit network, where appropriate.
- Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan supports the desired outcomes, principles, and additional directives for the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.

## RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Ramsey County is the most densely populated county in the State of Minnesota and the parks and open spaces held by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation represent the largest undeveloped land area in the county. Within the system there are six regional parks, six regional trails, nine county parks, nine protected open spaces, five golf courses, and numerous recreation facilities. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation works in cooperation with the Metropolitan Council, the National Park Service, Saint Paul Regional Water Services, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, its municipalities, and other government units to advance park, recreation, and leisure opportunities for all Ramsey County residents.

The vision of Ramsey County is "a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive," and the county mission is to provide "a county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life." The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department follows this mission by preserving, developing, maintaining, and managing a system of parks, open space, trail corridors, and special use areas as well as providing year-round recreational programs, services, and facilities which are responsive to changing needs, compatible with the resource base, and most effectively provided at the county level.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation supports the county vision and mission through:

### Trail Services

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation coordinates the establishment of a Ramsey County trail network system that connects significant natural and cultural features and implements those segments of county or regional significance on Ramsey County and Open Space land.

### Open Space Preservation

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation acquires, protects, and manages unique, fragile, and aesthetically attractive natural resources that contribute positively to the urban landscape, and perform critical natural functions.

### Natural Interpretation

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation promotes positive environmental values through an increased awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of natural resources and natural processes.

### Outdoor Recreation Programming

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation sponsors or co-sponsors recreation programs that encourage development of resource oriented outdoor recreation skills and promote wellness. Special events are also organized that introduce people to recreation opportunities available within the system.

### Special Recreation Services

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation provides areas, facilities, and programs of significance county-wide to meet specialized indoor and outdoor recreation needs of Ramsey County residents.

# Planning Framework

## Park Services

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation provides diverse and accessible areas and facilities primarily for self-directed outdoor oriented recreation that complements the natural features of the site.

## Equitable Use

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is working to strengthen equitable use of regional parks and trails, county parks, open spaces, and other recreation facilities across all ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, national origins, and abilities.

## PARK HISTORY

### PRE-SETTLEMENT HISTORY AND THE LANDSCAPE

The landscape of Battle Creek Park is the result of climatic patterns, hydrology, and activities of human inhabitants of the region. Glaciers formed the topography and mineral soils of the region; climate also influenced vegetation composition and patterns after the glaciers retreated; water shaped the landforms and vegetation patterns; and humans made further alterations in vegetation, soils and topography to produce the current landscape. These basic factors will continue to govern the landscape of the park.

Most of the geologic features and soils of the park were formed by the actions of glaciers over the past 20,000 years (Wovcha et al, 1995). This portion of Ramsey County was affected by the Superior lobe of the late Wisconsin glaciation, which advanced southward from the Lake Superior basin. The Superior lobe scoured rock from the Lake Superior basin, ground it into gravel, sand, and silt, and deposited it in this area along the melting margin of the glacier. As the glacier advanced and retreated several times, it formed a rugged moraine of sand and gravel till, the St. Croix Moraine complex. This till was reworked by weather and plants, forming coarse, droughty, and relatively infertile soils in upland areas of Ramsey County, with deposits of clay and denser soils in low areas where water collected to form lakes and wetlands.

The topography, soils, and pattern of streams, lakes, and wetlands that resulted from this glacial activity greatly influenced the pattern of vegetation communities that developed later. Existing plant communities in the park, such as dry oak forests and bluff savannas, are well-adapted to the climate, dry erodable soils, and rolling topography of the park.

Glacial meltwaters that pooled in the Red River Valley flowed south, as the Glacial River Warren, which cut deeply through glacial deposits and bedrock sedimentary layers formed 500 million years ago to form the Mississippi River valley and bluffs. Tributary streams like Battle Creek also cut down through these St. Peter Sandstone deposits, forming steep side channels, and depositing sediment in the Mississippi Valley. Since the formation of river valleys and lakes about 10,000 years ago, the geologic landscape has changed little. The Mississippi Valley has filled gradually with sediment, and lakes and wetlands have gradually filled with dead plant material or sediments eroded from surrounding uplands.

Immediately after the melting of the glaciers, spruce trees and tundra plants developed around the margins of glaciers, followed by pine barrens and forests with a bracken fern understory. As the climate warmed about 9,000 years ago, pines began to decline, and prairie herbs increased, along with elm and oak forests. The climate continued to warm until about 7,000 years ago, when midgrass prairie reached its maximum extent in Minnesota and covered most of the Twin Cities region.



Prairie and oak woodlands dominated the region until about 4,000 years ago, when the climate became cooler and wetter. Oak thickets spread, and oak woodland-brushland gradually dominated upland areas interspersed with marshes and wet prairies. White pines also migrated into this region as the climate cooled. About 300 years ago, the climate became especially cool and wet, and extensive forests of elm, sugar maple, and basswood developed in eastern Minnesota. The major patterns of vegetation of the Twin Cities area at the time of European settlement were then in place.

The history of American Indians and their influence on the local landscape are still evolving. American Indians have probably inhabited and hunted in the area for about 10,000 years. In addition to using a wide variety of plants and animals for food, American Indians altered the landscape and vegetation patterns by cultivation and by setting fire to vegetation. Indians (and European fur traders) used fire to hunt game, create desired game habitat, to clear the landscape for travel, communication, and defense, and to obtain firewood. While some fires in the region occurred naturally, the activities of American Indians probably greatly increased the frequency of fires. Prairies near the Mississippi River may have been burned annually. Prairies and savannas are fire-dependent plant communities, and would most likely not have been present in the Twin Cities area at the time of European settlement without these fires. (Wovcha, 1995)

At the time of settlement the landscape of Battle Creek Park probably included emergent wetlands, wet meadows, and prairies in low areas; oak woodlands and brushlands and sand/gravel savannas on drier uplands and bluffs; and denser forests of mixed species on cooler slopes that were not burned. Aerial photos from 1940s indicate that some oak woodlands in the park were once much more open than they are today, perhaps due to regular fires before European settlement, and grazing in the early part of this century. Pigs Eye Lake was more of a closed water body wetland with more vegetation prior.

As the Saint Paul area developed after the mid-1800s, more intensive human activities began to change the landscape and natural communities. These alterations included the following:

- Road building began to clear and fragment forests and other communities, for example, dividing sections of the bluff lands from each other, and separating Mississippi River floodplain from upland areas and habitats, as they are today.
- Agriculture affected hydrology by draining wetlands and altering creeks. Within Battle Creek Park, farming also altered vegetation communities through clearing, plowing, cessation of regular fires, and grazing. These effects can be seen in the reduction of native vegetation in meadow and forest understory areas, and substitution of communities of lower diversity and dominated by non-native plants, such as smooth brome. Soil erosion increased where native cover was removed, adding sediment to creeks, wetlands, and lakes.
- Urbanization fragmented natural communities further with the addition of more roads, streets, and utilities. Construction of all types altered and compacted soils, and changed the local hydrology. Large areas of impervious surface and drainage of wetlands increased the amount of stormwater runoff and pollutants carried to local waters. Additional non-native, aggressive species like buckthorn were added as landscape materials.
- The development of the upper watershed of Battle Creek caused dramatic flooding and bluff erosion, and eventually led to major alterations to the creek and its floodplain to control flood damages.
- Changes in habitat and increasing presence of humans in the landscape brought changes in animals populations, decreasing or eliminated some species like eagles and bluebirds, favoring others such as white-tail deer and cardinals.
- The extensive lock and dam system built along the Mississippi river forever changed backwater wetlands, like what is now Pigs Eye Lake, by altering the river levels.

# Planning Framework

## History of the Park and Surrounding Area

In the mid-1800s, when European settlers were arriving in St. Paul, the area now called Battle Creek Regional Park was known as “Pine Coulie,” named for the white pines around the creek. Early settlers reported that the Sioux village at Kaposia (South St. Paul) had a small farm plot at Pine Coulie, and white settlers were already farming near Pigs Eye Lake in the 1840s. Local histories report little additional information about the park until 1914.

In 1914, Dietrich Lange, the superintendent of St. Paul schools, suggested that Pine Coulie be acquired as a park. He noted that “The creek, Battle Creek, is the most limpid one imaginable, threading its shining way through a maze of fern and mossy stones, and making here, a waterfall, and there a placid pool, reflecting the deep blue of the sky. The creek is fed by ice cold, crystal clear springs. The water flows between green banks covered with a soft carpet of moss.”

Lange also noted that the park included pine trees, which accounted for the name “Pine Coulie,” but also had “the biggest variety of trees in any spot in the state. Tall pine, spruce, elm, maple, oak, basswood, cottonwood, willow, birch, and other trees that grow there abundantly, along with many varieties of shrubs.” By 1921, however, this had changed—a team of surveyors working in the area noted that the trees around the creek had been cut back for a distance of 100 feet.

The first thirty acres of the park were donated to the city of St. Paul in 1922 by William McMurray, a St. Paul businessman, who purchased the acres around the creek a few months before in order to donate the area to the city as a park. McMurray suggested the name “Battle Creek Park.” The city had also surveyed the 65 acres on the tops of the bluffs as potential parkland. McMurray later talked with other landowners near the park and suggested that they donate property for the park. In 1924, the city purchased an additional 34 acres from 5 landowners. By 1928, the city had constructed a caretaker’s cottage, lights, parking spaces, a steel bridge and two dams in the Park. In 1941, 5,000 conifers were planted to reforest the creek area, including 500 white cedar, 1000 jack pines, 1500 Norway pines, and 2000 white pines from Northern Minnesota. By 1947, the St. Paul Pioneer press noted that erosion and vandalism were becoming major maintenance problems for the park.

Ramsey County made additional land purchases for the park in the 1950s and has continued to purchase land up to the present.

Much of the eastern side of St. Paul, including the area around Battle Creek Park, was in agricultural uses through World War II, including dairy farms, truck farms, and some croplands. The scattered farm homes and older homes in neighborhoods near Battle Creek Park are evidence of this era. The eastern side of St. Paul was much slower to develop urban land uses than the areas west of downtown. In part, this is due to steeper slopes and wetland areas that made this area more difficult to develop. Western areas of the city also developed faster due to the influence of transportation connections and economic activity in the Minneapolis and Midway areas. Most of the residential areas, schools, and commercial areas that dominate neighborhoods adjacent to the park today developed in the 1960s and later. Wooded areas along the bluffs in the Highwood neighborhood of St. Paul south of the park and in Maplewood are still being developed with new homes.

Prior to acquisition and development of the park, land use within the park boundaries was primarily agricultural. Uses included grazing, cropping, truck farming, and farm residences. Eastern portions of the park were part of the Ramsey County Work Farm. Aerial photos of the park from 1945 show an area dominated by agricultural uses with some scattered residences, existing parkland along Battle Creek, and generally more open woodlands and bluff areas than the current park landscape.

Northeastern portions of the park, including oak forest areas and the current picnic grounds, were formerly part of the Ramsey County Work Farm. The flat portions of this area were used for crops, pasture, and buildings. Old foundations and trash dumps were found in these areas when the creek and ponds were modified in the 1980s. Areas near the corner of Upper Afton Road and McKnight Road were briefly used for community garden plots in the

1970s. The steep, wooded areas may have been used for grazing, but have not been altered in other ways. Informal picnicking areas with a gravel parking lot were developed in the open areas in the 1960s, with current buildings and other improvements completed from 1984-85.

Most of the southeast area of the park was also part of the County Work Farm. Some lots in the southeast corner, lots along Upper Afton Road, and a 40-acre parcel at Upper Afton and McKnight were in private ownership until the 1980s, when they were purchased by the County. The "Jordan 40" and other private lots were in agricultural uses such as cropping, grazing, and farm buildings, but zoned for future commercial use. The County purchased these properties in the early 1980s and removed most of the buildings, though foundations and some fences remain. In the southeast corner, two lots are still in private ownership but undeveloped.

The open meadow southeast of Ruth Street and a strip of land along Lower Afton Road were also part of the County Work Farm and probably used for grazing. This area became part of Battle Creek Park before 1970.

Portions of the large woodland areas of the park east of McKnight Road and Battle Creek Road were once much more open than they are today, with wider spaces between canopy trees and an understory of grasses and herbaceous plant cover. These areas were part of the County Work Farm or private farms, and were probably used for grazing or as woodlots, with some scattered farm residences adjacent to the woodlands along roads. The City and County also owned undeveloped portions of the Creek corridor that connect the east and west areas of the park. City ownership was transferred to the County along with the lower portions of the creek corridor and bluffs.

The oak woodland and meadow areas between Ruth Street and Battle Creek Road included some property owned by the City of St. Paul and some private residential properties along Battle Creek Road. The woods were used for grazing. The old field area west of Battle Creek Road was used as a truck farm. The north end of this area was planted as a tree nursery by the city and county in the 1970s, with some nursery stock still visible adjacent to the woods today. The County purchased properties in this area between 1972 and the present. The wetland depression in the open field area was formed when soil was taken for use in the Battle Creek flood control project. While it supports wetland vegetation now, it was a dry meadow similar to surrounding areas before soil removal activities.

As noted previously, the Battle Creek corridor and portions of the bluffs from Upper Afton Road to Highway 61 were owned by the City of St. Paul after 1922 and used as a park. The areas included a popular ski jump, picnic areas and shelters, and other park buildings. As the upper portion of the creek's watershed developed during this century, this area began to flood regularly from increased storm runoff. This flooding eroded the bluffs, washed out park buildings, and closed the park in 1971. In the early 1980's, the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District completed a flood control project that put most of the creek flow underground, retained a managed flow above ground, and installed a series of stepped falls and bridges. St. Paul then exchanged the land around the Creek with the County for park lands in the Lilydale and Pigs Eye areas. Ramsey County installed the existing parking lot and trail near Highway 61 in 1991.

The County has gradually acquired private properties along what is now Park Entrance road and Point Douglas road to the north, since 1972. After 1996 the three homes in private use remaining along these roads were purchased, removed and converted to parkland. Since this time Point Douglas road has been an unserviced road with a lock gated access off of Highway 61, beyond the gate is a Metropolitan council lift station and a 9.82 acre parcel owned by the Minnesota Department of Transportation in the southwest corner. The Minnesota Department of Transportation also owns the land south of this parcel, between Park Entrance road and Highway 61. Ramsey county parkland abuts the road north along Point Douglas road. Northwest of county parkland the City of St. Paul owns an almost 4-acre parcel of parkland that adjoins the Minnesota Department of Transportation's historic Highway 61 overlook land. This overlook serves as an unofficial entrance to Battle Creek park for hikers and off-road cyclists. Since Point Douglas road has been abandoned it is slowly degrading over time, although live overhead utilities still run along the road. Two areas along Point Douglas road and two area along Park Entrance road were used as borrow pits during road construction of Highway 61. The County restored more gentle slopes and planted these areas in the 1970s with non-native seed mixes.



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The City of St. Paul and Ramsey County have purchased numerous vacant residential lots along the bluffs between Battle Creek Park and Fish Creek. The plan is to purchase additional properties within this area to preserve the bluff line from development.

Pigs Eye Lake is located in a heavily industrialized area, close to the Metro Plant and other major air emissions sources. The land use designation for the metro plant and surrounding parcels is industrial, consistent with this designation noise, odors, emissions and traffic are present at levels that are consistent with industrial land use. The Pigs Eye Landfill has contributed to the presence of hazardous, toxic, and radioactive wastes in and surrounding Pigs Eye Lake. The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan amendment provides further details on the contamination and proposed next steps in that area for natural resource and public safety planning in the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park. Ramsey County is committed to working closely with neighboring landowners to create a compatible vision for the future of the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park.

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

The development of Battle Creek Regional Park has been evolving since 1974 when the state legislature established the Regional Parks System and Battle Creek Regional Park was incorporated into the system. The original master plan for Battle Creek Regional Park was a joint effort between Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul in 1981. Within the 1981 master plan several key development details were discussed including:

- A group picnic area northwest of the intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road.
- Swimming area.
- Trailhead and picnic area southeast of the intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road.
- A winter sports area located in the segment of Battle Creek Regional Park bounded by Upper Afton Road, Lower Afton Road, Winthrop Street, and Battle Creek Road.
- A bluff picnic area located in the segment of Battle Creek Regional Park between Highway 61 and Battle Creek Road.
- A trailhead/visitor center located on the bluff between Highway 61 and Battle Creek Road.
- A lower creek picnic area located in the segment of Battle Creek Regional Park Between Highway 61 and Battle Creek Road with access from Lower Afton Road.
- Pigs Eye Lake development.
  - Additional planning would need to be done.
  - Trail development through accessible areas.
  - Pedestrian Bridge over Highway 61 and the railroad.

In the time since the original master plan was developed for the park other plans have been developed which add context and have helped guide the development of the park as well as this master plan including:

- Ramsey County Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan.
- Ramsey County Off-Road Cycling Master Plan.
- The Great River Passage Master Plan.
- Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment (See Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment for more detail).
- 2018 Ramsey County Parks & Recreation System Plan.
- Green Spaces, Green Places An Energy Action Plan for Ramsey County Parks & Recreation.
- 2016 Fish Creek Open Space Concept Plan, coordinated along with the city of Maplewood.
- Suburban Pond Open Space Concept Plan.
- Mississippi River Bluff Open Space Protection Area Concept Plan.
- Point Douglass Road Regional Trail Master Plan.

## Goals of Communications and Public Engagement

In the Spring of 2019 Ramsey County Parks & Recreation began the process of developing a new master plan for Battle Creek Regional Park. To aid the county in the master planning effort, SRF Consulting was contracted as a team member whose primary responsibility was to guide the public engagement phase. Based upon initial project discussions during the kickoff meeting, and an analysis of park stakeholders, it is recommended that this project engage in a “collaborate” level of engagement as described in the IAP2 spectrum of public engagement. At this level, the project team will partner with the public on key aspects, including identifying issues and needs, determining alternative options, and providing guidance on preferred alternative plans. Overall, the broad goals of our engagement approach are to:

- Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure there is transparency and consistent communication of project information.
- Use an equity lens in amplifying the voices of communities traditionally left out of planning processes, including immigrants, people of color, LGBTQ communities, Native American communities, youth, and the elderly.
- Connect with a broad cross section of community stakeholders to provide ideas, guidance, and feedback.
- Deploy a defined communications and messaging strategy.

## Communications and Public Involvement Strategy Overview

Transparent, efficient, and equitable public engagement and communications will be achieved throughout the master planning process with the deployment of two key strategies – Consistent Communication and Tailored Involvement. Utilizing these strategies throughout all phases of the project will ensure a smooth public process that meets the overall goals of the project.

### Strategy 1: Consistent Communication

Consistent updates and opportunities for feedback will be used to keep the public informed and identify concerns and issues from an early point in the project. Community websites, newsletters, and other print, online, and in-person communications will provide clear explanations of the project need, project timeline, and project impacts. Similar engagement methods will be used throughout the process to equip individuals with project information in a consistent format.

### Strategy 2: Tailored Involvement

Tailored involvement is necessary to connect with project stakeholder groups using methods and locations that work best for them. There will be a different approach for connecting with stakeholder agencies and organizations than there will be – for example – in connecting with recreational interest groups, passive park users, or the general public.

## Agency Involvement

Stakeholder agencies will be the key decision makers throughout the master planning process and will be primarily involved through the Project Management Team. The Project Management Team (PMT) is the decision-making body for the project, however all decisions will be informed based on feedback from the community and community engagement results. The Project Management Team helped guide the master planning effort, providing recommendations for approaches and decisions at key project points. Project Management Team members also participated in public meetings as needed.

# Planning Framework

## Communications Plan

The Communications Plan is a living document that provides a road map for how and when all external project communications will occur.

### Key Messaging Areas

Throughout the planning process, there are seven key messaging areas that should be specifically shared with the public. Communication efforts will ensure that the public is aware of the following components:

- Project need.
- Getting involved in the planning process.
- Project status, schedule, and other housekeeping items.
- Design charrette goals & objectives.
- Community impacts.
- Opportunities for engagement and feedback.
- Process (Issues and concerns engagement, Design Charrettes, Concept Graphic Review).

### Public Communications

To ensure impactful, cost-effective, and swift dissemination of information, the team will use the existing communication tools of Ramsey County, with support from the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. Communications tools include:

- Ramsey County Project Website.
- Newsletters.
- Mail.
- Social Media platforms.
  - Recreation groups were also encouraged to share information through their social media channels.
- In-Park Posters
  - Poster boards were laminated and posted at all park entrances announcing when major meetings were taking place along with information regarding the project website to encourage community members to stay involved.
- In-person engagement events.
  - Pop-up engagement.
  - At-Large meetings.
  - Design charrettes.

The project team worked with communications staff from each of the partner agencies to provide project updates and information.

In addition, community partners have their own communication outlets. Leveraging relationships with community organizations to spread the word to their members, clients, and audience is another low-cost, minimal-effort opportunity to reach the public.

At certain points in the project, especially prior to public events, the project team reached out to local media outlets to earn media coverage. Ramsey County produced a press release prior to each large public event for distribution to the following local media and for project partners to share.



## Social Media

Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, and the City of Maplewood already have established collective audiences through their social media channels. Using these outlets (Facebook and Twitter) helped to share timely information and increase awareness about the project with local and regional audiences.

### Local Media Outlets

Outlet	Type
Asian American Press	Newspaper/Website
East Side Review	Newspaper/Website
City of Saint Paul Website/Newsletters	Municipal
Ramsey County Project Page	County
KSTP, WCCO	Regional Television
Star Tribune	Newspaper/Website
Pioneer Press/TwinCities.com	Newspaper/Website
Facebook, Twitter, Instagram	Social Media

SRF assisted the project management team staff in creating social media content to share key messages, promote upcoming engagement events, and direct users to the project website for additional information. Social media content included a balance of graphics and text, making it easy to understand as well as visually appealing.

## Outreach Methodology and Tools

A variety of methods and tools were employed to involve the public in the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. These methods and tools were tailored in ways to ensure that a wide variety of community members and stakeholders were able to connect with the planning process.

### Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings were planned events that connected with specific community groups. The purpose of stakeholder meetings is to connect deeply with a variety of communities who have perspectives on the future of Battle Creek Regional Park.

### Pop-Up Engagement Meetings

Pop-Up meetings were held at locations and events where people were already going. Locations for potential pop-ups included Battle Creek Park as well as other local event locations like the Ramsey County Fair.

### At-Large Meetings

These meetings allowed the community an opportunity to identify issues, discuss project materials with project team members, and be informed regarding next steps. They were formatted in an accessible, collaborative manner as determined by the Project Management Team.

### Design Charrette

The design charrette was open to the public and included opportunities for ideation, creativity, and collaboration.

# Planning Framework

## Virtual Design Charrette

A virtual design charrette and concept overview was provided in lieu of a second open house design charrette due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Members of the public, stakeholder groups, recreation clubs, project management team members, and anyone interested in the master plan were invited to attend and give feedback on concept graphics for the regional park.

## Website and Online Involvement

Online engagement activities were impactful ways to find deep connections with community members. These opportunities augmented other in-person activities and provided an opportunity to provide specific comments. Online engagement tools included:

- **Project Website:** The project website was the primary repository of public-facing project information and opportunities for staying involved.
- **Social Media Updates:** Social media updates were provided at key points in the project process to keep the community apprised of milestones.
- **Wikimap:** A wikimap provided a platform for community members to identify specific issues, hopes, and concerns at key points within the park on an easy-to-use dynamic mapping platform.
- **Online Surveys:** Multiple online surveys were provided for community members to be involved and directly comment on the master plan as concepts progressed. These surveys were also an impactful tool for community members who were unable to attend in person events.

## Summary of Public Engagement and Outreach Tools

### Pop-Up Engagement Meetings

#### Hmongtown Marketplace

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at the Hmongtown Festival on Como Avenue in Saint Paul to gather initial feedback for the Battle Creek Master Plan. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek Regional Park what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. A summary of results can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a diverse audience in age, race, and gender.

Overall the most popular types of programming included nature education, beginner outdoor recreation programs such as off-road cycling and cross country skiing, summer camps and community events, and/or festivals. A majority of respondents would like to see a free splash pad located at Battle Creek Regional Park.

### Ramsey County Fair

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at the Ramsey County Fair located on the Parks & Recreation campus at the corner of Frost and White Bear Avenue in Maplewood. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. A summary of results can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a diverse audience in age, race, and gender.

The most popular types of programming included nature education, after school classes such as fishing, skiing and biking, summer camps, and community festivals. Respondents at the Ramsey County Fair indicated a desire for the development of a nature center, a splash pad, and archery range.

### Battle Creek Pavilion Eritrean Muslim Council Event

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at an event hosted by the Eritrean Muslim Council with permission located at the Battle Creek Pavilion north of Lower Afton Road. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. A summary of results can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a majority black demographic with a wide range of ages present.

The most popular types of programming included art education, summer camps, community events, and/or festivals. The respondents indicated a strong desire to see the development of a splash pad.

### Battle Creek Waterworks

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at Waterworks in Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, and what attracts them to the park. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback, a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. A summary of results can be found in the Appendix. Responses were limited as less than ideal weather kept many people from visiting Battle Creek Regional Park that day.

Most respondents indicated the need for the rehabilitation of Waterworks or the development of a splash pad.

## Planning Framework

### Southeast Community Organization Community Event

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at an event at Highwood Hills Elementary School hosted by the Southeast Community Organization located on Londin Lane East. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. A summary of results can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a diverse audience in age, race, and gender.

Responses were varied but the most interest was in the development of a splash pad and more programming available for youth in Battle Creek Regional Park.

### Battle Creek Recreation Center Food Shelf Event

Ramsey County staff attended and hosted an informational kiosk at Battle Creek Recreation Center during a food shelf event. The county was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. Example boards can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a diverse audience in race, and gender.

The greatest concern was that Battle Creek Regional Park remain free of any type of admission cost to the public. General maintenance and a greater availability of restrooms and water were also indicated as a need.

### Community and Stakeholder Meetings

#### Battle Creek Recreation Stakeholder Meeting

Ramsey County hosted the recreation stakeholder meeting to gather information and feedback from existing groups that are invested in Battle Creek Regional Park. Many community members representing different interests attended including off leash dog area users, off-road cyclists, running groups, cross country ski teams, hikers, and other interested parties shared their views. The county was interested in learning what types of amenities, programming, or other features community members were interested in. Ramsey County also sought out information on how people currently use the park, what attracts them to the park, and in the case that they had not visited Battle Creek Regional Park what may lead them to visiting in the future. Ramsey County also took any comments or concerns relating to the park that the community was interested in sharing. To gather feedback a number of voting boards and comment cards were provided. Example boards can be found in the Appendix. The responses gathered came from a predominantly white, middle to late age group of respondents.

Respondents were most interested in the expansion of existing infrastructure such as cross country ski/grass mowed walking trails, off road cycling/hiking trails, and the future development of the off leash dog area. Community members shared their thoughts on how these recreation amenities can continue to co-exist. The development of the winter recreation area and how Ramsey County would fund that infrastructure was also frequently mentioned.

### Environmental Stakeholders Meeting

Ramsey County invited members of the community and representatives of other government agencies that had an interest in the environmental protection and preservation of Battle Creek Regional Park to share their thoughts on the future of the park. The county also sought feedback regarding the concept development and what amenities or features they thought would be warranted in the development of the park.

Participants indicated the desire for further water and creek protection within the park which could also include community education, focusing on homes in the area whose land contributes to the Battle Creek Sub-Watershed. Interpretive signage and educational opportunities were also strongly desired.

### Southeast Community Organization Council Meeting

Ramsey County presented information from community engagement as well as park concepts with the Southeast Community Organization Council at their meeting held on Monday February 24, 2020. The county wanted to gather their feedback on both the process and what they thought was important in the development of the park.

Safe access was an important issue, Battle Creek Regional Park is a highly segmented area with major road intersections that can be difficult to cross. Expanded programming especially for community youth was also desired. Overall the council was interested and supportive of the improvements being proposed.

### Carver Elementary Family Night

Ramsey County staff attended the Carver Elementary School's Family Night event to gather additional feedback on park concepts that had been generated through community engagement. Overall community members were pleased with the improvements being proposed. Some of the community did not realize that Fish Creek and Pigs Eye Lake had public lands and would like for more information to be made available.

### Battle Creek Middle School

Ramsey County was invited to share information and gather feedback from a classroom of students at Battle Creek Middle School. The class had a diversity of ages and race. Students enrolled in the class were from households where English was not the primary language spoken. The class had an interest in seeing more programming being made available including nature education, movies in the park, and community gatherings with food trucks. Students also would like to see more fishing opportunities, walking trails, and paved multi-use trails through the park.

Friends of the Mississippi River already performs in class programming with the school and takes groups down to the creek for course work. There was an expressed interest in improving the access site across from the school as well as the trail. Implementation of learning stations along the trail and creek are desirable outcomes.

### Carver Elementary School

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has met with Carver Elementary Staff regarding the redevelopment of the school grounds which are currently in a design phase. Carver Elementary offers Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (S.T.E.M) education. As a part of this education students go out into the park during various classes for their instruction. Carver Elementary and Ramsey County are interested in increasing access to the park from the school grounds and implementing learning trails and opportunities within the park close to Carver Elementary.



# Planning Framework

## Minnesota Department of Transportation

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has had preliminary conversations with the Minnesota Department of Transportation regarding parcels of land along the east side of Highway 61. Ramsey County is interested in incorporating some of this land into Battle Creek Regional Park, the department of transportation has indicated that some land transfers may be possible in the future, additional planning and work will be needed to make this a reality.

### At-Large Meeting & Design Charrette

#### At-Large Community Meeting

The first at-large community meeting was held at the Battle Creek Recreation Center on Saturday August 3, 2019, to gather feedback on what future amenities are wanted, programming in the park, what features of Battle Creek are important to protect, and any other information that community members wanted to express. The event was advertised through local media, social media, in park posters, the county newsletter, the project website, and Ramsey County encouraged all partners to also share the information through their own networks.

Overall the turnout, while substantial, was not very diverse and was predominantly white, middle to older aged community members who were already active users of the park. Respondents emphasized existing uses as the most important aspects of the park to further develop with the implementation of the winter recreation area and man-made snow being the most important. Community members also communicated the desire for the protection of the park's natural areas as being a significant factor in the development of the master plan. Access into Pigs Eye and the protection of that area as a public resource was also noted.

### Community Design Charrette

Ramsey County held a community design workshop on Saturday November 2, 2019, at the Battle Creek Recreation Center. The event was advertised through local media, social media, in park posters, the county newsletter, the project website, and Ramsey County encouraged all partners to also share the information through their own networks.

The design workshop was held so that members of the community could come and take in what had been learned through community engagement to start placing amenities in the park to shape the development of the park concept. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation provided maps of the park overall, the Battle Creek segment and the Pigs Eye Lake segment for participants to annotate, draw on or in any other way express their views. Community members were broken into groups along with county and SRF staff to help facilitate or answer any questions.

#### Themes that emerged from the community design charrette:

- Keep development clustered around areas that have already been developed such as parking lots, the community center, and existing trailheads.
- Acquire park inholdings, Minnesota Department of Transportation Parcels, and land within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area for protection and recreational use.

#### Comments Regarding the Overall Park Map:

- Regional park is lacking signage along Highway 61.
- Recreational amenity/viewing bluff (Totem Town).
- Land bridge across 61 from Lower Afton to Pigs Eye segment.
- Access to Pigs Eye Lake.
- Bluff trail connection from Battle Creek to Fish Creek.
- Learning station/viewing area at Red Rock Road (Pigs Eye Lake).
- Future property acquisition (homes along fish creek).

- Acquisition of Burns Ave. Overlook.
- Connect Pigs Eye Lake/ parking/expansion.
- Boardwalk around Pigs Eye Lake to viewing areas.
- Canoe/kayak/rowing at Pigs Eye Lake.
- Rowing facility/kayak/canoe at Pigs Eye Lake.
- Acquisition (totem town).

## Comments and notes from design workshop groups:

### Group 1

- Break park into 4 quadrants.
- Collaborate between Ramsey County and municipalities.
- Use facilities we already have.
- Connections to Pigs Eye Lake.
- Public safety concerns.
- Skiing expansion.
- Improved signage.
- Permanent restroom at off-leash dog area.
- Expand Waterworks (splash pad).
- Trail loops.

### Group 2

- Water resources become part of a larger landscape.
- Land bridge to connect Pigs Eye Lake.
- Contiguous land.
- Development should happen in existing locations.
- Park reserve vs. regional park.
- Wayfinding improvements.
- Sustainability is important.

### Group 3

- Adopt a trail to address trash.
- Nature center supported.
- Access point safety.
- Connecting dense areas to park.
- Satellite nature centers.
- Bluff connection.

### Group 4

- Focus on nature preservation.
- Trail links into Pigs Eye Lake.
- Boardwalks in Pigs Eye Lake.
- Expand development within existing areas.
- Wayfinding improvements.
- Restrooms.
- Add access points.
- Close Battle Creek Road.

# Planning Framework

## Group 5

- Centralize active development areas.
- Internal park transit system.
- Walking trails vs biking trails.
- Wayfinding.
- Need to reduce mowing in non-recreation use areas.

## General Notes

- More trash cans.
- Tamarack Nature Center as an example – bring kids into woods.
- Connect to other cultures.
- Signs.
- Safer access points.
- Friends of the park trash events.
- Nature center with bike parking.
- Nature kiosks/info boards distributed all over park.
- Grass track course (flat area biking).

Note: maps and meeting material can be found in the Appendix.

## Virtual Community Meeting

A virtual design charrette and concept overview was held on Thursday July 23, 2020, in lieu of a second open house design charrette due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Members of the public, stakeholder groups, recreation clubs, project management team members, and anyone interested in the master plan were invited to attend and give feedback on concept graphics for the regional park. The event was advertised through local media, social media, in park posters, the county newsletter, the project website, and Ramsey County encouraged all partners to also share the information through their own networks. The virtual meeting saw 76 attendees in addition to county and SRF staff members.

Ramsey County staff provided an overview of the project, community engagement to date, and park concepts for community members to ask questions, comment, and provide general feedback.

Prominent themes discussed:

- Land to be acquired
- Pigs Eye Island Building
- Additional trails, uses, and potential conflicts

A complete list of questions asked during this meeting can be found in the Appendix. In addition to the feedback received during the virtual meeting, Ramsey County hosted a dedicated set of office hours to answer questions and take feedback on the proposed master plan and park concepts.

Overall the feedback was supportive of the concept plan, proposed amenities, and programming opportunities in consideration for Battle Creek Regional Park.

## Online Engagement

### Survey #1 and Wiki-Map

The first online survey and Wiki-Map were created to get general feedback from the public on what they value about the park, how the park is currently used, what would make the park better in the future in terms of programming, recreational amenities, and any other thoughts on Battle Creek Regional Park. The Wiki-Map was created as an online tool that community members could go to and place comments, thoughts, conflict areas, or ideas for the future directly on a map of the park. In conjunction these two online tools allowed the public to clearly communicate their goals for the future of Battle Creek Regional Park. These tools were open and available to the public from June through September of 2019 during the first phase of community engagement. The Survey was also translated into Hmong and Somali in an effort to make the survey as accessible as possible.

Overall the respondents to these online tools were primarily white and middle aged from the demographics recorded through self reporting in the survey. The respondents were also predominantly active park users that were familiar with and invested in Battle Creek Regional Park.

Most respondents prioritized passive and natural space activities such as cross country skiing, hiking, off-road cycling, walking, and birdwatching among others. Man made snow and a nature center were identified as two recreation amenities that deserved consideration in the implementation of a master plan. Programming was also identified as a priority with many community members in favor of implementing nature education and beginner outdoor recreation programs for off-road cycling and cross-country skiing. To a lesser extent, community events and various outdoor classes were also mentioned.

The preservation and protection of natural space was a top priority for survey respondents. Community members indicated the importance of limiting development to areas that are already partially developed such as trailheads, the community center, and in areas of long term acquisition.

Survey results may be found in the Appendix.

### Survey #2

The second online survey was launched to gain further insight into selected recreational amenities and park features that were identified through community engagement. The survey was open and available to the public from January through October of 2020.

Waterworks is an amenity that is in need of some type of redevelopment or repair. Survey respondents echoed what Ramsey County had heard from in person engagement. Waterwoks is seen as an important aspect within Battle Creek Regional Park. What should be done is less certain with community members split between keeping it as a water park for younger children, converting the area to a free splash pad, and expanding the water park to support a wider range of ages.

The survey also found that lighting in select areas of the park should be a priority. Further planning and rules changes will be required for this amenity to be added within Battle Creek Regional Park.

Trailheads were an area that many community members believe need further development. Requested amenities at trailheads include:

- Restrooms.
- Drinking fountains.
- Lighting.
- Bike repair stations.
- Additional trash and recycling containers.

## Planning Framework

Survey results can be found in the Appendix.

### Story Map and Survey

In addition to the virtual community meeting, Ramsey County sought to make park concept maps available to the largest audience possible. Concept maps along with questions regarding recreational amenities as well as a general open comment and question section was made available for Battle Creek Regional Park. There are many existing and proposed amenities that were identified on the concept park plans, to make the maps as legible as possible different amenities, and segments of the park were separated into a number of maps including:

- Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Concept - Regional Connections.
- Battle Creek Segment.
- Battle Creek Segment Park Access.
- Battle Creek Segment Trail System and Park Amenities.
- Battle Creek Segment Learning Trails Corridors.
- Battle Creek Segment Trailheads and Park Amenities.
- Pigs Eye Segment.
- Fish Creek Segment.

Overall the feedback was supportive of the concept plan, proposed amenities, and programming opportunities in consideration for Battle Creek Regional Park.

Comments from the Story Map and survey results can be found in the Appendix.

### Municipal Support

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department has received letters of support and resolutions supporting the Battle Creek Regional Park Master plan from the municipalities of Saint Paul and Maplewood, as well as the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission, and the District 1 - Southeast Community Organization. These letters and resolutions can be found in the Appendix.

### Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has met with the Parks & Recreation Commission throughout all phases of engagement to keep them up to date and gather additional feedback and direction.

Ramsey County staff brought the plan to the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation commission on the following dates:

**February 13, 2019:** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation gave an overview of what a master plan is, why they are needed, how they are used and what specifics are included within them. Master plans are the mechanisms to get funding for parks. Regional Parks master planning is dictated by state statute, any funding for a regional park must follow the master plan. In addition the commission was informed of the process that a master plan follows from conception to Metropolitan Council adoption. The commission was given this information because Ramsey County Parks & Recreation had a number of master planning projects that were either in process or about to begin as was the case with the Battle Creek Master Plan. Questions from the commission along with answers included:

- Does a master plan address how pedestrian/bicycling is impacted around the parks especially considering the recent pedestrian deaths in the Battle Creek area?
  - Yes, multi-modal access and identifying if there is a need while working with Public Works and municipalities on adjacent roadways to make them safe is a part of the master planning process.



- Are master plans viewable and how is the public notified of their creation?
  - Ramsey County Parks & Recreation uses email, social media, and regular mail to notify the public of community engagement sessions. The community engagement action planning guide covered next will go into some of these challenges.

**March 13, 2019:** The commission was informed that the original Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan was completed in 1981 and is in need of an update. SRF Consulting was hired to lead the community engagement process while Ramsey County would perform the writing and graphic development of the plan. Two rounds of community engagement as well as two rounds of design charrettes were expected to draw out ideas from the public.

**May 8, 2019:** The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission received an update on the status of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. The group was informed of that the master plan is currently entering into the first phase of community engagement with pop-up engagement and stakeholder meetings scheduled from June through August. The second phase of engagement would follow to inform and develop the initial park concept. The third phase would include the introduction of the final park concept along with a public review. Questions from the commission along with answers included:

- How are stakeholders determined?
  - Ramsey County Parks & Recreation creates a list based on current users and also looks for other interested groups and stakeholders. Everyone is considered a stakeholder.
- What are the thoughts behind when parks cross a busy intersection?
  - To make them as safe as possible.

**June 12, 2019:** An update on the status of the Battle Creek Master Plan was given to the parks commission. SRF consulting has been hired to assist with community engagement because of the complexity of the stakeholders and user groups involved. This will set the guide for future master plans on how the community can be fully engaged in the process. In addition the commission was informed that a pop-up meeting would take place at the end of June at the Hmong Town Market Place.

- Concern on reaching the high population of renters was expressed.
  - Ramsey County will have meetings and pop-ups near the park. A list of events that the Southeast Community Organization is having will be provided to Ramsey County Parks & Recreation.
- Concern for safe access points to the park and access to a Somali translator was also expressed.

Community engagement opportunities were also reviewed as a part of this meeting. Staff gave the commission a list of engagement opportunities and were told that they are welcome to assist in staffing the pop-up booths for master planning community engagement.

**September 11, 2019:** Ramsey County staff updated the parks commission that SRF Consulting is heading the community engagement process for the Battle Creek Master Plan. Important notes from the update included:

- Ramsey County has already hosted several pop-up meetings.
- An online survey has been launched.
- Many community engagement events were held as a part of community/cultural events in and around the park.
- At-large meetings were held during busy times at the Battle Creek Recreation center and Battle Creek Water park.
- Meetings with special interest and community groups.
- The second phase of engagement is beginning with the purpose to analyze what has been collected, pinpoint groups/areas that have been missed, and engage those groups.
- Dates for the design workshops and stakeholder meetings are still being determined and will be communicated to the parks commission.

## Planning Framework

**October 9, 2019:** Ramsey County staff presented the parks commission with the Battle Creek Master Plan engagement results from the first round of online and in-person sessions. The commission was told that on November 2, 2019, the first design your park charrette would be held from 9 AM to 12 PM.

**November 13, 2019:** Ramsey County staff provided the parks commission with an update on the Battle Creek Master Plan. The first design charrette took place on November 2, 2019, at the Battle Creek Recreation Center. Themes explored and proposed by the community included:

- The addition of a nature center, partnerships with other municipalities.
- Snow making for cross country skiing and future winter recreation activities.
- Safer crossings/park access points.
- Additional shelter/picnic opportunities and parking.
- Archery.
- Public art.
- Open space possibilities and other inholdings of the park for acquisition.
- Preservation of natural areas instead of development.
- There is already an adequate amount of paved trails.
- Links to Fish Creek Open Space.

These themes will be shared with other stakeholders and community members for their input. Questions from the commission along with answers included:

- A commission member pointed out the very different demographics of two meetings they had attended and asked how that is balanced in creating the master plan.
  - The diversity of stakeholders that are sought out for input is important and all information is weighted equally. Going to large in person meetings is not the only way groups can be heard.
- How is summer vs. winter use balanced?
  - All uses are considered.
- When discussing the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area, the parks commission wanted to be sure that Ramsey County is making sure that there is equitable input, especially in light of the euro-centric-ness of winter activities. How do we get people to come to more culturally diverse activities that may be added to parks?
  - Engagement has been conducted in a proactive way, for example visiting the Hmong Town Market and seeking input from other geographical and diverse socioeconomic areas that use Battle Creek Regional Park.

**August 12, 2020:** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation staff updated the parks commission on the Battle Creek Master Plan. Engagement had to be changed and tailored to fit Covid-19 regulations with much of the engagement being moved to a virtual presence. The parks commission was given an updated schedule for the remainder of the project.

**May 12, 2021:** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation staff provided an overview of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan, including a comprehensive review of the community engagement performed for the creation of the plans as well as an equity analysis of the project.

Questions from the commission along with answers included:

- How was the priority list for implementation established?
  - A combination of measures including secured funding, community engagement, and a cost/benefit analysis.
- At what stage was an equity lens applied?
  - An equity lens was applied from the very beginning, starting with the Request for Proposals from consultants.
- Has qualitative and quantitative data been separated by users and nonpark users?
  - Ramsey County staff shared examples of both and how it has been documented.

**June 9, 2021:** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation staff provided an overview of the parks master planning process and the past decision-making process which has moved from director lead to the involvement of the community in the creation of parks plans. A summation of the previous meeting and the community engagement methods and outcomes obtained for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master plan was provided along with an overview of the plan concepts and desired outcomes was provided to the commission.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation also informed the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission that the department was seeking a Letter of Support from the commission. The commission made a motion to provide a letter of support for the Battle Creek Master Plan which was approved. The Letter of Support can be found in the Appendix.

### Project Management Team Meetings

The Project Management Team is the decision-making body for the project. Project Management team meetings were held throughout the master planning process. The team worked to guide the master planning effort, providing recommendations for approaches and decisions at key points. Team members were also invited to participate in public engagement. The project Management team consisted of representatives from:

- Ramsey County.
- The City of Saint Paul.
- The City of Maplewood.
- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- SRF Consulting Inc.
- The Lower Phalen Creek Project.

An overview of Project Management Team Meetings includes:

**June 10, 2019:** The team met for the first time to discuss the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan to gather information on what the members knew about the park and to find out if there were any aspirations that were held for the future of the park.

Among the favorite aspects of the park were:

- Diversity of uses.
- Natural resource diversity.
- Off-leash dog area.
- Park diversity.

Hopes for the master plan from team members included:

- Balance recreation with natural passive uses.
- Improve bike and pedestrian connectivity.
- Play area improvements.
- Realize the goal of connecting people to the park.
- Connecting to youth.
- Improve wayfinding.

Project Management Team Members were also presented an overview of the project as the planning effort had been defined to date through the Communications & Public Engagement Plan as well as the proposed timeline. The role of the Project Management Team was also defined as a part of this meeting along with an overview of existing park and regional conditions.

A stakeholder analysis activity was also facilitated by SRF staff through the use of an influence and interest lens.

## Planning Framework

Insights from the Project Management Team were used to further define and develop ways to reach community members whom have traditionally been left out of master planning efforts.

The initial master plan survey was also reviewed and discussed by the Project Management Team. A variety of edits were suggested and incorporated into the survey.

**September 25, 2019:** The second Project Management Team meeting was held to review the findings from the first round of public engagement including pop-up meetings, stakeholder meetings, and a community survey. The in-person and online engagement findings of the first round were presented by SRF staff and found that in-person respondents tended to be more racially diverse and were supportive of active park uses such as splash pads, while online respondents tended to be white and were more supportive of passive park uses such as trails, dog parks, and passive space.

SRF staff also reviewed the general plan for the initial design charrette, which was planned for early November of 2019. The charrette would facilitate a discussion between community members and staff from the Project Management Team, Ramsey County, and SRF.

**December 9, 2019:** Project Management Team meeting #3 was held to review the initial concept plans for Battle Creek Regional Park and to discuss the next steps for community engagement. The feedback from the community in shaping the concepts was shared with the group and included:

- Protect the bluffs and acquire more of that land for the park.
- Identification of areas for water fountains and restrooms.
- Telling the story and history of the site.
- Preserve natural areas, place any new development within already developed park areas.

Major features of the initial concepts for the park included:

- Recommendation to close Battle Creek Road.
- Identification of an area for lighted trails and snow-making operations.
- Discussions with Carver Elementary regarding field and educational needs.
- What other potential infrastructure improvements should be included? Archery range? Takraw or Tuj Lub?

The Project management team also provided feedback and recommendations for the initial concept plans.

**April 21, 2020:** The Project Management Team met for a fourth time to discuss the next steps in the master planning effort for Battle Creek Regional Park, which had been altered due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In-person events surrounding phase 2 engagement needed to be postponed, eventually it was decided that the best way to proceed with community engagement would be to move everything to a virtual presence.

The team was also asked to provide guidance on a number of issues including:

- Pigs Eye access points.
- Battle Creek Road.
- Winter Recreation Trailhead Facility.

**December 16, 2020:** The fifth Project Management Team meeting was held to discuss the Final Draft Concept and the public review that had taken place regarding the final concept maps. The team was reminded of the overall planning process and was informed on what was heard from the public, concept development considerations, and proposed major changes to the park. The Project Management Team was also given a draft version of the Battle Creek Master Plan for internal review ahead of the 45-Day Public Review Period.

All Project Management Team meeting notes can be found in the Appendix.

## 30 Day Preferred Concept Plan Review

A public review of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan park concept plan was available for the public to view and submit comments to Ramsey County from November 1 through November 31, 2020.

Comments from the draft review period can be found in the Appendix.

## 45 Day Draft Report Review

A public review of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan park concept plan was available for the public to view and submit comments to Ramsey County from September 15 through October 31, 2021.

Comments from the draft review period can be found in the Appendix.

## Supporting Plans and Documents

### System Plan

During the preparation of the 2018 Parks & Recreation System Plan, community engagement was a major component to allow residents, community organizations, local partners, and park staff to participate in the planning process. The Parks & Recreation department recognized the need to engage the community in reviewing current recreation trends, park use, and available recreation amenities through various methods to solicit input.

A comprehensive needs analysis was completed to emphasize community priorities and support a needs-based allocation of funding for parks and recreation services. The anticipated outcomes for this analysis included:

- Documenting existing park and recreation facilities, how they are used, who uses them, and where improvements can be made.
- To aide county officials, park staff, and residents determine what steps to take to ensure all communities in Ramsey County have adequate access to our parks, trails, and open spaces.
- Assist in determining the size, location, and number of future parks in Ramsey County.

The community engagement process for the System Plan was conducted using two methods:

- Online survey.
- Pop-up meetings throughout Ramsey County.

Social media, the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation website, and email communication were used to inform residents of upcoming engagement opportunities.

The online survey was launched in July of 2017 and remained open until February of 2018 and received almost 1,000 responses.

A series of nine informal pop-up meetings were conducted at various libraries, community centers, and ice arenas located throughout the county.

The following themes emerged from an analysis of the input received from the community engagement process:

### Gaps

- More trail connections to parks and open spaces needed.
- Add facilities with food and/or concessions available.
- Add facilities with recreation rentals such as watercraft, bikes, cross country skis, etc.
- Extend park hours.



# Planning Framework

## Parks & Trails

- Additional off-road cycling and cross-country ski trails.
- Develop a new nature center.
- Trail development for more and better connection between parks and communities.
- Add and improve to existing recreation amenities (playgrounds, picnic facilities, etc.).
- Develop recreation equipment rental facilities.

## Programming

- Add programming throughout the Ramsey County parks system.
- Nature programs.
- Recreation programs.

## Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan

In 2018, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation completed work on the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan. The plan assesses the current state of off-leash dog areas within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation system, including Battle Creek Regional Park. After meeting with stakeholders and conducting public engagement meetings throughout the county Ramsey County found that new standards were necessary regarding improvements to site amenities, park rules, and the maintenance and operations of off-leash dog areas within the system.

Improvements for the off-leash dog area at Battle Creek Regional Park includes:

- The addition of an accessible route for the inclusion of all park users as well as maintenance operations.
- The accommodation of an area within the off-leash dog area for small dogs only by fencing off a portion of the site with a double gated entry.
- Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
- Development of a multi-species drinking fountain and water line at off-leash dog area entrances.
- Double gated entrances .
- Removal of miscellaneous and duplicative signage on fences and relocate to a central bulletin board at main entrances.
- Install a 10' maintenance gate.
- Standardize rules boards at entrances, currently rules are not uniformly posted throughout the off-leash area.
- Install trash receptacles throughout the off-leash dog area along with waste bag dispensers.

The full Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan can be found in the Appendix.

## Off-Road Cycling Master Plan

In 2018, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation completed work on the Off-Road Cycling Master Plan for Battle Creek. Off-road cycling has a long history in Battle Creek Regional Park with reports of cyclists using the area for recreation dating back to the park's inception. The county engaged with the public holding stakeholder meetings, community meetings, and posting an online survey to gather feedback on the improvement and development of off-road cycling within Battle Creek Regional Park.

Major themes that emerged from the master plan include:

- Implementation of looped trails, the current system is very disjointed and linear, if you are not familiar with the trails it is likely you would get lost.
- Implementation of a skills area for developing the necessary ability to ride trails within the park.
- Implementation of bike repair stations.
- Improved wayfinding signage throughout the park.

The master plan and subsequent summary of public engagement and off-road cycling history can be found in the Appendix.

### Green Spaces, Green Places An Energy Action Plan for Ramsey County Parks & Recreation

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation worked with Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy team to develop the Energy Action Plan. An eight-member Energy Action Team met in a series of five facilitated workshops to review energy data, establish an energy vision, prioritize areas of focus, set energy goals for the department, and establish a framework for implementation.

The Energy Action Team developed an energy vision statement to help guide decisions throughout development and implementation of the plan. The energy vision is "Ramsey County Parks & Recreation's programs, policies and practices will reflect a commitment to leadership in energy efficiency, conservation, education and renewable energy, to foster a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive."

Based on this vision, the Energy Action Team identified priority focus areas and set goals within each. The team then identified key strategies for achieving these goals, with a priority on short term and impactful action steps.

#### Energy Efficiency and Conservation

- Reduce the total energy use of Parks & Recreation facilities by 20 percent by 2020, and 35 percent by 2025, over a 2008 baseline.

#### Renewable Energy

- Utilize 100 percent renewable energy on site at county parks facilities by 2019.
- Utilize 50 percent renewable energy at regional parks facilities by 2020, and 100 percent by 2025.
- Showcase to the public renewable energy technologies installed at arenas, golf courses, and the administration building by 2020.

#### Education and Outreach

- Increase awareness of parks' energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to 50 percent of users by 2018.
- Engage at least 50 percent of parks employees in an employee energy conservation initiative by 2019.

Individual facilities and recreational amenities proposed by the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Energy Action Plan.

### Great River Passage Master Plan

Planning for the Great River Passage Master Plan began in 2010, and was completed in 2012. The plan uses the vision and guiding principles established in prior plans as a framework to develop specific goals and recommendations to provide direction for future land uses and development in the river corridor. The master plan's vision for the corridor represents complex inter-relationships of urban and natural systems, new types of parks, and innovative means by which the natural qualities of the river corridor can be protected and enjoyed.

Battle Creek Regional Park falls within the area of the Great River Passage Master Plan labeled "The Floodplain" Recommendations from the Great River Passage Master Plan for this area include expanding park access, establishing buffers for natural areas, and improving connections to the lakes and river.

## Planning Framework

The Great River Passage Master Plan was reviewed by Ramsey County as a complementing plan and a continuation of community engagement. The Great River Passage Master Plan engages the entire 17-mile stretch of the Mississippi River along Saint Paul's borders, of which the Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park is only a portion of the land covered. Within the plan there are access and recreational amenities identified along and within the Pigs Eye segment. However, any access or recreational amenities within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park is a long-term goal of Ramsey County which can not be realized until all appropriate investigations into environmental contamination are complete and mitigation strategies concluded and verified. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is committed to working with all stakeholders and neighboring landowners to address the environmental issues surrounding Pigs Eye Lake and to continue to develop concepts for future recreational activities that are safe and compatible with land uses in the area.

For the full report on the natural resources existing conditions and next steps in the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park, please see the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment.

### Fish Creek Concept

Ramsey County and the city of Maplewood worked jointly in 2016, along with community members to develop a concept for Fish Creek Open Space. The concept plan included:

- Expanded trails within Fish Creek Open Space.
- New trailheads and parking areas for expanded access.
- Playground.
- Gathering area.
- Shelter and restrooms.
- Interpretive programming shelters.
- Observation and programming areas along Fish Creek.

### Suburban Pond Open Space Concept

The original concept plan for Suburban Pond Open Space included:

- A path loop around the pond.
- A small parking lot.
- Three picnic shelters in a mowed area near the parking lot.
- Native and natural landscape surrounding the pond.

### Point Douglass Road Regional Trail Master Plan

The city of Saint Paul is currently in the process of creating a master plan for the Point Douglas Regional Trail Corridor. The 4.5 mile corridor is located in the southeast region of the City of Saint Paul running along Highway 61 from Indian Mounds Regional Park (Burns Avenue) to Washington County (Bailey Road).

The trail has the potential for interaction with and Battle Creek Regional Park and would be an important access route for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other trail users into the area. Ramsey County will continue to work with the City of Saint Paul and support the plan as it progresses.

### 21st Century Parks Initiative

The 21st century parks initiative will be a multi-year dynamic, community-centered evolution for Parks & Recreation with outcomes driven by authentic community engagement and a racial equity lens. This provides an opportunity to be more responsive to changing demographics and residents' needs, and to systematically rethink current sites and programming.

As the county's population increases and becomes more racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse, gaps are increasing between users and the recreational facilities and services that Parks & Recreation offers. To meet these changing needs and interests, Parks & Recreation developed a new vision statement that will be at the heart of all projects moving forward.

### 21st Century Vision

A dynamic, community-centered system that provides opportunities for our ever-changing community to engage with inclusive and welcoming parks and recreation sites and programming.

### Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment

In 2015, funding became available through the Army Corps of Engineers Continuing Authorities Program Section 204 Beneficial Use of Dredged Material to develop a feasibility study with an integrated environmental assessment worksheet for the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake. The Army Corps of Engineers in collaboration with Ramsey County initiated an agency-wide planning effort comprised of federal, state, and local agencies to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders, and process for developing the feasibility study in compliance with National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and Minnesota Environmental Project Agency (MEPA). The feasibility study was completed in 2018 and identified the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake was feasible and did not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under NEPA or MEPA guidelines.

The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment has been developed to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendments as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan.

### Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye Master Plan Amendment

- Sequencing of natural resource and public safety improvements for Pigs Eye Lake.
- Does not address boundary adjustments, park acquisition, or recreational infrastructure and programming improvements which will be completed in a future master plan amendment/update process.
- Address Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area policy standards and criteria.
- Public engagement process.
- Plan Completion - May 4, 2021.

### Public Engagement:

Engagement for the master plan was completed on multiple levels for items identified within the master plan from 2015-2020. Both partner engagement for agency coordination and involvement, and community engagement for general participation by the general public was completed for feedback. Below is a high-level summary of public input options.

### Partner and Community Engagement Options:

- Pigs Eye Feasibility Study – Prior to this master planning process, previous engagement was completed through planning activities for the Pigs Eye Lake Island feasibility study. As part of this process there was extensive partner engagement with federal, state, and local agencies for development of the feasibility study. Public engagement was completed with two concurrent 30-day public review periods for both the MEPA and NEPA process to allow general feedback from the public. See Master Plan Appendix - Pigs Eye Feasibility Study – Appendix A for additional information regarding correspondence and coordination.

## Planning Framework

- Master Plan Amendment -
  - Previous public engagement completed – Past engagement for development of the 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan, and the overall Battle Creek Regional Park master plan were utilized.
  - Additional public engagement - The Parks department launched a 45-day public review period from mid-August through the end of September 2020. Other steps taken for master plan public engagement consisted of numerous project information notifications, social media, and making information available through the County Parks project website.
- Agency support – Following the public engagement period, the Parks department initiated a process for agency support of the master plan amendment. Additional support and approval were requested from the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission, and the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners prior to submittal to the Metropolitan Council.

### Engagement Results:

The following themes emerged from analysis of input received through the community engagement process.

### Community Participation Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – these themes are discussed more in detail in the Conflict master plan section.
  - Project planning/intent – project understanding as a habitat restoration project and the need for additional public safety components related to long-term environmental clean-up.
  - Constructability.
    - Utilization of dredge material.
    - Testing.
    - Existing pollution.
  - Timing for implementation – potential delay of the project until long-term cleanup activities have been completed.
  - Effectiveness.
    - Benefits of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
    - Long-term clean-up efforts.
    - Impact and/or benefits to existing wildlife.
- Public safety – need for additional long-term planning.
- Need for future access and recreation improvements.
- Climate resilient vegetation.
- Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations.

### Agency Participation Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – extensive support from all levels of federal, state, and local agencies through benefits achieved from this project.
- Public safety – need for additional long-term planning.
- Climate resilient vegetation.
- Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations.

Theme outcomes related to both community participation and agency participation have been analyzed and incorporated were feasible in the master plan for continued participation, and evaluation/completion of projects identified in the master plan.

### Equity Analysis:

Public engagement for the focused master plan amendment was intended to reach as wide of an audience as possible and focused on gathering information both from residents who live near the regional park and county-wide as well. Even though no recreational infrastructure improvements or programming amenities are proposed in this master plan amendment an equity analysis was still conducted to provide approximate values for areas within one mile of the Pigs Eye Lake area.



Comparing census blocks from 2010 data and approximate values in 2017 between tracts that fall within 1 mile of the Pigs Eye Lake area with Ramsey County overall provided some meaningful data. Ramsey County, as of 2017, had a population of 537,893. The median household income of the county was \$60,301, with a poverty rate of 15%. The subset of the population living in a census tract within 1-mile of Pigs Eye Lake had a population of 72,623, with a median income of \$53,911 and a poverty rate of approximately 20%. The area surrounding Pigs Eye Lake is very diverse with approximately 49.5% people of color comparing to Ramsey County overall with approximately 36.94% people of color. Additional data for neighborhoods within the immediate surrounding area shows a higher percentage of population in 25-64 age range with 25-34 age range with the highest.

The engagement process with the community consisted of numerous project information notifications through social media, website, newspaper in addition to making information available through the County Parks project website. The level of engagement as defined by the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum was "consult" for development of the focused master plan amendment.

### Development Plan:

The focused master plan amendment addresses natural resource and public safety improvements to the Ramsey County Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park.

- Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements) - The selected plan includes six islands with sand benches totaling approximately 35.69 acres. Three of the islands would utilize a "split" design that would establish sheltered areas in the centers of the islands, allowing for the creation of approximately 17.6 acres of protected wetland habitat. Island vegetative cover will consist of native grass and shrub land plantings. The recommended plan was developed to address the following objectives in Pigs Eye Lake:
  - Improve aquatic habitat – create depth and habitat diversity in Pigs Eye Lake. Increase acreage of aquatic vegetation. Incorporate structural habitat features to promote fisheries.
  - Improve the quantity and quality of habitat for migratory bird species – create suitable habitat for migratory birds such as dabbling ducks within Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Maintain or enhance the quantity of shoreline habitat – protect existing floodplain forest and marsh habitat along the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake from wind and wave erosion.
- Other Natural Resource Restoration activities and projects.
  - Conversion of mixed woods to floodplain forest (i.e. reforestation of native floodplain tree species).
  - Continued enhancement of existing wetland.
  - Removal of invasive species.
  - Re-vegetation of the existing shoreline.
- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection.

## Summary of Public Engagement and Outreach Themes

### Battle Creek Regional Park - Regional Connections

- Additional trails, both rustic and paved to connect regional park parcels including Battle Creek Regional Park, Fish Creek Open Space, Mississippi River Bluffs Protection Open Space, and the Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park.
- Acquire properties along the bluffs between Battle Creek Regional Park and Fish Creek Open Space when they become available and from a willing seller.
  - This connection would also provide space for recreational amenities such as overlooks, rest areas, picnicking, rustic trails, and trailheads in addition to the critical role of environmental preservation.
- Establish better public access into the Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park.
  - Grade separated crossings of Highway 61 and the railroad corridor.
  - Trailhead development at the north end of Red Rock Road and at the north end of Pigs Eye Lake.

## Planning Framework

- Regional Trail Corridors and Connections.
  - Access to and between the regional system are an important aspect of the regional parks system. Ramsey County should continue to support and be involved in the planning of the Point Douglass Regional Trail Master Plan led by Saint Paul and the Afton Bluffs Regional Trail Search Corridor.
- Acquisitions.
  - Expand the administrative boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park by including Suburban Pond Open Space, Mississippi River Bluffs Protections Open Space, Fish Creek Open Space including city of Maplewood owned property, and select residential properties when they become available and from willing sellers.

### Battle Creek Park Segment

- Access and safety improvements
  - The Battle Creek segment of the regional park is a highly segmented area that has many road crossings. Community access into park areas should be a focus of the master plan. The employment of various strategies such as rapid flashing beacons, underpasses and/or overpasses where they are viable, crossing lights, and other methods should be strongly considered.
- Natural Resource Preservation and Management
  - Community input indicated an extremely strong desire to keep Battle Creek Regional Park as undeveloped and natural as possible. Every effort should be made to limit development to existing nodes of development such as existing trailheads and newly acquired land. Ramsey County and its partners shall continue to manage and preserve the natural quality and aesthetic of the park.
- Winter Recreation Area
  - The implementation of recreational amenities within the winter recreation area should continue to be a priority for Ramsey County. Amenities may include snow making, lighting, a skills and staging area, and a warming hut.
- Trailhead development
  - Existing trailheads should be standardized to the extent possible to include lighting, restrooms, drinking fountains, and bike fixing stations.
  - Select new trailheads located at Suburban Pond Open Space and along Battle Creek Road should be investigated as property is brought into Battle Creek Regional Park.
- Learning Trails
  - The addition of outdoor classrooms, messaging boards, and other learning opportunities should utilize exiting trails and trail corridors. The educational opportunities may include wildlife, plant species, park history, and Native American history.
- Waterworks Redevelopment
  - Waterworks redevelopment, expansion, or rehabilitation should be a priority of future development.
- Acquisitions
  - Suburban Pond Open Space
  - Select residential properties when they become available and from willing sellers.

## Pigs Eye Segment

- Trailhead development
  - Explore possible trailhead locations for access to Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Trailhead development may include wayfinding signage, parking, canoe and kayak launches, restrooms, and picnicking opportunities.
- Recreational Development
  - Natural surface trail and boardwalk system for hiking, birdwatching, and fishing opportunities around the lake.
- Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area
  - Continue to preserve and protect the valuable resource.
  - Acquire parcel that connects to the scientific and natural area owned by the Saint Paul Port Authority.
- Access and safety improvements

The themes above are a result of community engagement and past planning efforts and are not proposed for development at this time. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation would like to acknowledge the results of community engagement and past planning efforts to present potential future access and recreational amenities. Ramsey County acknowledges that issues including environmental contamination and clean up, public safety, and compatibility of recreational use with surrounding land must be resolved before any new visitor access or recreational amenities can be provided. The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment was produced to highlight this area and take a closer look at natural resource related projects and environmental clean up.

Additional coordination for necessary security steps will need to be considered for improvements within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park. For example, the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant follows the strategic guidance laid out in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan for security of critical infrastructure. Additional coordination and necessary security steps will be needed to mitigate security concerns for implementation of projects within the Pigs Eye Lake area.

The Pigs Eye Lake Segment is located in a heavily industrialized area, close to the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant and other major air emissions sources. Prior to planning and implementing recreational amenities, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation will need to evaluate the long-term health impacts of air quality on public users of proposed amenities. In addition, the land use designation for the Metro Plant is industrial and the plant is a highly industrialized facility with safety and use consistent with that designation. Noise, odors, emissions, and traffic are present at levels that are consistent with industrial land use and that meet the Metro Plant's permits but which raise concerns about conflicts between the proposed recreation and the current land use designation in the surrounding area. While the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services has invested in reducing odor generation at the Metro Plant, further reductions are unlikely to mitigate odors to a significant degree. Noise, traffic, and emissions from Metro Plant operations and maintenance activities may also negatively impact the public's ability to enjoy recreational activities.

## Planning Framework

In addition to the challenges posed by conflicting land uses near Pigs Eye Lake there are also contamination and public safety issues that need to be addressed prior to enabling future recreation development and safe public use of the Pigs Eye Lake Segment of Battle Creek Regional Park. The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment was written to address the natural resources existing conditions and future plans for the Pigs Eye Lake Segment. Next steps for Public Safety Planning Activities include:

- Secure funding for planning activities.
- Initiate an agency-wide planning team to determine project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders, agency and public engagement, funding strategy, and process for developing a long-range plan for remediation. Initiate an agency and public engagement process.
- Initiate additional site assessments and testing to determine the extent of contaminants within Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding areas.
- Develop an agency-wide monitoring and stewardship plan.
- Other required planning activities as required dependent on outcomes from long-term planning.
- Secure funding for remediation.
- Re-evaluate access and recreational amenities after the public safety planning activities have concluded.

Recreation amenities that have been identified as a result of public engagement for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master plan such as fishing, canoe and kayak use/launches, and providing access to the shore of Pigs Eye Lake could bring park users into contact with water and soil that has been found to be contaminated. Access and recreational amenities within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park is a long-term goal of Ramsey County which can not be realized until all appropriate investigations into environmental contamination are complete and mitigation strategies concluded and verified. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is committed to working with all stakeholders and neighboring landowners to address the environmental issues surrounding Pigs Eye Lake and to continue to develop concepts for future recreational activities that are safe and compatible with land uses in the area.

For the full report on the natural resources existing conditions and next steps in the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park, please see the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment.

### Fish Creek Segment

- Trailhead development
  - Trailhead development may include wayfinding signage, improved and increased parking, restroom building(s), a playground, and picnicking or shelter opportunities.
- Recreational development
  - Passive recreation should be prioritized in the Fish Creek Segment of Battle Creek Regional Park.
  - Expand rustic hiking and walking trails in the area.
  - Include a combination of outdoor classrooms, park signage, and learning opportunities along trail system to incorporate programming in the future that may be self-guided or teacher directed.
- Acquisitions
  - City of Maplewood Fish Creek property and select residential parcels when they become available and from willing sellers.

### Programming

Overall there was broad support for increased programming throughout Battle Creek regional Park. Recreation stakeholders and heavy users of off-road cycling and cross-country ski trails supported classes and learning opportunities to help expand their respective sports. Racially and economically diverse community members supported the inclusion of beginner courses in recreational sports, nature study, after school programs, art education, summer camps, and community festivals and events.

Throughout Public engagement Ramsey County has heard that the community would like greatly expanded programming opportunities in Battle Creek Regional Park. At pop-up engagement events more community members commented on and shared their desire in programming within the park than any other category. A study to detail the feasibility and which types of programming are offered and implemented should be a top priority coming out of the master plan.

Ramsey County has many options for partnering with other groups such as Friends of the Mississippi, the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood, the Friends of Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and many others. A coalition of stakeholders and partnering agencies should be formed to study and make park programming a reality.

# Planning Framework

## DEMAND FORECAST

Visits and use of the regional parks system throughout the metropolitan area increased by 6.3% from 2018 to 2019 to an estimated 63.3 million visits. Ramsey County facilities were the fourth most visited with 5.7 million estimated visits. In addition, Ramsey County had the largest percentage increase in visitation at 19%. Ramsey County regional facility visits have continually rose from 3.8 million in 2015 to the 5.7 million that were seen in 2019. Battle Creek Regional Park was the most visited Ramsey County facility in 2019 with an estimated 887,744 visits. The expansion of Battle Creek Regional Park to include Suburban Pond Open Space, Fish Creek Open Space, Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space along with efforts to increase access and public awareness of the park while increasing recreational amenities and opportunities within Battle Creek will continue to promote a rise in visitors. The use of Battle Creek Regional Park is anticipated to continue to rise due to urban recreation trends, and anticipated population growth within the park service area. Population projections for surrounding communities are shown in the table below.

### Population Projections

County & City	2010 Census	2020	2030	2040	Percent Change
<b>Ramsey County</b>					
Saint Paul	285,068	315,000	329,000	344,100	20.7%
Maplewood	38,018	42,200	45,600	48,600	27.8%
North Saint Paul	11,460	12,000	12,000	12,000	4.7%
<b>Washington County</b>					
Woodbury	61,961	72,500	80,500	87,800	41.7%
Oakdale	27,401	29,600	35,300	36,000	31.4%
Newport	3,435	3,600	4,050	4,450	29.5%
<b>Dakota County</b>					
South Saint Paul	20,160	21,500	21,500	21,800	8.1%



# Existing Conditions



## REGIONAL PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM CONTEXT

Battle Creek Regional Park is a part of the Regional Parks System established in 1974 which includes 64 regional parks, park preserves, and special recreation features, as well as more than 389 miles of regional trails open to the public. The park is unique for its connections with Pigs Eye Regional Park as well as Indian Mounds Regional Park by the Fish Hatchery Trail, managed by the City of Saint Paul. Regional trails both planned and existing further connect the park to the regional system including the Sam Morgan Regional Trail, Point Douglas Regional Trail, Mississippi River Regional Trail, and a regional search corridor for the Afton Bluffs Regional Trail.

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a unit of the National Park Service, is a 72-mile long river park offering quiet stretches for fishing, boating, and canoeing along the Mississippi River from Dayton to south of Hastings, Minnesota. Other areas are excellent for birdwatching, bicycling, and hiking. Unlike most national parks, the Mississippi River and Recreation area is a “partnership park.” The National Park Service owns only 67 acres of the 54,000 acres within the park boundary. The rest is composed of city parks, regional parks, one state park, a national wildlife refuge, state scientific and natural areas, along with private businesses and homes including parts of Battle Creek Regional Park.

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program is a joint state, regional, and local program that provides coordinated land use planning and zoning regulations for the 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River through the seven county metropolitan area covering 54,000 acres of land in 30 local jurisdictions. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical area shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Any development within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical area in Battle Creek Regional Park would need to adhere to the standards and criteria for the preservation, protection, and management of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area under Minnesota Statute 6106. Both the Pigs Eye Lake Segment and the western portion of the Battle Creek Segment of Battle Creek Regional Park fall within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. Refer to the map on page 39 for the exact boundary of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area as it relates to Battle Creek Regional Park.

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area was designated in 1976 to protect its many unique natural and cultural resources and values. These resources and values are protected through development standards and criteria implemented via local land use plans and zoning ordinances.

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area is home to a full range of residential neighborhoods and parks, as well as river-related commerce, industry, and transportation. Though the river corridor has been extensively developed, many intact and remnant natural areas remain, including bluffs, islands, floodplains, wetlands, riparian zones, and native aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna.

## Existing Conditions

### LOCATION AND SIZE

Battle Creek Regional park is owned and operated by Ramsey County through the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department and is located in the southeast corner of Ramsey County within the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The park can generally be divided into two main segments, the Battle Creek segment which is moderately developed, and the Pigs Eye segment which remains undeveloped. The Battle Creek segment of the park is bound by Interstate 94 to the north, Century Avenue to the east, Lower Afton Road to the south, Highway 61 to the west, and consists of 759.5 acres. The Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park is bound by Highway 61 to the east, the Mississippi River to the south and west, properties owned by the city of Saint Paul and Metropolitan Council Environmental Services to the north, and consists of 1,131.7 acres.

The Battle Creek segment of the park is composed of several tracts of land that are mostly connected, with most large sections separated by roads. There is an area of private residential land in the middle of what is mostly a block of continuous land, with other narrow sections of residential land adjoining the park. The park has a relatively large amount of edge habitat that border mainly single-family residential and school properties, and few interior tracts of land that are unaffected by regular human activity. The north and west edges of the park are bounded by major roadways, Interstate 94 and US Highway 61. On the east, the park borders Ramsey County Corrections department property. The Pig's Eye lake segment is separated from the main park by US Highway 61 and railroad yards.

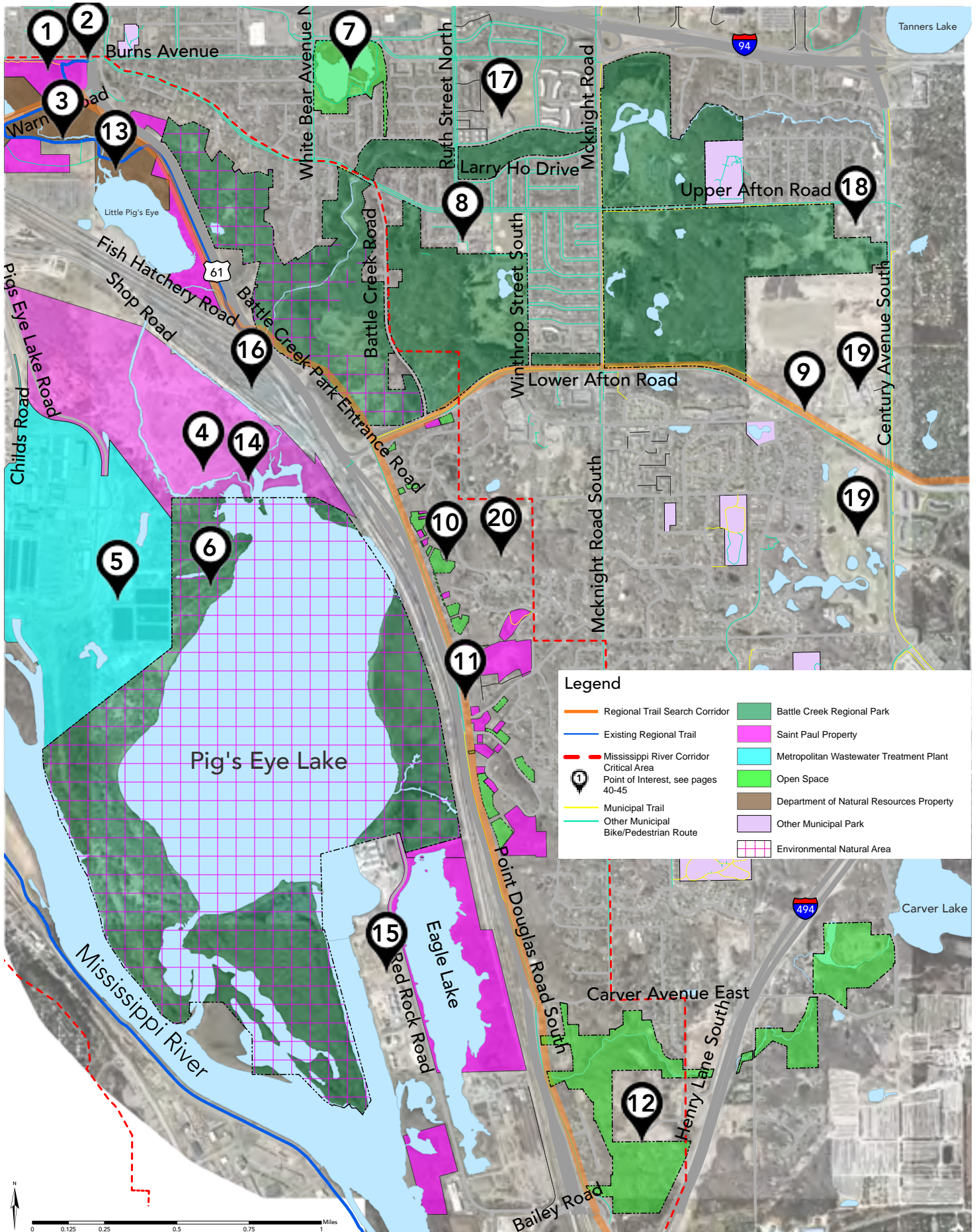
The natural resources of the park are intimately connected to surrounding areas in St. Paul, Oakdale, Maplewood, and Woodbury. The Mississippi River bluff terraces and open space that border the west side of the park continue to the northwest toward Mounds Bluff and St. Paul, and to the south, to Fish Creek open space, with some breaks in the bluff and canopy due to roads and homes. The oak woodlands and bluff prairies in the park continue along the bluffs into these adjacent areas as well. These connections are an important consideration for natural resources planning in the area. The river corridor, surrounding bluffs, park lands and areas to the north and surrounding the Pig's Eye Lake segment are part of an important migratory corridor for many species of birds.

The hydrology in and around Battle Creek Regional Park has mostly been manipulated to flow through storm sewer structures, with the exception of Battle Creek and Fish Creek, which runs on the surface.

Battle Creek Regional Park is solely within the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District. The Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District has jurisdiction over the surface waters, along with the state of Minnesota. There are four major sub watersheds that flow through the park, with the majority of the main park within the Battle Creek sub watershed and the Pig's Eye segment within the Mississippi river bottoms subwatershed. Both include large sections of urban runoff from the north and west. Battle Creek itself flows from Battle Creek Lake and consists of surface flow throughout most of the park until it outlets into a series of wetlands north of Pig's Eye lake.

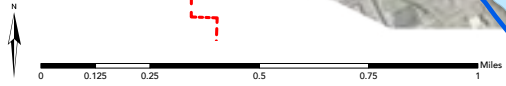


REGIONAL POINTS OF INTEREST



Legend

- Regional Trail Search Corridor
- Existing Regional Trail
- Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area
- Point of Interest, see pages 40-45
- Municipal Trail
- Other Municipal Bike/Pedestrian Route
- Battle Creek Regional Park
- Saint Paul Property
- Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Open Space
- Department of Natural Resources Property
- Other Municipal Park
- Environmental Natural Area



## Existing Conditions

### SITE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Battle Creek Regional Park is situated within a complex network of residential, industrial, and municipal, state, and railroad owned properties. Due to the urban setting, the park is divided into two main segments, Battle Creek and Pigs Eye Lake, separated by Highway 61 and the Soo Line and BNSF railroads. To the east of the divide is the developed Recreational Area Segment and the Pigs Eye Lake Segment lies to the west.

#### Regional Points of Interest

1. **Indian Mounds Regional Park:** located atop the bluffs of the Mississippi River near downtown Saint Paul, the 111-acre park consists of river bluffs, steep slopes, rolling hills, woodlands, and grasslands. The site is rich in history and is the site of Indian burial mounds which date to the Hopewell Indian Era of more than 2,000 years ago. Access between Battle Creek and Indian Mounds Regional Parks is extremely limited, Highway 61 acts as a severe obstacle to pedestrians attempting to navigate between the two areas, and the Fish Hatchery Trail underpass is periodically damaged by erosion issues causing frequent closures.
2. **Sam Morgan Regional Trail:** follows Shepard and Warner Roads along the east side of the Mississippi River from Crosby Farm Regional Park to Indian Mounds Regional Park. Walkers, runners, and bikers enjoy beautiful views of the Mississippi River, the downtown Saint Paul skyline, the Cathedral, High Bridge, and more along this approximately nine-mile paved path. The trail ends at Highway 61 and this would seem to be an ideal location for an improved crossing in an attempt to connect the two regional parks. The Sam Morgan Regional Trail also intersects with the Fish Hatchery Trail, which extends south through an underpass of Highway 61 and into Battle Creek Regional Park.
3. **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Fish Hatchery:** the first state run hatchery, established in 1877, was first called the Willow Brook Hatchery, then Mounds Park Hatchery, and finally Saint Paul Hatchery. The Department of Natural Resources owns approximately 60 acres of land located between Indian Mounds Regional Park and Pigs Eye Regional Park, both owned and operated by the City of Saint Paul.
4. **Saint Paul - Pigs Eye Regional Park:** the city of Saint Paul owns approximately 290 acres of land to the north of Pigs Eye Lake and the eastern edge of Little Pigs Eye separated by railroad tracks. The southern portion covers a former landfill which was remediated and turned into a park featuring the 500-acre lake, hiking trails, and bird watching areas. Access to this site is limited, users must cross the railroad tracks on Childs and Pigs Eye Lake Roads and park near the Saint Paul wood chipping site.

Saint Paul also operates an archery range located at 1200 Warner Road; the hours of operation are from sunrise to sunset.

5. **Metropolitan Council Environmental Services - Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant:** located on the Mississippi River in Saint Paul, near the northwest corner of Pigs Eye Lake, this is the largest wastewater treatment facility in Minnesota. When it opened in 1938, it was the first plant in a metropolitan area on the Mississippi River. Today it is among the nation's largest. The Metro Plant treats an average of 172 million gallons of wastewater per day. The Metro Plant's excellent environmental record has resulted in it regularly earning state and national awards for operational excellence, including the National Association of Clean Water Agencies Platinum Peak Performance Award for perfect clean water discharge permit compliance for 5 consecutive years. Metropolitan Council Environmental Services' record of improving and protecting Mississippi River water quality is a pillar of its history, one of the most important aspects of its work, and a significant contribution to quality of life in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.



Metropolitan Council Environmental Services owns and maintains wastewater infrastructure in and around several areas of Battle Creek Regional Park, including wastewater conveyance pipes and the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant. To protect this infrastructure, Metropolitan Council Environmental Services follows the strategic guidance laid out in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan that was created by Homeland Security in response to Presidential Policy Directive 21 following the attacks of September 11, 2001. This plan designates water and wastewater infrastructure as an essential component of Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource (CIKR) protection and directs owners of such infrastructure to take an “all hazards” prevention and reduction approach, which involves taking action to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from all hazards. Goals developed under that guidance direct Metropolitan Council Environmental Services to sustain protection of public health and the environment by recognizing and reducing risks to and vulnerabilities of its infrastructure. The impacts on the security of the regional wastewater system will be fully addressed prior to Ramsey County Parks & Recreation moving forward with the master plan.

- Battle Creek Regional Park - Pigs Eye Segment:** The entire Pigs Eye Lake segment of the regional park lies within the floodplain of the Mississippi River. The lake is approximately 500 acres in size and is very shallow, the land surrounding the lake is approximately 610 acres. Access to this area of the regional park is extremely limited and has no recreational amenities available.

The Pigs Eye Lake segment contains one of the largest heron rookeries in the state of Minnesota and is designated as a State Scientific and Natural Area by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Species that nest in the rookery include great blue heron, great egret, black-crowned night-heron, double-crested cormorants, and yellow crowned night heron. This is one of four places in the state where yellow-crowned night herons are known to nest.

Scientific research at this State Scientific and Natural Area has included the study of perflourinated compounds (PFCs) in migratory birds, based on chemical analysis of the eggs of great blue herons. Perflourinated compounds are a family of synthetic chemicals, which bio-accumulate in organisms and, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, have been found to have some health effects in animals. Studies in 1993 and again in 2010-2011 found perflourinated compound concentrations in some heron eggs collected from the island to be among the highest measured in bird eggs worldwide. As reported by the study Perflourinated Compound Concentrations in Great Blue Heron Eggs near Saint Paul, Minnesota, numerous manufacturing facilities and landfills for perflourinated compound related waste, as well as a wastewater treatment plant, are located within 12.42 miles of the colony: a distance great blue herons regularly travel from nest sites for daily feeding. Perflourinated compounds are a family of synthetic chemicals associated with harmful physiological and neurological effects in birds. Of particular and ongoing concern are certain “long chain” types – a reference to the number of carbons – which according to the Environmental Protection Agency are “persistent in the environment, bioaccumulative in wildlife and humans, and toxic to laboratory animals and wildlife.”

The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment has been developed to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendments as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan.

- Suburban Pond Open Space:** a 32-acre site including a 20-acre pond and wetland complex in addition to a 50 to 300-foot strip of upland around the entire pond. The pond consists of approximately 50% open water and 50% wetland vegetation and is a significant storm water pond for Battle Creek, located ¼ mile to the south. The area also has a one-half mile wood chip trail which circles the pond. An outlet structure controls the pond elevation.
- Battle Creek Recreation Center:** offers educational programs, after school activities, open gym, tot-times, family events, fitness center memberships, seasonal ice-skating, athletics fields, field rentals, and rental spaces. The recreation center is run by the city of Saint Paul and also serves as a major trailhead for off-road cycling, hiking, cross-country skiing, and many more activities that take place within Battle Creek Regional Park. The recreation center is located at 75 Winthrop Street South in Saint Paul, and is located within the Winter Recreation/Battle Creek West zone of the park, see map on page 46.

## Existing Conditions

9. **Afton Bluffs Regional Trail Search Corridor:** the Afton Bluffs Regional Trail will be an approximately 17-mile long multiple-use trail that will run through Woodbury, Afton, Maplewood and Saint Paul. Once fully developed it will connect to regional destinations including the Central Greenway and Saint Croix Valley Regional Trails, Afton State Park, and Battle Creek Regional Park. The trail will also provide vital connections to local destinations including trails, parks, schools, and businesses.

The Afton Bluffs Regional Trail is not planned or fully developed, but will generally run from the intersection of Point Douglass Road South and Lower Afton Road to the intersection of Lower Afton Road and Century Avenue South within Ramsey County. A master planning process may identify existing trails as part of the regional trail alignment.

10. **Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space:** located in the southeast part of Ramsey County in the city of Saint Paul, the site is a 2-mile long narrow strip of steep sloped bluff line within the Mississippi Corridor Critical Area, paralleling the east side of Highway 61 between the southern boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park at Lower Afton Road and Carver Road to the north of Fish Creek Open Space. Ramsey County currently owns 69 platted lots totaling 12 acres in the area. These lots constitute about 25% of the total site and are scattered without much continuity of owned space. The purpose of the Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space is to protect the bluff and the natural resources contained within the unique ecosystem.

Currently there are no existing or proposed recreation improvements for the site.

11. **Point Douglass Regional Trail Search Corridor:** stretching 4 miles from the Bruce Vento Regional Trail to the Point Douglass Regional Trail in Washington County. The trail is located in the southeast region of the city of Saint Paul running along Highway 61 from Burns Avenue to Bailey Road. Saint Paul Parks and Recreation completed a master plan for the future Point Douglass Regional Trail on February 8, 2022, which includes community engagement, assessing trail feasibility, and engineering testing.
12. **Fish Creek Open Space:** the Ramsey County owned open space is located in the southeast corner of Ramsey County and neighboring the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood, the site is 130 acres in size. The defining characteristic of Fish Creek Open Space is Fish Creek, which flows for 1.5 miles from Carver Lake to Pigs Eye Lake on the west side of Highway 61.

The city of Maplewood owns land abutting Fish Creek Open Space that contains a short paved trail network sitting on a flatter area above the bluffs and creek valley. The city made improvements consisting of the paved trail and a parking lot development utilizing both the city and county owned property in 2016. Maplewood also completed improvements to the existing access road off of Carver Avenue entering Fish Creek Open Space. The city of Maplewood property has a conservation easement which limits development to the land.

Maplewood and Ramsey County also completed a joint Master Plan Concept, which was adopted by both the city and Ramsey County. The concept plan included paved trails, turf trails, programming elements, parking and access points, and central gathering spaces. Ramsey County would like to explore the opportunity of including Fish Creek Open Space into the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park as well as any future recreational opportunities as a part of the Battle Creek Master Plan.



## Existing Conditions

13. **Saint Paul Fish Hatchery Dump Site:** The following information was taken from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website. (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/st-paul-fish-hatchery-dump-site>)

The Fish Hatchery Dump is located in the Mississippi River valley, south of the intersection of Warner Road and Highway 61 in Saint Paul. The dump is about 38 acres, mostly of wooded and grassy areas. A stream and a bicycle trail are other features of the dump site. Little Pigs Eye Lake and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railyard are located to the south and southeast of the site, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Central Regional Office is located to the west.

### Fish Hatchery Superfund Site



The Fish Hatchery Dump operated from the mid-1930s to 1971. During the dump's operation, approximately 690,000 cubic yards of garbage and other wastes that can decay were disposed of. When the dump closed in 1971 the waste was covered with soil.

Over time, erosion, freezing/thawing cycles, and flooding have removed some of the cover soil, exposing the waste in spots. The dump was added to the Minnesota Superfund list in August 2007.

Pesticides, metals, volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) exceeding Minnesota standards are found in soil, groundwater, surface water, and sediment.

Visitors who get off the bicycle trails could be exposed to contamination by walking or camping in the areas where landfill soil cover has been disturbed. Visitors could contact contaminated sediments in the lake and stream by wading and paddling in the area. Visitors can also consume contaminants while swimming or eating fish caught there.

## Existing Conditions

The full extent of contamination at the site is not yet known. Visitors who stay on the bike trail have no or very little risk of being exposed to contamination.

Additional soil, groundwater, surface water, and sediment testing are being done to determine the full extent of the contamination and outline which areas need to be cleaned up. The testing results will be used to design a cleanup plan for the area.

Various organizations have expressed interest in improving this area for future recreational use by the public. Throughout the investigation and cleanup process, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency will continue to work cooperatively with project stakeholders and organizations regarding future Site Redevelopment. (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/st-paul-fish-hatchery-dump-site>)

14. **Saint Paul Pigs Eye Dump:** The following information was taken from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website. (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/st-paul-pigs-eye-dump-site>)

Pigs Eye Dump operated between 1956 and 1972, accepting waste from communities, businesses, and industry in the east metro area. Much of the waste was deposited in wetland areas on the property. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency records show that an estimated 8.3 million cubic yards of waste was disposed of on the approximately 230-acre site. (Waste from the Fish Hatchery Dump is not included in this estimate) This makes the Pigs Eye Dump the largest unpermitted dump site in the state.

From 1977 to 1985, the site also was used for the disposal of wastewater treatment sludge ash by the Metropolitan Council Wastewater Treatment Plant. An estimated 236,000 cubic yards of ash were placed on top of old garbage.



There are several ways that "hot spots" of contamination have been eliminated or minimized. Starting in 1999, remediation efforts have included:

- Removing exposed drums of waste along Battle Creek.
- Augmenting the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake with organic rich soils that have slowed the migration of contaminants into it.
- Stabilizing lead-contaminated soil in the battery disposal area by mixing it with a cement-like substance that fixes the lead, keeping it from running off the site or leaching into the groundwater.
- Covering the entire site with at least two feet of clean soil and planting trees to prevent erosion and draw contaminants from the groundwater.

## Existing Conditions

- Filling in ponds in the southeast and southwest portions of the dump with organic rich soil and planting the areas with trees to prevent erosion and encourage biological removal of contaminants.

At this time, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency wants to minimize the amount of contaminated leachate and groundwater that flows out of the site and into Battle Creek. To do this, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency proposes to remove contaminated soil and waste from portions of the Battle Creek stream bank and replace it with organic rich soil. Contaminants leaching out of the dump bind to this type of soil and it reduces the amount of pollutants that reach the creek. The Area will be re-vegetated to prevent erosion and encourage additional biological removal of contaminants.

The soil and waste removed from the stream bank will be relocated elsewhere on the site and covered with clean soil. Groundwater will be monitored to determine impacts.

The Minnesota House of Representatives passed legislation in April 2022 to invest in and to preserve the environment and natural resources for current and future generations of Minnesotans. The legislation includes a proposal to remediate and restore the Pigs Eye Landfill Superfund site and addresses perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination of Battle Creek, Pigs Eye Lake and nearby groundwater.

15. **Red Rock Terminal:** located near Pigs Eye Lake, the terminal is part of a larger portion of land the Saint Paul Port Authority acquired in the area, most of which has been dedicated for park use. Businesses at Red Rock Terminal include: AMG Resources, Barton Enterprises, Continental, Gavilon, Hawkins, Simcote, and Gerdau.

The Saint Paul Harbor is the northernmost port on the Mississippi River and the Red Rock Terminal accommodated more than 2.7 million tons of product in 2017. River shipping works in tandem with railroads as part of an intermodal transportation system connecting Minnesota farmers to the global market.

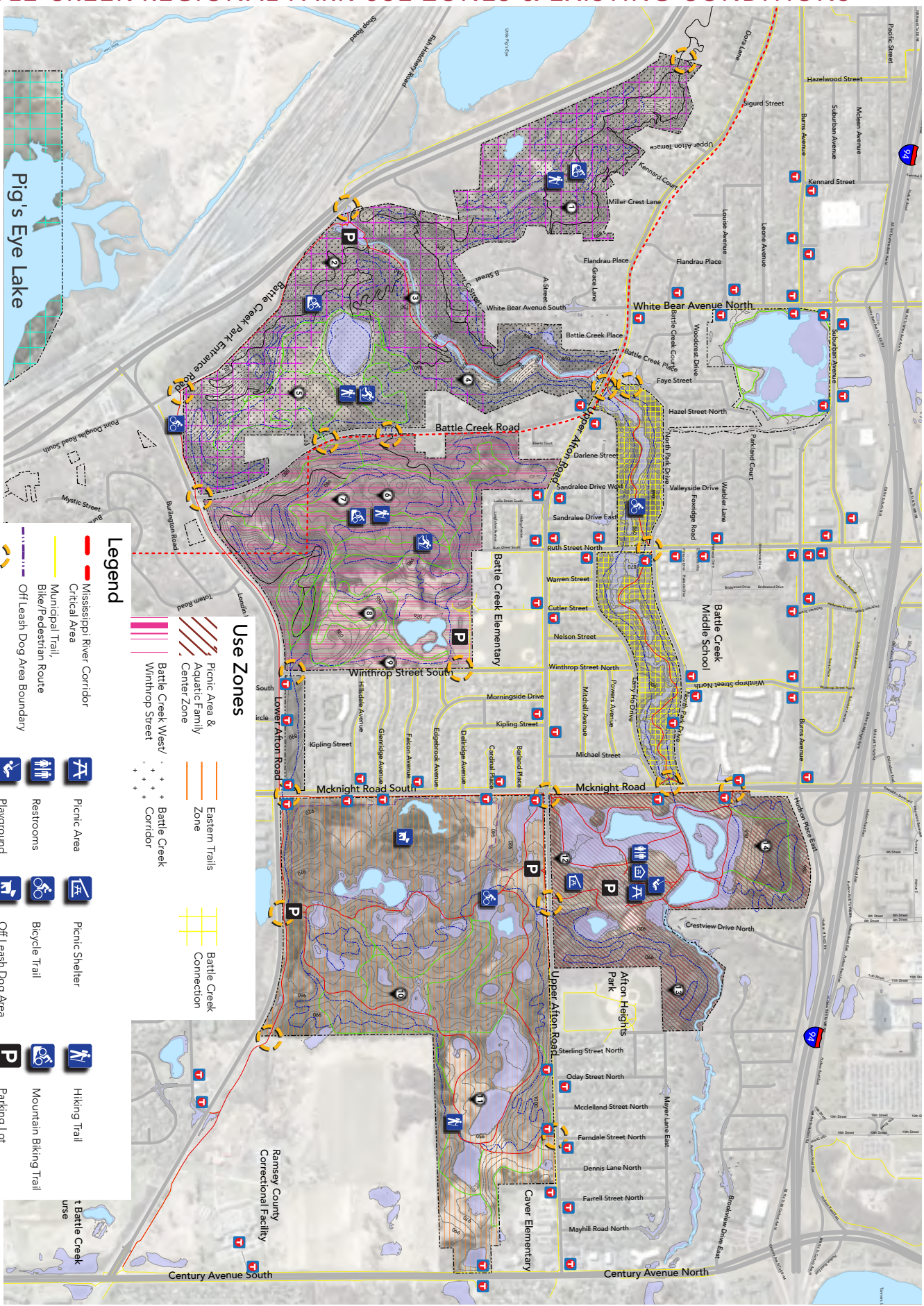
16. **Burlington Northern Santa Fe & Canadian Pacific Railroads:** railroads operate and maintain a large stock yard and multiple railroad tracks, which in conjunction with Highway 61, bisects the two main segments of Battle Creek Regional Park. Access between the two parcels of land is difficult and many community members are unaware that the land surrounding Pigs Eye Lake is parkland.
17. **Battle Creek Middle School:** serving grades 6-8, Battle Creek Middle School has an enrollment of 750 students. Students receive a full array of arts, technology, science, social studies, and physical instruction. Monthly events bring students together to socialize and learn; everyone can participate in free after-school classes in the Panther Extended Program.
18. **Carver Elementary School:** Serving students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, Carver elementary has a student population of approximately 535. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has had conversations with school administrators about blending the dividing lines between the school and park property to allow for an easy transition and use of the park by the school's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (S.T.E.M.) courses.
19. **Ramsey County Correctional Facility:** The Ramsey County Community Corrections Department owns approximately 256 acres of land to the east and south of Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County and the city of Maplewood are considering future potential uses for portions of this land.
20. **Boys Totem Town:** was a residential program for up to 36 adolescent boys from the ages of 14-18 who had been committed by the court to treatment for committing offenses and demonstrating risky behavior concerns in the community. Boys Totem Town served the Ramsey County community for more than 100 years.

Boys Totem town provided a safe, secure, and healthy environment for residents and helped facilitate community safety by providing specialized evidence-based services to youth and empowering families to prevent future out-of-home placements.



# Existing Conditions

## BATTLE CREEK REGIONAL PARK USE ZONES & EXISTING CONDITIONS



### Legend

	Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area		Picnic Area & Aquatic Family Center Zone		Eastern Trails Zone		Battle Creek Connection
	Municipal Trail, Bike/Pedestrian Route		Battle Creek West/Winthrop Street Corridor		Battle Creek Connection		
	Off Leash Dog Area Boundary						
	Park Entrance						
	Environmental Natural Area						
	Paved Park Trail						
	Cross County Ski / Mowed Grass Trail						
	100 Year Flood Zone						

	Picnic Area		Picnic Shelter		Hiking Trail
	Restrooms		Bicycle Trail		Mountain Biking Trail
	Playground		Off Leash Dog Area		Parking Lot
	Pavilion		Cross County Skiing		Metro Transit Bus Stop
	Existing Off Road Cycling Trail				
	Proposed Off Road Cycling Trail				
	Natural Resources Point of Interest				

Ramsey County will work in partnership with the city of Saint Paul, the District 1 community and other stakeholders in a community-based process about potential future uses of the site. As part of the process, Ramsey County and Saint Paul will develop an engagement plan with the community to ensure there is equitable land use of the Boys Totem Town site.

### Battle Creek Regional Park Use Zones

Battle Creek Regional Park Can generally be divided into two main segments, the Battle Creek segment which lies to the east of Highway 61 and the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park which lies to the west of Highway 61. The Battle Creek segment can be further divided into 5 use zones which generally are split by major roads and intersections. Those use zones include the Picnic Area & Family Aquatic Center Zone, the Eastern Trails Zone, Battle Creek Connection, Winter Recreation & Battle Creek Recreation Center Zone, and the Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor.

1. **Picnic Area & Family Aquatic Center Zone:** consisting of approximately 100 acres, the use zone is located to the northeast of the intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road and is a primary active recreation area within the park. The area includes a large picnic pavilion, medium picnic shelter, a general picnic area, 275-car parking lot, a destination play area, an open games field, and a 2.3 mile bituminous multi-use trail. Battle Creek Waterworks, a family aquatics center, is also located within this zone of the park and includes an interactive water play area, leisure pool, water slide, and sand play area. In addition to picnicking and water park activities, the area is also used as a venue for special events and cross-country running meets.
2. **Eastern Trails Zone:** consisting of approximately 245 acres, the zone is located to the southeast of the intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road. The area includes a 2.5-mile bituminous multi-use trail, and an additional 3 miles of unpaved hiking and cross-country ski trails. The bituminous trail corridors are also groomed for cross country skiing, providing approximately 5 miles of cross-country ski trails in the area. The trails are connected to the trail system located to the picnic area to the north. A 110-car parking lot is located south of Upper Afton Road to serve the area, as well as provide overflow parking for the Picnic Area and Family Aquatic zone. An additional 30-car parking lot is located on Lower Afton Road. A 44-acre fully fenced off-leash dog area is located in the southwest portion of the site. Trail access to the off-leash dog area is provided from both parking lots.
3. **Battle Creek Connection:** Battle Creek flows from the picnic area and family aquatic center zone in the northeast to the Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor bounded to the north by North Park Drive and Larry Ho Drive to the South. A bituminous multi-use trail follows the creek bed to connect the two trail systems within the park. This segment provides a major in-park trail connecting the Picnic Area to the Bluffs Corridor.
4. **Winter Recreation Area & Battle Creek Recreation Center Zone:** consisting of approximately 144 acres, this area of the park is generally bound by Winthrop Street to the east, Lower Afton Road to the South, Battle Creek Road to the west, and Upper Afton Road to the north. The area has been developed primarily for trail use and more passive multi-season recreation. The Area includes 4 miles of combined us off-road cycling and hiking trails, and 4 miles of cross-country ski trails (including 2.4 miles of lighted ski trails) which are mowed in the summer months for hiking and walking. There is also a lighted sledding hill and recreation center. The primary access to the site is provided form a 180-car parking lot located off of Winthrop Street. The parking lot and adjacent recreation center were developed by the city of Saint Paul under a joint powers agreement. According to this agreement, the parking lot is available to all trail users and the recreation serves as a visitors center for trail and winter recreation area users. Ramsey County has priority rights to the use of the recreation center for interpretive programming.



## Existing Conditions

- Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor:** consisting of approximately 218 acres, this area of the park is generally bound by Battle Creek Road to the east, Upper Afton Road to the north, and Highway 61 to the south and west. There is a 1.7-mile bituminous multi-use trail reaching from the Battle Creek Connection zone in the north and heads south to the main trailhead for the area. The trailhead, which consists of a 36-car parking lot, provides parking for trail users, and a small general picnic area is located at the lower reaches of Battle Creek near the parking lot. An underpass of Highway 61 provides trail access to property owned by the city of Saint Paul and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources surrounding Little Pigs Eye Lake and eventually the trail reaches Indian Mounds Regional Park and the Sam Morgan Regional Trail.

This area of the park is also largely classified as an Environmental Natural Area (ENA). Environmental Natural Areas have been defined by Ramsey County as areas within regional parks having significant, sensitive, and unique natural resources that warrant extended preservation. The habitat and vegetation within these areas is managed to support and enhance these natural communities. These areas are designated for increased habitat protection, ecological restoration, passive recreation, and environmental education. Any development or expansion within these areas is limited to trails only, with nature interpretation facilities allowed within planned development areas. Public access to these areas is restricted to designated trails and the use of these areas is limited to passive recreation such as hiking, skiing, and nature observation. Bicycles and off-road cycling is allowed on designated trails only. Dogs and off trail activities are not allowed.

The use zone also falls completely within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical area is a joint state, regional, and local program that provides coordinated planning and management for the 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River through the seven-county metropolitan area and 54,000 acres of surrounding land across 30 local jurisdictions. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a unit of the National Park Service.

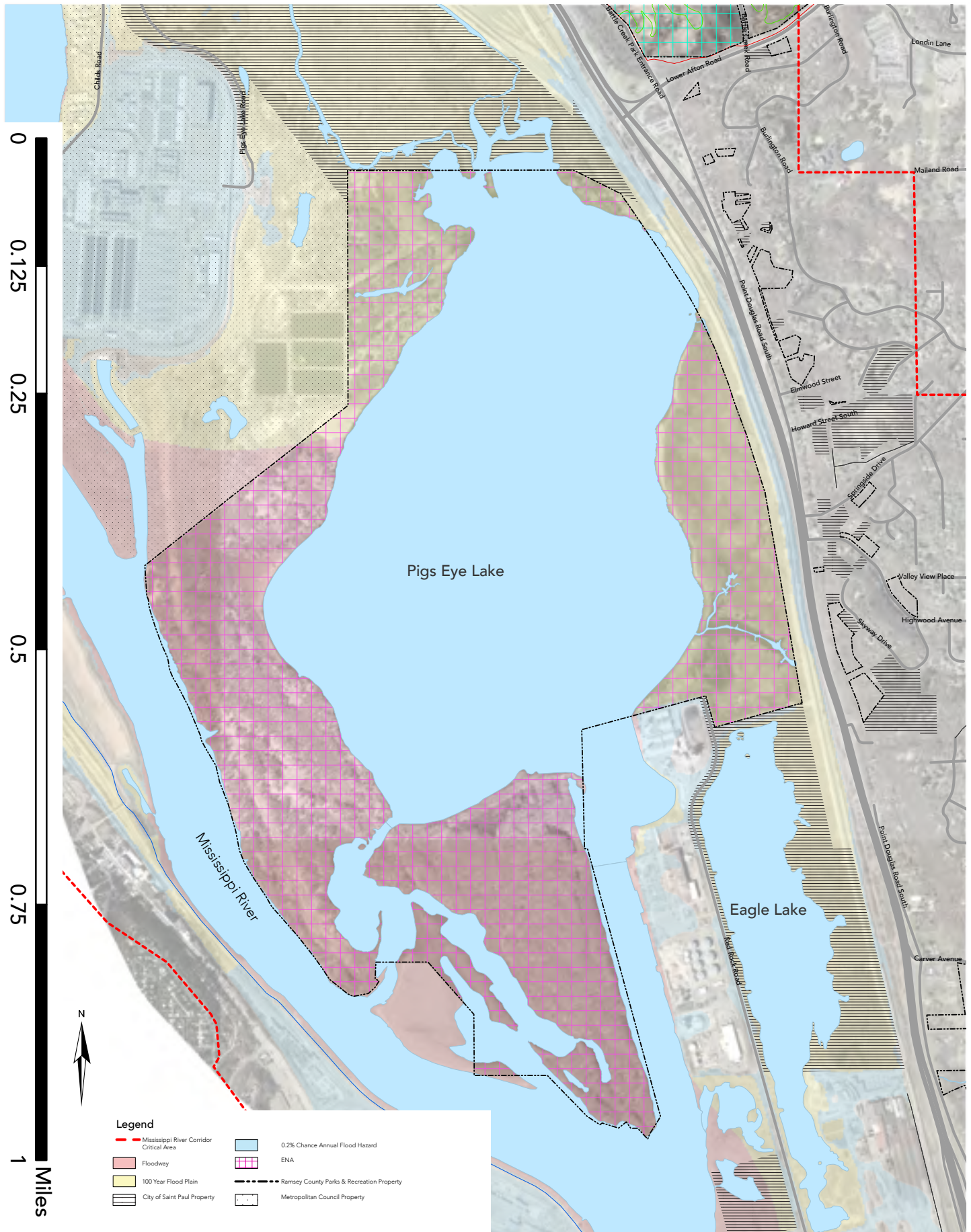
- Pigs Eye Lake Segment:** The Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park lies completely within the 100-year floodplain of the Mississippi River with portions of the land laying within the river's floodway. Floodway Areas are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and adopted by communities to provide an area that will remain free of development to moderate increases in flood heights due to encroachments of the floodplain. The entire Pigs Eye segment also lies within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. The land owned by Ramsey County is primarily seasonally flooded basins, shrub swamps, wooded swamp, and shallow marsh which are all types of wetlands. There is little to no upland available to develop on land owned by Ramsey County. This makes the utilization of partners and stakeholders to ensure access to the area absolutely vital. For reference please see the floodplain and land cover maps of the Pigs Eye Lake segment on pages 49-50.

The Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park consists of a 629-acre lake, which is a back water of the Mississippi river, surrounded by 378 acres of land to the west and 125 acres of wetlands to the east and northwest of the lake, which is in the floodplain. Pigs Eye Lake water levels fluctuate with the river and the land within the park boundary is often inundated by water for varying lengths of time. The Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park also contains one of the largest heron rookeries in the State of Minnesota and is designated as a State Scientific and Natural Area by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The Pigs Eye segment is included in the National Great River Park and is also defined as an Environmental Natural Area, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department System Plan, which warrants additional protection and preservation.

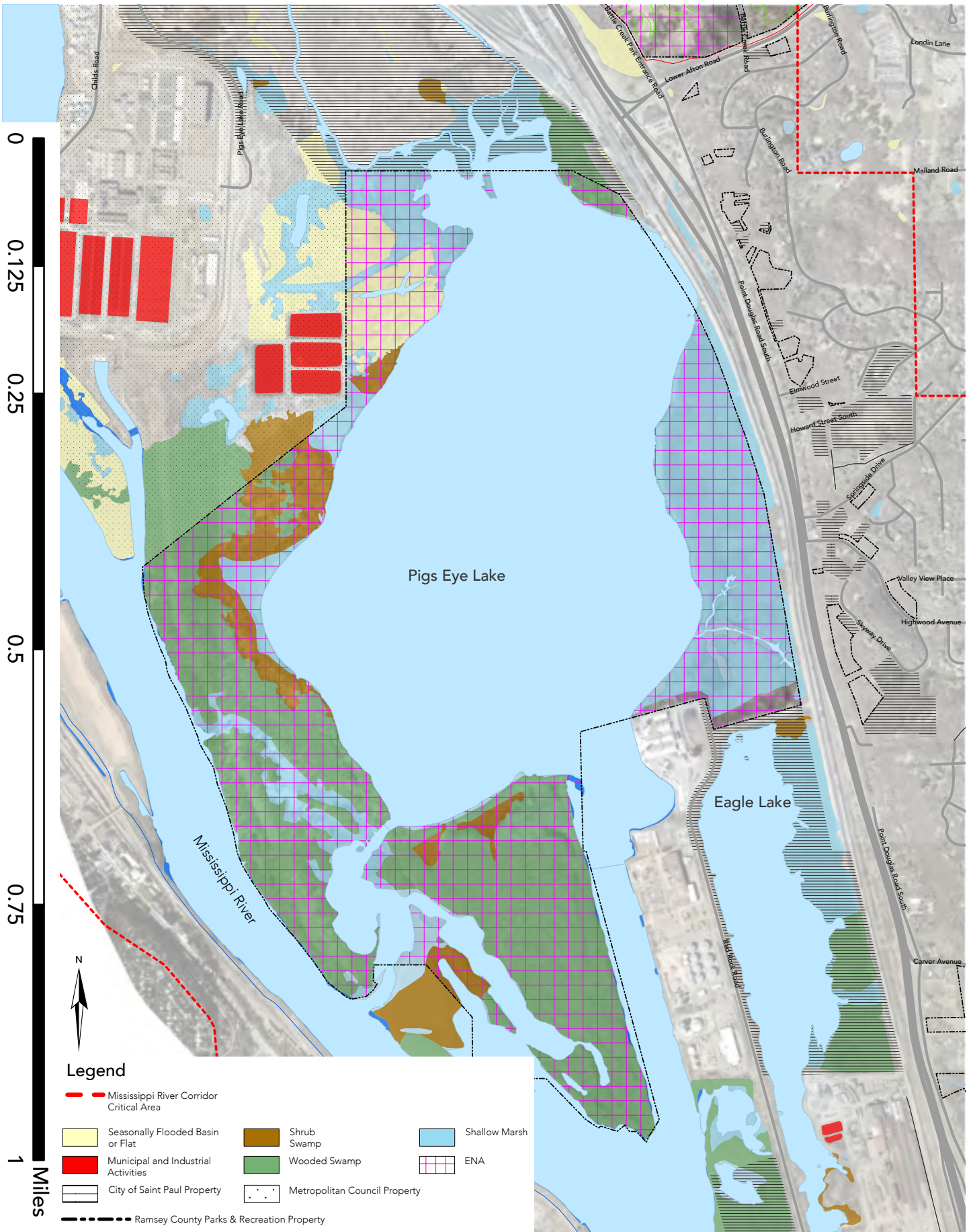


# Existing Conditions

## PIGS EYE LAKE FEMA FLOOD ZONES



PIGS EYE LAKE LAND CLASSIFICATION





## Existing Conditions

Most of the Pigs Eye area land cover consists of mixed woods located on a peninsula of land that separates the lake from the main channel of the Mississippi River. This peninsula of land is historically a floodplain forest but is presently defined as a mixed woods, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department System Plan. The wooded peninsula consists of typical floodplain trees such as cottonwood, silver maple, green ash, willows, American elm, and some swamp white oak, however several invasive tree species have encroached into this area, such as buckthorn and boxelder. The area is also prone to constant flooding creating an open understory with few shrubs or saplings. Ground cover can consist of forest pools, mucky depressions, bare silt or sand, and dense patches of wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) or impatiens (*Impatiens capensis* or *I. pallida*), which can all constantly shift due to movement of water. The wetlands within the park consist of native vegetation, such as prairie cord grass, and various rushes and sedges. Invasive cattails and reed canary grass also dominate a lot of the wetland edges.

The majority of Pigs Eye will remain a natural area to provide benefit to wildlife and for increase diversity. Natural phenomena, such as hydric soils, areas prone to flooding, water features, and wetlands, make up much of the park and will dictate which recreational amenities should be planned for the area. The south portion of the peninsula will remain a Scientific and Natural Area for the protection of the heron rookery. Wetlands will remain protected under the State and Federal wetland conservation act.

The Pigs Eye Lake Segment is located in a heavily industrialized area, close to the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant and other major air emissions sources. Prior to planning and implementing recreational amenities, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation will need to evaluate the long-term health impacts of air quality on public users of proposed amenities. In addition, the land use designation for the Metro Plant is industrial and the plant is a highly industrialized facility with safety and use consistent with that designation. Noise, odors, emissions, and traffic are present at levels that are consistent with industrial land use and that meet the Metro Plant's permits but which raise concerns about conflicts between the proposed recreation and the current land use designation in the surrounding area. While the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services has invested in reducing odor generation at the Metro Plant, further reductions are unlikely to mitigate odors to a significant degree. Noise, traffic, and emissions from Metro Plant operations and maintenance activities may also negatively impact the public's ability to enjoy recreational activities.

Currently there are no developed recreational features or site amenities within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park.

The Minnesota House of Representatives passed legislation in April 2022 to invest in and to preserve the environment and natural resources for current and future generations of Minnesotans. The legislation includes a proposal to remediate and restore the Pigs Eye Landfill Superfund site and addresses perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination of Battle Creek, Pigs Eye Lake and nearby groundwater.

## Existing Site Amenities & Features

### Picnic Area and Family Aquatic Zone

- Upper Afton Road East Trailhead.
  - 275-car parking lot.
  - Drinking water fountain.
  - General picnic area.
  - Wayfinding signage.
- Large picnic pavilion.
  - Integrated restrooms.
  - 2 kitchen areas.
- Medium Picnic Shelter.

- Destination Play Area.
  - Standard play equipment.
  - Swings.
  - Nature play area.
  - Zip line.
  - Water stream nature play feature.
  - Sand play water log.
  - Accessible route throughout with accessible picnic tables.
- Waterworks family aquatic center.
  - Interactive water play area.
  - Leisure pool.
  - Water slide.
  - Sand play area.
- Open games and event staging field.
- 2.3 mile bituminous multi-use trail.
- 0.4 mile grass mowed walking and hiking trail.
- Pedestrian access points.
  - McKnight Road across from Villages on McKnight, pedestrian flashing beacon and crosswalk.
  - Intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road.
  - North side of Upper Afton Road next to vehicle entrance.

### Eastern Trails Zone

- Upper Afton Road East Trailhead.
  - 110 car parking lot.
  - Trash and recycling bins.
  - Wayfinding signage.
- Lower Afton Road Trailhead.
  - 30 car parking lot.
  - Trash and recycling bins.
  - Wayfinding signage.
- Off leash dog area.
  - Trash containers throughout.
  - 3 gated entrances.
  - Natural surface trails throughout.
  - Approximately 44 acres in size.
  - Picnic tables and benches located in an open field area.
- 2.5 miles of bituminous multi-use trails.
- 2.7 miles of grass mowed/cross-country ski trails.
- Pedestrian access points.
  - Intersection of McKnight Road and Lower Afton Road.
  - Southwestern edge of the site from the Afton Bluffs Regional Trail search corridor.
  - Intersection of McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road.
  - Northeastern edge along Upper Afton Road near Carver Elementary.

# Existing Conditions

## Battle Creek Connection

- 1 mile of bituminous multi-use trail.
- Pedestrian access points.
  - Intersection of North Park Drive, Larry Ho Drive, and McKnight Road.
  - North Park Drive Across from Battle Creek Middle School.
  - Intersection of North Park Drive and Winthrop Street North.
  - Intersection of Ruth Street North and North Park Drive.
  - Upper Afton Road across from the Battle Creek Corridor and Bluffs zone's northeast arm.

## Winter Recreation Area and Battle Creek Recreation Center Zone

- Recreation Center Trailhead.
  - 180 car parking lot.
  - Trash and recycling bins.
  - Wayfinding signage.
- Battle Creek Recreation Center.
  - Benches.
  - Basketball courts.
  - Craft room.
  - Fitness center.
  - Gym.
  - Restrooms.
  - Warming facility.
  - Meeting room.
  - Offers educational programs, after school activities, open gym, tot-times, family events, fitness center memberships, field rentals, rental space for parties, meetings, events, and more.
- Sledding hill.
- 5 miles of cross-country ski and grass mowed hiking and walking trails.
- 3 miles of combined off-road cycling and hiking trails.
- Cross-country ski trails in the Winter Recreation Area.

The cross-country ski trails in the winter recreation area are recognized by the International Ski Federation as a homologated course. Homologation represents a system of evaluation that is designed to guide the development and upgrade of cross-country competition courses. It is not just a set of numbers and standards, but is a process for certification that provides a forum for constructive discussion between organizers, the International Ski Federation, and inspectors.

The homologation evaluation includes more than just the course design. The stadium layout and the infrastructure installations are also part of the overall evaluation. The resulting certification represents an International Ski Federation stamp of approval indicating that the site is physically capable of accommodating international competitions.

The end result of the process is to provide a varied and challenging course that requires competent skiing abilities, as well as stadiums that meet the requirements of new competition formats.

It should be emphasized that homologation should not be carried out in such a way that the course marginally fits the rules. Some of the cross-country ski centers will not be capable of having a homologated course if the physical characteristics of the terrain are below the required height difference limits.

## Existing Conditions

Homologation is an important aspect of the cross-county ski trails in this area. The trails are of high quality and have the ability to offer competition and difficulty not easily found. The cross-country ski trails in this area of Battle Creek are one of 32 sites in the United States to receive homologation certification. The only other trail system in the state of Minnesota is located at Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

- Pedestrian access points .
  - Along Battle Creek Road.
  - Intersection of Battle Creek Road and Lower Afton Road.
  - Intersection of Battle Creek Road and Winthrop Street.
  - Winthrop Street across from the Phoenix Apartments.
  - Winthrop Street at Battle Creek Recreation Center trailhead.

### Battle Creek And Bluffs Corridor

- Park Entrance Road trailhead.
  - 36 car parking lot.
  - Trash and recycling bins.
  - Wayfinding signage.
- Small general picnic area.
- 0.8 mile bituminous multi-use trail.
- 2.4 miles of grass mowed walking and hiking, and cross-country ski trails.
- 4.5 miles of combined hiking and off-road cycling trails.
- Pedestrian access points.
  - Intersection of White Bear Avenue South and C Street.
  - Via the historic overlook at the intersection of Highway 61 and Burns Avenue.
  - Upper Afton Road across from the Battle Creek Connection zone.
  - Along Battle Creek Road.
  - Underpass of Highway 61 from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources land and Indian Mounds Regional Park.
  - Intersection of Battle Creek Road and Lower Afton Road.

## NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY AND MANAGEMENT

The natural resources of Battle Creek Park include the soils, water, plants, animals, and people that are within the Park boundaries or connected with it. The particular resource elements present in the park and their landscape patterns are the result of historical processes, including climate, hydrology, plant and animal migrations and interactions, and human decisions and activities.

### Current Natural Resource Quality and Issues

Despite major alteration from agriculture and urbanization, the natural resources of Battle Creek Regional Park are still of significant quality. The park contains examples of many of the native plant communities that were present in Ramsey County at the time of European settlement, though these are poorer in plant and animal species than they were originally, and have been invaded by a number of aggressive, non-native species.

Based on the findings of the Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS), these are some of the highest quality natural communities remaining in Ramsey County, and include some species that are now rare in Minnesota. Rare communities in the park include dry oak forest, sand-gravel oak savanna. Less than 1 percent of the original dry savanna and few examples of mature dry oak forest remain in the Twin Cities Region. Sizable populations of



## Existing Conditions

Kittentails, an endangered plant in Minnesota, exist in the savanna areas of the park, and evidence of Fox snake were found by the MCBS surveyors. Within the park is nesting and wintering habitat for Bald Eagles and nesting habitat for colonial waterbirds in the river valley, and provides foraging habitat for these birds.

The quality of water and aquatic habitat in Battle Creek and some wetlands in the Park is still good. Finally, the Park has significant existing and potential connections to other important natural areas along the Mississippi River corridor and bluffs, and is part of an important wildlife migratory corridor and fishery along the River.

Plant, animal, and human communities and the landscapes they inhabit are in constant change. Just as the composition and patterns of native habitats in the park have changed, the processes that built and maintain these habitats especially hydrologic processes, fire disturbance, and activities of some native animals have changed dramatically. Since American Indians began to manage the local landscape with fire, human decisions and choices have determined much about how the landscape appears and will determine much of its future. In developing a management plan for the natural resources of the park, the composition and quality of its plant and animal communities, the landscape processes that can be used to maintain, enhance or restore them, and the values of people and institutions affecting the Park will all be important considerations.

Major issues for management of natural resources in the park identified in this planning process include the following:

1. Inventories of plant and animal communities living in and migrating through the park are inadequate for making management decisions.
2. Natural communities in the park are valuable but degraded by fragmentation, invasion by non-native species, and other changes since settlement. The park is located in a highly urban area where such processes will continue.
3. The deer population in and around the park often exceeds the carrying capacity of the land. A population of 15 to 20 deer per square mile of deer habitat is considered desirable to maintain the health and diversity of forests and to maintain or restore other plant communities in the park. The population needs to be managed, given the habitat needs of all species in the park, and the value and interest by park users and neighbors.
4. Along with landscape fragmentation, settlement, and urbanization have altered the landscape processes that maintained the natural resources of the park, and make these processes difficult to restore. These processes include fire that maintained some native plant communities like oak savanna and wet meadows; hydrologic processes that gradually infiltrate and clean storm water runoff and maintain creek flows; and soil-building processes. How far can natural processes be restored? What other options are available to maintain the quality of aquatic and terrestrial communities and habitats?
5. The need to serve a large urban population bring conflicts between maintaining the quality of natural resources and desires for recreational opportunities. Some species and communities are altered or eliminated by a high degree of human contact, trampling, or other activity. Activities also cause soil erosion and spread non-native species.
6. Conflicts concerning management of park areas adjacent to private homes, such as intrusion of neighbor's yards into park land, neighbors' objections to relaxed mowing regimes in the park, and dumping of trash and yard waste, etc. How should these conflicts be addressed?
7. These conflicts suggest that neighbors may have limited knowledge, interest or ownership of park lands. What strategies can be used to build community interest, values, and desire to care for the natural resources of the park and their own properties?
8. Funding and staff available to maintain, protect, or enhance the natural resources of the park are limited. Natural resource needs in this park need to be balanced with recreation needs and needs of other parks and open space areas.

## Existing Conditions

### EXISTING EASEMENTS

#### **Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Sewage Interceptor Line 1-SP-200/201**

This sewer interceptor line roughly parallels the man-made Battle Creek and is an important piece of the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services infrastructure. The line receives sewage from the surrounding community and beyond taking waste to the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Metro Plant on the Mississippi River bordering Pigs Eye Lake.

#### **Magellan Refined Products Pipeline**

A small portion of the approximately 9,800 mile pipeline covering a 15-state area across the central United States runs through Battle Creek Regional Park.

#### **Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District**

The Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District has an access agreement with Ramsey County Parks & Recreation for the storm water line that runs underneath the man-made Battle Creek. The watershed district completed a significant restoration of the creek in 1982 and continues to conduct maintenance on the creek to sustain the project.



# The Plan



## FUTURE BOUNDARY AND EASEMENT ADJUSTMENTS

Future long-term acquisition is proposed for Battle Creek Regional Park when properties become available. Inholdings along Battle Creek Road, Suburban Pond Open Space, and properties held by the Minnesota Department of Transportation along Highway 61/10 constitute land that Ramsey County is interested in incorporating into the Battle Creek Segment. Properties falling within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical area between Fish Creek and Battle Creek, including properties held by Ramsey County that are considered the Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space and Fish Creek Open Space are also of interest for inclusion into Battle Creek Regional Park. While some general uses and recreational amenities have been identified as a part of this master plan, additional master planning activities may be required as properties are acquired and included as a part of Battle Creek Regional Park. Acquisition of these parcels will only occur if the land becomes available and from willing sellers. The acquisition of land is a complex issue due to constraints such as property ownership and the existing conditions of the properties among other issues. Cost for these acquisitions will likely not be known until the property is ready to be acquired and all existing conditions are taken into account.

Expansion of the Battle Creek Regional Park boundary advances all four outcomes of the Thrive MSP 2040 Regional Park System Outcomes, which includes:

- Expand the regional parks system to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, thereby improving climate resilience and enhancing the quality of life for the region's residents.
  - A critical component of these boundary expansions is natural resource protection and restoration opportunities. Each acquisition has unique qualities and provides long-term natural resource benefits.
- Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that balances the conservation and restoration of natural resources (with the provision of nature-based recreational opportunities).
  - Battle Creek Regional Park has a diverse range of outdoor recreational amenities but is lacking nature based educational and programming opportunities and access to surrounding neighborhoods. The acquisitions will provide an opportunity to expand outdoor nature based programming and educational opportunities within Battle Creek Regional Park. Acquisition parcels have unique natural resources and will become an asset to provide a balance between protection of natural resources and provide outdoor nature-based recreational opportunities.
- Expand access to regional parks and trails by connecting them with local, state, and federal parks, trails, other lands, and transportation networks, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems.
  - The boundary expansion acquisitions will provide an opportunity to expand outdoor recreational opportunities and will be critical for improved community access especially surrounding under-represented communities.

## The Plan

- Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region's residents across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability, inspiring a legacy of stewardship that also strengthens friendships, families, health, and spirit.
  - The proposed boundary expansion areas for Battle Creek Regional Park will not only provide more geographic balance to the regional park system in Ramsey County but will provide a localized geographic balance to surrounding communities. These areas will enable Battle Creek Regional Park to integrate into the surrounding communities, provide a balanced approach for parkland and increases community access especially surrounding under-represented communities.

In 2020 the Metropolitan Council began a process to address system additions and boundary adjustments for the regional parks system. The goal of the policy update was to create bridging facilities to introduce and link new regional park visitors and trail users across race, ethnicity, national origin, income, ability, age, and other pertinent characteristics. These facilities engage people with the wide array of opportunities that exist across the Regional Parks System, through innovative strategies and partnerships.

A summary of properties to expand the Battle Creek Regional Park boundary includes:

### Properties owned by Ramsey County and within the County Parks System

The following properties are not currently within the regional park and trails system and are owned by Ramsey County. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is interested in including these properties in the Battle Creek Regional Park boundary.

#### Suburban Pond Open Space

Suburban Pond Open Space consists of 32 acres of primarily a wetland complex surrounded by an old field on the south and degraded mixed woods on the east side of the site. Suburban pond is located directly to the north of Battle Creek Regional Park, located across North Park Drive between Ruth Street North to the east and White Bear Avenue North to the west. Suburban Pond Open Space would provide the opportunity to expand the trails system along with another potential trailhead. Due to the parks' proximity to Battle Creek inclusion within the regional parks system makes sense as the general public does not differentiate the two parks.

The site includes the 20-acre pond and wetland complex, as well as a 50 to 300-foot strip of upland around the entire pond. The surrounding development consists of commercial, multi-family, and single family residential real estate. The pond consists of approximately 50% open water and 50% wetland vegetation and is a significant storm water pond for Battle Creek, located ¼ mile to the south. The natural upland area surrounding the pond provides critical vegetation buffers and offers a place for habitat in a highly urbanized area.

Suburban Pond Opens Space will provide a critical access connection to Battle Creek Regional Park.

No acquisition cost will be required for this property since it is owned by Ramsey County. It is anticipated the timeline for implementation of recreational developments within Suburban Pond Open Space will vary between 0-20 years.

## The Plan

### Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space

The Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space is a narrow 2 mile long strip of steep sloped bluff line paralleling the east side of Highway 61 between Battle Creek Regional Park to the north and Fish Creek Open Space to the south. Ramsey County Currently owns parcels totaling 19.55 acres in the area. Along with other properties within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area the inclusion of Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space would provide the opportunity to provide further natural resource management of the bluffs area as well as providing an unparalleled experience along the river corridor near a metropolitan downtown area. The inclusion of the bluffs would also provide for recreational amenities such as trails, trailheads, overlooks and educational opportunities along the river between Battle Creek Regional Park and Fish Creek Open Space.

This open space is all located within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, which shares its boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The open space is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations (state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106) which are in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor. The habitat within all parcels consists of mixed woods, dominated by oak trees.

Acquisition is proposed for adjacent properties for inclusion into Mississippi River Bluff Protection Open Space as they become available. Acquisition of these parcels will only occur if the land becomes available and there is a willing seller.

Acquisition is required for parcels currently owned by Ramsey County. Approximately 224 acres is anticipated for full acquisition but is dependent on availability of properties along the bluff line with an anticipated timeline of 20+ years. Anticipated cost for full long-term acquisition is approximately \$57,512,000.

### Fish Creek Open Space

Fish Creek Open Space, located in the southeast corner of Ramsey County neighboring the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The 130 acre site is composed of Fish creek which flows for 1.5 miles from Carver Lake on the east side of Interstate 494 to Pigs Eye Lake on the west side of Highway 61. From Carver Lake to Interstate 494 the creek has a flat gradient and passes through wetlands, wooded slopes, and grasslands. From Interstate 494 to Highway 61 the creek undergoes a large elevation drop and passes through a deep wooded valley with steep slopes. A wooded bluff runs parallel to the creek as it descends the Mississippi River Valley.

The city of Maplewood owns land abutting Fish Creek Open Space and made improvements consisting of a paved trail and parking lot development utilizing both city and county owned property in 2016.

A concept master plan was prepared in 2016 in coordination with the city of Maplewood for vehicular access, trails, access to fish creek, and programming activities throughout the open space. This plan was further defined as a part of community engagement for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Due to the size and proximity to Battle Creek, Ramsey county has been interested in incorporating Fish Creek Open Space into the Regional Park System along with the land owned by the city of Maplewood. Maplewood has requested in the past that Ramsey County take over ownership and management of the section of land currently owned by the city.

Fish Creek Open Space has a diverse range of natural resource land components that need to be protected and have unlimited restoration opportunities. The diverse range of land habitat components make this area unique and is the bases for why this area should be included within the regional park system. The key feature is Fish Creek and associated bluff/ravine areas, which is located on the Ramsey County section but, this area provides key components for addressing natural resource protection. The Maplewood section has critical upland mixed woodland and prairie areas that are key buffers to Fish Creek and surrounding bluff and ravine areas. These unique land features advance the priority for establishing measures for improving climate resilience and stormwater management to surrounding areas.



Fish Creek Open Space will greatly enhance access to parkland for nature-based programming and education opportunities. Fish Creek is anticipated to be connected to Battle Creek Regional Park with long-term trail connections through the Mississippi River Bluff Protection Open Space Area. Additional long-term trail connections to Fish Creek could provide access to the Point Douglas Regional Trail and Mississippi River Trail along Point Douglas.

No acquisition cost will be required for this property since it is owned by Ramsey County. It is anticipated the timeline for implementation of recreational developments within Fish Creek Space will vary between 0-20 years.

It is anticipated that the Maplewood owned parcels of Fish Creek would be acquired through a land transfer, the cost of a future land transfer is unknown at this time. Future acquisition is proposed for adjacent residential properties and long-term expansion of Battle Creek Regional Park when properties become available from a willing seller. At this time the acreage and acquisition cost are undetermined and is dependent on availability of properties surrounding Fish Creek.

### Publicly Held Properties

#### Minnesota Department of Transportation Parcels

The Minnesota Department of Transportation owns several properties along the east side of Highway 61 which border Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County is interested in working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to include these parcels as a part of Battle Creek Regional Park, ongoing agency coordination would be required for long-term acquisition. Some access agreements will need to be secured as one of the properties holds a pumping station for sewer interceptor lines.

#### Port Authority of Saint Paul

The Port Authority of Saint Paul owns a parcel which abuts the Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area. Ramsey County is interested in working with the Port Authority of Saint Paul to acquire this property, ongoing agency coordination would be required for long-term acquisition. This would add to the total footprint of the scientific and natural area, further protecting the heron rookery.

#### City of Saint Paul Bluff Properties

The City of Saint Paul also owns properties along the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River. Ramsey County would be open to working with the City of Saint Paul for future consideration of expanding regional park boundaries to include city bluff property. In order to accommodate this boundary expansion, both the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County would need to cooperate jointly, and this expansion would require a future boundary expansion change through the Metropolitan Council.

### Residential Properties

There are many residential properties including inholdings within the Battle Creek Segment of the park along Battle Creek Road that Ramsey County is interested in acquiring. The inclusion of these properties would provide numerous benefits to Battle Creek Regional Park including trail connectivity, an additional trailhead space, and the possibility of closing Battle Creek Road and connecting two major park segments.

Additionally, there are many properties along the river bluffs within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical area surrounding the Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space and Fish Creek Open Space that the county would like to incorporate into the regional park. This is a far reaching and long term goal to connect the two park spaces. This connection would provide a vital link that would provide recreational and natural resource related amenities.

Residential properties would only be acquired when land becomes available and from willing sellers.

## The Plan

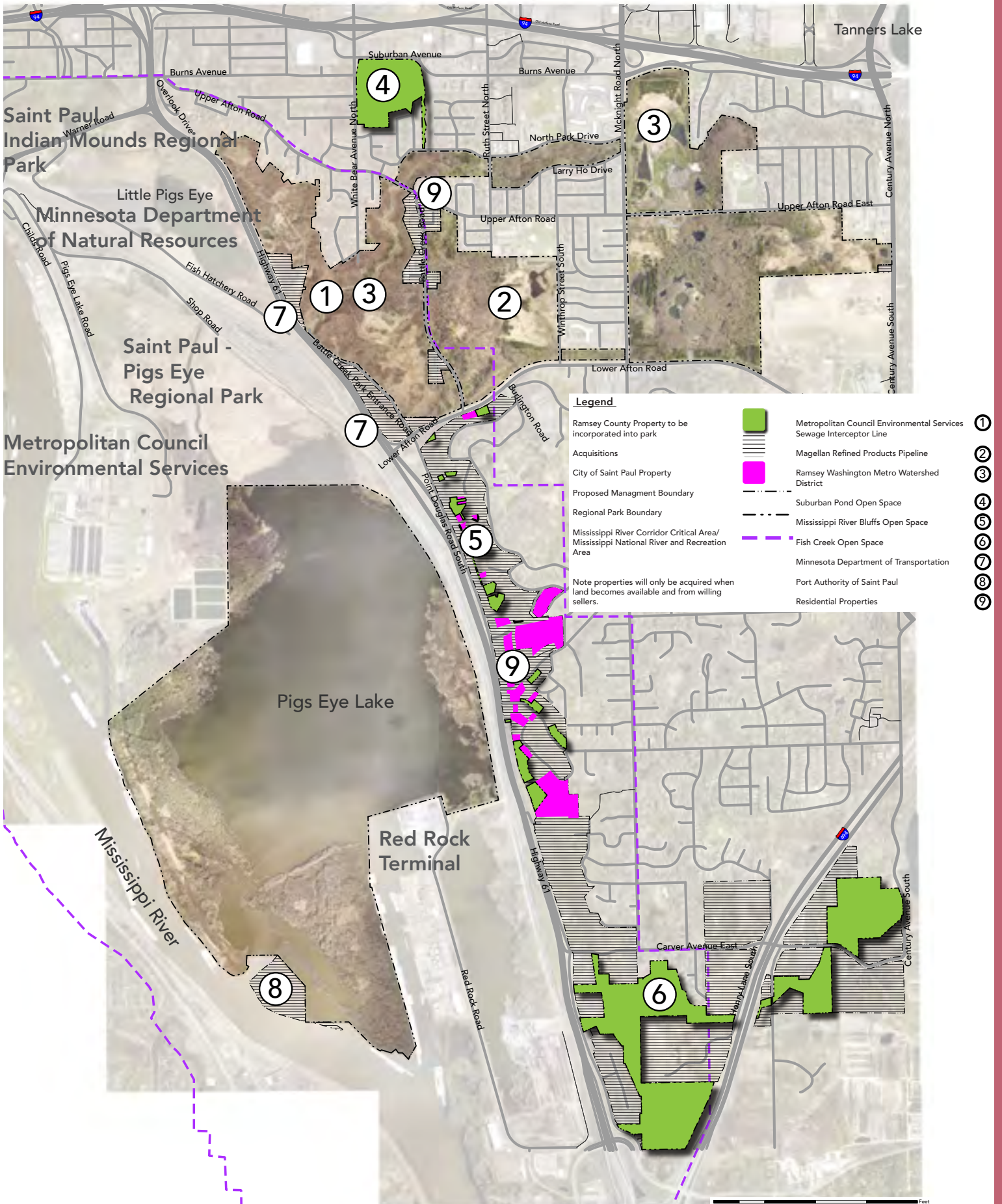
Parcel ID	Natural Resource Quality	Recreational Benefit	Acres
<b>Existing Administrative Boundary / Park Acreage</b>			1,891.23
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Ramsey County Suburban Pond Open Space</b>			
#022822220072	Generally low with areas of moderate quality	Trails, trailhead, park connectivity	32.73
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Ramsey County Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space</b>			
#112822210018	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.81
#112822240067	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.32
#112822240083	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.45
#112822240074	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.23
#112822310075	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	1.07
#112822310077	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.77
#112822310010	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.08
#112822310059	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.05
#112822310056	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.23
#112822310072	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	3.35
#112822340036	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	1.13
#112822430085	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	1.49
#142822120050	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.04
#142822120071	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.78
#142822130100	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	1.11
#142822130048	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.13
#142822130098	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	1.73
#142822130051	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	0.59
#142822420040	Low to moderate	Bluff preservation, trails, park connectivity	5.22

## The Plan

Subtotal			19.58
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Ramsey County &amp; Maplewood Fish Creek Open Space</b>			
#232822140018	Moderate to high	Bluff preservation, trails, education opportunity	25.72
#242822330001	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails, education opportunity	34.84
#232822440053	Moderate to high	Bluff preservation, trails, education opportunity	1.5
#242822230041	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails, education opportunity	23.77
#242822240007	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails	0.91
#242822130003	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails	16.63
#242822120002	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails	2.97
#242822110006	Moderate to high	Bluff and creek preservation, trails	32.23
#242822320004	Moderate to high	Trails, prairie restoration, parking, trailhead, nature center, education opportunities	68.15
#242822210013	Moderate to high	Trails, natural resource preservation	26.57
Subtotal			233.29
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Port Authority of Saint Paul</b>			
#222822410001	Moderate	Limited - abuts scientific and natural area	8.8
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Minnesota Department of Transportation</b>			
#0328224200008	Low to moderate	Trails, education opportunities, natural resource protection	9.82
<b>Proposed Management Boundary - Miscellaneous Unplatted Property and Residential Properties</b>			
	Low to moderate	Bluff and creek preservation, trails, education opportunities, natural resource protection	357.54
<b>Proposed Management Boundary / Park Acreage</b>			2,552.99

# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK REGIONAL PARK FUTURE BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS AND EASEMENTS





527 Battle Creek Road is a residential property of importance to the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. This property would provide a critical access point and trailhead for the regional park. Acquisition cost for this property including stewardship costs is approximately \$1,062,945. It is anticipated that the timeline for implementation of recreational development on this property will vary between 0-20 years.

Please see the table on pages 62-63 and the Battle Creek Regional Park Acquisitions map on page 64 for an overview of proposed boundary adjustments.

### DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Battle Creek Regional Park is the largest regional park under the care of Ramsey County Parks & Recreation. This master plan has a long-term goal of expanding the administrative boundary of the park to include areas of county open space as well as long-term acquisitions to link Battle Creek Regional Park and Fish Creek Open Space while preserving bluff habitat and developing recreational opportunities throughout. Battle Creek is in a rapidly growing and diverse area of Saint Paul and Maplewood, and is linked to the greater Metropolitan Park System through regional trails and parks adding to the overall connectivity of the system.

The park is also home to restored and remnant prairies, varied wildlife, and other unique vegetation types and ecosystems that should be maintained, preserved, and restored. The park's unique size and natural setting is one element that brings people to Battle Creek Regional Park and can not be easily found elsewhere in the metropolitan core area.

Many types of recreational users have enjoyed and shared Battle Creek Regional Park. Through thoughtful development of recreational infrastructure, and amenities, all park users will continue to find joy in Battle Creek Regional Park. Care and thoughtful planning of any new development within the park shall be practiced in order to preserve the park's natural beauty and unique features. Community members strongly advocated that new development be clustered at existing nodes of development.

### Regional Development

Long term development of the park has identified land connecting the Battle Creek and Fish Creek segments of the park for acquisition. Upon acquisition of this land amenities are proposed along the bluffs including:

- Additional park access.
- Scenic overlooks.
- Natural surface trails along with a major multi-use connecting trail between the Battle Creek and Fish Creek segments of the park.
- A multi-use trail paved trail along the Interstate 494 and Century avenue corridor which would create a loop connecting the surrounding neighborhood.
- Additional picnicking opportunities.

As the corridor is acquired and developed the area has a very unique ability to provide trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods while protecting and preserving bluff landscapes and wildlife habitat. The long term development of the regional connections and corridor will require additional planning as land is acquired from willing sellers.



# The Plan

## Pigs Eye Lake Development

Development of recreational amenities and programming opportunities near Pigs Eye Lake are a long term goal of the master plan. Ramsey County acknowledges that issues including environmental contamination and clean up, public safety, and compatibility of recreational use with surrounding land use must be resolved before any new visitor access or recreational amenities can be provided. It will be important for Ramsey County to continue to work with adjacent land owners, stakeholders, and community members in developing recreational amenities.

Proposed recreational amenities in the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park include:

- Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area.
  - The scientific and natural area should be left undisturbed in any new development proposed within the Pigs Eye Lake segment.
  - Acquire parcel of land currently owned by the Saint Paul Port Authority that abuts the island.
- Grade separated crossing(s) of Highway 61 and the railroad corridor.
  - Provide additional pedestrian and bicycle access into the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park.
  - Future planning will be required, and coordination with community members, adjacent land owners, stakeholders, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the railroad entities, and others will be necessary.
  - Possible proposed future crossings located at:
    - The intersection of Lower Afton Road and Highway 61.
    - Bailey Road.
    - Carver Avenue.
    - Highwood Avenue.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.
- Island building project in coordination with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.
  - A separate master plan amendment has been produced regarding the island building project which includes:
    - Sequencing of natural resource and public safety improvements for Pigs Eye Lake.
    - Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area policy standards and criteria.
    - A public engagement process.

Proposed development for the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Park was informed through community engagement and past planning efforts to show potential future access points and recreational amenities. Ramsey County acknowledges that issues including environmental contamination and clean up, public safety, and compatibility of recreational use with surrounding land must be resolved before any new visitor access or recreational amenities can be provided. The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment was produced to highlight this area and take a closer look at natural resource related projects and environmental clean up.

Additional coordination for necessary security steps will need to be considered for improvements within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park. For example, the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant follows the strategic guidance laid out in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan for security of critical infrastructure. Additional coordination and necessary security steps will be needed to mitigate security concerns for implementation of projects within the Pigs Eye Lake area.

The Pigs Eye Lake Segment is located in a heavily industrialized area, close to the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant and other major air emissions sources. Prior to planning and implementing recreational amenities, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation will need to evaluate the long-term health impacts on public users of proposed amenities. In addition, the land use designation for the Metro Plant is industrial and the plant is a highly industrialized facility with safety and use consistent with that designation. Noise, odors, emissions, and traffic are present at levels that are consistent with industrial land use and that meet the Metro Plant's permits but which raise concerns about

## The Plan

conflicts between the proposed recreation and the current land use designation in the surrounding area. While the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services has invested in reducing odor generation at the Metro Plant, further reductions are unlikely to mitigate odors to a significant degree. Noise, traffic, and emissions from Metro Plant operations and maintenance activities may also negatively impact the public's ability to enjoy recreational activities.

In addition to the challenges posed by conflicting land uses near Pigs Eye Lake there are also contamination and public safety issues that need to be addressed prior to enabling future recreation development and safe public use of the Pigs Eye Lake Segment of Battle Creek Regional Park. The Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment was written to address the natural resources existing conditions and future plans for the Pigs Eye Lake Segment. Next steps for Public Safety Planning Activities include:

- Secure funding for planning activities.
- Initiate an agency-wide planning team to determine project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders, agency and public engagement, funding strategy, and process for developing a long-range plan for remediation. Initiate an agency and public engagement process.
- Initiate additional site assessments and testing to determine the extent of contaminants within Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding areas.
- Develop an agency-wide monitoring and stewardship plan.
- Other required planning activities as required dependent on outcomes from long-term planning.
- Secure funding for remediation.

Recreation amenities which have been identified as a result of public engagement for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master plan such as fishing, canoe and kayak use/launches, and providing access to the shore of Pigs Eye Lake could bring park users into contact with water and soil that has been found to be contaminated. Access to the Pigs Eye Lake Segment of the park is a long-term goal of Ramsey County which can not be realized until all appropriate investigations into environmental contamination are complete and mitigation strategies concluded and verified. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is committed to working with all stakeholders and neighboring landowners to address the environmental issues surrounding Pigs Eye Lake and to continue to develop concepts for future recreational activities that are safe and compatible with land uses in the area.

For the full report on the natural resources existing conditions and next steps in the Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park, please see the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment.

## Recreation Development

Recreational Development for Battle Creek Regional Park includes a mixture of active and passive recreational opportunities including but not limited to walking, hiking, bicycling, off-road cycling, cross-country skiing, birdwatching, canoeing, kayaking, and interpretive and educational programming and amenities. Existing trailheads and pedestrian access points have planned enhancements to improve site amenities as well as safe access into the park. There is a desire to find a location for a community nature center and recreation center with improved amenities. Battle Creek Regional Park's unique and attractive setting along the Mississippi River bluffs and floodplain have provided the strong desire to expand the park and the many active and passive recreation opportunities and amenities that it currently provides. Some of the major amenities proposed to be enhanced or newly implemented in addition to current amenities in this master plan include:

- Gain additional access into the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park
- New trailhead locations along Battle Creek Road, within the Fish Creek Segment of the park, and Suburban Pond.
- 9.44 miles of paved multi-use trails.
  - 7.41 miles existing.
  - 2.03 miles proposed.
- 4.49 miles of natural surface hiking and walking trails.

## The Plan

- 2.23 miles existing.
- 2.9 miles proposed.
- Note: select trails within the off leash dog area are proposed to be paved for accessibility.
- 10.3 Miles of existing cross country ski trails which are mowed for hiking and walking in the summer months.
- 12.14 miles of combined hiking and off road cycling trails.
  - 7.92 miles existing.
  - 4.22 miles proposed.
- All trail systems are intended to be looped systems originating and returning to major trailheads, increasing the enjoyment and minimizing or removing dead end routes.
- Safe pedestrian access points.
- Interpretive and educational programming and signage to go along learning trail corridors.
- Improvements to the off leash dog area.
- Additional picnicking opportunities.
- Working relationship with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to stock family friendly species within the storm ponds.
- Site amenities including benches, trash and recycling bins, wayfinding signs, water fountains, etc.
- Nature, history, and recreation center redevelopment or a new building to house additional features not available at the current recreation center.
- Waterworks redevelopment or reconstruction.

## Multi-Season Trailhead and Nature Center

The most significant new development that was advocated for was the redevelopment of the recreation center to also include aspects commonly found in a nature center. This potential long-term redevelopment would also include improved amenities for programming and recreation currently found in the Battle Creek Recreation Center. As a part of this redevelopment, additional parking should also be explored. The final size and use will need to be determined with an additional study and master plan amendment revolving around the specific needs and costs of implementation. Public engagement and input has helped to identify some possible uses including:

- Nature/History/Outdoor Recreation Center.
- Restrooms.
- Warming area for winter recreation.
- Locker rooms for active recreation users such as off-road cyclists and cross-country skiers.
- Programming and classroom space.
- Recreation staging area.
- Picnicking or shelter opportunities.
- Wayfinding signage.

- Enhanced trail access.
- Staging and teaching area for cross-country skiing, off-road cycling, and other recreational sports.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater and resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

The redevelopment of the Battle Creek Recreation Center or the development of a new building within Battle Creek Regional Park will require further community engagement, along with an additional amendment to the plan. This study should include defining needs such as storage, parking, new programming needs, and programming partners. A refined concept will need to be created to understand building expansion, parking, conflicts, affects to other recreation facilities such as the play area, recreation fields, and building entrances. Community engagement shall again be stressed throughout this process.

Ramsey County has also located other areas within the park that may be options for a newly developed building to house some or all of the additional amenities identified through public engagement as a supplement to the existing recreation center. A history/nature/outdoor recreation center may also be located on acquired land along Battle Creek Road or within the Fish Creek segment of the park.

### Suburban Pond Trailhead

A new trailhead is proposed for Suburban Pond which would increase access to the park and provide additional recreational amenities within Battle Creek Regional Park. This trailhead was identified through community engagement and the existing concept plan for the open space. Amenities proposed for this trailhead would include:

- Limited parking.
- Restrooms.
- Picnicking opportunities, either open picnic tables or small shelter(s).
- Wayfinding signage.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater design, resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- The trailhead would provide connection to the trail encompassing Suburban Pond and south to the Battle Creek Corridor zone of Battle Creek Regional Park, enhancing access to the entire regional park.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

## The Plan

### Upper Afton Road Active Recreation Area Trailhead

The existing trailhead serving the active recreation zone and associated water park, playground, pavilion, and shelter should be reassessed with any future redevelopment of the parking lot or site amenities. Additional parking should be investigated along with enhanced stormwater and resilient site design. Ramsey County should look to the Energy Action Plan to investigate the possibility of construction which would meet net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Energy Action Plan.

### Upper Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area and Overflow Parking Trailhead

The trailhead located at the north entrance to the off-leash dog area is well utilized and would benefit from the addition of site amenities including:

- Additional parking spaces.
- Restrooms.
- Wayfinding signage.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater and resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

### Lower Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area Trailhead

The trailhead located along Lower Afton Road at the entrance to the off-leash dog area would benefit from the addition of site amenities including:

- Additional parking spaces.
- Restrooms.
- Wayfinding signage.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater and resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

### Park Entrance Road Trailhead

The trailhead located at the lower reaches of Battle Creek has been a popular destination since Battle Creek Regional Park's earliest Days. The trailhead would greatly benefit from the addition of site amenities including:

- Additional parking spaces.
- Restrooms.



- Wayfinding signage.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Additional picnicking opportunities which could include open picnic tables or small shelter(s) along the creek corridor.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater and resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

In addition to the site amenities located at the trailhead, the access gate is proposed to be moved to near the intersection of Lower Afton Road and Park Entrance Road.

### Bluff Top Trailhead

527 Battle Creek Road is a park inholding that Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is interested in acquiring. Acquisition would only happen if the property became available from a willing seller. Acquisition and development of this property would greatly improve the accessibility of the regional park and specifically the Battle Creek segment's creek corridor zone. Community engagement has indicated that development be thoughtful and whenever possible not encroach upon natural areas. This property provides the opportunity for an additional trailhead without compromising this goal. Any other trailhead development along the bluffs would injure native habitats, recreational facilities, and have an adverse effect on the aspects of Battle Creek Regional Park that so many community members have identified as important to them. Development of this trailhead would provide a space for:

- A possible location for the outdoor recreation/history/nature center.
- A staging area for recreational sports such as off-road cycling and cross-country skiing.
- Restrooms.
- Picnicking or shelter opportunities.
- Parking.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Staging and teaching area for cross-country skiing, off-road cycling, and other recreational sports.
- Site amenities such as benches, trash and recycling bins, bicycle racks, enhanced stormwater and resilient site design, and safety measures such as cameras and lighting.
- Individual facilities and recreational amenities should be designed and constructed to net-zero standards to further support the goals of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Energy Action Plan.

## The Plan

### Fish Creek Trailhead at Carver Avenue East and Henry Lane South

A new trailhead is proposed for the Fish Creek segment of the park at the intersection of Carver Avenue East and Henry Lane South. The trailhead would include:

- Restrooms.
- Parking.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Picnicking or shelter opportunities.
- Wayfinding signage.
- Playground.

### Fish Creek Trailhead at Henry Lane South

The existing trailhead at the end of Henry Lane South currently requires community members to turn around and park along the side of the road. The trailhead would benefit from the following amenities:

- Restrooms.
- Parking.
- Enhanced trail access.
- Picnicking or shelter opportunities.
- Wayfinding signage.
- Potential area for nature/history center development.

### Park Access Points

Battle Creek Regional Park is very segmented, requiring community members who are walking, bicycling, or accessing the park by anything other than a vehicle to cross roads and intersections at grade. Ramsey County should take all necessary precautions to ensure that these access points are as safe as possible. Access points should include additional wayfinding signage to complement the physical access points.

Typical road crossing enhancements may include:

- Creative or unique painting schematic.
- Rapid flashing beacons.
- Additional signage.
- Pedestrian refuges.
- Speed Bumps.

- Neckdowns.
- Warning Signs.
- Speed reductions.
- A combination of strategies.

Select intersections and crossing points warrant investigation of grade separated crossings including:

- The intersection of Lower Afton Road and Burlington Avenue.
- Upper Afton Road separating the Battle Creek and Bluff Corridor from the Battle Creek Connection
  - Ramsey County has investigated the potential of an underpass here in the past, and while feasible may be cost prohibitive until such a time as road reconstruction takes place.
- Ruth Street bisecting the Battle Creek Connection zone.
  - Ramsey County has investigated the potential of an underpass here in the past, and while feasible may be cost prohibitive until such a time as road reconstruction takes place.

Battle Creek Road between the Battle Creek and Bluff Corridor and the Winter Recreation Area is another area that needs further planning. Trails cross at a few locations and cars are coming around corners creating potential conflicts. In addition to the enhancements listed above grade separated crossing and closure of Battle Creek Road should be investigated. Closure of the road would allow for a seamless integration of the park while grade separated crossings are likely to be cost prohibitive.

### Learning Trail Corridors

Learning trail corridors have been identified in three locations within the Battle Creek Segment of the park. One connects to the entrance across from Battle Creek Middle School, one from Carver Elementary School and the final location starts and ends at the Battle Creek Recreation Center. These corridors were identified through community engagement and meetings with various stakeholders and partner agencies. Battle Creek Middle School and Carver Elementary already utilize the park to take classrooms out for in field education. Friends of the Mississippi and Ramsey County also lead programming within Battle Creek Regional Park.

Learning trail corridors would utilize existing trails which would be enhanced through the implementation of additional interpretive and educational signage, as well as outdoor classrooms. Battle Creek Middle School has expressed the interest in a point along the trail to access the creek for classroom activities. Outdoor classrooms can be as simple as a space off to the side of the trail for a gathering space and some log benches. Interpretive and educational signage would also provide the opportunity for self-lead walks to learn about native vegetation, wildlife, park history, area history, and Native American history.

The trail corridors will require further planning to determine exact programming and educational needs, as well as the number and types of signs, outdoor classrooms, and related site amenities to support the goals of the individual corridors. Ramsey County will need to engage the public, community members, stakeholders, partnering agencies, the Native American community to determine the final information, locations, and types of education within the learning trail corridors.

# The Plan

## Waterworks

Through community engagement, it is clear that Waterworks is a much loved and desirable asset to Battle Creek Regional Park. This was more apparent during pop up engagement sessions and among younger and more racially diverse community members. While the exact outcome for Waterworks was undecided redevelopment or reconstruction of waterworks, which is needed, includes:

- Destination water park for younger community members (replace as is).
- Destination water park for all ages.
  - Small children area.
  - Wading pool.
  - Slides.
  - Sand play.
  - Deeper pool for older ages and lap swimming.
- Free splash pad.

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department completed a feasibility study for Waterworks in December of 2022. The study looked at existing facility conditions, performed a market analysis, and looked at options for refurbishment and redesign.

## Fishing

Fishing opportunities were indicated throughout community engagement, but were stressed more by racially diverse community members and at the Battle Creek Middle School engagement. Ramsey County has had preliminary discussions with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fishing in the Neighborhood Program. The program is aimed at increasing angling opportunities, public awareness, and environmental stewardship within the seven-county metro region. As the state's population has become increasingly urbanized, it has become evident that there is a growing need for easily accessible fishing opportunities close to where people live. The Fishing in the Neighborhood Program builds on existing urban fisheries management activities such as stocking, aeration and enhancement of shore-fishing and pier-fishing opportunities. By reaching out to a wider variety of interests, such as local parks departments, lake associations, and schools, Fishing in the Neighborhood promotes a greater awareness of aquatic habitat needs and the importance of good stewardship. By getting more people involved in angling, Fishing in the Neighborhood will assure that this family-oriented activity continues to be one of Minnesota's most popular pastimes. Stocking the storm ponds located in the active recreation area, East of Mcknight Road and North of Upper Afton Road, would allow Ramsey County to promote the shared goals of environmental stewardship and awareness of aquatic habitats. Recreational amenities and opportunities in addition to the stocking of fish would include:

- Fishing access.
  - Fishing pier or boardwalk.
  - Fishing nodes along the storm water ponds.
- Programming introducing fishing to new and experienced audiences for a family friendly experience.

### Cross-Country Skiing

Cross country skiing is an area of recreational demand that was greatly supported throughout public engagement. There has been a long-term goal to turn the Winter Recreation Area into a destination for cross country skiing in the county. Battle Creek is unique for its ability to provide a space which is a homologated system, a rarity anywhere in the world. The trail system exists but there is a desire to add lighting, snowmaking, improved facilities, and a staging area for races and events. The staging area may include:

- Start gates.
- A timing booth.
- Ski repair and waxing stations, space for temporary outdoor seating.
- Other components compatible with a premier cross country ski destination.

There are 10.3 miles of cross country ski trails available when weather allows for the trails to be groomed, snowmaking would make the trails at Battle Creek much more reliable. This reliability is paramount for the many schools, community members, recreation groups, and others who consistently rate Battle Creek as their favorite location for cross-country skiing.

### Off-Road Cycling

Off-road cycling and trail riding have continued to gain popularity throughout the metropolitan region. In addition to adult riders, schools are creating more off road cycling clubs and leagues, such as the Minnesota High School League, to introduce riders of all abilities at a younger age. Statewide there are over 60 high school clubs in Minnesota, with around 25 clubs in the metropolitan area. In addition to feedback gathered as a part of this master plan process, there was also a demand placed on off-road cycling heard during public outreach for the 2018 System Plan, and Off-Road Cycling Master Plan.

Battle Creek Regional Park is currently the only county facility and the only park in Ramsey County to offer off-road cycling trails. Off-road cyclists and clubs such as Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists have been primarily responsible for the implementation and build-out of most of the combined hiking and off-road cycling trails within Battle Creek regional park and have been active since the earliest days of the park.

There are several trails that cross each other throughout the park, however these have been limited as much as possible. In the event that a vehicular road is crossed by a trail, additional signage or other enhanced crossing elements along the trail and road will notify drivers and trail users of the intersection and to use caution. In the event that two trails cross each other and on shared trails, faster moving recreational elements will be asked to stop for slower moving recreation elements. In areas where there may be crossing conflicts with cross-country ski trails, hiking trails, off-road cycling trails, and paved trails alternate crossing improvements should be considered to minimize conflicts, improve safety, and to allow through movement dependent on the location and activity.

There are 12.14 miles of combined hiking and off-road cycling trails proposed as a part of this plan. In addition to the trails themselves a number of recreational elements are also proposed including:

- Wayfinding signage at all trailheads.
- Rules signs indicating proper etiquette on trails, when to ride, whom has the right of way, etc.
- Skills area.
- Bike repair stations.



## The Plan

- Mileage markers and associated trail signage and wayfinding throughout the trail system.
- Winter use of trails is not allowed.

The full Off-Road Cycling Master Plan and Summary of Engagement can be found in the Appendix.

## Hiking, Walking and Trail Running

Hiking and walking within Battle Creek remain some of the most common activities locally as well as regionally in parks. With a proposed 13.92 miles of combined hiking and off-road cycling trails, 10.3 miles of mowed grass trails, 9.45 miles of multi-use paved trails and 4.5 miles of dedicated natural surface hiking trails for a total walking and hiking system of 38.17 miles providing the most comprehensive access to the park of any recreation group. Within the Fish Creek segment of the park, dedicated natural surface trails along the bluffs for hiking and walking are provided where there is no shared use of off-road cycling allowed.

## Winter Hiking and Snowshoeing

Throughout public engagement Ramsey County heard from residents who enjoy winter hiking and snowshoeing in Battle Creek Regional Park. Generally, these users report enjoying the trails west of Battle Creek Road, however they prefer to park at the Battle Creek Recreation Center trailhead. The trails leading from the recreation center to the trails in the Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor are all signed for cross-country skiing only for winter use. Generally, this does not cause too much conflict if pedestrian traffic stays to the side of the groomed trails. Ramsey County shall further study the use of trails for winter use. Currently the park trails are dominated by a single sport, cross-country skiing. While the homologated trails should remain untouched, other areas should be looked at for expanded uses outside of the snow-making operations.

The trails west of Battle Creek Road would be a good area to look at for snowshoeing and hiking winter uses while maintaining some cross-country ski opportunities. Until the Bluff Top Trailhead is established a trail to the side, or new separated trail from the recreation center through the Winter Recreation area should be established to aid in accessibility of this area.

Ramsey County may need to further engage community members, stakeholders, partnering agencies and others in regards to the development of winter recreation trails in Battle Creek Regional Park to determine final uses, areas, and trail lengths for winter snowshoeing and hiking.

## Off-Leash Dog Area

Ramsey County finalized the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan in 2018. Improvements to the off-leash dog area should follow the findings of that plan and community engagement for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan, which include:

- The addition of an accessible route for the inclusion of all park users as well as maintenance operations.
- Accommodate an area within the off-leash dog area for small dogs only by fencing off a portion of the existing site with a double gated entry.
- Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
- Bring a dog and human drinking fountain and water line up to the off-leash dog area entrances.
- Double gated entry at the north and west entrances.
- Removal of miscellaneous and duplicative signage on fences and relocate to a bulletin board/rules sign.
- Standardize rules signs at entrances, currently not the same rules are posted at each entrance.
- Install trash receptacles throughout the off-leash dog area along with waste bag dispensers.

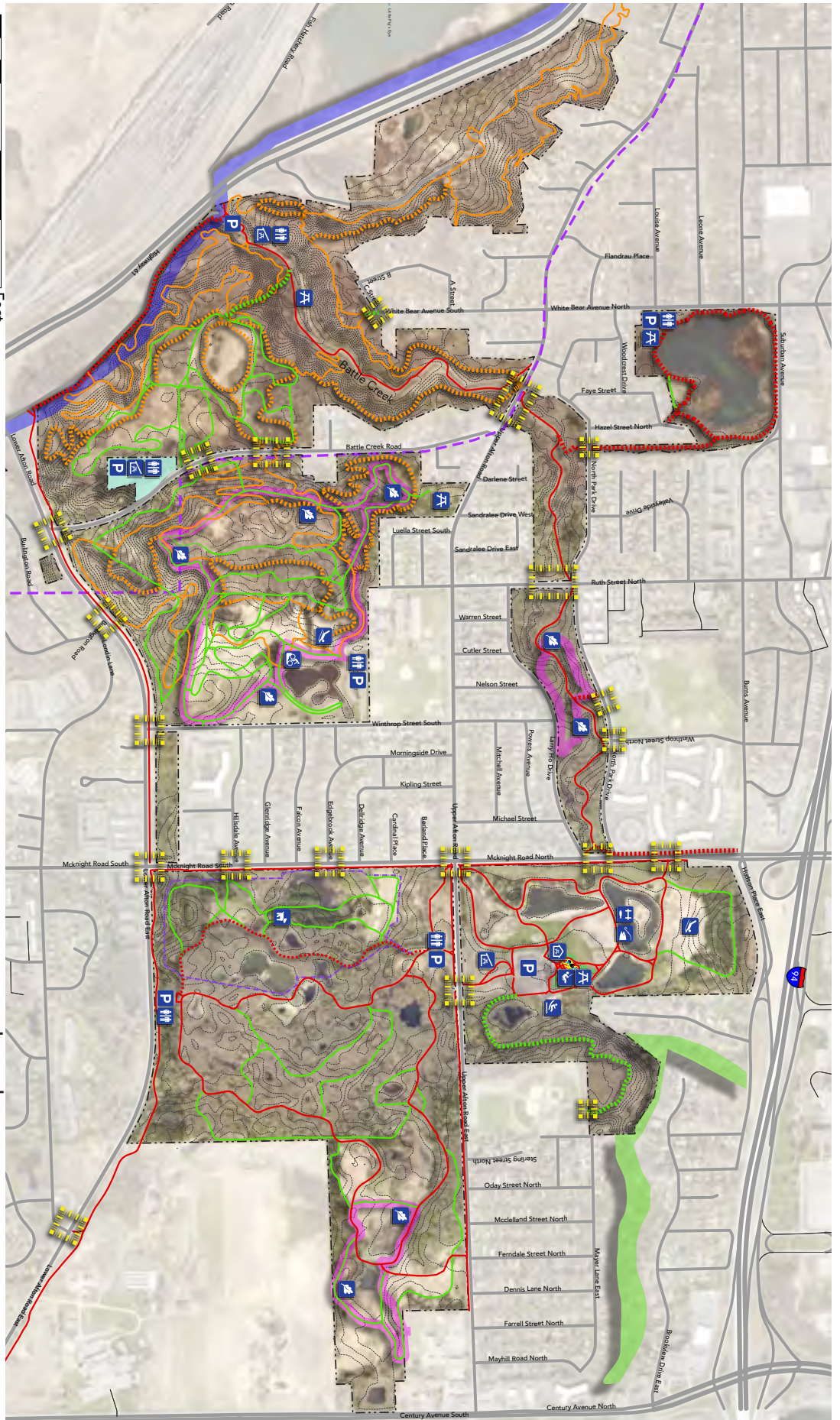
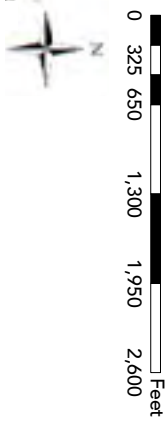
A copy of the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan can be found in the Appendix.





# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT OVERALL CONCEPT MAP



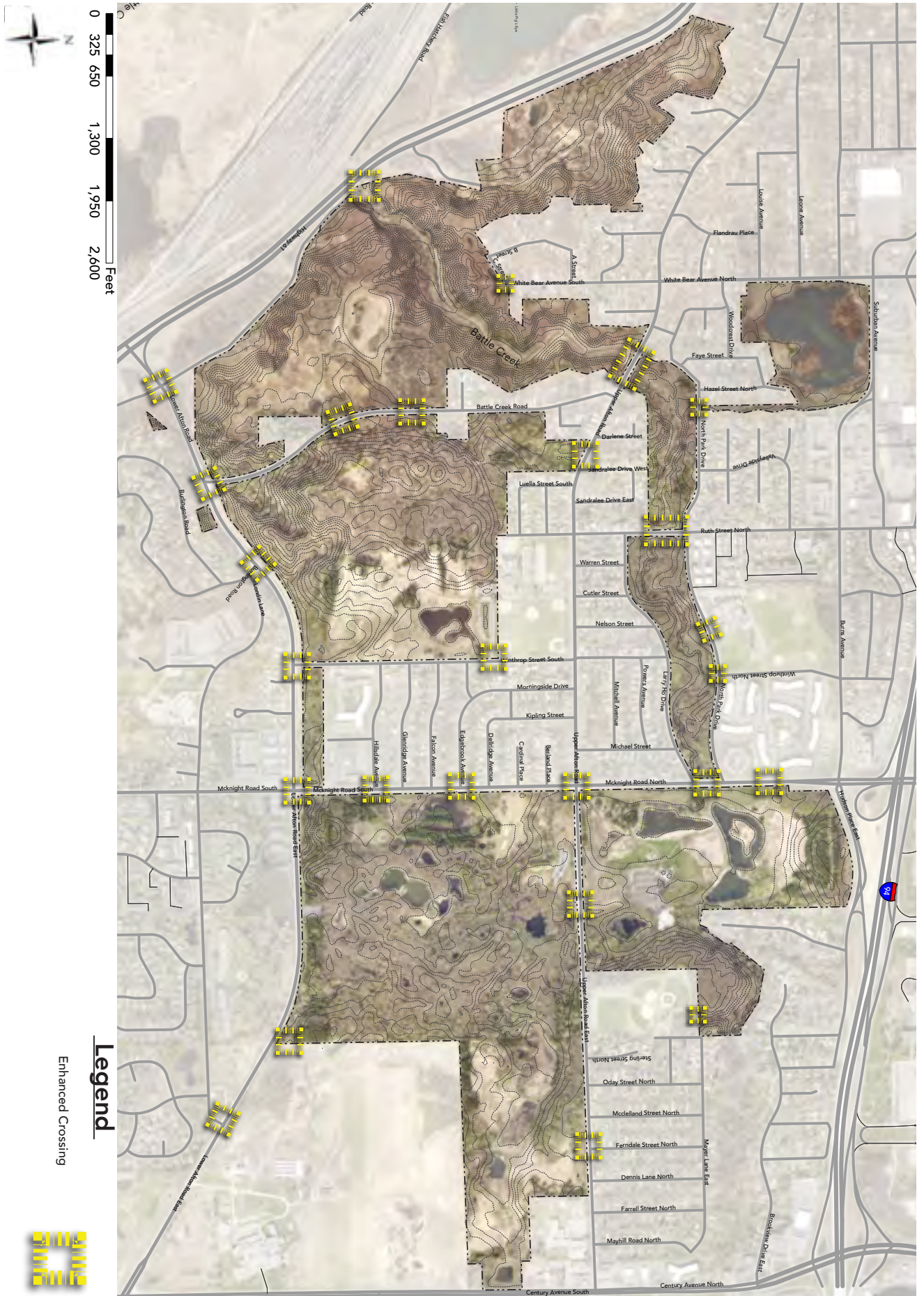
**Legend**

	Paved Trail		Site Amenities
	Existing		Pavilion
	Turf/AC Soft Trail		Picnic Shelter
	Existing		Restrooms
	Proposed		Outdoor Nature Station
	Off Road Cycling/Hiking Trail		Parking Lot
	Existing		Off Road Cycling
	Proposed		Skills Area
	Nature Trail Corridor		Off-leash Dog Area
	Existing		Playground
	Regional Trail Search Corridor		Water Park
	Proposed Acquisition		Picnic Area
	Mississippi River Corridor		Enhanced Crossing
	Critical Area / Mississippi River Corridor		
	Restoration Area		



# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT PEDESTRIAN ACCESS POINTS





# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT PEDESTRIAN ACCESS POINTS

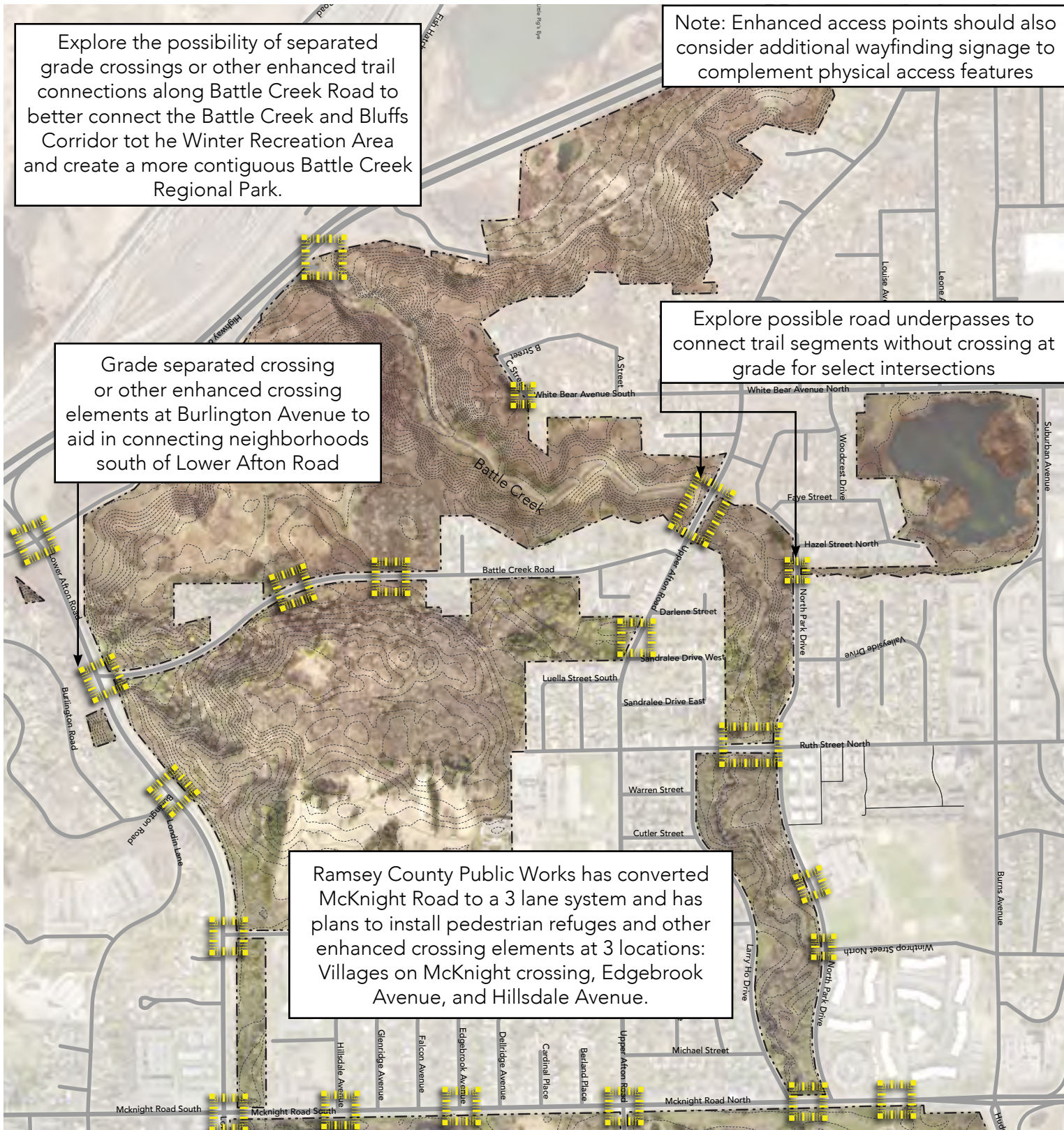
Explore the possibility of separated grade crossings or other enhanced trail connections along Battle Creek Road to better connect the Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor to the Winter Recreation Area and create a more contiguous Battle Creek Regional Park.

Note: Enhanced access points should also consider additional wayfinding signage to complement physical access features

Grade separated crossing or other enhanced crossing elements at Burlington Avenue to aid in connecting neighborhoods south of Lower Afton Road

Explore possible road underpasses to connect trail segments without crossing at grade for select intersections

Ramsey County Public Works has converted McKnight Road to a 3 lane system and has plans to install pedestrian refuges and other enhanced crossing elements at 3 locations: Villages on McKnight crossing, Edgebrook Avenue, and Hillsdale Avenue.



0 325 650 1,300 1,950 2,600 Feet

### Legend

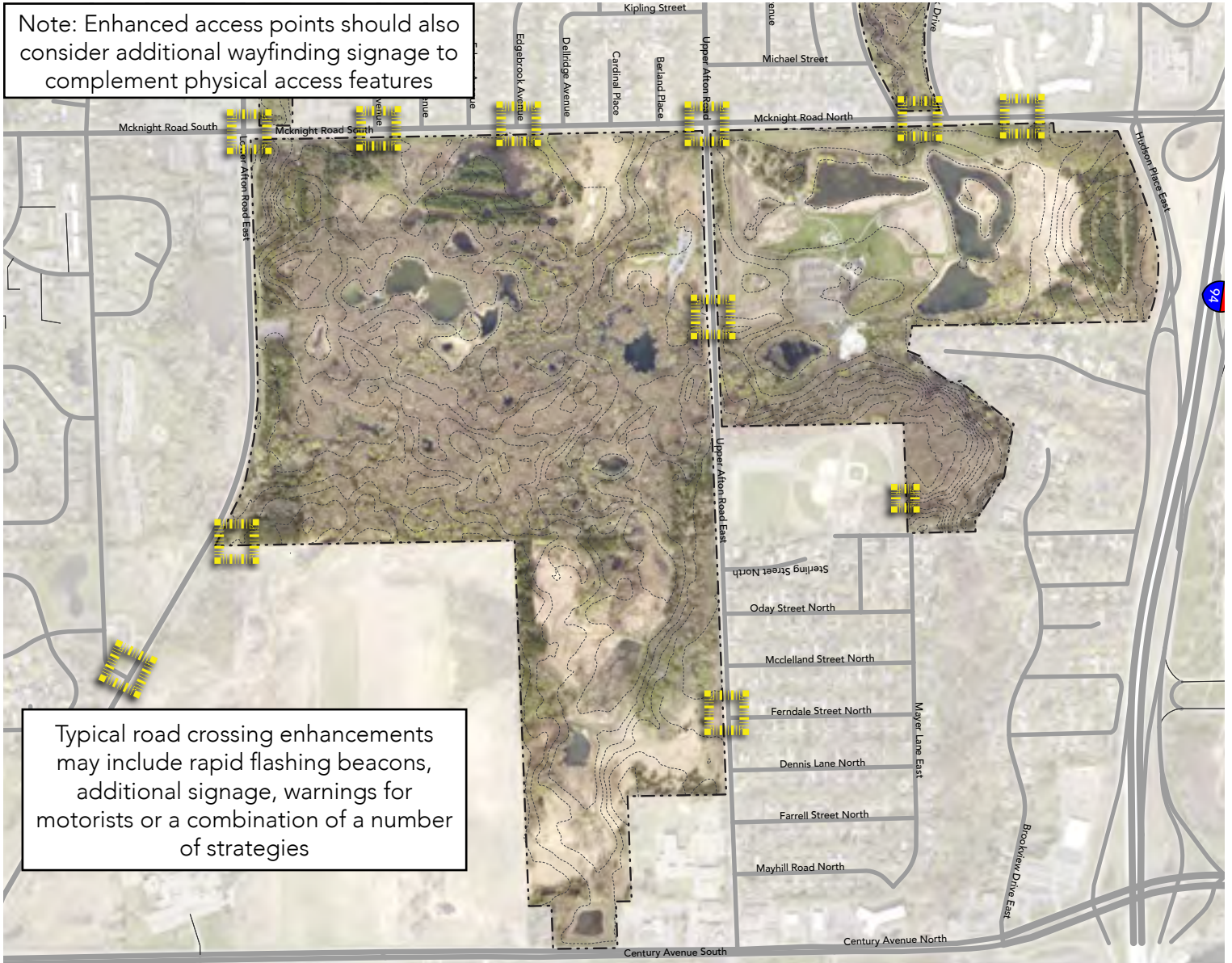
Enhanced Crossing



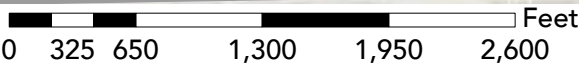


# BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT PEDESTRIAN ACCESS POINTS

Note: Enhanced access points should also consider additional wayfinding signage to complement physical access features



Typical road crossing enhancements may include rapid flashing beacons, additional signage, warnings for motorists or a combination of a number of strategies



## Legend

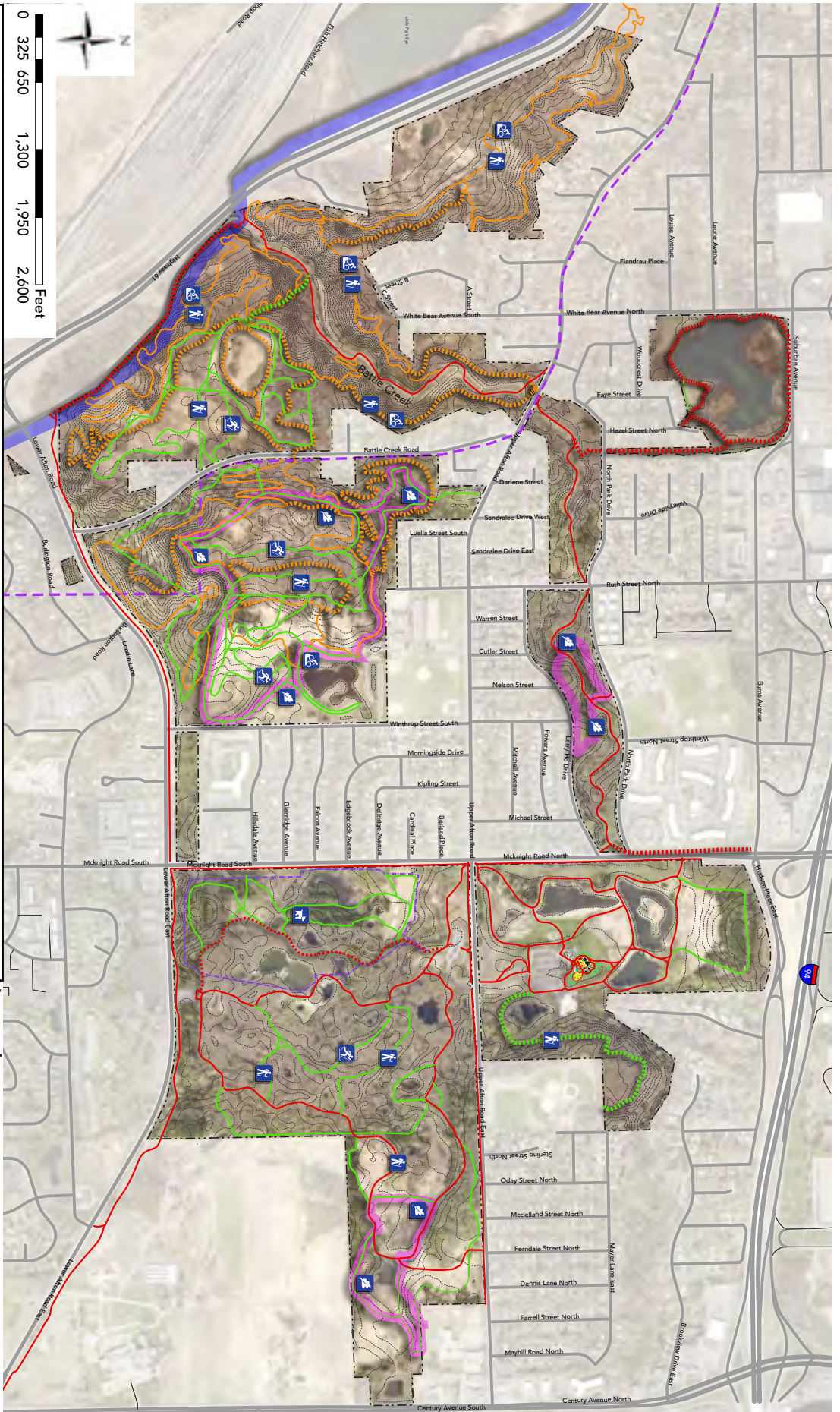
Enhanced Crossing





# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAIL SYSTEM AND AMENITIES



### Battle Creek Trails

Existing Paved Multi-Use : 6.44 Miles  
 Proposed Paved Multi-Use : 1.85 Miles  
 Total Paved Multi-Use : 8.29 Miles

Existing Off Road Cycling & Hiking Trails : 7.92 Miles  
 Proposed Off Road Cycling & Hiking Trails : 4.22 Miles  
 Total Off Road Cycling & Hiking Trails : 12.14 Miles

Existing Natural Surface Walking & Hiking : 1.73 Miles  
 Proposed Natural Surface Walking & Hiking : 0.70 Miles  
 Total Natural Surface Walking & Hiking : 1.79 Miles

- Select trails are proposed to be paved for accessibility

Existing Hiking & Cross Country Ski Trails : 10.3 Miles  
 Total Hiking & Cross Country Ski Trails : 10.3 Miles

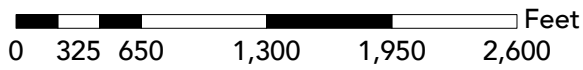
### Legend

	Paved Trail		Site Amenities
	Existing Paved Multi-Use		Pavilion
	Proposed Paved Multi-Use		Picnic Shelter
	Existing Natural Surface		Restrooms
	Proposed Natural Surface		Outdoor Nature Station/ Learning Center
	Existing Off Road Cycling & Hiking		Parking Lot
	Proposed Off Road Cycling & Hiking		Off-Road Cycling
	Existing Regional Trail Search Corridor		Off Leash Dog Area
	Proposed Regional Trail Search Corridor		Playground
	Nature Trail Corridor		Water Park
	Outdoor Nature/Learning Station		Cross Country Skiing
	Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area / Mississippi National River and Recreation Area		Hiking



# The Plan

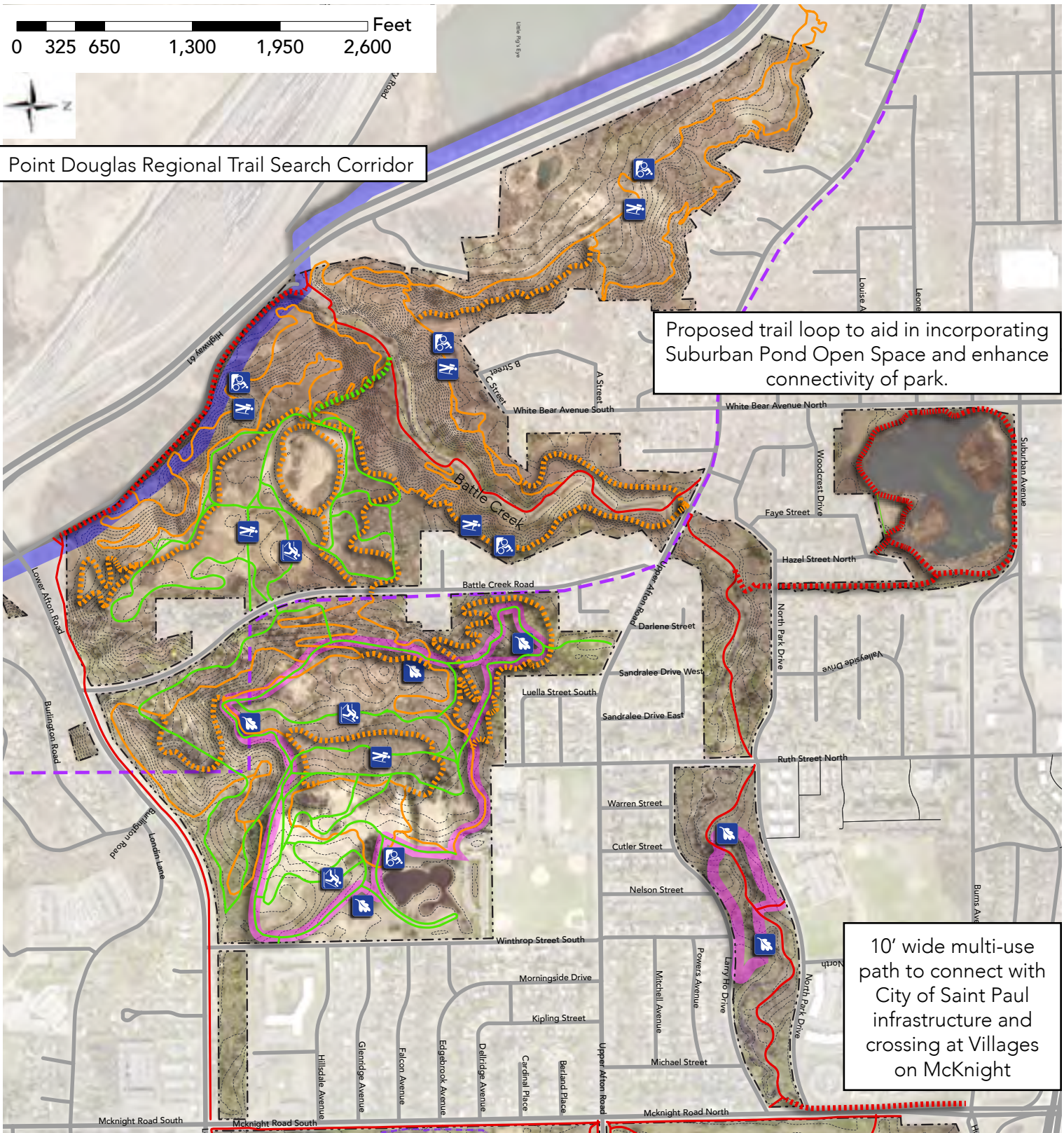
## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAIL SYSTEM AND AMENITIES



Point Douglas Regional Trail Search Corridor

Proposed trail loop to aid in incorporating Suburban Pond Open Space and enhance connectivity of park.

10' wide multi-use path to connect with City of Saint Paul infrastructure and crossing at Villages on McKnight



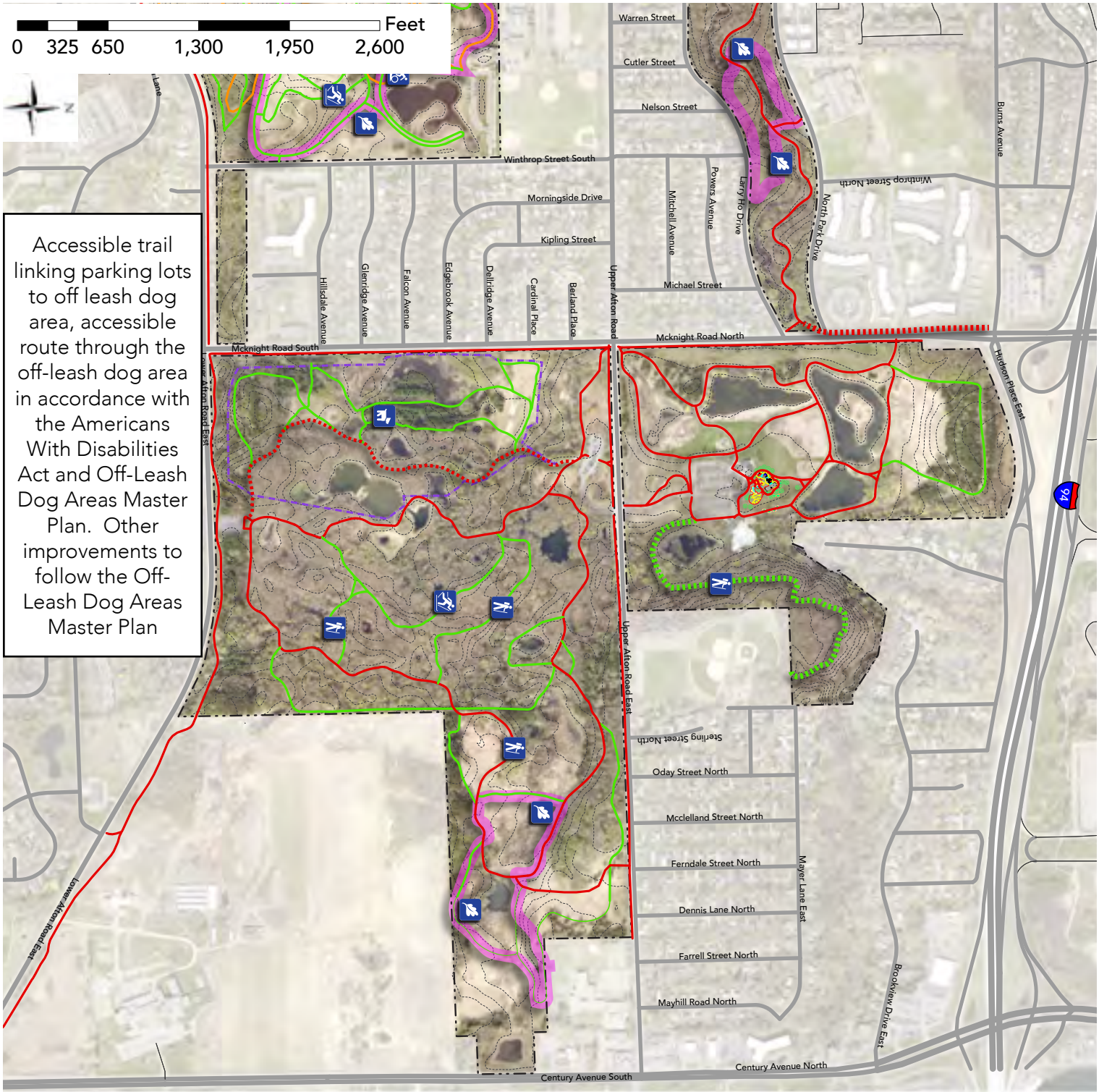
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paved Trail</li> <li>Existing</li> <li>Proposed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature Trail Corridor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor Nature/Learning Station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mississippi River Corridor</li> <li>Critical Area / Mississippi National River and Recreation Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site Amenities</li> <li>Pavilion</li> <li>Picnic Shelter</li> <li>Restrooms</li> <li>Outdoor Nature Station/ Learning Center</li> <li>Parking Lot</li> <li>Off-Road Cycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off Leash Dog Area</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Water Park</li> <li>Cross Country Skiing</li> <li>Hiking</li> </ul>
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# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAIL SYSTEM AND AMENITIES



Accessible trail linking parking lots to off leash dog area, accessible route through the off-leash dog area in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan. Other improvements to follow the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan

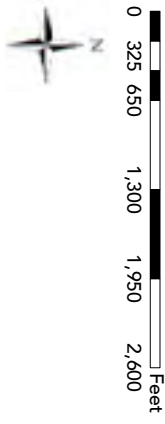
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paved Trail                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing</li> <li>Proposed</li> </ul> </li> <li>Turf/XC Ski Trail                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing</li> <li>Proposed</li> </ul> </li> <li>Off Road Cycling/Hiking Trail                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing</li> <li>Proposed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Trail Search Corridor</li> <li>Nature Trail Corridor</li> <li>Outdoor Nature/Learning Station</li> <li>Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area / Mississippi National River and Recreation Area</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site Amenities                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pavilion</li> <li>Picnic Shelter</li> <li>Restrooms</li> <li>Outdoor Nature Station/Learning Center</li> <li>Parking Lot</li> <li>Off-Road Cycling</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off Leash Dog Area</li> <li>Playground</li> <li>Water Park</li> <li>Cross Country Skiing</li> <li>Hiking</li> </ul> |
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# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT LEARNING TRAIL CORRIDORS

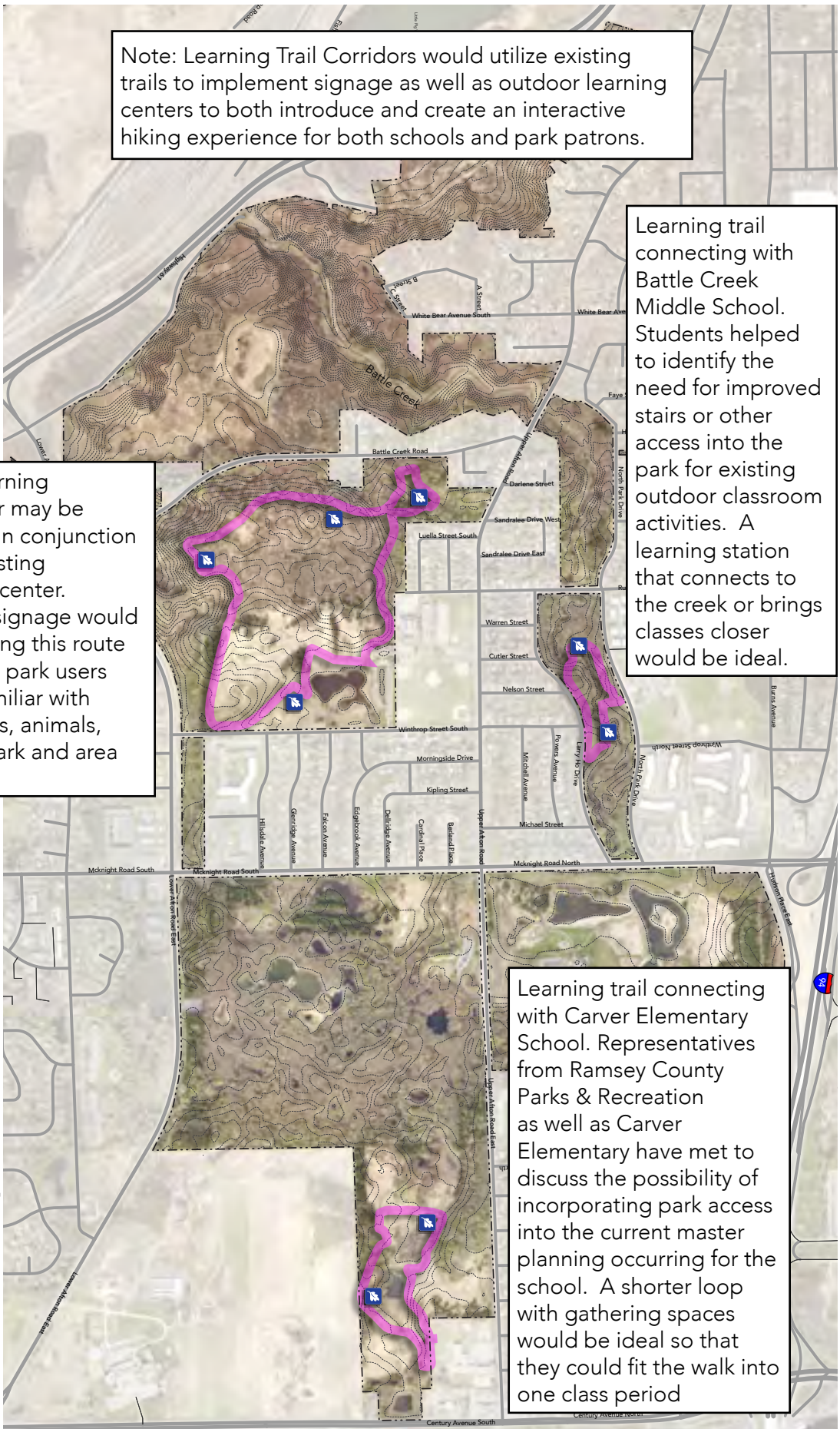


Note: Learning Trail Corridors would utilize existing trails to implement signage as well as outdoor learning centers to both introduce and create an interactive hiking experience for both schools and park patrons.

Learning trail connecting with Battle Creek Middle School. Students helped to identify the need for improved stairs or other access into the park for existing outdoor classroom activities. A learning station that connects to the creek or brings classes closer would be ideal.

A larger learning trail corridor may be developed in conjunction with the existing community center. Additional signage would be ideal along this route to help new park users become familiar with native plants, animals, as well as park and area history.

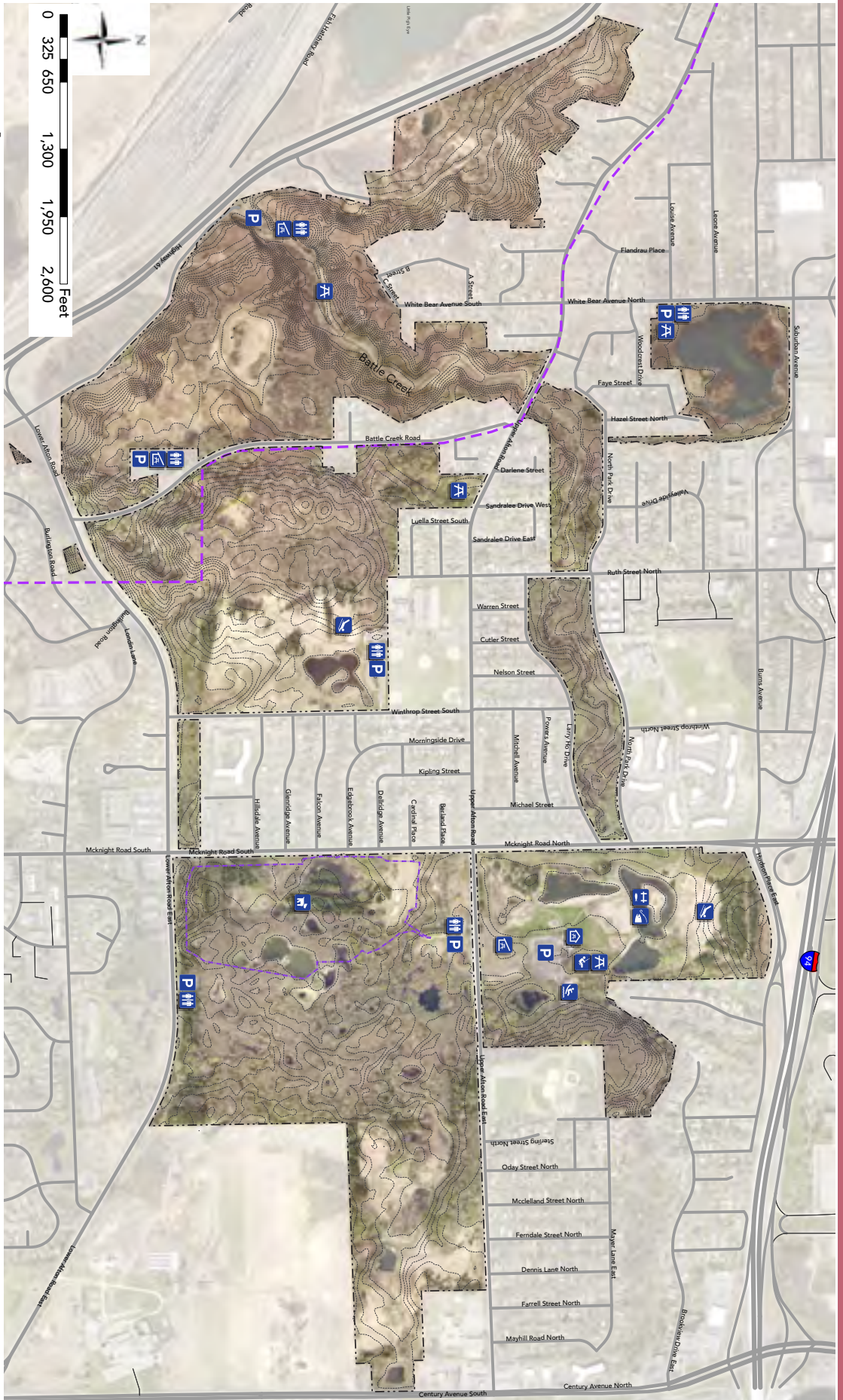
Learning trail connecting with Carver Elementary School. Representatives from Ramsey County Parks & Recreation as well as Carver Elementary have met to discuss the possibility of incorporating park access into the current master planning occurring for the school. A shorter loop with gathering spaces would be ideal so that they could fit the walk into one class period









# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAILHEADS AND AMENITIES








### Legend


#### Site Amenities

-  Pavilion
-  Picnic Shelter
-  Restrooms
-  Outdoor Nature Station / Learning Center

#### Parking Lot

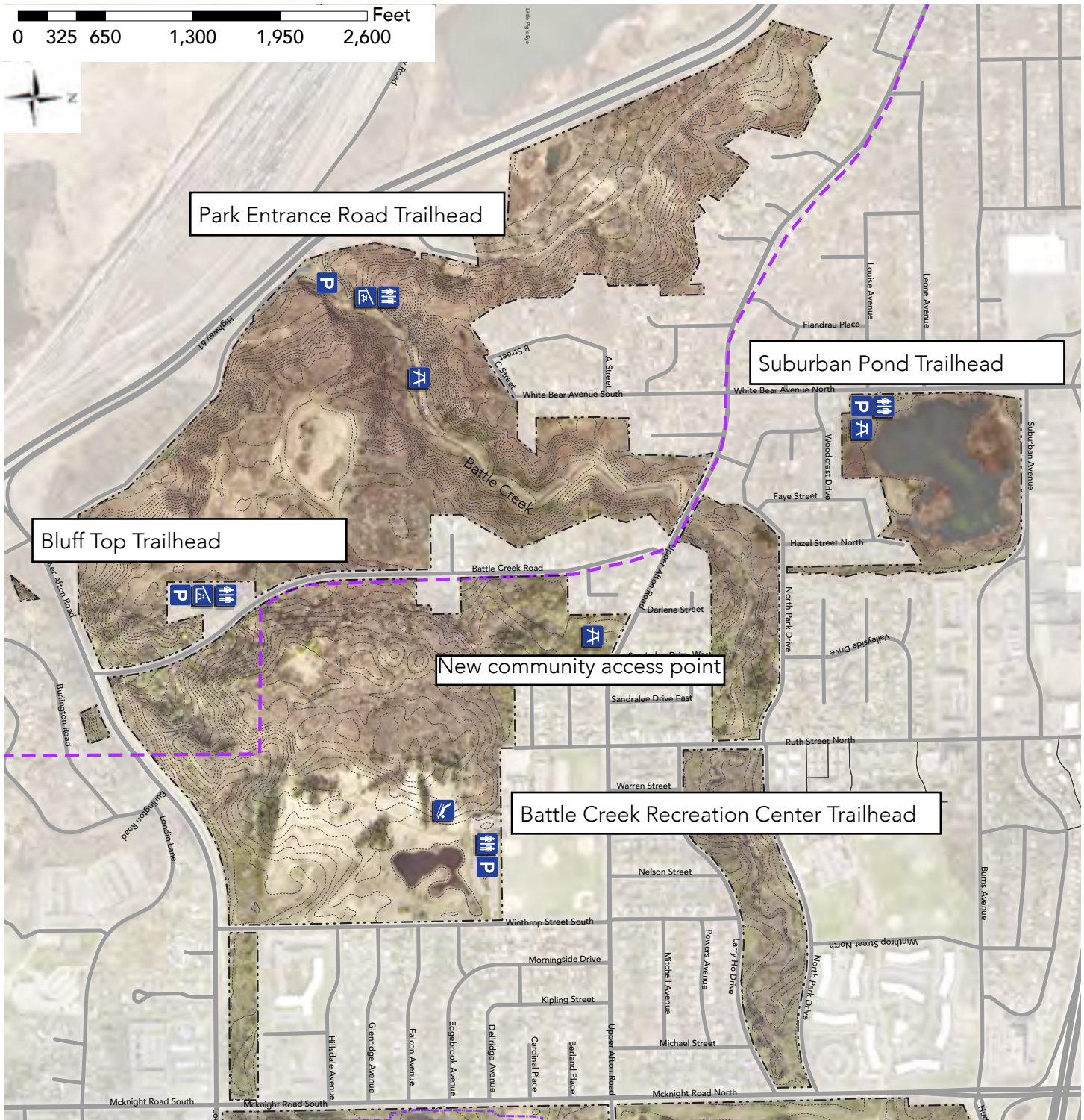
-  Off Road Cycling Skills Area
-  Off Leash Dog Area
-  Playground
-  Water Park
-  Fishing Opportunity / Pier

#### P

-  Mississippi River Corridor
-  Critical Area / Mississippi National River and Recreation Area













BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAILHEADS AND AMENITIES




**Legend**

Site Amenities

- Pavilion 
- Picnic Shelter 
- Restrooms 
- Outdoor Nature Station/  
Learning Center 

- Parking Lot 
- Off Road Cycling Skills Area 
- Off Leash Dog Area 
- Playground 
- Water Park 
- Fishing Opportunity / Pier 

 Mississippi River Corridor  
Critical Area / Mississippi  
National River and  
Recreation Area



# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK SEGMENT TRAILHEADS AND AMENITIES



### Legend

#### Site Amenities

Pavilion



Picnic Shelter



Restrooms



Outdoor Nature Station/  
Learning Center



Parking Lot



Off Road Cycling  
Skills Area



Off Leash Dog Area



Playground



Water Park



Fishing Opportunity / Pier

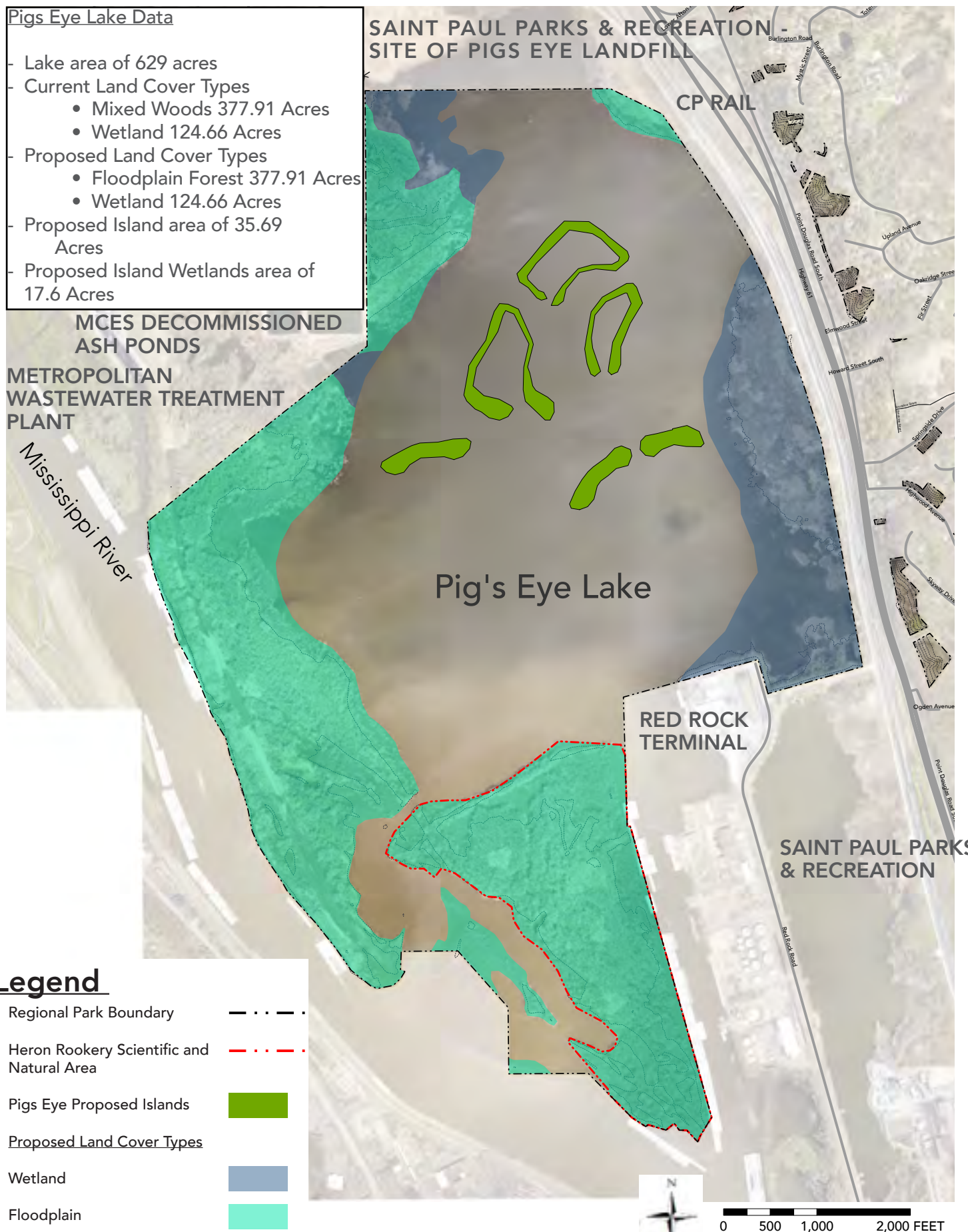


Mississippi River Corridor  
Critical Area / Mississippi  
National River and  
Recreation Area





PIGS EYE LAKE SEGMENT CONCEPT



**Pigs Eye Lake Data**

- Lake area of 629 acres
- Current Land Cover Types
  - Mixed Woods 377.91 Acres
  - Wetland 124.66 Acres
- Proposed Land Cover Types
  - Floodplain Forest 377.91 Acres
  - Wetland 124.66 Acres
- Proposed Island area of 35.69 Acres
- Proposed Island Wetlands area of 17.6 Acres

MCEs DECOMMISSIONED ASH PONDS

METROPOLITAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Mississippi River

SAINT PAUL PARKS & RECREATION - SITE OF PIGS EYE LANDFILL

CP RAIL

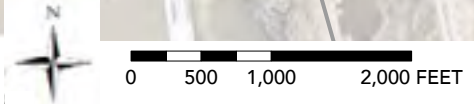
Pig's Eye Lake

RED ROCK TERMINAL

SAINT PAUL PARKS & RECREATION

**Legend**

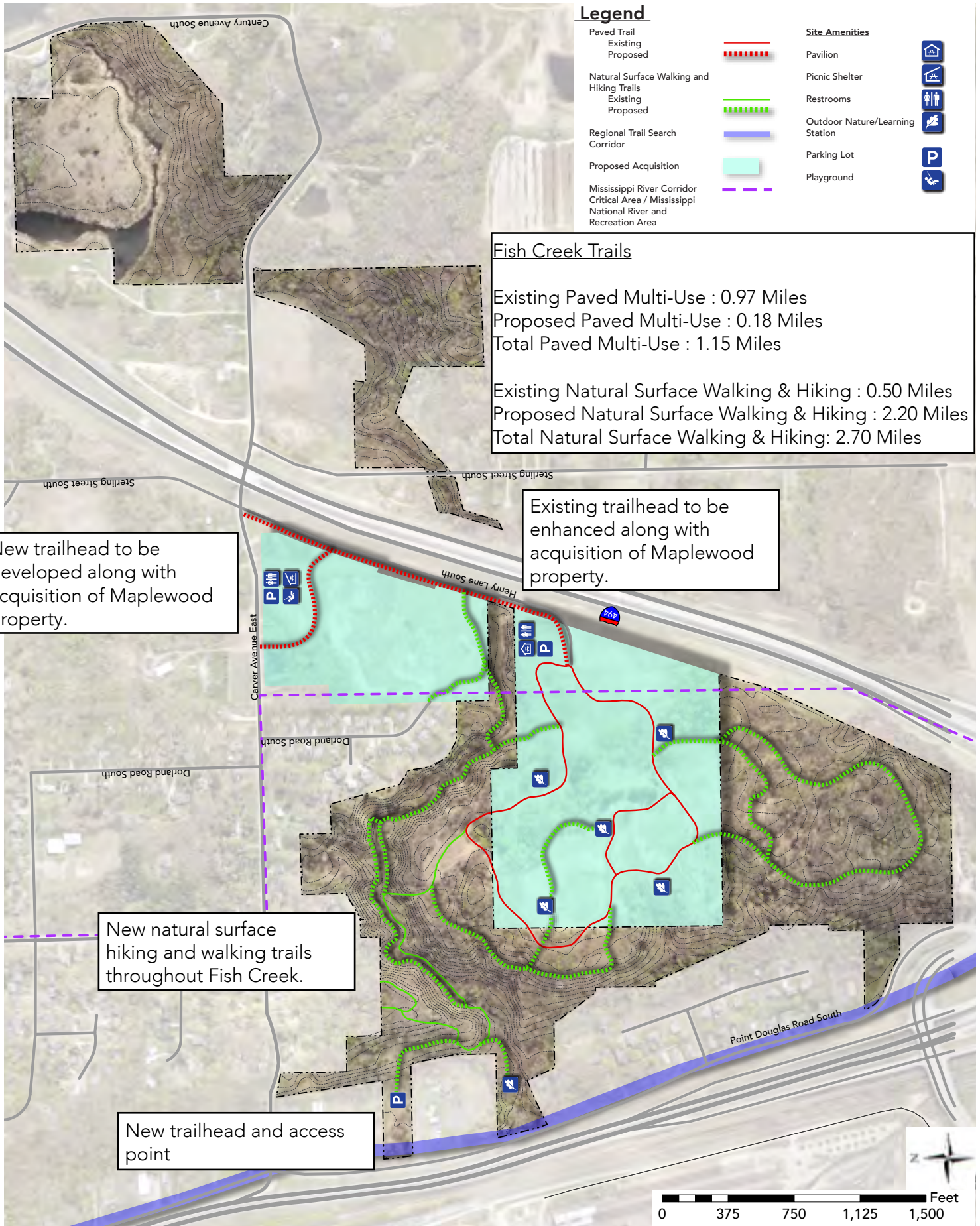
- Regional Park Boundary
- Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area
- Pigs Eye Proposed Islands
- Proposed Land Cover Types
- Wetland
- Floodplain





# The Plan

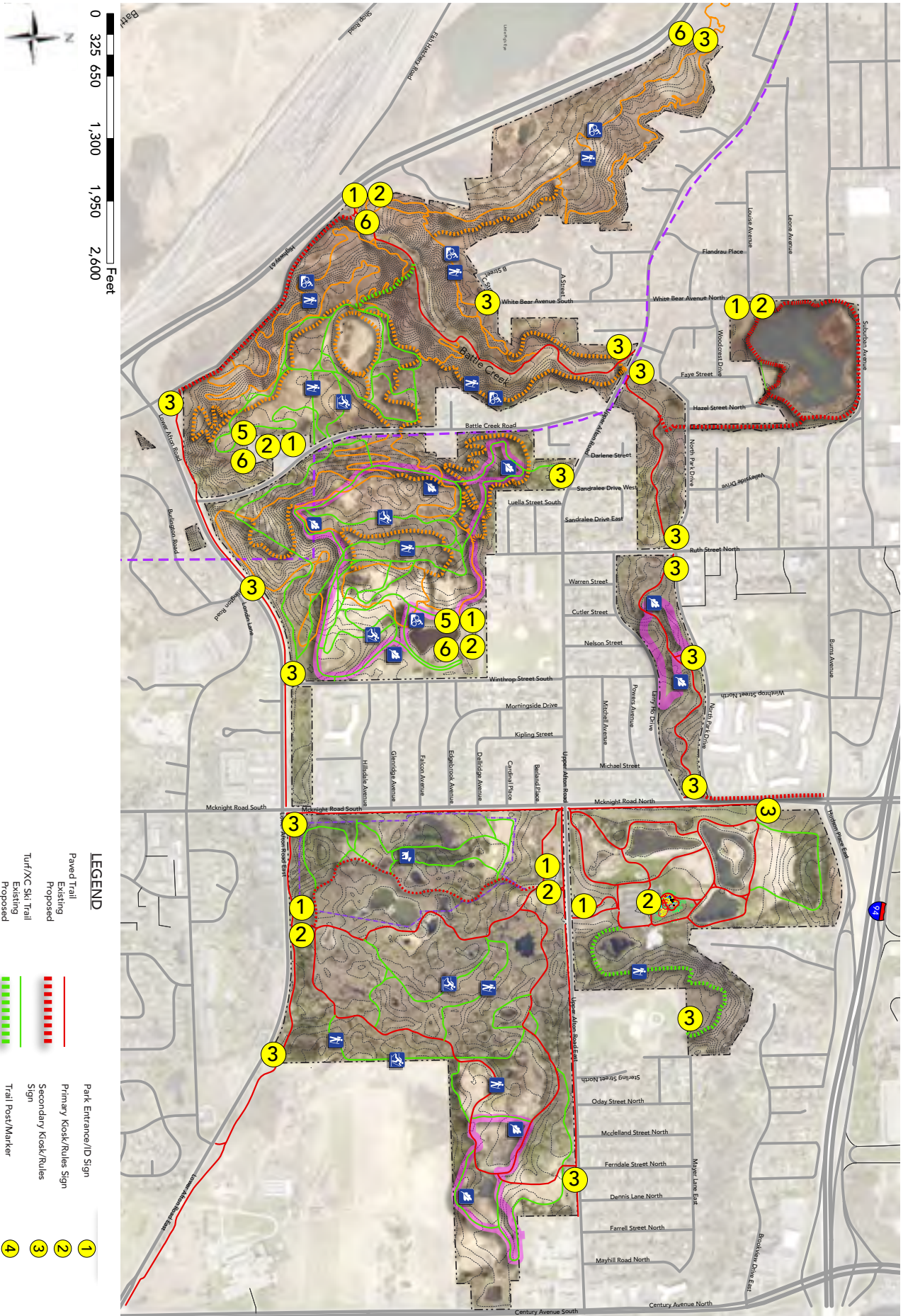
## FISH CREEK SEGMENT CONCEPT





# The Plan

## BATTLE CREEK WAYFINDING PLAN

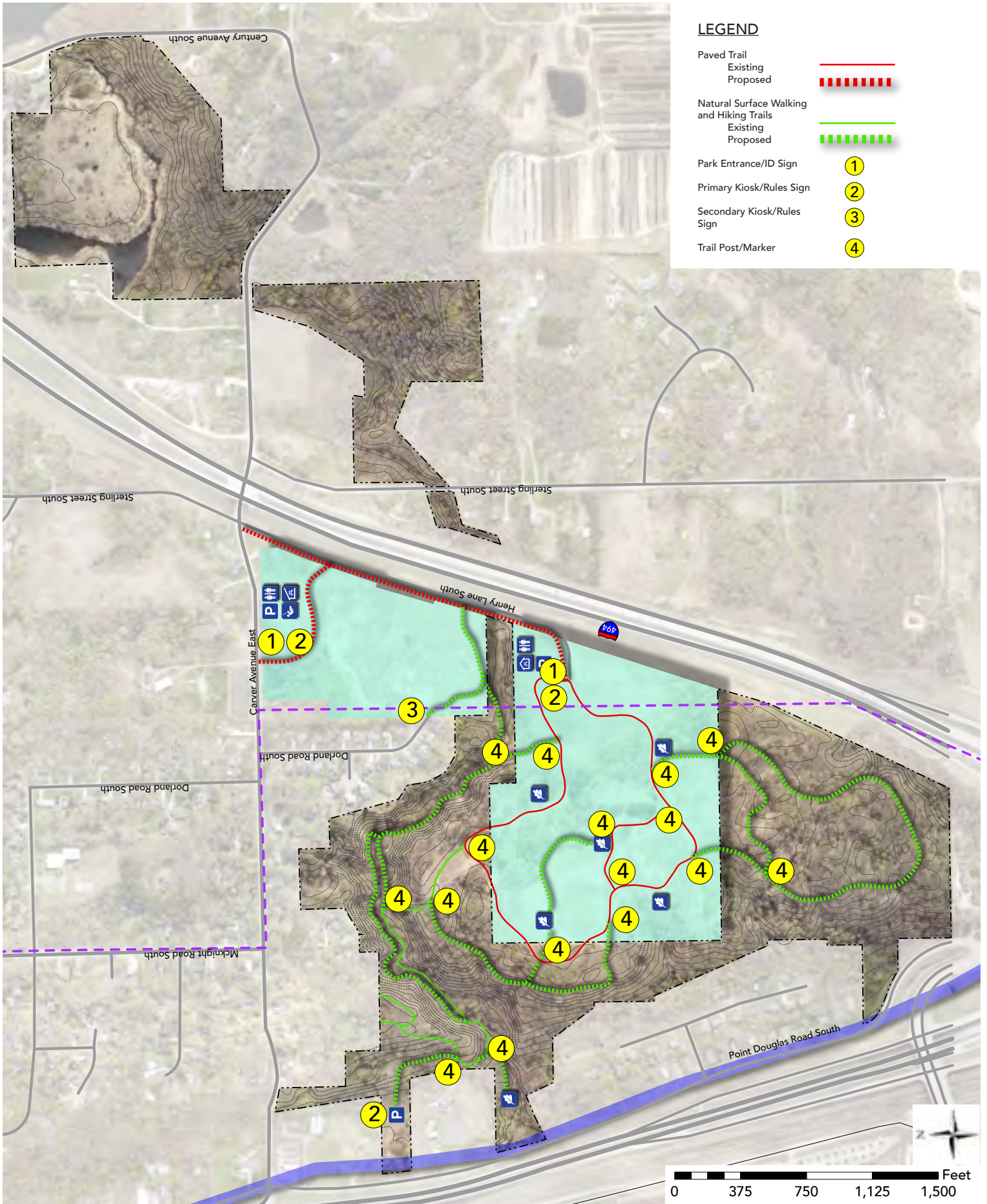


LEGEND	
	Paved Trail
	Proposed Paved Trail
	Turf/XC Ski Trail
	Proposed Turf/XC Ski Trail
	Off Road Cycling/Hiking Trail
	Proposed Off Road Cycling/Hiking Trail
	Park Entrance/ID Sign
	Primary Kiosk/Rules Sign
	Secondary Kiosk/Rules Sign
	Trail Post/Marker
	Cross Country Ski Trails Map and Rules Sign
	Off-Road Cycling Trails Map and Rules Sign



# The Plan

## FISH CREEK WAYFINDING PLAN



### LEGEND

- Paved Trail
  - Existing ———
  - Proposed ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬
- Natural Surface Walking and Hiking Trails
  - Existing ———
  - Proposed ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬
- Park Entrance/ID Sign 1
- Primary Kiosk/Rules Sign 2
- Secondary Kiosk/Rules Sign 3
- Trail Post/Marker 4



## Wayfinding, Rules and Trail Signage

Wayfinding encompasses all of the ways in which people orient themselves in a physical space and navigate from place to place. A consistent system is essential for orientation, navigation, and public safety. Signage should be consistent across the system and should guide trail corridor users to local services, cultural destinations, transportation connections, activity centers, recreational destinations, cities, neighborhoods, and other landmarks. Battle Creek Regional Park will utilize the existing Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department Wayfinding Master Plan for consistency with other regional parks and trails. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is currently starting to plan for an updated wayfinding and signage plan, the new plan upon completion would become the guiding document for wayfinding, rules, and trail signage within Battle Creek Regional Park.

All trailheads and parking lots should have standardized signage including park wayfinding and rules signs to aid in park accessibility and knowledge of where amenities are located. In Addition select trailheads and parking lots should have specialized signage for trail systems including:

- Battle Creek Recreation Center.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for cross-country ski system.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for off-road cycling system.
  - Wayfinding and informational sign for learning trail corridor.
- 527 Battle Creek Road Trailhead.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for cross-country ski system.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for off-road cycling system.
- Park Entrance Road Trailhead.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for off-road cycling system.
- Lower and Upper Afton Road Trailheads.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for cross-country ski system.
  - Wayfinding and rules sign for off-road cycling system.

Community access points where pedestrians, bicyclists and others enter the park will also require updated signage. Select access points should also have wayfinding signage. Please see the wayfinding plan on pages 91-92 for more information.

Park rules signs will also be posted at all trailheads. Rules for Battle Creek Regional Park include the following:

- General Park Regulations
  - Park Hours
    - Parks are open 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. This time limitation does not apply to people who, without delay, are traveling on Regional Trails.
    - The Department may close Parks or areas within Parks to the public as necessary to protect public safety or property.
    - Entering or remaining in any locked building, or any park area that is closed to the public, is not allowed.
  - Permits
    - Permits are required for exclusive use of all or a portion of a Park or park facility for special events, and for conducting private lessons or classes for commercial gain or conducting any business enterprise within a Park.
    - Some activities that are prohibited in this ordinance may be permitted with written approval from the Department.
    - Permit holders must follow all rules outlined in the permit.
    - Permit holders cannot transfer their permits to another person or entity.

## The Plan

- Permit holders are responsible for any damage or injury that occurs as a result of the event or activity for which a permit was granted.
- The Department may revoke a permit at any time.
- Harassing or interfering with a permit holder, their event, property, or equipment is not allowed.
- Protecting Park Property
  - Damaging, vandalizing, altering, or removing any park property is not allowed. Park property includes the park buildings, grounds, signs, and equipment.
  - Dumping or littering trash, yard waste, liquids, furniture, or construction materials is not allowed in any Park.
  - The use of or encroachment on park property for personal or private use, such as storing equipment, erecting structures, installing objects, posting signs, or placing utilities, is not allowed.
  - All Park signs, barriers, and posted rules and regulations must be followed at all times.
  - Lost and found items may be held by the Department or may be turned over to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office to be disposed of according to Minnesota Statutes, Section 345.15.
- Protecting Natural Resources
  - Removing, altering, or damaging any plant or animal is not allowed. Fruits, nuts, and mushrooms on park property may be foraged and harvested for personal use.
  - Planting any plants or releasing an animal into any Park is not allowed.
  - Digging or excavating land in any Park is not allowed.
  - Feeding, hunting, trapping, or disturbing any animal in a Park is not allowed.
  - Fishing is allowed, consistent with the Rules of the State of Minnesota.
- Conduct
  - Threats, fighting, harassment, or bullying others in the Park is not allowed.
  - Small amounts of trash created within the Park, such as food containers for a picnic or decorations for a party, must be deposited in trash or recycling containers provided in the Park, or may be carried out for disposal off-site.
  - Wine and beer are allowed in Parks if local city ordinance allow. All other types of alcohol are not allowed. Kegs, barrels, or taps of beer require a permit. Selling wine or beer requires a permit, and sales must comply with liquor licensing regulations for the city in which the Park is located.
  - Charitable gambling must be duly authorized by the Minnesota Gambling Control Board and is allowed only upon permit approved by the County Board.
  - Soliciting donations or money, or selling anything in Parks is not allowed, except with a permit.
  - Posting, displaying, pasting, fastening, painting, or affixing any bill, notice, or sign upon any structure, tree, stone, fence, or enclosure in Parks is not allowed.
  - Commercial photography that requires a crew of more than one photographer and one photographer's assistant requires a permit.
  - Fires are allowed only in approved fire rings and must be completely extinguished when unattended. Cooking fires are allowed only in grills provided by the Department or small private grills. Ashes or hot coals must be disposed of in Park containers marked specifically for ashes and coals. Smokers or oversized grills require a permit.
  - Audio devices, such as speakers, radios, and musical instruments may be played, but must be heard no more than 25 feet away. Groups or picnic shelter users must apply for a permit for amplified sound, and the amplified sound must be heard no more than 50 feet away.
  - Any large amusement equipment, including a bounce house, dunk tank, or portable climbing wall requires a permit.
  - Obstructing or interfering with a county employee or agent of the county in the performance of their duties is not allowed.
- Smoking, vaping and commercial tobacco use is governed by a separate Ramsey County ordinance.

## The Plan

- Firearms and Dangerous Weapons
  - Firearms and other dangerous weapons are not allowed in Parks, except as permitted by Minnesota law and local ordinances.
  - Bows and arrows are allowed only in archery ranges. Crossbows are allowed at archery ranges only for adaptive needs.
  - Firing any weapon in or into a Park is not allowed.
- Fireworks
  - Possessing or setting off fireworks, rockets, smoke bombs, or other pyrotechnics is not allowed.
- Pets
  - Pets must be on a leash no more than 6 feet long at all times, except within designated dog park areas.
  - Pets are not allowed in any park buildings, picnic areas, beach areas, playgrounds, golf courses, or on the Tamarack Nature Center grounds. This prohibition does not include or apply to service animals as defined by Americans with Disabilities Act.
  - Leaving pets unattended or allowing them to disturb others is not allowed.
  - Pet feces must be picked up and properly disposed of.
- Picnicking
  - All Park shelters and pavilions require a permit to use.
  - 10'x10' canopies may be used among picnic tables. Canopies used for this purpose must be weighted down and cannot be staked into the ground or tied to trees or other Park property.
- Swimming
  - Swimming is allowed only in designated swimming areas.
  - Glass containers and bottles are not allowed in beach or designated swimming areas.
  - Fires and grills are not allowed in beach areas.
  - U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets are allowed and encouraged. Inflatable toys, such as inner tubes, rafts, or loungers are not allowed.
  - All lifeguard or staff directions and instructions must be followed at all times.
- Fishing
  - All Minnesota State Statutes and Rules must be followed at all times.
  - Fishing is not allowed in prohibited areas.
  - Spearing, netting, and trapping any aquatic animals is prohibited.
  - Ice-fishing houses must use boat launches to access the water and cannot be kept on park property.
- Boating
  - Boats must be launched only in designated areas, such as boat launches.
  - Boats cannot be left unattended.
  - Boats, including boats towing people (water skiers, towable tubes), must be operated at least 100 feet away from swimming areas.
  - Operators of boats are not allowed to create a wake that will damage, injure, or disturb people or park property.
  - All watercraft must be inspected for and removal of any aquatic plants or animals according to guidelines at [ramseycounty.us/ais](http://ramseycounty.us/ais). Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 84D, Invasive Species also applies.
- Bicycles
  - Bicyclists must operate bicycles in a safe manner at all times, staying as close to the right-hand side of the trail as safe conditions allow.
  - Bicyclists and off-road cyclists must yield to pedestrians and pass with care.
  - Bicycles must be operated only on paved trails, except for designated off-road biking trails.
  - Bicyclists must follow all Minnesota State Statutes regarding bicycles.
  - Electric bicycles are allowed on paved trails, and must be operated safely at speeds below 20 mph.

## The Plan

- Skating: Roller-Skating, In-Line Skating, Skateboarding, Scootering
  - Skaters must skate only on paved trails and in a safe manner, staying as close to the right-hand side as safe conditions allow.
  - Skating is not allowed in any park building or shelter.
  - Electric scooters and similar electric skate equipment are allowed only on paved trails and must be operated safely at speeds below 20 mph.
- Winter Activities
  - Cross-country skiing is allowed only on designated trails and with a Ramsey County approved ski trail pass.
  - Groomed cross-country ski trails are for skiers only. Pedestrians and snowshoers are not allowed on groomed ski trails.
  - Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing is allowed in Park areas open to the public. Snowshoers and skiers must not damage trees or plants.
  - Snowmobiles are only allowed in Parks in winter at boat launch parking lots as a way to get slowly and safely from a trailer directly to the lake.
  - Other winter activities, such as skating, sledding, and fat tire biking, are allowed only in designated park areas.
- Golf
  - Golfing is allowed only on golf courses.
  - Only approved tournaments are allowed.
  - Entering or exiting a golf course is allowed only through a designated entrance or exit area.
- Horseback Riding
  - Horseback riding is not allowed in Parks.
- Camping
  - Setting up a tent or other temporary shelter or maintaining a campsite or temporary lodging or sleeping place is not allowed in any Park.
- Geocaching
  - Placement of geocaches is allowed only by permit.
  - Caches must be more than 1/10 th of a mile apart.
  - Dangerous or illegal material may not be placed in a cache.
- Aviation
  - Aviation takeoffs or landings, including toy planes, drones, hot air balloons, and rockets are not allowed in any Park.
  - Drones may be operated only in designated areas.
- Motorized Recreation Vehicles
  - Motorized recreation vehicles, such as ATVs or UTVs are not allowed in any Park, except for snowmobiles, as stated in Section 15.d of the park ordinance.
  - Power-driven mobility devices used by people with disabilities are allowed in Parks.
- Vehicle Operation
  - Vehicles must be operated only on roadways and in parking areas.
  - Vehicles must be operated at less than 15 miles per hour, or at the posted speed limit.
  - Drivers must follow all Minnesota State Statutes and operate vehicles in a safe manner.
  - Vehicles must not be used to access private property through park property.
  - Vehicles must not emit excessive noise, fumes, or other pollutants.
  - Drivers must yield to pedestrians and bicycles.
  - Except for emergencies: Washing, greasing, changing oil, servicing, or repairing any vehicle is not allowed in any Park.



- Drinking alcohol in a vehicle is not allowed in any Park.
- Vehicle Parking
  - Vehicles may be parked only in designated areas.
  - Parking in any spot with yellow-painted curbs or no parking signs is not allowed.
  - Handicapped-accessible parking is reserved only for persons with a handicapped vehicle license or permit.
  - Boat trailers must be parked only in parking spots and lots designated for boat trailers.
  - Equipment or materials cannot be parked or staged on park property.
- Off Leash Dog Area Rules.
  - Owners must clean up and dispose of feces.
  - Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash dog area and in transition corridors.
  - Owners must be in verbal command of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting, or excessive barking. If a dog becomes aggressive, or gets into a fight it shall be leashed and escorted out of the park immediately.
  - Owners must have a visible leash at all times.
  - Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs.
  - Dogs must stay within signed boundary.
  - Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated.
  - Dogs in heat are not allowed
  - For every handler there shall be a maximum of two dogs.
  - Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, and should be educated about safe behavior around dogs (do not run, scream, offer food, pet a strange dog without permission, etc.)
  - Owners must comply with all park rules and regulations.
  - Park ordinance in effect. Enforced by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. To report violations, please call 651-767-0640.
- Off-Road Cycling Rules.
  - Ride only on marked trails.
  - Observe: one way arrows, do not enter signs and trail closed signs.
  - Yield to pedestrians.
  - Control your speed pass with care.
  - Maintain a safe distance when following another biker.
  - Keep environmental impacts to a minimum.
  - Stay off wet or snow covered trails.
  - Wear a helmet.
  - Respect Wildlife.
  - Park ordinance in effect. Enforced by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. To report violations, please call 651-767-0640.

Trail signage is also important for recreational users to find their way through the different systems. Cross-country skiing and off-road cycling both have trail markers stating direction of travel, trail number/letter, and difficulty. Trail markers shall be installed per the wayfinding plan and Off-Road Cycling Master Plan. Upon the completion of new trails or trail sections trail markers should be added.

There are connections to other public land and regional parks and trails that are important access points of Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County should continue to work with the community and partnering agencies to ensure that proper wayfinding signage to these facilities is included in the park's signage and wayfinding plan. These facilities include land owned by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Pigs Eye Regional Park, Indian Mounds Regional Park, the Point Douglas Regional Trail, the Afton Bluffs Regional Trail (currently a search corridor), and local facilities managed by the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood.

# The Plan

## Park Amenities

Additional site amenities are proposed throughout Battle Creek Regional Park to provide a high-quality experience. These amenities may consist of benches, additional drinking fountains where feasible, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, additional wayfinding, and nature interpretation and educational signage. In park bridges should be widened, and designed for both pedestrian and vehicular loads, when they are at the end of their life cycle so that more multi-use trails can be paved for winter use. Implementation of restroom buildings is proposed at trailhead locations.

## Lighting

Consistent with other Ramsey County Regional Parks, lighting is only provided at the trailhead and parking lot areas, with the exception of a short segment of cross-country ski trails. Currently, there is no lighting provided for other park areas, in-park trails, or regional trails per park and trail ordinances.

Through public engagement it became apparent that no additional lighting of in-park trails, or recreational amenities is needed or wanted by the community. The only exception to this would be lighted sections of cross-country ski trails in the winter recreation area.

## Utilities Required for New Development

New utility line extensions into Battle Creek Regional Park will be required to accommodate portions of new development for the park.

New restrooms, lighting, cameras, utilities, drinking fountains, etc. are proposed for trailheads. Additional planning would be needed to accommodate the development of trailheads, and improvements may vary from one place to another.

Trailheads that would require new water, sanitary sewer, and electrical services to be extended from the roadway into the site in the event of development include:

- Suburban Pond Trailhead
- Upper Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area and Overflow Parking Trailhead
- Lower Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area Trailhead
- Park Entrance Road Trailhead
- Bluff Top Trailhead
- Fish Creek at Carver Avenue East and Henry Lane South
- Fish Creek at Henry Land South Termination

## PROGRAMMING

Throughout public engagement, it has become apparent there is a lack of adequate programming in Battle Creek Regional Park. Community members expressed interest in a wide variety of programming from after school classes, summer camps, art education, nature education, outdoor recreation courses from beginner to advanced, among many others.

With the closure of the Maplewood Nature Center a void in education and programming may become more apparent in the area. The nature center was a gathering place for community members to learn about plants and animals as well as their relationships to each other. The Friends of the Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves have a desire to not only see a nature center reestablished somewhere in the area, they have also expressed an interest in partnering with Ramsey County in finding programming opportunities within Battle Creek Regional park.

## The Plan

Environmental groups such as Friends of the Mississippi River, Battle Creek Middle School, and Carver Elementary Middle School already utilize the park for education opportunities. Ramsey County should continue working with these groups as well as expand partners to local hiking, bird watching, and environmental groups to provide more educational opportunities throughout the park.

Recreation groups such as Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists, Endurance United, The Loppet Foundation, Friends of the Mississippi River, and others are an invaluable asset as well as stakeholders in the park. Ramsey County should continue to build strong relationships with these groups to expand recreational programming. These groups already have the expertise needed to design and implement programming in Battle Creek Regional Park. Through partnerships with these groups introducing new and experienced community members to new activities. Many members have already had good ideas on how to get new riders out and active in the park, as well as supply them with the necessary equipment to do so.

Ramsey County should study and invest in the infrastructure to make park programming a reality. Parks & Recreation should launch a study into the programming needs of the park and use resources to make it a reality.

## FUTURE PLANNING

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation should increase awareness of the cultural and indigenous history present in the area and specifically within the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park. An Indigenous peoples and cultural study of the area should be launch with the support and inclusion of all stakeholders and community members. This study could also be accomplished by requiring a study of specific areas of the park as they are developed and or programmed.

## STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has worked alongside countless stakeholder groups, park patrons, non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies to create the current master plan as well as implementing past park improvements. Ramsey County should continue to partner with other organizations and user groups to implement the improvements outlined in this plan, as well as continue to establish agreements to improve the natural resources, recreational infrastructure, and other elements within Battle Creek Regional Park.

## STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Battle Creek Regional Park contains some of the highest quality natural resources remaining in Ramsey County. The goal for managing the resources of the park is to protect and improve the health and native diversity of these resources. Working toward this goal will accomplish a variety of worthy objectives to:

- Enhance the unique resources that the park was established to preserve for the community.
- Provide attractive and interesting recreation areas for people.
- Allow the natural communities of the park to adapt to change and disturbance in the future.

The plan considers the best available scientific knowledge and interests of people in developing recommendations and goals to protect and improve the health of the park.

## The Plan

The character of the park and resource have been influenced for thousands of years by climate, water patterns, and by the activities of people. Since the mid-1800s, agriculture and urban development in St. Paul and surrounding area have greatly changed the landscape of the parks. Many valuable natural resources remain, including resources now rare in the county and in the state. However, these resources are threatened by degradation that results from human activities in the landscape. In many places, these trends will not be reversed if the area is simply “left alone;” so much has changed that people must actively care for and manage the landscape to return it to health. The plan suggests ways to care for and restore the natural resources of Battle Creek Park to improve the long-term health of the park, and benefit park users and the natural communities of the park.

The key sections of the plan recommend management tasks and schedules for each of the Management Units of the park, of which many habitat areas traverse. These recommendations are made by prioritizing each of the habitat areas as high, medium, and low. While all resources of the park are important, this prioritization recognizes the limits of staff time and other resources available to the park, and tries to prioritize management activities based on several criteria:

1. Remaining habitats of the highest quality and native diversity should receive attention first. If these resources are lost, it may not be possible to replace them; and restoration of such resources, if possible, is generally more costly than protection.
2. Medium quality areas still have valuable resources, but will require much higher inputs than high quality areas to reverse degradation and improve habitat quality, and outcomes of management activities may be uncertain.
3. Low quality communities have regressed so that they exhibit little native diversity, and would need intensive restoration and management to achieve the quality of high or medium quality areas. Some of these low quality areas have been developed for recreation activities that are not compatible with resources of higher quality habitat areas, but are important to park users, and can usefully remain dedicated to these activities.

Battle Creek Park is a valuable resource for the citizens of Ramsey County, and part of a significant ecological community associated with the Mississippi River Corridor and its bluff lands. The park was originally proposed for acquisition as a public resource based on the quality and beauty of natural resources there. This plan was developed in a spirit that hopes to protect and restore the resources of the park so that they will not diminish, but rather increase in value for future generations. Involvement of people in carefully considering and choosing management options, in learning about the park and its resources, in participating in recreation activities that are compatible with various habitat areas of the park, and in volunteer activities that care for and restore natural resources of the park will be key to the success of the park.

The goals are high, but hopefully achievable in the long term. Shorter term goals and actions compatible with these overall goals are provided for each proposed management area. In addition to prioritizing natural resources management based on the quality and native diversity of habitat areas in the park, and working to restore native diversity and habitats where possible, the plan suggests the following broad goals:

- Additional inventories of plants, animals, and trails should be completed to help guide future management.
- Management should seek to control or eliminate non-native invasive species that are damaging the health of park habitats.
- The white-tail deer population should be managed to protect existing plant communities and aid the success of restoration activities.
- Restoration of native animals should be considered where appropriate when habitat has been improved.
- Water resources should be protected using vegetative buffers and other methods.
- New proposals for recreation should be evaluated in light of their effects on natural resources.
- Efforts should be made to work with park users, surrounding landowners and other organizations to inform them about the natural resources in the park and management options, and identify and meet common goals in managing the park and resources connected to it, such as the bluff lands along the Mississippi River.
- The effects of management activities should be monitored, to provide guidance for future efforts.



### Ecologically-Based Management Principles

This plan suggests that the resources of Battle Creek Regional Park be managed on an ecological basis. Simply put, an ecosystem (or habitat) is where things live--it is the interacting group of physical elements (soils, water, etc.), plants, animals, and human communities that inhabit a particular place. All of these elements and their interactions need to be considered in developing goals and plans for management. Ecosystem-based management suggests that people are part of the community, and that maintaining a healthy ecosystem is the best way to meet human needs as well as those of other organisms in the community for the long-term.

Managing on an ecosystem basis integrates scientific knowledge and human values toward a general goal of protecting the health of the ecosystem for the long term. (Grumbine, 1993) A key measure of the health of ecosystems is the level of diversity of plants and animals native to the area--a higher diversity of native plants and animals probably indicates a healthier ecosystem (or habitat). A healthy, diverse Battle Creek ecosystem is a desirable goal because it will provide for the basic needs of all living things, allow for successful adaptations to change and disturbance, and allow long-term evolutionary processes to continue with as much genetic diversity as possible so that natural communities in the park can adapt to changing conditions.

The following are some overall ecosystem-based principles for managing Battle Creek Regional Park. They are paraphrased from current literature on ecologically-based management. Later sections of the plan use these principles to develop goals and objectives for managing the park as a whole, and for management of individual units within the park, but these principles should also be considered when new issues arise that have not been considered in this plan.

### Goal and Principles for Management

The management goal for Battle Creek Regional Park is that management should protect and enhance the ecosystem of the park and native biological diversity of its habitats. This is generally defined as giving first priority to protecting and restoring the native diversity (including species and communities), and the ecological patterns and processes needed to maintain that diversity. When the highest quality areas have been protected, next steps include buffering and connecting these areas, and restoring and maintaining healthy, diverse communities and habitats in surrounding areas.

Managing for ecosystem health in the park will include identifying and conserving viable populations of native species, using natural disturbances such as controlled fires to maintain and restore communities, and increasing native species diversity in the park and surrounding areas when possible. Recreation uses should be balanced with the ability of resources to sustain use without damage. Areas most sensitive to human use should be considered for the least intensive uses; areas that can sustain more use without negative impacts to plant and animal communities or natural systems should be considered for more intensive use.

While maintaining some native species and processes offers challenges in an urban setting, it is worth pursuing for a variety of reasons:

1. Native plant and animal species and communities have evolved together in the park area for a long time and are particularly suited to this environment. Over the long term, they will maintain a healthy system that can adapt to disease, weather, other natural disturbances, and should require less management inputs than species less suited to the environment of the park.
2. These species and communities offer human visitors a varied and interesting park environment that illustrates the ecological history of our region and provides diverse opportunities for recreation and education.

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3. High quality natural communities are rare in Minnesota, and particularly in the Twin Cities Metro Area, and are worth protecting and enhancing because they are rare and difficult, if not impossible, to restore to natural condition. Such areas can serve as a source of native seed for restoration of other park areas and areas nearby and as habitat for unique species adapted to these environments.

Some ecological principles that are important components of this goal include the following:

1. Species are interdependent; planning should be focused on maintaining healthy communities and habitats, and the processes that sustain them, and saving all the parts, since we don't always understand how all components function.
2. Introductions of generalist species (non-native species not native to the area) reduces native diversity, the quality of habitat, and the health of communities, and therefore non-natives should be excluded or controlled. Appropriate methods for controlling non-native species include cutting, burning, herbicide application, and biological controls.
3. The health of communities depends on their size, in general, smaller and more fragmented communities support fewer species, are more vulnerable to extinctions and invasions, and are less able to recover their diversity, particularly if other sources of native populations are not available nearby. Management therefore emphasizes improving connectivity, avoiding fragmentation of contiguous habitats, protecting natural waterways, and identifying and protecting critical habitats. Connections between communities along natural corridors may help to maintain diversity and health by allowing plants and animals to migrate and reproduce.
4. People are part of nature. The decisions and actions of humans have been a major force shaping the natural resources and processes of the park for a long time. Humans and their values must be an important factor in shaping park management. Recreation is an important goal of park management. Natural resources management needs to consider providing for appropriate active and passive recreation opportunities in the park.
5. Planning should be based on a time frame that considers natural processes across ecological boundaries that may transcend park boundaries. Natural systems and communities that make up the park extend beyond political boundaries and influence the quality of resources in the park. For example, the natural communities of the park continue along bluff areas to the west and south; common management goals for these areas could improve long-term health and survival of plant and animal communities here, and their value for human residents and recreational users. Effective management needs to consider broader spatial areas that influence the park and be based on time frames that consider natural processes.
6. Management should be based on good data collection and monitoring. Baseline species and population assessments, habitat inventories and classification, and monitoring data are critical to evaluating the quality of the park's resources and determining appropriate management.
7. Management should employ an adaptive management approach, which requires being flexible and considers changing park conditions and results of past and current management actions when making natural resource decisions.
8. Management should be based on inter-agency cooperation. All organizations that make decisions or take actions that affect the resources of the park should be involved as appropriate in developing management plans, implementing actions, and evaluating outcomes.
9. Management should provide for permanent protection of important natural resources, particularly those of county-wide, metro, or state significance.

### Natural Resources Management Objectives for Battle Creek Park

The following are park-wide management objectives that support the overall goal to improve the ecological health and diversity of the park. Detailed objectives for each of the Management Units in the park are detailed in sections that follow.

1. Identify and map existing plant communities in the park. Complete inventories of plants, birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and important habitat areas, beginning with high priority communities. Coordinate with other agencies to complete invertebrate and mussel surveys of Battle Creek and Pigs Eye Lake as part of water quality monitoring of the major water bodies. Collect any additional natural resources inventories and information available from other sources, such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, local birdwatchers, other volunteers, etc.

A first step in natural resource management is identifying current plant and animals within the communities. These plant and animal surveys are necessary to help guide management decisions for wildlife habitat improvement. Existing data includes plant survey data collected for the 1996 natural resource management plan and general land cover data (current and future land cover types) created by park staff for the 2018 park system plan and state Geographic Information System data layers, such as the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System and the natural heritage information system. Beyond this, current survey information for each Management Unit is lacking and needs to be updated.

Depending on funding, timeline, and ecological significance of each Management Unit, the method for gathering plant information could be as detailed as a plot survey to as general as a ground truth land cover update to delineate cover types no less than one acre in size. Ideally a baseline plant survey should be completed prior to and following a restoration project to determine wildlife habitat improvement succession.

Task: Baseline plant inventories of high and medium quality natural communities should be completed in 5 years. Quality ratings and management priorities given to these communities in sections that follow should be changed as needed to reflect the findings of the inventories.

2. Prioritize management of community/habitat areas based on ecological quality and issues. While all habitat areas may have some value, management resources are limited. Prioritizing communities based on ecological value suggest the following criteria for rankings:
  - Highest priority habitats are those with the highest native diversity, particularly with rare species or rare plant communities remaining. If these communities are lost, it may be impossible to replace them; if restoration is possible, it is generally more costly than protection. Lowest intensity recreational uses that will not compromise resource quality may be permitted in these habitat areas.
  - Medium priority habitats still have a good representation of native species but have been more degraded by past use or invasion by non-native species than high quality communities. They will require higher management inputs to reverse degradation and improve habitats, and outcomes of restoration activities may be uncertain. More intense recreational uses are allowed in these areas than in high priority habitats but are managed to ensure that use does not degrade these habitats or prevent restoration of these areas.
  - Low priority habitats have been changed so greatly that little native diversity remains, and these areas would need intensive management or virtual reconstruction to achieve the quality of native habitats. Some of these areas have been developed for recreation activities that are not compatible with resources of higher quality habitat areas, but are important to park users, and can usefully remain dedicated to these activities. Highest impact recreational activities are located in these areas.

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Examples of management recommendations for these communities include the following:

- High priority/rare communities (such as Bluff prairie with Kittentails): Protection is a higher priority than recreational use. Initiate prescribed burns and removal of non-native species to enhance community diversity; ensure that the communities are monitored at least annually; limit recreational use to the limited number of existing paths for hiking use only; close paths where damage to natural communities is occurring. Foot traffic should be discouraged on steep slopes, and limited in other areas to just a few well-placed trails. Interpretive signage may be used to identify these communities and discuss management activities but should not identify rare species locations.
- Medium priority communities (such as Dry Oak Forest): Inventory the community to identify highest quality areas and pinpoint resource management problems such as non-native species. Manage to increase diversity by clearing non-native species from highest quality areas in this community first, and managing deer populations; replant with native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. Remove or control non-natives in additional areas as resources are available. Allow recreation and paths but provide erosion control. Carefully evaluate any new recreational activities for compatibility with resources and restoration activities. Add interpretive signage.
- Lower priority communities (such as turf or old field): No immediate management attention is needed. As funds and volunteers are available, remove groves of non-native species and/or begin prescribed burns to determine whether prairie or savanna restoration is possible. Allow a variety of recreational uses, including most intensive uses, but control erosion on paths.
- While the classifications of high, medium, and low quality habitats and priority communities is important for utilizing limited resources, it is also important to bear in mind that these units are not always distinct, and adjacent low-quality areas can influence habitat quality in higher quality units. Creating buffers of restored habitat around higher quality units, even if it means spending resources on a low-quality habitat, may be more important than restoring a medium-quality unit elsewhere and restoration decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis.

3. Develop management goals and action recommendations for each habitat area based on the quality of the resource, landscape history, needs of park users, and management resources available. Areas where high quality resources remain or could be restored may be targeted for intensive management activities. For example, restoration of oak savanna communities may be a desired goal in areas where soils and topography are appropriate, and historic evidence suggests that this community once existed. Management for this plant community may also be desirable for human uses, providing open views and areas for hiking and picnicking.

In such areas, intensive management such as cutting invasive non-natives, use of periodic fires to control non-native species, and use of herbicides may be needed to restore and maintain the desired plant communities.

4. Identify areas for special protection, such as the native communities identified by the County Biological Survey, and important habitat areas identified by animals surveys. Park maps should identify these areas as "Environmental Natural Areas." Management in these areas will be directed toward protecting and improving the natural communities and native plants and animals that inhabit them. The county should explore designation of these and additional areas as natural heritage registry sites, in coordination with the Minnesota Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program. This could provide additional, ongoing stewardship assistance and help to ensure the continued protection of these areas.
5. Non-native species control, concentrating on highest quality natural communities first. Example of species to be controlled, but not limited to, include: leafy spurge, buckthorn, honeysuckle, black locust, purple loosestrife, Siberian elm, crown vetch, Japanese knotweed, narrowleaf bittercress, Japanese hedge parsley, and knapweed. For each area, determine appropriate methods of cutting, herbicide application, controlled burns, and biological controls (such as predatory insects) for initial control and for ongoing community maintenance.



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Task: Presence of buckthorn, honeysuckle and black locust should be reduced by 80% throughout the park by 2030.

6. Manage white-tailed deer populations to levels that protect natural communities and allow success in plant community restoration activities and that minimize negative interaction between deer and humans. This is known as the biological and cultural carrying capacity. To meet this objective a deer management plan is drafted annually that sets deer population goals and reduction methods. Currently, the plan strives to meet the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources recommendation of 20 deer per square miles of deer habitat. This equates to 25 deer within the Battle Creek park segment and around 10 deer in the immediate Pigs Eye segment. Deer habitat transcends park boundaries, so surrounding habitat and herd numbers have to be looked at on a larger scale when making management decisions. Currently, reduction methods have been completed through special permitted archery hunts within Battle Creek Regional Park, with some sharp shooting completed near the Fish Creek segment of the park to help reduce the herd in the area south of Battle Creek Regional Park.

Park managers may also experiment with deer exclosures to determine the effects of deer populations on plant communities and restoration efforts. The cities of St. Paul and Maplewood both having ordinances prohibiting feeding deer. The general public and park neighbors need to be educated on the negative effects on feeding deer. Park staff and volunteers should also monitor for other herbivory problems.

Task: White-tailed deer populations should be controlled to less than 20 per square mile of deer habitat within and around county parkland by 2030, which comes from recommendations outlined within the annual deer management plan.

7. Begin plant community restoration and habitat enhancement, as described under each Management Unit. Where possible restore animals such as bluebirds, grassland birds, and amphibians, as indicated in individual plans.

Task: Number and diversity of native plant and animal species increase in high priority community areas by 2030.

8. Maintain undeveloped/unmown buffers around wetlands and creeks. Re-establish buffers in areas where they have been mown or eliminated. Use the provisions in the Maplewood Wetland and Streams Buffer Ordinance or Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District Plan to determine recommended buffer sizes. Monitor water quality and plant and animal community response to determine appropriateness of buffer widths. Maintain or restore native wetland plants in wetlands and buffers.

Task: Buffers marked and maintained by 2025.

9. The Parks department does not have regulatory authority over water features within the park system, however, the department can coordinate with regulatory agencies, such as the Minnesota Pollution Control agency, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, and other agencies as needed, to get updated information on monitoring and protection of water quality of Battle Creek, Fish Creek, Pig's Eye lake, wetlands, other water resources of the park, and assist with the following: maintain current water quality and improve quality and aquatic habitats where possible, pursuant to watershed plans. Coordinate with Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District and Parks maintenance to determine a dredge plan for Battle Creek. The dredge plan will include timing, location, volume of sediment to be dredged within Battle Creek, as well as methods of execution.

Task: Meet with agencies that monitor water bodies annually to discuss agencies measurable objectives to reduce pollutants and loading. Determine if agencies are willing to help monitor additional in park wetlands and help with restoration decision making. Coordinate with agencies on planning for the following objectives: numbers and species of invertebrates, fish, and mussels in the creek remain the same or increase. Number and size of wetlands in the park remains the same or increases as wetlands are restored in appropriate areas. Wetland native vegetation diversity increases and purple loosestrife populations are maintained or decrease.

## The Plan

10. Inventory all existing trails and evaluate existing and proposed trails based on recreational need and impact to natural communities and rare species. Eliminate, relocate, or improve trails that are unnecessary or causing negative impacts (such as erosion and non-native species invasion in high quality natural communities).

Task. Complete trail inventory plan with timeline and cost to meet objective by 2025.

11. Evaluate future proposed development plans for the park and their impacts on natural resources. Consider eliminating or modifying those with significant impacts on natural resources, particularly those in high quality natural communities.
12. Increase knowledge and care for park resources among neighbors and surrounding communities using education activities and demonstrations of recommended practices in visible locations in the park. Coordinate volunteer events with partners or parks staff to complete management and restoration activities in the park and adjacent areas. Work with park neighbors to extend use of native species and restore natural communities in areas adjacent to the park. Coordinate with neighboring schools to restore native plant communities on school grounds. Work through community councils, city, and neighborhood associations to encourage elimination of non-native species from yards and planting native species and plants that provide bird and wildlife habitat.
13. Work with other organizations to extend linkages and management of natural communities outside the park. Participate in ecological inventory of Mississippi River and adjacent corridors, work on purchase and cooperative management of the bluffs, river bottoms, creek corridors, and other watershed areas with Cities of St. Paul and Maplewood, National Park Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, non-profits, and other agencies, organizations and volunteers.

Establishment of a resource coordinator at Ramsey county parks to work to implement this plan with staff, volunteers, and other organizations would help to facilitate cooperative action.

14. Restore linkages among natural communities and reduce fragmentation within the park wherever possible to increase the size and diversity of native habitats. Activities could include closing of the lower section of Battle Creek Road and re-establishment of forest connections across this barrier, elimination of unneeded trails, use of low curbs, and large-size culverts that facilitate movement of animals as infrastructure is built or rebuilt, or other methods.
15. Monitor results of management activities. Use management as a learning process and base ongoing management on results of previous actions, new knowledge, and adapt to changing conditions. Maintain flexibility to take advantage of opportunities and resources that benefit the health and management of the park.

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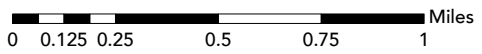
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNITS



Legend

Management Unit Boundary - - - - -

Management Unit Number 1



# The Plan

## Management Units

The following sections breakdown the stats, descriptions, management issues, objectives, and tasks for each Management Unit within Battle Creek Regional park. The Management Units were created to partition up the park in a manner that would allow for reasonable funding requests to complete restoration throughout a unit. Most unit boundaries were created using defining features such as roads, terrain, or land cover boundaries. The 1996 natural resource plan featured management areas consisting of general native plant communities and land cover types as boundaries. Since this plan, advanced digital data and field information has helped to define these communities and land cover types in greater detail. Refer to the map on the next page for the location of these Management Units in each park.

The stat data for each Management Unit includes:

- Dominant land cover, soils, and terrain types listed. This gives the reader a quick glance of the defining features of the unit beyond the description.
- Frances J. Marschner’s original analysis of Public Land Survey notes and landscape patterns from 1895. Marschner compiled his results in map format, which was subsequently captured in digital format to show pre-settlement vegetation patterns for the purpose of determining natural community potential, productivity indexes, and patterns of natural disturbance. The Marschner Pre-settlement Vegetation of Minnesota based on the original vegetation from public land survey records indicates three major plant communities in the Battle Creek area:
  - Oak Openings and Barrens
  - Big Woods
  - Wet Prairies, Marshes and Sloughs
- Government recognition and protection status lists plant communities or areas within the unit that are protected under statute or recognized by government entities, mostly the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, as significant. These classifications are listed and defined below:
  - Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program: The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program is a land corridor along the Mississippi River in the seven-county metro area in which special land use regulations guide development activity. The corridor extends 72 miles along the Mississippi River from the cities of Ramsey and Dayton in the north to the City of Hastings and Ravenna Township in the south. It includes 54,000 acres of land along both sides of the river. The State of Minnesota created the corridor and land use regulations in 1976. Local governments administer the regulations through their local plans and zoning ordinances. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program is home to a full range of residential neighborhoods and parks, as well as river-related commerce, industry, and transportation. Though the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program has been extensively developed, many intact and remnant natural areas remain, including bluffs, islands, floodplains, wetlands, riparian zones, and native aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna.
  - Mississippi National River and Recreation Area: this area is a federal national park administered by the National Park Service. The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program share the same boundary. This is the only national park dedicated exclusively to the Mississippi River. It is located in parts of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington counties, all within the Minneapolis–Saint Paul metropolitan area. The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area was established in 1988 as a new unique type of National Park known as a partnership park. Unlike traditional national parks, the federal government is not a major landowner and therefore does not have control over land use. The National Park Service works with dozens of “partners” (local, state, and federal governments, non-profits, businesses, educational institutions, and individuals) who own land along the river or who have an interest in the Mississippi River to achieve the National Park Service’s mission to protect and preserve for future generations.



## The Plan

- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors. This is an analysis of regionally significant Terrestrial and Wetland Ecological Areas in the seven county metropolitan area. Individual forest, grassland, and wetland models were integrated to identify and rank the Terrestrial and Wetland Ecological Areas. The scores are determined by examining important ecological attributes of the ecological patches including size, shape, cover type diversity, and adjacent land use. The results represent a probability that the modeled conditions exist in any given area, due to limitations of the data layers. The ecological models were run on the most current Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) data available - currently spring 2008.
- Minnesota Biological Survey. Native Plant communities. The Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) systematically collects, interprets, monitors, and delivers data on plant and animal distribution as well as the ecology of native plant communities and functional landscapes. The Native Plant Communities dataset includes polygons representing the highest quality native plant communities remaining in surveyed areas (typically counties). These native plant communities are important areas for conservation.

Native plant communities (sometimes also referred to as “natural communities”) are groups of native plants that interact with each other and their surrounding environment in ways not greatly altered by modern human activity or by introduced plant or animal species. These groups of native species form recognizable units, such as an oak forest, a prairie, or a marsh, that tend to repeat across the landscape and over time.

Native plant communities are generally classified and described by considering vegetation, hydrology, land forms, soils, and natural disturbance regimes. The native plant community types and subtypes in this data layer are classified primarily by vegetation and major habitat features.

Native habitats (with the exception of calcareous seepage fens) have no legal protection in Minnesota. However, such communities are rare, and include the highest diversity and quality of natural resources remaining in the state and in our local area. Therefore, identification, consideration, protection, and management of these areas in planning for natural resources should be a high priority, and is a central focus of this plan for Battle Creek Park. Less than 1 percent of the original areas of these communities remain in the state, and the communities remaining at Battle Creek Park are among very few remaining in Ramsey County.

Native habitats are distinct groups of plants and animals that are “native or indigenous to a particular region.” (Wovcha, 1995) Native habitats are classified and described by considering vegetation, successional status, topography, hydrology, landforms, substrates, soils, and natural disturbance regimes (such as fire, flood cycles, and native insects and microorganisms). The Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has developed a classification of native habitats for the state that was used by the Minnesota County Biological Survey in evaluating natural areas in Battle Creek Park and is being used throughout the state.

These native habitats include: Dry and Mesic Oak Forests, Sand/Gravel Oak Savanna, Emergent, Shrub, and Forested Wetlands Wet meadow

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Scientific and Natural Areas: Scientific and natural areas are exceptional places where native plants and animals flourish; where rare species are protected; and where we can know, and study, Minnesota’s fascinating natural features. Scientific and natural areas are established to protect and perpetuate in an undisturbed natural state those lands and waters embracing natural features of exceptional scientific and educational value. The Scientific and Natural Areas Program’s goal is to ensure that no single rare feature is lost from any region of the state. This requires protection and management of each feature in sufficient quantity and distribution across the landscape.

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- Environmental Natural Area: Ramsey County Park & Recreation department Environmental Natural Areas have been identified in Regional Parks having significant natural resources. Environmental Natural Areas (ENA) are defined within Regional Parks as having significant, sensitive, and unique natural resources to Ramsey County that warrant extended preservation. The habitat and vegetation within these areas is managed to support and enhance these natural communities. These areas are designated for increased habitat protection, ecological restoration, passive recreation, and environmental education. Any development expansion within these areas is limited to trails only, with nature interpretation facilities allowed within the planned development areas of Tamarack Nature Center only. Public access to these areas is restricted to designated trails and the use of these areas is limited to passive forms of recreation such as hiking, skiing, and nature viewing. Bicycles and off-road cycling is allowed only on designated trails. Dogs and off-trail activities are not allowed.
- Community Structure and Quality / Management Priority
  - Structure, quality, and management of a unit is categorized as high, medium, and low, with descriptions under section Natural Resources Management Objectives for Battle Creek Park, #2.

### Management Unit 1

#### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Oak woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep hillsides

Marschner Pre-settlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and Federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors
- Environmental Natural Area: Ramsey County Park & Recreation department

Community Structure and Quality: High

Management Priority: High

#### Unit Description

The forest that extends north and east from the creek along Upper Afton Road, becomes drier, and is dominated by mixed red and white oak canopy, grading to more bur oaks on south and west-facing areas near the Minnesota Department of Transportation overlook. The steep hillsides in this area historically consisted of more open savanna type canopy that were likely dominated by bur oak. This land cover type stretched southward along park entrance road and east along Lower Afton Road, along the bluffs in Management Units 2, 3, and 4. There are two large concave areas along the hillsides that were areas excavated for fill. At the base of the bluffs in this area, cottonwoods, boxelders, and green ash occupy wet areas, along with wetlands. The wetlands consist of a connected complex of freshwater emergent, forested, and open water wetlands located in the southwest corner of the site. There is a remnant of an old road, that was historically Highway 61, before becoming Point Douglas Road that runs along the base of the hill, separating the upland from the lowland areas. There were a number of homestead sites off of the road. Areas near existing homes or former home sites have the highest density of non-native species in the understory, but buckthorn is a consistent problem throughout the area. Near the end of this current remnant road is a series of wetland seeps emerging from the hillsides and flowing into the wetlands below. The wetland seeps contain high quality plants, including skunk cabbage, Joe-pye weed, swamp milkweed, amongst others. In 2015 – 2018 a restoration project was completed through this area, with a focus on invasive species removal, primarily buckthorn, and reestablishment of native ground and shrub vegetation. The upper woodlands and lowland areas were cleared of buckthorn and the excavated areas, previously dominated by invasive grasses, were seeded to native prairie. A

prescribed burn was conducted through portions of the woodlands that had enough fuel to carry a burn and native woodland seed was spread throughout following the burn. Maintenance will be consistent and ongoing to control the buckthorn and other invasive species emerging, such as Japanese knotweed (which is located near the wetland seep) and narrowleaf bittercress, which is starting to spread throughout the unit. Deer are usually heard or seen in these areas, and deer evidence of deer browse is visible on forest forbs and small trees. There are a number of official and some unofficial trails, which are causing erosion, that are located within this unit. Recreation consists of hiking and off-road cycling.

### Management Issues

- The level of native ground and shrub cover establishment is unknown.
- Ongoing and continued maintenance, following initial restoration, will be extensive and costly to keep the invasive species controlled while establishing native ground and shrub cover throughout all land cover types. Maintenance such as foliar spraying of buckthorn and a prescribed burn has occurred, but further maintenance has yet to be defined.
- It is unknown if clearing trees throughout the oak woodlands to open the canopy for conversion of a savanna system would be beneficial and cost effective.
- Unofficial trails are causing erosion problems.
- Encroachments and dumping from abutting neighbors are major issues that are causing negative impacts to surrounding parkland.
- Deer browse will continue to be an issue within this unit. Control of the deer population is necessary to prevent over browsing of natural regeneration of shrubs and trees.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Costs

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in each land cover type restored to determine location and level of native and invasive plant species re-emergence and new emerging non-natives biannually.

#### Tasks:

- Complete biannual observation surveys and monitor areas that exhibit successful natural regeneration. Delineate areas needed for supplemental seeding and planting.
- Complete biannual observation surveys of non-native species that are spreading and create a distribution map of non-native invasive species.
- Identify locations of emerging species, such as Japanese knotweed and narrowleaf bittercress.

## The Plan

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Continue ongoing preservation of restored lands at a level equal to or greater following initial restoration, using surveys and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheets for guidance. Hire contractor, implement plan and revise after three years.

### Tasks:

- Draft a three year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type maintenance needs, including efforts to stabilize eroding seep area.
- Secure funding for three year plan through state grant program or county funds and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three year contract. At a minimum include all listed below.
- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in non-natives in restored areas of 80% or more, including buckthorn, honeysuckle, locust, Siberian Elm, and emerging non-natives. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Monitor and eradicate new emerging invasive species.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants in the woodlands and prairie areas following the removal of non-natives.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume and timeline of foliar spraying following three year mark.
- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.
- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs and shrubs, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate native seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.
  - Obtain shrub saplings from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.



### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2 Jan - March: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor

Cost = park staff time

Year 2-5: maintenance to be completed

Cost = \$40,000.00

Year 6 – 9 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs, and oak trees

Cost = To Be Determined

### Objective 3:

Complete assessment to determine benefit and cost of converting oak woodlands to a more open canopy savanna where appropriate.

### Tasks:

- Survey bluff land oak woods to identify locations ecologically and economically beneficial for conversion to savanna.
- Determine, with county forester, trees for removal within identified savanna locations.
- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for savanna conversion using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community guidelines: Southern Dry Savanna.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2, July, collect survey information

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2, August – September, draft plan if warranted

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 4:

Control encroachments and unofficial trails to prevent further impacts.

### Tasks:

- Complete inventory of unofficial trails and encroachments throughout area.
- Create plan to close and re-vegetate unofficial trails.
- Reach out to neighbors encroaching on lands and have them stop and remove all infractions.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, April or October: inventory trails and encroachments

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2 Jan -March, April: draft trail restoration plan and encroachment letters

Cost = parks staff time

## The Plan

Year 2 April – May: contact/send letters to neighbors and restore and re-vegetate trails, using Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists volunteer efforts  
Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 5:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

#### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan  
Cost = parks staff time

## Management Unit 2

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Oak woods

Dominant soil type: sandy loam

Dominant Terrain: steep hillsides

Marschner Pre-settlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered.
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- MN Native plant Community.
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate.
  - MHs38c - Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest. 13 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation
- Environmental Natural Area: Ramsey County Park & Recreation department.

Community Structure and Quality: High

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description:

This area consists of mainly oak woods along south and west facing slopes and plateaus, from Upper Afton Road to the lower parking lot at the end of Park Entrance Road and adjacent to Highway 61. These woods have a wider variety of canopy and understory species than the dry oak forests to the east. White oaks dominate on the ridge tops. Large black cherry trees, basswood, and a few large white pines are also present in the canopy. There are sections of mesic woods within north facing aspects on both sides of the creek and with the section on the west side of the creek identified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as a native plant community as a red oak, sugar maple, basswood and bitternut hickory forest, mesic hardwood forest system. Most bitternut hickory in this area have died out, with a few hickory trees remaining. Within coulees along the hillsides are remnant white pine along with some

planted conifers as well. On the lower edge of the woodlands on the east side of the creek is a large wetland seep that abuts the paved trail. Growing within the seep are a number of hydrophytic plants, such as spotted joe-pye weed and skunk cabbage. While the understory of the woods is diverse, many areas are highly infested with buckthorn, particularly areas close to private homes that border the park. These areas have few or no ground layer forbs. Areas with less buckthorn are much more diverse and of good quality, include groves of ferns and a diversity of forest forbs such as, bloodroot and ginger, often seen on the north facing aspects. Deer are usually heard or seen in these areas, and deer evidence of deer browse is visible on forest forbs and small trees. The entire woodland area includes official and unofficial trails that are used for hiking and off-road cycling. Many of the unofficial trails have serious erosion problems.

Oak forest communities cover about half of the area of Battle Creek Park; these are mainly dry forest communities. Few mature dry oak forests with large diameter trees remain in the Metro Region; more remnant areas of mesic oak woodlands remain near wetlands, slopes, and in undeveloped portions of the Metro Region.

The immediate creek corridor serves as a recreational area with a paved path, numerous pedestrian bridges over the creek and picnic tables in small sections of turf mowed areas. Most of the creek consists of a buffer of invasive species of reed canary grass and cattails. This area was altered in the early 1980s when a flood control project was completed by the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District which included an underground storm sewer pipe system installed beneath the creek. The creek overflow structures can be seen in the middle of the creek. This project left some hillsides exposed and covered with invasive grass. These hillsides are currently being converted to native prairie. In addition to the storm sewer a main sanitary sewer line runs within the creek corridor, with a section of the pipe, which was hand dug to place in the early 1900s, under the bluffs west of the creek and connecting to the pump station located off of Highway 61.

The southern portion of this unit includes large and small bur oaks above a diverse herbaceous ground layer on cliffs and slopes over Battle Creek and south-west facing bluffs over Highway 61. These west and south facing bluffs were historically sand/gravel oak savanna. There are unique steep limestone bluffs overlooking the creek on the most southern edge. Aerial photos from the 1940s and historic photos from earlier years suggest that south-facing slopes and forest areas adjacent to the oak savanna community were once more open woodlands than they are today, with north and east facing slopes historically occupied by more mesic, closed-canopy forest. The herbaceous openings are covered with a variety of grasses and diversity of prairie forbs. A large population of Kittentails (*Besseyia bullii*), a plant endangered in Minnesota, exists in one area and is reproducing, primarily on rocky cliffsides, overlooking the creek on the west side. Previous records identified Kittentails on the east side of the creek and with smaller populations scattered throughout the savanna openings on the west, however, a recent survey could not locate Kittentails in these areas. Larger populations on north-facing slopes above the creek were also identified by Morley in 1990, but no longer exist. The soil in south-facing areas is very loose, and much erosion is evident along the paths and cliffs due to trails and cliff climbing along bluff edge. The quality of the communities is being reduced by invasion of honeysuckle, crown vetch, black locust, and general spread of canopy with lack of fire. Deer browse is evident on prairie forbs. There was an old homestead east of the creeks east side bluff, that now grows with prairie grasses, a remnant representative of a more open canopy system. Limited areas of sand/gravel oak savanna exist in Battle Creek Park along bluffs above the river and creek. Few oak savannas survive in the Metro Region.

Over the past four years this unit, in conjunction with unit 3, has been being restored through funding provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources conservation partners legacy and Ramsey County. The restoration so far has included the removal of buckthorn throughout the unit and conversion of hillsides along creek to native prairie. Other work has included foliar control of herbaceous weeds, such as garlic mustard, burdock, and narrow leaf bittercress. Ongoing maintenance will include foliar control of emerging species and prescribed burns.

### Management Issues

Ongoing and continued maintenance, following initial restoration, will be extensive and costly to keep the invasive species controlled while establishing native ground and shrub cover throughout all land cover types. Maintenance has yet to be defined.

## The Plan

Initial restoration did not include the conversion of blufflands to savanna with a more open canopy. Surveys should be completed to define the boundaries of these areas to prioritize for management and to determine what tree removal efforts will be needed to convert blufflands to savanna.

The preservation and propagation of the kitten tails within the area is not clearly defined. Surveys of other special species, specifically butternut hickory, need to be updated.

Numerous human factors are impacting this area, including:

- Encroachment from surrounding neighbors.
- Pressure for more recreation.
- Unofficial trails causing environmental damage throughout.
- Rogue trails and hiking around bluffs surrounding southern part of creek is causing damage.
- Education on the prevention of spread of emerging invasive, specifically along trail corridors, is lacking amongst the general public and users groups such as off-road cyclists and hikers.

Emerald ash borer is prevalent throughout this unit, with many ash trees infested and dying.

Deer browse will continue to be an issue within this unit. Control of the deer population is necessary to prevent over browsing of natural regeneration of shrubs and trees.

This area is a convergence of unique land cover types that warrant additional preservation. Pressure to expand trails and recreational amenities in this unit should be thoroughly assessed.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in each land cover type restored to determine location and level of native and invasive plant species re-emergence and new emerging non-natives biannually.

#### Tasks:

- Complete biannual observation surveys and monitor areas that exhibit successful natural regeneration. Delineate areas needed for supplemental seeding and planting.
- Complete biannual observation surveys of non-native species that are spreading and create a distribution map of non-native invasive species.
- Identify locations of emerging species, such as celandine (just south of Upper Afton Road on the east side of the creek) and narrowleaf bittercress (spotted throughout and concentrated along trails) to identify for eradication.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

#### Objective 2:

Improve condition of sand/gravel oak savanna community, indicated by an increase in native diversity of understory plants and complete continued restoration efforts by converting to a more open canopy savanna where appropriate.



### Tasks:

- Survey bluff land oak woods to identify locations ecologically and economically beneficial for conversion to savanna.
- Determine, with county forester, trees for removal within identified savanna locations.
- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for savanna conversion using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community guidelines: Southern Dry Savanna.
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of savanna.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2, July, collect survey information

Year 2, August – September, draft plan and apply for funding

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2, Year 3 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3 – Year 6 Complete restoration

Cost = \$70,000.00

### Objective 3:

Continue ongoing preservation of restored lands at a level equal to or greater following initial restoration, using surveys and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheets for guidance. Hire contractor, implement plan, and revise after three years.

### Tasks:

- Draft a three year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type maintenance needs, including efforts to stabilize eroding seep area.
- Secure funding for three year plan through state grant program or county funds and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three year contract. At a minimum include all listed below.
- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in non-natives in restored areas of 80% or more, including buckthorn, honeysuckle, locust, Siberian Elm, and emerging non-natives. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Monitor and eradicate new emerging invasive species.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants in the woodlands and prairie areas following the removal of non-natives.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume

## The Plan

and timeline of foliar spraying following three year mark.

- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.
- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs, shrubs and trees, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate native seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.
  - Obtain shrub saplings from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.
  - Achieve observable regeneration of oaks by planting saplings throughout the project site as specified in the objective. Stagger the years of planting oak saplings to prevent oak wilt transfer by differing age classes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2 Jan - March: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor

Cost = park staff time

Year 2-5: maintenance to be completed

Cost = \$51,260.00

Year 6 – 9 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs, and oak trees

Cost = To Be Determined

### Objective 4:

Continue maintenance to ensure establishment and success of established native prairie areas along creek by eliminating 90% or more of invasives found within 3 years and maintain this level annually.

### Tasks:

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use contractor to treat and remove invasives from prairies
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: survey inventory info

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1-3: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives

Cost = contractor cost \$3,000.00

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies

Cost = contractor cost \$4000.00

### Objective 5:

Identify current locations and protect and improve health of kittentail populations. Increase numbers and locations of kittentails in the oak savanna areas of the park.

#### Tasks:

- Complete desktop review of known locations given current data.
- Complete thorough field survey of kittentail populations and inventory human and non-native species impacts.
- Coordinate with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program staff who have managed similar populations in southeast Minnesota to determine management requirements and propagation plan.
- Maintain and create a protection zone around known populations, to prevent impacts.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: complete field survey  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1, August -September: review data with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources staff

Year 1-2, October – January: Draft protection and expansion plan

Year 3, June – October: Define protection zone and implement plan specifications

### Objective 6:

Control encroachments, unofficial trails, and hiking on sensitive limestone bluff areas to prevent further impacts.

#### Tasks:

- Finish inventory of unofficial trails and encroachments throughout area.
- Create plan to close and revegetate unofficial trails.
- Reach out to neighbors encroaching on lands and have them stop and remove all infractions.
- Add interpretive sign near bluff entrances to educate park users on the importance of not climbing in and around bluffs and cave areas.
- Communicate importance of sensitive areas being impacted through social media outlets.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Annually, Feb: plan volunteer events  
Cost = parks staff time

Annually, April: post updates and info on restoration, maintenance and invasive species  
Cost = parks staff time

## The Plan

### Objective 7:

Increase environmental education and outreach for park neighbors, general public, and user groups

#### Tasks:

- Meet annually, prior to growing season, with special user groups (Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC), hiking groups) representatives:
  - Plan for a minimum of one volunteer event to take place within unit.
  - Update and post information on current non-natives and steps to prevent spread.
- Annually update social media and website to better connect people to the parkland and include restoration and maintenance work update.
- Send an annual post correspondence to park neighbors informing them of ongoing restoration efforts and to respect park boundaries.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Annually, Feb: plan volunteer events

Cost = parks staff time

Annually, April: post updates and info on restoration, maintenance, and invasive species

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 8:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

#### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds state standards.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 9:

Continue current types of recreation uses to avoid impact of natural resources. Do not exceed more than 10% of land cover for recreational areas and trails.

#### Tasks:

- Do not expand recreational amenities beyond what currently exists in this unit. Only unpaved trails will be considered for expansion.



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- Complete thorough environmental impact review and preserve sensitive areas when considering any additional unpaved trails.
- Any expansion of unpaved trails should follow specifications and implementation guidelines when being constructed.

### Schedule and Costs:

Ongoing as trail development is proposed

Cost = parks staff time

### Management Unit 3

#### Unit Stats:

Dominant land cover type: Prairie

Dominant soil type: sandy loam

Dominant Terrain: flat plateau

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered.
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- Environmental Natural Area: Ramsey County Park & Recreation department.

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: Medium

#### Unit Description:

The bluff lands that exist on the southeast, south and west edge of this unit historically consisted of sand gravel prairie savannas that were connected to those in Management Unit 2 and 4. This community is similar in structure and species composition to communities that continue outside the park along the bluffs toward Mounds Park. Only a few such areas remain in the Twin Cities Region. Much of this bluff land fringe has transitioned into more closed canopy oak and mixed woodlands with overgrown understory of aspen, sumac, and buckthorn. Two sections of bluff land hillside on the west side, totaling 6 acres, were excavated for fill more than 30 years ago, which has left two concave impressions on the hillside that are now dominated by invasive grass and other species such as brome, crown vetch, garlic mustard, and burdock. These two excavated areas have left gaps in what was historically a connected oak savanna bluff side.

On a steep slope with in the oak woodlands located in the south east corner, west of battle creek road and north of Lower Afton Road, the water table is high and flows consistently throughout the year creating a wetland seep. There are numerous hydrophytic plants growing along this hillside wetland seep, including spotted Joe-pye weed, skunk cabbage, and numerous rushes. This seep is causing erosion along the hillside.

The flat plateau area overlooking the steep bluff lands was mostly cleared and farmed for the past 80 years. In the northeast corner is 13 acres of mixed woods, consisting of mostly invasive Siberian elm and black locust. An open field, being encroached by black locust, surrounds an excavated area. The open field area on the north consists of an excavated area where soil was borrowed for creek construction activities in the early 1980s, leaving a 4.3 acre depression. This rectangular bowl like depression is deep enough that the ground water table seeps through the surface, leaving standing water or saturated soil, depending on fluctuations in precipitation, throughout the footprint

## The Plan

of the depression. This depression has now become an ephemeral wetland that exhibits hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic plants, such as spotted Joe-pye weed, jewel weed, willows, cattails, bulrush, swamp milkweed, and a variety of sedge species. An overflow pipe near the base of the depression prevents water from accumulating in this area. The field area surrounding this depression is dominated by brome grass and is being encroached by black locust. The south section reverted to mixed woods and invasive grasses after farming had ceased. In early 2000s this area of around 12 acres was cleared of trees and converted to native prairie. This prairie is dominated by big blue stem and is being encroached by woody material, specifically buckthorn and black locust, mostly on the east and south edges.

A restoration project began in 2017 within unit 3 with funding provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Conservation partners Legacy grant program and Ramsey County. This project targeted clearing the buckthorn from all the woodlands within the unit. In addition to buckthorn removal, larger locusts, and Siberian Elm were girdled throughout the unit and removed within the southeast corner in an attempt to open the canopy. This project also included herbaceous invasive weed control, including garlic mustard, burdock, and narrowleaf bittercress. Maintenance and further tree removal throughout the unit will continue in the future to open the canopy along the bluffs, converting this area back into a savanna landscape. In addition, the invasive trees within the mixed woods in the northeast corner were girdled and will likely be cleared to convert to prairie.

### Management Issues

The initial restoration removed a massive amount of buckthorn and other invasives across the entire unit. A lot of work is being completed, however, there are standing issues that will need to be addressed:

- Native grasses, flowers, and oaks started emerging immediately after the first season of buckthorn removal in certain locations. Further information is lacking to determine if supplemental seeding and planting is required and where invasives are re-emerging.
- Ongoing and continued maintenance will be extensive and costly to keep the invasives controlled while establishing native ground and shrub cover.
- The mixed woodland in the northeast corner contains no desirable trees and is mainly invasive Siberian elm and black locust.
- Initial restoration did not include the removal of trees required to convert oak and mixed woodlands in to savanna with a more open canopy. An assessment is required to define which trees should be removed.
- The old field surrounding the depression consists of invasive species such as brome, locust, and other invasives.
- Many new invasive non-natives are emerging throughout this unit, specifically narrowleaf bittercress. Surveys of the area to locate and eradicate newly emerging invasives is required.
- The planted native prairie areas contain herbaceous and encroaching woody invasives.
- The wetland seep area is slowly eroding because of lack of natural vegetation throughout the seep and surrounding hillsides.
- Can the wetland bowl be altered to provide more beneficial wildlife habitat? Can diversity of the wetland edges be increased with plantings or other management and would the cost of wetland management be worth the habitat benefits in this area?
- Emerald ash borer is prevalent throughout this unit, with many ash trees infested and dying.

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- Deer browse will continue to be an issue within this unit. Control of the deer population is necessary to prevent over browsing of natural regeneration of shrubs and trees.
- The trails in this unit are well established and include many off-road cycling and mowed turf trails used for skiing in the winter. The maintenance of these trails, mainly including the width and timing of flailing and mowing of trail edges needs to be defined to minimize impact on the resources.
- Given heavy trail use, there are many opportunities in this area for interpretive signage, related to forest community, non-native species, wetland diversity, and prairie restoration.
- Education on the prevention of spread of emerging invasive, specifically along trail corridors, is lacking amongst the general public and users groups such as off-road cyclists and hikers.
- There is pressure to expand trails and recreational amenities in this unit.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observation surveys in each land cover type restored to determine location and level of native and invasive plant species re-emergence and new emerging non-natives.

#### Tasks:

- Complete biannual observation surveys and monitor areas that exhibit successful natural regeneration. Delineate areas needed for supplemental seeding and planting.
- Complete biannual observation surveys of non-native species that are spreading and create a distribution map of non-native invasive species

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

#### Objective 2:

Complete continued restoration efforts by converting oak woods (bluff lands) to a more open canopy savanna where appropriate and mixed woods (northeast corner) and old field (surrounding bowl depression) to native prairie

#### Tasks:

- Survey bluff land oak woods to identify locations ecologically and economically beneficial for conversion to savanna.
- Determine, with county forester, trees for removal within identified savanna locations.
- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for prairie and savanna conversion using the MN Department of Natural Resources native plant community guidelines: Southern Dry Savanna.

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- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2, July, collect survey information

Year 2, August – September, draft plan and apply for funding

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2, Year 3 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3 – Year 6 Complete restoration

Cost = \$160,000.00

### Objective 3:

Continue ongoing preservation of restored lands at a level equal to or greater following initial restoration, using surveys, and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheets for guidance. Hire contractor, implement, plan, and revise after three years.

### Tasks:

- Draft a three year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type maintenance needs, including efforts to stabilize eroding seep area.
- Secure funding for three year plan through state grant program or county funds and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three year contract. At a minimum include all listed below.
- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in non-natives in restored areas of 80% or more, including buckthorn, honeysuckle, locust, Siberian Elm, and emerging non-natives. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Monitor and eradicate new emerging invasive species.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants in the woodlands and grasses and flowers in the savanna and prairie areas following the removal of non-natives.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume and timeline of foliar spraying following three year mark.
- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.
- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs, shrubs, and trees, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate native seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.



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- Obtain shrub saplings from MN Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.
- Achieve observable regeneration of oaks by planting saplings throughout the project site as specified in the objective. Stagger the years of planting oak saplings to prevent oak wilt transfer by differing age classes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2 Jan - March: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor

Cost = park staff time

Year 2-5: maintenance to be completed

Cost = \$51,260.00

Year 6 – 9 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs and oak trees

Cost = To Be Determined

### Objective 4:

Continue maintenance to ensure establishment and success of established native prairie areas and savanna area along Winthrop by eliminating 90% or more of invasives found within 3 years and maintain this level annually

### Tasks:

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use contractor to treat and remove invasives from prairies.
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: survey inventory info

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1-3: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives

Cost = contractor cost \$8,815.00

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies

Cost = contractor cost \$4000.00

### Objective 5:

Complete inventory of wetland and buffer areas for restoration decision making

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with the local watershed district and parks soil and water division to complete a wetland assessment.
- Assessment should identify problem areas and list wetland restoration options.
- Contact state agencies to determine wetland status and option to use as a wetland bank.

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### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete assessment of wetlands

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: Sept, coordinate with state agencies

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 6:

Increase environmental education and outreach for general public and user groups

### Tasks:

- Maintain existing boot brush station for continued use and education.
- Meet annually, prior to growing season, with special user groups (MN off-road cyclists (MORC) and ski group) representatives:
  - Plan for a minimum of one volunteer event to take place within unit.
  - Update and post information on current non-natives and steps to prevent spread.
- Annually update social media and website to better connect people to the parkland and include restoration and maintenance work update.
- Coordinate with a minimum of two volunteers per year to complete observational surveys or invasive species removal within the unit.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually, Feb: plan volunteer events

Cost = parks staff time

Annually, April: post updates and info on restoration, maintenance and invasive species

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 7:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 8:

Complete thorough environmental impact review and preserve sensitive areas when considering any development in this area.

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with planning staff to determine locations and level of development acceptable within unit.
- Continue current types of recreation uses to avoid impact of natural resources.
- Ensure no more development (trails, amenities) are constructed within the bluff lands area or near the wetland seep. Any future recreational expansion should only be considered within the flat plateau area and follow Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area guidelines.
- Continue maintenance of existing off-road cycling trails to avoid environmental impacts.

### Schedule and Costs:

Ongoing as development is proposed

Cost = parks staff time

## Management Unit 4

### Unit Stats:

Dominant land cover type: Oak woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- The southwest corner of unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered.
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- MN Native plant Community.
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate
  - MHs37a - Red Oak - White Oak Forest, Mesic Hardwood Forest System. Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest. 61.5 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation
  - UPs13b - Dry Sand - Gravel Prairie (Southern), Upland Prairie System. 1.54 acres. Imperiled
- Environmental Natural Area: Ramsey County Park & Recreation department.

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description:

The west central area of this unit includes seventy-five acres of dry oak forest, dominated by various oaks, including pin, red, white oak, and bur oak. Other native trees include large and small black cherry trees, cottonwoods, and aspen. Oak wilt is widespread among the red oaks in the forest, and removal of diseased trees is an ongoing management activity. There is a 1.5 acre open prairie area containing remnant native plants, located on a plateau in the middle of the oak forested area. Aerial photos indicate that in 1945 this area was a more open oak woodland,

## The Plan

with only about half of the current forest canopy evident. Some of the woodland was used for haying and pasture. Buckthorn is widespread in the shrub layer, with high density throughout. Buckthorn and sumac are particularly numerous where the canopy has been opened by oak wilt; these are also the areas where small oaks are numerous. The ground layer includes dry forest herbs, though diversity is much reduced in areas of heavy buckthorn infestation. Southern portions of this community area or south-facing slopes may be areas suitable for savanna or open woodland restoration. Northern parts of this area, and north and east-facing slopes may be more suitably left as forest. Dry oak forest communities cover about half of the area of Battle Creek Park. Mature forests of this type with large canopy trees are uncommon in the Metro Region; this area is recognized by the MN Department of Natural Resources as a native plant community of significance that warrants preservation and is vulnerable to extirpation. The area has wide trails, and is heavily used by hikers, joggers, bikers, and cross-country skiers. Off-road cycling trails exist in this unit, with additional tracks proposed.

The south portion of this unit consists of south and west facing bluff tops that are dominated by large bur oaks, with some white, red, and pin oaks. These areas were historically very open, with minimal tree cover. The understory is much overgrown with aspen, sumac, and buckthorn encroaching on the steep hillsides. Small openings of prairie grasses and forbs are scattered, though they are gradually being overgrown by aspen and sumac. Prairie forbs include spiderwort, flowering spurge, and grasses including little bluestem are scattered throughout under the canopy with concentrations in more open areas. This area includes a small, dry prairie opening dry prairie, sand-gravel subtype recognized by the MN Department of Natural Resources as a native plant community that is imperiled. In this area is a small but diverse collection of prairie grasses and forbs at opening in woods at south end of trail as it turns west below large bur oaks. Includes little bluestem, leadplant, coreopsis, and others. Needle grass and hoary puccoon were listed within the 1996 plan as being present in these areas, but have not been observed recently. Small patches of prairie forbs continue in woods along edge of bluff under heavy buckthorn and undergrowth to the east and west of this clearing. Aspen and sumac clones are also encroaching on the prairie opening and shading other prairie remnant areas along the bluff. This community is similar in structure and species composition to communities that continue outside the park along the bluffs toward Mounds Park. Limited areas of sand/gravel savanna exist in Battle Creek Park, along river and creek bluffs. Only a few such areas remain in the Twin Cities Region.

Southwest, downslope, of this sand gravel prairie along the hillside north of Lower Afton Road and east of Battle Creek Road, the water table is high and flows consistently throughout the year creating a wetland seep. There are numerous hydrophytic plants growing along this hillside wetland seep, including spotted Joe-pye weed, skunk cabbage, and numerous rushes.

The eastern section of this unit consists of 24.72 acres of planted native prairie, with scattered oak trees and conifer plantations stands which were planted in the late 1980s. The native prairie areas are mostly flat and were historically farmed. There are wetlands on the northeast (freshwater pond and emergent) and southeast (freshwater forest/shrub and emergent) corners of the site that were never altered by previous farming activities. On the east edge, west of Winthrop St, is an area of open old growth oak woodlands, resembling a savanna, which was not historically farmed. The linear section east of Winthrop street is a mostly steep south facing slope that is mixed woods that is highly degraded with buckthorn. There is also planted conifers. This section was historically farmed and pastured in the steeper areas. On the west edge of this piece is an open area where some native prairie plants growing. This open area is being encroached by invasives and undesirable spreading trees, such as aspen.

The north end of this unit is flat and was historically one large farm field. The area now consists of mixed woods, consisting of quacking aspen, boxelder and the occasional oak and an open field that is currently mowed. There is also less than a half-acre forested/shrub wetland within this area.

### Management Issues

General plant and animal surveys are lacking for the entire unit. The MN county biological survey native plant community information defining the oak woods and sand gravel prairies was completed in 1990 and updated surveys are necessary to redefine boundaries and prioritize areas for management.



## The Plan

All of the woodland areas are heavily infested with non-native invasive species, primarily buckthorn. This is putting a strain on oak regeneration and native shrubs and herbaceous vegetation. The planted native prairies are being encroached by woody and herbaceous invasives. The conifer plantations conflict with the native landscapes open oak woods and native prairie. The conifer stands are overgrown and understory is high density buckthorn. The historically open canopy areas, mostly the south and southwest facing hillsides, are being overgrown with tree species, such as aspen, black locust and Siberian elm, which is suppressing the native prairie grasses and forbs. The native plant community, sand gravel prairie is degrading from encroachment of invasive shrubs and trees. The mowed field north in unit provides little to no habitat. The restoration of this unit may have to be phased or partitioned to allow for adequate time and funding.

Oak wilt occurs in much of the woodland but the extent is unknown. A forest management plan for restoration and oak wilt remediation does not exist.

The wetlands health and level of habitat quality are unknown.

Overpopulation of deer can set back the natural succession of native shrubs and trees by over browsing.

There is pressure to expand trails and recreational amenities in this area that would impact the native prairies and oak woodlands.

Continued management of all land cover types following initial restoration will be extensive until regeneration of native vegetation is dominant.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete surveys within each upland land cover type throughout unit prior to and following restoration planning and implementation. Determine which areas should be managed for prairie, open savanna or oak woodland given data on soils, slopes, and vegetation. Natural resource manager will determine which level of plant survey will be completed for each land cover type. Animal surveys will be completed following, given the tasks below.

#### Tasks:

- Identify areas with highest vegetation quality and areas where non-native species are a problem. At a minimum, create the following for entire area:
  - Distribution map of non-native invasive species.
  - Delineation of vegetation of highest quality.
  - General land cover data update.
- Complete baseline plant plot survey or ecological assessment of the entire unit if funding and time allows. At a minimum complete plot survey and update boundaries of native plant communities (oak woodlands, savanna, and sand/ gravel prairies) prior to restoration.
- Complete annual plant community observational surveys after restoration to monitor invasives and determine success in oak and understory regeneration.
- Complete observational animal surveys, including insect, bird and amphibian/reptile following plant surveys.
- Monitor breeding and migrating bird populations after buckthorn removal activities to determine effects on populations.

## The Plan

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: Spring – summer of first season complete baseline plot survey or ecological assessment of native plant communities and other land covers within unit if funding allows.

Cost = contractor cost, native plant communities: \$8,000.00

Cost = contractor cost, for entire unit: \$15,000.00

Year 2: Summer, complete observational animal surveys

Cost = parks staff time

Annually: Summer: complete observational plant and animal surveys for each defined land cover type

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Use survey data to develop plan to restore and convert upland land cover to quality savanna, oak woodlands, or prairie. Use the following Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheets for restoration requirements and metrics: Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest for the upland oak woodlands, Southern Dry Prairie for designated sand/gravel prairie areas, and Southern Dry Savanna for south, southwestern facing bluff areas. In addition to these communities, restore all other land cover types to reduce the amount of non-native species by 80% or more, and maintain control of non-native species so that there is an observable regeneration of canopy tree and native ground vegetation. Determine if conversion of planted conifers and mowed field to native prairie or oak woodlands is beneficial and cost effective.

### Tasks:

- Draft two separate plans detailing the specifications for:
  - Project 1: Savanna conversion and sand gravel prairie restoration which will include:
    - A measurable reduction in woody understory plants, including buckthorn, sumac, and aspen to restore the oak savanna and prairie communities.
    - An increase in native diversity among the herbaceous community.
    - Observable regeneration of bur oaks.
  - Project 2: Oak and mixed woodland restoration which will include:
    - Conversion of mowed turf and conifer plantations to prairie if warranted.
    - Increase diversity in native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants following removal of non-natives.
    - Achieve observable regeneration of oaks and black cherry.
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3 August – September, draft plans and apply for funding for both projects.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3, Year 4 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractors for both projects

Cost = parks staff time

Year 4 – Year 6 Complete restoration of both projects within unit  
Cost = \$400,000.00

### Objective 3:

Continue maintenance to ensure establishment and success of established native prairie areas and savanna area along Winthrop by eliminating 90% or more of invasives found within 3 years and maintain this level annually.

### Tasks:

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use contractor to treat and remove invasives from prairies.
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: survey inventory info  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1-3: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives  
Cost = contractor cost \$52,816

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies  
Cost = contractor cost \$6800.00

### Objective 4:

Draft a three year maintenance plan that will include tasks and projected costs for oak woods, savanna, and native prairies, pursuant to associated MN Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheet. Implement plan and revise after three years.

### Tasks:

- Draft a three year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type maintenance needs.
- Secure funding for three year plan through state grant program or county funds and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three year contract. At a minimum include all listed below.
- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in non-natives in restored areas of 80% or more, including buckthorn, honeysuckle, locust, Siberian Elm, and emerging non-natives. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants in the woodlands and grasses and flowers in the savanna and prairie areas following the removal of non-natives.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume and timeline of foliar spraying following three year mark.
- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.

## The Plan

- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs, shrubs and trees, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate native seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.
  - Obtain shrub saplings from MN Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.
  - Achieve observable regeneration of oaks by planting saplings throughout the project site as specified in the objective. Stagger the years of planting oak saplings to prevent oak wilt transfer by differing age classes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 5 July- August: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor  
Cost = park staff time

Year 6 - 9 October: maintenance to be completed  
Cost = \$51,260.00

Year 7 – 9 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs and oak trees  
Cost = To Be Determined

### Objective 5:

Work with forester to map current oak wilt and develop an oak wilt management plan for this unit.

### Tasks:

- Survey the woodlands and GPS polygon boundaries around active oak wilt sites.
- Survey for natural regeneration and determine if oak tree planting is required.
- Draft plan including: sites, access, management methods and costs.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 6: July – Sept, map oak wilt, survey for natural regeneration  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 6: October – December, draft oak wilt management plan  
Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 6:

Gather wetland information and complete wetland surveys for restoration decision making

### Tasks:

- Gather existing State wetland data.
- Complete plant surveys on wetlands that lack existing data.
- Prioritize wetlands to determine if restoration is cost effective.
- Work with local watershed district and state agencies to secure funding and coordinate restoration of wetlands.



### Schedule and Costs:

Year 6: July – August, complete assessment of wetlands

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 7:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 8:

Ensure the long term preservation of this unit, especially sensitive native plant communities.

### Tasks:

- No development within the designated native plant communities beyond approved unpaved trails.
- Identify and remove rogue trails causing erosion or negative impact.
- Draft a flail and mow plan that highlights cutting widths and time of year to complete activities.
- Additional recreation uses, park features, trails should be assessed to determine environmental impact prior to implementation.
- Off-road cycling trails should follow implementation guidelines when proposed.
- A public engagement process of park amenities should involve environmental groups.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1 October - November: identify rogue trails, review mowing patterns

Year 1,2: December – Jan. : draft mowing plan for unit

Year 2. April – May: reestablish rogue trails, revegetate and regrade

Cost = parks staff time, conservation corps for trail establishment. \$3000.00 for vegetation materials.

# The Plan

## Management Unit 5

### Unit Stats:

Dominant land cover type: Oak woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep banks, creek corridor

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: Low

Management Priority: Medium

### Unit Description:

This is a relatively short, narrow creek corridor, with a mature forest canopy over Battle Creek. Upper slope areas are a dry oak woodland dominated by a mix of oaks, like other forest areas to the east, with river bottom species in low areas along the creek. Historically much of this corridor was not farmed likely due to the terrain and soils. The tree canopy was more open than it is presently, and many old growth oaks still exist throughout the woodlands. The understory has high density invasion of buckthorn; other shrub and ground species are sparse, and similar to those found in other dry oak woodland areas of the park. Battle Creek flows from the east to west through the site. The water quality of the creek is good, with reed canary grass, sedges, and other forbs along the meandering banks. Small fish, mussels, and amphibians are evident in the creek. Narrow dirt foot paths follow the creek and occasionally traverse the slopes. Deer and heron tracks are evident.

This area serves as a connecting corridor between larger tracts of land for wildlife.

Dry oak forest covers about half of Battle Creek Park, but mature forests are uncommon in the Metro Region. Creeks with mature forest canopy cover are rare habitat types in this watershed and the urbanized Twin Cities area.

### Management Issues

Plant and animal survey information for this entire unit is lacking and needs to be updated.

Riparian area and creek shoreline over health is unknown and survey information needs to be updated for future restoration decision making.

This unit is inundated by non-native invasive species, particularly highly dense stands of buckthorn. Extent of invasive trees within the woodlands is unknown.

Education and outreach with neighbors and adjacent school can be increased to promote the preservation and protection of this area.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Coordinate initial and ongoing surveys (annually) of plants, birds, and other animal species in this community area, and map areas with invasive species or other problems.

### Tasks:

- Identify areas with highest vegetation quality and areas where non-native species are a problem. At a minimum, create the following:
  - Distribution map of non-native invasive species.
  - Delineation of vegetation of highest quality.
  - General land cover data update.
- Complete baseline plant plot survey or ecological assessment of the entire unit if funding and time allows.
- Complete observational animal surveys, including insect, bird and amphibian/reptile following plant surveys.
- Annually complete observational plant community surveys after non-natives removal to determine success in oak and understory regeneration and to locate reestablishing invasives.
- Annually monitor breeding and migrating bird populations after buckthorn removal activities to determine effects on populations.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: Spring – summer of first season complete baseline plot survey or ecological assessment of unit.  
Cost = contractor cost \$8,000.00

Annually, July: ongoing surveys to monitor area following restoration.

### Objective 2:

Complete inventory of riparian zone and creek shoreline for restoration decision making

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with the local watershed district and parks soil and water division to complete a shoreline assessment.
- Assessment should identify problem areas and list shoreline restoration options to be installed in the future.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2: July – August, complete minimum surveys to inventory the majority of invasive and native plant species following restoration.  
Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 3:

Restore and convert upland land cover types to native plant communities using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheet for Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest to determine restoration requirements and metrics for the upland oak woodlands. Restore riparian areas to reduce the amount of non-native species by 80% or more and maintain control of non-native species so that there is an observable regeneration of canopy tree and native ground vegetation.

## The Plan

### Tasks:

- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type restoration and conversion.
  - Focus will be on restoration of the oak woodlands primarily and riparian areas secondary.
  - There is a stand of planted conifers and an area of old field that is currently mowed. Determine if the benefit to convert these areas to oak woodlands is cost effective.
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3 August – September, draft plan and apply for funding

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3, Year 4 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor

Cost = parks staff time

Year 4 – Year 6 Complete restoration of unit

Cost = \$168,935.00

### Objective 4:

Connect parks education and communication staff with nearby school to determine interest in using parkland for projects or outdoor education and develop plan. School has completed buckthorn removal projects in the past and shown interest. Send information on restoration efforts to adjacent neighbors prior to the start of project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, 2 school year, connect with school staff and develop plan

Cost = parks staff time

Year 4, March – Provide information and educate neighbors on restoration project

Cost = parks staff time



## Management Unit 6

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Wetlands and active use  
Dominant soil type: silt loam  
Dominant Terrain: rolling hills  
Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Oak openings and barrens  
Government recognition and protection status: N/A  
Community Structure and Quality: Low  
Management Priority: Medium

### Unit Description

This unit consist of a series of open water wetlands, in stream of Battle Creek, that were constructed by the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District for flood control. These wetlands are surrounded by a mix of native shrubs, and non-natives such as amur maple, reed canary grass and cattails. Active use area of around 15 acres consists of pavilions, picnic areas, open turf, and a water park feature within the center of the unit. One large section of turf that remains is on the west side of the site adjacent to McKnight Road. Within this turf are stands of conifers and amur maples. North within the site is a conifer plantation that was planted in the late 1980s surrounded by mixed woods to the east and west, with these sections of woods containing some old growth oak trees. There are also conifers that were planted on the west and southwest corner of the unit. There is a grove of old growth oak trees on the south side abutting Upper Afton Road and west of the park entrance road. In 2016, a restoration project began that successfully converted 7.47 acres of old field and 2.51 acres of unused turf grass areas into planted native prairie. The areas north of the pavilion were planted with Minnesota State Seed Mix 35-241 (Mesic Prairie General) and the areas to the south were planted with State Seed Mix 35-221 (Dry Prairie General).

Although this area is geared toward active use, there is quality wildlife habitat that is used by numerous grassland birds, insects, and mammals such as whitetail deer, fox, and coyotes.

### Management Issues

The planted native prairie areas contain herbaceous and encroaching woody invasives.

The conifer plantations conflict with the historic landscape of open oak barrens. The conifer stands are overgrown causing trees to die off.

The mixed woodlands are overgrown with invasives, mainly buckthorn and unwanted tree overgrowth, such as boxelder, Siberian Elm, and some locust.

The use of turf grass areas, mainly the section on the west side, is unknown. Unused turf grass areas provide little to no wildlife habitat benefit.

The health of the wetland buffer areas are unknown.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Continue maintenance to ensure establishment and success of native prairie areas ongoing by eliminating 90% or more of invasives found within 3 years and maintain this level annually.

## The Plan

### Tasks:

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use contractor to treat and remove invasives from prairies.
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years.
- Complete annual survey of prairie areas at the peak of growing season to determine:
  - Quality, ensure there is an appropriate mix of grasses and forbs pursuant to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources seed mixes installed.
  - Encroachment of invasives.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: survey inventory info

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1-3: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives

Cost = contractor cost \$16,500

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies

Cost = contractor cost \$2,500.00

### Objective 2:

Maintain health of conifer stands through selective harvest. Consider plan for removal of conifer stands, focusing on north stand, for conversion to native prairie or oak woodlands.

### Tasks:

- Survey conifer stand with county forester to determine volume of removal and projected cost.
- Thin conifer stands as recommended.
- Start the planning process to determine cost/benefit of conifer conversion to native landscapes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, summer: survey conifer stands

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2. Planning process to determine conversion

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2-4, winter: thinning or removal of conifer stands.

Cost = contractor cost \$15,000.00 – \$40,000.00

### Objective 3:

Complete the restoration of the woodlands on the north side of site to reduce 80% or more of invasive species and removal of unwanted tree species to preserve and improve oak woodlands.

### Tasks:

- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type restoration and conversion. Focus will be on restoration of 3.35 mixed and 2.10 oak woodlands and conversion of 5.9 acres of mixed woods to oak woods.
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractor's completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1 August – September, draft plan and apply for funding  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1, Year 2 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 2 – Year 5 Complete restoration of unit  
Cost = \$31,573.76

### Objective 4:

Inventory the use of turf grass area, specifically the west side section, to determine which areas could be converted to native prairies.

### Tasks:

- Survey use and determine special interest groups that use existing turf.
- Delineate turf grass areas that are unused.
- Convert turf grass areas to native prairie.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, use communication and outreach staff to survey turf grass use  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 2. Delineate unused turf grass areas  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 2, August - September: draft plan and submit for funding to convert areas to native prairie  
Cost = parks staff time

## The Plan

### Objective 5:

Complete inventory of wetland buffer areas for restoration decision making

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with the local watershed district and parks soil and water division to complete a wetland buffer assessment.
- Assessment should identify problem areas and list wetland restoration options.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete assessment of wetlands

Cost = parks staff time

## Management Unit 7

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Oak Woods. Dry Oak forest on well drained soils.

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Oak openings and barrens

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: High

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description

A deciduous forest community with a canopy dominated by large pin and white oaks. Mature trees are widely spaced, have single stems, and are of varying size. There are large black cherry in the canopy as well and a few bur oaks. Smaller trees include white birch, black cherry, slippery elm, and basswood. The shrub layer is dominated by chokecherry and elder. The ground layer is patchy, with north-facing slopes dominated by various fern species, and other areas with a variety of dry forest herbs and Virginia creeper. Battle Creek flows from east to west on the north edge of this unit.

The forest is in a little-used corner of the park, with large private residences adjacent across Battle Creek. A few narrow dirt paths and deer paths cross the area. Slopes are steep, and trails are narrower and appear to have less use than most areas of the park. The forest was once part of the Ramsey County Work Farm. There is an abutting City park in the southeast corner of the park that consists of stormwater features, oak forest, and planted native prairies.

This oak forest is small, but of high quality. Mature dry oak forest covers about half the area of Battle Creek Park, but mature forests, particularly of high quality, are rare in the Metro Region.

Park neighbors have been voluntarily removing buckthorn on the north east section of this unit, which has kept a few acres within this section cleared of buckthorn. A woodland restoration focused on invasive removal (buckthorn) began in 2019 and will continue into 2022. This restoration was funded through Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Conservation Partners Legacy grant and county funds. The restoration work completed includes the removal, treatment, and burning of buckthorn piles.



## Management Issues

Though small, this is a high-quality oak forest. It can serve as a model and seed source for improvement of other forest areas in the park, both for forest structure and species composition. The forest and adjacent creek provide habitat for large raptors, migratory songbirds, and waterfowl, evident in spring field trips to the area. Removal and management of established non-natives and complete eradication of emerging non-natives should be a priority to maintain diversity of forest trees and ground vegetation. Reed canary grass has invaded the edges of the creek and wetland adjacent to the forest--it should be monitored and controlled if it begins to invade forest areas. Coordination with the City of Maplewood to complete work on abutting natural areas should be a priority.

The creek thorough this unit is a valuable resource, but serves as a corridor for emerging non-natives and shows signs of shoreline degradation in many areas. Since 2015, newer invasive non-native species have been emerging along the creek corridor and include Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*), Butterbur (*Petasites*), and bishop weed (*Aegopodium podagraria*). Known locations of these non-natives are currently being treated in an attempt to eradicate within this area.

Invasive tree species such as black locust and Siberian elm have emerged on the edges of the woodlands, especially along the south edge abutting Upper Afton Road. Toward the south area of the forest and on south slopes, some disturbance has occurred, and invasion of nettles is evident along trails and areas where canopy has been disturbed.

Control of deer population may aid in maintaining the continuing health and diversity of the oak forest community. Deer activity is evident, and browse is occurring on small trees and forest herbs.

Homeowners across the creek have extensive perennial gardens consisting of many non-native species, with some non-native species like red monarda and ligularia planted along the edge of the forest. Invasion of the native community by aggressive non-natives from this source are a problem.

## Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

### Objective 1:

Coordinate surveys of plants, birds, and other animal species in this community area, and map areas with invasive species or other problems.

### Tasks:

- Complete inventory and/ or ecological assessment to collect baseline plant vegetation data.
- Following plant inventory, parks staff will monitor plant communities annually to determine success in non-natives removal, oak regeneration, and deer control.
- Staff and volunteers can be used to complete insect and breeding and migrating bird surveys to determine management effects on populations through observation surveys.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species following restoration.

Cost = parks staff time

## The Plan

### Objective 2:

Complete inventory of creek shoreline for restoration decision making.

#### Tasks:

- Coordinate with the local watershed district and parks soil and water division to complete a shoreline assessment.
- Assessment should identify problem areas and list shoreline restoration options to be installed in the future.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species following restoration.

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 3:

Complete restoration of entire unit, converting mixed woodlands to oak woods and placing emphasis on the restoration of understory within the upland oak woodlands.

#### Tasks:

- Continue coordination of contractors completion of restoration work pursuant to project specifications entitled “Battle Creek Forest Restoration” dated April 2019 and Conservation Partners Legacy grant program approved plan.
- Add on project work as time and funding allows.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1-3: complete restoration.

Cost = \$150,000 of funding was secured for contractor services (Jan 2019)

### Objective 4:

Draft a three-year maintenance plan that will include ongoing maintenance tasks and projected costs. Implement plan and revise after three years.

#### Tasks:

- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in non-natives in restored areas of 80% or more, including buckthorn, honeysuckle, locust, Siberian elm, and emerging non-natives. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer plants in this area following the removal of non-natives using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheet for Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest as a guide for plant composition.
- Secure funding for three year plan through state grant program or county funds.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3-6: implement maintenance plan.

Cost = \$25,550 for contractor services

### Objective 5:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 6:

Increase education and outreach for adjacent landowners and general public

### Tasks:

- Host an annual meeting with adjacent neighbors and general public to better connect people to the parkland and include the following topics:
  - Promote ecological awareness in an effort to expand restoration and the use of native plants on private lands.
  - Talk with adjacent landowners to suggest control of non-native perennial plantings.
  - Restoration and maintenance work update.
- Send mailing update to neighbors on restoration work completed.
- Coordinate with a minimum of two volunteers per year to complete observational surveys or invasive species removal within the unit.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement outreach

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 7:

Ensure the long term preservation of this unit

### Tasks:

- Limit recreation, development and encroachment by adjoining land uses, such as the water recreation features and picnic areas to the west.

## The Plan

- No increase in number or size of trails should be considered within this area and remove rogue trails, primarily those causing erosion issues.

### Schedule and Costs:

Ongoing coordination  
Cost = parks staff time

## Management Unit 8

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Oak Woods.

Dominant soil type: silt loam

Dominant Terrain: flat with rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors
- MN Native plant Community
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate
  - MHs37a - Red Oak - White Oak Forest, Mesic Hardwood Forest System. Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest. 72 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: Medium

### Unit Description

This is mainly a deciduous forest community, with large white and bur oaks dominant, and some large red oaks. Bur and white oaks with spreading canopies originally grew in a more open conditions. This is shown in historic aerial photos and pre-settlement data. Dry oak forest communities cover about half the area of Battle Creek Park, but mature forests of this type with large canopy trees are rare in the Metro Region. Subcanopy, shrub, and ground communities consisting of elderberry, ninebark, but with less diversity, and much invasion by buckthorn and honeysuckle, especially on south, southwest facing aspects. Sections of the unit have had buckthorn removal completed in the past decade with no follow up maintenance completed. The buckthorn through much of the area now consists of 2 -3 inch diameter at breast height and high density stands. There are numerous invasive tree species throughout the unit as well, consisting of Siberian elm and black locust. Plantations of white spruce and red pines have been planted in several areas within the forest, and are now mature in size. These plantations are overcrowded and should be thinned. Approximately 11 acres of these conifer plantations is slated for removal and conversion to oak woods. Several paved trails form loops through the woodland. A 35-acre fully fenced in off-leash dog area is located in the west portion of this unit.

Wildlife using of this area include migrating warblers, waterfowl, shorebirds, woodpeckers, raptors, turtles, and a variety of frog species. Diversity of wetland community, large oaks, and the adjacent old field contribute to diversity of wildlife in this area.

Numerous small, emergent wetlands are enclosed within the forest in low areas. Vegetation communities among these vary greatly in size, diversity, and quality. Some are dominated by sedges, others by cattails or reed canary grass, and some with forest canopy and understory fringing the wetland. Amphibian and bird use varies among the wetlands as indicated in species lists included in the Appendix.



### Management Issues

Plant and animal survey information for this entire unit is lacking and needs to be updated.

This unit is inundated by non-native invasive species, particularly highly dense stands of buckthorn, and needs to be restored. This unit is spatially large and there is a high projected cost for initial restoration targeting the removal of buckthorn and honeysuckle. Securing funding for initial restoration of the unit could pose a problem, especially if removal of invasive tree species is included in restoration. Parceling the unit into subsections for restoration phases may be required.

There are areas of quality habitat and wetlands within the off-leash dog area. An inventory of the off-leash dog area is required to determine size and quality of remaining habitat types. Once these habitats are identified the need for restoration and ongoing protection of these areas can be determined. This may include restricting areas of quality habitat from off-leash dog use temporarily or indefinitely.

The wetlands in this unit are very important as they provide habitat and improve surface and groundwater quality. Survey data is lacking and inventories of each wetland should be completed and include, at a minimum, vegetation transect surveys and observation surveys of birds, amphibians, and reptiles. The focus would be to determine management recommendations to protect or increase diversity. Other agencies, specifically the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency wetland monitoring program and the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District, may be available to help partner to complete surveys and restoration of the wetlands.

The trails in this unit are well established and include a paved loop and numerous grass trails that are mowed. The maintenance of these trails, mainly including the width and timing of flailing and mowing of trail edges needs to be defined to minimize impact on the resources.

Several pine and spruce plantations were planted within this unit. According to the historic aerial photos the first of the plantations were established in the late 1960s to early 1970s, with the other plantations planted following this time frame. All of these plantations understory are bare or consist of buckthorn. Management or conversion of the plantations is necessary.

Given heavy trail use, there are many opportunities in this area for interpretive signage, related to forest community, non-native species, wetland diversity, and prairie restoration.

Deer browse will continue to be an issue within this unit. Control of the deer population is necessary to prevent over browsing of natural regeneration of shrubs and trees.

Adjacent school may offer opportunities to expand prairie restoration or include students in management and interpretive activities in the Park.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete plant and animal surveys within the upland portions of the entire unit prior to and following restoration planning and implementation. Natural resource manager will determine which level of plant survey will be completed, which will be heavily dictated by time and funding.

## The Plan

### Tasks:

- Identify areas with highest vegetation quality and areas where non-native species are a problem. At a minimum, create the following:
  - Distribution map of non-native invasive species.
  - Delineation of vegetation of highest quality.
  - General land cover data update.
- Complete baseline plant plot survey or ecological assessment of the entire unit if funding and time allows.
- Complete observational animal surveys, including insect, bird and amphibian/reptile following plant surveys.
- Monitor plant community after non-natives removal to determine success in oak and understory regeneration.
- Monitor breeding and migrating bird populations after buckthorn removal activities to determine effects on populations.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: Spring – summer of first season complete baseline plot survey or ecological assessment of unit.

Cost = contractor cost \$15,000.00

### Objective 2:

Restore and convert upland land cover types to native plant communities using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community fact sheet for Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest to determine restoration requirements and metrics for the oak woodlands.

### Tasks:

- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type restoration and conversion. Restoration will likely be partitioned into phases in order to provide adequate funding and time to restore entire unit. If phased each project will follow the same schedule below.
  - Focus will be on restoration of the oak woodlands and conversion of around 11 acres of conifer plantation to oak woods.
  - Plan should include steps for public education and awareness of conifer to oak woods conversion areas and to thin remaining conifer stands by about half to improve stand health. As these plantations die, replace them with native species (this may be fifty years in the future).
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund restoration project.
- Complete restoration of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing restoration requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete restoration of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1 August – September, draft plan and apply for funding

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1, Year 2 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor

Cost = parks staff time

Year 2 – Year 5 Complete restoration of unit

Cost = \$399,880.00

### Objective 3:

Following initial restoration: complete ongoing maintenance of unit to control re-emerging non-native invasive vegetation specifically buckthorn, at an eradication level of 80% or more and increase diversity of native vegetation pursuant to native plant community fact sheet.

### Tasks:

- Draft a 10-year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type maintenance needs and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three year contract. At a minimum include tasks listed below.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume and timeline of foliar spraying following three year mark.
- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.
- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs, shrubs and trees, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate woodland seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.
  - Obtain shrub saplings from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.
  - Achieve observable regeneration of oaks by planting saplings throughout the project site as specified in the objective. Stagger the years of planting oak saplings to prevent oak wilt transfer by differing age classes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 5 July- August: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor

Cost = park staff time

Year 6 - 9 October: maintenance to be completed, foliar spray and/or woodland burn

Cost = \$66,136.50

Year 7 – 9 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs and oak trees

Cost = \$61,083.00

## The Plan

### Objective 4:

Gather wetland information to prioritize wetland survey and restoration needs.

#### Tasks:

- Gather existing State wetland data.
- Complete plant surveys on wetlands that lack existing data.
- Prioritize wetlands to determine if restoration is cost effective.
- Work with local watershed district and state agencies to secure funding and coordinate restoration of wetlands.

### Objective 5:

Control deer population

#### Tasks:

- Complete annual survey of area.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

### Objective 6:

Work with internal staff and dog park patrons to improve wildlife habitat within the off-leash dog park area.

#### Tasks:

- Survey and prioritize habitats within the OLDA that warrant protection and restoration. An example would be to restore existing native wildflower areas to benefit insects.
- Work to obtain funding for restoration and preservation of these areas.
- Fence off areas to ensure preservation.

### Objective 7:

Maintain trails to have the least impact on the natural habitat.

#### Tasks:

- Inventory unpaved trails and close and revegetate unneeded rogue trails.
- Draft a flail and mow plan that highlights cutting widths and time of year to complete activities.
- Drive trails annually to determine trees to trim or remove to protect trails and park users.

### Objective 8:

Continue current types of recreation uses to avoid impact of natural resources.



## Tasks:

- Do not expand recreational amenities beyond what currently exists in this unit without a thorough review of environmental impacts.
- Off-road cycling trails should follow the implementation guidelines when proposed.

## Management Unit 9

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Prairie and emergent wetlands

Dominant soil type: silt loam

Dominant Terrain: rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: Medium

### Unit Description

This unit consists of 62.79 acres, of which 20.3 acres of old field was converted to native prairie starting in 1996 and continuing into the early 2000s. These are now well established mesic prairies dominated by big blue stem grasses. A low central portion includes a linked group of emergent wetlands with sparse fringe vegetation and dominated by cattails in most incidences. These freshwater emergent wetlands overflow east to west. There are 4 plots of conifer plantations on the edges of the unit. In reviewing historical aerial photos, the three southern/western plantations were planted in the mid 70s and the plantations in the northeast corner were planted in the late to mid-1990s. There are 25.49 acres of mixed woodlands within the unit. The north and western most section of mixed woodlands are dominated by larger old growth oaks and were historically more of an open canopy oak dominated system.

Deer and a variety of open meadow and edge bird species are evident in these area, including white-throated and song sparrows, cardinals, finches, and others. Deer are seen frequently in the area, with many "bedding areas" close to tree groves. Raptors, woodpeckers, and songbirds such as warblers, white-throated sparrows, chickadees, and finches are part of this community.

Particularly if other nearby areas of the Ramsey County Work Farm can be managed for the same species.

### Management Issues

It has yet to be determined if the established prairies are providing quality grassland habitat for birds and insects.

The prairies are constantly being encroached by non-native invasive herbs and tree species, such as black locust, Siberian elm, spotted knapweed, and emerging tansy. The mixed woodlands are dominated by buckthorn and undesirable deciduous trees, such as boxelder, Siberian elm, and black locust.

Unwanted trees and shrubs, mainly buckthorn, Siberian elm, boxelder, black locust, etc. are high in density within the mixed woodlands area, choking out existing quality trees and preventing oak regeneration. The conifer plantations are out of place in this entire unit and separate naturally transitioning native land cover types. The conifer plantations provide little wildlife habitat and take up space where native landscapes could exist to better provide habitat for local wildlife.

Can diversity of the wetland edges be increased with plantings or other management and would the cost of wetland restoration be worth the habitat benefits in this area?

## The Plan

Invasive non-native species dominate surrounding lands, including landowners to the east and on adjacent Ramsey County correction lands to the south.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Determine and complete survey methods necessary to help define the diversity level and habitat quality of the prairies to help guide resource decision making.

#### Tasks:

- Coordinate with local and state agencies, such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Xerces Society, to help determine sound survey methods for plant and insect data collection.
- Parks staff complete surveys if applicable or hire contractor to complete survey and draft restoration guide.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: Jan – Feb. determine survey method

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: July – September, complete surveys of prairies

Cost = contractor cost \$15,000.00

#### Objective 2:

Maintain and preserve existing prairies by eliminating 90% or more of invasives found within 3 years and maintain this level annually.

#### Tasks :

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use conservation corps crew or contractor to remove invasives from prairies.
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years.
- Complete annual survey of prairie areas at the peak of growing season to determine encroachment of invasives.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 2, mid to late July: inventory invasives

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3-6: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives

Cost = contractor cost \$5,000.00

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies

Cost = contractor cost \$5,150.11

### Objective 3:

Restore and convert uplands within this unit into a quality mix of converging native prairies and open oak woodlands with a canopy up to 50%.

#### Tasks:

- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for each land cover type conversion.
  - Plan should detail items necessary for the conversion of the 6.06 acres of conifer plantations to oak woods (1.44 acres) and native prairie (4.61 acres). The southernmost plantation of red oaks could remain if proven to provide some wildlife habitat, and conversion of 25.49 acres of mixed woods to native prairie and oak woods
  - Plan should include steps for public education and awareness of conifer to oak woods and prairie conversion and to thin remaining conifer stands by about half to improve stand health.
- Acquire funding through state grant programs and/ or county parks to fully fund conversion project.
- Complete conversion of land cover types.
  - Draft project specifications detailing conversion requirements.
  - Hire contractor to complete conversion of each land cover type within project specifications.
  - Oversee contractors completion of restoration project.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 3 August – September, draft plan and apply for funding to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources CPL grant program and/or county funds

Cost = parks staff time

Year 3, Year 4 December – Jan, draft project specifications and hire contractor

Cost = parks staff time

Year 4 – Year 7 Complete conversion of unit

Cost = \$114,345.27

### Objective 4:

Complete assessment of wetlands to determine wetland survey and restoration needs.

#### Tasks:

- Gather existing State wetland data.
- Complete plant surveys on wetlands that lack existing data.
- Prioritize wetlands to determine if restoration is cost effective.
- Work with local watershed district and state agencies to plan restoration of wetlands if found to be beneficial.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 5, April – September: Gather existing wetland data and coordinate vegetation surveys on priority wetlands.

Cost = parks staff time

## The Plan

Year 5-6, September – March: Draft wetland restoration plan for sites to be beneficial and cost effective  
Cost = parks staff time

Objective 5:

Coordinate with adjacent landowner and Ramsey county corrections department to promote habitat improvement on lands.

Tasks:

- Coordinate with Ramsey county corrections department to determine if restoration on park land can be continued onto corrections adjacent property.
- Host an annual meeting with adjacent neighbors and general public to better connect people to the parkland and include the following topics:
  - Promote ecological awareness in an effort to expand restoration and the use of native plants on private lands.
  - Talk with adjacent landowners to suggest control of non-native perennial plantings.
  - Restoration and maintenance work update.
- Send mailing update to neighbors on restoration work completed.
- Coordinate with a minimum of two volunteers per year to complete observational surveys or invasive species removal within the unit.



## Management Unit 10

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: floodplain forest

Dominant soil type: silt loam

Dominant Terrain: flat

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered.
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- Scientific and Natural Area: Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area.
- MN Native plant Community.
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate and outstanding
  - FFs68a - Silver Maple - (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest. Southern Floodplain Forest. 107.7 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation
  - MRn93 - Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh. Southern Floodplain Forest. 13.3 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation
  - WFn55b - Black Ash - Yellow Birch - Red Maple - Basswood Swamp (Eastcentral). 11.7 acres Northern Wet Ash Swamp. Vulnerable to Extirpation

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description

This unit is the Pigs Eye segment of Battle Creek Regional Park and consists of an open water lake (Pigs Eye Lake) of around 629 acres, which is connected to Pool 2 of the Mississippi River. Since this lake is connected to the river, the water level can fluctuate, with an average maximum depth of around 4 feet. The lake is recognized as a public water by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, but since the water body is connected to the Mississippi River, the United States Army Corp of Engineers has regulatory jurisdiction over the water body. Another surface water contributor to Pigs Eye Lake is Battle Creek, which discharges through a series of wetlands on the north side of the lake.

The lake has the longest section of natural shoreline in the park system. The lake edge, where vegetation grows, is prime habitat for waterfowl, shoreline birds, raptors, amphibians, and reptiles. The substrate of the lake is a soft bottom throughout. Within the open lake area there is very little structure or submerged aquatic vegetation, due to the water clarity, which is less than one meter and high turbidity. The open lake produces wind-induced shoreline erosion and provides little to no habitat for waterfowl, native fish or other aquatic species in its current condition.

In 2014, the United States Army Corps of Engineers began working with the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department to discuss the construction of islands within the lake to address some of the environmental concerns. Since this time, the United States Army Corps of Engineers completed a feasibility study for constructing island habitat enhancements and a portion of the funding was secured through a habitat grant approved by the Lessard Sam's outdoor heritage council through the Clean Water Land and Legacy amendments Outdoor Heritage Fund. A construction and design plan were completed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the island construction began in 2021 with additional funding provided by Ramsey County. The project will enhance and restore backwater habitat by creating island and wetland features. Project features include six islands, sand benches, marsh habitat, and land plantings. These enhancements will improve aquatic and land habitat as well as maintaining the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake. This project will utilize clean dredged material from the Mississippi to construct the islands, similar to the numerous islands the United States Army Corps of Engineers has constructed in river pools to

## The Plan

the south of the metro.

The majority of the Pigs Eye Lake segment land cover consists of mixed woods located on a peninsula of land that separates the lake from the main channel of the Mississippi River. This peninsula of land is historically a floodplain forest, but is presently defined as a mixed woods with moderate biodiversity significance, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department system plan, due to a number of invasive and tree species that have encroached into the area, such as buckthorn and boxelder, however, the woods consists of typical floodplain trees such as cottonwood, silver maple, green ash, willows, American elm, and some swamp white oak. The constant flooding of the area creates an open understory with few shrubs or saplings. Ground cover can consist of forest pools, mucky depressions, bare silt or sand, and dense patches of wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) or impatiens (*Impatiens capensis* or *I. pallida*), which can all constantly shift due to movement of water. The wetlands within the park consist of native vegetation, such as prairie cord grass, and various rushes and sedges. Invasive cattails and reed canary grass also dominate a lot of the wetland edges. The east side of the lake has some cattail wetlands and patches of lotus. The island in the south portion of the park is of great significance, outstanding biodiversity and is a state protected scientific natural area: Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area. This island, around 137 acres, is a floodplain forest of green ash, silver maple, cottonwood, and black willow which provides excellent nesting habitat for colonial waterbirds. The Pigs Eye Lake Island rookery is the largest and longest-occupied site for colonial nesting birds in the metro area, and among the largest in the state.

Floodplain forest systems as large as the Pigs Eye Lake segment are rare within the metro and additional preservation and protection, especially for the designated Scientific and Natural Area, should be ongoing. The Pigs Eye Lake segment is also within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, which shares the boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This section of park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations (State statute under Minnesota Rule 6106) which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor. The Pigs Eye Lake segment is included in the "National Great River Park" and is also defined as an Environmental Natural Area, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department system plan, which warrants additional protection and preservation.

Surrounding land use has had historic and current environmental impacts in this area. The open space, owned by the city of Saint Paul, abutting the Pigs Eye Lake segment to the north, was historically the largest unpermitted dump site in the state and was listed as a federal superfund site. Past remediation efforts continued cleanup and monitoring is being completed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The Met Council wastewater treatment facility is located to the northeast of the site and land use practices, such as abandoned pond holdings, previously used for containing ash sludge, are on the edge of the parkland. To the east is commercial and industrial land use consisting of railroad yards and shipping docks. Barges are docked and line the channel to Pigs Eye Lake throughout the shipping season. Recreation within the unit is minimal because of limited to no access from land due to surrounding land use. Kayakers and other small boats use the lake.

The wildlife diversity of the park is very high and includes a variety of nesting songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, and wild turkeys. Larger mammals include white-tailed deer, coyotes, red fox, raccoons, and river otters. The Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park is especially unique and contains the heron rookery, nesting area for bald eagles, and habitat for countless amphibian, reptiles, migratory waterfowl, and shorebirds. Fish species within the lake consist of common native river fish, such as black bullheads, crappie, bluegill, catfish, sunfish, and freshwater drum. Invasive fauna species within the lake include zebra mussels and carp.

Management unit 10 provides a unique opportunity to plan for climate resiliency and adaptation. The Friends of the Mississippi River and other stakeholders have expressed an interest in actively studying how floodplain community assemblages fare with current and future climate conditions.

## Management Issues

Continued coordination with the United States Army Corps of Engineers is required to ensure the island building project will be successful. A native planting plan and implementation is required, beyond the current willow and grass base design, to ensure quality wildlife habitat following island build.

The extent of survey work being completed by State and local agencies is unknown. Internal park surveys of the Pigs Eye Lake segment are severely lacking and will need to be completed to gather more information about the current state of the area prior to any restoration work.

There is pressure for increased access and recreation within the Pigs Eye Lake segment.

Coordination and communication with surrounding land use owners is lacking and knowledge of development or restoration on adjacent lands is unknown.

The deer population can exceed the carry capacity of the land in this area.

## Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

### Objective 1:

Communicate with United States Army Corps of Engineers monthly to review status and receive updates of island building progress until islands are established.

### Tasks:

- Review current design, budget and plan and discuss any changes.
- List stakeholders to involve in developing native planting plan.
- Engagement with stakeholders to develop and implement plan following island build.

### Schedule and Costs:

2020 - 2024, Monthly: meet with United States Army Corps of Engineers

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Review existing survey data and determine and complete survey methods necessary to define the diversity level and habitat quality to guide resource decision making.

### Tasks:

- Connect with agencies, such as the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and National Park Service, to find most current survey information completed in the area.
- Coordinate with local and state agencies, such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, to help determine sound survey methods for plant and animal data collection.
- Surveys will focus on determining restoration needs for shoreline erosion, invasive plant species removal, and reforestation of floodplain tree species, such as cottonwood.

## The Plan

- Parks staff complete surveys if applicable or hire contractor to complete survey and draft restoration guide.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: Jan – March. Complete review of existing survey data and determine required surveys and methods to meet objective

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: April – October, complete surveys of Pigs Eye Lake segment and draft guide

Cost = contractor cost \$20,000.00

### Objective 3:

Ensure that this unit exists foremost as natural land for wildlife habitat and that all proposed recreation and development will have minimal impact on resources and avoid sensitive areas.

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with all stakeholders, primarily environmental groups and government agencies, to review any proposed development plans.
- While reviewing plans, the following should be considered at a minimum, but not limited to:
  - No development or recreation will be considered on or around the south portion of the island and peninsula. This area will remain protected for the protection of the scientific natural area heron rookery and follow all state rules.
  - Natural phenomena, such as hydric soils, areas prone to flooding, water features, and wetlands, make up most of the park and will dictate which recreational amenities should be planned for the area. These entities will not be altered for development.
  - List and follow all federal and state regulations, including, but not limited to wetlands will remain protected under the State and Federal Wetland Conservation Act, county recognized Environmental Protection zone, Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area rules, national park rules, etc.

### Schedule and Costs:

Ongoing: as development is proposed.

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 4:

Build stronger relationships with surrounding land use representatives to promote the environmental preservation and improvement of the area.

### Tasks:

- Connect with surrounding landowners (St. Paul Parks, Railroad personnel, Met Council staff) annually to share work being completed by the parks department and learn about tasks being completed on surrounding lands.
- Share natural resource survey data and promote the importance of preserving unique features in and around the park.



### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: ongoing  
Cost = parks staff time  
Objective 5:

Control deer population

### Tasks:

- Complete annual survey of area.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

## Suburban Pond Management Unit 11

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: wetland  
Dominant soil type: silty clay loam  
Dominant Terrain: flat  
Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Oak openings and barrens  
Government recognition and protection status: N/A  
Community Structure and Quality: Low  
Management Priority: Low

### Unit Description

The Suburban Pond Management Unit consists of a large shallow open water wetland complex consisting of freshwater emergent and pond wetland types surrounded by upland consisting of mowed turf on the southwest corner and mixed woods on the east. Suburban pond was historically a shallow water wetland that started to be used as a stormwater collection pond when the area was developed in the 1960s. The watershed draining to the pond consists of dense impervious urban land use. The wetland complex is inundated with invasive vegetation, consisting of cattails on the fringe and highly dense stands of purple loosestrife. The upland areas were historically wider open with larger trees likely consisting of oaks. The mixed woods presently consist of boxelder, some oak trees with an understory dominated by buckthorn and other invasives.

### Management issues

Complete survey information of vegetation types is lacking throughout the unit to give a clear assessment of restoration needs.

The invasive species are prominent throughout the entire unit. Buckthorn dominates the understory throughout the mixed woods area and aquatic invasive, such as narrowleaf cattail and purple loosestrife dominate the wetland area, providing little room for native species.

Encroachments, litter, and dumping are a constant problem within this unit. A lot of trash accumulates on the north side of the unit, which is adjacent to numerous commercial and fast food restaurants. Dumping is often found on the east side adjacent to the large apartment complex.

## The Plan

The mowed turf area provides no to little natural resource habitat and only benefit neighbors for recreational opportunities.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete vegetation surveys and map invasive species or other problems to create general restoration plan.

#### Tasks:

- Identify areas with highest vegetation quality and areas where non-native species are a problem. At a minimum, create the following:
  - Distribution map of non-native invasive species.
  - Delineation of vegetation of highest quality.
  - General land cover data update.
- Draft restoration plan for unit that will detail invasive species removal and costs.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: July – August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September – December, draft general restoration plan for unit.  
Cost = parks staff time

#### Objective 2:

Work with parks staff to develop encroachment, littering and dumping prevention plan specifically for this unit.

#### Tasks:

- Catalog consistent littering, areas of dumping, and encroachments.
- Staff meeting to discuss option for prevention.
- Draft prevention plan or implement objectives.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: April, complete catalog  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: May -August, meet with staff and draft prevention plan  
Cost = parks staff time

#### Objective 3:

Determine appropriate use of areas that are being mowed for turf and other recreational areas within unit and manage these areas appropriately moving forward.

### Tasks:

- Determine maintenance requirements and cost for area.
- Complete neighborhood and public outreach to determine wants and needs of current area.
- Draft plan on land cover type for current area, considering factors of recreation, habitat, and maintenance of area.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: Jan -Feb, determine maintenance of current area  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: March -May, collect public input  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: June -July, draft plan  
Cost = parks staff time

## Mississippi River Bluffs Management Unit 12

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: mixed woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description

The Mississippi River Bluffs unit consists of 18 parcels, totaling 19.55 acres, scattered along the bluff line east of Highway 61, stretching from Battle Creek Regional Park to just north of the Fish Creek segment, within the city of Saint Paul. This greater bluff line, including these parcels, is an extension of the bluff lands starting near downtown Saint Paul and following the river corridor through Ramsey County, southward and beyond. These bluff lands are an extension of those found in Battle Creek Regional Park and the Fish Creek segment, which historically were more wide open canopy oak savanna, existing as Southern Dry Savanna. These were fire dependent plant communities thriving along the bluff sides. Development surrounding the bluff lines, the lack of fire and minimal restoration efforts has transformed these parcels into woodlands consisting of a mix of less desirable species, such as boxelder, invasive such as Siberian elm, black locust, and a shrub layer dominated by buckthorn, surrounding large old growth oak trees growing throughout. These woodland areas provide habitat for numerous migratory birds along the Mississippi flyway and larger mammals, such as white-tailed deer, fox, and coyote that inhabit these parcels and similar habitat that exists on adjacent private and city park parcels.

# The Plan

## Management Issues

Plant and animal survey information for this entire unit is lacking.

Determine restoration required to convert lands to oak savanna.

Overpopulation of deer can set back the natural succession of native shrubs and trees by over browsing. This area has a consistent overpopulation problem.

Encroachments and dumping from abutting neighbors are major issues that are causing negative impacts to parkland.

Education and outreach with neighbors and adjacent landowners can be increased to promote the preservation and protection of this area.

Coordination with landowners and other agencies is necessary to maintain the health of the overall bluff lands throughout the corridor.

## Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in each parcel to determine level of native and invasive plant species.

#### Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species.
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Complete assessment to determine benefit and cost of converting woodlands to a more open canopy savanna where appropriate.

#### Tasks:

- Survey bluff land oak woods to identify locations ecologically and economically beneficial for conversion to savanna.
- Determine, with county forester, trees for removal within identified savanna locations.
- Draft a plan detailing the specifications for savanna conversion using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources native plant community guidelines: Southern Dry Savanna.

### Objective 3:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

#### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 4:

Work with parks staff to develop encroachment, littering and dumping prevention plan specifically for this unit, control encroachments, and improve public education.

#### Tasks:

- Catalog consistent littering, areas of dumping, and encroachments.
- Reach out to neighbors encroaching on lands and have them stop and remove all infractions.
- Staff meeting to discuss option for continued education and prevention of encroachments and draft plan to implement objectives.
- Communicate importance of sensitive areas being impacted through social media outlets.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: April, complete inventory of encroachments, send letters to neighbors in regard to infractions.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: May -August, meet with staff and draft prevention and education plan.

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 5:

Continue coordination efforts with other involved agencies for the enhancement and preservation of the river corridor.

#### Tasks:

- Continue to be involved with Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program.
- Continue restoration planning with guidance from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.



## The Plan

Schedule and Costs:

Annually, ongoing:

Cost = parks staff time

### Fish Creek Management Unit 13

#### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: oak woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered.
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- MN Native plant Community.
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate
  - FDs37a - Oak - (Red Maple) Woodland

Community Structure and Quality: High

Management Priority: High

#### Unit Description

This Management Unit of the park is dominated by oak woodlands along steep bluff sides, which are an extension of those that exist along Battle Creek and within the Mississippi River Bluffs segment of the park. Mature oak trees dominate the unit with more red oak growing in the flatter area south on site and white oak and bur oak along the steeper hillsides. There is a mix of other tree species throughout, consisting of maple, cherry, boxelder and ironwood on north facing slopes. Oak wilt persists throughout the site, especially affecting the red oak stands in the southern portion of this unit. North of the creek, oak trees dominate on the slopes and quaking aspen and large tooth aspen stands exist on the plateaus overlooking the creek. The understory is dominated by invasive buckthorn with very sparse native shrub and herbaceous growth on the south and west side of this unit. Garlic mustard is dense throughout the site and Japanese hedge parsley is scattered throughout, mostly existing along the creek corridor. Throughout the creek corridor and north of the creek, consists of the most diverse and abundant native herbaceous layer consists of all types of native ferns and numerous flowers such as ginger and bloodroot, predominately on north facing slopes. Native grasses and wildflowers exist along the creek corridor as well.

In the years 2015 – 2018 a restoration project was completed throughout the woodlands in Management Unit 1. This project included removal of 90% of the buckthorn on site. Since this time the buckthorn regeneration has been aggressive and very dense. Foliar treatment of the site was completed unsuccessfully in 2018 and 2019. A treatment will occur again in the fall of 2020 in an effort to control the buckthorn regeneration. Two attempts to complete prescribed burns though the woodlands has occurred since the initial removal of buckthorn. A very small percentage of the woodlands was burned, mainly because of lack of fuel and weather conditions.

Historically, this unit consisted of a fire dependent more open canopy system, especially along the western facing slopes, dominated by oaks. Mature forests of this type with large canopy trees are rare in the metro region and warrant further restoration and preservation. There are numerous unofficial foot trails that exist throughout this unit and a portion of the official paved trail that dips into this unit from the city owned property. Some of the unofficial trails are well established and could be converted to established turf trails, these consist of: a loop through the south

woodlands, a trail that extends along the south side of the creek and transcends south east to the paved trail, this lies atop a service road that was created for the watershed district to be able to access creek infrastructure. There are several trails on the north side of the creek and within the corridor that have erosion issues. The wildlife diversity of the park is very high and includes a variety of nesting songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, and wild turkeys. Larger mammals include white-tailed deer, coyotes, red fox, raccoons, and river otters.

### Management Issues

Continued management of woodlands following initial restoration will be extensive and costly until regeneration of native vegetation is dominant and prescribed burns can be utilized for increased management.

Oak wilt occurs in much of the woodlands, but the extent is unknown. A forest management plan for restoration and oak wilt remediation does not exist.

Overpopulation of deer can set back the natural succession of native shrubs and trees by over browsing.

Recreation of area should not expand beyond what currently exists.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Draft a three-year maintenance plan for continued restoration efforts of oak woodlands that will include tasks and projected costs for maintenance and establishment of oaks and native understory. Implement plan and revise after three years, using the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Southern Dry-Mesic Oak (Maple) Woodland vegetation structure and composition as a guide for establishing native vegetation.

#### Tasks:

- Draft a three-year maintenance plan detailing the specifications for maintenance needs.
- Secure funding for three-year plan through state grant program or county funds and hire contractor to complete ongoing maintenance on a three-year contract. At a minimum include all listed below.
- Continue maintenance by achieving a measurable reduction in buckthorn of 80% or more in restored areas. Tools will include foliar spraying and prescribed burns.
- Increase diversity among the native shrub and herbaceous ground layer in the woodlands to allow for successful prescribed burns throughout 70% of the woodlands. Follow Minnesota Department of Natural Resources plant community guide for percent and types of vegetation to establish.
- Foliar spray emerging buckthorn every fall following initial restoration for three years. Assess continued volume and timeline of foliar spraying following three-year mark.
- Assess the need for an oak woodland burn after initial restoration. If woodland burn will be beneficial in setting back non-natives and promoting native growth, complete burn in fuel rich areas every 3 to 5 years following initial restoration.

## The Plan

- If there is limited native regeneration of herbs, shrubs and trees, observed after one season growth following restoration complete the following:
  - Increase diversity in the native herbaceous ground layer plants by casting an appropriate native seed mix in the spring or following a prescribed burn.
  - Obtain shrub saplings from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources forestry or other reliable source and plant throughout the unit at a rate that will meet the percent cover listed in native plant community fact sheet.
  - Achieve observable regeneration of oaks by planting saplings throughout the project site as specified in the objective. Stagger the years of planting oak saplings to prevent oak wilt transfer by differing age classes.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1 July- August: Draft maintenance plan and hire contractor  
Cost = park staff time

Year 2 - 3 October: maintenance to be completed  
Cost =

Year 4 – 6 spring or fall, planting of native seed, shrubs and oak trees  
Cost = TBD

### Objective 2:

Work with forester to map current oak wilt and develop an oak wilt management plan for this unit

#### Tasks:

- Survey the woodlands and GPS polygon boundaries around active oak wilt sites.
- Survey for natural regeneration and determine if oak tree planting is required.
- Draft plan including: sites, access, management methods and costs.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 4: July – Sept, map oak wilt, survey for natural regeneration  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 4: October – December, draft oak wilt management plan  
Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 3:

Control deer population to levels that protect native vegetation and allow woodland regeneration pursuant to the annual deer management plan.

#### Tasks:

- Complete annual population survey of area to determine reduction needs and methods.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt to maintain population.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: implement deer management plan

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 4:

Ensure the long-term preservation of this unit, especially sensitive native plant communities.

### Tasks:

- No development within the designated native plant communities beyond approved unpaved trails.
- Identify and remove rogue trails causing erosion or negative impact.
- Additional recreation uses, park features, and trails should be assessed to determine environmental impact prior to implementation.
- A public engagement process of park amenities should involve environmental groups.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1 October - November: identify rogue trails

Year 2. April – May: reestablish rogue trails, revegetate and regrade

Cost = parks staff time, conservation corps for trail establishment. \$3000.00 for vegetation materials.

## Fish Creek Management Unit 14

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Maple / basswood mesic woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: steep

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors
- MN Native plant Community
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate
  - FDs37a - Oak - (Red Maple) Woodland

Community Structure and Quality: High

Management Priority: High

# The Plan

## Unit Description

This Management Unit consists of steep hillsides encompassing the Fish Creek segment of the park. The land cover on the south side of the creek is north facing slopes of mesic woods consisting of maple, basswood, ironwood, and some oaks. Ferns dominate the understory. Given the aspect there is minimal invasive buckthorn growing in this area. On the north side of the creek is a south facing slope that is mostly shaded because of the steepness of the adjacent slopes. The tree cover consists of maple, basswood and oaks, with more mixed woods, including ash and aspen near the top and plateau areas. The understory is thicker consisting of more shrubs and ground cover than the south side of the creek. The present and historic canopy cover is similar at around 80-100%. Buckthorn is more dominant on the south facing slope, especially near the top of the slope and in areas where it plateaus. Given the steepness and aspect of this section there has been minimal need and accessibility issues to remove invasives along the steep hillsides. Buckthorn removal in areas that are accessible was completed under the same project completed in Management Unit 1 around 2015. Areas like this consisting of steep terrain, dominated mostly by native vegetation, are very unique in the metro and warrant further preservation.

## Management Issues

A complete inventory of area is lacking.

The area is steep, creating difficulty to access invasive species for removal.

Recreation within this area should be prohibited to protect the steep hillsides.

## Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in throughout unit to determine level of native and invasive plant species.

#### Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species.
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information.

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Draft a three-year maintenance plan in conjunction with Management Unit 1 maintenance plan, Objective 1, to include tasks and projected costs for control of invasive species in accessible areas.

#### Tasks:

- Include Management Unit 2 within Management Unit 1 maintenance plan tasks listed under Objective 1.



### Schedule and Costs:

Follow schedule and costs listed under Management Unit 1, Objective 1.

### Objective 3:

Limit recreational use of this unit.

### Tasks:

- Review the need for steep hillsides along the creek within Management Unit 1 and 2 to be defined as county Environmental Natural Areas.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, while completing surveys of area, define boundaries for environmental natural areas designation.

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information.

Cost = parks staff time

## Fish Creek Management Unit 15

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: mixed woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: low

Management Priority: Medium

### Unit Description

This unit consists of rolling hills surrounding the Fish Creek segment of the park. Due to the gradual grade, the creek moves slower throughout this unit as compared to Management Unit 1 and 2. The land cover is 80%-100% tree cover of mixed woods, including aspen, boxelder, and ash. Historically this unit was completely cleared, as seen in 1940 aerial photos, and was used for farming up to the creek edge. Invasive species dominate the understory and include mainly buckthorn and honey suckle, along with invasive tree species such as black locust and Siberian elm. White-tailed deer and other mammals, such as coyote and fox are prominent throughout the landscape. This area is also essential for woodland birds use. Recreation within the area is limited. There are very little to no walking trails and no parking access exists.

### Management Issues

The extent of native and non-native plant communities is not well defined throughout the Management Unit.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in throughout unit to determine level of native and invasive plant species so that management decisions can be defined.

# The Plan

## Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species.
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species.

## Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

## Fish Creek Management Unit 16

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: mixed woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description

In this Management Unit Fish Creek runs through a wetland complex consisting of freshwater emergent and freshwater pond wetlands. The land to the north of the creek is flat and consist of brome and reed canary grass. This area is often too wet for trees to establish and was historically farmed up the wetland edge. There are some mixed woods on the north side of the open brome field area. South of the creek is rolling hills dominated by oak woods and a small section of lowland forest surrounding the creek in the southeast corner of the site. The oaks woods also contain cherry, ash, and ironwood, amongst other hardwoods. Historically, the woodland canopy was wider open with mature oaks and fewer other species that are growing today. This hillside is predominantly north facing aspect, which prevents invasive buckthorn from becoming dense within the understory. Buckthorn is more dominant on the few western facing aspects. Oak woodlands, like contained in this unit, are rare in the metro and warrant further preservation. Recreation within the area is limited. There are very little to no walking trails and no parking access exists. White-tailed deer and other mammals, such as coyote and fox are prominent throughout the landscape. This area is also essential for woodland birds use.

### Management Issues

The extent of native and non-native plant communities is not well defined throughout the unit.

Recreation of area should not expand beyond what currently exists.

In the past surrounding neighbors use all-terrain vehicles in this area.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in throughout unit to determine level of native and invasive plant species so that management decisions can be defined.

#### Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species.
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species.

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information.

Cost = parks staff time

#### Objective 2:

Limit recreational use of this unit and ensure the long-term preservation of this unit, especially sensitive native plant communities.

#### Tasks:

- No development within the designated oak woodland communities beyond approved unpaved trails.
- Additional recreation uses, park features, and trails should be assessed to determine environmental impact prior to implementation.
- A public engagement process of park amenities should involve environmental groups.

#### Schedule and Costs:

As recreation is proposed.

#### Objective 3:

Work with parks staff to develop encroachment and park misuse prevention plan specifically for this unit, control encroachments and improve public education.

#### Tasks:

- Catalog consistent littering, areas of dumping, and encroachments and misuse of parkland.
- Share park rules with surrounding neighbors.
- Staff meeting to discuss option for continued education and prevention of encroachments and draft plan to implement objectives.

## The Plan

- Communicate importance of sensitive areas being impacted through social media outlets.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: April, complete inventory of encroachments and misuse and send letters to neighbors in regard to infractions.  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: May -August, meet with staff and draft prevention and education plan.  
Cost = parks staff time

## Fish Creek Management Unit 17

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: oak woods

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status: N/A

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: High

### Unit Description

In this Management Unit Fish Creek runs through a wetland complex consisting of freshwater emergent and freshwater pond wetlands. The land to the north of the creek is flat and consist of brome and reed canary grass. This area is often too wet for trees to establish and was historically farmed up the wetland edge. There are some mixed woods on the north side of the open brome field area. South of the creek is rolling hills dominated by oak woods and a small section of lowland forest surrounding the creek in the southeast corner of the site. The oaks woods also contain cherry, ash, and ironwood, amongst other hardwoods. Historically, the woodland canopy was wider open with mature oaks and fewer other species that are growing today. This hillside is predominantly north facing aspect, which prevents invasive buckthorn from becoming dense within the understory. Buckthorn is more dominant on the few western facing aspects. Oak woodlands, like those contained in this Management Unit, are rare in the metro and warrant further preservation. Recreation within the area is limited. There are very little to no walking trails and no parking access exists. White-tailed deer and other mammals, such as coyote and fox are prominent throughout the landscape. This area is also essential for woodland birds use.

### Management Issues

The extent of native and non-native plant communities is not well defined throughout the unit.

Recreation of area should not expand beyond what currently exists.

In the past surrounding neighbors use all-terrain vehicles in this area.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in throughout unit to determine level of native and invasive plant species so that management decisions can be defined.

### Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species.
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information.

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

Limit recreational use of this unit and ensure the long-term preservation of this unit, especially sensitive native plant communities.

### Tasks:

- No development within the designated oak woodland communities beyond approved unpaved trails.
- Additional recreation uses, park features, trails should be assessed to determine environmental impact prior to implementation.
- A public engagement process of park amenities should involve environmental groups.

### Schedule and Costs:

As recreation is proposed.

### Objective 3:

Work with parks staff to develop encroachment and park misuse prevention plan specifically for this Management Unit, control encroachments, and improve public education.

### Tasks:

- Catalog consistent littering, areas of dumping, encroachments, and misuse of parkland.
- Share park rules with surrounding neighbors.
- Staff meeting to discuss option for continued education and prevention of encroachments and draft plan to implement objectives.
- Communicate importance of sensitive areas being impacted through social media outlets.



## The Plan

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: April, complete inventory of encroachments and misuse and send letters to neighbors in regard to infractions.  
Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: May -August, meet with staff and draft prevention and education plan.  
Cost = parks staff time

### Fish Creek Management Unit 18

#### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: Prairie

Dominant soil type: sandy loam

Dominant Terrain: rolling hills

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
- This section of the park is subject to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations, state statute under Minnesota Rule 6106, which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor, any development needs to be carefully considered

Community Structure and Quality: Medium

Management Priority: Medium

#### Unit Description

The land in this Management Unit was historically homesteads and farm fields until the early 2000s. In 2013, this Fish Creek natural area was purchased by the city of Maplewood, through assistance from numerous partners. Recently after the purchase the city converted the open fields to native prairie of mostly mesic and dry short grass prairie mix. There were some remnant prairie grasses on site along hillsides that were to steep for farming. These consisted of porcupine grass and mostly little bluestem. There are also mixed woods of boxelder, cottonwood, aspen, ash, and some oak that run through the middle of the site. The management of the land is currently overseen by the city, however, the city partners closely with the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department to manage the prairie and surrounding woodlands together. Currently there are multiple oak tree research plots throughout the prairie area that are being overseen by various university researchers. This area sees the most recreation throughout the Fish Creek open space, as there is a paved trail loop and small parking area within the unit.

#### Management Issues

- Partnership between city and county should continue and be strengthened.
- Prairie is continued to be encroached by herbaceous and woody invasive vegetation.
- Passive recreation use should continue throughout unit.

#### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

##### Objective 1:

City and county staff meet annually, prior to growing season, to discuss site plans for the year.

### Tasks:

- Discuss annual restoration and maintenance items and how these could be combined over the landscape to save money.
- Share volunteer opportunities on site.
- Discuss education and outreach opportunities.

### Schedule and Costs:

Annually: April, staff meeting

Cost = parks staff time

### Objective 2:

City will continue to maintain prairies on city land. Maintenance should ensure establishment and success of established native prairie by eliminating 90% or more of invasive found within 3 years and maintain this level annually.

### Tasks:

- Inventory and map invasives encroaching in and on edges of prairies.
- Use contractor to treat and remove invasives from prairies.
- Complete prescribed burns every 3 to 5 years.

### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1, mid to late July: survey inventory info.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1-3: seasonal, maintenance to remove invasives.

Cost = contractor cost \$4,000

Every 3 to 5 years, spring. Complete prescribed burn of prairies.

Cost = contractor cost \$10,000

### Objective 3:

Complete thorough environmental review and preserve sensitive areas when considering any development in this area.

### Tasks:

- Coordinate with planning staff to determine locations and level of development acceptable within unit.
- Continue current types of passive recreation uses to avoid impact of natural resources.

### Schedule and Costs:

Ongoing as development is proposed

Cost = parks staff time

# The Plan

## Fish Creek Management Unit 19

### Unit Stats

Dominant land cover type: wet meadow

Dominant soil type: loamy sand

Dominant Terrain: flat

Marschner Presettlement Vegetation: Big Woods - Hardwoods (oak, maple, basswood, hickory)

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

Community Structure and Quality: low

Management Priority: Low

### Unit Description

This area consists of wetlands surrounded by low lying brome/reed canary grass dominated fields and a small area of mixed woodlands in the northeast corner. The wetlands are classified as freshwater emergent wetlands. The vegetation within and around the wetlands is dominated by invasive, cattails, reed canary grass, and purple loosestrife. The city of Maplewood currently owns this parcel. Archaeological digs occurred in the southern section of this parcel, closer to the creek and artifacts were discovered. The majority of the site, with the exception of the immediate wetland areas, was historically cleared and farmed in the early 1900s.

### Management Issues

The extent of native and non-native plant communities is not well defined throughout the unit.

### Management Objectives, Tasks, Schedule, and Cost

#### Objective 1:

Complete observational surveys in throughout unit to determine level of native and invasive plant species so that management decisions can be defined.

#### Tasks:

- Complete baseline observational surveys of native and non-native species
- Create a distribution map of native and non-native invasive species

#### Schedule and Costs:

Year 1: May and July - August, complete minimum surveys to capture the majority of invasive and native plant species.

Cost = parks staff time

Year 1: September, Develop maps of survey information

Cost = parks staff time

### PUBLIC SERVICES

New public services may be needed to accommodate the history/nature/recreation center dependent upon the final location of the development, and projected use. It is anticipated that additional development within existing trailhead sites and for the history/nature/recreation center will require new services for gas, water, sanitary sewer, and for communications. Once the history/nature/recreation center is established and visitor use increases, intersections and roads will need to be reviewed regularly to determine whether intersection or road improvements are necessary to accommodate traffic volumes and preserve motorized and non-motorized transportation safety.

Public transit, safety services such as police, fire, and emergency medical response will also need to be evaluated during the planning and implementation stages for various amenities. Dependent upon level of services and location efforts shall be made to provide access through public transit to newly implemented amenities.

### ACCESSIBILITY

The Ramsey County park system was originally designed for vehicular access. Ramsey County is still vehicle oriented, but public transportation options have expanded, and bicycling has grown in popularity. The All Abilities Transportation Program will lead to a more accessible transportation network. Since parks and recreation facilities and services contribute to public health, economic accessibility will remain an important consideration. Parks and trails are generally free of charge, while other department recreation options, such as golf and arena use, are fee-based.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is committed to providing universal accessibility at all park and trail facilities. Ramsey County is part of the Ramsey County Active Living Communities partnership which works to bring about and sustain changes in design, transportation, and public/private policies to cultivate and support a way of life that makes physical activity in our neighborhoods and communities safer and easier. Ramsey County uses the following to assess and implement these changes:

#### ADA Transition & Implementation Plan

The department is implementing a plan to bring its sites and facilities into compliance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and updated 2010 standards.

#### Ramsey County Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan

The Ramsey County Pedestrian & Bicycle Plan, developed through a collaboration between Active Living Ramsey Communities, Parks & Recreation, and other county departments, municipalities, state agencies, residents, and other organizations, establishes a vision and strategy for providing safe and comfortable facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the county.

#### All Abilities Transportation Network

The all abilities Transportation Network unifies regional transportation efforts under a shared vision and implementation strategy to realize an integrated and fully interconnected multi-modal transportation system providing safety, health, mobility, and connectivity for residents of all abilities.

### CONFLICTS

Adjacent land uses of Battle Creek Regional Park are overwhelmingly residential and commercial near the Battle Creek, Fish Creek, and Mississippi River Bluffs segments of the park. The Pigs Eye segment of the park is surrounded by park space, industrial, and public services. Bisecting the two sites is Highway 61 and a major railroad corridor. Due to the surrounding uses Pigs Eye Lake is largely cut off from the surrounding community.

The Battle Creek segment of the regional park has numerous points of conflicts that arise from the segmented nature of the park causing community members to have to cross busy roads and intersections to enter the park if they are not traveling by vehicle. Along with the recommendations made in this plan, Ramsey County should continue to monitor traffic in order to adapt.

Crossing the railroad and Highway 61 corridor for one or more pedestrian access points into the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park will be a challenge. Ramsey County, the surrounding community and other shareholders need to continually engage the railroad and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to move the conversation along in order to secure the proper rights and easements to make a crossing(s) a possibility. Ramsey County shall continue to engage and plan for these pedestrian access points.

Land acquisition is another potential conflict that may arise from the plan. Multiple parcels of land, owned and operated by local and state government units are proposed for acquisition. These properties include the Maplewood section of Fish Creek, Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Port Authority of Saint Paul, and the City of Saint Paul. Ramsey County shall continue to engage and work with all stakeholders and agencies to determine if these acquisitions are feasible. There are also a large number of privately held parcels of land that are proposed for acquisition. Acquisition of privately held properties shall only occur when the land becomes available from willing sellers.

Throughout engagement and planning activities for the Battle Creek Master Plan properties owned by Ramsey County including The Ponds at Battle Creek, the 77-acre grasslands and Boys Totem Town owned by the Community Corrections Department were advocated for acquisition. Ramsey County has initiated separate planning initiatives to determine the outcomes of these properties.

Land use surrounding Pigs Eye Lake will also make accessing the surrounding land and establishing trailheads difficult. On the north end of the lake Saint Paul and The Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant border property owned by Ramsey County. Access through the Land owned by Saint Paul causes any future infrastructure to disturb the Pigs Eye Dump, while any access through the treatment plant is also difficult due to the plant being a secure site. On the south end of the lake the Saint Paul Port Authority operates the Red Rock Terminal. This terminal is a very busy port with trucks, barges, and rail cars constantly entering and exiting. At times vehicles can be trapped by rail cars for up to an hour. Accessing and utilizing the public land surrounding the terminal will require further planning for any type of trailhead to be established at this site.

Ramsey County heard through engagement concerns raised by members of the public about the island building project in Pigs Eye Lake, including concerns that the dredge materials could contaminate the lake further. Please see the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment for public engagement results and Ramsey County's preferred vision for the island building project.

Proposed development, access points and recreational amenities within the Pigs Eye Lake segment of the park were developed based upon public input and prior planning efforts. Ramsey County acknowledges that issues including environmental clean up, public safety, and compatibility of recreational use with surrounding land use must be resolved before any new visitor access or recreational amenities can be provided.





# Implementation



## PHASING AND PRIORITIES

Implementation of proposed improvements is anticipated to take place in several phases for completion and will likely require alternate sources of funding from partners depending on the development project. Improvements are planned within a high, medium, low, and long-term priority to implement over time and better plan for the long-term capital improvement funding. Depending on the project need and/or demand, there may be a need to shift projects into different priority levels.

### High Priority Items

High priority items will focus on projects that have been identified as high need, or focused on improving safety, or are currently funded, or projects in process.

### Battle Creek Segment

- Battle Creek Recreation/Nature Center development and/or redevelopment including community engagement and planning for the exact location, size, amenities, and other needs of the building.
- Programming: Ramsey County should identify park programming and begin implementation of more in park activities for community members.
- Wayfinding and park entrance signage to be standardized, with signage directed at community access points as well as vehicular entrances.
- The erosion occurring from pedestrian traffic leading from the multi-use trail to the bluff prairie in the Battle Creek and Bluffs Corridor should be stabilized.
- The natural surface hiking/walking trail and entrance from Afton Heights Park to be restored with wayfinding signage appropriately placed at the entrance.
- Acquisition of 527 Battle Creek Road inholding so that planning for the Bluff Top Trailhead can begin to increase park access.

## Implementation

- Learning Trail Corridor and signage/outdoor spaces should be programmed and installed along with cooperation from community members, stakeholders, Indigenous community members, and the local schools (Carver Elementary and Battle Creek Middle School).
- Continue to engage the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fishing in the Neighborhood program to begin family centered fishing opportunities in Battle Creek Regional Park.
- Waterworks study to inform the future use and amenities of the water park.
- Significant maintenance or redevelopment of waterworks.

### Fish Creek Segment

- Learning stations and outdoor classrooms should be prioritized in this segment of the park.

### Pigs Eye Lake Segment

- Island building project in coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers (see Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment).
- Planning and Development for the Pigs Eye Lake segment along with partnering agencies, stakeholders, and community members in accordance with the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan.

## Medium Priority Items

Medium priority items will focus on important projects that have need but should not be a priority until higher priority items are completed.

### Battle Creek Segment

- Trail Development: continue to work towards the build-out of the trail system, wayfinding signage, trail improvements, and invasive species control measures already in place.
- Improvements of pedestrian and community access points: wayfinding signage should continue to be improved at community and pedestrian access points along with roadway crossing improvements.
- Staging and skills development areas for cross country-skiing and off-road cycling.
- Trail development encircling and connecting the Suburban Pond area of the park to the rest of the Battle Creek Trail system.
- Access Trail and associated amenities connecting Battle Creek Middle School with the multi-use trail and learning corridor.
- Educational programming and community education surrounding Battle Creek and local water resources.
- Trailhead improvements at existing trailheads.

### Fish Creek Segment

- Natural surface walking and hiking trail development.
- Engage with Maplewood for acquisition of property for incorporation into Battle Creek Regional Park.

# Implementation

## Low Priority Items

Low priority items will focus on projects that do have need, but increased demand, use, or environmental planning may be required prior to implementation.

### Battle Creek Segment

- Existing trailhead redevelopment.
- Suburban Pond trailhead development.
- Bluff Top trailhead development.
- Battle Creek Road closure and/or trail connectivity improvements.
- Grade separated crossings at Burlington Road, Lower Afton Road, and Ruth Street.
- New community access point along Lower Afton Road.

### Fish Creek Segment

- Trailhead development at the intersection of Carver Avenue and Henry Lane.
- Trailhead redevelopment at terminus of Henry Lane.
- Trailhead/access point development along Point Douglas Road.

### Mississippi River Bluffs Segment

- Planning for future site amenities, recreational facilities, and bluff preservation.
- Implementation of planned items as land is acquired.

## IMPLEMENTATION COST ESTIMATE

## Master Plan Implementation Cost Estimate

Activity	Cost
Pigs Eye Access & Development Studies *	\$1,000,000
Regional Development Studies	\$300,000
Multi-Season Trailhead and/or Nature Center Study	\$300,000
Waterworks Improvement or Redevelopment Study	\$200,000
Suburban Pond Trailhead and Recreational Amenities	\$2,500,000
Upper Afton Road Active Recreation Area Trailhead Redevelopment	\$2,000,000
Upper Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area Trailhead Redevelopment	\$1,000,000
Lower Afton Road Off-Leash Dog Area Trailhead Redevelopment	\$1,000,000
Park Entrance Road Trailhead Redevelopment	\$2,500,000
Bluff Top Trailhead Development	\$3,000,000
Fish Creek Trailhead at along Carver Avenue Development	\$2,000,000
Fish Creek Trailhead Redevelopment	\$2,000,000
Park Access Improvements	\$2,550,000
Burlington Road Access Study	\$300,000
Ruth Street & Upper Afton Road Underpasses	\$2,500,000
Learning Trail Corridor Study	\$200,000
Fishing Access and Programming	\$500,000
Cross Country Skiing Staging Area & Winter Recreation Area Development Study	\$1,000,000
Off-Road Cycling Skills Area, Site Amenities, and Wayfinding/Signage	\$1,100,000
Off-Road Cycling and Hiking Trail Development	\$500,000
Off-Leash Dog Area Improvements	\$1,000,000
Picnic Area Development & Site Amenities	\$1,000,000
Wayfinding Rules & Trail Signage	\$1,000,000
New Bituminous Trail Development	\$400,000
Indigenous Peoples Cultural and Historical Study	\$300,000
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$30,150,000</b>

\* Pigs Eye Access & Development study cost is a high-level estimate, for greater detail please see the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment.



# Implementation

## OPERATIONS

Operations and maintenance of the regional park will be the responsibility of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department. Operations and maintenance services will be provided at a level that is appropriate for the designated use and consistent with proposed development. The level of services will be directly influenced by demand, type use, budget limitations, and the county's operation and maintenance policies. Funding for regional park maintenance and operation is appropriated from county tax revenue, supplemented by state appropriation for Regional Parks Operation and Maintenance Funding.

Battle Creek Regional Park is a valuable resource for the community and requires proper maintenance to keep it in good condition for park visitors.

### Objectives

- To maintain park facilities in a safe, clean, and functional condition.
- To preserve and protect the natural resources of Battle Creek Regional Park.
- To promote responsible use of park resources by park visitors.
- To maintain a welcoming and attractive environment for park visitors.

### Responsibilities

**Park Management:** The park management is responsible for overall maintenance and management of the park, including the supervision of park staff.

**Park Staff:** The park staff is responsible for routine maintenance activities, such as trash removal, grounds maintenance, and facility cleaning.

**Park Visitors:** Park visitors are encouraged to help keep the park clean and safe by properly disposing of trash and respecting park resources.

### Park Maintenance Schedule

#### Daily Maintenance:

- Trash removal and litter control.
- Cleaning of park facilities, such as restrooms, pavilion, shelter, picnic tables, and grills.
- Monitoring of park grounds for potential hazards and maintenance needs.

#### Weekly Maintenance:

- Mowing of turf areas.
- Maintenance of park trails and walkways.
- Maintenance of park playgrounds and equipment.

### Monthly Maintenance:

- Cleaning of park signs and markers.
- Monitoring of park water resources for potential hazards and maintenance needs.

### Seasonal Maintenance:

- Spring cleaning of park facilities and grounds.
- Fall maintenance of park trees and landscaping.
- Winter maintenance of park trails and walkways, including plowing most paved surfaces.

### Annual Maintenance:

- Comprehensive inspection and maintenance of park facilities and grounds, addressing capital needs.
- Maintenance of park water resources, such as streams and ponds.
- Monitoring of park wildlife and natural resources.

## Battle Creek Waterworks

### Daily maintenance:

- Check and adjust water levels in all pools and attractions.
- Check and clean all filters and skimmers.
- Test and balance water chemistry levels.
- Sweep and hose down all deck areas and walkways.
- Check and clean all restrooms and shower facilities.
- Inspect all slides and attractions for any damages or safety hazards.
- Ensure all safety equipment, such as life jackets and rescue tubes, are in good condition and properly stored.

### Weekly maintenance:

- Conduct a thorough cleaning of all pools and attractions.
- Conduct routine maintenance on all mechanical equipment, such as pumps and motors.
- Inspect and clean all drains and gutters.
- Check and tighten all bolts, nuts, and screws on attractions and structures.

## Implementation

### Monthly maintenance:

- Conduct a deep cleaning of all pool areas, including scrubbing walls, floors, and tiles.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of all slides and attractions for any damage or wear.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of all structural elements, including supports, beams, and posts.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of all water lines and hoses.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of all fencing and gates.

### Seasonal maintenance:

- Close down all pools and attractions properly at the end of the season, including draining and winterizing.
- Conduct any necessary repairs and maintenance during the off-season.
- Conduct any necessary upgrades or improvements to the park during the off-season.
- Conduct a thorough inspection of all equipment and attractions before reopening for the new season.

## Battle Creek Waterworks

### Regular maintenance:

- Regularly inspect the trail for any damage or hazards and make repairs as necessary.
- Keep the trail clear of any debris, such as fallen branches or rocks.
- Maintain a consistent width and grade of the trail.
- Clear any obstacles or hazards, such as rocks or roots, that may interfere with grooming equipment.
- Regularly pack and flatten the snow to create a firm base.
- Check the grooming equipment, including the Pisten Bully, Tidd Tech, and utility vehicle for any damage or wear and make repairs as necessary.

### Daily Grooming:

- Create a smooth, even surface on the trail by using a combination of Pisten Bully grooming machine, and utility vehicle with Tidd Tech (primarily for natural snow trails).
- Roll and compact the snow using a grooming machine or roller.
- Use equipment to create grooves or tracks for classic skiing, or a wide, flat surface for skate skiing.
- Ensure the width and grade of the trail remain consistent throughout the grooming process.
- Smooth out any rough areas or ridges using a grooming machine or snowmobile.
- Check the trail markers, such as signs or fencing, and replace any that are missing or damaged.

### Operations and Maintenance Cost

Operations and maintenance costs are based on a combination of past practice, work done in other park systems, and expert opinion. Operations and maintenance cost may require additional evaluation after implementation of new infrastructure. Operations and maintenance costs may vary from year to year depending on economic, climatic, development, and demand of infrastructure, as many variables can influence the actual cost of operation and maintenance.

### Operating Hours

Park and trail operating hours are defined within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Ordinance. Currently, regional parks and trails have operating hours from 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. This time limitation does not apply to people who, without delay, are traveling on regional trails. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation may close parks or areas within parks to the public as necessary to protect public safety or property.

### Ordinances

Public use and enjoyment of the county park system is controlled by “An Ordinance for the Control and Management of Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas and Facilities under the Jurisdiction of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.” This ordinance, adopted in 1992 and amended in 2007, will govern the conduct of the public during the use of the regional park, its facilities, and resources. The ordinance, provided in the Appendix, incorporates pertinent Minnesota statutes and includes the following sections:

- Purpose/Definitions.
- Regulations of Public Use.
- General Conduct.
- Regulation of Recreation Activity.
- Regulation of Motorized Vehicles, Traffic, and Parking.
- Enforcement.
- Miscellaneous.
- Effective Date.

## Implementation

### Operations and Maintenance Cost

Operations and maintenance costs are based on a combination of past practice, work done in other park systems, and expert opinion. Operations and maintenance cost may require additional evaluation after implementation of new infrastructure. Operations and maintenance costs may vary from year to year depending on economic, climatic, development, and demand of infrastructure, as many variables can influence the actual cost of operation and maintenance.

#### Annual Operations & Maintenance Costs Estimate

Activity	Cost
Bathrooms Facilities Maintenance and Cleaning	\$25,000
Trash and Recycling Collection	\$21,000
Spring Cleanup	\$10,000
Mowing and Turf Maintenance	\$30,000
Brush Cutting and Tree Trimming	\$20,000
Parking Lot Maintenance	\$25,000
Amenities (Benches, Signs, Picnic Tables, Etc.) Maintenance	\$17,000
Snow Removal	\$20,000
Paved Trail Maintenance	\$10,000
Recreation & Nature Center Maintenance	\$20,000
Snow Making and Grooming	\$180,000
Recreation & Nature Center Staff	\$300,000
Waterworks Maintenance	\$50,000
Waterworks Staff	\$150,000
<b>Total Annual Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$878,000</b>

### Enforcement and Safety

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department, in conjunction with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department, will educate and direct the public in appropriate use, provide ordinance enforcement, assist with first aid, and ensure security in the regional park. The Ramsey County Sheriff will be responsible for enforcement of park ordinance.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS

Ramsey County will use a variety of tools to promote awareness and use of the regional park system. This includes electronic and print communication methods such as websites, park maps, brochures, email notification, Twitter, Facebook, and press releases. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department will provide necessary information and updates to the department's website.

Ramsey County will also collaborate with the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood, and the Metropolitan Council to promote the park through their websites, newsletters, brochures, and social media. Wayfinding signage throughout the park will be updated as needed following the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department Wayfinding Master Plan for consistency with other regional park and trail facilities.



EQUITY ANALYSIS

PROJECT DATA

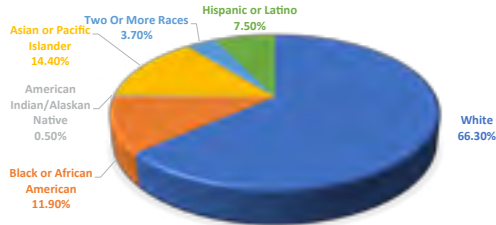
Scope

Public engagement for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan was intended to reach as wide of an audience as possible, while also focusing on an equitable approach through the thoughtful selection of engagement sessions in order to reach as racially diverse audience as possible at the same time. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation focused on gathering information both from community members who live near the regional park as well as county-wide.

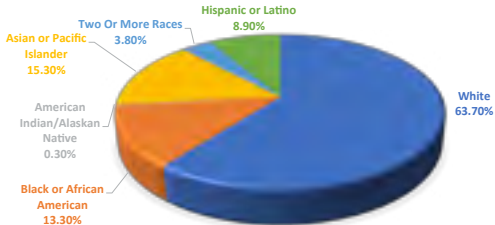
Comparing census blocks from 2010 data extrapolated to reflect the approximate values in 2019 between tracts that fall within 1 mile of the regional park with those of Ramsey County overall may provide some meaningful data. Ramsey County as of 2019, had a population of 544, 442. The median household income of the county was \$64,660, with a poverty rate of 14%. The subset of the population living in a census tract within 1/2 mile of the regional park had a population of 84,604, with a median income of \$57,341 and a poverty rate of 12.6%

The following graphs reflect the race, education and age of the respective areas:

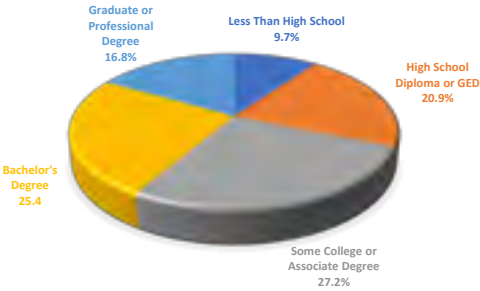
Ramsey County Demographics - Race



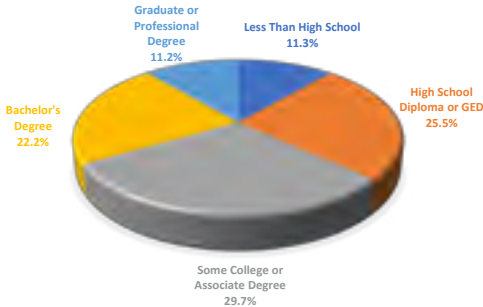
Focus Area Demographics - Race



Ramsey County Demographics - Education

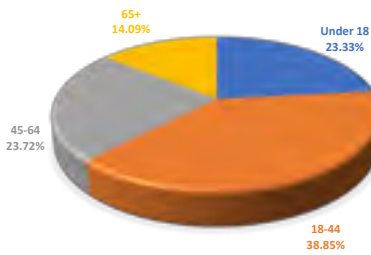


Focus Area Demographics - Education

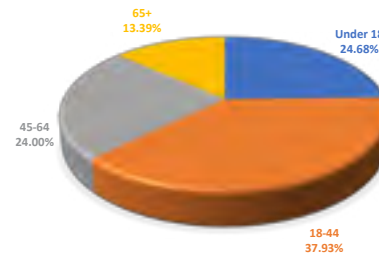


# Implementation

## Ramsey County Demographics - Age



## Focus Area Demographics - Age



The area surrounding Battle Creek Regional Park is largely representative of Ramsey County as a whole, with a slightly higher racial diversity. Additional data for neighborhoods within the immediate surrounding focus area shows a higher percentage of home ownership and a lower percentage of renter-occupied housing than Ramsey County as a whole. Transportation is another area of difference, residents in the focus area near Battle Creek Regional Park have a higher percentage of households with multiple vehicles and use public transportation less than Ramsey County as a whole, but their travel times to and from work are extremely similar. The full reports from Minnesota Compass, which draws its data from the United States Census can be found in the Appendix.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Relative to the rest of Ramsey County, the area surrounding Battle Creek Regional Park is a more racially diverse area with a population that also skews slightly younger. The focus area looked at census tracts within 1/2 mile of Battle Creek Regional Park and has larger populations of Asian or Pacific Islanders, black or African Americans, and Hispanic or Latino peoples.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation along with SRF made conscience decisions, along with the project management team, which consisted of partnering agencies, to formulate community engagement that would target these populations. In addition to online engagement that was available to all through the use of translation services, postings about upcoming community meetings and design charrettes were posted throughout the park with translations in a few prominent languages. To ensure that the opinions of a racially diverse audience were included in the master plan, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation held pop-up meetings at various community festivals, events, and at reservations made at the Battle Creek Regional Park pavilion including:

- Hmongtown Marketplace.
- Battle Creek Pavilion Eritrean Muslim Council Event.
- Southeast Community Organization Community Event.
- Battle Creek Recreation Center Food Shelf Night.
- Southeast Community Organization Council Meeting.
- Carver Elementary Family Night.
- Battle Creek Middle School English as a Second Language Classroom.

The events listed above saw participation among racially diverse community members in proportions far greater than their representative numbers when compared to the focus area demographics. Through engagement with Battle Creek Middle School and Carver Middle School Ramsey County was able to specifically focus on gathering feedback from younger community members.

In prioritizing community engagement events which were intended to target community members who were from racially diverse backgrounds as well as a number of events that looked at younger audiences the themes that Ramsey County heard included:

- Prioritize programming which would include beginner to intermediate outdoor programs.
- Prioritize programming which would introduce community members to new forms of outdoor recreation such as off-road cycling, hiking, and cross country-skiing while keeping fees to a minimum or free.
- Prioritize the redevelopment of waterworks or the implementation of a free splash pad.
- Built park uses such as picnic facilities, shelters, playgrounds, and trails are important features that are heavily used and in demand.
- Trailhead amenities such as water fountains, restrooms, and security cameras are important for access and to feel safe.
- Support for the addition of a nature center.
- Increase fishing opportunities.
- Safe access to park.

### Evaluation Summary

Public participation from racially diverse and younger audiences provided Ramsey County with valuable feedback from this segment of the population. Overall the desires and wants of these community members is in line with the rest of Ramsey County. The themes that were brought forward strengthened the need for trail development, trailhead improvements, and the addition of a nature center. Ramsey County has also heard very strongly that programming needs to be an essential and integral part of Battle Creek Regional Park as the master plan is implemented. The programming that is developed needs to continue to explore ways to involve the community and keep costs low while providing access to community members who may not be able to afford fees and also should explore ways to transport community members to events to increase accessibility of the programming.

Input from younger and racially diverse community members also helped to shape the plan and influenced the way in which Ramsey County decided to prioritize implementation strategies. Waterworks redevelopment, programming, and the addition of a nature center are all high priority items that have been identified.

### GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY

An additional tool that Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has decided to use in the evaluation of the equity of the Battle Creek Master Plan is the Government Alliance on Race & Equity Toolkit. This toolkit asks a variety of questions that are designed to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets.

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan has looked at and used the toolkit to evaluate the plan from an equity lens and answers to the questions posed by the Government Alliance on Race & Equity follow.

### What Is Your Proposal and the Desired Results and Outcomes?

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan will develop a long-range vision and recommendations for the park, built from input from the public and stakeholders. This will be achieved by gathering information on issues and concerns from community members and stakeholders, engaging in design charrettes with the public, and ultimately refining a master plan that will guide future park improvements.

## Implementation

This proposal will have the ability to impact:

- Children and Youth.
- Community engagement.
- Education.
- Environment.
- Non-traditional park users.
- Under-represented communities.
- Programming within the park.
- Community members from Ramsey County and beyond.

### What's the Data? What Does the Data Tell Us?

Relative to the rest of Ramsey County, the area surrounding Battle Creek Regional Park is a more racially diverse area with a population that also skews slightly younger. The focus area looked at census tracts within 1/2 mile of Battle Creek Regional Park and has larger populations of Asian or Pacific Islanders, Black or African Americans, and Hispanic or Latino Peoples.

The plan has the potential to impact the neighborhoods surrounding the park directly. A major component of the plan is park access and making road crossings, which are abundant, safer, and built to serve the surrounding community. Park programming is also a top priority to bring new or novice users into the park and teach about a variety of subjects which is yet to be determined.

### How Have Communities Been Engaged? Are There Opportunities to Expand Engagement?

Ramsey County has engaged communities in a variety of ways including:

- Pop-Up Meetings.
- Stakeholder Meetings.
- Community Meetings.
- Design Charrettes.
- Online Surveys.
- Draft Concept and Plan Reviews.

The Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan is the guiding document for the development of the park in the future. As such there will be many more opportunities as development of the area occurs to expand and increase engagement opportunities as the plan is implemented and carried out. Ramsey County shall continue to use engagement best practices as they are understood at the time of future engagement.

### Who Benefits From Or Will Be Burdened By Your Proposal? What Are Your Strategies for Advancing Racial Equity or Mitigating Unintended Consequences?

Ramsey County intends that the proposal for Battle Creek Regional Park will ultimately increase racial equity and benefit all community members. From community engagement that has been targeted at diverse audiences Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has learned that these communities desire:

- Safer park access points.
- Park programming in a variety of subjects and disciplines such as beginner outdoor recreation courses, nature courses, after school programming, and community events.
- Trailhead and park amenities such as water fountains, restrooms, benches, and picnicking infrastructure.
- Implementation of a free splash pad or the redevelopment of waterworks.
- Educational programming in the park.
- Nature center development.
- Playgrounds.

Many of these desired outcomes were shared among all communities and stakeholder groups and have been incorporated into the planning and implementation strategy for Battle Creek Regional Park.

Diverse community members have advocated for the implementation of park programming and it is evident that Ramsey County needs to develop a robust and varied catalog of programs for the community to participate in. Ramsey County has also heard through engagement that this programming needs to be available to all and to do this fees must be low or non-existent for entry into programs. Racially diverse segments of the population could be burdened by the proposal if Ramsey County does not continue to engage these community members and ensure they have access to and knowledge of future park programming and proposed infrastructure.

Throughout engagement it has become apparent that there are many public and private agencies that share the desire to develop programming within Battle Creek Regional Park. Stakeholders are vital to increasing access and opportunity for racially diverse communities. Ramsey County should continue to engage with these agencies to produce lasting partnerships that may help to shape park programming. Agencies that Ramsey County could partner with to develop programming include but are not limited to:

- Endurance United.
- Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists.
- Audubon Society.
- National Park Service.
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- The Loppet Foundation.
- The Sanneh Foundation.
- High School Cross-Country Ski Teams.
- Friends of the Mississippi River.
- Carver Elementary School.
- Battle Creek Middle School.
- City of Saint Paul.
- City of Maplewood.
- Friends of the Maplewood Nature Center.
- Lower Phalen Creek Project.
- Indigenous/Native American Groups.



## Implementation

An unintended consequence of the plan includes an inequitable distribution of recreational opportunities. A large part of the plan is also focused on completing the infrastructure needed to make recreational programming a reality such as trails, wayfinding and signage improvements, and trailhead improvements. These amenities support recreational users such as hikers, off-road cyclists, cross-country skiers, trail runners, in-line skaters, bird watchers, and many other groups. Programming and introducing community members who are not already active users of Battle Creek Regional park will be vital in the success of the plan from an equity lens.

### What is Your Plan For Implementation?

Implementation of proposed improvements are anticipated to take place in several phases. Master plans are commonly implemented over the course of a few decades and full realization is unlikely to occur before plan revision or amendment. Completion will likely require alternate sources of funding from partners depending on the development project. Improvements are planned within a high, medium, low, and long-term priority to implement over time and better plan for the long-term capital improvement funding. Depending on the project need and/or demand, there may be a need to shift projects into different priority levels. Please see the implementation plan starting on page 157 for more detail.

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# Appendix

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June 9, 2021

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
Attn: Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
2015 N. Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109

RE: Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission Letter of Support

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is to share the Park & Recreation Commission's support for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. The commission believes this master plan will act as a long-term guiding document for implementing critical park and recreation elements that provide tremendous benefit to the regional park and trail system as well as for the residents of Ramsey County.

Sincerely,

Leah Shepard, Park and Recreation Commission Chair

---

2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, MN 55109  
651-266-0300  
[www.ramseycounty.us/parks](http://www.ramseycounty.us/parks)



April 13, 2022

Benjamin Karp, Landscape Designer  
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
2015 North Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Mr. Karp:

The Southeast Community Organization has appreciated the opportunity to engage with the staff working on the update of the Battle Creek Regional Park master plan. The Battle Creek and Pig's Eye units of the park are a significant natural asset in our community. The future of this park is one of our top priorities for greenspace and outdoor recreation. The expansion of the park's boundaries is also of interest to us as we feel it represents an opportunity to better develop these spaces in a way that meets the needs of neighbors.

I write this letter to express our organization's support for the draft master plan. We ask that we continue to be engaged as the improvements identified in the plan get designed and constructed. Our community is dynamic, and we pledge to help connect you with the different groups of residents that will call the district home in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie A. Siever". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Laurie A. Siever, President  
Southeast Community Organization

Southeast Community Organization | 2105 ½ Old Hudson Rd | St. Paul, MN 55119  
Southeastside.org | 651/578-7600





April 4, 2022

Scott Yonke  
Ramsey County Parks & Recreation  
2015 Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Dear Mr. Yonke,

This letter is to share the City of Maplewood's support for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. The City believes this master plan will act as a long-term guiding document for implementing critical park and recreation elements that provide tremendous benefit to the regional parks and trail system as well as for the residents of Ramsey County.

The master plan incorporates long-term site and infrastructure improvements, recreation improvements, natural resource improvements, access improvements, park acquisition and boundary adjustments, and additional recreational opportunities throughout the regional park.

Improvements will include a new or reconstructed multi-season trailhead as well as a nature center which will provide a home for recreation, history and nature education, restrooms, warming areas for winter recreation, locker rooms, programming and classroom spaces, recreation staging areas, picnic or shelter opportunities, wayfinding signage, trail access and site amenities. There will also be improvements to the winter recreation area; an expanded recreational trails system; waterworks redevelopment; creation of learning trail corridors including additional educational signage and related trail components. There are plans for additional amenities at existing trailheads such as improved wayfinding signage, restrooms, increased parking, trail access, site amenities, and lighting. There are also plans for improved pedestrian access points including rapid flashing beacons, roadway signage, pedestrian refuges and crosswalks. There will be increased fishing opportunities within the park, improvements to the off-leash dog area; enhanced wayfinding, rules and trail signage throughout the park, and increased nature based and recreational park programming.

The long-term goals and objectives of the plan will have a positive impact on the community and are supported by the City of Maplewood.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marylee Abrams".

Marylee Abrams, Mayor

City of Maplewood  
Office of the Mayor  
1830 County Road B East  
Maplewood, MN 55109

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## City of Saint Paul

City Hall and Court House  
15 West Kellogg Boulevard  
Phone: 651-266-8560

### Legislation Text

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**File #:** RES 22-1066, **Version:** 2

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Supporting Ramsey County's Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Amendment. (Laid over from July 27, 2020)

WHEREAS, Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul established a joint master plan for Battle Creek Regional Park in 1981; and

WHEREAS, the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park Joint Master Plan was comprised of four sections, Indian Mounds, Fish Hatchery, Battle Creek and Pigs Eye Lake; and

WHEREAS, regional parks notably contain a diversity of nature-based resources, either naturally occurring or human-built, accommodate a variety of outdoor recreation activities; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan amendment is to guide long-term development, recreation and programming amenities, boundary expansion and acquisition, engagement, preservation, and management for the Battle Creek ~~section long-term boundary expansion and acquisitions areas of Battle Creek Regional Park~~ within Battle Creek Regional Park ; and

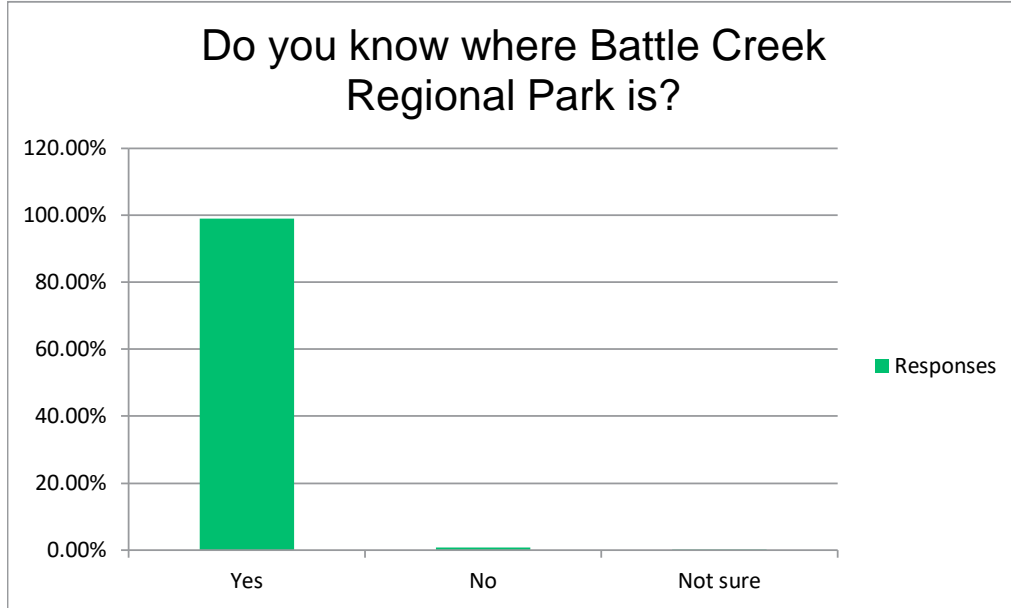
WHEREAS, the 2022 master plan amendment incorporates long-term site, building and infrastructure improvements, recreation improvements, natural resource improvements, access and trail improvements, nature based recreational programming opportunities, park acquisition and boundary adjustments throughout the Battle Creek section of the regional park ~~and future boundary expansion and acquisition areas~~; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County completed extensive engagement for the master plan from the spring of 2019 to fall of 2021, with the public, recreational groups, community stakeholders, and public agencies identified in the plan, encompassing 7 pop-up events, 2 online surveys, stakeholder meetings, 2 community design workshops, project management team meetings, elected official outreach, 1 virtual community meeting, a 30-day draft concept review, and a 45-day plan review, receiving over 2,000 comments pertaining to all aspects of the plan, which will be placed within the plan and uploaded to the Ramsey County Battle Creek Master Plan prior to its final adoption; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Saint Paul, Minnesota, with the inclusion of the full record of public comment into the plan prior to its adoption, supports the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Amendment

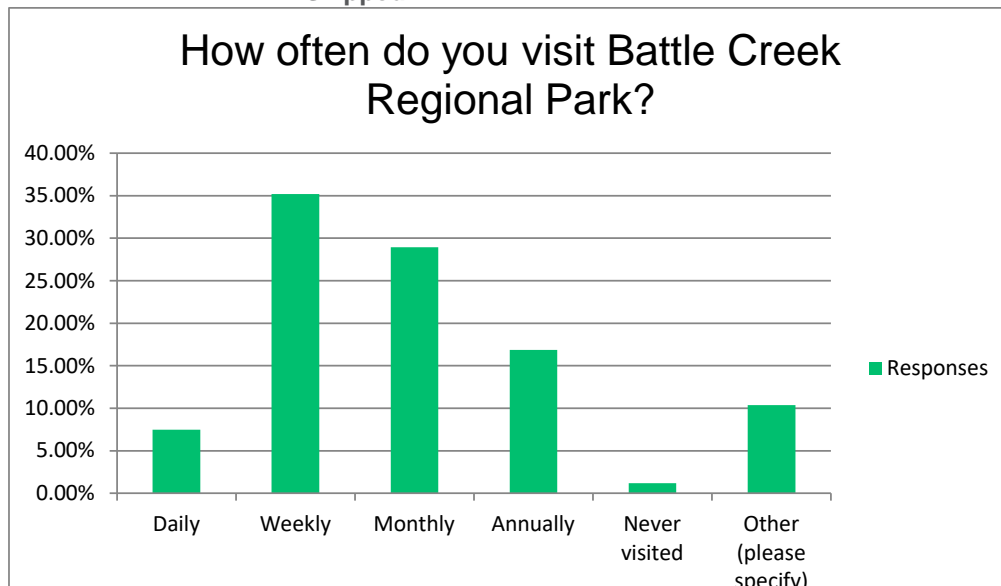
Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey  
 Do you know where Battle Creek Regional Park is?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	99.03%	820
No	0.85%	7
Not sure	0.12%	1
<b>Answered</b>		<b>828</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>5</b>



Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey  
 How often do you visit Battle Creek Regional Park?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Daily	7.47%	
Weekly	35.18%	
Monthly	28.92%	
Annually	16.87%	
Never visited	1.20%	
Other (please specify)	10.36%	
<b>Answered</b>		
<b>Skipped</b>		



## Appendix - Online Survey 1

### Other (please specify)

been there  
Have not visited in several years  
2-3 times/year  
Not since a kid  
Been here my whole life  
Used to live across the street  
2 times/week  
3 times a year  
One time  
weekly in the Fall  
weekly in the winter skiing  
6 times per year  
Couple times in the summer  
2-3 times a year  
Twice a week  
Just moved here from out of state and have used it once  
Weekly or more during moderate weather, rarely in the winter  
I don't necessarily "visit" the actual park very often. But Battle Creek woods area backs up to my back ya  
Was there almost everyday growing up.  
McKnight due to Highway 94. I'm tired of transporting our bikes by car to the park so I've stopped visiting the park.  
Thrice weekly  
Summer water park  
Several times per year  
not often enough! (seriously, probably every 3-4months)  
Occasionally  
3x/year  
about 4 or 5 times a year  
Not since we don't have snow  
multiple times a week in the winter if there is good snow  
2 times a week  
Once per week in the winter to ski  
Throughout the winter  
Intermittently  
twice a week  
3 times per week!  
weekly or more during the nordic skiing season  
Weekly during ski season  
Winter= biweekly Summer= monthly  
occasionally  
weekly in winter  
Daily during summer, weekly during ski season  
4 times plus  
Used to visit at least weekly

It's been a few years but I use to visit monthly

Two or three times a year

I used to visit at least once a week. But after two friend had cars broken into, with property losses, we no longer visit the park. Park personnel seemed completely unconcerned about the breakins.

Quarterly

2 or 3 times when kids were little

Mostly winter

Weekly on my CX bike for training and if there's snow weekly for skate skiing

Daily in winter, monthly in summer

3-5 x week

Weekly during winter, monthly during summer

when there's adequate snow. Used to MTB there a lot, much better options available these days.

Seasonally for cross country skiing

Nordic skiiig a few times a winter, biking through once a month in the summer, meetings or volunteer events several times a year

More often in the winter to ski!!!!

My son visits frequently during Nordic ski season, we visit as a family periodically for walks.

Daily in the winter

Daily/Weekly during winter, less often in the warmer months

Occasionally, but will visit much more frequently, if you offer snow-making and cross country ski trails.

Once or twice a week in the winter

Regularly in winter

Only recently moved to Eagan

Monthly in winter for skiing when there is snow. I do not visit in the summer.

3-4 times per year

Every time I train for Skiing

Haven't been there for about 20 years.

Often in winter if there's snow for skiing

I visited frequently in high school for skiing and biking. I am now in college out of state but still treasure the park and try to get back there whenever possible.

we have been several times

weekly in winter/spring

Occasional visits through the year, especially in winter for Xc skiing, but only if there's snow.

Annually, or twice annually, depending on Nordic ski meets.

15 times/year

Only a few times

I like to ski there when there is snow. It is the best place to ski in St Paul area.

3-4x per year

Approx. 3 days/week

Once a week in the winter if there is skiable snow

Winter, for skiing.

Quarterly

For special events, ski races

3-5 times annually

Have not used in in years; went XC skiing there years ago.

Currently once a quarter with the dogs. But it used to be weekly. (The dogs got old,lol)

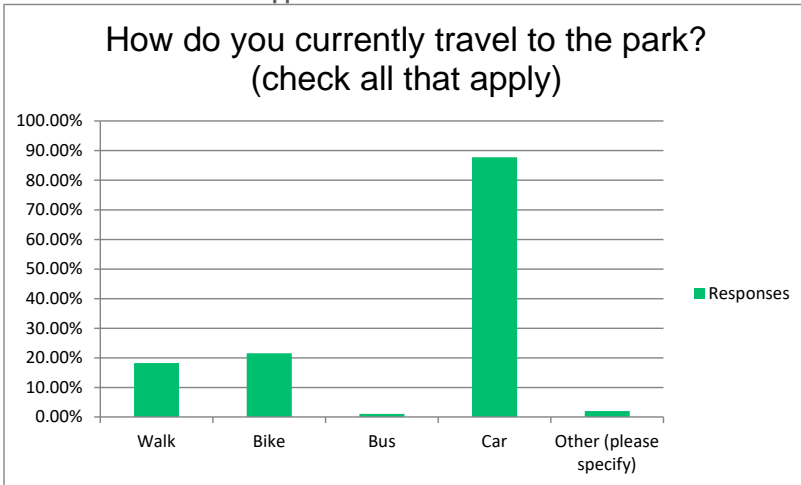


# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey How do you currently travel to the park? (check all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses
Walk	18.29%
Bike	21.54%
Bus	1.08%
Car	87.73%
Other (please specify)	2.05%

Answered  
Skipped

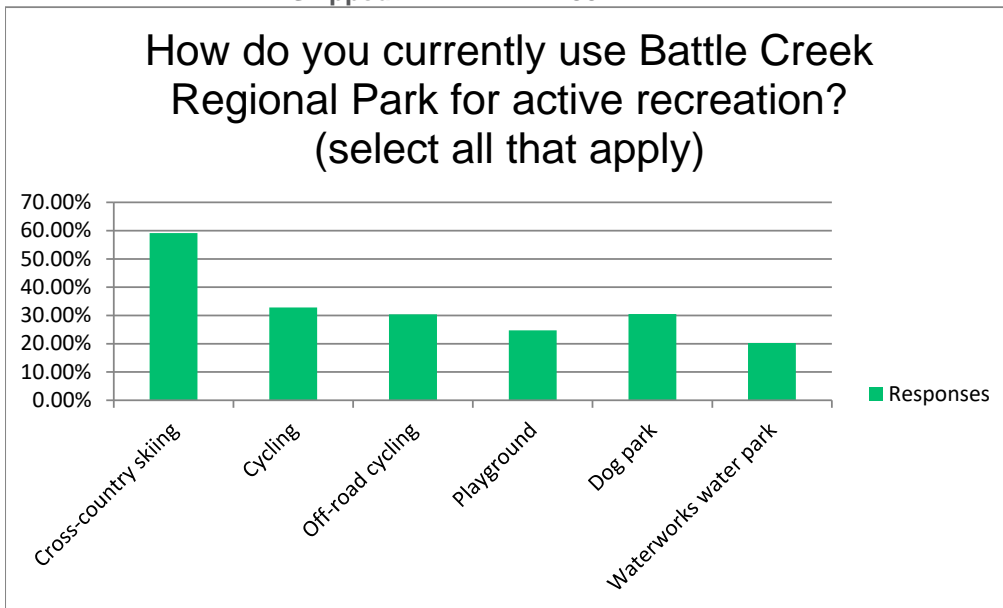


Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
	1 Sep 05 2019 0	Trail run
	2 Sep 05 2019 11	don't go
	3 Jul 29 2019 07	carpool
	4 Jul 22 2019 08	Highway 94 cuts off access to the park. Crossing back and forth on McKnight is not worth the risk
	5 Jul 19 2019 1C	Trucks
	6 Jul 19 2019 1C	Scooters
	7 Jul 17 2019 1C	Run
	8 Jul 17 2019 02	Run
	9 Jul 05 2019 1C	Run
	10 Jul 03 2019 09	No longer visit.
	11 Jun 30 2019 1	Ski
	12 Jun 30 2019 1	Ski
	13 Jun 25 2019 0	Run
	14 Jun 24 2019 0	Cross Country skiing
		Used to run or bike to the park, but now we have kids and don't feel safe accessing the park via foot from
	15 Jun 22 2019 0	Maplewood as there are no bike paths to get to the park.
	16 Jun 21 2019 0	Airline then car
	17 Jun 21 2019 0	Run

Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

How do you currently use Battle Creek Regional Park for active recreation? (select all that apply)

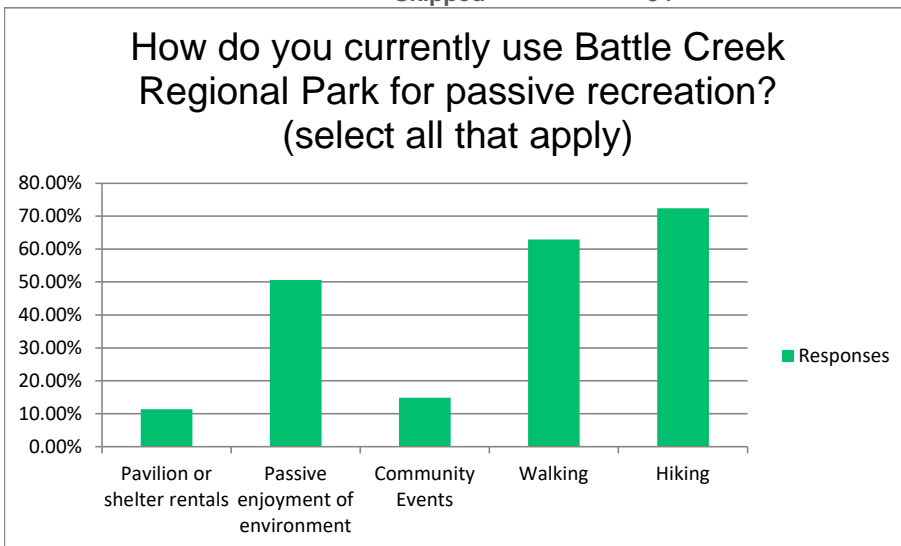
Answer Choices	Responses	
Cross-country skiing	59.13%	463
Cycling	32.82%	257
Off-road cycling	30.40%	238
Playground	24.78%	194
Dog park	30.52%	239
Waterworks water park	20.31%	159
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>783</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>50</b>



Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

How do you currently use Battle Creek Regional Park for passive recreation? (select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Pavilion or shelter rentals	11.37%	84
Passive enjoyment of environment	50.61%	374
Community Events	14.88%	110
Walking	62.92%	465
Hiking	72.40%	535
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>739</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>94</b>



# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

Are there any other ways that you currently use Battle Creek Regional Park that were not previously listed?

Answered 301  
Skipped 532

Respondents	Response Date	Responses
1	Sep 09 2019	0 no
2	Sep 09 2019	1 no
3	Sep 08 2019	0 play dates
4	Sep 07 2019	1 No
5	Sep 07 2019	0 No
6	Sep 07 2019	0 I don't currently use the park, but selected ways I've used in the past.
7	Sep 07 2019	0 no
8	Sep 07 2019	1 Golf course near by, weekly with my kids.
9	Sep 07 2019	1 Fishing
10	Sep 06 2019	1 Golfing at PBC
11	Sep 06 2019	0 No
12	Sep 06 2019	0 No
13	Sep 06 2019	0 No
14	Sep 06 2019	0 No
15	Sep 06 2019	0 no
16	Sep 06 2019	0 No
17	Sep 06 2019	0 Commuting to downtown or cottage grove
18	Sep 06 2019	0 No
19	Sep 06 2019	1 No
20	Sep 06 2019	1 We want to fish
21	Sep 06 2019	0 Fishing
22	Sep 06 2019	0 No
23	Sep 06 2019	0 N/A
24	Sep 06 2019	0 No
25	Sep 06 2019	1 No
26	Sep 05 2019	0 Family Photography in the fall months
27	Sep 05 2019	0 Running
28	Sep 05 2019	0 Golf at the ponds golf course
29	Sep 05 2019	0 No
30	Sep 05 2019	0 Watching wildlife
31	Sep 05 2019	0 No
32	Sep 05 2019	0 No
33	Sep 05 2019	0 No
34	Sep 05 2019	0 No
35	Sep 05 2019	0 No
36	Sep 05 2019	0 School based educational hikes
37	Sep 05 2019	0 No
38	Sep 05 2019	1 Bird watching
39	Sep 05 2019	1 bird watching
40	Sep 05 2019	1 none
41	Sep 05 2019	0 no
42	Sep 05 2019	0 No
43	Sep 05 2019	0 No
44	Sep 05 2019	0 No.
45	Sep 05 2019	0 Rollerskating / Rollerblading
46	Sep 04 2019	1 Golfing
47	Sep 04 2019	1 Trail Running
48	Sep 04 2019	1 No
49	Sep 04 2019	0 No
50	Sep 04 2019	0 Picnic and BBQ
51	Sep 04 2019	0 no
52	Sep 03 2019	0 No
53	Aug 27 2019	0 Single Track Mountain Biking
54	Aug 26 2019	0 No.
55	Aug 21 2019	0 Running. XC skiing.
56	Aug 21 2019	0 Sledding
57	Aug 21 2019	0 bird-watching, also wildflower, tree and shrub observing

- 58 Aug 18 2019 0trail running and trail races
- 59 Aug 16 2019 0no
- 60 Aug 15 2019 0Bird watching and would like to archery hunt as well
- 61 Aug 15 2019 0Sledding
- 62 Aug 14 2019 0Picnic table and benches
- 63 Aug 13 2019 1Walking this AM in the peace and quiet was a balm for my loneliness (as well as providing much needed exercise)
- 64 Aug 12 2019 0Trail running
- 65 Aug 10 2019 1No.
- 66 Aug 08 2019 0Trail running
- 67 Aug 06 2019 0No
- 68 Aug 06 2019 0snowshoeing, running
- 69 Aug 05 2019 0No
- 70 Aug 05 2019 0Wildlife viewing, photography
- 71 Aug 05 2019 0Wildflower gazing, bird watching
- 72 Aug 05 2019 1Bird watching. restrooms
- 73 Aug 05 2019 0No.
- 74 Aug 04 2019 1Get away from people on trails that go thru the woods.
- 75 Aug 04 2019 0N/A
- 76 Aug 03 2019 1Geo caching
- 77 Aug 03 2019 0no
- 78 Aug 01 2019 0Sitting and listening to the birds
- 79 Jul 30 2019 07relaxation
- 80 Jul 30 2019 0No
- 81 Jul 29 2019 08Running both on the paved and unpaved trails
- 82 Jul 29 2019 02Trail running, trail race events, dawn/dusk recreation  
Running! I run the ski trails. They are especially challenging. Ramsey County Parks should exploit the fantastic trails for running.
- 83 Jul 29 2019 08Except there would be one downside, the trails would be more crowded. I enjoy running out there all by myself.
- 84 Jul 29 2019 07bird watching, native spring and summer flower viewing,
- 85 Jul 28 2019 01Running
- 86 Jul 26 2019 06no
- 87 Jul 24 2019 1CRunning
- 88 Jul 24 2019 08I run on the single track trails there on a weekly basis, when there is no snow cover.
- 89 Jul 23 2019 08Photography hike
- 90 Jul 23 2019 07no
- 91 Jul 23 2019 05I walk my dog but never in the dog park
- 92 Jul 22 2019 03Kids camp at the park
- 93 Jul 22 2019 08Bird watching
- 94 Jul 21 2019 12No
- 95 Jul 20 2019 1Cnot that I can think of
- 96 Jul 19 2019 03No
- 97 Jul 19 2019 1Cno
- 98 Jul 19 2019 1CNo
- 99 Jul 19 2019 08Picking medicine
- 100 Jul 19 2019 08I do a lot of birding there.
- 101 Jul 18 2019 05With School groups from Carver elementary
- 102 Jul 18 2019 03picnic
- 103 Jul 18 2019 03Snowshoeing
- 104 Jul 18 2019 08More if the geese were removed
- 105 Jul 17 2019 1CRunning
- 106 Jul 17 2019 1CNo
- 107 Jul 17 2019 08No
- 108 Jul 17 2019 06School visits
- 109 Jul 17 2019 05No
- 110 Jul 17 2019 03No
- 111 Jul 17 2019 03birdwatching, wild flower looking
- 112 Jul 17 2019 02No.
- 113 Jul 17 2019 02no
- 114 Jul 17 2019 02Running
- 115 Jul 17 2019 02running
- 116 Jul 17 2019 02Hiking is NOT passive. Also trail running and roller skiing should be included as active recreation..
- 117 Jul 17 2019 02bird watching
- 118 Jul 17 2019 02exploring nature, enjoying creek, nature hiking for club activities
- 119 Jul 17 2019 02Trail running
- 120 Jul 17 2019 01Trail Running

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- 121 Jul 17 2019 12 Roller-skiing (nordic training)
- 122 Jul 17 2019 12 Running
- 123 Jul 15 2019 06 trail running
- 124 Jul 15 2019 07 trail running
- 125 Jul 14 2019 09 Running
- 126 Jul 14 2019 07 Trail running
- 127 Jul 14 2019 03 N/A
- 128 Jul 14 2019 03 Rollerskiing
- 129 Jul 13 2019 11 No
- 130 Jul 12 2019 07 trail running
- 131 Jul 11 2019 04 na
- 132 Jul 11 2019 11 running the ski trails in the summer
- 133 Jul 11 2019 11 Trail running in the mountain bike area
- 134 Jul 11 2019 09 Running
- 135 Jul 11 2019 12 N/A
- 136 Jul 10 2019 1C no
- 137 Jul 10 2019 05 no, but would ski there more with improvements
- 138 Jul 10 2019 02 No
- 139 Jul 10 2019 1C no
- 140 Jul 10 2019 07 Green space & trees keeps the city more temperate, not extreme temperatures.
- 141 Jul 09 2019 12 None
- 142 Jul 09 2019 06 Dog walking
- 143 Jul 08 2019 12 Kids Soccer
- 144 Jul 08 2019 1C Cross Country Skiing
- 145 Jul 07 2019 09 running
- 146 Jul 07 2019 07 Watching wildlife, sports training
- 147 Jul 07 2019 01 No
- 148 Jul 07 2019 1C berry picking, bird watching, nature study
- 149 Jul 07 2019 1C berry picking, bird watching, nature study
- 150 Jul 06 2019 05 Ice skating
- 151 Jul 06 2019 1C I bring a book to read or write in my journal while I sit on one of the benches, enjoying the beauty of the prairie/forest.
- 152 Jul 05 2019 03 Nature photography; watching for wildlife
- 153 Jul 05 2019 02 Wildlife observation, learning about Nature.
- 154 Jul 05 2019 1C running, cross country races
- 155 Jul 05 2019 1C Running  
Point-to-point travel. For example, to downtown St Paul and beyond through the ravine now that the Fish Hatchery Trail is open
- 156 Jul 05 2019 07 again. Also to walk to Target or to Culvers or to HaTien Market.
- 157 Jul 04 2019 06 I have participated in trail runs attached to Endurance United
- 158 Jul 04 2019 06 Can't check all that apply and n #5. Invalidates results
- 159 Jul 04 2019 04 No
- 160 Jul 04 2019 04 wildlife viewing
- 161 Jul 04 2019 02 No
- 162 Jul 04 2019 11 no
- 163 Jul 04 2019 11 Running
- 164 Jul 04 2019 1C Trail running
- 165 Jul 04 2019 1C No
- 166 Jul 04 2019 1C No
- 167 Jul 04 2019 06 bird watching, community meetings, scenic driving
- 168 Jul 04 2019 09 Running
- 169 Jul 04 2019 06 Picnic
- 170 Jul 04 2019 07 Roller-skiing
- 171 Jul 04 2019 07 No
- 172 Jul 04 2019 06 We enjoy the many dragonflies and damselflies along the creek.
- 173 Jul 03 2019 06 No
- 174 Jul 03 2019 07 no
- 175 Jul 03 2019 04 No.
- 176 Jul 02 2019 05 no
- 177 Jun 28 2019 0 Snow sledding
- 178 Jun 28 2019 0 birdwatching, nature photography
- 179 Jun 28 2019 1 Trail running
- 180 Jun 27 2019 0 Flying kites
- 181 Jun 27 2019 0 sledding with my children
- 182 Jun 26 2019 0 Dryland training (pole hiking, trail running) for Nordic. Also playground for strength training after a trail run.
- 183 Jun 26 2019 1 A place to enjoy my lunch hour when the weather is nice



184 Jun 26 2019 1 trail running  
 185 Jun 26 2019 0 Birding  
 186 Jun 25 2019 0 Trail running  
 187 Jun 25 2019 0 Running  
 188 Jun 25 2019 0 I am a volunteer groomer for the XC ski trails, so I am there to maintain trails as a volunteer  
 189 Jun 25 2019 0 Running on the paved trails  
 190 Jun 25 2019 0 Dryland training  
 191 Jun 25 2019 1 Cross country skiing  
 192 Jun 25 2019 1 No  
 193 Jun 25 2019 0 Trail running, group ski training lessons all year  
 194 Jun 25 2019 0 Running events  
 195 Jun 25 2019 0 CX training, CX races  
 196 Jun 24 2019 1 Trail running  
 197 Jun 24 2019 1 Trail running and rollerskiing  
 198 Jun 24 2019 0 No.  
 199 Jun 24 2019 0 no  
 200 Jun 24 2019 0 no  
 201 Jun 24 2019 0 No  
 202 Jun 24 2019 0 Rollerskiing and running  
 203 Jun 24 2019 0 Rolw  
 204 Jun 24 2019 0 no  
 205 Jun 24 2019 0 no  
 206 Jun 24 2019 1 na  
 207 Jun 24 2019 1 No  
 208 Jun 24 2019 1 No  
 209 Jun 24 2019 1 NA  
 210 Jun 24 2019 1 trail running  
 211 Jun 24 2019 1 sledding  
 212 Jun 24 2019 0 Many hours of skiing and biking classes for yourh  
 213 Jun 24 2019 0 Photography  
 214 Jun 23 2019 0 Skiing in the winter with man- made snow when natural snow is not available.  
 215 Jun 23 2019 0 Exploring  
 216 Jun 23 2019 0 Trail Running  
 217 Jun 23 2019 0 Nordic pole hiking and bounding. Roller skiing.  
 218 Jun 23 2019 0 roller ski on paved pathways around the perimeter of the park  
 219 Jun 23 2019 0 Rollerskiing!  
 220 Jun 23 2019 0 No  
 221 Jun 23 2019 0 birding  
 222 Jun 23 2019 0 Trail running  
 223 Jun 23 2019 0 Roller skiing  
 224 Jun 23 2019 0 N  
 225 Jun 23 2019 0 Trail Running  
 226 Jun 23 2019 0 Trail running  
 227 Jun 23 2019 0 Hill running  
 228 Jun 23 2019 0 no  
 229 Jun 23 2019 0 Running, hill workouts  
 230 Jun 22 2019 1 Snow making would be great!  
 231 Jun 22 2019 0 Trail running  
 232 Jun 22 2019 0 Tennis  
 233 Jun 22 2019 0 Hike with ski poles as a form of active recreation  
 234 Jun 22 2019 0 Running  
 235 Jun 22 2019 0 Roller-skiing  
 236 Jun 22 2019 0 Running  
 237 Jun 22 2019 0 Sports competition spectating  
 238 Jun 22 2019 0 Trail running!  
 239 Jun 22 2019 0 Running races  
 240 Jun 22 2019 0 No  
 241 Jun 22 2019 0 X-country skiing!  
 242 Jun 22 2019 0 no  
 243 Jun 22 2019 0 No  
 244 Jun 22 2019 1 Trail running  
 245 Jun 22 2019 0 No  
 246 Jun 22 2019 0 No, mainly skiing  
 247 Jun 22 2019 0 Roller skiing

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

248 Jun 22 2019 0 Trail running  
249 Jun 21 2019 1 bird watching  
250 Jun 21 2019 1 Trail running  
251 Jun 21 2019 1 I would definitely come more if there was man made snow  
252 Jun 21 2019 1 Trail running, sledding  
253 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
254 Jun 21 2019 0 Trail running  
255 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
256 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
257 Jun 21 2019 0 no  
258 Jun 21 2019 0 Fatbiking it in the shoulder seasons before the ski trails are groomed.  
259 Jun 21 2019 0 when my son plays indoor soccer, I ski, walk or enjoy nature  
260 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
261 Jun 21 2019 0 Hill/trail running  
262 Jun 21 2019 0 Rollerskiing  
263 Jun 21 2019 0 Trail running  
264 Jun 21 2019 0 Year round training for cross-country skiing  
265 Jun 21 2019 0 Summer Off season nordic training. Winter Nordic skiing.  
266 Jun 21 2019 0 Ski races!  
267 Jun 21 2019 0 Roller skiing  
268 Jun 21 2019 0 no  
269 Jun 21 2019 0 no  
270 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
271 Jun 21 2019 0 Sledding  
272 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
273 Jun 21 2019 0 Trail running  
274 Jun 21 2019 0 ski  
275 Jun 21 2019 0 Ski races  
276 Jun 21 2019 0 Trail running  
277 Jun 21 2019 0 I groom the Nordic trails and run  
278 Jun 21 2019 0 Races  
279 Jun 21 2019 1 Trail running  
280 Jun 21 2019 1 No  
281 Jun 21 2019 1 No  
282 Jun 21 2019 0 Roller Skiing!  
283 Jun 21 2019 0 Sledding in the winter with the kids  
284 Jun 20 2019 0 Cyclocross races  
285 Jun 20 2019 0 Roller skiing  
286 Jun 20 2019 0 Trail running, rollerskiing  
287 Jun 20 2019 0 Roller skiing  
288 Jun 20 2019 0 Mountain biking  
289 Jun 20 2019 0 Trail running  
290 Jun 20 2019 0 I rollerski along the paved trails  
291 Jun 20 2019 0 Trail running  
292 Jun 20 2019 0 Minnesota Youth Ski League and trail running  
293 Jun 20 2019 0 Running  
294 Jun 20 2019 0 Trail running  
295 Jun 20 2019 1 Trail running, rollerskiing.  
296 Jun 20 2019 1 Rollerskiing  
297 Jun 20 2019 1 No.  
nature up there, not a lot of man-made structures. I like to keep those things separate, playground/pavillion and paved trails  
298 Jun 20 2019 1 separated from hiking trails that take you further into the nature and make it more quiet.  
299 Jun 20 2019 0 Nope  
300 Jun 19 2019 0 Geocaching  
301 Jun 19 2019 0 No

**Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey**  
**Which features of the Park do you think are important to keep?**

**Answered 683**  
**Skipped 150**

Responses
bike trailsplayground
All of them.
Dog park and walking trails
accessibility for all abilities
The mountain biking trail
Groomed ski trails and maintain the hiking/mountain biking trails
All! Playground, trails, waterpark
All
No opinion
dog park & trails
Golf course.
Everything- Scenery, off trail path, water park, playground, creek and water for fishing, the history of what took place in war, grass area for sports when events take place, and the other grills for smaller and non reserved areas.
All of them.
Water park, bike paths, playground
Golf Course at PBC
All of the green space and un developed areas
All of it
Dog park. Mountain bike trails. Hiking trails. Hiking trails in the winter besides ski trail
Trails, natural beauty
All of them. The park is well set up currently
Paths and openness
Paths, skiing options
the offroad parts
Trails
Walking/bike paths. Dog park needs to be eliminated and is legal/financial drain that is known as the terror park due to large number of fights and bites. It is not safe and risks all connecting trails
Trails for walking/ skiing/bikingPlayground
Water park is great, it should be expanded!!!
More fish
Wildlife habitat
All of it
Walking paths, dog park, open access
Nicely cut grass
Water park and playground
Nature
Dog Park
Leaving it natural
Leave it alone
The rural feeling in the city.
Quiet. Nature. Open space. Dog park.
prairie/ wildflowers, dog park, cross country ski trails
Walking paths, keeping the structures as mother earth intended them to be.
Mountain bike trails
The dog park
Playground, walking path, waterpark, picnic shelters and tables
The bridge and little waterfall near parking lot off 61
Open space to hike and walk
Dog park and paths
All of them
Love the dog park!
Paths, golf course, water park, picnic area, play ground
Dog park. It is the best around
I bring my energetic dog to the dog park multiple times a week. We love it's natural beauty and walking paths.
All of them
The natural aspects and how part of the park feels very remote and not in the middle of a city.
Walking and biking paths
The untouched quality of the trees and plants.
The water and dog park
Nature, pavilion, walk paths, bike paths. Water park.
Off road biking. There's not a lot of parks available east of the cities.
NATURAL...
The natural elements of the park that help preserve the animal habitats
Green space.Rec CenterPlaygrounds
Dog park, pavilion
Trails
Wooded walking trails

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

All of it. Enough of taking away parks that people enjoy. Everyone has their own activity that they enjoy. Also leave the golf course as is. It is a beautiful course, is paid off and will not need any repairs for 10 years.

Dog park! Wooded trails

All of it. The dog park and ski paths/hiking trails are used all year.

Hiking trails and natural areas  
trails and natural settings

I love the dog park, the trails (both paved and unpaved), the sledding hill, and the tennis courts.

Dog park, water park, pavillion, parking area, water ways fresh and clean  
space, natural grass areas, location to my home

The walking/ cross country trails, biking, hiking trails, dog park, picnic shelter, and the playground.  
safe walking paths, safe playground

Fences

DOG PARK!!!

All the natural aspects of it

Dog park, walking trails. Play ground.

Walking paths, dog park and picnic areas

The dog park

Golfing

Walking paths, dog park, cross country

Dog park

Trail networks

Dog park

The fenced in dog park. It's perfect

Paved trails

Walking/biking paths

The woods and trails. Gathering areas.

The beautiful trailway from McKnight to Hwy 10&61. Please don't ever change that portion of the park.  
paved and unpaved trails, wild spaces, benches.

Dog park is the best one in the area. The water park is great for families.

Walking and biking

Dog park

Waterpark

Dog park, walking paths, pavilions, open space for playing, children's play area and water park.

Playground, paths, water park

Walking paths

Water park, paths, mountain biking, cross country skiing

The fully fenced in dog park, with plenty of walking trails. I take my dogs frequently and they love to walk the trails off-leash

Dog park

The dog park is super important to us. It is the best dog park in the state!

Mountain biking

Dog park, playgrounds, walking/biking/jogging trails

The waterpark

I think it is important to fund expansion of the mountain biking trails, as this seems to have an extremely positive community impact based on the clientele it attracts.

Mountain Bike trails

Cross country skiing

Open spaces, hiking trails. Love keeping elements natural.

Dirt trails. The tiny waterfall by the bridge.

Cross country skiing and added snow making, hiking, trail and off roadbiking

Cross country skiing

Woods and trails.

Skiing and sledding opportunities

The natural woods in the West unit,  
ecological functionality - no invasives, native flora and fauna peace and quiet

hiking, running, biking dog park, playground

Trails

walking trails

Walking paths, playground.

The natural areas. Trails are an amazing resource near the city. Disappointed there aren't more options for winter hiking instead of just cross-country skiing

Hiking trails

Off road cycling trails

Cross Country Ski Trails, Lights for Cross Country Ski Trails, Off-Road cycling (MTB) Trails, Hiking Trails

Protect the nature, keep the dog park, maintain trails and trash bin

The natural wooded area

Cross country ski area

Water works

Dog park and skiing

All of it. I love the variety of things you can do.  
the natural setting - especially the wooded areas in both parks.

Groomed trails, trash receptacles and more port-a-potties! Better recycling

Dog Park, trails

Enclosed dog park

The wooded area available so close to busy streets - this provides peace, quiet and the opportunity to just enjoy nature, as well as exercise all year. It is VERY IMPORTANT that we keep areas as this intact B4 all we will have are buildings, parking lots, etc. Please DO NOT do anything in the area across from the water park. That area, also, could remain as is as it provides picnic areas, walking paths, playground equipment and, of course, the water park for children. I don't think anything needs to be changed to the Battle Creek Regional Park at all.

Waterworks

Trails running, cross country skiing, and mountain biking

Walking paths, green landscapes

Trails, beauty of nature

Dog park

walking & biking trails, dog park

landscape, clear water, healthy trees, wild flowers and wetland, bathrooms should be open more days, from April to November

Well-maintained trails, please! This is one of the best un-paved trail networks in St. Paul!

Nature walking trails

Cross country skiing, off-road bike riding

Cross Country skiing, dog park, off road biking. I can't think of anything I would take away.

Areas of minimal development, natural feeling.

Walking trails and informational signs

Open space

Cycling trails both on and off-road, skiing, ice skating/community sports, hiking

The natural feel

The mountain bike trails at Battle Creek have a unique character like no other in the twin cities that should be retained and expanded. Battle Creek is an incredible mountain bike resource on the east side of the cities where there are few other options. It also has the best access from downtown St Paul of any mountain bike trail in the area. The variety of cross country ski trails is also a great resource that should be retained.

walking paths, woods and grass lands, play ground, waterpark, restrooms, creek and ponds

Playground, water park, hiking/walking trails, ample open green space.

Walking paths. Dog park.

Leave undeveloped land stay that way.

The wooded areas for walking and habitat. The pavillion park for walking and diversity of plant life.

Broad and accessible green space

water park and bike trails

Keep the waterworks!

Walking trail

dog park, play ground, trails, all of it

dog park

Mountain bike trails and improve them

Quiet overall. Quiet activities

Keep the green space and wooded space

Walking trails Nature setting (ponds)

Fantastic trail systems

ski, bike, and hiking trails sledding hill

Trails And skiing

DOG PARK!!!

Dog park

I really enjoy having a waterpark close to our house and just the vastness of the park has so much to offer.

well maintained trails for bikers, hikers, walkers

trails.

The dog park for sure. And the walking trails. Waterworks is a great place as well. And for sure the playground.

Green space. Picnic shelters.

The natural setting.

Nearly all features, especially off road mountain bike trails, cross country ski trails, water features, open spaces, paved trails

The secluded nature of the ski/running area. It is the best secluded place that I've found in the metro.

quiet, undeveloped areas. tree cover, open spaces

Pathways through the woods

The green space and the trees, as well as the paths and picnic areas.

trails, lights

Trails for walk, bike, etc. XC skiing. Hiking trails. Pool for families. Dog park. Shelters for family gathering.

trails

Playgrounds

dog park, biking trails

Trails for walking, biking, hiking.

Undeveloped green space, dirt trails, neighborhood access points

The dog park

trails

Dog park

All of them

All the current features

Wildlife, improve water quality of creeks/ponds in the park

Open space. Trees. Pavilions. Trails. Ponds.

The playground, off road cycling, and rec center

MTB BIKING, CYCLING PATHS, PLAY GROUND

All are important.

Walking and hiking trails, dog park, playgrounds, natural areas, picnic pavillions



# Appendix - Online Survey 1

Mountain bike trails  
Dog park!  
Single track/mountain bike trails. Though, it is important to not simply have the trails be bike-exclusive. I run there often and have never had a collision with a bike--as long as both parties are being aware of what is going on, it should be fine to share them.  
Trails  
The Dog Park! and would like to see swimming/water options improved!  
Dog park, trails, cross-country skiing, water park  
Deer  
ski and hiking trails, lights  
all of them?  
Off road cycling  
Dog park. Having separate walking and mountain bike trails.  
All.  
bike paths and pool  
Creek  
The undeveloped woods, trails that allow one to get away in nature. Community access points from the neighborhoods is good.  
Add rental snow shoes. Keep waterworks  
All of it  
Hiking and skiing trails.  
All of it. It has served my family for 20 years. We've used each component. The dog park is most prevalent now.  
large park or recreation area. Nature has significant value

dog park (our favorite), mountain biking trails, and cross country ski trails (make snow pretty please!) Keep it woody, an escape for those of us who struggle being stuck living in the city.  
skiing, biking, hiking, dog park  
Nature part.  
The Indigenous plants and animals keep it safe for survival  
open areas  
the Mounds that have been there for centuries and the safety of the people  
Water park  
Creek along trail, off leash dog area, lots of natural green space, native prairie areas  
The trees and shrubs so the birds have places to nest and live.  
skiing, hiking, dog park.  
Dog park!  
The mountain bike park, dog park, and cross-country ski trails.  
MTB trails. Select quiet spaces for relaxation/meditation.  
nature  
The dog park, however it is becoming very shabby due to the heavy use it sees and lack of maintenance.  
Natural character of the dog park. It feels like I'm hiking in the woods, not strolling around a city park.  
DOG PARK  
Mountain Biking Trails  
Natural areas, unpaved trails, paved loops  
All of them  
Keeping the current Mountain Bike single tracks maintained and up to date.  
Paved trails. Signage  
Nature space  
Walking cycling and skiing  
All the things.  
The green!  
NATURE, NATURE, NATURE!  
The unmanicured aesthetic and various plant and communities supported by woods prairie and ponds, and the little hills of it. It's good that's it's a little wild!  
Love the Pavilion and picnic shelter. I think the tot lot could be replaced and I wish the pool had a larger lap or older kid swimming area. The paved path is perfect for walks.  
The feeling you get on the trails of being in nature, sounds of water and winds and sights of trees, birds and peace and quiet  
Biking hiking xx skiing kids play park sliding hill  
Playground, walking trails  
Please keep it as natural as possible. This is one of the few places to escape the noise and stress of urban life.  
Trails, dog park, water park  
Waterpark  
Mountain bike trails.  
The wooded areas and off road paths  
The Paths and Trails. The Pavilion (but updated version) Green space.  
Dog park, Hiking & Biking trails, Pavilions and Grills  
Paved and unpaved paths. Undeveloped area.  
paths and shelters  
The natural environment which isn't the way it is now. No natural areas the way the park was originally.  
trails through undeveloped sections  
Mountain biking but they need to be improved currently they are built so erosion is a big problemcross country skiing  
hiking/walking trail maintainedog parkcommunity rec  
walking and hiking paths, waterpark/pool, playgrounds, natural environment  
Groomed/maintained non-paved/off-road trails for walking/hiking/running. It's nice that there are both off-road walking trails as well as off-road mountain bike trails.  
Plenty of dirt trails.

The trails for skiing and running. It is the only challenging ski trail park in the East Metro.  
Some paved paths for bikes and rollerskiing, the awesome hiking, trail running, and single tracks mountain bike trails, the great ski trails in the wintertime.

The cross country ski trails on the Winthrop side of the park. Single track trails throughout the park. I think it is important to keep all of the trails (paved and unpaved)

Ski trails

ski trails, MTB trails, running trails, lighting.

Love having wooded trails in summer and cleared walking paths in the winter!

Trail maintenance, ski grooming

All of the trails. Skiing and mountain biking

Cross Country Ski trails

Cross country skiing.

Lighted ski trails featuring a variety of challenging terrain. Ski trail grooming regularity in the winter.

Both paved and unpaved trails of all types.

Skiing, outdoor recreation, community

Skiing, hiking

Ski trails and grooming

Nordic ski trails

Ski trails

Cross-country skiing, Mountain Biking, hiking

Dog park and running trails

Ski trails and mountain bike trails

Skiing! Please add snowmaking!

wooded trails, lighted ski trails, ski trail grooming

dog park --I have been coming to the park for 20+ years

Prairies, woodlands, natural topography. Please keep the mountain bike trail area multi-use for hiking and running

The dog park!

Keep the dog park

In my opinion this is hands down the best dog park in the whole greater metro area!!! It's been a game changer for my pup and I

xc skiing, mtn biking

Asphalt walking paths, the creek, lots of trees

ski trails and other winter sports.

Cross country ski trails/ unpaved trails for hiking and running

Off road cycling, Skiing

Nordic skiing/Mountain biking

cross country skiing, Mt biking

Cross country skiing.

cleanliness

XC ski trails, dog park, hiking/walking trails

I like how the park serves people of many ages, young to old. I like the features listed, which I used the waterpark, playgrounds, biking trails, picnic shelters when my kids were younger.

Please keep the off-leash dog park - there are so few places like this available in or near St. Paul. Please keep the wooded areas quiet and separate from the kid's activities like the waterpark/playground areas - in other words, don't add facilities that will alter their character. Those facilities are in a separate area now.

The main part of the park that is the enclosure of raw nature. Even though it is in the midst of the city, it is great to be able to get away from the noise.

Ski trails

Beauty. Buck thorn invasion looks to be substantial.

natural area preservation, walking paths

Dog park with water for swimming

The dog park is great! Our dogs love it and it is our favorite dog park.

My kids both participate in MYSL Skiing. My son as a student and my daughter as a coach. I'd love to see snow making there.

The dog park, the variety of trails and trail use options.

natural beauty, wooded areas, trails for walking, cycling and hiking

Cross country Skiing and all the trails

no where to deposit it along paths

Both the paved and dirt trails. There is something magical about getting away from sidewalks, ducking under branches, and feeling the dirt underfoot, seeing wild turkeys, deer, raccoons, and other people enjoying the same thing. A perfect way for our family to start a morning!

the diversity of the different trails and pathways

Skiing and biking and walking/hiking

Cross country skiing

maintain natural habitat

maintain natural habitat

Cross country ski trails

XC lighted ski trails

the big community area with the playground, picnic pavilion, water park, etc.

the wild parts along the creek, behind Battle Creek school, and by Carver school

The off leash trails in the dog park.

Cross country skiing and walking trails

The ski trails

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

People need nature -- as such, the most important feature of the park is to maintain a high quality natural environment. If there is a need for turf and expanded built infrastructure, it should be carefully planned for resiliency, and should enhance pollinator and wildlife habitat -- not diminish it.

low impact hiking trails, Wildlife habitat

Nature - the woods, ponds, creek.

Access - paths, both paved & not

Dog Park - we go at least once a day, and take care of it.

Classic only cross country ski trails - the skate skiers are a different group, and the tracks added to a skate ski area are rarely pleasant.

Sledding hill!

Trails, nature, tracked ski trails

I live near the state fairgrounds and mostly use Como Park and Snelling State Park for recreation. But our family cross country skis at Battle Creek because we love the trails and it's more wooded, more hilly and less crowded than Como.

Wild spaces. Make sure there are plenty of spaces with just walking trails to see nature and not be near noisy activities such as picnics, sports, dog park. Our favorite are the trails west of Battle Creek road which are lovely and wild and change beautifully with the seasons.

Dog park - it's the best dog park in the east metro. We don't have a dog right now, but were frequent visitors when we had one. Also, keep hiking trails.

The large dog park

Walking paths.

Trails and indoor area for winter

Ski trails, paved trails for roller skiing

Trails

The trails for hiking and skiing

Definitely the dog park!

Trails

High quality snow grooming for cross country skiing and investment in snow making equipment.

Safety

All

natural areas for wildlife, rather than excessive development

Cross Country Ski Trails

natural areas/ski trailpaths

Dog park. Trails.

Dog park, water park, pavilions, trails, and playground.

Dog Park

cross country skiing

dog park

dog park

Cross Country skiing

Skiing, hiking

The well-maintained trail system and the friendly recreation center

Open space, wildlife areas,

DOG PARK

make strong connection for walking, running, biking to Pigs Eye Regional Park across Hwy 61 and railroad tracks. Also protect natural environment, habitat restoration.

Cross country skiing. Please add snowmaking. There is no where in the east metro that has snow making for cross country skiing.

Cross country skiing and biking, hiking, picnics

Dog Park, walking trails, ponds/wetlands, picnic areas.

Cross country trails, dog park, like being in the north woods in the city

Ski and bike trails, dog park

Hiking and cross country ski trails

No

Dog park

Cross country ski areas and hiking trails are the most important to me.

The natural quality of the dog park. The unimproved dirt paths make it feel like I'm immersed in nature, miles from nowhere.

There are accessible asphalt walking paths elsewhere in the park which I use from time to time when it is too muddy but the unimproved paths in the dog park are essential to creating that hiking in nature experience. Please don't 'improve' the dog park.

Skiing and dog park

The natural areas along the creek and the woods and prairies in the southeast corner of the park.

Off-leash dog park- with support for seniors (people and dogs) and people with disabilities. Huge audience.

Trails and woodland

The dog park

Hiking and biking trails

Lots of paths, both finished and the more rustic paths without blacktop.

Unpaved hiking trails

dog park and trails

ski trails for winter and summer use.

Off-road cycling

Dog park, ponds, trails

Unique dog park

Large dog park with lots of woods and trails. It is a unique space that allows for all temperaments of dogs to exist peacefully.

Dog park!  
 Keeping it as nature intended. Wildlife is important  
 Dog park  
 The paved and unpaved paths and also the ponds.  
 Ski trails  
 Hiking trails. Skiing trails. Habitat for plants and animals.  
 Paved trails  
 playground  
 cross country ski trails with snowmaking off road biking trails  
 The lush green trails! I adore the trail between McKnight and Hwy 61  
 Existing structures and Natural Areas  
 Bike trails Hiking trails Walking paths  
 Great paved and unpaved trails for hiking, biking and skiing. Dog park and waterpark.  
 Ski trails, hiking trails.  
 Skiing, biking, hiking, walking,  
 Skiing, biking, hiking, walking,  
 Cross a Country ski trails  
 Every current feature is great, however the natural topography of the park is unique and provides an unparalleled opportunity in the metro area for cross country skiing and mountain biking. Therefore I think these are the two most important features that will continue to help Battle Creek stand out as a gem and attract people from all over the metro area.  
 natural setting, diverse habitats  
 Unpaved trails particularly in the west (there's plenty of paved trails in the east) . Untouched wilderness.  
 The park is wonderful as it is. We like the port-a- potties during the off season.  
 Trail maintenance for walking and hiking! Ski trail maintenance in the winter.  
 Nature trails, playground, waterworks, cross country skiing, paved trails for bikes  
 Nodric Ski Trails  
 hiking trails, cross country skiing  
 unpaved trails and ski trails (winter)  
 The natural beauty. The vast size.  
 Unpaved trails and undeveloped recreation areas  
 Places to relax, the dog park, picnic tables  
 preserve some of the natural areas  
 groomed and lit ski trails, wooded areas, kid space  
 Trails  
 Cross country ski trails, water park, dog park, mountain bike trails, paved trails  
 Hiking, cross country skiing  
 Ski trails  
 Mt Biking Trails Cross Country Ski and Running Trails Parking Locations  
 XC ski trails, mountain bike trails, walking paths, native prairie restoration areas  
 Paved running trails  
 Ski trails/ hiking trails  
 Ski trails  
 Cross Country Skiing  
 Off road in paved ski and bike trails are fantastic.  
 The cross country ski trails are #1. Make snow!  
 Availability for CX training, races and skate skiing training and races, signage for those events.  
 Nordic ski trails. Snowmaking would make such a difference!  
 Cross country skiing and off road summer activities like mt biking, hiking and trail running.  
 Off road cycling and cross country ski trails  
 Ski /bike trails  
 trees  
 Skiing! Neighborhood feel, quiet, family friendly.  
 Mountain bike trails! Water park Ski trails  
 Mountain bike trails but make them better!  
 Ski trail  
 All of the above!  
 mountain bike and ski trails, assuming they get the necessary amount of attention  
 Skiing, mountain biking and hiking trails  
 Cross country ski trails.  
 XC ski and mountain bike trails!  
 XC Ski Mountain Bike Trails  
 Ski trails  
 Cross country skiing  
 The cross-country skiing is the best in the metro region when there's snow. Anything that would help promote that and make it more reliable, like snowmaking, would be great.  
 Cross Country Skiing. Trails in general.  
 Nordic and Hiking trails  
 Wooded trails. XX ski trails  
 Lighted ski trails  
 Roller ski  
 ski trails, mtb trails  
 trails for cross country skiing and hiking  
 Cross Country skiing, mountain biking, recreation in general.  
 The pool!

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

Cross country skiing, trails for biking, hiking

The natural beautiful of the area. The simple fact that you can feel a million miles away when in the park but only be a mile from your home.

XC Skiing--snowmaking is needed

Dog park! Nice and big, with lots of different levels of activity for all kinds of dogs

Cross country ski trails are vital to the East Metro high school programs

Dog park, clean/safe spaces for families to play and hike, cross country skiing.

XC ski trails

Playground, water park, walking and biking trails

Ski trails and bike trails

everything. it's a special place in the city of St Paul

Bike trails, nordic trails

All of the amazing trails and the separate dog park

Cross country ski trails

Water park, extensive ski trails.

The ski trail terrain is some of the best in the city

Cross country skiing, sledding hill

Multipurpose uses

Natural state

Ski Trails, Multi use walking trails, sledding hill.

Ski trails and off road biking.

Ski trails. Please add snow making so we have snow all winter in the East metro

Th ski trails. There hard trails but so good to train on as well as snow making. The money they people will pay to ski with or snow that comes and go is so important

Skiing

Cross Country Skiing

Good trails for cycling

Ski and Running Trails

Cross country skiing

Trails, both paved and natural.

cross country ski trails

All

All of them

I want ski trails with manufactured snow in the winter please!

Ski trails. Mountain bike trails. Hiking trails. multiple habitats for wildlife(birds)

Trail system

Cross country ski trails

Sliding hills, ski trails, pavillion, walking trails, bike trails, lights for ski trails

The I don't want trees to be cut down, and I want the beautiful nature to remain untouched.

Nordic skiing, hiking, mountain biking, dog park

Nordic ski trails

Lights for cross country skiing at night.

Skiing, water park

Skiig, biking, hiking

Cross country skiing, hiking, walking

Amazing trail system. Great ski trails, hiking/running trails, biking trails. The woods and nature surrounding makes the trails great too!

Cross country ski trails

Trails, sledding hill, rec center

Xc ski and hiking trails, wooded environment, sled hill

Cross country ski grooming and Single Track mountain bike trails

TRAILS: Interesting terrain, challenging hills, trees,

Love the wilderness feel of it and ability to get away from the city

Natural beauty. Save the trees?

Nordic trails

I would like to x country ski, but there's not enough natural snow.Please make snow!

Skiing, off road trail system

Mountain bike trails and ski trails.

Balance between 'wild' areas and built up areas such as the water park, playground, and pavilion.

Xc skiingOff road biking

Gnarly Mountain Bike trails

Ski trails

Ski trails, mountain bike trails

I know that part of what makes the park unique is the trail system. I hope we can keep providing amenities for east siders who love to hike, off-trail, and cross country ski!

XC ski trails, paved trails, mountain bike trails, picnic areas

Xc skiing, hiking, biking, picnic facilities

The trails...for both summer and winter use

Trails

Cross country skiing — add snowmaking. Trails for trail running and mountain biking.

All

Cross country ski trails

Winthrop site trails.

Cross country ski trails are the best in the east metro. Dog park is wonderful.

Wild natural environment



cross country skiing and hopefully snow making.  
 Ski trails ! Run trails !  
 Cross country skiing  
 The xc ski and mtn bike trail systems. Snow-making would be awesome! I live in Golden Valley so Wirth, Elm Creek and Hyland are all pretty close. For skiers that live in the east metro, they have no options other than drive almost an hour each way or just not ski.  
 Bike and walking trails  
 natural areas; skiing  
 Trails  
 trails  
 Cross country skiing  
 Trails  
 Ski trails, running trails, MTn biking single track  
 Groomed ski trails  
 Mountain biking and cross country ski trails  
 Mountain bike trails  
 Groomed cross country ski trails  
 Free and easy access  
 The Nordic skiing  
 Biking and ski trails  
 Cross Country skiing  
 Cross country ski trails and mountain bike trails.  
 skiing  
 Skiing, hiking, biking, pool, nature and trees  
 Hiking and walking trails in natural settings. As much cross country skiing trails as possible!  
 Xc ski  
 ski trails  
 Ski trails  
 Ski trails  
 I think the hiking and ski trails are awesome  
 All of them.  
 Cross country trails are best in East Metro.  
 Ski trails  
 Off road biking  
 walking, skiing, and biking trails  
 Cross county ski trails  
 Skiing, dog park, hiking  
 trails  
 Dog park hiking and ski trails  
 Ski trails and mountain biking  
 Challenging trails  
 Cross country ski trails  
 Cross country skiing  
 Prairie spaces, water features, solitude and nature, dog park, picnic and bbq spaces, ski trails, running, walking and biking.  
 Ski and mt bike trails  
 Cross country skiing  
 Trails/trail maintenance  
 Non paved trails  
 Great trails  
 Ski and hiking trails  
 Cross country skiing trails since it is so close to the city and accessible to so many people!  
 cross-country ski trails, water park, hiking trails  
 The accessibility is huge for me  
 Hiking/ski trails  
 The natural trails and the cross country ski trails  
 paths/trails  
 Nordic skiing biking community space and rec center  
 cross country skiing, water park and walking trails  
 Ski trails are very important. Battle Creek is one of the few ski areas on the eastern side of the river.  
 All of them. We love really close, and it's the main reason we stay in the area. We bike it, ski it, use there trails, and use the dog park.  
 I love that the trails feel like you are in nature, both for skiing and walking/hiking  
 Hiking/skiing trails. Awesome dog park!  
 Cross country ski and biking trails. Snowmaking should be permanently installed.  
 Skiing  
 ski trails , hiking trails  
 Mix of developed and more wild areas  
 Skiing and biking  
 nordic skiing, walking and biking  
 Cross country ski trails  
 All the trails for winter and summer  
 Groomed cross country ski trails  
 Cross country ski trails. Please add snowmaking capability! There are no snowmaking trails on the entire east side - city or suburbs.  
 Skiing bike trails  
 Cross-country ski trails, hiking trails, forest, steep hills  
 Cross country skiing

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

The great trail systems, both paved and unpaved.  
Cross country trails and lights  
Cross country skiing. We need snow making!!!  
Wild nature  
Cross Country Skiing  
Winter ski trails.  
Natural feel.  
Add snowmaking!!  
Mountain bike and ski trails  
Ski trails in the winter, and paved trails for rollerskiing in the summer, I also think the unpaved trails are very nice to run and walk on. When I rollerski, I also very often pass people walking on the paved paths.  
run / bike / ski trails  
Lots of wooded trails!!!  
Cross country trails, mountain bike trails, hiking  
Skiing.

The cross country ski trails are some of the only ones in the east metro, and there are limited options in the metro in general. It is very important to me that we keep the cross country ski trails and improve them, as my family visits them 1-2 times per week while there is snow.  
trails  
Cross country skiing and hiking.  
Mountain bike trails that MORC has worked very hard to maintain and develop.  
The ski trails that were recently homologated to bring more races to the venue.  
Nordic Trails and off road cycling.  
Everything! It's a great park and a hidden gem in Saint Paul  
Water, cross country skiing  
CC ski, biking, hiking trails. Dog Park  
cross country skiing  
Snow making for skiing  
single-track mtb trails  
trails for skiing and hiking/walking/running  
Good walking paths, natural / scenic setting, water views, wildlife habitat  
Skiing, nature, trails, water park  
Ski trails!!  
Cross country ski trails/hiking trails  
Wooded, non paved trails for running and cross country skiing. I'm at the park weekly to do one of the two things. It's also an important feature to keep dog walkers and hikers off the groomed ski trails in winter.  
Cross country skiing should be primary focus for winter activities -- maintain and improve the trails and grooming and do better enforcement to keep foot traffic off of groomed trails.  
XC skiing and hiking and biking  
Cross country skiing  
Hiking trails & Walking paths  
Snowmaking is greatly needed! This would allow thousands of kids access to guaranteed snow!!  
Mountain biking and CX Skiing.  
Ski trails  
Ski trails are some of the best in the metro when there is snow.  
XC ski trails! Paved and dirt hiking trails. Build winter building for ski center!  
The cross-country ski trails.  
Groomed ski trails  
Mountain biking, hiking, cx skiing  
Ski trails  
The ski trails  
Ski grooming, unpaved trails  
Ski trails. Snow making would be great  
competition level cross country ski trails, with the addition of snow making.  
Cross Country Skiing, hiking, biking  
The mountain bike trails  
Mountain bike trails and ski trails  
Mountain bike trails and ski trails

I love the trail system! I think the signage is great. I like the playground because I can hike with my kid and play after. The community center is helpful for events and programming but I don't use it frequently. The lighting for the 5k ski trail is wonderful when there is natural snow.  
Ski trails!!! Please invest in snowmaking! The ski trails are a gem. We love them and utilize them weekly when there's snow!  
Cross country ski trails and getting snowmaking for them!  
Cross Country Ski Trails  
Cross Country Ski Trails

Cross Country Ski trails are the most important feature of the park. They are some of the best cross country ski trails in the metro area and are used by groups of all ages and abilities including families, community ski clubs, individuals, high school teams, and college clubs/teams.  
Ski trails  
Need to keep all hiking and cross country skiing trails  
Ski trails, playground, mountain bike trails and hiking trails  
Ski Trails  
Nordic trails and mountain biking trails.  
The ski trails are some of the best in the metro area. The lights make it great for evening workouts.

All the unpaved trails for skiing, hiking, and biking. Running on pavement is terrible for my knees. You can't ski on paved trail with low snow we've had.

World class cross country ski trails

Ski Trails

Walking & skiing paths. Potties, of course.

Cross country skiing

Keep all the grassy & wooded trails. I love that this park has real good hiking and a separate paved trail for people who need it (wheelchairs and strollers). I love the feeling of being far away from human-made things. Except for the loud train right by the park, this park does a really good job at giving you a nature experience that doesn't feel like you're in the metro!

Natural beauty Well-maintained paths

Hiking trails

The dog park.

Water park

Paved trails, playground, beautiful open field/wilderness areas,

Remote walking trails; simplicity of the park; don't let it become just another nice park for zillions of people. It's too unique the way it is.

The large fenced-in dog park. I have two dogs and this is the best place to take them where they can safely run and play off-leash.

Hiking/skiing paths, creek

Playground and waterworks

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

### Which features of the Park do you think should be removed or changed?

Answered 464

Skipped 369

Respondents	Response Date	Responses
1	Sep 09 2019	C parking lot...have cars park on upper afton or lower afton. Parking lots are a nightmare with theft
2	Sep 09 2019	1 adding hiking trail to area with bike trails
3	Sep 08 2019	C increase restroom accessibility. Parents and kids with disabilities need options, especially sensory
4	Sep 07 2019	1 None adult changing tables and adjustable sinks. More accessible parking. Accessible/inclusive options at the
5	Sep 07 2019	C pool with water wheel chairs
6	Sep 07 2019	C No opinion You need big family bathrooms that have a adult changing station in them. No automatic flushing toilets. Please consider going above the ADA minimal standards . We need a inclusive playground where all individuals in wheelchairs, little individuals, individuals with sensory seeking such as autism FASD, or ODD
7	Sep 07 2019	C can enjoy themselves. Think about putting a fence around the playground.
8	Sep 07 2019	C none
9	Sep 07 2019	1 None, it's a park and it works. (there are a lot of people who loves to do picnics and birthdays at this park), and better access near water
10	Sep 07 2019	1 to fish.
11	Sep 06 2019	1 None
12	Sep 06 2019	C Water park Allow walking/hiking in the winter besides groomed ski trails. At the moment the groomed ski trail close the
13	Sep 06 2019	C park for all other uses (except dog park) wild areas as was being considered.
14	Sep 06 2019	C
15	Sep 06 2019	C None of them
16	Sep 06 2019	C Dog park needs to go!
17	Sep 06 2019	C Some areas better lit
18	Sep 06 2019	C Playground upgraded expand water park size
19	Sep 06 2019	C Dog park elimination
20	Sep 06 2019	C Remove pavilion none, but maybe a shuffling of resources to align space commitment to the different types of activities
21	Sep 06 2019	1 according to average utilization.
22	Sep 06 2019	1 Bigger lake for fish
23	Sep 06 2019	C Nothing
24	Sep 06 2019	C None
25	Sep 06 2019	C Can't think of much but more amenities - maybe tennis courts, occasional events like food trucks The Dog park pond. It's extremely dirty and green algae builds up throughout the entire pond. There should
26	Sep 06 2019	C be a way to clean the ponds to remove the algae.
27	Sep 06 2019	C Add a splash pad, make the playground bigger
28	Sep 06 2019	C Like them all
29	Sep 06 2019	C Nothing
30	Sep 06 2019	C Leave it alone and stop wasting tax dollars More trash cans in the park area next to dog park. Better trails in dog park. More clearing of brush around
31	Sep 06 2019	1 perimeter loop of dog park. Replace the parking lot. Dog water fountains.
32	Sep 05 2019	1 safer street crossings along bike paths and to access park
33	Sep 05 2019	1 More lit paths for safety
34	Sep 05 2019	C Fence off all ponds in dog park
35	Sep 05 2019	C None of them
36	Sep 05 2019	C Would like a water source so dog bowls can be filled
37	Sep 05 2019	C Update playground and trails
38	Sep 05 2019	C The park has a good balance for many types la activities.
39	Sep 05 2019	C Unknown
40	Sep 05 2019	C Restrooms are needed on the trails

- 41 Sep 05 2019 C N/A  
The park should be patrolled at night. Even this the park closes some people are there not using the park
- 42 Sep 05 2019 C like they should be
- 43 Sep 05 2019 C Updated playground Nature playground Adventure course for older kids to play on
- 44 Sep 05 2019 C Playground could be expanded substantially
- 45 Sep 05 2019 C Updated playground equipment
- 46 Sep 05 2019 C None
- 47 Sep 05 2019 C Leave it as is
- 48 Sep 05 2019 C Updated shelters, shelter in dog park, running water in dog park
- 49 Sep 05 2019 I not sure  
Honestly, I love the park so much, I wouldn't want to remove anything.  
If there was one thing I would change it would be to regulate the roller skiing. They deserve a time and
- 50 Sep 05 2019 I place to practice, but they are so loud and hard to maneuver around when they practice in the park.
- 51 Sep 05 2019 I Less picnic tables more signage about appropriate vs inappropriate behavior, ie trash, music, ect
- 52 Sep 05 2019 I signage is old.
- 53 Sep 05 2019 I Waterworks.
- 54 Sep 05 2019 C not sure
- 55 Sep 05 2019 C The people
- 56 Sep 05 2019 C The dog park parking lots need more security cameras
- 57 Sep 05 2019 C None.
- 58 Sep 04 2019 I None
- 59 Sep 04 2019 I Hoe profitable is the water park?
- 60 Sep 04 2019 I Expansion of the dog park
- 61 Sep 04 2019 I Improve wildlife habitat.
- 62 Sep 04 2019 I Water park
- 63 Sep 04 2019 C It would be great if there were a Porto potty in the actual dog park as well as water fountains for humans
- 64 Sep 04 2019 C More paved trails
- 65 Sep 04 2019 C Water park.
- 66 Sep 04 2019 C I have no interest in the water park or the dog park.  
  
Don't convert too much to tall floral plants, there used to be more open mowed fields on the downhill and you could see the creek. Now you can't see the water there is too much tall plants. I understand making it ecologically friendly, but let us see the water and keep some open spaces. :) I'd love if we could walk in the
- 67 Sep 04 2019 C park in winter too, it says only for skiing.
- 68 Sep 04 2019 C Nothing
- 69 Sep 04 2019 C Dog park  
It would be nice if the fenced in pond at the water park could be aerated to prevent the algae from forming
- 70 Sep 04 2019 C so quickly. It's hardly ever swimmable for the dogs.
- 71 Sep 04 2019 C Update playground, more trails
- 72 Sep 04 2019 C Better maintained paths, garbage collected. Better supervised/ safety
- 73 Sep 04 2019 C It might be cool to add adult pools to the water park.
- 74 Sep 03 2019 C None. Enhance the mountain bike trail network. Provide more single track
- 75 Sep 02 2019 I The waterpark- make bigger?  
I don't think any of the park should be removed. I think we should continue to develop the single track
- 76 Aug 27 2019 C mountain biking offerings as the terrain is an incredible opportunity for fantastic mountain biking.
- 77 Aug 26 2019 C Mountain Bike trails
- 78 Aug 22 2019 C Unsure
- 79 Aug 21 2019 C Adding snow-making capabilities
- 80 Aug 21 2019 C Add snowmaking. Add to hours of trail lights?
- 81 Aug 21 2019 C No input  
common buckthorn needs to be controlled; glossy buckthorn is starting to invade the West unit and should
- 82 Aug 21 2019 C be removed;
- 83 Aug 17 2019 C Better aquatics facility.  
A bathroom or portapotty by the western end of the park by the cave. It is too far to walk to get to a toilet
- 84 Aug 16 2019 C when visiting that area of the park.
- 85 Aug 15 2019 C Update playground equipment
- 86 Aug 15 2019 C More winter trail access for hikers.



## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- The off road cycling trails need signage. I would use the trails a lot more if I wasn't afraid of getting lost all the time.
- 87 Aug 15 2019 C
- 88 Aug 14 2019 C More benches. Some picnic tables
- 89 Aug 14 2019 C Add snowmaking
- 90 Aug 14 2019 C It'd be great if there were lit ski trails and if they could make snow.  
the loose stripe is going wild - if possible, cut some of it back before it takes over. Otherwise, leave
- 91 Aug 13 2019 1 everything in its natural setting. a few more benches in the walking areas.
- 92 Aug 12 2019 1 See previous
- 93 Aug 12 2019 C none
- 94 Aug 10 2019 1 None.  
walking on the winter trails, especially after they are groomed for skiing. This is a perennial problem.
- 95 Aug 08 2019 C Everyone ignores the signs.  
Huge lights on ski trails at night. Use a lot of power and irritating to others not using the trails. Also, free-
- 96 Aug 06 2019 C style skiers wreck groomed traditional cross country ski trails.  
Park shelters for rent that can also be enclosed in times of inclement weather; thinking of parties, weddings,
- 97 Aug 06 2019 C etc.
- 98 Aug 06 2019 C Make the pool a family pool
- 99 Aug 06 2019 C Organize volunteer crews to help cut back buckthorn and bring in native plants.
- 100 Aug 05 2019 C Can we have man-made snow, please?
- 101 Aug 05 2019 C None
- 102 Aug 05 2019 C Dog park - it's dangerous for all dogs that enter.
- 103 Aug 05 2019 C I think the park is great - perhaps some easier mountain bike trails for us beginners could be added.  
Water Park should be more open to younger children. It is great for pre-teens and teens, but it definitely
- 104 Aug 05 2019 C needs better amenities for kids 3-10.  
I think there should be more community activities at Battle Creek Rec Center for youth and adults. County
- 105 Aug 04 2019 1 and city cooperation would be good.
- The waterpark should be converted into a REAL POOL, not just a place for little kids. We have no public pools south of Highway 35E, and are asked about them all the time.
- People have commented that signage could be improved at the park - both way-finding and interpretive information.
- Not sure how well the dog park area has been maintained. I know it is well used - but last time I went there, was looking a bit worn out.
- 106 Aug 04 2019 C
- 107 Aug 03 2019 1 Do NOT need amphitheater!!!!
- 108 Aug 03 2019 1 Water park  
Area residents able to buy season pass for water park,
- 109 Aug 03 2019 C Too many people just sitting in cars in parking lot during the day
- 110 Aug 03 2019 C none
- 111 Aug 02 2019 1 More time on the mountain bike trails
- 112 Aug 01 2019 C Remove the watermark. Loud, expensive and underused
- 113 Aug 01 2019 C Increase off-road cycling trails
- 114 Jul 30 2019 07 make water park better
- 115 Jul 30 2019 02 Nothing leave it be
- 116 Jul 30 2019 12 Please don't remove anything; better maintenance of the hiking and off road biking trails
- 117 Jul 30 2019 11 Expanded/larger playground  
I personally don't see the need to remove anything. If anything adding in more pavilions would be a nice
- 118 Jul 30 2019 05 and welcome addition!
- 119 Jul 30 2019 05 Upgrade the water park
- 120 Jul 29 2019 08 Not any

Off-road bike trails have been great, would love to see them improved, connected, expanded, extended even further. Additionally, off-road or mountain bike skills loop features like what is at area bike trails.

While I enjoy xc-skiing, would also be great addition to have winter fat-biking trails opened up.

There should be more ways to improve the connections of the multiple sections of this amazing park by implementing over or under passes for those on foot, bike, mtb, ski, with dogs, etc. Dream would be to have a "great loop" of connected off-road bike trails and ski trails that brought together all the beautiful sections of this park.

Adding evening hours (instead of based on sunrise-sunset) to more sections of this park would make it much more accessible on week days especially in the spring, fall, and winter. Really enjoy getting to ski or bike or trail run by headlamp at the off-road trails at other MSP parks. Wish I had this opportunity at Battle

121 Jul 29 2019 02 Creek too.

122 Jul 29 2019 05 Can there be a place at the park to buy a ski pass?

would like to see fewer paved trails and similar "improvements" that break up the ecosystem. there are plenty of "developed" parks in Ramsey County and this general area. Also, work on restoration of native

123 Jul 29 2019 07 plants and trees. also main road through the park should be limited speed.

Waterworks could be improved. It's a pretty small waterpark for the price. Busy days people are so

124 Jul 28 2019 01 crammed in the swimming area that there is no real swimming happening.

Need snowmaking ability for XC ski trails. East Metro has no XC ski snow making sites and I have to travel to Bloomington, Maple Grove or Minneapolis. Lots of East Metro skiers would benefit and if necessary, you

125 Jul 27 2019 10 could charge a fee for a pass for cost recovery.

126 Jul 26 2019 06 nothing

127 Jul 26 2019 03 Add a free splash pad.

128 Jul 25 2019 10 Remove buckthorn and other invasives, increase health of Creek (water quality, biodiversity, etc)

129 Jul 25 2019 05 No amplified music rule

There are so few places to go for longer hikes in a nature setting in Saint Paul, so maintaining or increasing

130 Jul 25 2019 06 the amount of nature-y areas in the park would be my top priority

131 Jul 25 2019 05 Nothing...I see folks using all parts of the park

132 Jul 24 2019 10 Nothing really

133 Jul 24 2019 07 Add fence to dog park

134 Jul 24 2019 07 Dog park

135 Jul 24 2019 06 Basketball court needs some attention playground could use updates

136 Jul 24 2019 06 The old cycling paths, paved need to be redone

137 Jul 24 2019 05 None. Only add to it.

While the water park is nice for younger kids, a full swimming pool would be more useful for older kids and

138 Jul 24 2019 04 adults.

139 Jul 24 2019 02 Litter

It would be really, really nice to have more watering stations at trail heads. Other than the community center (which is not open on Sundays) I don't know of any places to fill up. Especially on the other side of the park (near the Burns Avenue Scenic Overlook) would be useful. Also, I do think the community center should be open on Sundays. The trails could be better marked--as it is, the maps only really show where the cross

140 Jul 24 2019 08 country ski courses are.

141 Jul 23 2019 08 None

142 Jul 23 2019 07 none

143 Jul 23 2019 05 Kids practicing cross county skiing in the summer

144 Jul 23 2019 11 none

145 Jul 22 2019 03 Battle Creek water works.

146 Jul 22 2019 10 Nothing removed however, they could be upgraded/expanded.

direct access from bike path on east side of McKnight (3M side) to the park without crossing back and forth on McKnight at 94. The pool is too small. We do not have a wave pool close by which would have been

147 Jul 22 2019 06 nice when my kid was younger.

148 Jul 22 2019 06 Woodticks

The street crossings at McKnight are not safe - dangerous for pedestrians even with the crosswalk. Would like the waterways to be developed to be more natural/healthy (there is garbage, limited wildlife, lots of non-

149 Jul 21 2019 05 native plants). Goats!!

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- 150 Jul 21 2019 1( If the pool isn't financially viable (used enough) then I would understand if it had to be changed out.
- 151 Jul 20 2019 1( Better directional signage on the trails  
Just want to keep it safe. I have to explore alone a lot (weird work hours) and I've felt a smidge nervous
- 152 Jul 20 2019 1( after hearing about car break ins.
- 153 Jul 19 2019 1( Maybe update the playground and remodel or update the picnic areas
- 154 Jul 19 2019 1( none
- 155 Jul 19 2019 1( the dangerous parts of the trails and the trails that are close to the mounds
- 156 Jul 19 2019 1( Respect for burial mounds
- 157 Jul 19 2019 0( Unsure  
Add a outdoor Olympic size lap pool to the water park. I wish for something closer to my neighborhood that
- 158 Jul 18 2019 0( is outside!!  
dogs along these trails, there is often a lot of litter and dog waste not cleaned up, I think because there are
- 159 Jul 18 2019 0( few places to deposit the waste.
- 160 Jul 18 2019 0( I think the water park could use some improvements.
- 161 Jul 18 2019 0( None. Please continue to make improvements to the mountain bike trails!
- 162 Jul 18 2019 1( Winter activities.
- 163 Jul 18 2019 0( Off-Road biking--it is terrible for the park
- 164 Jul 18 2019 0( I don't use nor do I care for water parks - immense waste of resources  
Improved signage. The maps are difficult to read, hard to locate where you are. The orientation of the
- 165 Jul 18 2019 0( maps need to change depending on where they are posted and what direction you are looking.
- 166 Jul 18 2019 0( The area near the overlook sometimes feels sketchy or unsafe  
  
This can and should include a small skills park not a direct part of the Single Track so that users can practice small skills repeatedly for an extended period of time.
- 167 Jul 17 2019 1( Please consider a skills park.  
The Water Park needs an expansion. We go to Eagan or Apple Valley water parks as Maplewood's water
- 168 Jul 17 2019 1( park is too small and crowded.
- 169 Jul 17 2019 1( None
- 170 Jul 17 2019 1( Add hockey rinks, ice skating area. Add nature play area for kids. Add ski chalet and rentals.  
The statue of the fish needs to be turned around. Electric car charger. Bathrooms should have a smell of
- 171 Jul 17 2019 0( elderberries. There should be a large bell that sounds on the 15.
- 172 Jul 17 2019 0( Can't think of any. There are of course some features I don't use but that's OK other people do.
- 173 Jul 17 2019 0( Tot lot. Larger swimming pool or a splash pad
- 174 Jul 17 2019 0( None - On like it as is.  
I wish they had a park center where you could rent xx skis or snow shoes and an interpretive nature center
- 175 Jul 17 2019 0( for kids programming and animals
- 176 Jul 17 2019 0( Improve/expand playground for children
- 177 Jul 17 2019 0( Updated playground
- 178 Jul 17 2019 0( I love the woods
- 179 Jul 17 2019 0( Update the Pavilion.  
  
While I don't use it, the play area could use updating. The waterpark could be expanded for wider use by
- 180 Jul 17 2019 0( all ages  
  
Uncertain. I have never used the water park but would like to with family someday. The smell of the dog park isn't great but I'm glad the dogs have a large space to be off-leash. Could update the picnic shelter
- 181 Jul 17 2019 0( area.  
  
All the grass cutting. Where are the areas that used to be more natural? Where are the wildflowers? I don't want this park to be this tamed. Cut grass three feet around trails and leave the rest. People need to
- 182 Jul 17 2019 0( know how to dress for a nature area.
- 183 Jul 17 2019 0( keep additional recreation amenities (see 9 below) in the existing picnic / waterpark area
- 184 Jul 17 2019 0( Mountain biking trails need to be improved, currently they are built so erosion is a big problem
- 185 Jul 17 2019 0( n/a
- 186 Jul 17 2019 0( N/A
- 187 Jul 17 2019 0( None

- 188 Jul 17 2019 02 need to feel more safe, it has a bad reputation
- 189 Jul 17 2019 01 I think it should all stay  
I wish people wouldn't walk or run on the ski trails during the winter. It ruins the grooming that volunteers
- 190 Jul 17 2019 12 work hard at!
- 191 Jul 17 2019 12 Repave parking lot at community center
- 192 Jul 17 2019 1C Snow making
- 193 Jul 15 2019 0E Add artificial snow loop for Nordic Skiing (XC) for the east metro.
- 194 Jul 15 2019 0E Would be nice to have a 'tot lot' in addition to the other playgrounds (fenced, with equipment for little ones)
- 195 Jul 15 2019 07 nothing
- 196 Jul 14 2019 0E Add snow making
- 197 Jul 14 2019 07 Add snowmaking capabilities to the lighted trails for winter use  
I think the current park offers a lot, i would not recommend removing things. Potential to make
- 198 Jul 14 2019 0E improvements.
- 199 Jul 14 2019 0E Nothing
- 200 Jul 14 2019 04 None
- 201 Jul 14 2019 0C Add snow-making capability for cross-country skiing.
- 202 Jul 14 2019 0C Reduce foot traffic on ski trails in the winter. Add snowmaking.  
The dog park is getting overrun. Could area be cordoned off to regrow every couple of years? Is there a
- 203 Jul 13 2019 11 way to keep the ponds clear and free of algae ?  
-consider updating dog park fencing (some areas have dilapidated temporary fencing)
- 204 Jul 12 2019 01
- 205 Jul 11 2019 04 price at water park
- 206 Jul 11 2019 0E I think the waterworks area could use an update potentially inline with the como regional park pool.
- 207 Jul 11 2019 07 Improve the dog swimming pond. Skim the duck week occasionally.
- 208 Jul 11 2019 12 N/A
- 209 Jul 10 2019 1C Parking is inadequate and security is lacking. Also needs a Nordic Center
- 210 Jul 10 2019 0E Sometimes there are too many geese, but not this year so far.
- 211 Jul 10 2019 0E dog walking on the ski trails
- 212 Jul 10 2019 1C waterpark
- 213 Jul 10 2019 1C Snow making capability for cross country skiing should be incorporated
- 214 Jul 10 2019 1C none
- 215 Jul 10 2019 0E Snow making for xc ski trails  
As the population ages, try including more ADA routes and programs, even Dementia-friendly AARP suggestions. With more ice storms, could trails be paved with more camber (tilt) so ice pools to one side &
- 216 Jul 10 2019 07 there's less need for de-icer?  
I think that the section north of Upper Afton should be maintained as the developed section but please keep
- 217 Jul 09 2019 12 the section south of Upper Afton as is because they are fantastic trails
- 218 Jul 09 2019 11 Vehicle Vandalism  
Forest management - buck thorn. Will not take dog to dog park due to lack of owner control. Pack
- 219 Jul 09 2019 0E behavior against smaller dogs. Scares the beegesus out of me.
- 220 Jul 09 2019 0E impervious surfaces
- 221 Jul 08 2019 12 NA
- 222 Jul 08 2019 1C Add a snow-making loop for cross country ski trails.
- 223 Jul 07 2019 0E more prompt attention to the porta potties and litter removal.
- 224 Jul 07 2019 0E None
- 225 Jul 07 2019 07 More frequent maintenance of portable toilets and more trash cans. Monday mornings are pretty heaping!
- 226 Jul 07 2019 01 No
- 227 Jul 07 2019 1C There is too much mowed grass on northern end. Return it to native prairie.
- 228 Jul 07 2019 1C There is too much mowed grass on northern end. Return it to native prairie.
- 229 Jul 06 2019 0E Add snow making
- 230 Jul 06 2019 0C Keep walkers/hikers off of ski trails in winter  
I really like the idea I read about a sculpture garden or a dedicated nature center - with an educational
- 231 Jul 06 2019 1C focus.
- 232 Jul 05 2019 0E Make snow for skiers

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- 233 Jul 05 2019 0€ None, it is a fantastic park that makes nature and the outdoors accessible to the Metro community  
 Impervious surfaces for parking lots, and paved trails, should be replaced with porous surfaces; buildings should be leed certified; excessive lawns should be transitioned to include more native gardens. The water park provides no natural experience for park visitors -- it could/should be replaced with a nature-based playground, including water features, but much less of a development footprint.
- 234 Jul 05 2019 0€ based playground, including water features, but much less of a development footprint.
- 235 Jul 05 2019 0€ remove waterpark  
 Even though I'm a cross country skier, I don't appreciate the skiers taking over so much of the park. We still need to be able to walk through the woods, or snow shoe, and not just on the paved trails.
- 236 Jul 05 2019 01 still need to be able to walk through the woods, or snow shoe, and not just on the paved trails.
- 237 Jul 05 2019 11 Adding snow making
- 238 Jul 05 2019 0€ We don't use water parks.  
 Can't think of anything that needs to be removed. The southern half of Battle Creek Road is in horrible shape and didn't get repaved like the rest of that road did recently. Cars and, worse, buses park alongside the road where there really isn't any shoulder or parking and are tearing it up something awful. The paved trail where it crosses Ruth Street could use a litter barrel. Keep and improve the bike/walking trail that goes to downtown St Paul.
- 239 Jul 05 2019 07 to downtown St Paul.
- 240 Jul 04 2019 11 A few more trash cans.
- 241 Jul 04 2019 0€ Snow making capability is necessary on the East side with the odd winters we have been having.
- 242 Jul 04 2019 07 Snow making!
- 243 Jul 04 2019 0€ Lack of bathrooms and garbage cans
- 244 Jul 04 2019 04 investment in snow making equipment for cross-country skiing
- 245 Jul 04 2019 04 Add zip lining  
 I've heard snow making equipment might be installed for x-country skiing and the sledding hill. I feel that is an excellent idea. The \$100,000 lights aren't being used enough waiting for natural snow and the high school cross-country ski season has been very disappointing. Even this year when we had ample snow in Feb. the season was over the end of January.
- 246 Jul 04 2019 04 Feb. the season was over the end of January.
- 247 Jul 04 2019 04 continue to remove buckthorn and remove black locust
- 248 Jul 04 2019 0€ None.
- 249 Jul 04 2019 01 please add snow making- we need it and it would be a wise investment
- 250 Jul 04 2019 12 Nothing needs to be removed.
- 251 Jul 04 2019 11 Add a special fenced dog park area just for very small (less than 20 pounds) dogs
- 252 Jul 04 2019 1C Some of the parking lots could be improved, but it is a lovely park with lots to offer.
- 253 Jul 04 2019 1C None
- 254 Jul 04 2019 1C Good as is.  
 Strong trail, connections across Hwy 61 and railroad tracks to Pigs Eye Regional Park for walking, running, biking.
- 255 Jul 04 2019 0€ , biking.
- 256 Jul 04 2019 0€ None  
 We need snow-making at the Park so that East Metro cross-country skiers, including high school teams, have a place to ski and train for the entire winter.
- 257 Jul 04 2019 07 have a place to ski and train for the entire winter.
- 258 Jul 04 2019 07 None I'd say need to be removed. We (and our dog!) especially love you dog park
- 259 Jul 04 2019 07 It would be great if there was fresh water available at the Upper Afton parking lot (dog park and trails)
- 260 Jul 04 2019 0€ Skiing needs snow making  
 I think off-road bicycling should be stopped. Those natural areas the bikes go through should be nurtured for plants and wildlife and hikers. Off-road bicyclers can't really appreciate the natural environment because they are focused on going fast and hitting bumps and they just carve up the environment and are a menace to any living creatures in those areas.
- 261 Jul 04 2019 0€ to any living creatures in those areas.
- 262 Jul 04 2019 0€ No food or smoking in dog park.
- 263 Jul 04 2019 0€ Pavilion upgrade.
- 264 Jul 03 2019 11 Expand the dog park
- 265 Jul 03 2019 1C NA  
 It's very hard to know where to go to find hiking trails. My friends kept praising the park, but it took me 3 or 4 visits before I felt comfortable navigating to the correct entry points.
- 266 Jul 03 2019 0€ visits before I felt comfortable navigating to the correct entry points.
- 267 Jul 03 2019 0€ None
- 268 Jul 03 2019 07 large pavilions should be changed to many smaller pavilions for gatherings
- 269 Jul 03 2019 07 Add snow making for the ski trails
- 270 Jul 03 2019 07 Running water at Battle Creek Dog Park
- 271 Jul 03 2019 04 None



- 272 Jul 03 2019 1C Paved trail should pass under Upper Afton Road in a culvert. The paved trails are in need of reconstruction.
- 273 Jul 02 2019 0E playground - build new, inclusive play areas  
more parking and secure parking for cross country skiing and mountain biking. Battle Creek has a reputation as being a place you get your car broken into. My sister had her old car window smashed in daylight on a Sunday around 5pm even though she had made sure there was absolutely nothing in the car
- 274 Jul 02 2019 01 before she left it.
- 275 Jul 02 2019 0E Add more garbage/recycling cans throughout the park and mostly the trails. Perhaps near each bench.
- 276 Jul 01 2019 0I Invasive species
- 277 Jul 01 2019 0I ?
- 278 Jul 01 2019 0Z Playground needs improvement.  
More hiking trails that are not also used for cross country skiing (those trails are wider and less natural).
- 279 Jul 01 2019 0E See Lebanon Hills as an example.  
younger and less experienced riders. I would also like to see winter mountain biking opportunities within the
- 280 Jun 28 2019 0 park.
- 281 Jun 28 2019 0 buckthorn
- 282 Jun 28 2019 1 Unleashed dog walkers should be removed. All walkers on ski trails should be removed.
- 283 Jun 28 2019 1 Improved playground- more for older kids
- 284 Jun 27 2019 0 Kids playground is dated and the climbing wall has spots at the top where kids can easily fall
- 285 Jun 27 2019 0 add snow making
- 286 Jun 26 2019 0 None that I can think of.  
Maybe just updating the various features such as the playground and water park. It would be nice to have
- 287 Jun 26 2019 1 an accessibility friendly playground that's open to more children to play in.
- 288 Jun 25 2019 1 Mountain bike and hiking trails need a lot of TLC. Clear out buckthorn.
- 289 Jun 25 2019 0 N/A
- 290 Jun 25 2019 0 Snow Making on Cross Country Ski Trails
- 291 Jun 25 2019 0 None
- 292 Jun 25 2019 0 None
- 293 Jun 25 2019 0 Hiking/skiing lengthened  
Please add snow-making for cross-country skiing. I live in Roseville and would prefer to ski at Battle Creek
- 294 Jun 25 2019 1 when there is not sufficient natural snow rather than traveling all the way to Hyland or Elm Creek.
- 295 Jun 25 2019 1 None  
We need snow making at Battle Creek to address lack of snow and allow people to all ages to stay active in
- 296 Jun 25 2019 0 winter.
- 297 Jun 25 2019 0 Expand for snowmaking abilities!!
- 298 Jun 24 2019 1 Improve ski trails. Add snowmaking  
Could soften some of the nasty cross country skiing downhill there there's a sharp turn at the bottom of a
- 299 Jun 24 2019 1 steep downhill.  
I would love to see more off road cycling trail, especially beginner trails at the bottom of the hill. Would also
- 300 Jun 24 2019 1 love snow making for cross country skiing
- 301 Jun 24 2019 0 blacktop/concrete
- 302 Jun 24 2019 0 Better playground  
Make the mountain bike trails more user friendly by having more one way single track. Also, lighted fat bike
- 303 Jun 24 2019 0 trails.
- 304 Jun 24 2019 0 None
- 305 Jun 24 2019 0 Snow making for xc skiing and sledding has been discussed. Would be great if this became reality!
- 306 Jun 24 2019 0 Add snowmaking
- 307 Jun 24 2019 0 Snow for skiing, better mountain biking signage
- 308 Jun 24 2019 0 None
- 309 Jun 24 2019 0 Add snow making for xc-skiing
- 310 Jun 24 2019 0 Vandalism
- 311 Jun 24 2019 0 Improving the paved trails and implementing snowmaking
- 312 Jun 24 2019 0 Snow making for cross country skiing.
- 313 Jun 24 2019 0 No opinion
- 314 Jun 24 2019 0 think it should be left as is
- 315 Jun 24 2019 0 Need more of a police presence.

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- among the finest in the Twin Cities. High Schools and citizen skiers would benefit greatly from snow
- 316 Jun 24 2019 0 making at Battle Creek.
- 317 Jun 24 2019 1 Water park
- 318 Jun 24 2019 1 Probably more parking and signage.
- 319 Jun 24 2019 1 Add snowmaking
- 320 Jun 24 2019 1 More snow making for XC skiing
- I would like to see the addition of electric car charging stations. It would be nice for the electric car community to be able to stop by the park to charge while enjoying the park and its amenities. This community is growing and it would help draw additional people to the park. It would also be nice to see
- 321 Jun 24 2019 1 some modern updates to the water park, such as newer restrooms/changing rooms.
- 322 Jun 24 2019 1 add snow making
- Please, please add snow making for our cross country skiing in the area. So many people could benefit by
- 323 Jun 24 2019 1 this and could be a way to make the park even more impactful to the community.
- 324 Jun 24 2019 1 Add snowmaking for cross country skiing
- We really could use snowmaking. Also, MORC has a great long term plan on making the mountain bike
- 325 Jun 24 2019 0 more accessible to beginners we could really use a skills park similar to parks at other locations in the city.
- 326 Jun 24 2019 0 Add snowmaking capabilities please
- 327 Jun 23 2019 1 Battle Creek Road.
- 328 Jun 23 2019 0 Add man- made snow capabilities when natural snow is not available.
- 329 Jun 23 2019 0 Hunting
- 330 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow-making for cross country skiing
- 331 Jun 23 2019 0 Add SNOWMAKING!
- 332 Jun 23 2019 0 make the sheltered pavilion smaller
- 333 Jun 23 2019 0 Add snowmaking!! More security in parking lots!
- 334 Jun 23 2019 0 None should be changed or removed
- 335 Jun 23 2019 0 I would like manufactured snow for CC ski trails in the winter please!
- 336 Jun 23 2019 0 Lack of connection between units (Tunnel under Mcknight??)
- 337 Jun 23 2019 0 Start making snow!!!!
- 338 Jun 23 2019 0 Add snowmaking!
- 339 Jun 23 2019 1 Snow making for nordic skiing
- 340 Jun 23 2019 0 N
- 341 Jun 23 2019 0 Water park. That site could be repurposed into something more useful
- 342 Jun 23 2019 0 Keep anything that is getting used! Maybe nothing needs to be removed.
- 343 Jun 23 2019 0 ..
- 344 Jun 23 2019 0 Updated community center. Would love to see it modeled after Theodore Wirth
- 345 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making should be added for cross country skiing.
- 346 Jun 23 2019 0 Mountain bike trails could be improved. Better maps and signage
- 347 Jun 23 2019 0 Cross country ski snow- please make snow!
- Man made snow in the winter!!!!!!!!!!!! I would come here much more often if this was the case, the last few seasons the natural snow cover has not been great or has arrived too late in the season. Please help us
- 348 Jun 22 2019 1 skiers out by providing some lovely snow covered trails!
- 349 Jun 22 2019 1 None, make the overlook parking safer. Always sketchy.
- 350 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snow making for cross country skiing and sledding
- 351 Jun 22 2019 0 There only needs to be one set of ball fields.
- 352 Jun 22 2019 0 the Playground facilities could stand an update/overhaul...perhaps jointly with the elementary school?
- 353 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snow makingMake mountain bike trails one way only
- 354 Jun 22 2019 0 Snowmaking should be added! Add features, don't take away features.
- 355 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making needs to be implemented. I like the park as is
- 356 Jun 22 2019 0 Lighted ski trails should be added with snowmaking capability
- 357 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snowmaking for XC skiing.
- 358 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snow making for cc skiing
- 359 Jun 22 2019 0 None
- continue with buckthorn management. It's wonderful to see wildflowers beginning to grow along some of the
- 360 Jun 22 2019 0 trails.
- 361 Jun 22 2019 0 None that I can think of
- 362 Jun 22 2019 0 Not to much pavement !

- 363 Jun 22 2019 0 There should be snow making at the park for nordic skiing on the East Metro.
- 364 Jun 22 2019 0 None removed. Add snow-making! : )
- 365 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snow making for ski trails.
- 366 Jun 22 2019 0 ?
- 367 Jun 22 2019 0 None, its perfect
- 368 Jun 22 2019 0 Add in snow making for more access to cross country ski trails
- 369 Jun 22 2019 0 None
- 370 Jun 22 2019 1 None
- 371 Jun 22 2019 1 Add snow making loop
- 372 Jun 22 2019 1 SNOWMAKING!!  
It would be nice to have Snow making for skiing. Currently we need to travel to Maple Grove or Wirth park
- 373 Jun 22 2019 1 when snow is needed for our club. It would be nice to stay on the Saint Paul side of the city.
- 374 Jun 22 2019 1 It's not part of Battle Creek, but the Overlook is a drug mart now. Needs some help.
- 375 Jun 22 2019 0 I don't think anything should be removed.
- 376 Jun 22 2019 0 Na
- 377 Jun 22 2019 0 Upgrde Nordic skiing by adding snowmaking
- 378 Jun 22 2019 0 Add snow making for cross country ski
- 379 Jun 22 2019 0 Snowmaking for better access in east metro for skiing for our kids and us. We currently drive to hyland
- 380 Jun 21 2019 1 None
- 381 Jun 21 2019 1 none.
- 382 Jun 21 2019 1 MAKE SNOW (for sledding & cross country skiing)
- 383 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making  
better trails, maps, signage, easier to navigate, trails should be connected and provide different routes
- 384 Jun 21 2019 0 throughout the park
- 385 Jun 21 2019 0 buckthorn
- 386 Jun 21 2019 0 No opinion
- 387 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking for additional skiing days and training.
- 388 Jun 21 2019 0 Better maps  
Better nature areas (more natural), remove invasives, better management of litter, designated
- 389 Jun 21 2019 0 biking/walking lanes, more consistent trash and recycling cans throughout trail system.
- 390 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking for cross country ski
- 391 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snow making
- 392 Jun 21 2019 0 Don't know
- 393 Jun 21 2019 0 I would like to see the Nordic trails and grooming capabilities improved
- 394 Jun 21 2019 0 NA
- 395 Jun 21 2019 0 Na
- 396 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snow making.  
I would really like a man made snow loop for skiing. Also, the signage is pretty good for skiing (although sometimes it is confusing which way you go to start a loop), but for hiking and for walking the paved path, it is confusing. Also, there is a part along the road where the paved path ends and you have to walk on the
- 397 Jun 21 2019 0 grass to get back to the park entrance
- 398 Jun 21 2019 0 None  
My would LOVE to see snow making at Battle Creek. We love to ski and live in St. Paul. The snow has been so unreliable the past few years that we have to go somewhere where snow is made and those places are way overcrowded. There is nowhere in St. Paul or the east side that makes snow and we hope
- 399 Jun 21 2019 0 Battle Creek will consider!
- 400 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snow making capabilities  
Cross country ski trails. Please add snowmaking capability! There are no snowmaking trails on the entire
- 401 Jun 21 2019 0 east side - city or suburbs.
- 402 Jun 21 2019 0 No opinion  
The paved trails could be redone and snow-making could be added for the cross country/Nordic trails in the
- 403 Jun 21 2019 0 winter.
- 404 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snow making to cross country ski trails
- 405 Jun 21 2019 0 Get rid of the cross country skiing.
- 406 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking to XX ski trails
- 407 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow Making for cross country skiing
- 408 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making capabilities would offer an easy metro option for Nordic skiing.

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- 409 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking.
- 410 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking!!
- 411 Jun 21 2019 0 More secure parking. Add snow making and warming house  
I think that snowmaking should be added to the cross country ski trails, so you can use them even when
- 412 Jun 21 2019 0 there is no snow on the ground.
- 413 Jun 21 2019 0 none
- 414 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking
- 415 Jun 21 2019 0 add snowmaking!
- 416 Jun 21 2019 0 Battle creek needs snowmaking for cross country skiing.  
The parking lots could use some security and better lighting. Several break ins have occurred in the parking
- 417 Jun 21 2019 0 lots and would be nice to not worry about my vehicle being tampered with.
- 418 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snow making to Nordic trails so they are more reliable
- 419 Jun 21 2019 0 XC ski trails and lights
- 420 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking equipment
- 421 Jun 21 2019 0 snow making needs to be added to the nordic trails. The park usage numbers would explode.
- 422 Jun 21 2019 0 please add snow making for cross country skiing
- 423 Jun 21 2019 0 park needs more signage so it's easier to navigate the mtb trails
- 424 Jun 21 2019 0 add snow making!!!
- 425 Jun 21 2019 0 Loud cars, locked entrance at night, new playground (coming)
- 426 Jun 21 2019 0 Add snowmaking!!!
- 427 Jun 21 2019 0 Warming house for skiing, SNOWMAKING
- 428 Jun 21 2019 1 none  
Maybe specific mountain bike trails separate from the trail running trail. I love running the single track trails but I'm always a little nervous a mountain biker is going to tear through. I know they have to yield to hikers, but they don't always do nor do they seem to understand. I think hikers and dog walkers should be removed from the groomed ski trails in the winter. And I think dog walkers who unleash their pet in the west part of
- 429 Jun 21 2019 1 the park should be removed.
- 430 Jun 21 2019 1 None
- 431 Jun 21 2019 1 Snow making loop for skiing
- 432 Jun 21 2019 1 I wish the cross country trails were open to hikers in the winter.
- 433 Jun 21 2019 0 A chalet and snowmaking are needed
- 434 Jun 21 2019 0 More lights in the parking lots
- 435 Jun 21 2019 0 I think the ski trails could be improved.  
Snowmaking for ski trails. There would be a lot of use from youth and high schools if there was guaranteed
- 436 Jun 21 2019 0 snow.
- 437 Jun 21 2019 0 Other users like water park, but I do not use it.  
Snowmaking should be added to the park. It would give the people in the western part of the city
- 438 Jun 21 2019 0 somewhere to ski in. the winter.
- 439 Jun 21 2019 1 None
- 440 Jun 20 2019 0 Playground
- 441 Jun 20 2019 0 Playground could use improvement
- 442 Jun 20 2019 0 The cross country ski trails should add artificial snow to make the skiing reliable.  
Remove features that have low users and are difficult to maintain. I would hesitate to list any feature since I
- 443 Jun 20 2019 0 believe most are being used by various users.
- 444 Jun 20 2019 0 Nothing just make better mountain bike trails lots of people and teams go there to practice
- 445 Jun 20 2019 0 I can't think of anything. The safety of the parking lot seems to be an issue with break-ins.
- 446 Jun 20 2019 0 It'd be great to have a more official ski chalet
- 447 Jun 20 2019 0 Please add snowmaking especially for the xc ski trails
- 448 Jun 20 2019 0 Please do not add a tubing and downhill ski hill.
- 449 Jun 20 2019 0 Snow making should be added to the ski trails
- 450 Jun 20 2019 0 None
- 451 Jun 20 2019 0 None
- 452 Jun 20 2019 0 None
- 453 Jun 20 2019 0 No walking on ski trails should be enforced.
- 454 Jun 20 2019 0 Safer travel for cyclists between each section of the park  
Mountain bike trails could be better marked and maintained. Snowmaking added to ski trails. rework some
- 455 Jun 20 2019 1 of the corners on Silver and gold to make them less sketchy when it is icy.

- 456 Jun 20 2019 1 Parking access
- 457 Jun 20 2019 1 Needs big time buckthorn removal/remediation.
- 458 Jun 20 2019 1 Man made snow for cross country skiing  
Maybe add more bathrooms? Where I go and park there is no restroom or water. A frisbee disc course may
- 459 Jun 20 2019 1 be neat too.  
I don't think it should be changed. Nature is slow moving and should be left alone to mature. Maybe just
- 460 Jun 20 2019 0 add more security
- 461 Jun 19 2019 0 None  
I can't think of any - I love this park. I do know the park is near neighborhoods that serve many Somali
- 462 Jun 19 2019 0 families, and I would fully support any features that would be more responsive to their culture.
- 463 Jun 19 2019 0 Not aware of any.
- 464 Jun 19 2019 0 Parking area

Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

What active recreation amenities do you believe are missing from the park that you would like to see in the future? (select all that apply)

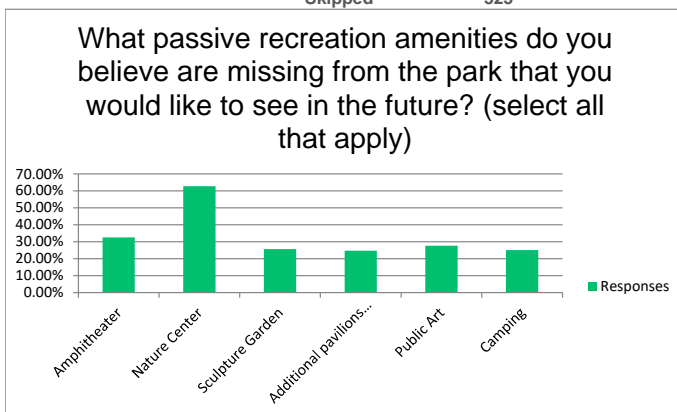
Answer Choices	Responses	
Tuj Lub Courts	3.89%	27
Takraw Courts	3.75%	26
Splash Pad	30.26%	210
Man-made snow for winter activities	74.21%	515
Archery	24.50%	170
High ropes course	29.25%	203
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>694</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>139</b>



Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

What passive recreation amenities do you believe are missing from the park that you would like to see in the future? (select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Amphitheater	32.55%	166
Nature Center	62.75%	320
Sculpture Garden	25.69%	131
Additional pavilions and shelters	24.71%	126
Public Art	27.65%	141
Camping	25.10%	128
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>510</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>323</b>





# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

Are there any features or amenities you believe are missing from the park that you would like to see in the future?

Answered 372

Skipped 461

Respondents	Response Date	Responses
1	Sep 09 2019	C more police Each area of the park should have some sort of pavilion or at least picnic tables, etc. Also - interpretive signage.
2	Sep 09 2019	1 Educate people!
3	Sep 08 2019	C accessible pool, playground, etc.
4	Sep 08 2019	C Man made snow and lighted trails for the winter would do a lot towards improving equity for east metro skiers.
5	Sep 07 2019	1 Larger handicap accessible restrooms. Inclusive playground for all abilities
6	Sep 07 2019	C More inclusive options
7	Sep 07 2019	C Nothing additional
8	Sep 07 2019	C Frisbee golf And pickle ball
9	Sep 07 2019	C no Why do things always need to be changing? Just keep the place clean and update playgrounds as needed
10	Sep 07 2019	1 around the city.
11	Sep 07 2019	1 Fishing area
12	Sep 06 2019	1 Larger/update playground
13	Sep 06 2019	1 No
14	Sep 06 2019	C No
15	Sep 06 2019	C No
16	Sep 06 2019	C No
17	Sep 06 2019	C Safety , water stations. and readable signage
18	Sep 06 2019	C Amphitheater
19	Sep 06 2019	1 No
20	Sep 06 2019	1 None of that wack stuff. Just fish. And please keep it clean unlike the rest of the lakes that no one cares for.
21	Sep 06 2019	C No
22	Sep 06 2019	C Disc golf course
23	Sep 06 2019	C N/A
24	Sep 06 2019	C Splash pad!
25	Sep 06 2019	C n/a
26	Sep 06 2019	C No
27	Sep 06 2019	1 Not that I can think of
28	Sep 05 2019	1 man made snow
29	Sep 05 2019	1 lit paths for safety
30	Sep 05 2019	1 More mountain bike trails
31	Sep 05 2019	C Camping
32	Sep 05 2019	C No
33	Sep 05 2019	C Running water at the dog park! It would be great to have a hose at the exit to rinse off our dogs.
34	Sep 05 2019	C Access to pigs eye lake.
35	Sep 05 2019	C More restrooms
36	Sep 05 2019	C N/A
37	Sep 05 2019	C No
38	Sep 05 2019	C Group Camps
39	Sep 05 2019	C Activity for seniors
40	Sep 05 2019	C An archery range
41	Sep 05 2019	1 I would like to see the basketball courts expanded, and I would love a sand volleyball court.
42	Sep 05 2019	1 I would like to see some play structures built inside the dog park for the dogs to use
43	Sep 05 2019	1 Fishing pond. Why would you be willing to add other amenities to the park which will not pay for themselves, while you are
44	Sep 05 2019	1 closing a golf course which does make money?
45	Sep 05 2019	C not sure

- 46 Sep 05 2019 0 Running water in the dog park. A paved path so it's handicap accessible
- 47 Sep 04 2019 1 No
- 48 Sep 04 2019 1 Tennis courts
- 49 Sep 04 2019 0 Horses
- 50 Sep 04 2019 0 Workout equipment stations along the paved trail
- 51 Sep 04 2019 0 No
- 52 Sep 04 2019 0 More benches for resting along the paths for older and less able folks.
- 53 Sep 03 2019 0 Better gathering spaces for small or medium size groups
- 54 Sep 02 2019 1 Those all seem like good options
- 55 Aug 27 2019 0 Some additional tool and air stands for biking would be nice.
- 56 Aug 26 2019 0 Ski and Snowboard Terrain Park similar to Theodore Wirth
- 57 Aug 24 2019 0 Better parking, more
- 58 Aug 23 2019 0 A nature play area similar to Discovery Hollow at Tamarack
- 59 Aug 22 2019 0 Disc Golf Course
- 60 Aug 22 2019 0 Snow making/ cross country ski rental and club
- 61 Aug 21 2019 0 Snowmaking
- 62 Aug 21 2019 0 Man made snow
- 63 Aug 21 2019 0 it is fine the way it is; keep it natural
- 64 Aug 18 2019 0 nature play like at tamarack nature center
- 65 Aug 16 2019 0 toilet in wester end of park as stated above
- 66 Aug 15 2019 0 Archery range would be great
- 67 Aug 15 2019 0 Camping would be great!
- 68 Aug 14 2019 0 Nature playground like at Tamarack Nature Center.
- 69 Aug 13 2019 1 leave both sections as is, additions would spoil them.
- 70 Aug 13 2019 1 More mountain bike trails
- 71 Aug 12 2019 1 Lights at parts of dog park...winters are difficult with the early darkness
- 72 Aug 10 2019 1 Tennis court, basketball court.
- 73 Aug 08 2019 0 a bridge connecting the ski areas in West Battle Creek park  
bathrooms facilities in lower park. It's 2 miles to reach the bathrooms in the park with the pavillion, and they
- 74 Aug 06 2019 0 aren't always open!!
- 75 Aug 06 2019 0 tennis courts
- 76 Aug 06 2019 0 Public adult pool
- 77 Aug 06 2019 1 scooter and bike rentals  
Just a bit more signage on the deep mtn bike trails to help people orient themselves if it's their first couple times
- 78 Aug 06 2019 0 on the trail.
- 79 Aug 05 2019 0 A "trail head" like at Wirth Park in Mpls. I'd love to see a program like the Loppet develop on the Eastside.  
1. The park feels very segmented. Is there a way to link the sections? Not sure what that is... "Park continues"  
maps at cross streets, major entry/exit points? 2. Source of fresh drinking water for canines within the dog park.
- 80 Aug 05 2019 0 Assuming it would have to be seasonal. Could even be just a hand pump
- 81 Aug 05 2019 0 A place to fill up your water bottle or a bathroom.
- 82 Aug 05 2019 0 pickle ball courts (multiple)
- 83 Aug 05 2019 0 Tennis courts  
Trailhead amenities such as quality shelters, bathrooms, drinking fountain, bike repair stand, secure bike racks,  
and quality signage. Other amenities of interest include quality food and drink vendors (craft beer vendor would
- 84 Aug 05 2019 1 be great!) and electric vehicle charge station.
- 85 Aug 05 2019 0 Better and more frequent bus service.
- 86 Aug 05 2019 0 Meditation maze
- 87 Aug 04 2019 1 Nature info. and historical signage.
- 88 Aug 04 2019 0 swimming pool
- 89 Aug 04 2019 0 A ski/bike chalet and snowmaking  
The splash park is for small children. If changes are needed at Waterworks, include a splash park but don't take
- 90 Aug 03 2019 1 away the pool for older kids
- 91 Aug 03 2019 1 Archery range
- 92 Jul 30 2019 0 8 More connecting bike trails to the park. There needs to be more safe ways for residents that live near the park.
- 93 Jul 30 2019 0 7 flower gardens, pond or little man man creek
- 94 Jul 30 2019 1 2 maybe a better bathroom and hydration facility, air pump station for bikes

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- 95 Jul 29 2019 09 A warming hut and place to buy ski passes in winter would be great. But not something huge and ungainly, just small and quaint.  
very limited camping in a very limited area so kids can get out and appreciate nature; especially overnight. i think the county should push more for "night skies" across the county so people can see the stars. who better to push this than the parks department. "quiet" is an amenity that is missing and higher quality ecosystem. a horse stable with a rental program would be nice, again to give kids and families a different experience that they can't get in
- 96 Jul 29 2019 07 other parks.
- 97 Jul 27 2019 07 More trash and recycling receptacles and more paths
- 98 Jul 27 2019 01 man-made snow, more lighted trails  
We live in south Maplewood and love the park. When kids were younger the pool was great. Love the community building of the dog park. Last several years have gotten more into biking and skiing. Given climate change and unpredictable natural snow from year to year, the park would benefit from artificial snow making
- 99 Jul 27 2019 10 capability.
- 100 Jul 27 2019 10 concerts in the park!
- 101 Jul 25 2019 09 Skateboard park
- 102 Jul 25 2019 09 No
- 103 Jul 24 2019 10 Manufactured snow for cross country ski trails
- 104 Jul 24 2019 06 A bigger water park
- 105 Jul 24 2019 05 More playgrounds. Or bigger playground Exercise Equipment.  
A restroom (not porta-potty) at the park between Upper and Lower Afton Roads. A small picnic area (not necessarily a pavillion) at the same part of the park
- 106 Jul 24 2019 04
- 107 Jul 24 2019 02 Cameras for parking lots  
Dog wash station at dog park. Even just a man powered pump to rinse off a dog after swimming would be greatly appreciated.
- 108 Jul 24 2019 10
- 109 Jul 24 2019 08 More water stations (as mentioned above).
- 110 Jul 23 2019 08 better water options for dogs
- 111 Jul 23 2019 07 no
- 112 Jul 23 2019 05 A physical fitness course places to do pull up and push ups etc
- 113 Jul 23 2019 03 artificial snow
- 114 Jul 22 2019 08 safe acces to the park from the north side of 94 and a wave pool
- 115 Jul 21 2019 09 None
- 116 Jul 21 2019 12 Disc Golf and more permanent bathrooms or more portjohns
- 117 Jul 21 2019 10 Artificial snow, more lighted ski trails.
- 118 Jul 20 2019 10 broomball rinks?
- 119 Jul 19 2019 11 Nature Center or other outdoor activities should be made like basketball courts or volleyball court
- 120 Jul 19 2019 10 no
- 121 Jul 19 2019 10 No
- 122 Jul 19 2019 09 Dakota interpretive elements  
Don't add too much - like the beautiful Oak savannah, spend the money on having a high quality natural areas at
- 123 Jul 18 2019 05 the park.
- 124 Jul 18 2019 03 Safer Turf playground options for wider range of kid ages  
Increased mowing of grasses along trail that follows creek. The "grass" is mostly weeds and they tend to get
- 125 Jul 18 2019 03 pretty long and are not welcoming.
- 126 Jul 18 2019 09 No
- 127 Jul 18 2019 09 Adding fresh water at the entrance to the dog park at the Upper Afton parking lot.
- 128 Jul 18 2019 07 Mountain Bike Trail Head, Bike Park (Pump Track/Skills Course)
- 129 Jul 18 2019 07 Would love to have more mountain bike trails!
- 130 Jul 18 2019 06 Camping, archery
- 131 Jul 17 2019 11 Mountain Bike Skills Park  
Tobacco-Free grounds. Pedestrian crossing light on Lower Afton Rd and Londin Lane. Clearing ice and standing
- 132 Jul 17 2019 10 water on the trail
- 133 Jul 17 2019 10 No  
Electric car charging. A statue of a medium sized lizard and should face south west. Water fountain with a VERY
- 134 Jul 17 2019 08 large mouth piece.
- 135 Jul 17 2019 05 I would really hate to see a bunch of these amenities put in in our beautiful Nature built up.
- 136 Jul 17 2019 04 Community garden
- 137 Jul 17 2019 04 No I like it peaceful and relatively undeveloped

- Would love amphitheater for more public music and outdoor concerts movies in the park and a spray park for
- 138 Jul 17 2019 03 kids, nature center with programming for candlelit hikes in winter and all year
- 139 Jul 17 2019 03 Prairie restoration or pollinator habitat
- 140 Jul 17 2019 02 I can't think of any.
- 141 Jul 17 2019 02 More water fountains and trash receptacles  
Art would be a really nice touch. I would not like to see camping, I dont think there is enough space I love the
- 142 Jul 17 2019 02 undeveloped areas.
- 143 Jul 17 2019 02 More natural areas. Wild areas. Native plantings. STOP CUTTING ALL The GRASS!
- 144 Jul 17 2019 02 Well marked paths through the woods
- 145 Jul 17 2019 02 Inline Hockey sport court that can be used for basketball and other sports
- 146 Jul 17 2019 02 i would like to see an updated playground similar to tamarack park, nature play area  
More/better trail maps or a better trail marking system. I think Lebanon Hills Regional Park has, by far, the best
- 147 Jul 17 2019 02 trail marking system.
- 148 Jul 17 2019 02 Pickleball Courts
- 149 Jul 17 2019 02 no
- 150 Jul 17 2019 01 No
- 151 Jul 17 2019 12 Nordic ski chalet, this could be combined with a. Nature center that also offers snowshoes
- 152 Jul 17 2019 10 snow making
- 153 Jul 15 2019 03 Snow making
- 154 Jul 15 2019 07 nothing else
- 155 Jul 14 2019 07 Snowmaking capabilities on lighted trails for winter use
- 156 Jul 14 2019 06 Snowmaking for skiing
- 157 Jul 14 2019 05 Skate park
- 158 Jul 14 2019 04 Snow making!!
- 159 Jul 14 2019 03 Snow making for cross country skiing
- 160 Jul 13 2019 11 A ski shelter/warming house would be nice
- 161 Jul 12 2019 01 Nature play area like at tamarak, community garden
- 162 Jul 12 2019 07 snow making for cross country skiing
- 163 Jul 11 2019 04 splash pad
- 164 Jul 11 2019 11 Restroom facilities
- 165 Jul 11 2019 12 It would be awesome to see some dog agility equipment added or something in dog sporting!
- 166 Jul 10 2019 10 Nordic Center and better parking facilities that can provide security
- 167 Jul 10 2019 05 Better parking lot
- 168 Jul 10 2019 11 Snowmaking for nordic skiing.
- 169 Jul 10 2019 10 no
- In terms of Venues, really large spaces for family reunions 300-500 people are in short supply & expensive;
- 170 Jul 10 2019 07 could additional pavilions/shelters be co-located with an amphitheatre for this need?
- 171 Jul 09 2019 05 I don't think any area can be all things to all people. Don't overcrowd the park!
- 172 Jul 09 2019 11 More parking when snowmaking starts
- 173 Jul 09 2019 08 More security
- 174 Jul 09 2019 06 art fairs, farmers markets
- 175 Jul 07 2019 09 man made snow making abilities. This is the most important.
- 176 Jul 07 2019 08 More trash receptacles so we can keep it clean
- 177 Jul 07 2019 07 SNOW MAKING!!!!
- 178 Jul 07 2019 04 Snow Makers for the ski season!
- 179 Jul 07 2019 01 No
- Add a small nature center adjoining Battle Creek Rec Center so that activities can overlap to maximize the value
- 180 Jul 07 2019 10 to the audience. Do not take additional natural space for construction.
- Add a small nature center adjoining Battle Creek Rec Center so that activities can overlap to maximize the value
- 181 Jul 07 2019 10 to the audience. Do not take additional natural space for construction.
- 182 Jul 06 2019 10 a dog wash station for post-park rinsing of dirty dogs
- 183 Jul 05 2019 03 natural playground; interpretative signage to inform/educate people on natural features of the park.
- 184 Jul 05 2019 02 Nature programming  
Parking on Battle Creek road, giving access to the "Ski Games" trails (and hiking trails) Water spigot for the dog
- 185 Jul 05 2019 01 park!
- 186 Jul 05 2019 08 none but those listed
- 187 Jul 04 2019 08 Snow-making capability
- 188 Jul 04 2019 05 I don't want any of those additional amenities. Where is that option

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- 189 Jul 04 2019 04 More locations with rest rooms  
Add pickleball courts or change one of the tennis courts into two pickleball courts. I belong to the Woodbury club
- 190 Jul 04 2019 04 It has more than 350 members. I would rather belong to a St Paul Club  
natural interpretation for people who are not aware of park resources and importance of habitat for this area of
- 191 Jul 04 2019 04 the county
- 192 Jul 04 2019 02 Snow Making for cross country skiing
- 193 Jul 04 2019 01 snow making  
I'd like to see cross country ski rental and snow shoe rental. I'd like to see guided tours to teach about nature and
- 194 Jul 04 2019 01 encourage exercise: bat tours, candlelight snow shoe tours, birding tours
- 195 Jul 04 2019 01 A more deliberate sliding area and skating rink in the park (in addition to those by the community center).
- 196 Jul 04 2019 01 Water fountains and availability
- 197 Jul 04 2019 11 special dog park area for very small dogs  
Although it was already mentioned, snow making is critical. A snowmaking venue in the East Metro would
- 198 Jul 04 2019 10 support 40-50% of all high school and community skiers in the cities.
- 199 Jul 04 2019 10 No
- 200 Jul 04 2019 07 Snow-making capabilities.
- 201 Jul 04 2019 07 No
- 202 Jul 04 2019 07 No  
I would like "small dog" (20 lbs and under) hours at the dog park. It's not safe for small dogs to attend the dog
- 203 Jul 04 2019 07 park and I would like to enjoy the dog park too. Even a couple hours a week would be lovely.  
Ramsey county desperately needs a snowmaking facility so that we can continue to have our impact on cross  
country skiing and enjoy one of Minnesota's unique and important ways to enjoy nature and the out-of-doors
- 204 Jul 04 2019 07 during the winter. Hennepin county has several places for its constituency and we have none.
- 205 Jul 04 2019 06 Regular maps along paths. Easy to get lost there!
- 206 Jul 04 2019 06 I think the park is perfect as is, except for allowing off-road bicycling.
- 207 Jul 04 2019 05 Better trails in winter.  
  
Lovely park, very close to our home. Would be glad to support adding the Tuj Lub and Takraw courts.  
WaterWorks is lovely, but always extremely crowded -- if this could be done without disturbing the environment
- 208 Jul 03 2019 11 too much, I'd love to see it expanded, adding another pool for older teenagers and adults. Thanks very much -
- 209 Jul 03 2019 10 I would like to see tent camp sites added.
- 210 Jul 03 2019 09 Security.
- 211 Jul 03 2019 09 Workout stations/equipment along the walking trail.
- 212 Jul 03 2019 09 outdoor pool for adults/teens
- 213 Jul 03 2019 08 No
- 214 Jul 03 2019 08 Dog rinse off station outside of the dog park. Cash or card activated to help raise funds to support the park.
- 215 Jul 03 2019 07 snow making
- 216 Jul 02 2019 05 no
- 217 Jul 02 2019 07 Upgrades to dog park fencing.
- 218 Jul 01 2019 03 There is an Amphitheater 6 miles away at Harriet Island, Nature Center in Maplewood 5 miles away
- 219 Jul 01 2019 03 Bocce ball  
Better trailheads/gateway to hiking trails. Many access points to the park are nondescript. Also, the ski hill could  
be greatly improved. Would be great to repurpose part of the rec center or rebuild a nice warming house/or ski
- 220 Jul 01 2019 02 lodge for ski-rentals, hot cocoa, fireplace, etc.
- 221 Jun 28 2019 0 Snowmaking for cross country skiing and tubing.
- 222 Jun 28 2019 0 The water park is underused and expensive. I think a splash pad might be a better alternative.
- 223 Jun 28 2019 0 interpretive signs for natural features
- 224 Jun 28 2019 1 Nordic ski rental. Chalet/warming house.
- 225 Jun 27 2019 0 No
- 226 Jun 27 2019 0 snow making
- 227 Jun 26 2019 0 Snowmaking in the East Metro
- 228 Jun 26 2019 0 Hiking trails not designated to mountain biking.  
  
In planning for the future, it would be nice to also see electric car charging stations. Maybe even a super charger.  
It would be nice to be able to charge my car during the lunch hour and This would attract new people to come to
- 229 Jun 26 2019 1 the park. There aren't many places in the east suburbs that offer this amenity.  
snowmaking and an inside space for skiers! Having a man-made snow option in the east metro would benefit so
- 230 Jun 26 2019 1 many people, families and kids.



- 231 Jun 26 2019 0 Snow making
- 232 Jun 25 2019 1 Snowmaking
- 233 Jun 25 2019 0 Drinking Fountains in West Side near Ski/Run Trails
- 234 Jun 25 2019 0 none
- 235 Jun 25 2019 0 No
- 236 Jun 25 2019 1 Snow-making
- 237 Jun 25 2019 1 Snow Making
- 238 Jun 25 2019 0 Snow making for cross country skiing.
- 239 Jun 25 2019 0 A building similar to Lake Elmo for changing clothes and meeting.
- 240 Jun 25 2019 0 Snow making !!  
Snowmaking for Nordic skiing! I am a high school coach and parent of young kids. This would make such a difference for the east metro. The west metro kids currently have many more opportunities to ski in low-snow
- 241 Jun 24 2019 1 years. Battle Creek could be a big regional draw!
- 242 Jun 24 2019 1 None other than the ones I mentioned
- 243 Jun 24 2019 0 A nature center could be multi purpose, used like a warming house in winter.
- 244 Jun 24 2019 0 Snow making
- 245 Jun 24 2019 0 trailhead facilities - see Theo Wirth, Lake Elmo, Lebanon Hills examples
- 246 Jun 24 2019 0 Only snow making and better mountain biking signage
- 247 Jun 24 2019 0 No
- 248 Jun 24 2019 0 toilets
- 249 Jun 24 2019 0 Cross country ski shelter
- 250 Jun 24 2019 0 Another vote for snowmaking
- 251 Jun 24 2019 0 Just snow making
- 252 Jun 24 2019 0 more parking for ski trails, especially if snowmaking is added (high demand)
- 253 Jun 24 2019 0 no
- 254 Jun 24 2019 0 Outdoor hockey rink.  
A nature center could provide shelter for winter activities as well as educational activities for school age children
- 255 Jun 24 2019 0 as well as adults.
- 256 Jun 24 2019 1 What ever is there, it should be intergenerational in nature and purpose.
- 257 Jun 24 2019 1 No
- 258 Jun 24 2019 1 Splash pad for DOGS or other water feature for dogs
- 259 Jun 24 2019 1 No
- 260 Jun 24 2019 1 Electric car charging stations
- 261 Jun 24 2019 1 Ski chalet
- 262 Jun 24 2019 1 snow making  
Snow making! If there were snow making capabilities, the park would be utilized even more in the winter. This past winter, my son had to travel quite a distance in order to ski. We want to highlight our area of the cities, not
- 263 Jun 24 2019 0 have to go to another park for skiing. Once there was actually snow, trails were packed with skiers.
- 264 Jun 24 2019 0 Expanded ski trails
- 265 Jun 24 2019 0 Trailhead warming hut. Mountain bike skills park
- 266 Jun 24 2019 0 No
- 267 Jun 23 2019 0 Add man- made snow capabilities when natural snow is not available.
- 268 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making
- 269 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow for skiing in the winter
- 270 Jun 23 2019 0 Snowmaking!!!
- 271 Jun 23 2019 0 More lights for night skiing
- 272 Jun 23 2019 0 Snowmaking
- 273 Jun 23 2019 0 man made snow
- 274 Jun 23 2019 0 Yes
- 275 Jun 23 2019 0 Locker room and shower facilities
- 276 Jun 23 2019 0 No
- 277 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making
- 278 Jun 23 2019 0 snow making, ski warming hut
- 279 Jun 23 2019 0 Ping pong, foosball, swimming pool, game room  
The east metro doesn't have any man made XC ski trails. XC skiing is great winter exercise for young and old.
- 280 Jun 23 2019 1 Great for office workers who sit all day. Easier on the body than running.

## Appendix - Online Survey 1

- 281 Jun 23 2019 0 N
- 282 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making
- 283 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making with trail grooming
- 284 Jun 23 2019 0 SNOW MAKING
- 285 Jun 23 2019 0 Snow making
- 286 Jun 23 2019 0 Man made snow
- 287 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making
- 288 Jun 22 2019 0 Snowmaking and lights for XC ski trails
- 289 Jun 22 2019 0 Mountain Bikes skills courses/Jump lines
- 290 Jun 22 2019 0 Trailhead for biking, skiing, hiking  
A better park building that would allow park users an indoor space for changing and bathrooms. The current rec center is inadequat
- 291 Jun 22 2019 0
- 292 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making capability
- 293 Jun 22 2019 0 Trailhead building for Nordic Skiing
- 294 Jun 22 2019 0 man made snow for cross country skiing
- 295 Jun 22 2019 0 Man made skis trails is it !
- 296 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making for winter activities
- 297 Jun 22 2019 0 No, not personally. But some might want a disc golf course.
- 298 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making for ski trails
- 299 Jun 22 2019 0 no
- 300 Jun 22 2019 0 No
- 301 Jun 22 2019 1 Snow making
- 302 Jun 22 2019 0 No
- 303 Jun 22 2019 0 Na
- 304 Jun 22 2019 0 Snowmaking
- 305 Jun 22 2019 0 Snow making
- 306 Jun 22 2019 0 snowmaking 100%
- 307 Jun 22 2019 0 Man-made snow for winter activities  
The snow making would allow kids that live in Ramsey Co and ski with the Ramsey Co schools to stay and not take hours on the bus.
- 308 Jun 21 2019 1
- 309 Jun 21 2019 0 water fountains, bike repair stations
- 310 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking for ski trails
- 311 Jun 21 2019 0 mini golf
- 312 Jun 21 2019 0 No  
I would really like to see snowmaking. As a past member of a high school nordic team, it would really benefit us to have more local trails.
- 313 Jun 21 2019 0
- 314 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making
- 315 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making
- 316 Jun 21 2019 0 Man made snow
- 317 Jun 21 2019 0 More/Better cross country skiing infrastructure
- 318 Jun 21 2019 0 Warming hut
- 319 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking and a ski chalet
- 320 Jun 21 2019 0 A building for the Nordic trails would be awesome!
- 321 Jun 21 2019 0 Just snowmaking for winter activities like skiing!
- 322 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making
- 323 Jun 21 2019 0 please see above
- 324 Jun 21 2019 0 Disc Golf
- 325 Jun 21 2019 0 Designated fatbike, skijor, snow shoeing multiuser trails.
- 326 Jun 21 2019 0 Upgraded space for winter activities
- 327 Jun 21 2019 0 No
- 328 Jun 21 2019 0 Please have man made snow happen this winter, we have nothing like this on this side of town
- 329 Jun 21 2019 0 Camping and snow making would be great!
- 330 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking capability
- 331 Jun 21 2019 0 No, but please, please pretty please snow making
- 332 Jun 21 2019 0 Artificial snow  
Are there any natural water features in the park that we could leverage for paddle boarding, canoeing, etc. like Lebanon Hills? I'd love to use Battle Creek like we do Lebanon Hills.
- 333 Jun 21 2019 0
- 334 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making

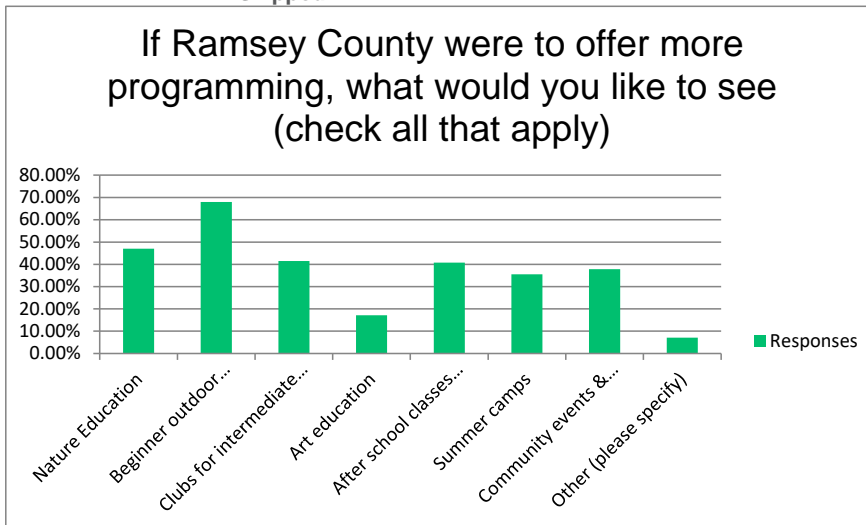
- 335 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking on XX trails
- 336 Jun 21 2019 0 Chalet for skiing and winter sports  
Man made snow without added "entertainment" type winter activities. Such as tubing. Tubing would take away
- 337 Jun 21 2019 0 from the calm, quiet, serene environment already present at Battle Creek.
- 338 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking  
three facilities, all in the western twin cities, that make snow. When there is no natural snow these facilities are
- 339 Jun 21 2019 0 super crowded.
- 340 Jun 21 2019 0 snowmaking
- 341 Jun 21 2019 0 Heated indoor place to support winter events that occur at the park
- 342 Jun 21 2019 0 Not that I can think of
- 343 Jun 21 2019 0 lodge and waxing area.
- 344 Jun 21 2019 0 Better cross country trail grooming
- 345 Jun 21 2019 0 Snow making
- 346 Jun 21 2019 0 Warming building for winter recreation  
100 percent of all resources should be used to put man made snow at the park. I could be a destination hub for
- 347 Jun 21 2019 1 nordic skiing. There would be nothing like in in the east metro.
- 348 Jun 21 2019 1 No
- 349 Jun 21 2019 1 Do not add camping or archery
- 350 Jun 21 2019 0 Ski chalet/bike center. Like Theodore Wirth "Trailhead "  
The park has wonderful terrain for creating world class cross country ski trails. A chalet, an area for holding
- 351 Jun 21 2019 0 large events, would be nice.
- 352 Jun 21 2019 0 XC ski center
- 353 Jun 21 2019 0 Snowmaking
- 354 Jun 21 2019 1 No
- 355 Jun 20 2019 0 A Nordic center for cross country skiing
- 356 Jun 20 2019 0 Nordic Skiing Biathlon range for winter and summer use
- 357 Jun 20 2019 0 Toilets  
Not specifically other than what was marked, though I fully support cultural games too! (I just don't know how to
- 358 Jun 20 2019 0 play them, yet!)
- 359 Jun 20 2019 0 Snow making!
- 360 Jun 20 2019 0 Man made snow for cross country skiing. Nordic Ski Chalet.
- 361 Jun 20 2019 0 Snow making
- 362 Jun 20 2019 0 Snow Making at Winthrop
- 363 Jun 20 2019 0 Disc golf course
- 364 Jun 20 2019 0 A warming house for athletes to change after hiking, skiing or biking.
- 365 Jun 20 2019 0 Winter chalet for skiing and sledding
- 366 Jun 20 2019 1 Snowmaking.
- 367 Jun 20 2019 1 No.
- 368 Jun 20 2019 1 Man made snow cross country skiing  
  
If these things get added i'd like to see them located near parking lots not spread out all over the park. That would ruin it from feeling like a real nature get away and not just another city park. Camping would be nice, but is there enough space for camping and hiking? There are plenty of other parks all over the metro area with nature centers and ampethiters. I think the nature, river, sandstone, hills, and tress are the public art. We have the
- 369 Jun 20 2019 1 walker art museum and street art for all your art viewing. I love this park because it is so undeveloped.
- 370 Jun 20 2019 0 No don't touch the park
- 371 Jun 19 2019 0 Trout pond and hatchery
- 372 Jun 19 2019 0 No

# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

### If Ramsey County were to offer more programming, what would you like to see (check all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Nature Education	47.03%	332
Beginner outdoor recreation programs (off road cycling, cross-country skiing, etc.)	67.99%	480
Clubs for intermediate and advanced outdoor recreation	41.50%	293
Art education	17.14%	121
After school classes (Fishing, biking, skiing, etc.)	40.79%	288
Summer camps	35.55%	251
Community events & festivals	37.82%	267
Other (please specify)	7.08%	50
<b>Answered</b>		<b>706</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>127</b>



Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Sep 08 2019	C camps when school is on break, holidays, etc.
2	Sep 07 2019	C Sensory Friendly inclusive activities
3	Sep 06 2019	1These are the wack stuff i mentioned. We just want to fish When I was a child remember going to this park for all kinds of kids events. I'm not aware of
4	Sep 05 2019	C there ever being public events like that anymore
5	Sep 05 2019	C Senior exercise equipment
6	Sep 05 2019	1stuff my family can walk/bike to after school or in the summer.
7	Sep 04 2019	C Equestrian facility
8	Aug 27 2019	C I don't think additional programming is required
9	Aug 17 2019	C Music in the park
10	Aug 14 2019	C Nature center based pre-school programming (like Dodge or Tamarack)
11	Aug 05 2019	C Opportunities like to Loppet Foundation provides to kids in Mpls. Creek hikes - naturalist-led walks starting at the public access closest to the source and
12	Aug 05 2019	C continue to the Mississippi River.
13	Aug 05 2019	C None. Keep it uncrowded

- 14 Aug 05 2019 1 Music and/or movies in the park. Mountain bike race.
- 15 Aug 04 2019 1 Gentle exercise like chair yoga; guest speakers on community issues.
- 16 Aug 03 2019 1 Education about dog behavior and nature education for dog park
- 17 Jul 29 2019 07 medicinal plants and wildflower guided walks;
- 18 Jul 27 2019 1C yoga classes, fitness in the parks, music concerts in the parks
- 19 Jul 23 2019 0E Photography tours  
similar outdoor programs similar to theodore wirth park. I used to live close to there, and have missed some of the things they offered (women's mtb class). Not interested in a restaurant
- 20 Jul 20 2019 1C that seems to be a trend at parks.
- 21 Jul 18 2019 0E None  
More Mountain Bike Races offered quarterly to include supporting High School Racing
- 22 Jul 17 2019 11 seasons and maybe some armature seasons
- 23 Jul 17 2019 04 Gardening
- 24 Jul 17 2019 0E dog related stuff
- 25 Jul 10 2019 1C Terrain is too difficult for beginner skiers and mtn bikers
- 26 Jul 10 2019 0E Live music at times, away from residential housing
- 27 Jul 10 2019 07 A class for older adults, that incorporates Dial-a-Ride for people who dont' drive anymore.
- 28 Jul 07 2019 0E The ability to have both high school and citizen nordic ski races all winter.
- 29 Jul 07 2019 1C Guided nature hikes. Interpretation of the Native American culture and history of the lans.
- 30 Jul 07 2019 1C Guided nature hikes. Interpretation of the Native American culture and history of the lans.
- 31 Jul 06 2019 1C summer outdoor film series
- 32 Jul 05 2019 0E Nature education
- 33 Jul 05 2019 0E winter activities to get people out
- 34 Jul 05 2019 07 none of these interest me
- 35 Jul 04 2019 0E None.  
I'd like to see cross country ski rental and snow shoe rentals. Candlelight tours like we see at
- 36 Jul 04 2019 01 state parks. Exercise and nature programs for older adults.
- 37 Jul 04 2019 0E Music/concerts like the Como bandshell
- 38 Jul 04 2019 07 Security patrols
- 39 Jul 04 2019 0E Dog related classes
- 40 Jun 24 2019 0 Don't really need more
- 41 Jun 24 2019 0 Partner with endurance United
- 42 Jun 21 2019 0 Ski races winter festival
- 43 Jun 21 2019 0 man made snow, and more ski classes or times to meet up and ski with other people
- 44 Jun 21 2019 0 Overnight kids summer camps!!!  
The outdoor basket ball court is used a lot by young men and boys, but it really should be
- 45 Jun 21 2019 1 upgraded so it is more functional for their use.
- 46 Jun 20 2019 0 Ski races
- 47 Jun 20 2019 0 Regional level cross country ski races
- 48 Jun 20 2019 0 Mountain bike training rides
- 49 Jun 20 2019 0 Any utilization that promotes a large park so close to downtown
- 50 Jun 20 2019 1 None. I walk in St. Paul (from my home.)



## Appendix - Online Survey 1

### Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

#### Zip Code (Optional)

Answered **673**

Skipped **160**

Respondents	Response Date	Responses	Tags
1	Sep 09 2019	055109	
2	Sep 09 2019	155119	
3	Sep 08 2019	055119	
4	Sep 08 2019	055106	
5	Sep 08 2019	055413	
6	Sep 08 2019	155122	
7	Sep 08 2019	055113	
8	Sep 07 2019	155119	
9	Sep 07 2019	055109	
10	Sep 07 2019	055119	
11	Sep 07 2019	155119	
12	Sep 07 2019	155118	
13	Sep 07 2019	055119	
14	Sep 06 2019	155119	
15	Sep 06 2019	055106	
16	Sep 06 2019	055119	
17	Sep 06 2019	055106	
18	Sep 06 2019	055119	
19	Sep 06 2019	055106	
20	Sep 06 2019	055119	
21	Sep 06 2019	055119	
22	Sep 06 2019	055110	
23	Sep 06 2019	055119	
24	Sep 06 2019	055119	
25	Sep 06 2019	055119	
26	Sep 06 2019	055119	
27	Sep 06 2019	155106	
28	Sep 06 2019	1 Fish	
29	Sep 06 2019	055106	
30	Sep 06 2019	055106	
31	Sep 06 2019	055119	
32	Sep 06 2019	055106	
33	Sep 06 2019	055119	
34	Sep 06 2019	055128	
35	Sep 06 2019	055106	
36	Sep 06 2019	055418	
37	Sep 06 2019	055119	
38	Sep 06 2019	055119	
39	Sep 06 2019	055129	
40	Sep 06 2019	058075	
41	Sep 06 2019	155119	
42	Sep 05 2019	155119	
43	Sep 05 2019	155106	
44	Sep 05 2019	155107	
45	Sep 05 2019	055119	
46	Sep 05 2019	055125	
47	Sep 05 2019	055128	
48	Sep 05 2019	055119	
49	Sep 05 2019	055119	
50	Sep 05 2019	055119	
51	Sep 05 2019	055109	
52	Sep 05 2019	055106	
53	Sep 05 2019	055119	
54	Sep 05 2019	055106	
55	Sep 05 2019	055106	
56	Sep 05 2019	055106	
57	Sep 05 2019	055106	
58	Sep 05 2019	055119	
59	Sep 05 2019	055119	
60	Sep 05 2019	055125	
61	Sep 05 2019	055106	
62	Sep 05 2019	055106	
63	Sep 05 2019	055119	
64	Sep 05 2019	055119	
65	Sep 05 2019	055119	
66	Sep 05 2019	055119	
67	Sep 05 2019	055119	
68	Sep 05 2019	055128	
69	Sep 05 2019	055117	
70	Sep 05 2019	055106	
71	Sep 05 2019	055109	
72	Sep 05 2019	055119	
73	Sep 05 2019	155119	
74	Sep 05 2019	155119	
75	Sep 05 2019	155119	
76	Sep 05 2019	155119	
77	Sep 05 2019	155119	
78	Sep 05 2019	055119	
79	Sep 05 2019	055119	
80	Sep 05 2019	055117	
81	Sep 05 2019	055106	
82	Sep 05 2019	055125	

83 Sep 05 2019 055106  
 84 Sep 04 2019 155119  
 85 Sep 04 2019 155119  
 86 Sep 04 2019 155119  
 87 Sep 04 2019 155125  
 88 Sep 04 2019 155119  
 89 Sep 04 2019 055418  
 90 Sep 04 2019 055125  
 91 Sep 04 2019 055109  
 92 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 93 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 94 Sep 04 2019 055109  
 95 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 96 Sep 04 2019 055109  
 97 Sep 04 2019 055109  
 98 Sep 04 2019 055109  
 99 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 100 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 101 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 102 Sep 04 2019 055113  
 103 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 104 Sep 04 2019 055119  
 105 Sep 04 2019 155403  
 106 Sep 03 2019 055126  
 107 Sep 03 2019 055119  
 108 Sep 02 2019 155119  
 109 Aug 27 2019 055110  
 110 Aug 26 2019 055406  
 111 Aug 22 2019 055106  
 112 Aug 22 2019 055128  
 113 Aug 21 2019 155082  
 114 Aug 21 2019 055082  
 115 Aug 21 2019 055125  
 116 Aug 21 2019 055110  
 117 Aug 21 2019 055125  
 118 Aug 21 2019 055108  
 119 Aug 20 2019 155107  
 120 Aug 20 2019 055115  
 121 Aug 18 2019 055016  
 122 Aug 17 2019 055106  
 123 Aug 16 2019 055119  
 124 Aug 15 2019 055119  
 125 Aug 15 2019 055119  
 126 Aug 15 2019 055101  
 127 Aug 15 2019 055117

128 Aug 15 2019 055116  
 129 Aug 14 2019 155438  
 130 Aug 14 2019 055107  
 131 Aug 14 2019 055117  
 132 Aug 14 2019 055106  
 133 Aug 14 2019 055125  
 134 Aug 14 2019 055117  
 135 Aug 14 2019 055108  
 136 Aug 14 2019 055105  
 137 Aug 13 2019 055119  
 138 Aug 13 2019 155119  
 139 Aug 13 2019 155108  
 140 Aug 12 2019 155119  
 141 Aug 12 2019 055107  
 142 Aug 10 2019 055119  
 143 Aug 10 2019 155125  
 144 Aug 08 2019 055107  
 145 Aug 07 2019 155119  
 146 Aug 06 2019 055119  
 147 Aug 06 2019 055119  
 148 Aug 06 2019 055106  
 149 Aug 06 2019 155119  
 150 Aug 06 2019 155119  
 151 Aug 06 2019 055119  
 152 Aug 06 2019 055119  
 153 Aug 05 2019 055103  
 154 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 155 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 156 Aug 05 2019 055116  
 157 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 158 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 159 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 160 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 161 Aug 05 2019 155105  
 162 Aug 05 2019 155119  
 163 Aug 05 2019 155106  
 164 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 165 Aug 05 2019 055119  
 166 Aug 04 2019 155106  
 167 Aug 04 2019 055119  
 168 Aug 04 2019 055419  
 169 Aug 03 2019 055106  
 170 Aug 03 2019 155119  
 171 Aug 03 2019 155119  
 172 Aug 03 2019 155119

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173	Aug 03 2019	055119	218	Jul 23 2019	0555119
174	Aug 03 2019	055125	219	Jul 23 2019	0355101
175	Aug 02 2019	155406	220	Jul 23 2019	1155106
176	Aug 01 2019	055119	221	Jul 22 2019	1155113
177	Aug 01 2019	055119	222	Jul 22 2019	0355119
178	Aug 01 2019	055119	223	Jul 22 2019	0255416
179	Aug 01 2019	055119	224	Jul 22 2019	1055119
180	Aug 01 2019	055129	225	Jul 22 2019	0855119
181	Jul 31 2019	0355125	226	Jul 22 2019	0855106
182	Jul 31 2019	0555119	227	Jul 21 2019	0955119
183	Jul 30 2019	0855119	228	Jul 21 2019	0855102
184	Jul 30 2019	0755101	229	Jul 21 2019	1255119
185	Jul 30 2019	0155119	230	Jul 21 2019	1055119
186	Jul 30 2019	1255119-3576	231	Jul 20 2019	0955119
187	Jul 30 2019	1155119	232	Jul 20 2019	1055108
188	Jul 30 2019	0955119	233	Jul 20 2019	1055110
189	Jul 30 2019	0955119	234	Jul 20 2019	1055107
190	Jul 29 2019	0855106	235	Jul 19 2019	0355102
191	Jul 29 2019	0255125	236	Jul 19 2019	1155117
192	Jul 29 2019	0955112	237	Jul 19 2019	1055106
193	Jul 29 2019	0755107	238	Jul 19 2019	1055119
194	Jul 28 2019	0155119	239	Jul 19 2019	1055330
195	Jul 27 2019	0755119	240	Jul 19 2019	1055119
196	Jul 27 2019	1055119	241	Jul 19 2019	0955106
197	Jul 27 2019	1055119	242	Jul 18 2019	0555119
198	Jul 26 2019	0655109	243	Jul 18 2019	0355119
199	Jul 26 2019	0355119	244	Jul 18 2019	0355119
200	Jul 25 2019	0855109	245	Jul 18 2019	0255119
201	Jul 25 2019	1055119	246	Jul 18 2019	1055075
202	Jul 25 2019	0955106	247	Jul 18 2019	0955106
203	Jul 25 2019	0555103	248	Jul 18 2019	0955117
204	Jul 24 2019	1055406	249	Jul 18 2019	0955104
205	Jul 24 2019	1055119	250	Jul 18 2019	0755110
206	Jul 24 2019	0755119	251	Jul 18 2019	0755113
207	Jul 24 2019	0755119	252	Jul 18 2019	0655106
208	Jul 24 2019	0755119	253	Jul 17 2019	1155106
209	Jul 24 2019	0655106	254	Jul 17 2019	1155303
210	Jul 24 2019	0655106	255	Jul 17 2019	1055119
211	Jul 24 2019	0555119	256	Jul 17 2019	1055119
212	Jul 24 2019	0455119	257	Jul 17 2019	0955106
213	Jul 24 2019	0255110	258	Jul 17 2019	0855113
214	Jul 24 2019	1055104	259	Jul 17 2019	0655119
215	Jul 24 2019	0855106	260	Jul 17 2019	0555107
216	Jul 23 2019	0855119	261	Jul 17 2019	0455119
217	Jul 23 2019	070	262	Jul 17 2019	0455104-5037

263 Jul 17 2019 0455119  
 264 Jul 17 2019 0355119  
 265 Jul 17 2019 0355119  
 266 Jul 17 2019 0355119  
 267 Jul 17 2019 0355106  
 268 Jul 17 2019 0355130  
 269 Jul 17 2019 0355107  
 270 Jul 17 2019 0355105  
 271 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 272 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 273 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 274 Jul 17 2019 0255106  
 275 Jul 17 2019 0255107  
 276 Jul 17 2019 0255113  
 277 Jul 17 2019 0255105  
 278 Jul 17 2019 0255106  
 279 Jul 17 2019 0255113  
 280 Jul 17 2019 0255108  
 281 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 282 Jul 17 2019 0255109  
 283 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 284 Jul 17 2019 0255109  
 285 Jul 17 2019 0255119  
 286 Jul 17 2019 0155016  
 287 Jul 17 2019 1255117  
 288 Jul 17 2019 1255406  
 289 Jul 15 2019 0855104  
 290 Jul 15 2019 0855119  
 291 Jul 15 2019 0755113  
 292 Jul 14 2019 0655414  
 293 Jul 14 2019 0655406  
 294 Jul 14 2019 0555105  
 295 Jul 14 2019 0455119  
 296 Jul 14 2019 0355437  
 297 Jul 14 2019 0355117  
 298 Jul 13 2019 1155119  
 299 Jul 12 2019 0155107  
 300 Jul 11 2019 0455103  
 301 Jul 11 2019 1155106  
 302 Jul 11 2019 0955125  
 303 Jul 11 2019 0755103  
 304 Jul 11 2019 1255113  
 305 Jul 10 2019 1055038  
 306 Jul 10 2019 0855119  
 307 Jul 10 2019 0555128

308 Jul 10 2019 1155116  
 309 Jul 10 2019 1055108  
 310 Jul 10 2019 1055102  
 311 Jul 10 2019 1055106  
 312 Jul 10 2019 0855116  
 313 Jul 10 2019 0755125  
 314 Jul 09 2019 0555105  
 315 Jul 09 2019 1255125  
 316 Jul 09 2019 1155105  
 317 Jul 09 2019 0855106-6819  
 318 Jul 09 2019 0655106  
 319 Jul 08 2019 0455106  
 320 Jul 08 2019 1055117  
 321 Jul 08 2019 0855106  
 322 Jul 07 2019 0955117  
 323 Jul 07 2019 0855119  
 324 Jul 07 2019 0755117  
 325 Jul 07 2019 0455104  
 326 Jul 07 2019 0155108  
 327 Jul 07 2019 0155106  
 328 Jul 07 2019 1055119  
 329 Jul 07 2019 1055119  
 330 Jul 06 2019 0955116  
 331 Jul 06 2019 0355103  
 332 Jul 06 2019 1055119  
 333 Jul 05 2019 0855125  
 334 Jul 05 2019 0655106  
 335 Jul 05 2019 0655106  
 336 Jul 05 2019 0255104  
 337 Jul 05 2019 0155106  
 338 Jul 05 2019 1155106-2053  
 339 Jul 05 2019 1055108  
 340 Jul 05 2019 1055119  
 341 Jul 05 2019 0855108  
 342 Jul 05 2019 0855119  
 343 Jul 05 2019 0755119  
 344 Jul 05 2019 1255102  
 345 Jul 04 2019 1155113  
 346 Jul 04 2019 1155119  
 347 Jul 04 2019 0855108  
 348 Jul 04 2019 0755108  
 349 Jul 04 2019 0655108  
 350 Jul 04 2019 0555101  
 351 Jul 04 2019 0455105  
 352 Jul 04 2019 0455119

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353 Jul 04 2019 0455119  
354 Jul 04 2019 0455119  
355 Jul 04 2019 0255108  
356 Jul 04 2019 0155119  
357 Jul 04 2019 0155119  
358 Jul 04 2019 0155109  
359 Jul 04 2019 0155108  
360 Jul 04 2019 1255109  
361 Jul 04 2019 1255108  
362 Jul 04 2019 1155119  
363 Jul 04 2019 1155104  
364 Jul 04 2019 1055117  
365 Jul 04 2019 1055116  
366 Jul 04 2019 1055117  
367 Jul 04 2019 0955406  
368 Jul 04 2019 0955116  
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## Appendix - Online Survey 1

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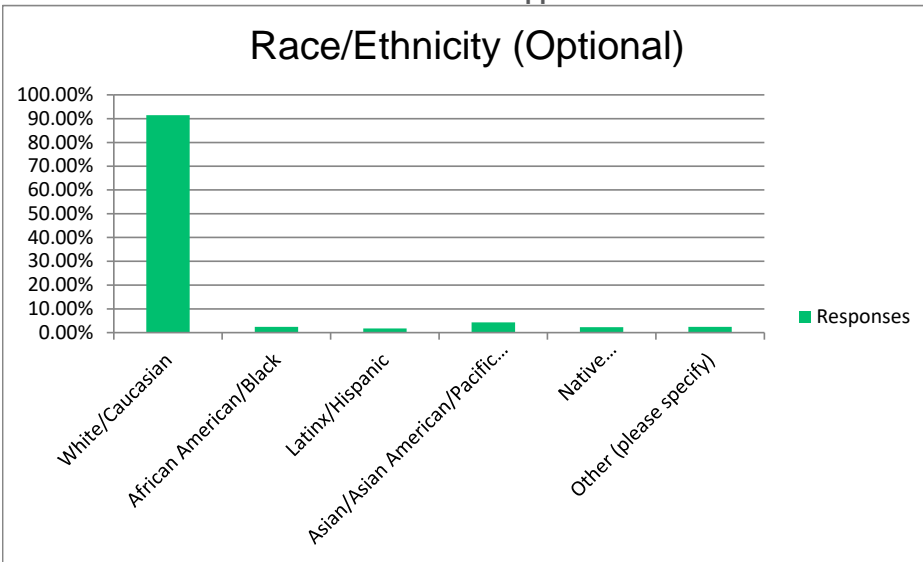
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# Appendix - Online Survey 1

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey

### Race/Ethnicity (Optional)

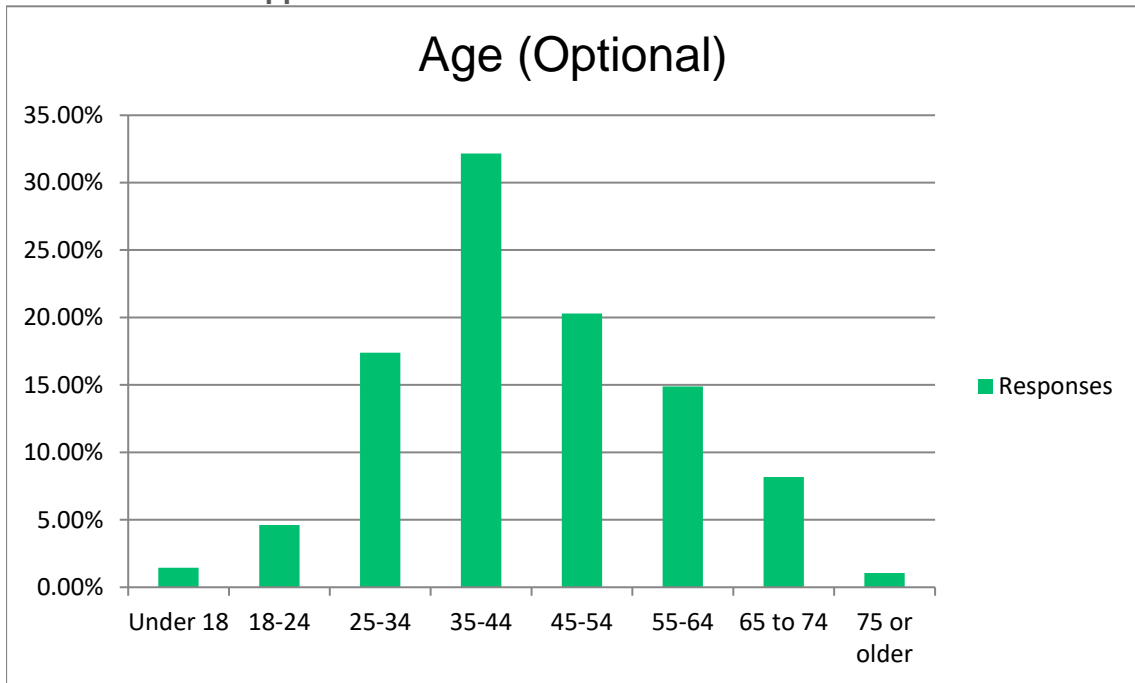
Answer Choices	Responses
White/Caucasian	91.47% 633
African American/Black	2.46% 17
Latinx/Hispanic	1.73% 12
Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander	4.34% 30
Native American/Indigenous/Alaska Native	2.31% 16
Other (please specify)	2.46% 17
<b>Answered</b>	<b>692</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>141</b>



Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
	1 Sep 08 2019	blended family
	2 Sep 07 2019	1 American
	3 Sep 06 2019	1 Fish
	4 Sep 06 2019	What is the living hell does rave have to do with a county park
	5 Sep 06 2019	Mixed. White hispanic
	6 Sep 05 2019	1 italian
	7 Sep 05 2019	Jewish
	8 Sep 03 2019	prefer not to say
	9 Aug 05 2019	prefer not to say
	10 Jul 23 2019	07 Prefer not to answer
	11 Jul 21 2019	09 Mixed
	12 Jul 19 2019	10 Oglala Lakota
	13 Jul 17 2019	08 Car and bike
	14 Jul 17 2019	03 Mix
	15 Jul 14 2019	06 W
	16 Jul 05 2019	12 Saami
	17 Jun 22 2019	0 X

Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey  
**Age (Optional)**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	1.45%	11
18-24	4.61%	35
25-34	17.39%	132
35-44	32.15%	244
45-54	20.29%	154
55-64	14.89%	113
65 to 74	8.17%	62
75 or older	1.05%	8
<b>Answered</b>		<b>759</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>74</b>





# Appendix - Pop-Up Meetings Board Results

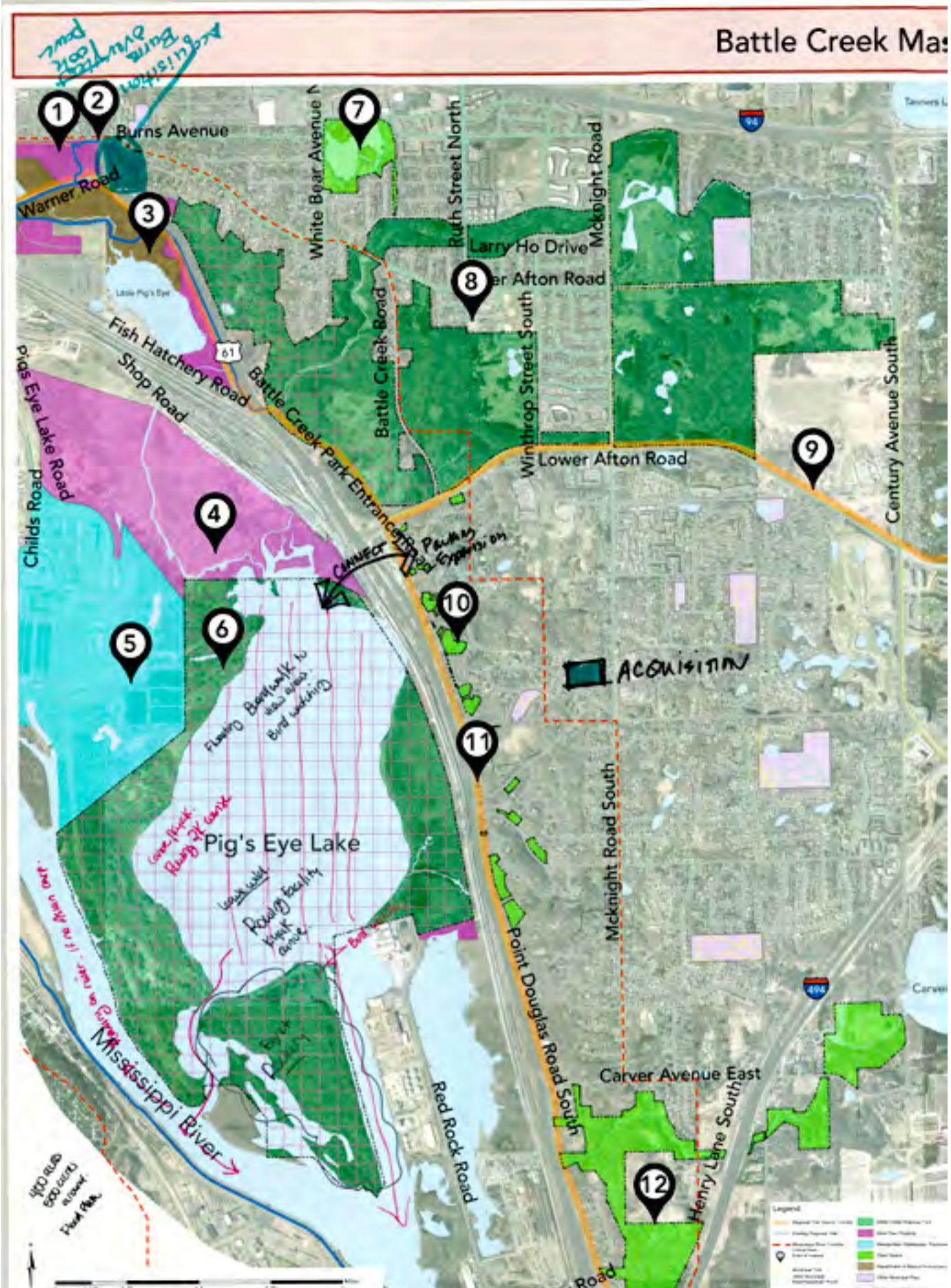
Column 1 Attendees/People Engaged	Hmongtown Market 6/29/19	Ramsey County Fair 7/12/19	Ericrean Muslim Event 7/14/19	Battle Creek Community Recreation 7/24/19	Community Event 8/3/19	Waterworks 08/10/19	D1 Music Event 08/28/19	Indigenous Stakeholder Event	Totals
<b>Questions</b>									
<b>If Ramsey County were to offer more programming, what would you like to see?</b>	<b># of Dots</b>								
Nature Education	3	4	2	7	5				21
Beginner Outdoor Recreation Programs (off road cycling, XC ski, etc.)	3	3	4	10	4				24
Intermediate and Advanced Outdoor Recreation Clubs	1	5	3	5	5				19
Art Education	2	2	2	1	2				12
After School Classes (fishing, skiing, biking)	2	5	2	2	4				18
Summer Camps	5	7	8	3	2				25
Community Events and Festivals	6	7	6	3	4				26
<i>Additional Comments/Ideas:</i>									0
Nature based classes for kids				1	1				1
Canoe and kayak rental youth fishing pier at Pigs Eye Lake					3				3
Invasive species management and natural area restoration				1					1
Single track trail running course					1				1
Outdoor education opportunities for St. Paul schools:						1			1
Safety and security of park users						1			1
Restaurant						1			1
Fishing docks						1			1
Continue special permit deer hunts						1			1
Disc golf course						1			1
Fat tire bike rentals						1			1
Added parking in high activity areas						1			1
Ice cream truck in summer						1			1
Trails developed as systems, with varying degrees of difficulty and clear signage						1			1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>42</b>				<b>264</b>
<b>What features or amenities do you believe are missing from the park that would like to see in the future?</b>	<b>6/29/19</b>	<b>7/12/19</b>	<b>Ericrean Muslim Event 7/14/19</b>	<b>Battle Creek Community Recreation 7/24/19</b>	<b>Community Event 8/3/19</b>	<b>Waterworks 08/10/19</b>	<b>D1 Performance Even 08/28/19</b>	<b>Indigenous Stakeholder Meeting</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Amphitheater	7	5	4	0	1				17
Ty Lub Courts		1	2	0	1				4
Takraw Courts	4	5	8	0	1				18
Nature Center	8	19	1	5	5				38
Sculpture Garden	2	3	1	0	4				10
Splash Pad	28	34	20	2	1				85
Camping	4	4	1	1	3				13
Archery	2	21	5	1	0				29
High Ropes Course	7	17	3	3	2				32
Public Art	3	11	5	2	3				24
Additional Pavilions and Shelters	5	4	2	2	0				13
Create Man Made Snow for Winter Activities for Cross Country Skiing and Snow Tubing	2	8		10	13				33
<i>Additional Comments/Ideas:</i>									0
Karaoke in the Park	1								1
Badminton	1								1
Volleyball Court	4								4
Off leash Dog Walking Activities	1								1
Bocce	2								2
Preservation areas are important		2							2
Pickleball		1							1
Basketball		3		1					4
Running		1							1
Tennis		2							2
Soccer		1							1
Pool		7							7
Eco-friendly rubber turf (Woodbridge Park example)		1							1
Hiking trail		2							2
Bike trail		1							1
Food snack kiosk		10							10







Battle Creek Mas

















### Battle Creek Master Plan





## Battle Creek Master Plan





Battle Creek Master Plan



**Public Area & Service Area: Center Area**  
 This area is located in the center of the park and is the most developed area. It contains the main parking lot, the main building, and the main entrance. The area is surrounded by trails and is a central hub for visitors.

**Public Area & Service Area: West Side**  
 This area is located on the west side of the park and contains several smaller buildings and parking areas. It is a secondary hub for visitors and is connected to the main area by trails.

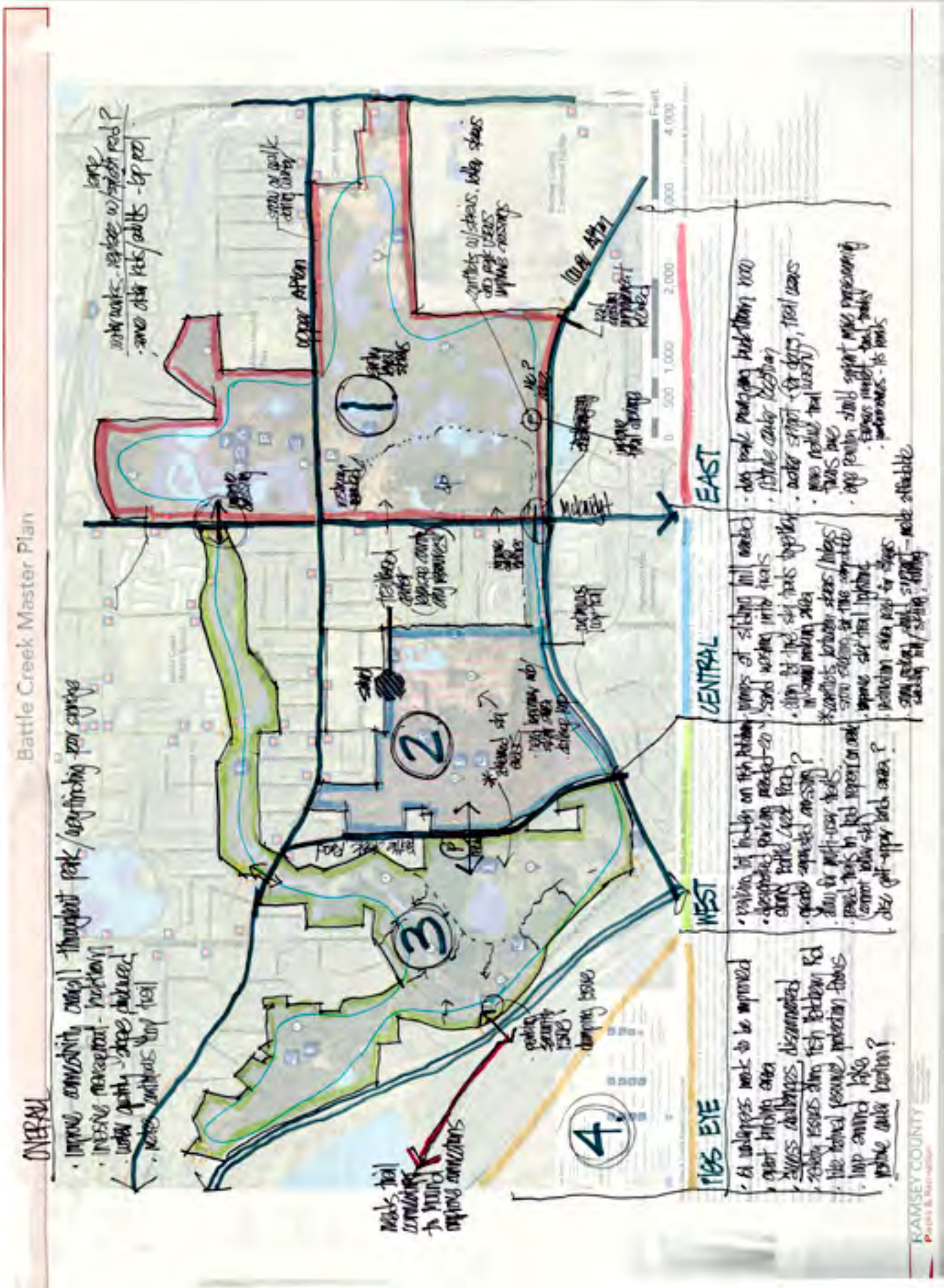
**Public Area & Service Area: East Side**  
 This area is located on the east side of the park and contains several smaller buildings and parking areas. It is a secondary hub for visitors and is connected to the main area by trails.

**Public Area & Service Area: South Side**  
 This area is located on the south side of the park and contains several smaller buildings and parking areas. It is a secondary hub for visitors and is connected to the main area by trails.

**FUTURE TRANSPORT**  
 1. Dedicated Biking w/ shuttle  
 - on demand  
 Links for ski/ski out

Frequency of use is too low  
 go use  
 how to ↑ public Transportation







Battle Creek Master Plan





Battle Creek Master Plan













# Battle Creek Master Plan





# Appendix - Design Workshop 1







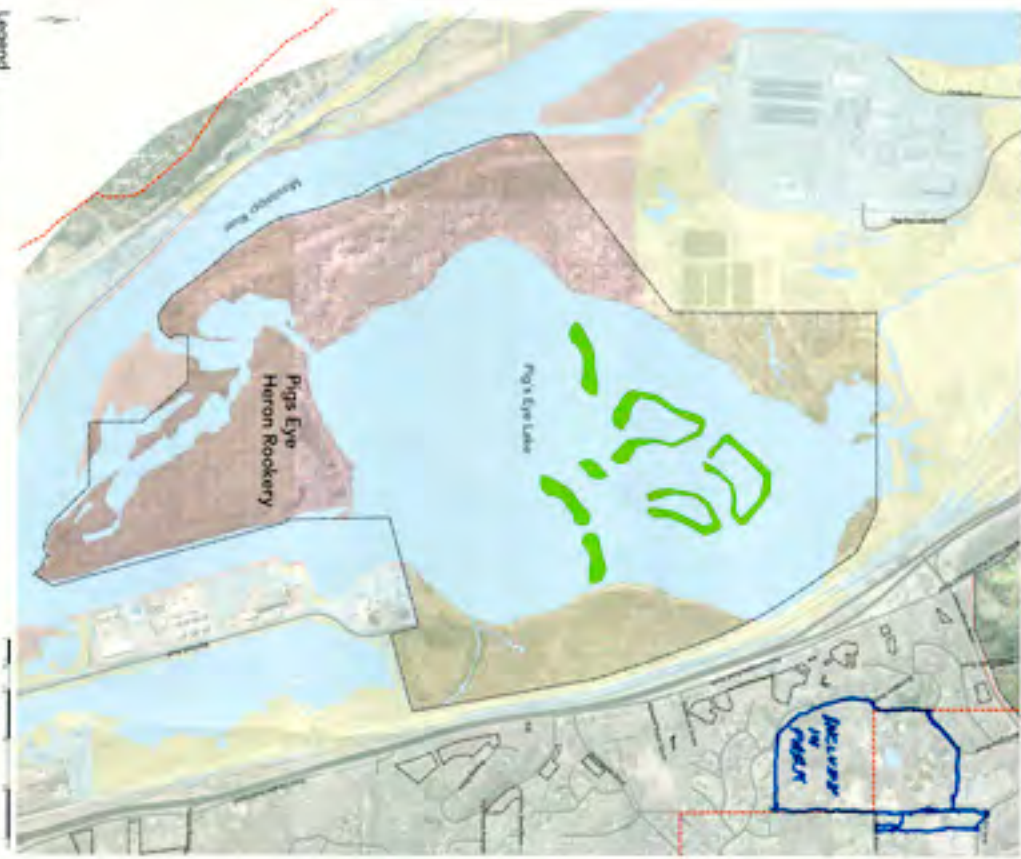






Battle Creek Master Plan

Pigs Eye FEMA Flood Zones



Pigs Eye Wetland Land Classification



**Legend**

- 100 Year Flood Zone
- 500 Year Flood Zone
- 100 Year Flood Zone with a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability

**Floodway Definition**

- Shrub Wetland
- Emergent Wetland
- Upland Wetland

Boundaries shown are for informational purposes only and are not intended to be used for any other purpose. Boundaries are subject to change and are not intended to be used for any other purpose.

**Legend**

- 100 Year Flood Zone
- 500 Year Flood Zone
- 100 Year Flood Zone with a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability
- Shrub Wetland
- Emergent Wetland
- Upland Wetland



# WHAT WE HEARD

GROUP

- ① Break Park into 4 quadrants  
Collaborate between County + City  
Use facilities we already have  
Connections to Pigs Eye  
Public Safety concerns  
Skiing expansion  
Improved signage  
Permenant Bathroom @ Dog Park  
Expand Waterworks  
Trail Loop

GROUP

②

Water resources - B.C. part of  
a larger landscape

Land bridge to connect Pigeon Eye  
Contiguous Land

Development should happen in existing locations

Park reserve v. Regional Park

Wayfinding Improvements

Sustainability important

Group

(3)

Adopt-a-trail to address trash  
Nature Center Supported

Access point safety

Connecting dense areas to Park

Satellite Nature Centers

Bluff connections

Group

(4)

Focus on natural preservation

Trail linkages into Pigs eye  
Boardwalk linkages

Expand development w/in existing areas

Wayfinding improvements

Restrooms

Add access points

Closing Battle Creek Place Road

Group

⑤

Centralize active development areas

Internal Park transit system

Walking trail v. biking trail  
↳ wayfinding

---

NEED TO REDUCE

MOWING IN NON

RECREATION USE

AREAS



- Trash (more cans)
- Tamarack Nature Center\*
  - Bring kids into woods
- Connect to other cultures
- Signs
  - Safer access points
    - high density → low into park
- Friends of the park trash events
- Simmeron (sp?) nature center w/ Bike repair
- Nature Center with ~~set~~ stations distributed all over
- Grass "Track" course (flat area)

# Appendix - Design Workshop 1

## Battle Creek Master Plan Design Workshop #1 Comments

### What We Heard

#### Group 1

1. Break Park into 4 quadrants
2. Collaborate between county and city
3. Use facilities we already have
4. Connections to pigs eye
5. Public safety concerns
6. Skiing expansion
7. Improved signage
8. Permanent restroom at olda
9. Expand waterworks (Splash pad)
10. Trail Loops

#### Group 2

1. Water resources become part of a larger landscape
2. Land bridge to connect pigs eye
3. Contiguous land
4. Development should happen in existing locations
5. Park reserve vs. regional park
6. Wayfinding Improvements
7. Sustainability is important

#### Group 3

1. Adopt a trail to address trash
2. Nature center supported
3. Access point safety
4. Connecting dense areas to park
5. Satellite nature centers
6. Bluff connection

#### Group 4

1. Focus on nature preservation
2. Trail links into pigs eye
3. Boardwalks in pigs eye
4. Expand development within existing areas
5. Wayfinding improvements
6. Restrooms
7. Add access points
8. Close battle creek road

### Group 5

1. Centralize active development areas
2. Internal park transit system
3. Walking trails vs biking trails
4. Wayfinding
5. Need to reduce mowing in non recreation use areas

### General Notes

1. More Trash Cans
2. Tamarack Nature Center – Bring kids into woods
3. Connect to other Cultures
4. Signs
5. Safer access points
6. High density low into park
7. Friends of the park trash events
8. Nature center with bike repair
9. Nature kiosks/info boards distributed all over park
10. Grass track course (flat area biking)

### **Battle Creek Master Plan Design Workshop #1 Comments**

#### Overall Maps

1. Regional Park Signage lacking along Highway 61
2. Rec. Amenity/Viewing Bluff (Totem Town)
3. Land Bridge across 91 from Lower Afton to Pigs Eye Area
4. Access to Pigs Eye
5. Bluff Trail Connection from BC to Fish Creek
6. Learning station/Viewing Area at Red Rock Road (pigs eye)
7. Future Property Acquisition (homes along fish creek)
8. Acquisition Burns Ave. Overlook
9. Connect pigs eye/ Parking/expansion
10. Boardwalk around pigs eye to viewing areas
11. Canoe/kayak/rowing at pigs eye
12. Rowing facility/kayak/canoe at pigs eye
13. Acquisition (totem town)
- 14.

## Appendix - Design Workshop 1

### Battle Creek Master Plan Design Workshop #1 Comments

#### Battle Creek RP Specific

1. Expansion & Protection of Upper Battle Creek (from area NW of Waterworks to Century Ave.)
2. Learning Stations (located throughout Eastern Trails/OLDA Area of park)
3. Water Service & Restrooms (Located at OLDA parking lot on Upper Afton Road)
4. Change in Use, New Destination (OLDA parking lot on Upper Afton Road)
5. Diverse Access in Winter (Eastern Trails Area)
6. Park vs. Park Reserve
7. Community Food Plots/Access to Corrections land near century/Lower Afton Road
8. Expansion and Protection of land south of Lower Afton Road near Eastern Trails Area
9. Trail Flooding Issue on trail leading from Century/Lower Afton Road to Eastern Trails Area
10. Open up Creek/Crossing at McKnight near Lower Afton
11. Create Access between land near Larry Ho/North Park Drive and Active Recreation Area
12. Density of Off Road Cycling Trails may create conflicts with other users
13. Open Park Area/Event for Horse Use
14. Land Bridge to Pigs Eye
15. Erosion with trail development
16. Close Battle Creek road
17. Open Creek at road crossings
18. Nature center at Battle Creek
19. Learning Stations
20. Wayfinding for trails
21. Neighbors as stewards
22. Protect/Add land adjacent to waterways
23. Signs along Highway 61 and other major roads directing public to Battle Creek RP
24. Add MNDOT land to park along 61
25. Dedicated Park Transportation/Shuttle
26. Frequency of Bus is too low, 70 line. How to increase public transportation?
27. Transit ends south of Lower Afton Road, Need connection
28. Future of Transportation? -dedicated parking with shuttle, driverless cars on demand
29. Links for ski in/ski out
30. Disc Golf (Active Recreation Zone)
31. Safe Crossings across McKnight/Lower Afton
32. Satellite nature center near Pavilion
33. Sand Volleyball
34. Splash Pad
35. Bike Skills Course
36. Programming (Movies & Music in parks)
37. Parking Signs
38. Strategically lit trails in park
39. Bathroom Facilities (Permanent) with water olda parking lot off of Upper Afton Road
40. Too many trails Maintain the existing circulation
41. Address invasive species
42. Signage for bikes
43. Parking safety
44. Connect resources for homeless population
45. Better way to organize and engage volunteers

46. Many dead trees
47. Trash
48. Nature center nodes – tie to elementary school locations
49. Nodes connected to circulation and provide access to entire park
50. Signage of nature center
51. Many concerns of pedestrian crossings of McKnight and lower afton
52. Keep golf course
53. Safe 100% accessible paly and nature for kids and adults
54. Need for new courts multi-use
55. Lit trails
56. Velodrome
57. Pump track
58. Additional cycling skills
59. Splash pad at nature center
60. Ski center warming house/ski rentals
61. Bringing community into programming, skiing, biking/cycling
62. Connections to foundations
63. Signage at major intersections
64. Safe pedestrian access from Burlington road
65. Connect to henry park, totem town, fish creek
66. Burns Avenue Overlook, safe connection Walking (?) only
67. To Bruce Vento Nature Center, Connect
68. Signage for private property access (?)
69. More park benches throughout
70. Keep Battle Creek Road Open
71. Nature Center, add restroom at Park Entrance Road Lot
72. Nature center at pigs eye
73. Water sports – canoe, kayak, rowing at pigs eye lake
74. Invasive species mitigation
75. Safe parking lots
76. Steep slopes and off road cycling, be sensitive of environmental degradation
77. Community engagement for invasive species control
78. Explore loops and connections to adjacent parks
79. Explore trails going over or under road at Mcknight/Lower Afton
80. Nature Kiosks connected to existing trails system
81. Improved parking along battle creek road
82. Over connection across battle creek road ski/walk/bike in out/over
83. Connection to Burlington road
84. Add larrys land
85. Groomed winter/hiking trails/ widen for more used
86. Larry land most important for acquisition use as small trail head/restrooms
87. Improve trail along park entrance road
88. Signs/lighting/cameras, restrooms at park entrance road parking lot
89. More picnic opportunity along lower battle creek trails corridor
90. Shovel steps in winter
91. Remove fences along perimeter of BC Park
92. Parking along battle creek road
93. Man Made Snow – Winter Rec Area



## Appendix - Design Workshop 1

94. Expand hours of rec center create nature/history center with warming hut restrooms/showers
95. Explore parking expansion at winter rec area
96. Community Access/trails/at jut out along upper afton road
97. Acquire Corrections land for open space, disc golf, future parking etc.
98. Interpretive programming loop in coordination with school/trailhead (limited Use)
99. Restroom and water at olda/upper afton parking lot
100. Pollinator habitat/prairie conversion of lawns in recreation area
101. Public art
102. Integrate playground with splash pad
103. No more asphalt trails
104. Additional or wider hiking trails so to not compete with xc skiers in winter
105. Future connection across Interstate 94/3m
- 106.

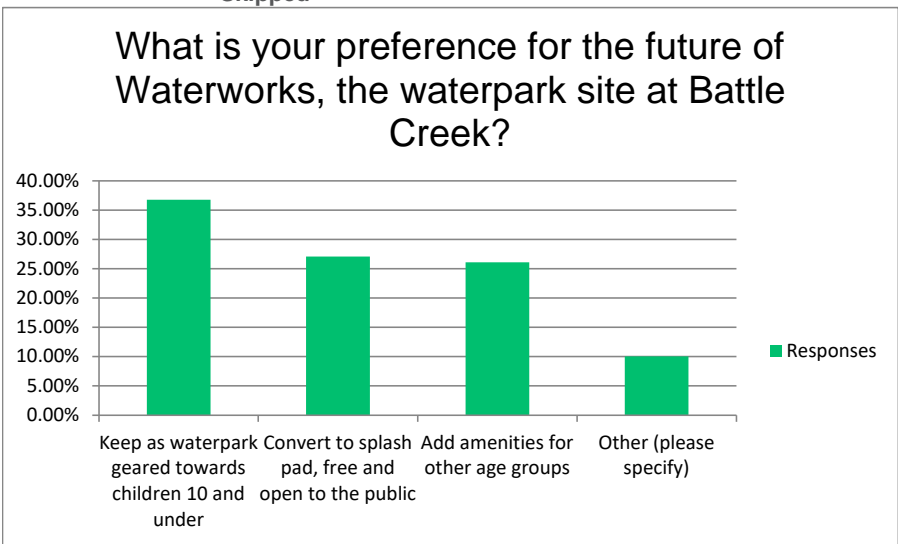


# Appendix - Online Survey 2

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

### What is your preference for the future of Waterworks, the waterpark site at Battle Creek?

Answer Choices	Responses
Keep as waterpark geared towards children 10 and under	36.79% 110
Convert to splash pad, free and open to the public	27.09% 81
Add amenities for other age groups	26.09% 78
Other (please specify)	10.03% 30
<b>Answered</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>14</b>



Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Sep 18 2020	0 disc golf course
2	Jul 21 2020	0 remove and clean up lakes and rivers so they are swimmable
3	Jun 27 2020	1 No preference
4	Jun 17 2020	1 I have not used this facility and have no preference
5	Jun 13 2020	1 It needs a pool like Highland or to be closed
6	Jun 12 2020	1 Lap swimming for adults
7	Jun 05 2020	0 Restore a natural environment with walking paths; remove the water parkl  Keep all the cool kid-pleasing stuff, but invest in substantial expansion to pool area to build additional pool designed for adult lap-swimming only. Do not eliminate entrance fee. In fact,
8	Apr 26 2020	0 increase it modestly to help pay for constructing new lap swimming pool.
9	Apr 22 2020	1 No interest in a waterpark
10	Apr 13 2020	1 No opinion
11	Apr 09 2020	1 No preference
12	Apr 02 2020	1 Convert to indoor facility open all year.
13	Mar 29 2020	0 No opinion
14	Mar 22 2020	1 No opinion
15	Mar 20 2020	1 no opinion
16	Mar 19 2020	0 no opinon
17	Mar 19 2020	0 I don't have kids. So no opinion.

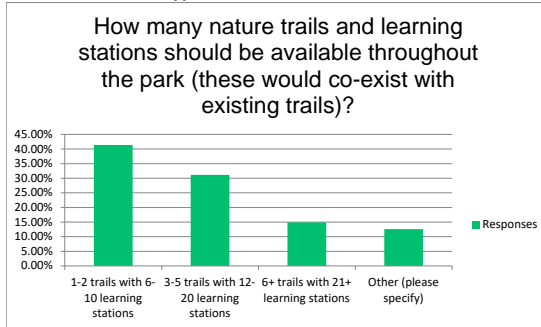
- Waterparks conflict with the nature-based opportunities provided by the regional parks system. My family is strongly opposed to this and would like to see the waterpark site at Battle Creek be restored to a natural destination. In addition, investment should be made to
- 18 Mar 19 2020 0 clean up the creek so people can enjoy nature rather than separate them from nature.
  - 19 Mar 08 2020 0 Close it down. The fudged numbers don't take in account the labor for startup and shutdown.
  - 20 Mar 07 2020 0 remove and clean up lakes and rivers so they are swimmable
  - 21 Mar 07 2020 0 No opinion  
toward children 10 and younger. Splash pads tend to be places of convenience and not really
  - 22 Mar 06 2020 0 a big destination. Waterworks to me is a destination.
  - 23 Mar 06 2020 0 no preference
  - 24 Mar 06 2020 0 None needed. Not what park is about.
  - 25 Mar 05 2020 0 no preference.
  - 26 Mar 05 2020 0 Close it
  - 27 Mar 05 2020 0 Unique Nature Play Area that focuses on water  
I would like to see the whole pool area simplified, more like Highland, where all families can
  - 28 Mar 05 2020 0 commune around a common pool with perhaps a splash area or kiddie area for littles
  - 29 Mar 05 2020 0 It doesn't concern me.
  - 30 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf

# Appendix - Online Survey 2

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

How many nature trails and learning stations should be available throughout the park (these would co-exist with existing trails)?

Answer Choices	Responses
1-2 trails with 6-10 learning stations	41.39% 125
3-5 trails with 12-20 learning stations	31.13% 94
6+ trails with 21+ learning stations	14.90% 45
Other (please specify)	12.58% 38
<b>Answered</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>11</b>



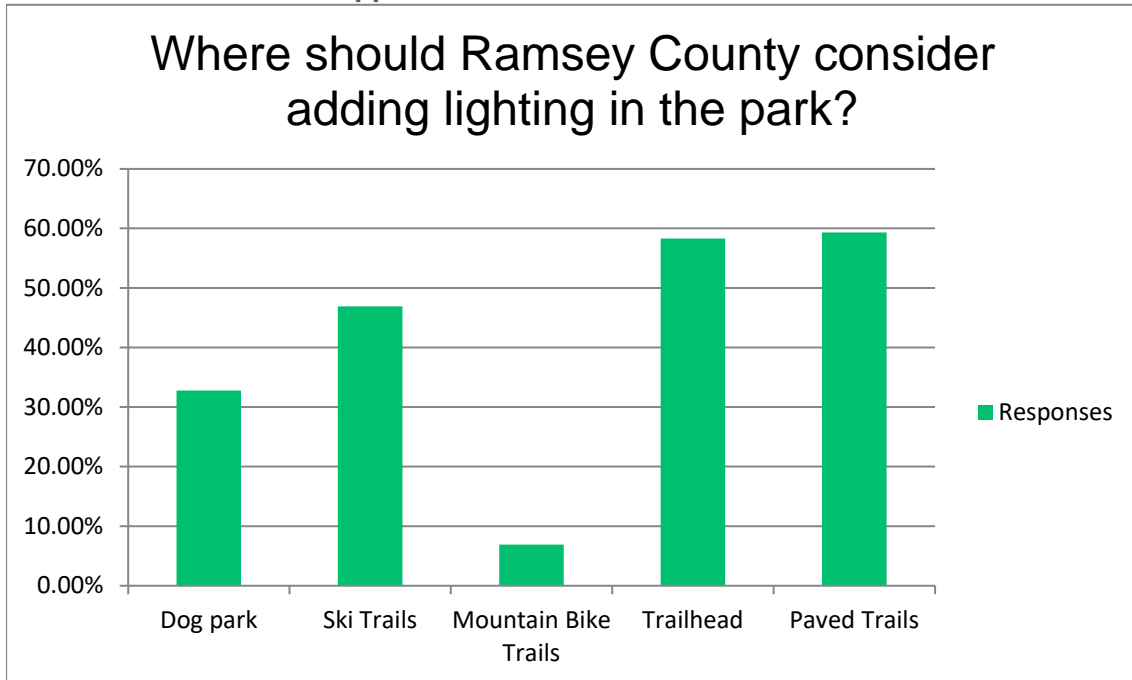
Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
		More trail (6+), but 21 seems like too many stations and very disruptive to the natural area.
1	Sep 12 2020 0	~10 would be better.
2	Jul 21 2020 03	limit trails as they fragment habitat and diminish the quality of the human visitor experience.
3	Jul 18 2020 07	Are learning stations needed? I'm all for trails though
4	Jul 17 2020 12	Locate near schools
5	Jul 17 2020 07	1-2 trails and 2 learning stations
6	Jun 27 2020 1	No preference
		None. There are nearby regional and state parks for these nature a Dan learning stations. We
7	Jun 15 2020 1	don't need to add to the cost of this park.
8	Jun 04 2020 0	One total
		Zero. In my considerable experience these so call interpretative trails and centers and stations are a complete waste of time, precious dollars, and accomplish nothing. There are
9	Apr 26 2020 0	not used, it would just increase trash in the park and mar the natural landscape.
10	Apr 22 2020 1	Trails are good, no other opinion.
11	Apr 13 2020 1	I'm don't see the need for learning stations, just nice trails.
12	Apr 12 2020 0	I can't find a background document that explains this activity
13	Apr 10 2020 1	6+ trails, 6-10 learning stations
		lots of trails - but are all "learning stations" an amphitheater type of thing? Couldn't there be
14	Apr 01 2020 0	some smaller learning stations. That term "learning station" is a bit ambiguous.
15	Apr 01 2020 1	How many learning stations are there now? Keep & maintain adding information to them
16	Apr 01 2020 0	More trails, less learning stations
17	Mar 29 2020 0	I think the existing trails are adequate
18	Mar 19 2020 0	I would say less learning stations and more trails
19	Mar 19 2020 0	trails maintained w/o learning stations
20	Mar 19 2020 0	Several. Could these be located close to schools, so they are used often?
		randomly asking people who don't know the placement or how the development of these will
21	Mar 19 2020 0	impact habitats.
22	Mar 16 2020 0	Disc golf
23	Mar 15 2020 0	None needed
24	Mar 08 2020 0	Vandalism targets.
25	Mar 08 2020 0	More trails, not stations
26	Mar 07 2020 0	none, increase Nature based programming
27	Mar 07 2020 0	None
28	Mar 07 2020 1	Disc golf 9-18 course
		of nature learning thing at Battle Creek one day, my preference is to keep it as green as
29	Mar 06 2020 0	possible and preserve trees.
		experience. Type of forest, big, wetland etc and why that's important. Also if you keep cutting
30	Mar 06 2020 0	the pathways so wide the reason for the signs won't be necessary.
31	Mar 05 2020 0	Not sure on the intended use for these.
		stations would be located. So, it could be the 6+ with 21+ learning stations if Pig's Eye is
32	Mar 05 2020 0	included.
		but could see adding learning stations. It would help to see an example - the benches in the
33	Mar 05 2020 0	photo are not representative of all options, are they?
34	Mar 05 2020 0	Uncertain
35	Mar 05 2020 0	OK near existing elementary schools as Phase I. See if other locations emerge over time.
		The learning centers would be used seldom at the same time, I feel; therefore no reason to
36	Mar 05 2020 0	build more than 3 to take advantage of different areas
37	Mar 05 2020 0	0
38	Mar 05 2020 1	Just add a disc golf course!



Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

Where should Ramsey County consider adding lighting in the park?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Dog park	32.76%	95
Ski Trails	46.90%	136
Mountain Bike Trails	6.90%	20
Trailhead	58.28%	169
Paved Trails	59.31%	172
<b>Answered</b>		<b>290</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>23</b>



## Appendix - Online Survey 2

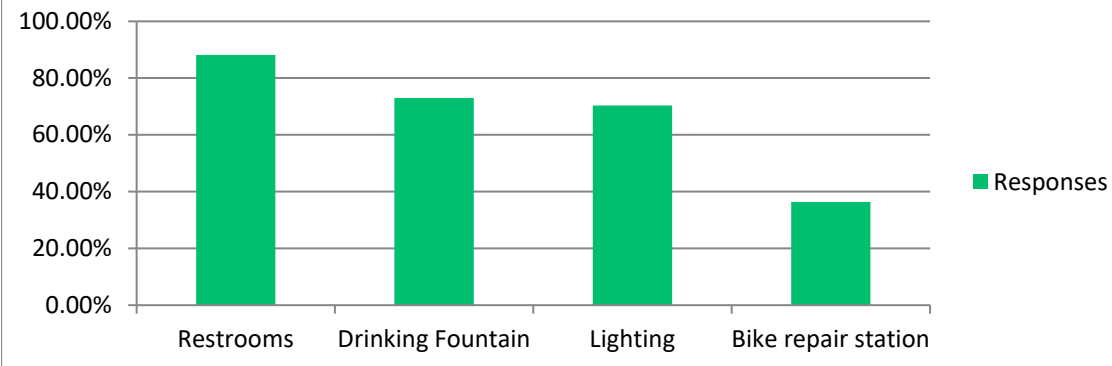
### Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

Trail heads are locations in parks that mark the beginning of walking and recreation pathways. What amenities should be standard at trail heads?

(Select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Restrooms	88.12%	267
Drinking Fountain	72.94%	221
Lighting	70.30%	213
Bike repair station	36.30%	110
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>303</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>10</b>

Trail heads are locations in parks that mark the beginning of walking and recreation pathways. What amenities should be standard at trail heads? (Select all that apply)



Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

**Aside from those listed in the above question, are there other amenities that should be standard at trailheads? Please explain**

Answered 146  
Skipped 167

Respondents	Response Date	Responses
1	Oct 17 2021	0 Safe crosswalks with enhanced signals to access trailheads, esp at Londin/ Lower Afton
2	Oct 24 2020	0 More trash cans.
3	Sep 18 2020	0 disc golf
4	Sep 12 2020	0 Trail maps
5	Jul 21 2020	0 minimize development and increase natural resource base
6	Jul 19 2020	0 Maps, Trail rules and user etiquette, emergency info
7	Jul 17 2020	0 Refreshments, included affordable and healthy food. Maybe food trucks or a small cafe like sea salt.
8	Jul 17 2020	1 Signage
9	Jul 17 2020	0 Sign with map.
10	Jul 16 2020	0 Explanation of the health benefits of being in the park
11	Jul 05 2020	0 TRASH CONTAINERS
12	Jun 28 2020	0 Adequate parking that is delineated, and not encroaching upon homeowners private property.
13	Jun 28 2020	0 bench
14	Jun 27 2020	1 A couple of benches
15	Jun 23 2020	1 Some kind of first aid/emergency station
16	Jun 15 2020	1 Trail map, maybe a bench
17	Jun 12 2020	0 Signage and maps
18	Jun 05 2020	0 Site map
19	Jun 04 2020	0 No. Also, this survey so far is biased. No option for none of the above.
20	Apr 28 2020	0 benches; maps Truthfully, outside of drinking fountains, I dont think ANY amenities should be added. Amenities are a
21	Apr 26 2020	0 double-edged sword. They cost \$\$ to install and they often bring about more ills than without them.
22	Apr 23 2020	1 Litter bins
23	Apr 22 2020	0 map
24	Apr 22 2020	1 Emergency button
25	Apr 22 2020	1 Indication of trail distance.
26	Apr 21 2020	0 Map. List of park rules and ordinances.
27	Apr 13 2020	1 Trailhead building for dressing, gathering (see lake elmo nordic center as a model)
28	Apr 13 2020	1 Police cameras
29	Apr 12 2020	0 waste and recycling. And, a big sign that says not to walk on ski trails.
30	Apr 11 2020	0 Man made snow for cross country skiing At least 1-2 larger trail head with a building could alleviate having ALL of the items listed above at
31	Apr 10 2020	1 each trail head.
32	Apr 10 2020	1 Trail Map
33	Apr 10 2020	0 N/A
34	Apr 09 2020	0 Maps
35	Apr 09 2020	0 A sign with a good trail map (including direction of travel if important)
36	Apr 09 2020	1 Map of trails warm building to change clothes and warm up if needed in winter/colder months. It would also add a
37	Apr 09 2020	1 gathering space for community connection
38	Apr 07 2020	0 Map
39	Apr 05 2020	0 Map of trails.
40	Apr 03 2020	0 Signs with any safety & hours instructions
41	Apr 02 2020	1 Benches
42	Apr 02 2020	1 N/A
43	Apr 01 2020	0 trash cans. water bottle filling station.
44	Apr 01 2020	0 information about accessibility
45	Apr 01 2020	1 Poop bags stations

## Appendix - Online Survey 2

- 46 Apr 01 2020 1 MAPS! MAPS! MAPS!!!! Map boards showing whole park, local area, and multi vs. user-specific trail areas. And emergency locator numbers  
A welcome sign designed by a local school or artist. Benches need to exist every so often for elderly and others who need to rest. A sign with clear instructions on how to call for help. A community notice board to post park and other events or a website to visit.
- 47 Apr 01 2020 1 Kiosk with trail maps and park info. Restrooms are great but how much maintenance cost does that add?
- 48 Apr 01 2020 0
- 49 Apr 01 2020 0 No
- 50 Mar 29 2020 0 Boot brush/signs on preventing the spread of invasive species
- 51 Mar 23 2020 0 map
- 52 Mar 23 2020 0 signage with a map of the park, garbage bins
- 53 Mar 22 2020 0 Maybe an emergency phone
- 54 Mar 21 2020 0 Map
- 55 Mar 19 2020 0 parking, maps, any rules specific to the location
- 56 Mar 19 2020 0 Maps
- 57 Mar 19 2020 0 Bottle filling station. Trash cans. Recycling bins. Map of the park/trails.
- 58 Mar 19 2020 0 Maps and trail distances
- 59 Mar 19 2020 0 wayfinding signage, info about trail length and route and amenities along the trail (if any)
- 60 Mar 19 2020 0 Trail Maps
- 61 Mar 19 2020 0 porta potties  
It seems obvious, but good signage showing where you are in the park. Cameras? Or emergency phones?
- 62 Mar 19 2020 0 Avoid lighting -- we have enough night lighting negatively impacting our critical wildlife, including birds and fireflies. The trailheads should be rustic and simple -- these are Nature-based parks and decisions need to be made through a natural resource lens. In your photos, look at the expansive lawns -- where are the native pollinator gardens?
- 63 Mar 19 2020 0
- 64 Mar 19 2020 0 Maybe a bike rack?
- 65 Mar 19 2020 0 Info boards. Maps
- 66 Mar 19 2020 1 Trail map that shows length of trails, if they are hiking vs. biking vs. skiing.
- 67 Mar 19 2020 1 Signage and orientation to the park.
- 68 Mar 19 2020 1 Parking
- 69 Mar 19 2020 1 n/a
- 70 Mar 19 2020 1 Maps, Events and Activities, Contact info, Waterbottle filling station
- 71 Mar 19 2020 1 None I can think of
- 72 Mar 19 2020 1 Don't know
- 73 Mar 19 2020 1 Map board might be helpful.
- 74 Mar 17 2020 0 community board
- 75 Mar 15 2020 0 Lighting is not needed, park closes at 10
- 76 Mar 15 2020 0 Maps of the area  
Maps of the different trails with distances so you can decide ahead of time which trail to take. Paper maps might be nice too. Maybe put them in a holder and keep them stocked from time to time  
SOLAR POWERED CHARGING STATIONS, BETTER MAPS THROUGHOUT TRAIL SYSTEMS,
- 77 Mar 13 2020 1
- 78 Mar 12 2020 1 DOG PARK
- 79 Mar 10 2020 0 Blue security station
- 80 Mar 09 2020 0 secure well lighted parking
- 81 Mar 09 2020 1 boot/tire cleaning stations for unpaved trails
- 82 Mar 08 2020 1 Security cameras
- 83 Mar 08 2020 0 Hope you're factoring in annual electrical and maintenance costs for these.
- 84 Mar 07 2020 0 minimize development and increase natural resource base
- 85 Mar 07 2020 0 Pleas keep the park free of unnecessary construction
- 86 Mar 07 2020 1 Disc golf 9-18 hole couse would be awesome
- 87 Mar 07 2020 0 Waste and recycling bins, as well as composting.
- 88 Mar 06 2020 0 A disc golf course at the trailhead would make wonderful use of the terrain and be a big draw.
- 89 Mar 06 2020 0 Trash and recycling!

- Large, specific maps detailing specific park rules. Few people read the rules of the park now. But, this winter season the department installed standalone signs stating "no hiking, no pets, no biking, no snowshoes on groomed ski trails." While they weren't 100 percent effective, they definitely reduced damage to the ski trails in 2020. I highly suggest other temporary, seasonal signage such as "hikers have right of way," "now open to hikers, bikers." "No off leash pets"
- 90 Mar 06 2020 0
- 91 Mar 06 2020 1 Seating areas sized appropriately for women so our feet don't dangle
- 92 Mar 06 2020 1 trash and recycling bins
- 93 Mar 06 2020 0 Maps  
Signage explaining the experience of the trail (history of area, changes over the years) and history of who was here first and importance of area. In other words; why is there a trail here and not to the right
- 94 Mar 06 2020 0 or left.
- 95 Mar 06 2020 0 Nah  
Trash cans for people walking dogs on leash can through away their trash most leave wherever or
- 96 Mar 06 2020 0 don't even pick up
- 97 Mar 05 2020 0 Garbage/recycling bins. Trail map
- 98 Mar 05 2020 0 Garbage, recycling bins. Trail map
- 99 Mar 05 2020 0 Cameras
- 100 Mar 05 2020 0 No
- 101 Mar 05 2020 0 a map, trash and recycling containers, bench or picnic table, park rules
- 102 Mar 05 2020 0 Signage and a map of the park with information
- 103 Mar 05 2020 0 Trash cans
- 104 Mar 05 2020 0 Trash cans
- 105 Mar 05 2020 0 Need trash and recycling containers
- 106 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf course
- 107 Mar 05 2020 0 No
- 108 Mar 05 2020 0 You should put disc golf courses in your parks.
- 109 Mar 05 2020 0 Benches to sit and rest
- 110 Mar 05 2020 0 N/A
- 111 Mar 05 2020 0 map of park with trails
- 112 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 113 Mar 05 2020 0 no
- 114 Mar 05 2020 0 Kiosks and benches
- 115 Mar 05 2020 0 sitting areas
- 116 Mar 05 2020 0 Bike parking
- 117 Mar 05 2020 0 Maps  
A decent parking lot - sorry as much as you all want people to ditch cars I can't bike to Battle Creek
- 118 Mar 05 2020 0 with two dogs.
- 119 Mar 05 2020 0 kiosk
- 120 Mar 05 2020 0 Map
- 121 Mar 05 2020 0 indoor changing area and ski waxing facility
- 122 Mar 05 2020 0 maps, with mileage instead of kilometers
- 123 Mar 05 2020 0 seating
- 124 Mar 05 2020 0 Map
- 125 Mar 05 2020 0 Trail maps
- 126 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf Course  
A Disc Golf Course would be great for the area. Starting at a trailhead and includes information on the
- 127 Mar 05 2020 0 sport and course.
- 128 Mar 05 2020 0 No
- 129 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf course
- 130 Mar 05 2020 0 Maps with symbols of where stuff is at
- 131 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf Course
- 132 Mar 05 2020 1 Information board about the park.
- 133 Mar 05 2020 1 Changing tables for kids in bathrooms
- 134 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf
- 135 Mar 05 2020 1 Discgolf course
- 136 Mar 05 2020 1 Add a disc golf course! Please and thank you!
- 137 Mar 05 2020 1 MAPS!
- 138 Mar 05 2020 1 Park map



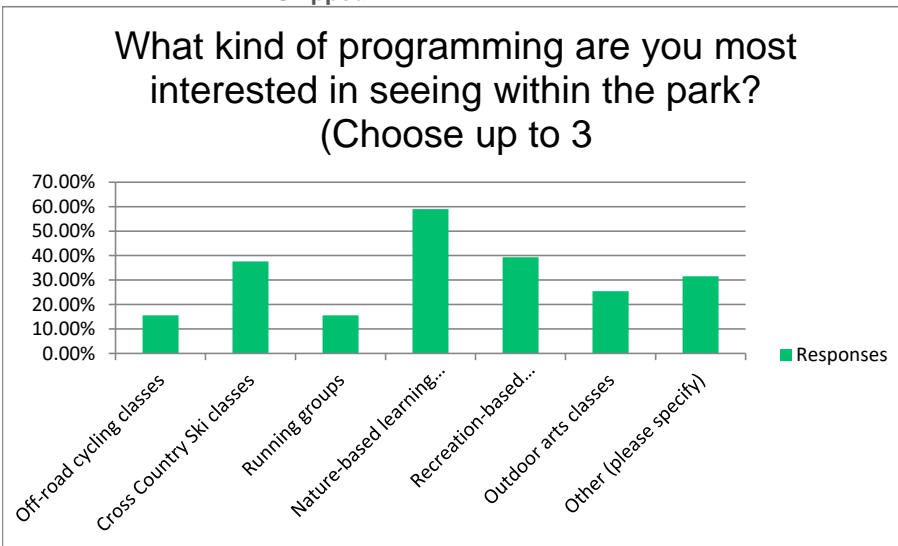
## Appendix - Online Survey 2

139 Mar 05 2020 1 General map of the location is always good  
140 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc Golf Course!  
141 Mar 05 2020 1 A disc golf course  
142 Mar 05 2020 1 i would like to see a disc golf course at Battle Creek  
143 Mar 05 2020 1 recycling and trash/signage  
144 Mar 03 2020 0 bike racks and those public rental bikes  
145 Jan 31 2020 0 benches  
146 Jan 30 2020 0 NA

Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

What kind of programming are you most interested in seeing within the park? (Choose up to 3

Answer Choices	Responses
Off-road cycling classes	46
classes	111
Running groups	46
Nature-based learning classes (birding, plant identification, etc.)	174
Recreation-based classes (road cycling, geocaching, hiking, etc.)	116
Outdoor arts classes	75
Other (please specify)	93
<b>Answered</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>18</b>



Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Sep 18 2020 0	disc golf classes and tournaments
2	Jul 21 2020 03	The basis for the park is Nature--please don't add more mtb trails.
3	Jul 17 2020 04	Things for kids and multiple generations
4	Jul 17 2020 07	Nothing. Parks are for walking, biking, skiing. That is good enough. Less is more.
5	Jul 16 2020 06	Guided nature walks for mental and physical health
6	Jul 16 2020 04	snowmaking
7	Jul 05 2020 08	Pedestrian only days or hours I'm not interested in programming. All of the activities like skiing and biking I enjoy, but I'm not interested in doing this in group settings, or classes. Engaging in these activities is in escape, I prefer to be out there alone. Don't try to institutionalize it too
8	Jun 28 2020 0	much!
9	Jun 16 2020 0	Rollerski
10	Jun 07 2020 1	Music/movies in the park
11	Jun 05 2020 0	The Battle Creek parks should be returned to nature to a great extent. The park with the little hill has suffered for years from excessive mountain bike use causing top soil erosion and deep furrows caused by bikes and made worse by rain.
12	Jun 04 2020 0	No interest in any None of the above. No organized functions. Just nature! Trees and meadows and
13	Apr 26 2020 0	shrubbery and flora and fauna and trails. That's all.
14	Apr 13 2020 1	I don't see a need for classes unless they're self-supported.

## Appendix - Online Survey 2

- 15 Apr 03 2020 0 Environmental awareness
- 16 Apr 02 2020 0 Resurface path in South half of the park.
- 17 Apr 02 2020 1: Snowshoeing  
Maintain park exclusively & allow private lessons on whatever people design them
- 18 Apr 01 2020 1 thru the county news  
Skills classes that double park improvement volunteering. Such as how to build a
- 19 Apr 01 2020 1 wooden fence, remove buckthorn, planting native rain gardens etc.  
  
rentals or free equipment to help newbies get started. Programming designed in coordination with a specific youth serving organization or adult day care centers,
- 20 Apr 01 2020 1 inviting groups instead of just individuals. Opportunities for volunteering.
- 21 Apr 01 2020 0 Gearded for kids
- 22 Mar 29 2020 0 Volunteer restoration events or opportunities for individuals
- 23 Mar 20 2020 0 Disc golf
- 24 Mar 20 2020 1 snowmaking!
- 25 Mar 19 2020 0 snow making for x-cty ski areas
- 26 Mar 19 2020 0 Rowing, on the river
- 27 Mar 19 2020 0 Work with Maplewood Nature Center to provide these classes and services.  
  
Only low-impact recreation and education opportunities. Residents are fortunate to have an abundance of locations for high-impact recreation such as road and off-road cycling. In addition, if the built environment increases how will the increased annual
- 28 Mar 19 2020 0 fees for maintenance and operations be funded?
- 29 Mar 19 2020 0 I think all of those sound great! I'd pick all of them if I could.
- 30 Mar 19 2020 1 nordic walking
- 31 Mar 19 2020 1 Hunting recruitment - learning to hunt/be outdoors.
- 32 Mar 17 2020 0 options for food access for young people
- 33 Mar 10 2020 0 None
- 34 Mar 08 2020 0 Stop finding new ways to spend tax dollars
- 35 Mar 07 2020 1 Disc golf
- 36 Mar 06 2020 0 Disc Golf  
There's already cross country ski classes and recreation based classes there thanks to Endurance United . To my knowledge, there's not a dedicated running group there. I would love if the area had a more dedicate art space for classes and nature learning
- 37 Mar 06 2020 0 classes for young people during the summer.
- 38 Mar 06 2020 1 golf
- 39 Mar 06 2020 0 more dog park activities and resources
- 40 Mar 06 2020 0 Disc Golf  
  
This park should be for the beauty of nature not for biking on common areas. What is the objective of the park. I thought it was to preserve the history of the area and green
- 41 Mar 06 2020 0 space for native wildlife. There are other parks to have other activities in.
- 42 Mar 06 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 43 Mar 06 2020 0 Yoga
- 44 Mar 06 2020 1 Disc Golf
- 45 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 46 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 47 Mar 05 2020 0 Volunteer restoration - while learning native and invasive plants
- 48 Mar 05 2020 0 Skateboard park and lessons
- 49 Mar 05 2020 0 Frisbee sports
- 50 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf
- 51 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf
- 52 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf
- 53 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf
- 54 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 55 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf

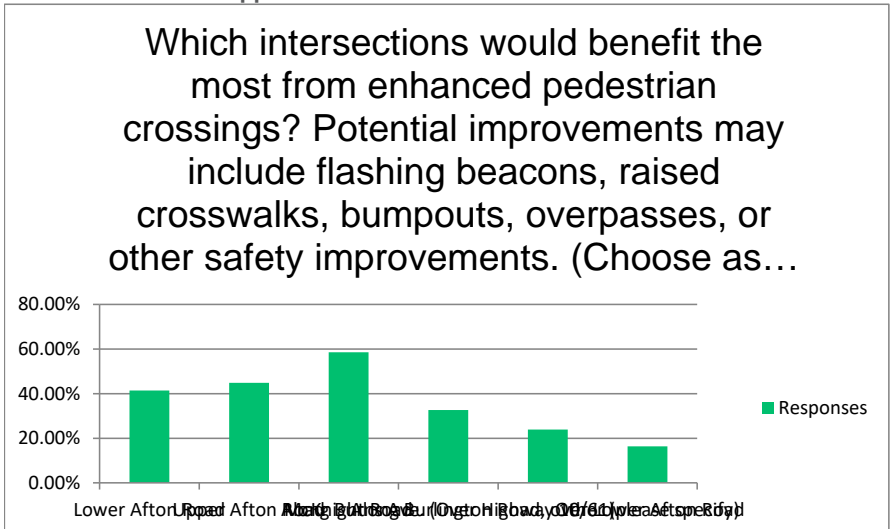
- I always thought Battle Creek would make a great spot to add a Championship Level Disc Golf course. I proposed, designed, and built the 21 hole course in Coon Rapids
- 56 Mar 05 2020 0 and I would be happy to research and assist if needed.
- 57 Mar 05 2020 0 Continue golf program at The Ponds at Battle Creek
- 58 Mar 05 2020 0 Dog training in the park
- 59 Mar 05 2020 0 walking groups for beginner, intermediate and advanced
- 60 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf
- 61 Mar 05 2020 0 I like it as wild as possible, not full of groups
- 62 Mar 05 2020 0 current golf course should be retained
- 63 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf!
- 64 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf tournaments
- 65 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf course
- 66 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf Course
- More recreation based classes can include Disc Golf and other sports that are within
- 67 Mar 05 2020 0 the park.
- 68 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf course (pay-to-play)
- 69 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf classes
- 70 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf!
- 71 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf classes!
- 72 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc golf
- 73 Mar 05 2020 0 Disc Golf League
- 74 Mar 05 2020 0 disc golf course
- 75 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf course.
- 76 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf
- 77 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf classes and leagues
- 78 Mar 05 2020 1 Discgolf
- 79 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf course
- 80 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf
- 81 Mar 05 2020 1 A disc golf course please and thank you!!!
- 82 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc Golf
- 83 Mar 05 2020 1 DISC GOLF!!
- 84 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf!
- 85 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf
- 86 Mar 05 2020 1 I think disc golf would be a great addition to the park
- 87 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc Golf!
- 88 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc Golf instruction for kids
- 89 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf classes and intro
- 90 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc Golf Course
- 91 Mar 05 2020 1 Disc golf course
- 92 Mar 05 2020 1 disc golf
- 93 Jan 30 2020 0 NONE

# Appendix - Online Survey 2

## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

**Which intersections would benefit the most from enhanced pedestrian crossings? Potential improvements may include flashing beacons, raised crosswalks, bumpouts, overpasses, or other safety improvements. (Choose as many options as you wish)**

Answer Choices	Responses
Lower Afton Road	41.44% 109
Upper Afton Road	44.87% 118
McKnight Road	58.56% 154
Along Burns Ave. (Over Highway 10/61)	32.70% 86
Along Burlington Road, over Lower Afton Road	23.95% 63
Other (please specify)	16.35% 43
<b>Answered</b>	<b>263</b>
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>50</b>



Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Jul 17 2020 04	Make user safety a top priority. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. There is no problem except for excessive erosion due to trails and
2	Jul 17 2020 07	stupid park planners chopping down trees on slopes.
3	Jul 16 2020 06	Keep lighting LOW and on the ground. Stop light pollution.
4	Jun 27 2020 1	no opinion
5	Jun 23 2020 1	Burlington Road does not intersect with Lower Afton Road. An overpass for Lower Afton Road to cross from one side to the other would be a huge safety improvement.
6	Jun 23 2020 0	There should be dividing lines on the paved trails. I live in the neighborhood between mcknight and century, people walk down the freeway ramp to get to the park, please put in a path along the ramp or something that cuts through the woods
7	Jun 22 2020 0	from the neighborhood. its so dangerous right now no personal opinion here because crossings are not a factor in my use ... but I can imagine value
8	Jun 17 2020 1	for the busier roads
9	Jun 16 2020 0	BATTLE CREEK ROAD - Bridge



- Along point Douglas road and the Battle Creek entrance. Point Douglas road is in great need of repair for safety of cyclist and pedestrians. Mcknight road that intersects at Lower Afton, Upper Afton, and Burns needs enhanced safety features for pedestrians and cyclists. I agree Burns Avenue that crosses over Hwy 61 needs improved attention for pedestrian and cyclists that cross that intersection.
- 10 Jun 15 2020 1 Please add access from the neighborhood between McKnight and century off. A path somewhere would help make it safer so people do not walk down the freeway on ramp like they
- 11 Jun 12 2020 0 do now
- 12 Jun 05 2020 0 There is no need for further enhancements other than typical crosswalks
- 13 Apr 26 2020 0 None. I think the existing crossing arrangements are sufficient.
- 14 Apr 22 2020 1 No opinion.
- 15 Apr 21 2020 0 Battle Creek Road between the ski loops in Battle Creek West and Ski Games.
- 16 Apr 13 2020 1 Point Douglas road for xc skiing.
- 17 Apr 13 2020 1 Not sure. Lower Afton Rd at Totem Rd?  
Something on Battle Creek road between the two different trails and a designated parking area
- 18 Apr 11 2020 0 on street
- 19 Apr 09 2020 0 Not sure
- 20 Apr 09 2020 1 Trail crossing along Battle Creek Road would allow connection of trail system
- 21 Apr 01 2020 0 on't know enough to answer
- 22 Apr 01 2020 0 HWY 94 at McKnight and Hudson BLVD
- 23 Mar 20 2020 0 I don't know it well enough to say
- 24 Mar 20 2020 1 It's hard to navigate Burns/61 walking East because of the traffic turn lane from 61.
- 25 Mar 19 2020 0 no opinion
- 26 Mar 19 2020 1 I do not have an opinion on this
- 27 Mar 09 2020 0 no opinion
- 28 Mar 07 2020 0 minimize light pollution with any decision.
- 29 Mar 06 2020 0 H  
Crossing the road in winter while cross country skiing between Battle Creek area to what they call "Ski Games" along Battle Creek Road can be a little concerning. That whole area could use some attention. There's often vehicles parked along Battle Creek there. The sightlines aren't great and vehicles naturally travel faster in the area. People often take their skis off to walk across the road, so their agility to move out of the way of a vehicle isn't great. There's no
- 30 Mar 06 2020 0 crosswalk or pedestrian warning signs.
- 31 Mar 06 2020 1 don't know - planners should be able to figure this out
- 32 Mar 05 2020 0 61 and Burns is a safety priority
- 33 Mar 05 2020 0 Definitely Lower Afton Road - at Burlington Rd - with steps going down to the path
- 34 Mar 05 2020 0 All of them. People don't follow posted speeds and few stop.
- 35 Mar 05 2020 0 Ruth and north park drive
- 36 Mar 05 2020 0 Uncertain
- 37 Mar 05 2020 0 no opinion
- 38 Mar 05 2020 0 Not sure
- 39 Mar 05 2020 0 Unsure
- 40 Mar 05 2020 0 The cross walk at Londin Road needs flashing beacons
- 41 Mar 05 2020 1 Not sure
- 42 Mar 05 2020 1 I don't see a need for these  
crossing the street that runs thru the two different parts of battle creek park and a overpass on upper afton parallel to mcknight and an overpass from mcknight village apartments across the
- 43 Mar 03 2020 0 street into the park

## Appendix - Online Survey 2

### Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

#### Zip Code (Optional)

Answered 220

Skipped 93

Respondents	Response Date	Responses
1	Oct 17 2021 0:55119	
2	Oct 24 2020 0:55119	
3	Sep 18 2020 055042	
4	Sep 12 2020 055106	
5	Sep 09 2020 055108	
6	Jul 27 2020 0455101	
7	Jul 24 2020 0955116	
8	Jul 23 2020 0855119	
9	Jul 21 2020 0355104	
10	Jul 19 2020 0955104	
11	Jul 18 2020 0755106	
12	Jul 17 2020 0455102	
13	Jul 17 2020 1255119	
14	Jul 17 2020 07	None of your business. Regular user.
15	Jul 16 2020 0655106	
16	Jul 16 2020 0655119	
17	Jul 16 2020 0655105	
18	Jul 06 2020 1055119	
19	Jul 05 2020 0855119	
20	Jun 28 2020 055119	
21	Jun 28 2020 055119	
22	Jun 27 2020 055119	
23	Jun 27 2020 155119	
24	Jun 26 2020 155119	
25	Jun 26 2020 155119	
26	Jun 26 2020 155119	
27	Jun 26 2020 155119	
28	Jun 23 2020 155119	
29	Jun 22 2020 055119	
30	Jun 21 2020 055119	
31	Jun 17 2020 155113	
32	Jun 16 2020 055106	
33	Jun 15 2020 155119	
34	Jun 13 2020 155119	
35	Jun 12 2020 055119	
36	Jun 12 2020 155119	
37	Jun 05 2020 055125	
38	Jun 04 2020 055106	
39	Jun 01 2020 055119	
40	May 30 2020 055119	
41	May 29 2020 055119	
42	May 18 2020 055119	
43	May 17 2020 155104	
44	Apr 28 2020 0:55119	
45	Apr 27 2020 0:55106	
46	Apr 27 2020 0:55116	
47	Apr 27 2020 0:55128	
48	Apr 26 2020 0:55119	
49	Apr 22 2020 0:55110	
50	Apr 22 2020 1:55102	
51	Apr 22 2020 155104	
52	Apr 21 2020 0:55130	
53	Apr 18 2020 0:55105	
54	Apr 14 2020 0:55103	
55	Apr 13 2020 155129	
56	Apr 13 2020 155104	
57	Apr 12 2020 0:55108	
58	Apr 12 2020 0:55108	
59	Apr 11 2020 0:55118	
60	Apr 10 2020 1:55082	
61	Apr 10 2020 1:55117	
62	Apr 10 2020 0:55116	
63	Apr 09 2020 0:55113	
64	Apr 09 2020 0:55016	
65	Apr 09 2020 0:55104	
66	Apr 09 2020 055422	
67	Apr 09 2020 155127	
68	Apr 09 2020 155057	
69	Apr 09 2020 1:55129	
70	Apr 09 2020 0:55117	
71	Apr 05 2020 0:55119	
72	Apr 04 2020 0:55106	
73	Apr 03 2020 0:55109	
74	Apr 02 2020 0:55119	
75	Apr 02 2020 055106	
76	Apr 02 2020 1:55106	
77	Apr 02 2020 155119	
78	Apr 02 2020 1:55106	
79	Apr 02 2020 0:55119	
80	Apr 01 2020 0:55119	
81	Apr 01 2020 055104	
82	Apr 01 2020 1:55104	

83 Apr 01 2020 1 55119  
 84 Apr 01 2020 1 55107  
 85 Apr 01 2020 1 55106  
 86 Apr 01 2020 0 55105  
 87 Apr 01 2020 0 55119  
 88 Apr 01 2020 0 55119  
 89 Apr 01 2020 0 55119  
 90 Mar 31 2020 1 55119  
 91 Mar 30 2020 0 55102  
 92 Mar 29 2020 0 55102  
 93 Mar 23 2020 0 55119  
 94 Mar 23 2020 0 55106  
 95 Mar 21 2020 0 55101  
 96 Mar 20 2020 0 55105  
 97 Mar 20 2020 0 55102  
 98 Mar 20 2020 1 55108  
 99 Mar 20 2020 1 55106  
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 101 Mar 19 2020 0 55130  
 102 Mar 19 2020 0 55117  
 103 Mar 19 2020 0 55106  
 104 Mar 19 2020 0 55116  
 105 Mar 19 2020 0 55102  
 106 Mar 19 2020 0 55117  
 107 Mar 19 2020 0 55101  
 108 Mar 19 2020 0 55106  
 109 Mar 19 2020 0 55109  
 110 Mar 19 2020 0 55119  
 111 Mar 19 2020 0 55117  
 112 Mar 19 2020 0 55119  
 113 Mar 19 2020 0 55108  
 114 Mar 19 2020 0 55119  
 115 Mar 19 2020 0 55116  
 116 Mar 19 2020 0 55105  
 117 Mar 19 2020 1 55119  
 118 Mar 19 2020 1 55102  
 119 Mar 19 2020 1 55116  
 120 Mar 19 2020 1 55102  
 121 Mar 19 2020 1 55119  
 122 Mar 19 2020 1 55105  
 123 Mar 19 2020 1 55105  
 124 Mar 19 2020 1 55102  
 125 Mar 19 2020 1 55119  
 126 Mar 17 2020 0 55119  
 127 Mar 15 2020 0 55119

128 Mar 15 2020 0 55119  
 129 Mar 15 2020 0 55119  
 130 Mar 13 2020 1 55119  
 131 Mar 12 2020 1 55114  
 132 Mar 11 2020 0 55119  
 133 Mar 11 2020 0 55417  
 134 Mar 09 2020 0 55104  
 135 Mar 09 2020 0 55038  
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 138 Mar 08 2020 1 55119  
 139 Mar 08 2020 0 55109  
 140 Mar 08 2020 0 55119  
 141 Mar 08 2020 1 55119  
 142 Mar 07 2020 0 55104  
 143 Mar 07 2020 0 55106  
 144 Mar 07 2020 1 55016  
 145 Mar 07 2020 1 55119  
 146 Mar 07 2020 0 55119  
 147 Mar 06 2020 1 55119  
 148 Mar 06 2020 0 55127  
 149 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
 150 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
 151 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
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 153 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
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 159 Mar 06 2020 0 55117  
 160 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
 161 Mar 06 2020 0 55119  
 162 Mar 05 2020 1 55109  
 163 Mar 05 2020 0 55119  
 164 Mar 05 2020 0 55119  
 165 Mar 05 2020 0 55119  
 166 Mar 05 2020 0 55102  
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 170 Mar 05 2020 0 55119  
 171 Mar 05 2020 0 55119  
 172 Mar 05 2020 0 55119

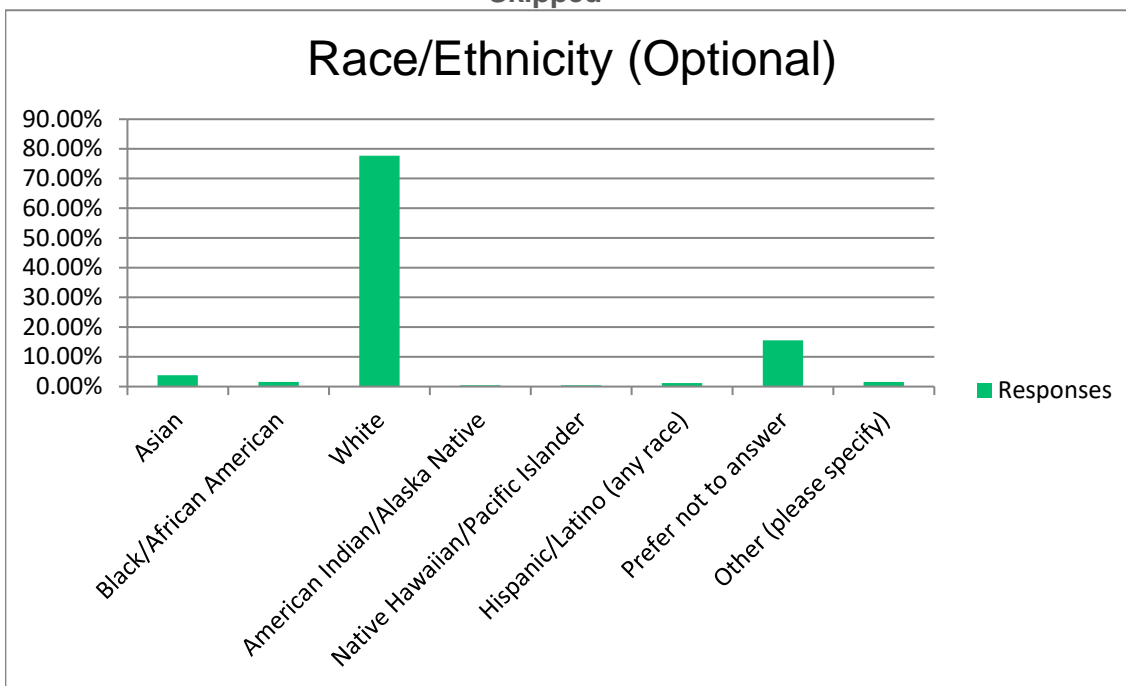
## Appendix - Online Survey 2

173	Mar 05 2020 0 55119	218	Mar 03 2020 0 55119
174	Mar 05 2020 0 55101	219	Jan 31 2020 0 55120
175	Mar 05 2020 0 55101	220	Jan 30 2020 0 NA
176	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
177	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
178	Mar 05 2020 0 55033		
179	Mar 05 2020 0 55396		
180	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
181	Mar 05 2020 0 55016		
182	Mar 05 2020 0 55433		
183	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
184	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
185	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
186	Mar 05 2020 0 55105		
187	Mar 05 2020 0 55113		
188	Mar 05 2020 0 55116		
189	Mar 05 2020 0 55117		
190	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
191	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
192	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
193	Mar 05 2020 0 55102		
194	Mar 05 2020 0 na		
195	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
196	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
197	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
198	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
199	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
200	Mar 05 2020 0 55119		
201	Mar 05 2020 0 55117		
202	Mar 05 2020 0 55406		
203	Mar 05 2020 0 55112		
204	Mar 05 2020 0 55204		
205	Mar 05 2020 0 55106		
206	Mar 05 2020 0 55016		
207	Mar 05 2020 0 55420		
208	Mar 05 2020 0 55125		
209	Mar 05 2020 1 55146		
210	Mar 05 2020 1 55102		
211	Mar 05 2020 1 55109		
212	Mar 05 2020 1 55102		
213	Mar 05 2020 1 55113		
214	Mar 05 2020 1 55119		
215	Mar 05 2020 1 55337		
216	Mar 05 2020 1 55119		
217	Mar 05 2020 1 55119		

### Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

#### Race/Ethnicity (Optional)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Asian	3.79%	10
Black/African American	1.52%	4
White	77.65%	205
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.38%	1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.38%	1
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	1.14%	3
Prefer not to answer	15.53%	41
Other (please specify)	1.52%	4
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>264</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>49</b>



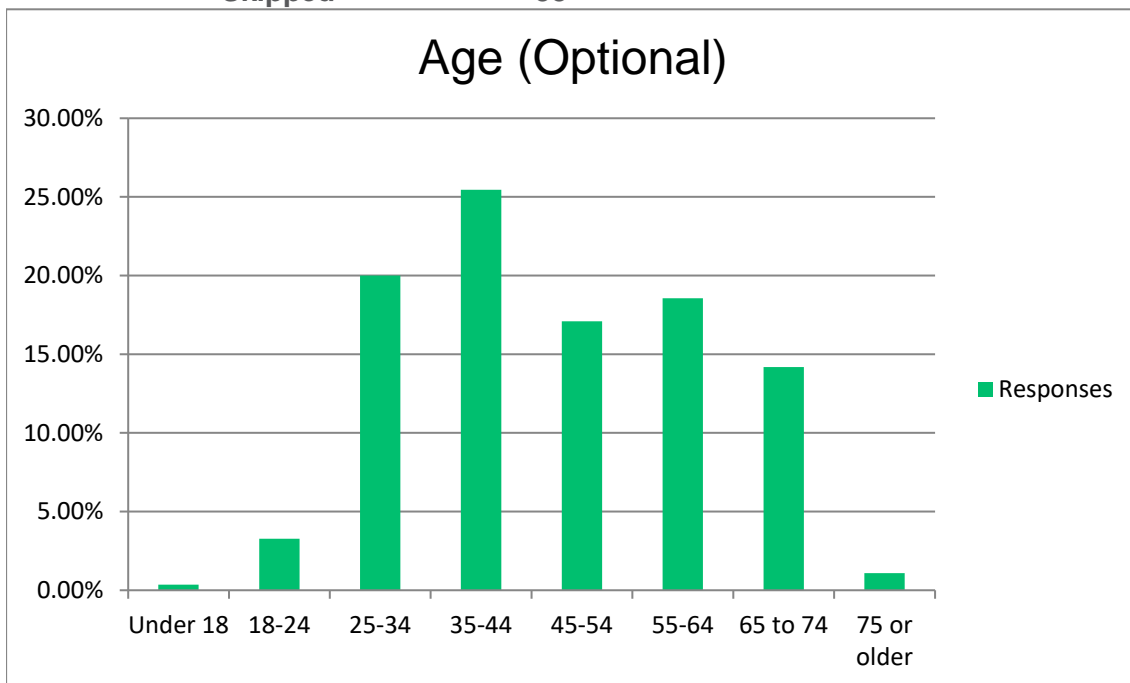
Respondents	Response Date	Other (please specify)
		None of your damned business. Obsession with race is divisive and rampant in todays world in which race obsessed people burn down and loot businesses in a misguided attempt to
	1 Jul 17 2020 07	make the world a better place.
	2 Mar 15 2020 0	human
	3 Mar 07 2020 1	European-American
	4 Mar 05 2020 0	Gaelic



## Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Survey #2

### Age (Optional)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.36%	1
18-24	3.27%	9
25-34	20.00%	55
35-44	25.45%	70
45-54	17.09%	47
55-64	18.55%	51
65 to 74	14.18%	39
75 or older	1.09%	3
<b>Answered</b>		<b>275</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>38</b>





# Overall Project Concept Comments

Please provide any comments you have on this concept	Rate the current Concept
We can see your concept for making Battle Creek Park into a world class park. We like it. Think big! Thanks, a Battle Creek neighborhood family for over a decade	3
Keep up the good work!	5
Please build a disc golf course. Perfect park for a course and much needed in St. Paul.	3
The regional trail corridor search is great. Access across the railroad to Pig's Eye would be great - good luck with that! Overall, the plan looks amazing. Hope it also includes resource protection - invasive removal, etc.	4
This is an ambitious plan and I think most of it should be put on the back burner given COVID-19. My main opinion is that this park is not going to be improved significantly by building it up.	2
Good concept. Like snowmaking cross country ski trails.	5
As a new resident in the Battle Creek neighborhood, I am very excited about the prospect of snowmaking, additional single track, and new paved trails linking different sections of the park. Please go through with these improvements!!	4
I never new Pig's Eye Lake was so close to Battle Creek. Neat if you're able to connect all of these park areas together.	5
not enough info here to comment on.	3
Build all the trails!	3
More Downhill bike trails!!!	1
It's not clear how this connection between areas would work.	5
Disc golf course! There's so much room behind Carver Elementary.	3
Unless this is a overpass underpass situation this is a terribly unsafe crossing over 61	2
Please include snowmaking to allow better winter use.	4
Love the attention to one of the best park systems in the Twin Cities.	1
I am not sure that the traffic to Battle creek justifies the amount of building and amenities planed. Right now the trails are pretty clear and I never see the parking lots full.	3
Very excited about the concept. Wish there was a safe way to access the proposed trails from most south Maplewood neighborhoods though. Linwood, Hollywood, McKnight are all not safe to take kids on bikes	3
If you are considering the connections to Fish Creek and Pig Eye, why are you NOT considering the connection to The Ponds at Battle Creek? This a community asset & part of the Battle Creek park & community. Closing the course is a LOSS to the area!!!!	5
I am concerned about impact on property taxes. Please keep things reasonable. We have had large increases in recent years. Please be careful about scope creep - do not add non-Battle Creek properties to plan. They can have their own plans.	5
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	5
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	3
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	3
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	3
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	3
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	3
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	2
Access, opportunities for different abilities using trails in a meaningful way. Better access Battle Creek Road-consider repurposing the road. Do work that has mose immediate need.	2

## Overall Project Concept Comments

Please have the keys on all maps the same for proposed and existing trails. One has the solid line as existing and others have the solid line as proposed. It gets confusing .... Also, BTT land is county land -- include that in county park land.	3
More access sounds good	3
The status of snow-making ability and the construction (renovation) of a trail-use programming facility should be incorporated in the plan. The principal uses of the trails should be actively supported.	5
This is not a substitute for a public hearing. A crossing over Hwy 61 would be wonderful but probably too costly. Use Childs Rd/Sewage plant instead	5
wider paved trails for walking and biking	4
I like the circular nature of the concept. A connection btw Pigs Eye and Battle Creek over (or under) Hwy 61 is a fantastic idea.	5
I appreciate the "undeveloped" vibe of Lower Battle Creek Park. I x/c ski but also like winter hiking and snowshoeing so I hope that distinct winter hiking/snowshoe trails are developed which limits the trampling of the x/c ski trails.	1
I prefer words to maps these maps are confusing and uninformative Pt Douglas Road and the bike trail to downtown are two great access points that ought to be built up and incorporated in the plan - that would make the park much easier to access for city residents	5
	3
	4
	4
	5
	4
	1
	3
	4

# Fish Creek Concept Comments

Please provide any comments you have on this concept	Rate the current Concept
New property offers opportunities for new uses; disc golf would be an excellent addition.	5
None at the moment.	5
I had no idea this area existed! Makes sense to incorporate. Must visit to have better idea of the opportunity there.	3
This area is quite separate from the main area of Battle Creek - doesn't make sense to add in my mind.	1
Would like to see single track mountain bike trails in this area	4
I've always driven by this on 494 but never stopped to take a look at what nature center it was. I'm looking forward to checking out Fish Creek.	5
	3
	3
nice addition	3
	3
Would like to see connecting trail in NE part of part to make big loop Build all the trail!	4
	5
	5
Again, where are you proclaiming demand for such?	2
There is a lot of wild space in Fish Creek that can be tamed, but please don't domesticate it!!! More trails into the forested parts would be lovely - right now a 35-minute walk gets one pretty much arround the whole space.	4
Nice, I love this park and I love how natural and peaceful it is!	5
	5
Not familiar with this area of the park system. The expansion should help with awareness.	4
I didn't even know this existed until now. Would need to do a lot of advertising if these imporvedment went through	3
	5
We need safe access to the park for bikes and pedestrians, but very excited about the park. Kids already love the new paved trails	4
	3
	3
I love the Fish Creek area. I think it is serious project 'scope creep' to add it to Battle Creek Master Plan. Fish Creek is not Battle Creek at all. It is a real stretch to consider this part of Battle Creek plan.	1
	3
More access for community in this area is a positive. All looks good, but be sure there is a plan to groom on a regular basis for ski areas.	3
Why aren't the ski trails hiking trails in the summer? What about interpretive signs? Use all opportunities to educate people about the flora/fauna/history of the area.	3
Ski trails should only be added if winter hikers and pets have access to them year-round, expansion into Maplewood sounds great though	3
I don't ski but I like walking through deep woods with my dogs in winter time--there should be less ski trails and more trails for walkers, more TRAILS, not paved paths	1
More park land = good	5
	5
I am in favor of moderate increases in amenities to make parks more pleasant to use with low environmental impacts. Please continue expanding natural spaces whenever possible.	5
Including Fish Creek is a great idea! Adding trails and access to lower Fish Creek and connecting with upper Fish Creek will be very positive	5
Is there a traffic study on the traffic impact for Fish Creek plans?	3
Although I like the current seclusion of Fish Creek, I am excited to see how the Maplewood aquisitions could add to the park.	3



## Fish Creek Concept Comments

I can't picture where this is.	3
Like the idea of more trails and access points (Dorland, and Pt Douglas). Not sure about playgrounds, I like the idea of more of a nature preserve with trails.	4
	3
Great opportunity to create a paved trail system that would be utilized by bikers and rollerskiers. This would become the primary locations for the multiple groups who Rollerski and alleviate the mixed use at BC Water Park trails, and BC East trails	3
Hope the additional property purchase can be accomplished and added to the natural area!	5
Pt Douglas Road is a great bike connector between downtown and the Mississippi River Trail so these should be linked to the park	3
	3

# Appendix - Virtual Design Workshop 2

## Pigs Eye Concept Comments

Please provide any comments you have on this concept	What access points should be given priority/implemented first?	Should Battle Creek Road be closed so that the winter recreation area and Battle Creek West may be linked?	Rate the current Concept
It's great to provide access to this beautiful site. Please consider how to partner with Met Council to educate about wastewater treatment and water quality history of the area.			5
It would be lovely to have a canoe/kayak launch.			3
Where is the heron / egret / eagle rookery? We should in no way endanger that area. Paved trail - is this in the floodplain? Paving doesn't hold if it is...			3
Like the idea of boardwalk to make use of the lake			3
Seems mighty close to the waste water treatment plant. Any worries about security with any added traffic?			4
an interesting idea. It would nice if this area had connections to the rest of the park			3
Do you have a way to protect the wildlife from disturbance if you make it easy for humans to enter the west side of Pig's Eye? I thought this was nesting area for birds in the spring.			3
Trail!			3
Curious about where a trailhead/canoe/kayak launch would go as this area is subject to high waters a few times a year			5
What are the cleanup costs to protect health of recreational use of this area? It's contaminated.			3
Please connect this to existing battle creek trails near Point Douglas Rd. I currently don't use this area of the park because there is little to no signage showing what is parkland and what is private property			1
I've lived on Springside Dr since 2001 and always longed for access to Pig's Eye, so I'm just thrilled that anything might be done here!			3
Let's try to screen the train pollution. Both noise, and visual.			5
I LOVE this idea. The canoe/Kayak launch is prefect. Making efforts for the water to be motor boat free would be an added benefit for use non motor boat users.			5
Concept looks great, super clunky website.			3
Please improve archery range			5
			5
			5
			3
			3

# Pigs Eye Concept Comments

Good	3
What about adding some animals blinds for wildlife viewing? Will there be a floating boardwalk to access the water? Need boat access at the old boat put-in at the end of Red Rock Road. Need interpretive signs. Educate people any chance you have!	3
Please keep these areas as natural as possible. Thank you.	3
Fantastic!!!	5
Canoe access and boardwalk both sound amazing, would use them both frequently	5
Pigs eye lake needs a lot of clean up. A few areas near off the MRT are occupied by homeless people, and the water is disgusting thanks to the nearby trains, recycling/trash spot, and whatever else. Anything to clean up this area is 100/100	5
It's fine but please include all weather paths through the open Pigs Eye Park area and also some access from 61	4
You didn't mention the dumping of 400,000 cubic yard of fill in Pig's Eye. If you're going to hide things from the public, then this isn't really public feedback, it's feedback on what you want us to see. It's deception.	1
Access from Warner Rd is a great idea. As long as the metal recycling plant continues on Red Rock Rd, do not use Red Rock Rd. I have had many tires damaged on Red Rock due to all the nails and screws that fall from the recycling trucks	5
Not sure if this is too late - I'm a Ramsey County resident and would like a public meeting on this. I'm especially concerned about dumping of over 400,000 cubic yards of dredge spoils into Pig's Eye Lake by the Corps of Engineers. - Aaron Kerr	3
I question the building of islands in the lake. I understand they will be made from dredging (likely polluted) from the Mississippi. Are these being built for habitat? Will there be viewing stations for the rookery?	2
Looks awesome!	5
Nice. Good idea for increased access to river.	5
Love the idea for access to Pigs Eye! It would be nice if there was a connection from the fish hatchery trail.	5
Long overdue access to Pig's Eye! (But I do not see from map how it would connect to existing roads)	4
Love the islands. Some concerns about access to the trail and kayak launch between toxins and ticks in that area.	4
The bike trail along 61 from downtown to Battlecreek should be integrated so it is easy to get to the park from the city	3

# Trailheads & Park Amenities Concept Comments

Rate the current Concept	Are there any additional locations where a trailhead/parking be explored?	Are any amenities missing from the plan?
3	All trailheads should include seasonal signage. Like for example "no hiking, animals, snowshoeing on groomed trails."	Ski rentals?
5	Nope - these look great!	Please consider adding bike maintenance stations at appropriate locations, such the trailhead at the bottom of Battle Creek or near the existing water park.
4	Not that I can think of.	TRASH CANS!! Ruth St & the creek e.g.; S end BC Rd, etc. Littering is a HUGE problem where cans are missing, esp this year when there was no volunteer cleanup
2	N	Again, it seems like you are pretty interested in making this more like other city parks and taking away it's unique areas of being underdeveloped.
2	no	
5	No	
3		
4	No	Not that I've seen.
5	The new proposed additions seem good.	Adding meeting places, picnic shelters, bathrooms, and some parking all sound like it would enable greater use of the park.
4	Parking along Battle Creek Rd is needed - proposed parking / trailhead at point #6 would be nice - not clear how close the land aquisition needed is	
3	No.	No.
3	it is exciting to see that a community center will be located near the trails. this is a much needed resource for the ski and outdoor community. I also appreciate that it could be a nature center. Perfect location to combine outdoor education and exe	
3	no	There is some vandalism in the park -- hopefully the facilities will be resistant to this and other illegal activities.
5		
5	Not that I can see	

## Trailheads & Park Amenities Concept Comments

3		I ski a lot at Battle Creek, but I've never accessed the Rec Center during the winter. If there isn't already, a "warming" center would be wonderful, especially if we get snow-making.
1	Are you kidding me here? Where is your demand model for any of this? How much is this pie in the sky vision of yours going to cost? This is ridiculous.	Yes, a check on reality. Get back to the basics. There is zero political will for a plan such as this with its associated development costs. Why put forward a vision that cannot be actualized, let alone shouldn't be.
3	no, but the additional restroom locations are greatly needed!	
3		
5		A dog wash station at both Upper and Lower Afton entrances would be a dream come true!
5		
5	Trailhead locations seem appropriate. Many access points. Thanks.	Would appreciate signage informing mountain bikers that these are multi-purpose trails. Tired of getting yelled at by mountain bikers for being on "their" trails.
3	No. I think there are too many. It takes away from the natural beauty and institutionalizes the Park. I want to go to this place to get out in nature, not to see a cheesy community center crowded with people and their litter.	Removal of buckthorn in the river corridor to eliminate spreading and enhance natural beauty.
3	No, this seems more than enough. I never see the parking lot at the rec center full so I am not sure much more parking is needed there.	Nope, seems like TOO much. Battle Creek road should be improved if putting in facilities there.
4		
3	I would encourage adding more trash cans near trailheads and along paved trails.	Would love a nature play area more trash/recycling
3		
4		
3		Archery range
5	Battle Creek Road sees a lot of cars parked along the road. Area 6 may provide enough additional parking for the area, but people may not venture that far off the main road. I'd like to see the detailed plans for area 6.	A bathroom at area 2. The increased picnic and bathroom options at 1,2,5, and 6 are all GREAT IDEAS!
3	I prefer Nature Center to be at area #6. I like/use the existing Rec Center on Winthrop and the space is highly used already. I want that to stay. I don't want their fitness center removed or anything else to make room for a nature center there.	



## Trailheads & Park Amenities Concept Comments

2	Battle Creek West and Ski Games Trails need trailhead accessible to hikers, walkers, skiers and Mt bikers. Amenities such as ski rental, bike rental, tool stand, lesson spaces would add to access to trails for more of our citizens	Yes. Trailhead at Battle Creek West for skiers, bikers and hikers, birders, etc. Indoor bathroom, changing rooms, Rentals for skiers, lesson opportunities for skiers/bikers with access to easy/beginner trails,
3	easter and western most points	There NEEDS to be a real/separate nature / interpretive center with info about all areas of the park - trails, maps, vegetation, history, kid classes, comm classes, amphitheater - see WoodLake Nature Center in Richfield as example.
5	I frequently make use of the off leash dog area and I use the Battle Creek West parking lot and more often than I would like there are no available spaces and I have to go to Lower Afton dog entrance so I'm VERY excited about more parking for the dog park	Probably not but the dog park is the best area and adding more amenities sounds amazing
5	There needs to be parking along point Douglas road. Currently there are no parking signs for the whole road north along point Douglas Rd at lower Afton (near hwy 61). There seems to be no reason for the no parking but this would be a preferred access t.	
3	The trailhead on Battle Creek Rd could serve as center for programming on skiing, biking, and trail/nature uses. Ski/bike/trail chalet with amenities.	There is a need for programming center and learning area connected to trails. If the community center is adapted to this use, other trailhead locations could be satellite locations.
2	No. Please minimize parking - we're already a few decades behind on the nessecary work of transitioning away from personal gasoline vehicles to other kinds of transportation.	I am okay with a few more amenities as long as there isn't a big environmental impact. Please minimize parking - we need to discourage car use, definitely not encourage it.
5	These look great but each one needs signage with a unique name or number	Maplewood Nature Center should be included in the plan instead of developing a new nature center in Battle Creek
1	No. I vigorously object to virtually all of the amenities to be added, except for the one at the SW corner of Suburban Pond. I have 2 ideas for water fountain locations. Strenuously object to all proposed restrooms, picnic areas etc.	
4	no	bike lockers

## Trailheads & Park Amenities Concept Comments

4	no	lockers for personal items (like Amazon pickup lockers) to reduce car break-ins?
3	<p>I think there is enough parking provided already. The dog park is overrun as it is. Thoughts should be given to fencing off portions for several months at a time to allow areas to be revegetated.</p> <p>There are too many side trails.</p>	<p>A dog wash station at one or the other of the entries to the dog park.</p> <p>No - but just please consider the mt bikers in planning. Already some issues with people walking the mt bike trails to the north of the ravine parking area, and cars not watching pulling in the lot. Also that seems to be a popular place to dump bodies.</p>
4	No - love it!	<p>Remove mountain bike skills area. MTB is not appropriate for a Nature based park leads to conflicts with other trail users, the bikes scare &amp; harm wildlife, increase erosion; there are countless miles of trails&amp; biking opportunities outside the park.</p>
1	<p>I question whether all the additional parking is needed. Rather, encourage people to bike to the park, but not through it. Also, for any parking, ensure the lots are natural surface, permeable.</p>	
4	<p>No, I like the idea of more parking along Battle Creek Rd, currently with Pt Douglas access closed half of the year that area feels unsafe and many people seem to shift to BC Rd.</p>	
3		
4	<p>I think there are plenty as designed. Like the idea of an outdoor center located at the inholding.</p>	<p>Not in my opinion</p>
3	<p>Pt Douglas Road could access the park in a number of great locations for bikes and cars</p>	<p>XC Ski Center to rival Theo Wirth!! And restaurant!</p>
3		

## Appendix - Virtual Design Workshop 2

# Trail System Concept Comments

Rate the current Concept	How do you feel about the level of trail development?	Are any additional trails necessary?
3	I love the emphasis on the cross country trails. Any efforts to keep hikers/dog walkers separate from skiers is huge. I like the additional lighting and fully support the trail making. I'm colorblind so I can't really decipher the additions.	no
4	This is a little ambitious - we support adding new trails to safely connect park segments that currently are not. But adding 10-foot wide hiking trails in all the identified spots makes some areas feel less wild (between Ruth and White Bear).	Add trails to to connect parts of the park that are currently are not safely connected. Adding snow-making is not a priority for us.
5	I am very excited to see snow making as a concept for the winter rec. area. This gives us skiers who live on the east side metro access to a growing winter sport. Very important in my opinion.	Not that I can see.
4	I have some concern for the extent of expansion of single track biking trails also labeled as hiking trails. These are conflicting uses. There is increased erosion on existing trails and newly created biking tracks, with a huge expansion in use .	In winter we need snow shoe/ walking trails - NOT just ski trails. Year round park users get chased off much of Battle Creek's trail system in winter. Not all ski! But most still get out in the winter.
1	Too much trail development. Especially "off road biking/hiking trails". First, having off road biking ruins it for hikers. Probably vice versa also true. Second, less development.	It seems like the major trails connecting to outside areas like the pond on Suburban and Point Douglas road.
4	We desperately need snow-making in the East Metro.	The MTB trails in the woods are mostly too difficult to ride for all but the most expert riders. More intermediate single track riding would be appreciated.
3	I would love to see enhanced and expanded mountain bike trails. I can't wait for snow making at Battle Creek!!!!!!	
5	Good. Top priority should be lighted snowmaking cross country ski trails.	
5	The current trails are good, but more work is needed. Snowmaking is an especially important addition.	Some of the trails shown in the concept would be nice, but they are not "must-haves".
5	I think the proposed changes (snowmaking, additional lighting, significant new single track) are crucial in turning Battle Creek into the kind of East-Side outdoor recreation hub that Theodore Wirth has successfully become for Minneapolis.	
5	Great	Good job
5	It looks like the off-road biking would see the largest increase in new trails. As a cross country skier, snow making is the main thing I'd push for!	Looks good to me!
4		In winter there is a problem of walking on the ski trails - the proposed bike trails on the ski games side could be used for winter hiking, but connecting the ends on the plateau, parallel to Battle Creek Rd would help make a hiking circle
3		No. I agree that it's best to prioritize enhancement of the existing XC skiing trails (including widening, leveling, lighting). More Ks of ski trail would be great, but enhancing (snowmaking!) is most important.
1	I am particularly concerned about the current off-road bike trails, many of which took over existing hiking paths, and the damage/erosion that the bikes have caused. (Bikes inherently do more damage than walking. It is simple physics.)	More is not necessarily better. (New off-road bike trails seem to have already been started, without much input from those of us who like to simply walk or run in the area.) We should focus more on maintain existing trails rather than making new ones.
5	Great. Snow making in the east metro is a necessity!	No
4	I like what is planned all around	

# Trail System Concept Comments

1	maybe too much -- there seems to be an adequate system of trails in the park already	no
3	I like it. The more trails the better.	Yes. More downhill lines, jumps and berms. This area has the most elevation change of all the bike areas in the metro. It's a great opportunity to create iconic downhill mountain biking trails for the twin cities.
5	Build it all!	Yes. Dedicated bike trail too
3	Proposed trails are good.	No
3	The level of trail development is good, but it would be really great to resurface the existing paved trails east of the Dog Park, so that they are suitable for roller-skiing, like the trails near the Water Park. Currently, they're too rough.	
4	Great. Get the snowmaking in ASAP!!!!	More easy to moderate ski trails with snowmaking.
5	Good! It's great to hear snow making will be added to XC ski trails.	
5	Pretty good	Additional mountain bike trails would be fantastic
2	Links are good but this is incredibly misleading in terms of planned trail development. Where are all the proposed/planned mountain biking trails reflected?	Fuck no. Y'all need to stop expanding. Crisscrossing all over the place already. It's too much. Unsafe. Destructive. And Wholly unnecessary.
4	That's a lot of trails. I don't think the levels of usage support 2 additional trails along North Park Drive. I'm excited to see the trails planned on the east side of the waterpark.	
3	I do not feel like snow making is something needed. more trails marked for winter hiking, snowshoeing and running is needed. There appears to be no access or trails marked for this near the Rec Center, only skiing?	I am an avid year-round trail runner and live downtown St. Paul. The close proximity of Battle Creek Park is a wonderful treasure. I run in the park 5 days a week and would like to see more trails assessable in the winter for running, hiking, snowshoeing
4	Trail development has been great. Trail 205 on the south side of the creek is too close to houses.	Be sure not to add trails too close to houses to protect homes from unwanted close traffic by the public.
4		
3	Good	NO - but snowmaking for the winter is necessary
5	Currently: poor. But looking at this plan I would be very happy with the level of trail development shown!	Adding snowmaking and lighting to all "main" Battle Creek ski trails between Winthrop and Battle Creek Rd would turn the area into the premier skiing locale in the TC Metro area. We already have fantastic terrain, this would take it the rest of the way!
4	I think mtb and ski trail development should be given equal effort	Additional intermediate and advanced mountain bike trails are needed.
1	I don't feel that winter should be put before the other 3 seasons of use. Of the trail system!!	

## Appendix - Virtual Design Workshop 2

# Trail System Concept Comments

4	I like it!	What do the x-c ski trails become in the "off-season?"
3	Support trails south of Upper Afton where there is a lot of space, do not need additional trails between North Park and Larry Ho where streets handle biking. Keep some urban woods sacred!	
5		
5	The trail system is very good already, but much still can be done.	Yes, the park has great potential to develop a couple of additional trails, for MTB and hiking/off road running.
4	I feel that having two additional 10' hike/bike trails in the park section between McKnight Road and Upper Afton Road is excessive. This in combination with the study area for Battle Creek Middle School would take too much of the existing trees.	
5	Great trail system! Unfortunately, some mountain bikers now believe the trails now belong only to them and verbally berate myself and others for hiking on the trails. Need signage telling them they are multi-use trails and to remain in control.	Like the expansion ideas, especially adding snow-making capabilities to the ski trails. There are no man-made snow options on the east side of the metro. Have to go the the Hennepin parks for early and late season skiing.
3	Snowmaking on Nordic trails would be fantastic!	
5	Very excited about the additional trail development, especially the off road biking/hiking trails. Additionally, snow making would be so welcome!	Is there a way to connect ski trails between the east and west sections of the park?
1	The amount of mountain bike trails is excessive, there will be almost no area along the creek that is available for quiet walks	No, reduce the number of trails
2	Way TOO many mountain bike trails. Why do we need a mountain bike trail on BOTH sides of the creek between upper afton and McNight?	Make sure that it is clear that these trails are multi-use and mountain bike trails can be hiked too.
4	Trails are great, really would like to see snowmaking on ski trails	We really need a safe connection from the southern portion of Maplewood to the park, especially crossing near the old fire station
3	Battle Creek is a gem. Lately I have noticed more mountain bike trails being cut. They are a ton of fun but some are very challenging.. Signs indicating proper direction of travel are important, even on the ski trails.	Completely separating hiking and mountain bike trails would be ideal and help prevent accidents.
4	I love the plans for additional hiking trails!	Currently the neighborhood north of the creek between McKnight and Century doesn't have safe access to the park without driving or walking over 1 mile to an access point. I propose adding a trailhead along Hudson Place East connecting to the new trails
1	Favor most of it. Trail marked 1 on the map is currently a very popular game trail for the park. Deer, coyotes, turkeys and foxes use the trail to get between the pond and the park. And the terrain slope would make the trail addition very expensive.	I'd vote for one less.
5	Awesome. The snowmaking in winter months will be a huge draw and boost revenue for trail passes.	Not from my perspective. However, many trails need to be repaved, especially nearest the dog park.
5	The more trails, means the more people able to use the park at any time. Bike trails are getting so much use, expanding these makes a lot of sense.	I do hope some of the small bike trails used for snow shoeing. This activity is currently limited.
3	Seems okay. I don't really understand Concept # 2 at all. "Additional 10' wide trail to connect with City of Saint Paul trail" But it just looks like a trail from N Park Dr to Burns ave on McKnight Rd - that does not connect to anything.	
5	Love it! We're really enjoying the new additions to the mountain bike trails and look forward to more great trails.	Yes! Battle Creek has so much mountain bike potential with its size and elevation changes. It's well on its way to becoming the premier mountain bike trail system in the metro area.



# Trail System Concept Comments

3	I think that snow-making capabilities on the cross-country ski trails are an absolute necessity.	I think at least 5K of snow-making trails could make Battle Creek the go-to place for cross country skiing in the East Metro. It would be very beneficial to the community, especially the high school students.
5		
3	Too many trail intersections, where ski accidents could happen. Keep the ski trails free of interference from other kinds of traffic as ski speeds and control is more difficult to control.	
4	Cross Country Ski trails are adequate, just need to include regular grooming on East BC trails similar to the regular grooming on the BC West and Ski Games trails.	No
3	Why give XC trails priority? Seems like enough trails over all - but why not make some winter ones (that are not XC skiing) snowshoe trails? and winter hiking trails?	Just connecting with possible / future trails on the land that was Boys Totem Town.
5	love the focus on xc skiing and off road biking those along with the dog park keep me coming back to this great park on a regular basis	nothing missing in my view
3	Concern over trail between Ruth and Upper Afton Rd on the south side. It is the only trail I see that does not have a road between the trail and family homes. Lots of kids in neighborhood. Concern for security as previously not very accesable.	
5		This is awesome! I'm particularly pleased about the paved trail around the pond!
5	Love it, the more trails the better	
5	Battle creek regional park is easily St. Paul's greatest asset. Anything that can be done to further solidify this natural resource as an essential part of the community is important	
3	Good progress on multi-use trails for skiing, biking, hiking.	Consider connecting the Battle Creek segments with bridge or tunnel across Battle Creek Rd, Winthrop and McKnight.
3	My house abuts Battle Creek park between Ruth St. N and upper afton rd. The southern single track addition will bring a lot of people really close to my back yard. My house has been broken into and I'm concerned the trail will give easy access to my yard	
5		
1	It's way too high. Trails ought to be minimized. There is very little natural space left in the world and it is crucial to the survival of the the environment, of which we are part. Leave as much space out of of human activity as you can.	No. We have enough trails.
5	looks good	get Corrections permission to run a trail through the prairie area next to Workhouse
1	It is way, way too extensive. The plan represents excessive over development and will effectively ruin the park. The thin skinny corridor between McKnight, across Ruth and down the hill should have NO trails added.	NO!!!!!!! No additional trails are necessary or tolerable. I would like to see some of the current mowed, unpaved trails both E and W of McKnight paved. NO NEW Trails. Will ruing park.
3	I'm excited for the build out of the off-road cycling/isngletrack trails	
5		

## Appendix - Virtual Design Workshop 2

# Trail System Concept Comments

3	Wow! This is an incredible increase in off-road biking. Is there a plan for bike rentals? How will lower income kids be able to utilize these trails if they don't have a \$1000 bike? I love snow making for x-country.	
5	The proposed additions look great!	Yes! More trails get more people out and enjoying our parks. Battle Creek has a lot of elevation and we could use more trails that suit less skilled skiers and bikers.
5	I am very supportive of more unpaved single track trail! more paved trail is nice too.	
	Extremely overbuilt, esp. the mountain bike trails. This is a Nature based park but all those trails fragment habitat, disturb wildlife (which are the Nature we want in the park) and introduce invasive species.	NO
5	I think this is fantastic and will become a destination for people from all over the metro, as well as a huge asset for neighboring residents!	I think this looks sufficient, the only area I would be curious about is around Pigs Eye, but that may be beyond the scope of this.
1	I enjoy existing trails, but It is already difficult/dangerous to walk in the area where mountain bikes zip around.	The proposed opening up of almost all park to additional biking is OUTRAGEOUS. This will be dangerous and ruinous to nature.
1	The most valuable feature of the park, by far, is its natural features. Slicing it up with new trails will have a devastating effect on the park forever. Mountain biking is incompatible with other uses. Please do not destroy this priceless asset!	No!
4	The mountain bike trails have gotten much better in the four years ive been going to battle creek. The work the crews are doing really shows! It went from a trail i would ride if i didnt have time to ride carver lake, to the best trail in the metro	the trail is getting closer to completly one way. this is a massive improvement. adding a few more miles of mtb trail will help battle creek become a destination trail.
4	It looks sufficient for all activities.	No
2	Construction better be sensitive to tree preservation or too many will be lost.	no
5	Love it!	
5		
	Frankly, I feel anguish. Battle Creek is one of my favorite local parks for walking and bird watching, and I am aghast at the proposal to allow mountain biking into nearly all areas of the park.	No. I would like to advocate for a re-examination of the proposed mountain bike trails, these will inevitably conflict with wildlife and those who enjoy quiet, wild places to enjoy walking, bird watching, and general nature watching.
5	Additional trails looks good. Excited of the plan for snowmaking on the xc trails!	
4	For off-road cycling, the vertical rise/fall is what is so unique about Battle Creek. I would like to see the large hillsides utilized for off-road cycling trail construction.	For off-road cycling, the vertical rise/fall is what is so unique about Battle Creek. I would like to see the large hillsides utilized for off-road cycling trail construction.



# Meeting Presentation Outline

### Overall Project Introduction

- Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan – update park & recreation infrastructure and amenities
- Project timeline – how we got to where we are at
- Project milestone/meeting overview

### Master Plan Concept

- Amenities/programs
  - Trails
  - Winter rec
  - Safe crossings
  - Off road cycling/hiking trails
  - Access to park
  - Waterworks
  - Nature/Learning trails
  - Wayfinding/signage
  - Trailheads and amenities
  - Natural resources preservation
  - Fishing (DNR FIN program)
  - Pigs Eye access
  - Pigs Eye amenities
  - Boundary adjustments and acquisitions
  - Other relevant plans
    - Off road cycling plan
    - Off leash dog area master plan
    - Point Douglass road Regional Trial MP (Saint Paul Parks & Recreation)

### Map Breakouts

- Trails
- Trail heads and amenities
- Access points
- Pigs Eye
- Fish Creek
- Learning Trails

## Meeting Q&A Report

### Question

On the last slide, can you point out some of the points?

the concept plans are hard to read on the screen

Hi,

I've been following this process and have some concerns. Last summer a recreation enthusiast meeting was held and I don't believe off-road cycling trails should be multi-use trails. It is too dangerous to mix dog walkers, hikers, etc. The city of Maplewood will be looking for partners to provide environmental education through the Maplewood National Recreation Area. Could we have a history trail or several? This should talk about the Indigenous and Native peoples former use of Battle Creek. I have not heard anything about the Off Road Cycling Master Plan. As the Ramsey County CWMA Coordinator, I've been involved in the whole battle creek regional park system going to have a bike trail to go through all like a big loop?

One of the online maps showed possible acquisition of land north of the County Workhouse, actually a transfer from Ben and Jono - Do you have information or details in regards to Boys Totem Town? Will or can this area and land be used for recreation? I am involved in the cultural landscape survey of Mounds Park. Has Ramsey County reached out to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources? Will there be exercise equipment along the walking trails at some of the parks?

How will you protect the rookery in Pig's Eye Lake?

paved biking

Thank you

Will there be a public process on the Corps' Pig's Eye plan to create islands from dredge spoils; there has been none. Can you remind me when the work on the master plan began?

Is this plan tied to the Fish Hatchery Trail fixes?

is there a website I could see all these layouts? and will there be exercise equipment along the walking trails at some of the parks? I noticed the words used about snowmaking was "concerns" not support. What are the concerns about snowmaking? thank you

Is there

There is no unmute button on my screen.

Is there a new trail running through the dog park. A paved one?

For the planned new parking lot at Suburban Pond - at White Bear Ave. & Louise - have you considered the potential for a paved trail? Does the plan get specific about how to access Pig's Eye lake from the east over the RR tracks? Or for easier public access? I was trying to make a comment with respect to a previous person who asked the question about whether or not there should be a paved trail. Yes, but if there was an effort by the off road groups to educate bikers it would help. I would love to partner with them. Off road cycling trails seem to be over represented in this plan. Is there a plan to provide bicycles for those who do not have one? Hi. I sent a comment previously, but my computer locked up and I don't know if you received it. I am concerned about the invasive treatment efforts in the county have been bolstered by MN Department of Agriculture. Programming is driven by the community non-profits and groups that are invested in their discipline. Are you suggesting that we should also be interested to discuss whether you will require a WorkCleanGo clause in construction contracts. Invasive species management is a big concern.



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [mary wilm](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** battle Creek environmental protection  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2020 11:12:06 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp, Dir. McCabe, Commissioners Carter and McDonough,

I implore you retain these Ramsey Cty properties. The planet and its inhabitants are in dire need of more green spaces not fewer.

Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study.

The 77-acre tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds. It has been farmed in the past, but the portion that is visible from Battle Creek Park has remained undisturbed for the last decade or so. **It harbors bird species that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America.** An oak woodland in Battle Creek Regional Park extends into part of the tract.

- **Site A** is 77 acres bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road;
- **Site B** is The Ponds At Battle Creek golf course, 88 acres, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east. The county has decided to cease operations of the golf course at the end of 2020.

I'm surprised to read that a sale of these wonderful places is even under consideration when the alternative is so attractive and urgent.

Regards,  
MaryLou Wilm

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Martha McMurry](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Development of 77-acre tract adjacent to Battle Creek  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 2, 2020 5:11:16 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello,

I think it would be best to leave this tract as natural habitat. Little by little our natural habitat is being chipped away and there is no way to replace it. The 77 acres in question are used by birds that are becoming increasingly rare. In addition, people benefit from relaxing in nature and open space helps ameliorate the effects of climate change.

Thank you for your attention.

Martha McMurry  
[martha.mcmurry@gmail.com](mailto:martha.mcmurry@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Cindy Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Habitat in SE Ramsey County  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2020 5:42:35 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Cindy Johnson*

*2073 Pleasant View Drive*

*New Brighton, MN 55112*

IOWA AUDUBON

IOWA IBA EDUCATION INITIATIVE

PART 4: SPECIES ACCOUNTS



**STATUS: HIGH  
CONSERVATION  
PRIORITY IN IOWA**



## **Bobolink** *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*

### **Introduction**

The Bobolink is a species that has long been familiar to many Iowa landowners, and it is one of the most distinctive birds of Iowa grasslands. During spring and summer the brightly colored male is easily recognized with overall black appearance, large patches of white on wings and down middle of back, and tawny yellow nape, or back of neck. Males are especially conspicuous during the nesting season as they perch high on plant stems and sing a long bubbly song during aerial displays – in helicopter-like flight – over the grassland. Females are duller colored and more secretive.

Bobolinks have one of the longest migration journeys of any Iowa songbird, wintering on grasslands in southern South America. One female known to be at least nine years old presumably made this trip annually, a total distance equal to traveling 4.5 times around the earth at the equator!

Bobolinks have been shot as agricultural pests in the southern United States, trapped and sold as pets in Argentina, and collected as food in Jamaica. The species is not as abundant as it was several decades ago, primarily because of changing land-use practices here where it reproduces, especially detrimental are the decline of meadows and hay fields. The combination of losses on the wintering grounds and destruction of many of the grasslands in Iowa has led to an overall decline in their numbers in Iowa.

LINK TO [IOWA IBA: BOBOLINK](#)

## Habitat Preferences

The Bobolink is a species of the Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem. It prefers habitat with moderate to tall vegetation, moderate to dense vegetation, and moderately deep litter without the presence of woody vegetation. Bobolinks originally nested in tall-grass or mixed-grass prairie. Most of this habitat came under intense agricultural pressure more than a century ago.

Presently in Iowa this species is found in old fields, pastures, wet meadows, and prairie. It seems to especially use old hayfields that are comprised of a mixture of grasses and broad-leaved forbs. Population density is significantly higher in fields with relatively low amounts of total vegetative cover, low alfalfa cover, and low total legume cover but with high litter cover and high grass-to-legume ratios relative to other nearby fields.

Bobolinks also breed in habitats similar to grass-sedge fields along river bottomland habitat, and sometimes in irrigated meadows.

## Feeding Habits

In Iowa, during nesting, adult Bobolink feed on weed seeds, a variety of larval and adult insects, spiders, and harvestmen. The young are fed exclusively invertebrates. In migration this species feeds on wild and domesticated rice, oats, other small grains, weed seeds, and occasionally on insects.

Bobolinks forage on seeds at the tops of forbs interspersed within expanses of grasses or sedges. They glean insects and spiders from mid-growth and bases of forbs, grasses, and sedges. The preferred foraging height is 2 to 6 inches above ground. Occasionally foraging is for invertebrates in trees and shrubs adjacent to or within nesting sites. Providing grassland habitats for feeding is recommended.

Bobolinks feed primarily as they walk slowly on the ground or as they ascend into lower levels of vegetation. When foraging on seeds, they often perch near the top of vegetation to extract and ingest seeds. Foraging occurs throughout daylight hours. During the breeding season, they are solitary foragers. In post-fledging groups on nesting fields and during migration and winter, Bobolinks join intra-specific flocks, which have highly social feeding behavior.

## Breeding Biology

In three well-studied populations, the majority of males that establish initial territories normally arrive suddenly on breeding grounds in early May, and depart slowly from July to early September. Older males generally precede yearlings by several days in spring. Females normally begin arriving 4 to 8 days after the initial group of territorial males. Earliest returning females also tend to be the oldest.

This species tends to return to areas where it has nested successfully before, and both sexes exhibit high breeding-site fidelity. Bobolinks are widespread and fairly evenly distributed in Iowa, and tend to occur wherever suitable grassland habitat is provided.

Females returning to the same breeding habitat often settle with a male within hours of returning, occasionally re-pairing with same male of a previous year. During early courtship phases, males devote complete courtship attention to the female. After a second day of courtship, and always by first day of the copulation period, males attempt to attract unpaired females. This species is polygynous with the males forming pair bonds with more than one female. Polygynous males often pair with second mates 3 to 8 days after initial pairing occurs. Pair formation within a population is highly synchronous, with most males that are successful in becoming

LINK TO [IOWA IBA: BOBOLINK](#)



paired, attracting their first females within a few days.

Nest construction takes place in the second or third week of May and is completed in 1 to 2 days. Food abundance may influence timing of nesting events. One egg is laid each day, starting within 1 to 2 days of nest completion. There are usually 5 to 6 eggs laid, but the number may vary from 3 to 7. Incubation is by the female only. An average incubation period is approximately 12 days. Undisturbed young fledge 10 to 11 days after hatching.

The norm is one brood per season. Bobolink nests tend to be located in wet habitats, transitional between drier soils and areas providing poor drainage. Nests are always on the ground, and often at base of a large forb. Shading and temperature modulation at the nest appear to be important to nesting females.

Nest construction activity is often intensive. It is important to note that nests discovered early in construction are often immediately abandoned. For this reason, great care should be taken when walking through grasslands that support Bobolinks from mid to late-May, and perhaps later. Surveys for IBA purposes can usually be accomplished effectively from a distance, and this is partly because singing males are so obvious during this time of year.

After approximately 12 days of incubation and 4 days of brooding after hatching, brooding frequency declines markedly and temperature regulation probably commences about this time. Young have left the nest and running capability develops by 7 days after hatching.

Feeding begins within 1 hour after first nestling hatches; and continues until fledglings become independent. Nestlings are fed exclusively invertebrates. Brood parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds is known to occur, but is evidently not frequent.

Undisturbed Bobolink young leave the nest on day 10 or 11. They move as much as 200 feet the first day out of nest, thus the size of overall grassland habitats is important. Adults divide labor of feeding, each parent concentrating on specific fledglings.

Until flight capability is developed at approximately 13 days of age, birds generally remain in thick vegetation, relying on cryptic coloration for concealment. By 16 days of age, the young are capable of sustained flights of over 500 feet. Within flocks, adults continue feeding their own young, for at least 28 days after birds leave the nest. Flocks leave breeding vicinities soon after immatures gain independence.

### Concerns and Limiting Factors

Breeding Bird Survey data for 1966-2004 show a significant decreasing trend of – 1.7%/year over the Bobolink's range and – 4.1%/year within Iowa during that same period. In the Midwest, the primary reason for this population decline is habitat loss.

Bobolinks appear to be area specific, preferring large grassland areas over smaller habitats. One researcher reported that the minimum area on which Bobolinks were found was 25 to 75 acres in prairie fragments, and Bobolink abundance in these fragments was positively related to the size of the area.

Research has shown that Bobolinks prefer hayfields with high grass-to-forb ratios and avoid hayfields with high legume-to-grass ratios. A serious downside for Bobolinks nesting in hayfields is that mowing accounted for significant nest losses.

The presence of woody vegetation within and along the edge of grasslands can have a negative impact on Bobolinks. Nest depredation and Brown-headed Cowbird brood parasitism increase near woody edges, and nest depredation rates were

LINK TO [IOWA IBA: BOBOLINK](#)

lower in larger (325-1215 acre) grasslands, than on smaller (40-80 acre) grasslands.

Lower rates of nest depredation on Bobolink nests occurred in areas burned within the last three years, where woody vegetation and deep litter were reduced by fire. Nest productivity was highest and the probability of encountering Bobolinks was also highest one year after burning.

### **Habitat Management Recommendations**

The combination of destruction, fragmentation, and degradation of grassland nesting habitats in the state has led to an overall decline in Bobolink numbers over several decades of time.

The keys to Bobolink management are providing large areas of suitable habitat (native and tame grasslands of moderate height and density, with high grass to forb ratios and adequate litter), controlling succession, and protecting nesting habitat from disturbance during the breeding season. Avoid disturbing (e.g., haying, burning, moderately or heavily grazing) nesting habitat during the breeding season, early May to early August. Treatments can be done in early spring, several weeks prior to the arrival of adults on the breeding grounds in early May, or in the fall after the breeding season.

It is also recommended that habitat be managed in patches larger than 25 to 75 acres, and woody edges are minimized whenever possible to decrease Brown-headed Cowbird brood parasitism.

When managing prairie or old fields for Bobolinks, a rotating treatment schedule on several adjacent grassland fragments should be used to make a variety of successional stages available. Burn within areas that are at least 200 acres in total size. A rotational burning system with subunits of at least 75 acres in size, or about 20 to 30% of the total area, can be

treated each year. In small, isolated grassland fragments, burning less than 50 to 60% of the total area at a time is recommended. Mow or burn patches every two to three years to prevent excessive encroachment of woody vegetation.

To create Bobolink nesting habitat where grazing occurs, grazing should be at moderate levels to provide diverse grass heights and densities in areas where the average height of vegetation is 6 to 12 inches. Also, graze using a rotational system of two or more grazing units. This will increase the variation in grass heights and densities within and between units. To maintain plant vigor, do not graze warm-season grasses in tallgrass prairie to a height of less than 10 inches during the growing season.

Nest disturbances during early stages of incubation present serious problems for this species. Females may abandon nests during early incubation if nest is visited; but rarely abandons nest after day 3 of incubation.

The primary disturbance to nesting sites is hay-cropping. In one study, 100% of nests with eggs or young nestlings affected by mowing were abandoned or destroyed. However, the proportion of young that were lost declined with increasing age of nestlings.

Fields should be mowed annually to maintain breeding habitat, but mowing should be delayed until at least late July or early August in order to minimize negative impacts on fledglings. Later mowing would be better, especially when re-nesting attempts are being made.

For general information about habitat management for Bobolink, see the sections on Grassland Management for Birds. For more specific details see Recommended Grassland Management Practices. Each of these sections is found in Part 3.

LINK TO [IOWA IBA: BOBOLINK](#)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Kruse](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Request regarding Battle Creek adjacent parcels owned by Ramsey County  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 1, 2020 1:07:59 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr Karp,

I am writing to you because it has come to my attention that Ramsey County has the opportunity to expand and preserve open space near Battle Creek Park. Doing so will preserve beauty, recreation, and wildlife for Ramsey County citizens today and in the future.

I am specifically referring to:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

I have heard that Ramsey County owns these properties and is considering selling them. I have also heard the 77 acre tract is a vital grassland for several bird species that in precipitous decline in America.

We are already tragically losing millions of birds a year due to over development and we have an opportunity to prevent this problem from being worse. More positively, we have an opportunity to gift ourselves and future generations with an environment filled with beauty and diverse living things.

I strongly implore you to vote against selling these tracts.

Respectfully,

Brian Kruse  
671 Ashland Ave  
St Paul

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [kesid@aol.com](mailto:kesid@aol.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Ellis, Joann](#)  
**Subject:** Save 77acres and The Ponds golf course for green space use and wildlife  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 10:41:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [Ia State 41IBA Bobolink.pdf](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Greetings -

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

I grew up in southern Iowa where these grassland birds still have habitat thanks to hay fields, Conservation Reserve Program fields and fencerows and wooded creeks provide nesting habitat and wildlife corridors for the larger number of acres of these species. Most people don't have the opportunity that I have to learn about these birds. We keep developing urban areas even though they are in rich river habitat. Development examples that are removing remaining corridors are the Rush Line replacing the Vento Bike Trail, the new Saint Paul Land Use plan that has large strips of industrial areas blocking wildlife movement and talk of RR development at Pigs Eye. At best I see a few isolated places restored to the native plants that wildlife depends on but they are not connected to each other. See the attachment from Iowa State on how habitat needed by Bobolinks for a sense of why they like this large grassland area. We can't just complain about farmers not being kind to the land and then do the same thing.

These plots of land are known to have wildlife that is rare for urban areas and are in what was the Red Zone for the US Fish and Wildlife Service plan for endangered Rusty-patched Bumblebees, and next to Ramsey County rare habitat areas at Battlecreek and along the river. See attachments.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Kathy Sidles*

*1380 Winchell St.*

*Saint Paul, MN 55106*

*651-771-7528*



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Don Wendel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [District1](#)  
**Subject:** Save Battle Creek for Wildlife and People to Enjoy  
**Date:** Friday, December 4, 2020 8:56:51 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Frethem:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Don Wendel*

*5206 Lakeview Ct.*

*White Bear Township, MN 55110*

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Dana Sterner](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#); [john.slack@perkinswill.com](mailto:john.slack@perkinswill.com)  
**Subject:** 77 acre parcel - Battle Creek Regional Park/Correctional Facility  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:48:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioners Carter, McDonough, and Reinhardt:

Project Manager John Slack:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with

passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

These are actual photos taken from the 77 acre parcel. I am a birder who lives in Maplewood and spends a lot of my personal time birding in Ramsey County. I can tell you that Bobolink species are breeding and nesting in those fields and have been reported on an annual basis within the birding community since at least 2017 with the most reports of this species reflected in 2020. This species is on a steep decline and currently, Ramsey County has extremely limited nesting habitat for these birds. The U of M agricultural fields may be the only other place they have been reported during the nesting season and it's not confirmed they are breeding there, only possible suitable habitat. In fact, I would assume most of the species below in addition to Eastern Meadowlark are nesting there. PLEASE allow this parcel of land to be included within the boundaries of Battle Creek Regional Park. With Ramsey County being as developed as it is, it is extremely important to keep existing habitat for these birds that have found a stopover in migration or a place to breed and nest. I understand the idea of having a parcel to collect real estate taxes on is appealing but please, keep this land as is and do the responsible thing. In addition, I believe that any kind of development next to a correctional facility would have limited appeal/attraction.



## Conservation

Eastern Meadowlarks are a declining species. Populations fell over 3% per year between 1966 and 2015, resulting in a cumulative decline of 89%, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Partners in Flight estimates a global breeding population of 30 million with 63% spending some part of the year in the U.S., 14% in Mexico, and 2% breeding in Canada. The species rates an 11 out of 20 on the Continental Concern Score. The 2014 *State of the Birds Report* listed Eastern Meadowlark as a Common Bird in Steep Decline, but the species is not on the 2016 *State of North America's Birds' Watch List*. Losses are due to their disappearing grassland habitat. Prairie is scarce in the eastern United States, and the kinds of farms that once hosted meadowlarks—small, family farms with pastureland and grassy fields—are being replaced by larger, row-cropping agricultural operations or by development. Early mowing, overgrazing by livestock, and the use of pesticides can also harm meadowlarks nesting on private lands. According to the State of the Birds 2011 report, more than 95 percent of the Eastern Meadowlark's distribution is on private lands, meaning farmland conservation practices are vital to the survival of this species.



### Conservation



Although Bobolinks are numerous and adaptable, their U.S. population declined by over 2% per year between 1966 and 2015, resulting in a cumulative decline of 65%, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Partners in Flight estimates a global breeding population of 8 million, with 28% breeding in Canada, and 72% spending some part of the year in the U.S. The species rates a 14 out of 20 on the Continental Concern Score and are on the [2018 State of North America's Birds\\* Watch List](#), which includes bird species that are most at risk of extinction without significant conservation actions to reverse declines and reduce threats. People have shot Bobolinks as agricultural pests in the southern United States, trapped and sold them as pets in Argentina, and collected them as food in Jamaica. But the main reason for the Bobolink's decline is land-use change, especially the loss of meadows and hay fields. To improve the Bobolink's prospects, people can maintain its breeding habitat by mowing fields annually once nestlings have fledged, and managing natural prairies through prescribed burning.

Thank you for your time and reading this.

Sincerely,

Dana Sterner

3100 Ariel St N, Apt 104

Maplewood, MN 55109

651-210-9954

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Grant Bastian](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 8:54:37 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin,

Overall the master plan is looking great! As a lifetime resident of the area I am excited about the future of battle creek park. I'm very familiar with the Park, I have been a weekly volunteer on the hiking/mountain bike trails alongside Scott Thayer (BC Mountain Bike Trail Steward) for the past 2 years. I was looking over the PDF's carefully and would like to add a recommendation.

I would love to see a Disc Golf course added to the master plan. Disc golf is one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, and would be an excellent addition to Battle Creek Park. [Here is a link](#) to the benefits of adding a disc golf course.

I think the wooded area behind 'WaterWorks' is a good area for several reasons.

- Currently unused
- Disc golf courses adapt very well into odd shaped or unused areas of a park
- Disc golf works great in the woods due to trees adding a natural obstacle
- Shares a parking lot with 'WaterWorks'.

I've attached a picture of the area to this email.

For a good example of a fun yet fairly compact disc golf course, look to 'Acorn Park' in Roseville. They have a fantastic 18 hole course within the 40 acres.

Please reach out if you have any questions, and thank you for considering.

--

Grant Bastian

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Andrew Novak](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 6:03:16 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello,

I am a resident of the Battle Creek neighborhood and a frequent visitor to Battle Creek Park. My partner and I have lived here for 7 years and proximity to the park was a big selling point for us. We are almost daily users of the trails throughout most of the park.

The push to implement more trails for skiers and mountain bike enthusiasts is destroying the natural character of the park. A great deal of time and money is being spent to widen trails and increase the amount of trails and it seems to be catering only to a small number of overly vocal recreationists with the means to afford expensive gear.

I am very concerned about the development of mountain bike trails on fragile slopes of forested ravines. These are very fragile ecosystems and they should be protected. With the added mountain bike traffic I have seen unprecedented deterioration of many of the park's trails. They are becoming wider and channelized with deep troughs. I am deeply concerned about the erosion this causes and the impact this will have on the first and the water ways.

Mountain bike enthusiasts have turned every one of the small, intimate hiking paths into their jungle gym. The idea that these are now supposed to be shared use trails is absurd. I've had countless occasions where men have been reaching down the hills at top speed and I've had to jump off the trail to avoid getting run down. What used to be a nice intimate connection with nature has become sullied by the destruction of the small rustic paths and the fear of being trampled.

I do not know why every single little trail needs to become part of the biker playground and I do not see the logic in over developing the large woodland into a jungle gym for wealthy entitled hipster bikers. It seems a very big cost for a very few people.

The same was true for the skate skiers. A ton of money and effort spent for a very select group of users and there are only 12 or so days a year with suitable skiing conditions.

Considering the enthusiastic interest throughout the metro regarding habitat restoration, particularly for pollinators, couldn't we just have a moratorium on trail expansion and take more of a conservationists approach? This park is the largest patch of green space in the East Metro. With every additional trail segment the ecological value is diminished.

I appreciate the management of the Buckthorn. That was long overdue. Money spent managing for invasive species and restoring habitat is money well spent. Considering the

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

proximity of the park to the highly urbanized downtown of St Paul, the quality of the oak savanna ecosystem should be too priority, not additional trails on the sensitive ravine slopes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew Novak  
1635 Burns Ave, St Paul, MN 55106

November 20, 2020

Park Director Mark McCabe via email and USPS  
Commissioner Toni Carter, Chair, via email and USPS  
Commissioner Jim McDonough, via email and USPS  
Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
15 Kellogg Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan

Dear Commissioners Carter and McDonough,

As a Ramsey County resident, taxpayer, small business owner and environmental health scientist thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan.

### **Background**

Here in the Twin Cities metro we are fortunate to have a very good park system. From small city parks to park reserves we have parks for nearly every user. Small city parks are designed for horseshoes, pick-up basketball, soccer, softball and tennis; they accommodate more intensive recreation. The regional parks and park reserve system was initiated in 1974 to “protect and preserve” the last remaining large tracts of land. Historically the regional parks have been Nature-based, providing habitat for wildlife including endangered species, stormwater storage, climate resilience and respite for humans.

Quiet walks in Nature are important for both mental and physical health and, biodiversity provides ecosystem services such as cleaning the water and air, and provide a wealth of other life forms that humans enjoy. The wealth of other life forms encompassed in biodiversity also have their own inherent value; Native American peoples (and others) whose spirituality is connected to the diversity of life are particularly aware of its importance.

Battle Creek Regional Park’s (RP) primary natural features are Battle Creek and the Mississippi River bluffs. The park’s primary ecotype is Oak forest with a smattering of Prairie. Part of the park lies within the Mississippi River Critical Area; the park contains cultural resources such as burial mounds and, the largest Heron Rookery in the state. Many visitors to Battle Creek RP go for the Nature experience and enjoy hiking, bird watching and quiet contemplation.

At a May 2018 Ramsey County commissioners meeting, I recall Commissioner McDonough stating to then-director Oyanagi, “most users want to be part of Nature”. Pay attention to passive users”.

Ramsey County’s Park System plan (RCPSP) states, “Responsible natural resources management is critical for the long term health of the parks system.”<sup>1</sup> The plan has robust language for protecting the parks’ natural resources:

- Protect high-quality environmental sensitive areas
- Restore degraded natural resources
- Maintain critical natural processes

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<sup>1</sup> Ramsey County, Parks and Recreation System plan, 2018, p4.



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

- Incorporate natural resource management into park maintenance
- Increase environmental education, awareness and appreciation of natural resources
- Promote a positive environmental ethic
- Manage for healthy wildlife populations.

Despite the RCPSP criteria for protection and restoration, incompatible uses (non-“Nature-based”) have moved into and expanded in Battle Creek and other regional parks. Examples include splash pads, water parks and mountain biking. The proposed concept plan more than doubles (from 8 to 17 miles) the amount of mountain bike trails in Battle Creek RP, adds a number of other trails, needless amenities and, has removed the acquisition of county land for the park.

### Too many trails

Looking at the trails concept, it appears the park is being converted nothing but trail and fragment every portion of the park. Fragmentation is a concern especially for smaller wildlife species as they will not cross trails to find food or, they cross trails and are run over or stepped on. Some plant species also cannot reproduce with a barrier such as a trail. Increased trails also create more “edge areas” that are less amenable to plants and animals and, create corridors that facilitate the spread of invasive species. Many of the trails in the concept plan are redundant and unnecessary, for example, the mountain biking trail running along both sides of Battle Creek and to the northwest of the park. Additionally, funds are needed for trail upkeep. As you know, operations and maintenance dollars for the regional parks have been grossly underfunded by the Legislature leaving local property taxes to foot the bill.

Please delete the following trails from the plan:

1. Near the southwest region of the park near the river bluffs. The area is more sensitive to erosion and may harbor a rare ecotype, a Bluff Prairie. Also given the history of Native American habitation, it would be important to do an archeological assessment to ensure cultural resources are not disturbed.
2. The proposed trail along highway 61 would further fragment the numerous small parcels along the road. Keep trail adjacent to already developed roadways.
3. Run proposed trail along Fish Hatchery Rd rather than Highway 61 and bluff area of park.
4. On the east side of the park, leave to passive uses, remove mountain bike trail and proposed additional paved trail.
5. Adding paved trails may require a clear cut of 50 feet wide. A turf trail around the small lake/wetland to the north (Suburban Pond) is preferable to protect the fragile nature of lakeshore, wetlands and limited area for mitigation.
6. A trail on the west side of McKnight north of the creek is redundant.

### Concept plan: mountain biking

Mountain biking (mtb) is a hard-hitting sport that looks for thrills including technically challenging courses, steep up/downhill slopes, fast, hard braking, more intense use, cutting corners, wet sections, and the inclusion of jumps/drop-offs.<sup>2</sup> While both hiking trails and mtb trails disturb the natural resource base, mtb trails are designed in a zig zag pattern creating a wider corridor of disturbance than a hiking trail which has a much

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<sup>2</sup> Huddart, D., Stott, T., Outdoor Recreation: Environmental impacts and management, p173, 2019.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

narrower corridor. Additionally, as the bikes make turns, the trail becomes more eroded due to braking and skidding. The wider corridor of disturbance and increased erosion provides entre for invasive species.

Over the past twenty years extensive resources have been committed to removing invasive species Battle Creek RP. Yet, the RCSP states, "Invasive species have become widespread in most habitats (p98)." Citizens and taxpayers have to ask whether it is the best use of county resources and tax dollars to support recreational activities such as mtb, that likely contribute significantly to invasive species and environmental degradation in a Nature-based park?

As a wildlife tracker, I have learned that both hikers and mtb disturb wildlife, however, mtb due to rapid movement, quietness and unusual profile are more disruptive. Wildlife has evolved with a human presence and humans are widely known to wildlife as predators. The upright human silhouette is unmistakable and, when a hiker enters the Forest or Prairie they will disturb wildlife. Mtb silhouettes are a relatively new profile and may not be recognizable as dangerous until very close to wildlife, putting the rider and animal in danger. A study in Banff National Park found 75% of encounters with Grizzly Bears occurred with mtb.

In addition to safety concerns due to wildlife encounters, in Battle Creek RP there are shared mtb and hiking trails. As previously mentioned, mtb is a sport that desires speed and the bike itself can be formidable presence on a shared trail. While management and signage will declare pedestrians have the right of way on shared trails, the reality is, hikers will concede rather than have a mtb behind them. Personally, I have tried to hike and bird watch on shared trails; the near ubiquitous presence of mtb on the trail was disruptive to the hike and the presence of birds was nil. I hiked faster to complete the loop and get off the trail and in doing so, I fell. Fortunately I was only bruised, however, at a recent Ramsey County park commission meeting, one of the commissioners reported his son had been mountain biking and broke his femur. Park visitor safety is at risk with mtb.

Adding more trails for mountain biking is also not permitting equitable use of the park as most mountain bikers are young white males, a cohort that the plan seems to be catering to at the expense of others such as older citizens and passive users.

With respect to the concept plan, the proposed mtb trails in the western region of the park are often adjacent to other trails and further fragment those areas. Currently, according to the concept plan, the park has nine miles of mountain bike trails and 26 trail miles overall. Giving almost 35% of the trails to one use (as hikers and walkers are discouraged from using mtb trails), especially when the state of Minnesota already has over 4000 miles of paved bike trails plus almost 140,000 miles of roads according to MNDOT, is excessive.

Please delete additional mtb trails from the plan and consider other areas, such as inactive gravel pits for mtb and other intense recreation.

### **Access and connections**

It is not clear from the concept maps exactly where additional/"enhanced" access points are being considered and what would it entail from a construction, maintenance and ecological perspective. Providing adequate access to the park is important, especially to meet the goals of enhancing an environmental ethic. However, as with trails, construction projects also degrade the natural resource base.

Careful consideration should be given to the costs and maintenance of multiple access points. Also, are numerous access points necessary given one of the primary reasons people are visiting the park is for exercise? Other regional parks in populated areas, e.g. Hyland Park Reserve (2600 acres) which is 1000 acres larger than Battle Creek, has three access points.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Please minimize the number of access points to those necessary and eliminate redundant or duplicative access points. For example:

1. The access point between upper and lower Afton roads seems redundant.
2. Along North Park Drive there are three five access points in less than a mile.
3. Along McKnight Rd there are seven access points in a little more than a mile.
4. On the west side of Lower Afton Rd. there are four access points in less than a mile.

### Winter recreation

As an avid cross country skier, I appreciate having trails and snow. However, the impacts of skate-ski trails and of, snowmaking must also be considered.

The wide skate-ski trails have the same or greater impact on small animal and plant disturbance that mtb and other trails have. At a minimum cross country ski trails should be shared with other non-winter trails and, the width of the trails minimized. For example, make the trails one way or, minimize the number of trails for skate-ski as this is an intensive recreational sport that is not necessarily enjoying Nature, but rather is looking for exercise and repeating loops could be adequate.

Snowmaking uses fossil fuels and large quantities of water. As you know, the climate crisis has appreciably diminished the reliability and quality of snow in Minnesota. This is a problem of our own making and rather than exacerbating greenhouse gas emissions with making snow, we should be focusing on reducing those emissions. Additionally, snowmaking uses, for example, 5000 gallons per minute of water to make snow. One has to question whether this is a sustainable use for water, even here in water –rich Minnesota and, where will the water go when the manmade snow melts?

When the snow is crummy, I don't ski. There are other winter outdoor activities such as snowshoeing or even hiking that can get one through winter until we resolve the climate crisis.

Also, a new trailhead is not needed for the winter recreation area; rather, the community center could be expanded and remodeled. This would reduce construction impacts and minimize maintenance costs.

### Environmental learning trails

The environmental learning trails are a good concept and connecting certain areas with local schools is positive. The following are comments from a colleague who is an environmental education instructor:

1. Things to include are phenology and bird watching lessons. The most effective lessons are those that are repeated over the course of the school year, but require a teacher willing to do that. Some things we do with littles include insect netting – survey, release and record what we find year over year, collecting macros from the waterway, creek, pond or lake, and recording what is observed, bird watching weekly, phenology observations weekly, nature sketching, maple syruping.
2. In nature, "learning stations" are often seasonal, so it might be more effective to talk about teaching students nature habits - don't disturb nature, walk quietly, record what you see, hear, and observe, help the habitat by staying on the trail - buckthorn removal, installing bird houses, set up trail cams to record the wildlife in the area to see what is currently living there and how to support it?
3. Outdoor classroom space is a popular idea, but not often used in my experience. It might be wiser to keep the Nature as is without imposing structure, and have the conversations/discussions pre-hike and post-hike back in the classroom.

### Trailheads & amenities

1. The addition of wayfinding signage without overdoing it will be helpful.
2. The waterworks, as was mentioned previously is not a Nature based activity. Rather than expanding artificial swimming areas, why not improve water quality for swimming?
3. In visits to Battle Creek RP, the parking lot at the pavilion and water park were underutilized. It does not make sense to add parking at the dog park or restrooms. These amenities are available at the pavilion.
4. Fishing has long been heralded as a “fun” and relatively harmless outdoor activity. However, recent research indicated Fish are more intelligent and sentient than previously thought. Fishing is not a benign experience for the Fish and particularly cruel if the Fish that are caught are not eaten for food. Reading “What a Fish Knows” is insightful and may lead to more careful consideration of the lives of Fishes and whether fishing for “fun” is appropriate.

### Acquisition of County Corrections and golf course properties

The initial Battle Creek concept plan indicated the County Corrections property was slated for addition to Battle Creek RP. This has been removed in the current concept plan.

Ramsey County is one of the smallest counties in Minnesota and one of the most densely populated. Seldom are there opportunities to add a relatively large parcel (77 acres) such as the corrections property to the park. Because the property is already a county inholding, the costs for acquisition would be small and the benefits to the public, large.

Additionally, the corrections property is grassland-like habitat, one of the most rapidly disappearing habitats in the world. The corrections property provides home and food to a number of declining grassland Birds such as the American Kestrel, Bobolink, Clay-colored Sparrow and Dickcissel. These bird populations have declined 35-70% in the past fifty years and, the corrections property is the only place in southern Ramsey County where these birds can be found. With the climate- and extinction crisis, it is imperative that habitat such as the corrections property be protected and restored.

Regarding the “Ponds at Maplewood”, adding this property to the park would also be a boon for the public as it would provide additional stormwater collection and relief from the urban heat island especially if restored.

Please add acquisition of both properties back into the Battle Creek concept plan.

### Lacking an environmental assessment

The RCPSP calls for protecting and managing the parks in an environmentally sustainable manner, yet the Battle Creek RP concept plan has no language for engaging in an environmental assessment. In Ramsey County’s Natural Resource plan, a number of rare species such as Kitten Tails, Illinois Tickfoil, Skunk Cabbage, Showy Lady Slippers, Bald Eagles, Ospreys, Red Shouldered Hawks, and Blanding’s Turtles have been identified, yet “No active surveys are conducted to locate rare species” (p12 and 22). Ramsey County parks, including Battle Creek, have the potential to harbor a number of rare and endangered species, including the Rusty-patch Bumble Bee, the Minnesota’s “state” Bee.

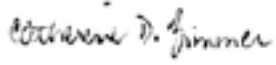
Before any construction and certainly with acquisition of the county properties an on-the-ground environmental assessment must be conducted. Doing so will allow better understanding of Nature in the park and how to best conserve, protect, manage and educate.

Again, as a resident, taxpayer and environmental health scientist, I appreciate the opportunity to comment and your careful consideration of these comments. Protecting the Nature-based regional parks is important human

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

health, biodiversity protection, climate resilience, mitigating the urban heat island and water cleansing and holding. I hope you agree and support requested changes to the Battle Creek concept plan.

Sincerely,



Catherine Zimmer, MS Environmental Health  
1790 Hague Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55104

CC: Ben Karp via email  
Council member Jane Prince via email  
Leah Shepherd via email  
Melissa Wenzel via email  
Metric Giles via email  
Mike Berger via email



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Rainry Salk](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Leah Shepard](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [mark.mccabe@ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mark.mccabe@ramsey.mn.us)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Concept Plan  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 2:54:50 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello,

I write to express my concerns about the concept plan for Battle Creek Regional Park. I have submitted my concerns in the past, during other planning phases, centered on the trail system. Unfortunately, many of my concerns persist and new ones have emerged.

I will say that I appreciate the omission of many of the initial proposed trails on slope sides. Having bore witness to ongoing slope erosion, recreational use conflict, and safety concerns on existing bluff trails in the park, foregoing future development on steep bluff areas is a sound management decision.

Unfortunately, there continues to be issues with the proposed trail system.

First, there is a lack of expressed need for additional trail mileage. I truly fail to see the need. For instance, what justification is there for increased off road cycling/hiking trails? As I have made it known many times, I use the park daily. I hardly ever see hikers, so it's not as if the existing trails are so crowded as to suggest the need for hiking trail expansion. As such, I am left to assume that the expansion of miles is to enhance the experience of mountain bikers, to expand the mileage so as to offer more opportunities for longer/different rides for that recreational user group. Thus, we are essentially carving up the park to a great degree for ONE user group at the detriment of other user groups, wildlife species, and plant biodiversity. Again, to underscore, there is not a justification or rationale for the expansion of off-road cycling/hiking trails, beyond what appears to be caving to the expressed desire of one powerful user group: MORC.

The increased proposed off-road trail miles are problematic from a management perspective for a variety of reasons. As I have indicated in the past, multi-use trails have: 1) a greater propensity for recreational conflict among varying user groups, 2) decreased user safety, and 3) greater propensity for recreational displacement of some user groups.

The new proposed trail system presents other issues as well. The new proposed off-Road cycling/ hiking trails criss-crosses existing trails, often paved, and will lead to negative impacts on visitor experiences. For instance, mountain bikers will have to slow down at every paved trail crossing (which are plentiful in many of the proposed areas, often six times or more in a 1/4-1/2 mile section). Conversely, walkers on the paved trails will need to be hyper aware at trail crossings to ensure they aren't hit. Neither of these are optimal recreational experiences.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

As a general rule, trail planning should minimize differing trail crossings (e.g., paved/unpaved, etc.) to the greatest extent possible. This criteria for future trail development is ignored in the new proposed concept plan. To illustrate this issue, just look at how many times the varied colored and dotted lines bisect one another on the map. For all your proclaimed emphasis on safe crossings, you've failed to consider internal safe crossings within the trail build outs.

With regards to individual proposed trail segments, there are a few specific concerns to raise:

1) Upper Afton Road to McKnight, new off-road cycling/hiking trails that run on both sides of creek. These proposed trails criss-cross existing paved trails, and present issues described above. Further, the recreational experience afforded in this section of the park is one wherein the foliage envelopes the paved trail to provide a sense of walking through the woods. The landmass of the park on either side of the creek, however, is not very wide, the neighborhood being just a few hundred feet away. As such, creating new trail corridors for speeds to accommodate mountain biking in that area will vastly alter the protected feel of that area of the park, essentially rendering it more of a paved trail along on creek bed in a neighborhood. It is clear the intention here is for cultivating a one way mountain bike route (hence the need for trails on both sides of creek), so all the natural resources that would be obliterated are essentially to cater to their ability to have a loop. Beyond the natural resource impacts of trail development, what will be the ongoing impact the creek itself with additional ongoing trail erosion? This section of the park is simply not fitted for three distinct trails, following along the same exact corridor.

2) East of the Creek to Battle Creek Road to Lower Afton Road. There are many segments that run parallel/adjacent to ski trails. Not sure why one needs additional trails in exact same area when the ski trails suffice during their off season. My assumption is to create single track for mountain bikers, but again question the necessity here since there already exists trails that are under-utilized already. Also, there are additional segments that are built on bluff sides that are super problematic and lead to no where anyway (e.g., most south western segment, near lower Afton).

3) Battle Creek Road to Winthrop; upper Afton to lower Afton. There are many proposed segments that are duplicative and unneeded. For instance, in the center of that area there is a proposed off-road cycling/hiking trail that runs north/south, nestled in between ski trail on either side. That area is beautiful oak forested land that does not need another trail ripping through it, particularly given there already exists three trails to chose from running the same direction. A hiker does not need yet another route to go to the same place. So, is this to accommodate mountain bikers who wish to have single track trail? Again, design build out reads to be catering to one particular user group: mountain bikers. Further, there are multiple proposed trail segments that are on steep slopes that will be problematic, including the northern segment near Luella Street and southern segment near lower Afton.

4) East of dog park; upper Afton to lower afton. Again, the proposed off-road cycling hiking trail segments here cross-cross paved trails at an alarming rate. The proposed loop appears to bisect existing paved trails ten times or more. Mind you, this a section of the park that is used by walkers, often older in age or families with young children. This creates the same problem described in #1 above, creating a trail system that is not desirable for any of the intended recreational user groups. Mountain bikers would need to slow down every 1000 feet and walkers would feel unsafe crossing bike trails all the time.

5) upper Afton to Hwy 94; East of McKnight. The proposed new ski trail is kind of ridiculous. It's basically such a short segment, not even worth gearing up for. And it leads to trails that are plowed in the winter.

There are so many new proposed trail segments cross-crossing the park that presents an additional concern. A substantial amount of money has been invested in managing for invasive species in the park. The splicing and dicing of new trails throughout the park will have a negative impact on those investments over time, creating greater opportunity for invasive species distribution throughout areas of the park currently inaccessible.

Lastly, and I cannot underscore this enough, the system plan is overwhelmingly catering to one user group: mountain bikers. This means that the plan inherently prioritizes the desires of affluent white males. With this design concept, you are essentially ensuring those who will most benefit from the park are those that can afford the upfront costs of mountain bike ownership. This is misaligned to the region's recreational needs and reality. A quarter of Saint Paul residents live in poverty. Nearly 15% of Ramsey county residents live in poverty. Unemployment in the county is at 9%. Yet, you are essentially planning for a system that requires a minimum of \$1350 investment to simply participate (see <https://www.mensjournal.com/adventure/how-much-does-it-really-cost-to-get-into-mountain-biking/>).

I would anticipate a rebuttal of my critique here will include the claim that these proposed trail segments are also hiking trails, so my assertions here-within have little merit. This is a good place for me to remind you that many of the existing trails used by mountain bikers in the park have already displaced hikers. For instance, the other week, I was hiking on an off-road cycling/hiking trail and a mountain biker came screeching up behind me and nearly leveled me. He told me that I needed to be aware that mountain bikers use these trails and I should be careful and maybe go elsewhere. I had to remind him that I have the right of way and that he is to yield to me, not tell me to go elsewhere. Unfortunately, due to the slopes of the trail system and the speeds of bikers, yielding to hikers is not always possible. As such, I find I am often displaced to routes where mountain bikers are not present. Daily, I must chose my routes based on the number of cars with bike racks at trail heads due to fear for my own safety. And this is already before trail expansion.

I urge you to go back and re-evaluate the proposed system. The proposed development of future trails should be based on recreational demand and NEEDS of all recreationists, not solely the desires expressed by a powerful, vocal user group. If you took this approach, you'd quickly learn you have enough trails and just need to actively manage those you have (e.g., rules, way finding, mapping consistency, etc.).

Thanks for your consideration,  
Raintry Salk, PhD  
Doctor of Recreation Resource Management

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Frederick Waltz](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park natural habitats  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:30:04 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

Since moving to Ramsey County (Roseville) in 1965 I have watched, to my dismay, the continuing degradation of natural habitats and loss of species diversity in our county and the world. The pace of degradation has been accelerating rapidly.

It is the civic duty and patriotic duty of every American to resist further degradation of our precious and diminishing natural areas. Therefore, I hereby ask you to do everything in your power to prevent the sale of so-called Battle Creek Site A and Site B for any kind of commercial or residential development.

Please do whatever you can to expand the boundaries of Battle Creek park to include Site A, and retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek.

Thank you,  
Frederick Waltz

Frederick M. Waltz, Professor (Retired)  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
1666 Coffman Street #1666  
Falcon Heights, MN 55108  
[waltz.fm@yahoo.com](mailto:waltz.fm@yahoo.com)

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

From: [Chase Davies](#)  
To: [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#)  
Subject: Battle Creek Properties - Please Leave Wild and Do Not Allow Any Development  
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 3:46:40 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

November 30, 2020 3:45 p.m.

Dear Mr. Karp, Director McCabe, and Commissioner McGuire,

It concerns me deeply we may possibly lose two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County. Though I live in Roseville, I have visited both of these sites in the past and they are both truly splendid. They are both also tremendously needed wild and open space for wildlife in Ramsey County. These are:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am tremendously disappointed the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

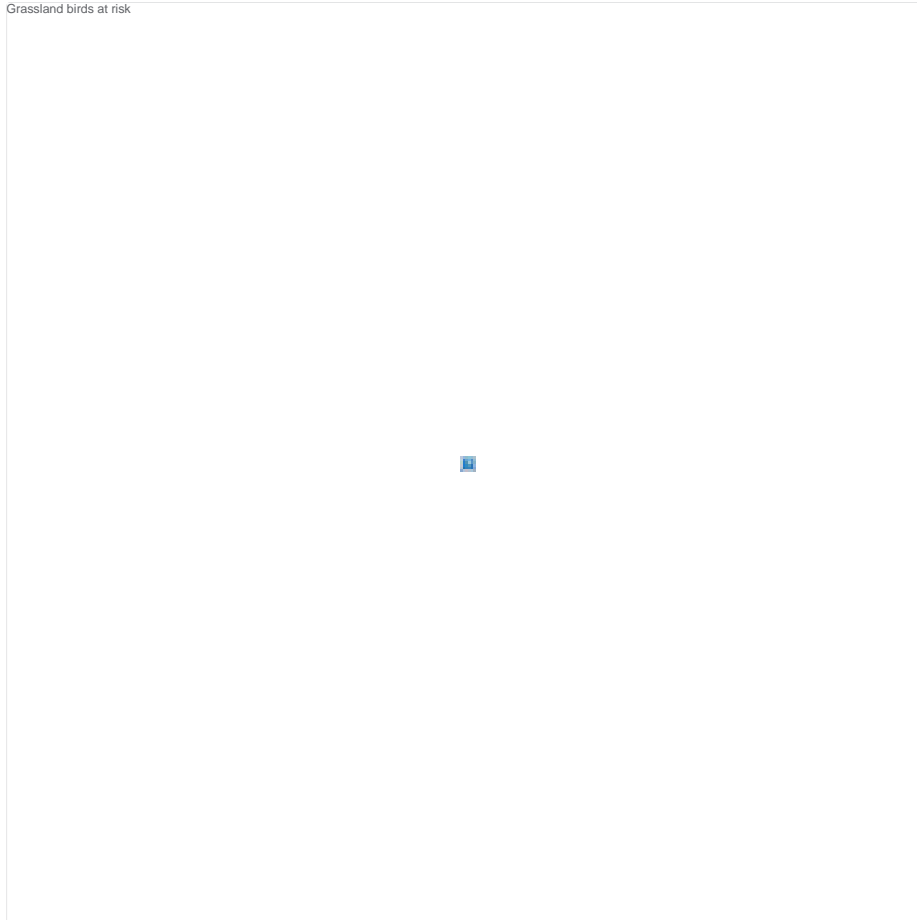
### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Here are some of the bird species documented in the grassland tract (Site A) during the 2019 and 2020 nesting seasons. The percentage by which those species have declined in Minnesota since 1967 is documented by the USGS Breeding Bird Survey. <https://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/>

Grassland birds at risk



Sincerely,

Chase C Davies, 1442 Brenner Avenue, Shoreview MN 55113



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Ed Davies](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Properties - Please Leave Wild and Do Not Allow Any Development  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:33:21 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp, Director McCabe, and Commissioner McGuire,

It concerns me deeply we may possibly lose two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County. Though I live in New Brighton, I have visited both of these sites in the past and they are both truly splendid. They are both also tremendously needed wild and open space for wildlife in Ramsey County. These are:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am tremendously disappointed the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### ***Please do the right thing:***

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Here are some of the bird species documented in the grassland tract (Site A) during the 2019 and 2020 nesting seasons. The percentage by which those species have declined in Minnesota since 1967 is documented by the USGS Breeding Bird Survey. [\[i\]\[i\] https://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/](https://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/)

Grassland birds at risk



Sincerely,

**Ed Davies**, 540 13th Avenue NW, New Brighton, MN 55112 612-819-1196

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Kathleen Schuler](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek regional park comment submission  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:54:06 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Director McCabe and Planner Karp,

Although I don't live in Ramsey County, I am concerned about protecting the many beautiful parks that I enjoy hiking and bird watching in, including Battle Creek Regional Park. I am concerned about protecting habitat and the climate crisis. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Battle Creek regional park concept plan.

I appreciate that the concept plan suggests adding Nature stations and incorporating Nature study to school children nearby helping to create the next generation of stewards. However, the plan's extensive trail networks will fragment and destroy the natural resource base of the park. The proposed plan more than doubles (from 8 to 17 miles) the amount of mountain bike trails in Battle Creek. It is not practical or safe for these trails to be shared between mountain bikers and hikers, including senior citizens and families with children. Adding more trails for mountain biking is also not an equitable use of the park as most mountain bikers are young white males, a cohort that the plan seems to be catering to at the expense of other users such as older citizens and passive users. More trails will also fragment habitat which is problematic particularly for smaller species such as reptiles and amphibians and, the trail edges make for easier introduction of invasive species, a significant problem in Ramsey County parks.

Also, the initial Battle Creek plan had identified the adjacent county corrections property as slated for acquisition. In the current plan, that no longer appears to be the case. The corrections property provides habitat for a number of grassland Bird species that are in decline, such as the American Kestrel and Clay-colored Sparrow. The golf course property retains some large trees and wetlands providing climate resilience and stormwater management as the climate continues to get wetter. The property could also be restored to Savanna, a lovely ecotype of Oak and other trees along with native grasses such as Bluestem.

The proposed Battle Creek plan does not support the 2018 park system plan, which calls for protection of high-quality environmental sensitive areas, maintenance or critical habitat, and conditions that support healthy wildlife populations. Therefore, I request:

- that the doubling of mountain bike trails and redundant trails such as the two trails added along the narrow Battle Creek bed and the addition of yet another paved trail and mountain bike trails on the east end of the park be removed from the plan.
- that both the county corrections land and the golf course be added to Battle Creek regional park.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Schuler  
1520 10<sup>th</sup> Ave S #2  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
[Keschuler47@gmail.com](mailto:Keschuler47@gmail.com)  
612-382-5917

The long holiday weekend is also perfect for sending in brief comments on Ramsey County's "[concept](#)" [plan for Battle Creek regional park](#). Of particular concern:

- Trails being proposed—the [trail map](#) looks like a pile of spaghetti with many trails, many of them redundant. Trail construction can destroy a swath 50 feet wide. And, as you know, trails fragment habitat, especially for smaller species, e.g. reptiles & amphibians that will not cross trails. Trails also allow for the introduction of invasive species, a problem RamCo parks calls out in its system plan. Invasive species also do not provide adequate food and habitat for the native species we are trying to protect. Of particular note: the concept plan **doubles** the amount of mountain bike trails (mtb) from about 8 miles to 17 miles. (While the planners state these trails are “shared” with hikers, anyone who has tried to hike on a trail with mtb knows the mtb are disruptive and concerning regarding safety. The first and last time I tried to hike and bird watch on a shared trail, I fell trying to get off the trail because of the mtb. It was not a pleasant experience.)
- Acquisition of the county corrections property and the to-be-decommissioned golf course are not included. The corrections property was in the original concept, but has been removed—we believe because Maplewood wants to develop it. This despite the land is habitat for a number of grassland **Birds whose populations are declining**. For example, the American Kestrel, 73% decline, Bobolink 65% decline, Clay-colored Sparrow 35% decline, Dickcissel 67% decline, Eastern Meadowlark 53% decline. (Minnesota specific population declines, data from the USGS Breeding Bird survey 1967-present.) It is important, given the impending extinction of one million species, for these Birds and for other wildlife, the properties such as the corrections site be protected and the golf course be restored.

Ramsey County's 2018 park system plan has robust language for protecting the parks' natural resources, e.g. protecting environmentally sensitive areas, restoring degrading natural resources and managing for healthy wildlife. Yes, the proposed plan for Battle Creek with multiple, redundant and overbuilt trail system does not protect the park's natural resource base. Also, the opportunity to increase the natural resource base with the acquisition of the corrections property and restoring the Ponds at Maplewood golf course is being missed with the concept plan.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Catherine Zimmer](#)  
**To:** [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Leah Shepard](#); [Mike Berger](#); [metriccsp@gmail.com](mailto:metriccsp@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek regional park concept plan comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 5:35:42 PM  
**Attachments:** [Battle Creek concept plan comments 11-2020.pdf](#)

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Dear Ramsey County Commissioners, Mr. McCabe and Mr. Karp,

Attached please find comments to the Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan.

Thank you for your consideration of the requested changes.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Zimmer



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Jane Schuler](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Plan  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:10:52 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Ramsey County Commissioners, Director McCabe, and Planner Karp,  
I am a taxpayer and citizen concerned about protecting habitat and the climate crisis. I am a bird watcher, and love to hike in the woods for solitude. The plan's extensive trail networks will fragment and destroy the natural resource base of the park. The proposed plan more than doubles (from 8 to 17 miles) the amount of mountain bike trails in Battle Creek. While these trails are marked as "shared" with hiking, that is neither practical nor safe. A mountain biker just scares all the animals and birds away, and stresses them. More trails will also fragment habitat, which decreases the number of species able to fully use the park (especially nesting), and is problematic particularly for smaller species such as reptiles and amphibians. The trail edges also make for easier introduction of invasive species. Invasive species is highlighted as one of the most significant management problems in Ramsey County parks. The initial Battle Creek plan identified the adjacent county corrections property as slated for acquisition. In the current plan, that no longer appears to be the case. The golf course property retains some large trees and wetlands providing climate resilience and stormwater management as the climate continues to get wetter. Restored to Oak Savanna with native species, the property would be a great addition to support the bird species (& other animals) facing serious declines.

I feel that protecting high quality environmentally sensitive areas and managing for healthy wildlife populations should be top priorities for the parks in this time of climate crisis. Thank you for allowing public commentary on this plan. Sincerely,

Jane Schuler  
695 Sherwood Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55106

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Pat](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park, The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 2:31:27 PM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Sirs,

I was very shocked when I learned of your plan to develop these properties. Of particular concern was the knowledge that my father Bernard Edmonds (former Director of Ramsey County Parks) worked tirelessly to provide this open space for future generations. Living in Woodbury, I often go for walks in Battle Creek Regional Park, as do my children and grandchildren. I have observed the diverse, multi-generational small groups of people who are also enjoying the park. In addition to the benefits the park has for individuals and families, it is so valuable as a grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Please consider: 1) Expanding the boundary of Battle Creek Regional park to include the tract adjacent to the park and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

2) Retain ownership and management of the Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

Thank you,  
Pat Edmonds  
3105 Juniper Lane unit D  
Woodbury, MN 55125

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [denisemarlowe5729](mailto:denisemarlowe5729)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:17:35 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp, Selling the 77 acre tract is a really destructive plan for biological diversity. It is a valuable habitat for birds and other wildlife that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. The tract harbors the American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark and Dickcissel. The county should expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park and retain ownership and management of The Ponds as open space and passive recreation. I hope you will take this into consideration. Denise Marlowe

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Dorothy Waltz](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 11:13:36 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp,

I'm writing to you to express my concern about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has developed plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide important wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area as protected wildlife habitat than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to benefit management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

- Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
- Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

Even though I live in Falcon Heights, I and many friends from this side of Ramsey County visit and enjoy these areas, and hope you will do all you can to protect them for wildlife.

Sincerely,

***Dorothy Waltz***

Dorothy Waltz  
1666 Coffman St Apt 313

Falcon Heights MN 55108  
651-917-0930  
[waltz.ds@yahoo.com](mailto:waltz.ds@yahoo.com)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Debbie Meister](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [District1](#); [District 2](#)  
[Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 11:17:10 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Ramsey County Commissioners, Director McCabe and Planner Karp,

As a Ramsey County, I am pleased to submit comments on the Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan.

Battle Creek, and the regional park system in general, provides a critical opportunity to preserve our natural resources and provide an area for citizens to learn about and enjoy the natural environment. I appreciate the concept plan suggesting adding nature stations and incorporating nature study for school children. **However, the plan's extensive trail networks will fragment and destroy the natural resource base of the park.**

The proposed plan more than doubles (from 8 to 17 miles) the amount of mountain bike trails in Battle Creek. While these trails are marked as "shared" with hiking, in reality that is neither practical nor safe. I have had unnerving experiences of mountain bikers roaring past me, requiring me to jump off "shared" trails—a most unpleasant experience. Adding more mountain bike trails will detract from a quiet nature experience.

More trails will also fragment habitat, which is problematic particularly for smaller species such as reptiles and amphibians. Additional trail edges make for easier introduction of invasive species. Invasive species is highlighted as one of the most significant management problems in Ramsey County parks.

The county's 2018 park system plan outlines goals for protecting the parks' natural resources. These should be at the forefront of the Battle Creek plan:

- Protect high-quality environmental sensitive areas
- Restore degraded natural resources
- Maintain critical natural processes
- Incorporate natural resource management into park maintenance
- Increase environmental education, awareness and appreciation of natural resources
- Promote a positive environmental ethic
- Manage for healthy wildlife populations

To be true to the goals of the park system plan, I request **removing**:

- Doubling of mountain bike trails and redundant trails such as the two trails added along the narrow Battle Creek bed

Addition of another paved trail and mountain bike trails on the east end of the park

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the plan.

Sincerely,  
Debbie Meister  
1312 Portland Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Meg Duhr](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Comments regarding Battle Creek area undeveloped lands  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 12:04:58 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Director McCabe and Mr. Karp,

I am a St. Paul resident living in the West 7th neighborhood. I am very concerned about the climate crisis and the loss of habitat for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. I am also a regular user of Battle Creek Regional Park, as a bird-watcher, cyclist, and hiker.

The subject parcels I am referencing are:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

When I recently learned that the two county-owned parcels of undeveloped land are vulnerable I knew I needed to speak up to urge the County Commissioners to keep this land in county ownership and maintained as open space. It is a rare opportunity to have (relatively) undeveloped parcels of land this large and already adjacent to parklands and if we are to honor the commitment we have made to do everything we can to slow the climate crisis, we must keep these lands undeveloped.

I recognize the need for more housing in our area, but there are plenty of excessive parking lots and abandoned big box stores sitting on sites that could be repurposed. Please do the right thing: Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

Sincerely,  
Meg Duhr

223 Colborne Street, St. Paul

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Grant Tiefenbruck LAST\\_NAME](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** County Owned Properties near the Work House  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:15:50 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:  
Director McCabe:  
Commissioners:

I am concerned about the possible loss of a tract of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents)

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of this property. This property provides wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. This property has far greater value for the metropolitan area in its current state than it would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use this land, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Grant F. Tiefenbruck*

*8989 Jasmine Lane S.*

*Cottage Grove, MN 55016*

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Kele Cable](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Don't develop the Battle Creek sites and make it a haven for threatened wildlife  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 11:29:14 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Ortega:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Kele Cable*

*2276 Highland Pkwy*

*Saint Paul, MN 55116*

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary Voight](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Homeless People and Living Creatures  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 10:17:53 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

Dear Director McCabe:

Dear Commissioner McDonough:

*Unless the sale of Ramsey County land results in the construction of affordable housing for people living in tents along Warner Road in St. Paul*, I am very concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

*There is plenty of empty commercial real estate in the city of Maplewood.* The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties should provide housing for poor St. Paul residents or at least continue to provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Build affordable housing.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area will benefit. *What are your intentions?*

Sincerely,

Mary C. Voight

951 McKnight Road South

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Holly Einess](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Input on Battle Creek Regional Park plan  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 6:37:20 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Planner Karp,

Thank you for taking citizen input on the Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan.

As an avid conservationist and environmentalist, I request that you make habitat preservation a higher priority in the park. The plan as it now stands more than doubles the existing mountain biking trails, which will further fragment habitat and scare off wildlife. Please consider reducing the number of these trails.

Also, I understand that at one time the adjacent county corrections property and golf course were being considered for acquisition. In the current plan, that no longer appears to be the case. If at all possible, please consider acquiring this land, and then setting it aside for wildlife, with perhaps just a few (unpaved) walking trails for those of us who enjoy birding or just walking without having to watch out for bikers. Not to mention that wildlife will be at less risk of being run over.

I appreciate the efforts and plans to make the most of the park, and to satisfy multiple interests. Consider me a voice for the non-human users of the park, whose habitat throughout the greater Metro area continues to shrink due to development. Let's give them as much space as we can!

Thank you for your consideration of my comments and concerns.

Sincerely,  
Holly Einess  
5021 Beard Ave S  
Minneapolis, MN 55410



**From:** [Sunderland, Annie](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Land adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 4:10:38 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Ann Marie Sunderland  
15555 Flight Way  
Apple Valley, MN 55124

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*Note: This email and its attachments may contain information protected by state or federal law or that may not otherwise be disclosed. If you received this in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete this email and its attachments from all devices.*

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Dave](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#)  
**Subject:** Master Plan for Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:59:19 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Carter:

Commissioner McDonough:

Commissioner MatasCastillo:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);

The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Dave Crawford  
1520 Lexington Parkway North  
Saint Paul, MN 55117

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Cynthia Hill](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Objections to Battle Creek development  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 8:56:39 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

To Commissioners Carter and McDonough and Mr. Karp and Mr. McCabe:

As a member of the St. Paul Audubon Society, I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County and the resulting damage to many bird species:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

The county should reconsider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Thank you for reconsidering and acting on behalf of imperiled bird species.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Hill

Cynthia Hill  
161 Amherst Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55105  
651-699-8244  
612-810-6150 (cell)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [DIANE MANCINI](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Open Space--Preserve It  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 6:02:32 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp, Director McCabe, and Commissioner Ortega:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

It would be a short-sighted mistake for the county to sell the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit. Let us be good stewards of the land we borrow.

Sincerely,

Diane Mancini

1280 Eleanor Ave

St. Paul, MN 55116



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [dr bello](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Open Spaces  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 2:04:16 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

We know where the money will have gone in the next decade or so...  
Somewhere surly. Yours, mine and everyone else's lives will with out a question be better in  
countless ways because of somewhere left too breath....Please leave the birds and bees more  
not less. Be well.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [TOM.DIMOND](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Park comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:52:50 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Tom Dimond  
2119 Skyway Drive  
Saint Paul, MN 55119

### **Clean up pollution in Pig's Eye Lake - Don't add to the problem**

*Cleaning up pollution in Pig's Eye Lake, by removing polluted lake sediment, is the most essential habitat restoration. Without cleanup of the pollution, efforts to restore aquatic vegetation, fish populations, bird populations, and recreational opportunities are doomed.*

The U S Army Corps of Engineers, Metropolitan Council, and Minnesota DNR have raised concerns about pollutant impact on habitat and wildlife. We all know cleanup of pollution is essential to a healthy environment, wildlife and recreation opportunities. Adding more than 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant will only exacerbate the problem and make cleanup more difficult. It would add 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant removal to the already high cost of cleanup. Failure to clean up pollution will limit park potential as a safe habitat for wildlife and recreational use.

*The Corps of Engineers would have you believe wind is causing an unhealthy park environment and not pollution. This narrative, attempts to justify the use of our lake as a dump site for dredge spoils. A previous Corps EIS puts pollution at the heart of the problem not wind. Critical Area protections call on us to stop filling wetlands.*

We've seen this before. The Pig's Eye Lake coal terminal was promoted as an environmental benefit. It was approved by the DNR and PCA. Residents actions protected the park and pushed for the SNA, State Critical Area and National Park. Now we have to protect it again.

***Wolf in sheep's clothing.*** *The potential of our Regional Park would be put at risk to create artificial islands that prohibit pelicans and other migratory birds and it fails to address the real problem "pollution".* The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) opposed the Corps plan. To get their support, the Corps agreed to plant woody brush to prevent migratory birds like the pelican from using the area, chase birds away by harassing them, monitor to ensure birds stay away, and MAC wants lethal means used if harassment does not keep birds away. In conclusion, \$15.6 million of taxpayer money would be spent to dump more than 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant into the lake, so birds like the pelican can be harassed.

In spite of this agreement to harass the pelicans, Ramsey County's request for Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Funding claimed it provided habitat for the American White Pelican. Members later said they had not been told of the agreement to prohibit, and harass pelicans.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

In spite of the agreement, pelican photos are still used to sell the proposal.

*In the EAW, Metropolitan Council staff expressed concern that the eroding shoreline may be a result of water fluctuation and plants dying due to toxic water quality and thus the proposal would not improve the habitat conditions of the lake. A previous Corps EIS supports Met Council staff concerns. The Ramsey County EAW, states they are not aware of any evidence that would suggest contaminants are a cause of vegetation loss in Pig's Eye Lake.* The Corps environmental evaluation of Pig's Eye Lake concluded pollution is a primary cause of aquatic vegetation loss in Pig's Eye Lake, not wind.

The Corps environmental review of Pig's Eye Lake concluded: Water quality in the lake has been severely degraded. Regarding sparseness of vegetation in the lake the logical conclusion is that the problems of Pig's Eye Lake are essentially due to domestic pollution and encroachment by dump landfill and industrial development. The other two factors (rough fish and fluctuations in water level) undoubtedly aggregate the situation although they certainly should not be considered of primary importance. *In any case, these factors have severely damaged the natural characteristics of the lake and limited its usefulness to waterfowl, furbearers, and fish.*

The Corps EIS describes the habitat for waterfowl as poor due to a lack of emergent vegetation, and the existence of pollution and large fluctuation in water levels. The Corps lists three factors involved in the lack of emergent vegetation: (1) the muck bottom is not a good substrate for plant growth, (2) chemical concentrations in the water are so high as to be limiting, (3) turbidity, caused at least in part by algal blooms, causes severe competition for rooted aquatic plants.

The Corps environmental review cited: The muck in Pig's Eye Lake has a foul odor when disturbed, indicating high concentrations of some chemicals and possible anerobic decomposition, neither of which are conducive to root growth, the sulphate ion concentration is much higher than would normally be expected, and sulfur compounds are generally harmful to vegetation.

Generally, Pig's Eye Lake is a hardwater lake of high fertility. It's high levels of sulphate and chloride ions indicate a high degree of domestic pollution. Levels of phosphorus and nitrogen are also high, probably due to the same cause. The coliform bacteria exceed the PCA maximum for recreation of all kinds. Pig's Eye landfill appears to be the primary contributor of sulfate ion and foul odor.

The Minnesota DNR Pig's Eye Lake Heron Rookery SNA provides additional information. *Pig's Eye Island Heron egg tests found PFC levels that were the highest measured in bird eggs worldwide.* The 1987 nest count was 1,300 and 2,600 adult birds. The 2015 count was 554 nests and 1,108 adult birds. A significant decline. Studies in 1993 and 2010-2011 found PFC concentrations in Heron eggs.

The PCA states that PFC – Per fluorinated chemicals refer to the group of toxic chemicals that include PFOA, PFOS and others. They persist in the environment for long periods.

Met Council staff requested the Corps collect water samples prior to progressing on the project as a means of certifying that improved habitat conditions could be realized. *The Corps*

*response was – Improving water quality is not an objective of the project, and is not an objective of the CAP authority.*

**The public record shows pollution as the problem. The EAW states that improving water quality is not an objective of the project. This supports the Met Council staff concern that the proposal would not improve habitat conditions of the lake. The public deserves an answer to this question before \$15.6 million is spent dumping pollutant into the lake.** The Corps previous environmental review and studies for the SNA provide evidence that pollution is the underlying problem, not wind. Another indicator, the lake is dominated by two groups of aquatic invertebrates that are normally considered tolerant of pollution and or organic enrichment. MN DNR found most heavily polluted waters had rough fish like carp and were least inhabited by game fish. This is Pig’s Eye Lake. All of the indicators are flashing pollution.

**MN DNR staff questioned how the setting of the proposed project compares with other island building projects and whether additional risks and uncertainties were identified for the proposed project.** The Corps did not address additional risks and uncertainties. Risks include: 2 superfund sites, urban storm water runoff, a toxic unconsolidated muck lake bottom, largest waste treatment plant on the Mississippi, industrial run off, and an airport combined to create significant additional risks and uncertainties and a different setting than areas with limited pollution and or conflicts with development. The location is in the heart of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metro area with 4 million people. The Corps should answer MN DNR’s question.

The previous Corps EIS concluded Pig’s Eye lake is a natural lake, not a backwater created by a dam, ordinary water level before dam construction was 688 and current level is 688, area of the lake in 1895 and 1967 are about the same, and 1895 average depth 6.5 feet.

Pig’s Eye Lake is 628 acres with an average depth of 3 feet. *400,000 cubic yards of fill is enough to fill 82.6 acres or 13 percent of the lake. This is an area larger than Como Lake.* When dredge spoils are dumped in the lake it will create mud waves that spread out in the lake. The net effect is you will not see all of the fill but the area impacted, by reduced depth, will exceed 83 acres. The environment will be negatively impacted by the resuspension of pollutants and recreational boat use will be restricted by all of the fill. The public deserves maps showing areas impacted and the depth differences it will make. The Great River Passage Plan calls for expanded boat access to the lake. Priorities of the National Park and Regional Parks include expanding recreational opportunities, and cleaning up the environment.

**None of the Counties 2017 project goals are met by this proposal.** The County said the goals of the proposal were: 1. To improve aquatic habitat 2. Increase available nesting and resting habitat 3. Maintain and or enhance the quality of shoreline habitat. The proposal does not remove polluted sediment and restore greater depth, it prohibits resting and nesting on the islands, it does not address pollution that the Corps concluded is a primary cause of vegetation loss and poor habitat. Habitat and wildlife health are dependent on cleanup that this proposal is not intended to do.

The DNR studies of the rookery are cautionary. The record shows pollution impacts and declining numbers of birds. The Corps previous environmental review tells us the loss of vegetation, poor wildlife habitat, foul odors, blue green algae blooms, high levels of sulfate and chloride ions and loss of species is primarily the result of pollution. The Proposal

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specifically states that *Improving water quality is not an objective of the project, and is not an objective of the CAP authority.*

The first priority should be pollution cleanup. Proposals to attract wildlife to polluted habitat is counterproductive and irresponsible.

**Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CLA)** establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged material into waters of the United States. The basic premise is that no discharge of dredged or fill material may be permitted if: (1) a practical alternative exists that is less damaging to the aquatic environment or (2) the nation's waters would be significantly degraded. The Corps previous EIS, DNR studies, and other evidence of record clearly demonstrate that pollution cleanup is the principal problem and a practical alternative. Filling Pig's Eye Lake is not in keeping with Federal and State policies to prevent filling and encourage pollutant cleanup.

**February 5, 2003, the City and County submitted a joint request to the Corps for removal of pollutant from the lake.** The Corps EIS had previously concluded the toxic muck lake bottom is not a good substrate for plant growth, chemical concentrations in the water are so high as to be limiting, heavy algae bloom probably due to pollution, and poor waterfowl habitat due to pollution killing vegetation. The City-County joint request looked to remove 6 to 8 feet of polluted muck from Pig's Eye Lake. Removal would reduce pollution levels, reduce turbidity, and provide greater depth diversity. Depth diversity and pollutant reduction would reduce turbidity, enhance vegetation, and fish species, and enhance water recreation opportunities including, fishing, canoe/kayaking, and birding, and reduce winter fish kill. The Corps EIS helped inform the joint City/County Section 206 request for aquatic restoration. The 206 program is for aquatic restoration and not a dredge spoils program. The Corps took no action on City-County request submitted by the Mayor and Commissioner Jim McDonough.

### **Section 206 is aquatic restoration – Section 204 is dredge spoils disposal**

The Section 206 aquatic restoration request (lake pollution removal) is very different than Section 204 which is a dredge spoils (pollutant) disposal program. The Section 204 proposal actually increases the volume of pollutants in Pig's Eye Lake.

This is about finding a place to dump dredge spoils. In the Corps Summer 2020 publication there is a picture of a mountain of dredge spoils. It says they are going to dispose of excess dredge spoils at Pig's Eye Lake. It also points out the Corps is having trouble keeping up with a 10 to 20 percent increase of dredge spoils.

The EAW states that there are other viable alternatives. The catch is, when weighing advantages, those options do not provide the same financial advantage to the Corps of disposing dredge spoils. It is the ugly truth behind the proposal to dump pollutants into our lake, to create habitat for pelicans, who will be harassed until they leave or are killed. The inconvenient truth is pollution is the primary problem not wind. We can do better with a proposal that actually addresses pollution. We must protect the Heron Rookery SNA from pollutants. The \$4.3 million of State funding should be redirected to protect wildlife and park visitors.

**Will the lake's water quality ensure a safe environment for wildlife?** Page 278 of the proposed Pig's Eye Lake Plan Amendment states: "The answer to this question is still an unknown and



obtaining a scientifically defensible conclusion is probably not feasible within the scope and budget of this project.”

The budget is \$15.6 million. Actually, the Corps previous EIS, DNR Rookery studies, and numerous other investigations indicate the clear risk, pollution poses, to the survival of wildlife and habitat. The EIS is a higher-level environmental review than the EAW done for this proposal.

A 1993 study of Heron Rookery eggs looked at the Pig’s Eye Lake Rookery, a rookery 140 km upstream and one 114 km downstream. **PFC’s concentrations detected in the Pig’s Eye Lake eggs were significantly higher. The Pig’s Eye Colony had a mean 1,015 ng/g wet weight, the upstream colony was 68 and downstream was 153.** The Plan Amendment - PFC’s in Pig’s Eye Lake Appendix, page 288 concludes: These findings suggest that birds nesting near Pig’s Eye would be exposed to similar levels of contaminants compared to those nesting in the surrounding Mississippi or St. Croix Rivers. This conclusion reinforces the need for an independent EIS.

**Saint Paul’s adopted Critical Area protections, approved by the MN DNR and Metropolitan Council, prohibit disposal of dredge spoils in the lake.**

Saint Paul Sec. 68.103 (c) Compliance of structures, fill, etc. No structure, fill, material or object shall hereafter be placed on or removed from lands within the River Corridor District, and no structures or other object shall hereafter be located, used, constructed, extended, converted or altered within the district without full compliance with this chapter and other applicable laws.

MN State Statute 115.01 defines dredge spoils as “waste”, and “pollutant”.

Saint Paul’s Critical Area Protections

Sec. 68.221 - waste shall not be permitted in the flood fringe RC-2 District.

Sec. 68.221 - disposal of waste materials not permitted

Sec. 68.223 – disposal of waste shall not be permitted as a conditional use.

In addition, the use of pollutant/dredge spoils is prohibited by:

Sec. 68.402(c)(3) – only fill free of chemical pollutants and organic wastes shall be used

Sec. 68.225(h) - *Pollution of waters*. No use shall be permitted which is likely to cause pollution of waters, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Section 115.01, unless adequate safeguards, approved by the state pollution control agency, are provided.

MN Stat. Sec. 115.01 Subd. 13. “Pollution of water” means discharge of any pollutant into any waters of the State.

Section 404 of the United States Clean Water Act (CWA) defines dredge spoils as pollutant.

Many have worked long and hard to put in place protections for this park. It is the responsibility of our local elected officials, and the Metropolitan Council to ensure hard fought protections matter. I have spent half a century working to protect this beautiful resource. I served on the Pig’s Eye Coalition, MECCA, Planning Commission, City Council. Appointed by the U. S. Secretary of the Interior as a Commissioner for the National River and Recreation Area planning. I have had the good fortune to work with and consider as friends Governor Wendell Anderson, Congressman Bruce Vento, and Senator Dave Durenberger. The work of many to protect this area is entrusted to future generations honoring adopted protections.

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From: [TOM DIMOND](#)  
To: [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
Subject: Park comments  
Date: Monday, November 30, 2020 3:49:51 PM

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**Removing polluted lake sediment from Pig’s Eye Lake is essential for wildlife and park users. Adding more than 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant will make cleanup nearly impossible. This will limit future park potential.**

### Key findings

The Corps of Engineers has worked on two Pig’s Eye Lake environmental reviews.

The Corps concluded that Pig’s Eye Lake is a natural lake.

The Corps concluded the lake’s ordinary highwater level was 688 feet before locks and dams and today is 688 feet.

The Corps previous EIS concluded the area extent of Pig’s Eye Lake is about the same in 1967 as it was in 1895 (stable size for 72 years)

The Corps EIS concluded that the problems of Pig’s Eye Lake are essentially due to domestic pollution and encroachment by dump landfill and industrial development.

The Corps EIS concluded the other two factors (rough fish and fluctuations in water level) undoubtedly aggregate the situation although they certainly should not be considered of primary importance.

The Corps EIS concluded in any case, these factors have severely damaged the natural characteristics of the lake and limited its usefulness to waterfowl, furbearers, and fish.

The Corps EIS concluded the lake was dominated by two groups of aquatic invertebrates that are normally considered tolerant of pollution and or organic enrichment.

The MN DNR cites 1987 Pig’s Eye Lake Rookery census of 1,300 active nests and 2,600 adult birds

The MN DNR cites 2015 Pig’s Eye Lake Rookery census of 554 active nests and 1,108 adult birds

The MN DNR cites studies in 1993 and 2010-2011 that found PFC concentrations in Heron eggs, in some eggs the PFC levels were the highest measured in bird eggs worldwide

The Ramsey County Park Plan called for removal of polluted lake muck from Pig’s Eye Lake.

The City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County submitted a joint request to the Corp to remove 6 to 8 feet of polluted muck from the lake bottom under the Section 206 aquatic restoration program.

The common thread is pollutant cleanup is essential for healthy wildlife and recreation.

The City and County asked the Corps for help under Section 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration to remove pollutants from Pig’s Eye Lake.

The Corps took no action.

Fast forward to 2020, instead of removing pollutant, the proposal would dump 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant into Pig’s Eye Lake. Enough to fill 13% or 83 acres of the lake. The United States Clean Water Act, Section 502 defines dredge spoils as “pollutant”. Community members have long opposed dumping in Pig’s Eye Lake. It is at the heart of establishing the State Critical Area, State Scientific and Natural Area, Regional Park, and National Park.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Adopted park plans do not support dumping fill in the lake.

### **Saint Paul's adopted Critical Area protections that have been approved by the MN DNR and Metropolitan Council prohibit the disposal of dredge spoils in the lake.**

Saint Paul Sec. 68.103 (c) Compliance of structures, fill, etc. No structure, fill, material or object shall hereafter be placed on or removed from lands within the River Corridor District, and no structures or other object shall hereafter be located, used, constructed, extended, converted or altered within the district without full compliance with this chapter and other applicable laws.

MN State Statute 115.01 defines dredge spoils as “waste”, and “pollutant”.

Saint Paul's Critical Area Protections

Sec. 68.221 - waste shall not be permitted in the flood fringe RC-2 District.

Sec. 68.221 - disposal of waste materials not permitted

Sec. 68.223 – disposal of waste shall not be permitted as a conditional use.

In addition the use of pollutant/dredge spoils is prohibited by:

Sec. 68.402(c)(3) – only fill free of chemical pollutants and organic wastes shall be used

Sec. 68.225(h) - *Pollution of waters*. No use shall be permitted which is likely to cause pollution of waters, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Section 115.01, unless adequate safeguards, approved by the state pollution control agency, are provided.

The USDA and MAC require woody brush to prevent resting and nesting, harassment of birds to prevent resting and nesting and monitoring to ensure the birds do not use the artificial islands. If this is not successful MAC wants lethal methods used/

Records show the lake ordinary high water level was the same before and after lock and dam construction. fore and after

Section 404 of the United States Clean Water Act (CWA) defines dredge spoils as pollutant. Minnesota classifies dredge spoils as regulated waste. The Corps of Engineers refuses to call it what it is.

Ramsey County and the Metropolitan Council should reject dumping more than 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant/waste into Pig's Eye Lake.

### **Consider the facts.**

Facts are often ignored these days. All too often we see the tragic consequences of this behavior. This is particularly true when it comes to the current administration's assault on our natural resources.

For too long, Pig's Eye Regional Park has been used as a dump site for waste. Pig's Eye Regional Park wetlands were filled with waste. We have two superfund sites within the Regional Park that leak toxic pollutants into Battle Creek and Pig's Eye Lake. The waste treatment plant sluiced ash residue into the lake. A wood chipping operation had fires that lasted weeks. Runoff from the fires went into the lake. Industrial uses also impact the lake.

The consequences include: pollutant and nutrient levels in the lake that inhibit lake vegetation and fish habitat. Adding more than 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant would only add to the problem. Dredge spoils are a regulated waste as defined in State Law. The use of our

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wetlands as a dump site must stop. Instead, we should remove polluted muck and restore depth to allow habitat restoration and recreation opportunities.

### **Corps of Engineers EIS concludes Pig's Eye Lake problems are essentially due to pollution, landfill, and industrial.**

The Corps previous Pig's Eye Lake EIS (coal terminal) states: The logical conclusion is that the problems of Pig's Eye Lake are essentially due to domestic pollution and encroachment by dump landfill and industrial development. The other two factors (rough fish and fluctuations in water level) undoubtedly aggregate the situation although they certainly should not be considered of primary importance. In any case, these factors have severely damaged the natural characteristics of the lake and limited its usefulness to waterfowl, furbearers, and fish.

### **City- County joint request for Corps removal of polluted lake bottom muck.**

The Corps EIS also concluded Pig's Eye Landfill is the primary source of sulfate ion, the muck lake bottom is not a good substrate for plant growth, chemical concentrations in the water are so high as to be limiting, heavy algae bloom probably due to pollution, and poor waterfowl habitat. The EIS also concluded that clams and paddlefish have apparently been eliminated by pollution. The Corps EIS helped inform the City-County joint request to remove 6 to 8 feet of polluted muck from Pig's Eye Lake. Removal of the polluted muck would provide for depth diversity, species diversity, aquatic vegetation, and shoreline habitat. It would also enhance recreational opportunities including fishing, canoeing, and bird watching. The Corps EIS helped inform the joint City/County Section 206 request for aquatic restoration.

### **Corps of Engineers did not act on request to remove pollutants from lake.**

Removing 6 to 8 feet of polluted muck from Pig's Eye Lake is a joint aquatic restoration proposal submitted to the Corps of Engineers by the Mayor of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough. The request dated February 5, 2003 was for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration under Section 206. Section 206 is for aquatic restoration projects. The Corps did not act on the City and County request for aquatic restoration of Pig's Eye Lake.

### **Section 206 is aquatic restoration – Section 204 is dredge spoils disposal**

The Section 206 aquatic restoration request (lake pollution removal) is very different than the Section 204 which is a dredge spoils (pollutant) disposal program. The Section 204 proposal actually increases the volume of pollutants in Pig's Eye Lake which the Corps concluded is the primary cause of limited vegetation and fish.

The section 204 proposal is not about restoring islands flooded by the Corps which have been cited as examples. There is no record of islands in Pig's Eye Lake. This is about finding a place to dump dredge spoils. In the Corps Summer 2020 publication there is a picture of a mountain of dredge spoils. It says they are going to dispose of excess dredge spoils at Pig's Eye Lake. It also points out the Corps is having trouble keeping up with a 10 to 20 percent increase of dredge spoils.

### **Pig's Eye Island 2 is threatened by proposed land removal.**

There is a threat of losing the west portion of Island 2. Island 2 is home to the Heron/Egret Rookery at Pig's Eye Lake. Rookeries need adjacent flood plain forest to support changes in the rookery. The full island should be protected as part of the Regional Park. Unfortunately, the silence has been deafening from the Corps or Ramsey County when it comes to protecting the west portion of Pig's Eye Island 2.

### **Pig's Eye Island Heron egg tests found PFC levels were the highest measured in bird eggs worldwide.**

A 1987 nest count of 1,300 active nest and 2,600 adult birds. Nests include 540 Great Egrets, 496 Black Crowned Night Heron, 180 Great Blue Heron, and 84 Double Crested Cormorants. A 2015 count of 554 nests and 1,108 adult birds. Nests included 253 Great Blue Heron, 119 American White Pelican, 181 Great Egret, and 2 Black Crowned Night Heron. With fewer than half as many active nests and almost a total collapse of the Black Crowned Night Heron population these are very concerning numbers. Studies in 1993 and 2010-2011 found PFC concentrations in Heron eggs. In some eggs the PFC levels were the highest measured in bird eggs worldwide. The removal of pollutants from the lake would benefit the rookery. Adding 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant and resuspending existing pollutant muck would adds to the problems.

### **Environmental cleanup versus more dumping**

There are plenty of opportunities to provide habitat without filling the lake. Habitat restoration should include the wetland habitat where the MWCC ash ponds were located. The wetlands north of the lake should have the waste material removed and wetland habitat restored. Removing pollutants, along with protecting and restoring existing habitat should be the priority. The Section 204 proposal would dump pollutant dredge spoils to “create” habitat while ignoring opportunities to remove pollutants and restore existing habitat. Environmental cleanup and restoration are the answer not more dumping. Dumping more than 400,000 cubic yards of dredge spoils would inhibit future cleanup efforts. There would be an additional 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant.

### **Never been allowed in the State Critical Area**

Dumping 400,000 cubic yards of dredge spoils into a regional Park has never been allowed in this stretch of the Mississippi River. This stretch of the river is physically different than others and is our only State Critical Area. It could negatively affect a State Scientific and Natural Area. This could set a dangerous precedent.

### **Enough dredge spoils to fill 13 percent of Pig's Eye Lake.**

Pig's Eye Lake is 628 acres with an average depth of 3 feet. More than 400,000 cubic yards is enough to fill 83 acres or 13 percent of Pig's Eye Lake. This is more than Como Lake's 68 acres. This would continue a pattern of wetland losses in the park.

### **The Corps earlier concluded the area extent of Pig's Eye Lake is about the same in 1967 as it was in 1895 (72 years)**

The Corps now say the lake area is increasing. They base this in part on the disappearance of a point that projected into the lake from Island 2. The Corp claims this must have been caused by erosion and extrapolated out into the future the continuing erosion it would represent. This is incorrect. The point was removed by dredging at the same time the west end of Pig's Eye Island was removed. Aerial photos show this to be the case. It is an example of the faulty assumptions based on a lack of understanding of Pig's Eye Lake. It may fit a narrative to justify dumping dredge spoils but it is not true.

### **Regional Park Plan Amendment and Public Hearing required.**

The Corps of Engineers has refused to hold a public meeting on this \$15.6 million dollar proposal. It is very telling that the Corps, Ramsey County and some of their supporters do not advocate for open meetings where the public can be involved. When asked the Corps



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response has been, we do not have to. Thanks to Metropolitan Council Chair Nora Slawik who made it clear a Regional Parks Plan Amendment must be approved and a public meeting must be held.

### **The Corps EIS notes bias of those that want to fill Pig's Eye Lake.**

The earlier Corps EIS notes that those who support filling Pig's Eye Lake refer to it in a diminishing way as part of the lock and dam containment, not a natural lake. The recent fill proposal calls it a backwater. Pigs Eye Lake is a natural lake. It is fed by creeks, storm water, and springs. Removing polluted sediment and providing depth diversity supports: improved water quality, healthier aquatic plant growth, fish habitat, minimizes winter fish kill, limits wildlife ingestion of pollutant, and provides expanded water recreation opportunities. Restoring lake depth and improved water quality expands opportunities to use boats on the lake, and enhances opportunities to bird watch and fish.

### **Maps do not show reduced lake depths from displaced muck.**

Dumping dredge spoils in Pig's Eye Lake will resuspend polluted sediment and push it towards the surface in mud waves. The maps do account for the displaced muck caused by dumping. Reduced water depth areas would extend out from the islands when muck is pushed toward the surface by the large quantities of fill dumped into the lake. The record does not account for shallow depths, created by filling, that impact boating. The lake is only 3 feet deep before dredge spoils would be dumped into the lake.

### **Restore a more natural lake depth that supports a healthy environment and recreation.**

Restoring a more natural depth of the lake would improve water quality and expand opportunities to use boats on the lake. Restoring the natural lake depth and removing pollutants should be a priority for this lake.

### **Claims that dumping dredge spoils will create wetland are greatly exaggerated.**

The report claims 20 acres of islands and 18 acres of wetlands will be "created". This claim ignores the fact that these 28 acres are now 38 acres of existing wetland. They are part of Pig's Eye Lake. A purportedly protected Minnesota lake. Stated differently: The proposal is to spend \$15.6 million to dump pollutant in a lake to fill 28 acres of wetland.

### **Claims that dumping pollutant will create bird habitat are greatly exaggerated.**

The record shows the project was promoted as creating bird and waterfowl habitat. Creating habitat for the American White Pelican was highlighted. The record clearly shows American White Pelican and other species will actually be prohibited.

### **Prohibition of American White Pelican and other birds**

Currently Pig's Eye Lake provides a resting area for migrating pelicans. Dumping dredge spoils would eliminate this. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC) opposed the island proposal. To get USDA and MAC support assurances were made. The islands will be planted with woody brush that prevent use by birds and waterfowl. Harassment of birds is required. Monitoring is required to ensure birds do not use the islands and MAC calls for lethal methods to be used if the vegetation and harassment fail to keep birds and waterfowl from using the islands. Ramsey County taxpayers are on the hook for the cost of ongoing maintenance, harassment and monitoring. Makes you wonder why those pushing for dumping dredge spoils into our lake fail to mention the prohibition of birds.

### **Taxpayers on the hook to maintain sinking artificial islands and chase away birds.**

Dredge spoils are projected to sink over time. Taxpayers are on the hook to keep adding fill to the islands and replacing vegetation as they sink. There are much higher priorities for park resources.

The Corps is now trying to promote the expenditure of \$15.6 million as turtle habitat. If 156 turtles were attracted it would be \$100,000 per turtle. A shortage of funds for housing has homeless camped in our parks while the County proposes \$15.6 million to expand housing for turtles. There are plenty of important opportunities to enhance habitat for turtles and other wildlife that do not include filling Pig's Eye Lake.

One hundred years ago, City of Saint Paul plans called for all of our Eastside flood plain to be protected parkland. Over the last 100 years, financial interests have pushed to use more and more of it to dump their waste. Our riverfront is dying a death of a thousand cuts. Designation as a State Critical Area, Scientific and Natural Area, Regional Park, and National Park mean little if we do not treat this as the valuable natural resource it is. We must do everything we can to protect and restore it.

Having lived in Saint Paul all my life, except when I served in the military, I am aware of the consequences bad decisions have on our natural resources. I have been involved in efforts to protect our river and specifically the Pig's Eye Lake area for half a century. I have been part of the Pig's Eye Coalition, MECCA, and appointed by the U. S. Secretary of Interior to serve as a Commissioner for development of the National Park Plan. Throughout those years, I have learned about the oversized influence of powerful interests that gain from exploitation of our natural resources. In spite of that, the public has collectively had success getting Scientific and Natural Area Designation for the Colonial Nesting Bird Rookery, Minnesota State Critical Area Designation, and National Park Designation for the area. None of this would have happened without raising our voices to protect and enhance our natural resources and expand recreational opportunities. Advocacy for protection and enhancement of natural resources and enhancing recreational opportunities is vital. The progress we have collectively made can quickly unravel if the public is not allowed in the room when decisions are being hatched. If you share these hopes and concerns I hope you speak out in support of protecting this wonderful natural resource.

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas was a famous advocate for protection of natural areas and rivers – He famously called The Corps of Engineers Public Enemy Number One. The National Wildlife Federation once said Remaining on the current path of waste and destruction at the Corps is not an option.

These issues could have been addressed if the public was allowed to participate. The EAW states that anyone who had shown an interest in the proposal was sent a copy of the draft EAW so they could comment. This is not true. I talked at length with Ramsey County Parks and the Corps staff about concerns regarding the proposal. I also asked to participate or at least be able to attend. I was told the public could not participate. I never received the draft EAW. No residents from adjoining Saint Paul neighborhoods are listed as commenting. Residents were

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shut out of the closed-door planning meetings and were not informed about the comment period. This is a proposal to spend \$15.6 million and dump 400,000 cubic yards of pollutant into the park and yet neighborhood residents and taxpayers are prohibited from attending. I served as a Board member of the Pig's Eye Coalition that helped establish the SNA, and protect Pig's Eye. I served as a Board member of MECCA that helped protect Pig's Eye. I served on the Planning Commission, and as City Councilmember representing the Pig's Eye Lake area. I was appointed by the U S Secretary of the Interior to serve as a planning Commissioner for the National Park. Even as a life time resident and after extensive involvement I was not allowed to participate in the planning process. Not allowing the public to participates contributes

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**From:** [TOM DIMOND](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Park comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 3:44:44 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

**Tom Dimond**  
2119 Skyway Drive  
Saint Paul, MN 55119

November 30, 2020

Battle Creek, Pig's Eye Lake, and Fish Creek Parks Master Plan

Thank you to Ben Karp and his efforts to include the public in park planning. Your efforts to include elements from the Great River Passage are appreciated.

You have the information I previously submitted and I encourage you to consider including those recommendations where possible. I also recommend an in-depth study of the impacts of pollution on the health and wellbeing of vegetation, wildlife, and park visitors. A scientific basis for management would be invaluable.

It is disappointing to see the proposed dumping of 400,000 cubic yards of dredge spoils and the filling of Pig's Eye Lake in this plan. The dredge spoils dumping was never part of this plan process. In fact, the public was told repeatedly dredge spoils and filling the lake will not be considered in this plan. The dredge spoils are part of a separate natural resources Master Plan Amendment we have been told. As such they should be kept separate. It feels like bait and switch when we have been told this subject is not part of this Master Plan Amendment.

I would encourage including within the park the island parcel on the west side of the SNA at Pig's Eye Lake.

The trail crossing over Hwy 61 should be shown at Henry Park not Carver. Some of the reasons for this location are a better balance of access points, the natural fit with a bluff that abuts 61 on one side and land outside the flood plain on the other. It provides more direct access to shore amenities on the south end of Pig's Eye Lake. This location provides for the shortest bridge and directly connects to parkland at each end. It is centrally located for the Highwood neighborhood. It is the least costly to build.

I would encourage a trail connection to Point Douglas Road and the MRT at the south end of the Fish Creek property and a trail connection to McKnight on the north.

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**From:** [Jeanne Farrell](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Please choose wildlife over profits.  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:27:11 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Ortega:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

I had lived in this area of St Paul and spent many hours at the park.....it was wonderful to see so many bird and animal species, probably happy because there is so much land for them to roam. I would hate to see more land taken away for the sake of development....there has to be other places to build. Why choose right here? Why choose an area filled with wildlife? An oasis?

Please do the right thing!!!!!!

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Jeanne Farrell*

*330 Webster Street*

*Saint Paul, MN 55102*



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## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [B.Thoman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#)  
**Subject:** Please don't see the land  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:49:18 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp, Director McCabe, and Commissioner Carter:

I hope the county will not sell two parcels of land in the city of Maplewood. These properties provide open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County. You likely know that the number of birds has declined by one third since the 1970's. Much of this loss is due to development and loss of habitat.

If Ramsey County wants to increase the tax rolls and provide additional land for development, I hope it will work with communities to change zoning requirements to densify existing parcels and reduce parking requirements. There is a lot of low density and inefficient development in Ramsey County. Allowing greater density is much more cost effective way to develop as water, sewer, roads, and other infrastructure are already in place. Higher densities also reduces vehicle miles traveled.

As you are aware:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

The 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do not sell this land! Instead, expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat and retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Barb Thoman  
2157 Roblyn Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Tom Hazen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** please no more mountain bike trails in Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:59:01 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a resident of Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul, I'm writing to ask you, for the love of nature, to please NOT create any more mountain bike trails in Battle Creek Regional Park. There are already more than enough!

Parks need to do a better job of prioritizing the protection of nature. Mountain bikers disturb soil, plants and wildlife. It's also very dangerous for mountain bikers to "share" trails with hikers and birders.

Please don't destroy more animal habitat by adding more mountain bike trails.

I know plants, birds, and other animals don't vote, but they are still your constituents!

Kind regards,

- Tom Hazen

\*\*\*\*\*  
LIBERTY INTERNATIONAL, LLC  
"High Performance Driving Instruction Since 2004"

Thomas M. Hazen, Instructor  
695 Sherwood Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55106 USA  
Tel: 612-237-1883  
Email: [myliberty@comcast.net](mailto:myliberty@comcast.net)

\*\*\*\*\*

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Suzanne Gappa](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Cc:** [johngappa@msn.com](mailto:johngappa@msn.com)  
**Subject:** Please preserve Ramsey County's critical wildlife habitat and open space  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 12:46:16 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Carter:

Commissioner McDonough:

Commissioner Ortega:

We are very concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

We are particularly concerned that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. **A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.**

## Please do the right thing!

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit. As we all know, once these lands are gone, they are gone forever!

Sincerely,

Suzanne and John Gappa

1480 Edgcumbe Road

Saint Paul, MN 55116

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary Grahek](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Potential Battle Creek Property Development Comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 12:19:47 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

I recently learned about the Maplewood planning process which discusses development of two properties owned by Ramsey County:

- A. The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- B. The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water filtration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. Open spaces like these in a metro area are increasingly rare. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am particularly surprised that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the following:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation and potential wildlife habitat.

I am very concerned about the possible loss of these tracts of open space and wildlife habitat. Please reconsider their value to the people of Ramsey County and to the wildlife that use this land.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Grahek

1701 James Avenue  
St. Paul, MN. 55105

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Nathan DeJarnett](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed development - Ponds at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 1:43:00 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioners Carter, McDonough, Frethem, McGuire, MatasCastillo, Ortega and Reinhardt:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

This is land my grandfather, Bernard Edmonds worked very hard to preserve as the Director of Ramsey County Parks. He pioneered the "open space" program preserving over 8000 acres of county land – including these two tracts. He envisioned a park system that connected water corridors and purchased land before it could be developed for strip malls and housing. This forward thinking led to the creation of Battle Creek Regional park and now the City of Maplewood has initiated plans for development within these areas. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,  
Nathan DeJarnett  
1014 Pioneer Trail  
Bayport, MN 55003



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [susan.solterman.audette](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Ramsey County Needs this Green Space!  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 11:59:19 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Ramsey County Park Planner Benjamin Karp,

I am writing in comment on the Battle Creek Regional Park concept plan. It is my understand that the original Battle Creek plan identified 77 acres of adjacent county corrections property as slated for acquisition. In the current plan, that no longer appears to be the case.

I cannot imagine that you would allow the opportunity to expand the park with a gorgeous grassland go by without a fight. This county cannot afford to lose the opportunity to acquire this green space. Why? *Because Ramsey County is the most densely populated and polluted county in the state.* This additional park land will increase quality of life for the county's citizens (ie taxpayers). It will also help to decrease both air and water pollution. And, green space in urban areas reduces crime. These are fantastic talking points for every elected person and public official in Ramsey County.

Hikers and birdwatchers, have noted that the corrections property parcel is habitat for a number of declining grassland bird species, including the Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, the Dickcissel, and the American Kestrel. Only on this special parcel of land have these birds been spotted. Indeed, there are identified Bobolink nests on this grassland parcel. These are bird species that many birdwatchers spend *years* hoping to see.

If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is the value of spending time outside in fresh air, recreating, and enjoying the wild life species and natural areas that inhabit our urban landscape.

Protecting the destruction of a high quality environmentally sensitive area that provides critical natural processes and resources to our immediate environment and enriches our daily existence should be the number one priority for the Ramsey County Parks.

*Please advocate for expanding the park and ultimately, for the quality of life for the residents of the county for which you work.*

Thank you,  
Susan Audette

Susan Solterman Audette  
1463 Portland Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-260-7040

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary Johnston](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Loss of Public Land  
**Date:** Monday, November 30, 2020 2:38:12 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

I omitted my signature - sorry!

Mary Johnston  
1149 Schooner Way  
Woodbury MN

Sent from my iPad

On Nov 30, 2020, at 2:37 PM, Mary Johnston <[mary.johnston6@icloud.com](mailto:mary.johnston6@icloud.com)> wrote:

Mr. Karp,

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

**Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Amy Jacky](#)  
**To:** [McDonough, Jim](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** 77 acres in Battle Creek  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 9:21:34 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good evening gentleman,

If I'm not sending this to the right contacts, please let me know.

I'm a homeowner in St Paul (214 Kennard St) and am concerned for 77 acres subject to proposed development near Battle Creek.

Admittedly, I'm a seriously nerdy and committed ecological gardener. I'm heart-sick at the idea of this development- this is massive blow to an already struggling ecosystem. This habitat loss will hurt birds and animals including pollinators and insects. It makes no sense to enlist an animal like the Rusty Patch bumblebee on our endangered species list and then destroy its potential habitat. Do you know this endangered bee has been sighted in MPLS/ STP? The rusty patch is an urban bee found in grasslands and forests, habitat that is proposed to be destroyed.

All but 1% (seriously!) of the native prairies MN is known for have disappeared. Birds have declined by 29% since 1970. Do you remember driving with your parents and getting out of the car after a 60min highway drive and the windshield and headlights were covered in dead bugs? We've already lost so much.

The grass meadow within this 77 acres supports a wide variety of animal life with habitats like beetle banks, safe spots for grass nesting birds and ground nesting bees (70% of all our native bees nest in the ground!), a plethora of pollinators, migrating birds and all manner of small mammals. The food web in this 77 acres supports a tremendous variety of birds and pollinators that have specially designed mouth parts to accommodate the food they need for survival (consider short tongued bees and the shallow bloom of our native yarrow or wild rose and the stout bill of a blue jay and downy woodpecker to crack open an acorn). A native tall grass prairie provides increased nutrition because the native plants evolved regionally with the birds and animals with which they co-exist. The size of this prairie supports so much life with its multiple seasons of bloom/ seed and fruiting stages.

A vast lawn in an average golf course or in a homeowner's city lot is a veritable ***food desert*** for our animals... including insects. And as overloaded with fertilizer and pesticide that I envision a golf course is, I've seen studies that support an average golf course offers more (more!) value for wildlife than a typical American lawn due to "edge habitat", a place of refuge and safety, perhaps food, essentially this is a small border place within developed land.

Protecting acreage like this 77 acres can accomplish so much. From overhead, the vastness of

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

this land communicates to a migrating flock that here is a place for food and rest. Did you know that it is estimated 40% of all migrating birds fly over us in the Twin Cities? Some even call our area part of the Mississippi Flyway?

I don't have the scope or the space at my house that this acreage offers. But I'm doing my part. Planting focused on generalist pollinators and birds that overwinter here. Planting native. Reducing the food desert that is my lawn. Eliminating chemicals. I wish I could plant for more specialist pollinators (think Monarchs and milkweed, Violets and Fritillary butterflies) and migrating birds but I don't have enough land. I planted a thicket garden this year and am planning an insectory garden next year. I'll have largely maxed out my lot capacity at that point. Come see what I'm working on next summer!

If you vote to develop, we will destroy habitat and food.

Part of this 77 acres is an oak forest. Doug Tallamy, an ecologist out of Delaware refers to Oaks as a "keystone species". Meaning this is one of our top local species to provide for insects and birds. Oaks are a "hyper-producer" genus (meaning that oaks support 500+ other species and 70-75% of our butterflies and moths). Compare this 500+ species figure to the non-native Ginkgo tree in my yard. The ginkgo supports either 0 or 1 species, depending on the source. My ginkgo is pretty but it offers nothing other than a roost- it is ornamental gardening.

Protecting our native genera and habitats are critical because the larval stage of butterflies and moths (e.g. caterpillars) according to Tallamy, are "soft bags of easily digested nutrients" (refer to his book Nature's Best Hope, p. 131). So a plant like an Oak, supporting 500+ species of insects is probably contributing to the nest of Chickadees you may have had in your yard. Scientists who observe nesting habits estimate that over the 2-3 week fledging process, Chickadee parents feed their babies 6000-9000 caterpillars. This is for a single nest and in one season! Gathering this many caterpillars is exhaustive for the parents and they won't create a nest where the land can't support food for their babies. And bird parents can't range far for food either, due to their own exhaustion and the need to keep their nests safe. These are a couple of the reasons research calls out the 29% decline in birds- fewer nests, fewer baby birds able to actually fledge.

We must provide the trees and meadows that support our insects and birds and mammals, for all our wildlife. But we humans haven't yet stopped exhausting and consuming all of our natural resources.

The proposed loss of the meadow and the Oak forest is devastating. Please vote against this proposal. Last, the forestry department within the city of St Paul got a grant and gifted me a swamp white oak this summer. I'm so grateful! And yet, the irony of being gifted a single oak tree while a mature oak forest is threatened is horrifying.

Amy Jacky  
612 900 8011

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Constantine Koutsouvas](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek -- Sites A & B  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 10:53:31 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello --

I am a citizen of St. Paul and Ramsey County and I am writing to urge you to NOT develop the above-referenced properties adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park.

I visit Battle Creek and the surrounding area frequently to hike, bicycle, walk my dog, bird watch and just be in nature. It is one of the things I love about living in St. Paul and Ramsey County. The above-referenced plots provide invaluable wildlife habitat, green space, and environmental benefits for a variety of species (including residents of Ramsey County!).

Please take this opportunity to preserve this acreage as vital green space and incorporate it into the park. Development of these relatively undisturbed plots would surely be a mistake.

Thank you for your consideration.

Constantine Koutsouvas  
1597 Niles Ave  
St. Paul, MN



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [John Benda](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30 day review comments  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 12:34:00 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Benjamin Karp,

I am a supporter of the Legacy of Nature mission and state bill. I am writing to ask you to make wildlife and their habitat, and hiking/walking the priorities for the Battle Creek plan. Please minimize the biking expansion to what is actually needed to use the park, not create any redundancies. Also please do not mix biking and hiking trails, limits safe walking of all ages.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns.

Best,  
John Benda

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [JULIAN SELLERS](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 11:59:38 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp,

Please do not increase the mountain bike trails in the park. They destroy habitat, disrupt wildlife, and disturb the vast majority of park visitors, who walk the trails in search of a restorative experience in a natural environment.

Julian Sellers

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [JULIAN SELLERS](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comment  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 11:16:17 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

(I'm re-sending this email to ensure that it becomes part of the Battle Creek 30-day review.)

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Julian Sellers  
1875 Juliet Ave  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Ed Ryan](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 9:16:34 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

I know there has been an effort to bring snowmaking to Battle Creek for a number of years, without success. I'm hoping this does come to be this time. Given the warming trend we've seen, reliable snowfall is hard to come by, and there is a definite dependence on man-made snow for HS teams and other scheduled events.

I'm an avid XC skier, and have been involved with the Loppet Foundation Board at Wirth for years. In fact, in a way the Loppet started in the back of my car, as I gave the new mayor RT Rybak a ride to and from Hayward for the Birkie in 2002, and the first race was the next year. RT's view was that encouraging these silent sports would make winter an attraction and be a positive amenity for Minneapolis, and he's 100% right. I financially supported the effort to bring snowmaking, and as well the successful completion of the Trailhead building. The usage of Wirth Park has increased fantastically since it became a reliable place to ski, and other sport uses like MTB has exploded as well. It has become a huge positive for that community. Battle Creek has that potential.

As a life-long east sider, it is embarrassing to me that there is no snowmaking on the east side, and three very well-run places on the west side. So there is a definite need this side of the river, and I have no doubt this area would get a lot of use from all the east side HS teams, and many others.

Both Three Rivers and Wirth have learned a lot about running the snowmaking and grooming, so you wouldn't have to re-invent the wheel. Best of luck with this effort.

Edwin Ryan MD  
Vitreoretinal Surgery, PA  
3601 West 76th Street, Suite 300  
Edina, MN 55435  
952-929-1131  
612-735-0669 cell

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Andy Rogers](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 4:14:43 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

My question is referring to this part of the plans:

"Many community members expressed the desire to continue to hike and snowshoe in the winter. In addition to the walking and hiking trails in the bluffs area, care should be taken to allow for a path to the side of cross country ski trails for other winter recreation uses."

What trail sections are you considering for a shared skiing/hiking path?

I've emailed before and I've shared similar concerns before.

I'm concerned a shared, although separate trail, might embolden hikers to walk on the groomed trail. Is there other examples of a shared, yet separate trail, that has worked at other ski trails?

I urge you to review the situation in Duluth with the Chesters Woods

<https://duluthmn.gov/media/9446/chester-shared-use-trail-03112020-parks-commission.pdf>

<https://www.duluthmonitor.com/2020/03/17/parks-commission-votes-to-eliminate-chester-park-shared-use-trail-designation/>

It can be quite dangerous to walk near people cross country skiing. There's a lot of hills out there as I'm sure you're aware. I'm also sure you're aware that not everybody follows the park rules. Blending hikers and walkers, especially those with dogs, could be problematic.

I'm sure you know that people already walk all over the groomed ski trails at Battle Creek. There was additional signage placed last year, which helped dramatically. But even after the signs went up, I still encountered walkers on the trail about 90 percent of the time often with unleashed dogs. That's not safe or pleasant for anyone. The foot traffic has absolutely made the trail unskiable before. I hope the additional signage continues, but I'm already pretty anxious about skiing there again. .



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [John Richter](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 9:02:56 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin,

I do like the increased access to the park system and the infrastructure that is identified in the plan. I would like to give some feedback on how some groups may use the park to see if the points of entry fit the user groups. What I observe is that there are four primary ways people approach the park. They come to Battle Creek for 1) specific amenity, 2) open trail use, 3) active groups, & 4) community events.

The user who is coming to the park for a specific amenity such as the water park, playgrounds, pavilion and dog park will find a parking lot and rest rooms which are clearly laid out in the master plan. I do think the neighborhood access across McKnight at North Park Drive or Villages seems to be the most obvious place to have an overpass, even with the improvement the road is still very busy. The crossings at Edgebrook and Hillsdale could be enhanced if there was a walk-up entrance on the west side of the dog park otherwise you need to go to the north or south end of the dog park to enter. The sledding hill on the north end of the water park seems futile, the south facing hill won't last long but if there's sufficient natural snow it could be fun. Starting at the Battle Creek Rec center for sledding makes sense. Not sure if there's plans to manage the sledding from the Rec Center.

Open use is entering the park from a variety of locations and the users move throughout the park whether it would be hiking, bird watching, running, mountain biking, snowshoe or skiing. The plan does address some possible safe entry points which connect the neighborhoods to the park but then where does the visitor go? Regardless of how and why they entered the park they hit a natural barrier or dead end. I think this is true for nearly all of the crossings over Lower Afton Road. I think this is a temporary thing that could be addressed once the crossing is approved and in place.

The park is made up of some major sections that are broken up by road crossings and there is not an easy route that is safe to take. I think neighborhood users would just drive to the trailhead and park rather than enter at their closest access point. The three big crossings are Battle Creek Road, Winthrop & McKnight corridor alongside Lower Afton and an overpass or

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

enhanced crossing on McKnight Road. Some would also say crossing Upper Afton at the Water Park/Dog Park entrances is a fourth.

In my opinion a Battle Creek Road trail overpass south of the proposed inholding acquisition (just up from Lower Afton Rd) would significantly change the flow of the park for mountain biking, hiking, snowshoe & skiing. The trail system becomes circular (looped) and greatly enhances the park experience for all trail activities. People could start at either Point Douglas or Battle Creek Road (new) or the Rec Center and could easily move between the trail-heavy sections of the park. It would be great to close the road off entirely to the south but I realize you still need emergency vehicle access to the homes on the north end.

I asked myself “I’m going to Battle Creek to \_\_\_\_\_” how would I get there and where do I go once I’m there. Is there a logical connector route or loop?

Another use is active groups, this could be organizations or teams who use the trail systems for a number of disciplines. They tend to meet as a group and use a specific loop of trails for leisure, instruction, or training. Ideally, the point of entry is safe and has some basic amenities’ plus a clear access point to their desired use. Point Douglas and the Rec Center have been the historic jump off points for biking and hiking with Battle Creek Road access becoming more desirable as the trail system has expanded especially for mountain bikers, hikers and skiers.

Both biking and skiing benefit from a teaching area that is safe and welcoming to beginners where they can progress through new skills as the terrain becomes more challenging. Unfortunately starting at the Rec Center has its challenges because nearly everything is up and more difficult to navigate. The Games loop area near the proposed trail head would be an ideal location for teaching and introducing new people to the outdoors. Trails could be adjusted to create loops with increased difficulty and still maintain the integrity of the trail system. Off road parking would be important for biking, hiking, in the summer and skiing, snowshoeing in the winter along with fat bike riding.

As a non-profit focused on getting people outdoors, being active and living a healthy lifestyle has to be intentional. We need to actively invite and encourage everyone to give it a try. That first experience needs to be welcoming and appropriate for the beginner then show a progression that builds confidence and excitement in the outdoor activity they choose. Ramsey County needs to consider the needs of these organizations who deliver programming. They are the catalyst to getting more people involved from underserved communities.

Finally, community events, trail runs, biking and skiing events would benefit from a designated area that is clearly identified so the community knows which trails are being used and for how long. These community events can highlight the park system in a way that no other way can by bringing in more people from the region. People who use Battle Creek, end up loving the

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

park and in turn support the entire park system. They support the organizations who use and watch over this great resource with funding, stewardship and volunteer their time and energy. The current trail system does not lend itself well for events and the general public to be on the trail at the same time. There is not a parallel route to accommodate both at the same time.

Is there something in the plan spelling out the opportunity to cooperate with Saint Paul Parks and Rec and enhance the Battle Creek Rec Center for outdoor activities and events. Can Ramsey County add onto the building or purchase the building?

The mountain bike master plan also calls out for a few skills areas which the locations should be reviewed to see if they are placed at or near a trail access point.

The paved trails on Battle Creek East have eroded and become too rough for a small group of Nordic skiers who rollerski in the summer and fall, nearly every day. Thus, they've moved to the trails at the Water Park. If BC east trails were resurfaced the skiers could move off the Water Park trails and keep the congestion to a minimum.

These two areas Pigs Eye and Fish Creek are very interesting but it's hard to visualize if anything will happen during this master plan. Clean-up funds, railroads, MDOT oh my.

The corridor connecting Battle Creek to Fish Creek is definitely a long shot but its worth pursuing. I would encourage Ramsey County to continue to look for opportunities to put the puzzle together including the purchase of Maplewood sections that bring the park together. The trend has been routes and exploring not just destinations.

Thanks,

- - -

John Richter *Executive Director*

*Pronouns: he/him*

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## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Michael Lunde](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 2, 2020 3:53:10 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good Afternoon,

My name is Mike Lunde and I live in the Battle Creek neighborhood of Saint Paul, on Ruth Street near Upper Afton Road. I am active in the park - walking/hiking, running, cycling - virtually everyday of the week from April through November. I have some concerns about the proposed changes within the park.

- Unfortunately, due to sewer work, my favorite part of the park (right along the creek from Ruth Street to Highway 61 parking lot) will be "closed" from now until Fall of 2021. With the park closed for almost a year, I am hoping that the planned changes will not result in further park closures or disruptions to trail access. I am hoping the changes will not require large existing segments of the trail to be closed for a long period of time. Is this notion in line with the plan?
- I have some concerns about the proposed off road cycling/hiking trail along the segment of the trail from McKnight Road to Upper Afton Road. There is not much room to spare on that segment of the park to begin with, and I don't know how off road trails could be expanded to both sides of the existing paved trail without tree removal, which I would hope to avoid. The part of the existing paved trail between Upper Afton Road and Ruth Street is particularly quaint and enjoyable to be in because of the great canopy of trees overhanging the existing trail, which provides shade and scenery. There is not that much existing space to build more trails without taking out trees, which would permanently damage the look and feel of this segment of the park. I would strongly advocate against building off road trails in this segment of the park. It would harm the ecology and environment and ruin the existing ambiance. This section of the park is never that busy as-is, so I see adding off road trails here as highly unnecessary especially when considering the several miles of off road trails that already exist in the park.
- I am not sure if you are the right person to talk to about this, but I have some major concerns with the buckthorn removal project that is taking place in park, particularly in the south central segment between Winthrop Street and Battle Creek road just north of Lower Afton Road. Crews have been leveling buckthorn and other trees (not just buckthorn) in that area and then just leaving the branches there without removing them, and it really looks like a deforestation campaign. That area used to be lush and green and now it is open and a person can see all the way to Lower Afton Road. I hope the goal here is not to turn this into a 'bluff prairie' landscape similar to what exists near the sledding hill behind the Battle Creek rec center - we already have enough bluff prairie land in the area and we need to preserve our forests. People go in the park to be out in the forest and away from seeing homes, roads, and the like, and this project has totally ruined the look of that section of the park. Again, not sure if you are the right person to talk to about this specific topic, but if you are not, could you please direct me to the correct person so that I can voice my concerns.

Thanks,

Michael Lunde  
651-202-8238

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mark Raderstorf](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 23, 2020 8:36:18 PM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Ben, I just wanted to express my support for snow making and winter lighting at Battle Creek. This is long overdue as many East side residents have to trek to Wirth or Hyland to get on skis in the winter. The high school kids really need a place close by so they are not spending over half their practice time traveling to a far off snow destinations. I hope you will make snow making a priority.

Regards,

Mark Raderstorf



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Steve Benton](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Monday, November 23, 2020 7:55:01 PM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi,

My family and I are fully in favor of snow making for Nordic skiing at Battle Creek Park.

Thanks for considering our opinion,

Steve Benton

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Seth Fine](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek 30-day review comments  
**Date:** Saturday, November 21, 2020 10:17:15 AM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

As a Ramsey County resident homeowner and park transformation student, my comments on the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan are as follows:

- 1) Learning Trail Corridors are a first priority. Students at connecting schools, and children who visit, need entryways and dedicated spaces to interact with the natural features of the park. That means prioritization over new/improved adult recreation proposals.
- 2) The Creek and ponds need long-term protection and preservation along with improvements on/around them. In addition to partnering with FIN for the fishing area, for example, adding Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) watershed for detailed planning and implementation, will be critical.
- 3) While in-person input was from more diverse participants and pointed at built structures and water park improvement priorities, consider ranking the school children's direct input as the most important. Assuming they are both current park users and future taxpayers / parents we want to stay in the area, those are the core stakeholders of the park. Not me (45 and white with excellent mobility) and not even their parents.

Thank you,  
Seth M. Fine, Saint Paul  
9523817217

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Tammy Shockley](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Area Land Development  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 8:42:54 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Tammy Shockley

38 Sterling St. N., Maplewood

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Sheila Bennett](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Area Properties  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 7:29:04 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B)

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans to develop these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water filtration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. They have greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments. I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors many bird species that are in deep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be taken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

(1) Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat. (2) Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

Such actions on your part will benefit the residents of the entire metro area and the wildlife that use these lands. The positive environmental and climate effects are considerable.

As a side note: Although I am no longer a resident of Ramsey County, I still live nearby and find that Battle Creek Regional Park and the beauty of its surrounding land keep bringing me back to recreate and to support area merchants and restaurants when I do. Don't underestimate the economic value of these natural assets.

Sincerely,

Sheila Bennett  
25 Birchwood Rd.  
Mahtomedi MN 55115

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Bob Dunlap](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek development  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 2:01:50 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

As a resident of Ramsey County as well as an avid wildlife enthusiast, I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Bob Dunlap



# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Connie Grundhofer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Development of 77 Acres County Owned Tract  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 5:51:49 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner \_\_Carter and McDonough\_\_\_\_\_:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

## Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Your community will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Connie Grundhofer*

235 Linda Ave

Lino Lakes, MN 55014

## EVENTS CALENDAR



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Anna Newton](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Land  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 2:39:22 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp.

I was appalled to learn that land currently belonging to the county as part of the Battle Creek complex was at risk of being sold and developed:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

Besides being valuable habitat for upland birds currently experiencing catastrophic declines, selling those two blocks would further fragment the habitat that is left for all wildlife. I would much prefer to see this land restored with native plantings and used for passive recreation, than become another tract of housing and shops. A full biological inventory should be undertaken to guide management of these lands.

I have watched as nearly every private woodlot in my city of Roseville has been razed for housing complexes. Ramsey County is pretty densely populated and our green space is all the more precious because there is not much of it compared to other Minnesota counties. I know the economic downturn has been tough for government at all levels, and I presume financial stress may be a reason behind this sale, but once this land is gone it will be next to impossible to get it back.

**Sincerely,**  
***Anna Newton***  
***998 Parker Ave***  
***Roseville, MN 55113***

***Anna Newton***

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Ellen Lowery](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us); [matascastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:matascastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek opportunity  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 5:03:41 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner \_Trista MatasCastillo

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am greatly disappointed that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Ellen Lowery*

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [lisa.goodlander@comcast.net](mailto:lisa.goodlander@comcast.net)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Parcels  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 12:36:21 PM  
**Importance:** High

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Additionally, this land is important to the indigenous community, both in terms of its natural and historical significance in its connection to Battle Creek Park and the surrounding areas near Kaposia.

Please do what is for the greatest good for all:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County (and Washington County) and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hanes Goodlander, PhD  
2323 Windsor Lane  
Woodbury, MN 55125  
612-718-6976



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Elizabeth Wroblewski](#)  
**To:** [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park development  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 4:31:04 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioner Ortega, Director McCabe and Mr. Karp,

I am writing to share my concern about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am sad that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

How would the citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area benefit? Given the historic moment we experience since the murder of George Floyd, a broader diversity of people are claiming experiences traditionally done by white Americans. Hiking in natural areas and birdwatching are good for the soul and for the community. People and the wildlife that use these lands will gain so much.

Thanks for listening. Stay safe! Sincerely,

Elizabeth Wroblewski

408 Duke St.

St. Paul, MN 55102

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mark Gilbert](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Expansion  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 12:15:56 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp, Director McCabe, and Commissioners:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

It would be wonderful to seize this opportunity to expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

As a user of Battle Creek Park, a resident of Ramsey County, and a lover of birds and nature, I thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,  
Mark Gilbert  
1855 Lincoln Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55105

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [GD.Hipple](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 3:43:22 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:  
Director McCabe:  
Commissioner Rafael Ortega:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (Site A)
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B)

The City of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments. The City of Maplewood cannot manage the properties they already own.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species that are in decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory needs to be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

- Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat
- Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation

All citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area and the wildlife that use these lands, can benefit by preserving these land tracks for their natural value.

Preserve Our Lands!

Sincerely,  
Gary D Hipple  
Board Member, Friends of Maplewood Nature  
Daytons Bluff  
Saint Paul, MN

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Norma Penn](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 12:20:52 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Norma Penn

914 Evergreen Court

Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

--

Have a great day,  
Norma

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Linda and Allan Kellar](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 3:40:30 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

I was appalled to learn through St. Paul Audubon that the city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County. One is a 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park and the other is the Ponds at Battle Creek golf course.

I am familiar with both of these areas because I have walked them many times with Audubon groups as well as by myself. I know they provide wonderful wildlife habitat for birds—especially grassland species that are becoming endangered.

I strongly urge the county to expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the 77-acre tract and to keep the Ponds of Battle Creek as open space for all nature lovers to enjoy. This makes much more sense -- for more citizens to use the two spaces -- than for it to be developed for housing or commercial development.

Sincerely,

Linda Kellar

4594 Lilac Lane N.

Lake Elmo, MN 55042



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Properties at Risk  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 8:50:46 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

I am an engaged citizen. This issue affects quality of life in East Saint Paul and the greater community. Land management is crucial to benefit future generations.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Culbertson

651-222-2268

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary](#)  
**To:** [mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
**Cc:** [Carter, Toni](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Properties at Risk  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 8:57:21 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Fellow Citizens,

Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

I am an engaged and concerned citizen. This issue affects quality of life in East Saint Paul and the greater community. Land management is crucial to benefit future generations.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Culbertson

651-222-2268

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Jim Wolf](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Properties Proposed Sale  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 11:00:01 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:  
Director McCabe:  
Commissioner Toni Carter:  
Commissioner Jim McDonough:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,  
Jim and Betty Wolf  
6050 Lake Road #211  
Woodbury, MN 55125

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Jane Dickerson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Properties  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 1:14:02 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Jane Dickerson

1666 Coffman St. #330  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
612-481-3147

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [PalmerLakeGuy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek properties  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 8:04:15 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Travis Bonovsky*

*5540 Emerson Ave. N.*

*Brooklyn Center, MN 55430*





## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Geoffrey Marshall](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park land  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 10:02:23 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

- Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
- Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Geoff Marshall

---

Geoffrey Marshall  
1162 Juliet Ave  
St. Paul MN 55105

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Pat Lockyear](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master plan and proposed development  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 12:58:17 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I live in Washington County where they have been expanding natural habitats and increasing prairie land to support wildlife. I hope you will follow the Washington County's example and not give in to developers who think only of profits and neglect the impact on habitat.

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

I live in Washington County where they have been expanding natural habitats and increasing prairie land to support wildlife. I hope you will follow the Washington County's example and not give in to developers who think only of profits and neglect the impact on habitat.

Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Pat Lockyear  
2001 Hazel Court  
Stillwater MN 55082

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Timothy Clemens](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Masterplan  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 11:00:22 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Benjamin Karp,

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

- Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
- Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Tim Clemens - 1938 Nortonia Av. Saint Paul, MN 55119

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Carol Steenson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us); [Carter, Toni](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 4:47:15 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Carter:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Carol Steenson*

*17 Skillman Lane*

*North Oaks, MN 55127*



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Paula Koutsouvas](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Sites A and B potential development  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 1:56:46 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello,

I live in St. Paul and it has come to my attention that the above referenced properties adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park are being considered for development. I am writing to you to urge you to please reconsider this development.

Our family frequently visits Battle Creek as a quick and close escape to nature where we can hike, bike, walk our dog, bird watch, and just be outside. One of the things I love about living in St. Paul and Ramsey County is our access to outdoor space, and the above-referenced plots provide invaluable wildlife habitat, green space, and environmental benefits.

Please take this opportunity to preserve this acreage and incorporate it into the park. It would be a shame to lose the green spaces that we have for everyone to enjoy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Paula Koutsouvas  
1597 Niles Ave  
St. Paul, MN

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Gislason, Scott](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creeks Master Plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 2:15:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp-

I just reviewed the 4 – Battle Creek Seg. Trail System & Amenities map and could not be more impressed. As a 30 year plus East-side Nordic skier, I have dreamed about manmade snow at BC. I've wasted countless hour driving my from Crocus neighborhood to Elm Creek, Hyland or, more recently Wirth Park. I have absolute confidence that once completed, the park will be inundated with happy skiers. More importantly, I think of all the East-side high school Nordic skiers that will be able to train consistent with their West-side competitors.

Let me know if/how I can be of any help to this effort!

**Scott Gislason | Financial Advisor**

**North Star Resource Group - Celebrating 110 years in business**

**Minneapolis, MN - Serving Clients Nationwide**

**Office |** (612) 617-6159 **Cell |** (612) 839-2916 **Email |** [Scott.Gislason@northstarfinancial.com](mailto:Scott.Gislason@northstarfinancial.com)

**Company Website |**  [LinkedIn Profile](#)

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*Please note: We remain available to help you. We are just a phone call or e-mail away. We also take COVID-19 very seriously. As such, significantly less work is being conducted in the office and will continue to adjust our procedures as needed. We'll do our best to reply promptly to emails/calls continuing to make your inquiries a top priority. if you typically send in checks for your investment accounts or insurance policies, please reach out to us prior to mailing the checks so we can discuss alternative options. If you need immediate assistance, please call our office at 612-617-6000 and we will be happy to help you. Thanks for your understanding and support of our efforts during this time.*

To opt-out from receiving future emails from North Star, please reply with "REMOVE" in the subject line

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Kathleen Weflen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Comment  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 9:01:39 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

29 November 2020

Dear Mr. Karp:

Please protect the two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County currently be targeted for development. Specifically, I am urging you to extend the boundaries of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the 77 acres designated as Site A in the city of Maplewood's plan and the ponds on the Battle Creek golf course designated as Site B.

Site A provides grassland habitat for many species of birds in steep decline. Birds, wildlife, and people in Ramsey County all use these open spaces. Once developed, this land and water will be gone forever. Because we have so little open space left, the city of Maplewood must do more to save what remains!

Sincerely,

Kathleen Weflen  
1245 Fairmount Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105  
[kathleen.weflen@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.weflen@gmail.com)  
651-600-9583

*Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known.* Carl Sagan

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [tcasey@frontiernet.net](mailto:tcasey@frontiernet.net)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Rafael.E.Ortega@co.ramseymn.us](mailto:Rafael.E.Ortega@co.ramseymn.us); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Comments to proposed Battle Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 10:26:23 AM  
**Attachments:** [SEA to Ramsey County \(11-29-20\).pdf](#)

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioners, Mr. McCabe, and Mr. Karp,

On behalf of Sustainable Earth Advocates (SEA), I have attached my client's comments to the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Best Wishes,

Thomas E. Casey  
Attorney at Law  
2854 Cambridge Lane  
Mound, MN 55364  
telephone: (952) 472-1099  
e-mail: [tcasey@frontiernet.net](mailto:tcasey@frontiernet.net)

**THOMAS E. CASEY**

Attorney at Law  
2854 Cambridge Lane  
Mound, MN 55364  
(952) 472-1099  
tcasey@frontiernet.net

November 29, 2020

Ramsey County Commissioners  
c/o Benjamin Karp, Landscape Designer

Via E-mail Only  
benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us

RE: Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan – Proposed Trails  
Comments from Sustainable Earth Advocates (SEA)

Dear Honorable Commissioners and Mr. Karp,

I represent Sustainable Earth Advocates (SEA), a Minnesota non-profit corporation organized in 2008 for the purposes, in part, of ensuring that our natural resources are protected from unnecessary and ecologically damaging development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan (“Plan”).

Based on the maps posted on the county website, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation proposes to add the following trails:

**1.8 miles of “paved multi-use trails”;**  
**0.70 mile of “natural surface walking and hiking trail”;** and  
**9.2 miles of “off-road cycling and hiking trails.”**

**SEA opposes the addition of these trails for the following reasons:**

**I. The proposed trails will have adverse environmental impacts.**

SEA supports the language in the Ramsey County Park and Recreation Systems Plan (2018):

“Parks systems are also key to environmental stewardship through the conservation of public lands, investments in green infrastructure, and responsible management of land and water resources.” [Page 1; emphasis added.]

Simply stated, the proposed trails conflict with environmental stewardship. For example, trail construction and usage fragment habitat, disturb or wildlife, trample plants, and contribute to soil erosion.



Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
November 29, 2020

### II. Environmental impacts have not been adequately determined.

The Ramsey County Parks and Recreation System Plan (2018) states: “Rare species are monitored where they are known. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department currently monitors bald eagles, ospreys, red shouldered hawks, and Blanding’s turtles. **No active surveys are conducted to locate rare species.** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation works with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on rare animal locations.” [Page 19; emphasis added.]

**This is a huge oversight.** SEA supports on-the-ground surveys of plant and animal species. The endangered Rusty Patched Bumble Bee (Minnesota’s “state bee”) requires particular attention; the Twin Cities is one of its last strongholds on Earth.

SEA notes Minnesota Rule 4410.4600, Subpart 27. F, exempts from environmental review “constructing or rehabilitating a non-motorized trail in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Regional Park System.” SEA supports working with the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners - and other interested parties - to **repeal this rule.** In this way, the environmental impacts of mountain bike and the other proposed trails on Rusty Patched Bumble Bees – and other natural resources - can be better understood.

### III. Shared “off-road and hiking trails” and “paved multi-use trails” are not “compatible” or “equitable.”

Mountain bikers and other bikers, operating at a faster speed than walkers, are in inevitable conflict. Walkers, often with little or no warning of an approaching bike, must step-aside to ensure their safety. The possibility of an oncoming bike detracts from walkers who slow down or stop to view, study, and, possibly, photograph a natural feature. Nature photography is not compatible with a speeding bike.

Furthermore, bikers, traveling at a faster speed, have less time to avoid impacts on native flora and fauna.

Trails that allow mountain bikes favor a limited age group and those who can afford a relatively expensive bike.

The inevitable result: as mountain biking and other biking increases, hiking will decrease on the trails.

### IV. Walking is more preferred than mountain bikes.

It is important to note the Metropolitan Council’s Regional Parks Policy Plan states, “Study findings revealed the **most preferred** outdoor recreational activities included **walking**, picnicking or barbequing, and playground use.” Understandably, mountain bikes are not mentioned. [Page 117.] The Regional Parks Policy Plan also states, “**Walking remains the most frequently mentioned favorite activity**” [page 188].

Yet, far too many trails are designated for mountain bikes – incompatible with walking.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
November 29, 2020

### V. Battle Creek Regional Plan is out of synch with the Ramsey County and Metropolitan Council park planning processes.

The Metropolitan Council has not completed its update of the Regional Park Policy Plan.

Ramsey County has **not** updated its Park Master Plan. The Ramsey County website states: “The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation System plan (PDF, 31 MB), a document that directs the development of park and recreation space and programs throughout the county, **is being updated** to reflect current and future community needs.” [Emphasis added.] <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/parks-recreation/parks-trails/parks-planning-projects/parks-system-plan> [Last visited 11/28/20; emphasis added.]

These plans must be completed – first - to allow the public to review and comment on whether or not the Battle Creek Regional Park Plan conforms to the Metropolitan Council Regional Parks Policy Plan and the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation System Plan.

### VI. Background Facts – Sixth Mass Extinction.

The Earth is suffering from the 6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction event in its history. This time, the cause is us. (Kolbert, The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History. 2014.)

Human-caused global warming is creating unprecedented climate change and weather events, resulting in tragic loss of human and animal life, extensive damage to ecosystems, and severe economic costs.

The “Anthropocene” is proposed as a new geological epoch, acknowledging that human activity now rivals natural geological processes, leaving unmistakable evidence in the stratigraphic record.

“... [T]he current world population of 7.6 billion is expected to reach 8.6 billion in 2030, rising to 9.8 billion in 2050.” [WWF Living Planet Report, 2018, page 51.]

“In March 2018, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released its latest Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment (LDRA), finding that only a quarter of land on Earth is substantively free of the impacts of human activities. By 2050 this fraction is projected to decline to just a tenth. Wetlands are the most impacted category, having lost 87% of their extent in the modern era. **The immediate causes of land degradation are typically local – the inappropriate management of the land resource ...**” [WWF Living Planet Report 2018, page 42; emphasis added.]

In summary, the Earth, on a global scale, is being afflicted by “death by 1,000 cuts.”

### VII. Minnesota’s Natural Resources – Imperiled.

Minnesota’s native plants and their communities have suffered great losses. Less than 1% of our native prairies and oak savannahs remain. Less than 2% of our old growth forests remain.

Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
November 29, 2020

About ½ of Minnesota’s original wetlands remain. “It has been estimated that Minnesota has lost approximately half of its original pre-settlement wetlands due to draining and filling for agriculture and development, with some regions of the state having lost more than 90 percent of their original wetlands (Anderson and Craig 1984).” (Kloiber, S.M. and Norris, D.J. 2013. Status and Trends of Wetlands in Minnesota: Wetland Quantity Trends from 2006 to 2011. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul, MN.)

“Monitoring suggests that about 40% of Minnesota's lakes and streams are impaired for conventional pollutants.” (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/minnesotas-impaired-waters-list>, last visited 11/11/18.)

The Metropolitan Regional Park System, which includes Battle Creek Regional Park, contains the **crown jewels** of our area, with the most sensitive and rare plant and animal communities. They deserve the highest degree of legal protection.

Yet, our Metropolitan Regional Park System is also suffering from “death by 1,000 cuts.”

### VIII. “Rescue of Environment is Central Organizing Principle”

Former Vice-President Al Gore wrote in Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit (1992): “I have come to believe that we must take bold and unequivocal action: we must make the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle for civilization.” (Page 269.) Former Vice-President Gore continues: “Adopting a central organizing principle ... means embarking on an **all-out effort** to use every policy, every tactic and strategy, every plan and course of action - to use, in short, every means to halt the destruction of the environment and to preserve and nurture our ecological system.” (Page 274.) [Emphasis added.]

**The ethical/moral decisions, arising from Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan, must be guided by this “central organizing principle.”**

### Summary

The proposed trails: (1) are incompatible with environmental stewardship; (2) have not been analyzed for their environmental impacts; and (3) are out of synch with the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County park planning processes.

Citizens prefer walking vs. mountain biking in parks.

### Requests for Action

SEA respectfully submits these requests the following:

1. Please **delete** all of the proposed mountain bike and other trails from the proposed Plan.
2. Please institute a moratorium on building any new mountain bike trail or other trail in Battle Creek Regional Park until their environmental impacts are adequately determined.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Ramsey County Board of Commissioners  
November 29, 2020

3. Please allow citizens the opportunity to comment on the adequacy of the environmental review, before a decision is made on whether the project moves forward.
4. Please work with interested parties to repeal the trail exemption from environmental review under the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act.

On behalf of SEA, I **thank you** in advance for your kind consideration and reply.

Sincerely yours,

*Thomas E. Casey*

Thomas E. Casey

TEC/tc

cc: SEA

Mark McCabe, Director, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation: [mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us)

Commissioner Toni Carter, District 4, Chair, Ramsey Co Board: [Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn.us)

Commissioner Jim McDonough, District 6: [Jim.McDonough@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Jim.McDonough@co.ramsey.mn.us)

Commissioner Nicole Joy Frethem, District 1, [district1@ramseycounty.us](mailto:district1@ramseycounty.us)

Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire, District 2, [District2@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:District2@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)

Commissioner Trista Matas Castillo, District 3, [trista.matascastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:trista.matascastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us)

Commissioner Rafael E. Ortega, District 5, [Rafael.E.Ortega@co.ramseymn.us](mailto:Rafael.E.Ortega@co.ramseymn.us)

Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, District 7, [Victoria.Reinhardt@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Victoria.Reinhardt@co.ramsey.mn.us)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Greg Filice](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#)  
**Subject:** County-owned properties near Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 1:20:11 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

Dear Director McCabe:

Dear Commissioner Carter:

Dear Commissioner McDonough:

Dear Commissioner Orgeta:

I am deeply distressed about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

I understand that the city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide much needed wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. Open, undeveloped space is in incredibly short supply already and is rapidly diminishing. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am dismayed that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

My family and I are avid user of Battle Creek Park. The County is rightfully proud of that space. It needs to be markedly expanded into these two parcels!

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

--

Greg Filice  
120 Amherst Street  
St. Paul, MN 55105



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Steve Kerrigan](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Development by City of Maplewood of 2 properties  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 7:52:47 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

We do not support the county selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

We feel we must preserve natural areas are therefore ask that Ramsey County:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Steve Kerrigan*  
2800 St. Anthony Blvd  
St. Anthony Village, MN 55418

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Rebekah Morse](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Expand Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:31:10 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Morse  
895 Palace Ave  
St Paul, MN 55102

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Heather Hundt](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 4:14:26 PM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Toni Carter:

Commissioner Jim McDonough:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);

The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.

Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

Minnesota residents outside of Ramsey County do recreate at Battle Creek Regional Park and an enhancement to the existing park through an extension of the existing boundary would benefit not only the citizens of Minnesota and the wildlife that use these lands, but would also benefit the economy of Ramsey County.

Sincerely,

Heather Hundt  
Lake Park, MN

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Colleen O'Connor Toberman](#)  
**To:** [Yonke, Scott](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Jono Cowgill](#); [Alex Roth](#)  
**Subject:** FMR comments on updated Battle Creek concepts  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 5:45:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [FMRBattleCreekConceptsLetter1120.pdf](#)

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Scott and Ben,

I've attached some comments from FMR on the updated Battle Creek master plan concepts. We really appreciate the opportunity to be closely engaged in this process from start to finish, and we're looking forward to seeing the full draft master plan when it's ready.

As always, we're happy to talk further about any of our comments or recommendations. Thank you!

-Colleen and Alex

---

**Colleen O'Connor Toberman** / River Corridor Program Director  
[ctoberman@fmr.org](mailto:ctoberman@fmr.org) / 651.222.2193 x29  
(she/her) [Why pronouns matter.](#)

**Friends of the Mississippi River**  
101 East 5th Street, Suite 2000  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
[FMR.org](http://FMR.org)

**Watch the salt, please.**

Winter deicers and salt can be toxic to river life. Learn more from the [State of the River Stewardship Guide](#).

Connect: [facebook](#) | [twitter](#) | [e-newsletter](#)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments



Working to protect the Mississippi River  
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

101 East Fifth Street  
Suite 2000  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

651-222-2193  
[www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)  
[info@fmr.org](mailto:info@fmr.org)

November 17, 2020

Scott Yonke and Ben Karp  
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
Maplewood, MN

Dear Scott and Ben:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer updated comments on the Battle Creek Regional Park master plan concepts. We appreciate that FMR has been invited to collaborate throughout this entire planning process and we look forward to continuing this relationship.

We've reviewed the proposed concepts and have some comments on the changes that have been made since our last review in July.

### **Trail System**

FMR supports the addition of trail segments that connect different parts of the park and provide better, safer connections between the park and surrounding neighborhoods.

We appreciate that the proposed network of new trails has been reduced in this most current iteration of the concepts. We especially appreciate the reduction of new trails proposed in the fragile Bluff Impact Zone near the southwestern corner of the park.

There are few proposed trails that we still find concerning. Trails can have significant ecological impacts. Every new trail serves to cut off and isolate wildlife populations, especially for very small species that won't cross trails. The same is true for some plant species. Increased trails also create more "edge areas" that are less amenable to plants and animals and create corridors that facilitate the spread of invasive species.

Given this, we evaluate proposed trails through the lens of, "Does this increase access to important areas of the park? Does that increased access outweigh the potential negative impacts of a new trail?" Some of the proposed new trails meet these goals. Others seem duplicative and unnecessary.

For instance, in the Fish Creek area, some of the proposed trails improve access to the scenic creek and provide better connections to the neighborhood. We support the addition of those trails. But some trails don't seem to go anywhere new. They create excessively short loops that don't really

appear to improve access, and in doing so cut through newly-restored areas that should be protected. Building trails on both sides of the creek also seems excessive; the creek is narrow and doesn't really need to have two trails so close to each other.

The Pig's Eye area is a better example of how trails can improve access to special areas of the park without overbuilt networks.

We also continue to question the concepts showing many new trails as being combined use for both hiking and biking. That seems misleading when much of the trail plan in the main park area was created through a project that studied only cycling trails and primarily engaged cyclists. In general, we hear from both hikers and cyclists that they prefer dedicated trails that are designed for specific modes and reduce potential conflicts and safety issues. If trails are easily shared, then the existing trail network at Battle Creek should be considered adequate.

### **Trailheads and Amenities**

We support modest improvements to trailhead areas, including acquisition of additional parkland in key places, that make the park more inviting and accessible. The focus on neighborhood access and safe street crossings is appreciated. We also support improved wayfinding throughout the park as it is frequently confusing to navigate. Any added trails will make wayfinding even more crucial.

We're also happy to see the addition of fishing piers, outdoor learning stations, and other amenities that welcome visitors to enjoy the park in new ways. We encourage you to avoid overbuilding new amenities or damaging the natural character in currently-undeveloped parts of the park.

We are curious about the proposed trailhead area near Lower Afton Road and Battle Creek Road. This seems like a good location to add some parking, a restroom, picnic tables, etc. We question whether adding a visitor center is really needed when the community center nearby is quite large. It seems like this existing large building could be enhanced to serve more park visitors. If the goal of a new visitor center would be primarily to serve skiers, Hyland Lake Park Reserve has a good example of how a modest warming house and staging area was added for ski meets without duplicating services provided by the larger visitor center nearby.

### **Ecological assessment needed**

In the county's entire planning process so far, little has been said to the public about environmental goals and impacts in the park. We expect that the full draft master plan will answer the public's questions about how the park will balance recreational and ecological goals, include an environmental impact analysis of the proposed recreational expansions, and incorporate plans for future ecological restoration throughout the park.

Before any new amenities or trails are built, we expect to see a review of how these projects will impact sensitive areas or rare species. The Pig's Eye area, for instance, has some wetlands that might need special assessment before a trail is built near/through them. The same goes for areas of the park where habitat restoration has been a priority; any new amenities should be careful to protect areas that have received significant restoration investment.



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

We also urge you to review a recently-published research study about the impacts of different recreational trail modes on wildlife. The study found that animals appeared to avoid trails used by mountain bikes and motorized vehicles more than trails used by hikers or horseback riders. This could suggest that expanding trail networks for noisier, faster modes such as mountain biking might have a greater negative impact on wildlife health and movement. (Full study: <https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/csp2.271>)

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on these park concepts. We look forward to participating in the rest of the planning process. If you'd like to discuss anything, please don't hesitate to contact us.

In partnership,



Alex Roth, PhD  
Ecologist  
aroth@fmr.org, 651-222-2193 x 33



Colleen O'Connor Toberman  
River Corridor Director  
ctoberman@fmr.org, 651-222-2193 x29

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Blumer, Brett](#)  
**To:** [Yonke, Scott](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Contact Us  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 12:13:13 PM

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This one is for Battle Creek.

---

**From:** PR Parks <[Parks@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:Parks@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 11:55 AM  
**To:** Blumer, Brett <[brett.blumer@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:brett.blumer@co.ramsey.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Fw: Form submission from: Contact Us

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**From:** ContactRamseyCounty <[contactramseycounty@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:contactramseycounty@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 11:13 AM  
**To:** PR Parks <[Parks@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:Parks@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Contact Us

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-----Original Message-----

From: [CommunicationsHelpDesk@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:CommunicationsHelpDesk@co.ramsey.mn.us) <[CommunicationsHelpDesk@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:CommunicationsHelpDesk@co.ramsey.mn.us)>  
Sent: Tuesday, November 24, 2020 7:31 AM  
To: ContactRamseyCounty <[contactramseycounty@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:contactramseycounty@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
Subject: Form submission from: Contact Us

Submitted on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 - 07:31 Submitted by user: Anonymous Submitted values are:

Name: John Zakelj  
Email: [jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com)  
Phone number : 6512394119

Would you like someone to contact you? Yes Your comments or questions:

Thank you for everything you've done during the past 2 years to include the public in the development of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. I have participated in many of your activities. I hope that this inclusive process will build broad public support for the future of Battle Creek Park.

The following are my comments for the Preferred concept 30-day public review.

I am generally supportive of the directions you are taking, including development of trails, public access and nature interpretation.

The big missing piece is the 77 acres which is currently controlled by the County Workhouse. A year ago, the Battle Creek draft materials mentioned this land for possible inclusion in Battle Creek park. I am really disappointed to see that this land is not included in your current maps.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Although this land was agricultural at one time, that is not true today, at least not the section that I can see while hiking the trails in Battle Creek Park. I have not seen any farming activity there in many years. It is this lack of farming activity that has allowed the development of a rich grassland habitat which is now home to Bobolinks and other grassland birds that are not found anywhere else in southern Ramsey County.

According to eBird reports, this is the only location in southern Ramsey County where Bobolinks were reported this year. Other species of note that have been reported at this location are American Kestrel, Eastern Meadowlark, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, and Dickcissel. All of these birds are declining due to habitat loss as they are all grassland birds that share the same types of habitat as the Bobolinks. The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S. A 2019 study published in the journal Science showed that grassland bird species such as the Bobolink experienced a 53-percent reduction in population across the United States and Canada since 1970.

Breeding bird surveys specific to Minnesota indicate a 65% reduction in nesting Bobolinks since 1966. The fact that Bobolinks have been seen in the Workhouse fields as late as July 5 indicates that Bobolinks may be nesting there. This is unique habitat that should be preserved as part of Battle Creek Park.

The above reports are based on what's visible from Battle Creek Park. Most of this land is not accessible to the public. I tried walking in those fields a couple times and have been surprised how quickly guards drove out from the Workhouse to notify me that that I was trespassing. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

My other main comment regarding the Master Plan is to encourage you to continue working with the city of Maplewood regarding joint management of Fish Creek, and possibly a partnership with Maplewood Nature Center.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and please feel free to contact me at [jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com) if you have questions.

John Zakelj  
471 Mystic St  
St Paul, MN 55119

Department / Division Node ID:

Contact email: [contactramseycounty@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:contactramseycounty@co.ramsey.mn.us)

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [margie.oloughlin](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Battle Creek Park development  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 10:42:16 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Mr. Karp, Please do not support the development of the 77 acres adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park. According to St. Paul Audobon, it is a valuable nesting site for grassland birds -- and has other environmental benefits as well.

This is an excellent opportunity to say NO to development at the expense of conservation.

Thank you, Margaret O'Loughlin

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Natacha Drechsler](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** HELP!! Please!  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:42:34 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

We are concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents); **ESPECIALLY THIS ONE!**
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

We are astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

**Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit. **WE ALL WILL!!**

Sincerely,

Natacha and Christopher Drechsler

1416 Laurel ave. Saint Paul MN 55104

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [john.zakelj](#)  
**To:** [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Cc:** [Bonnie Watkins](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Inclusion of Workhouse Field in Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 8:07:28 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Jim, I'm writing regarding the 77 acre parcel of county land between Battle Creek Park and the County Workhouse. Last week, I participated in a Maplewood Community Forum which was ostensibly about possible development at the Ponds golf course but also included the 77 acre parcel (the "Workhouse fields"). Over the past year, there's been lots of press about the county considering the sale of the golf course but I have not heard of any county board discussion regarding the Workhouse fields. Earlier this year, the online Battle Creek park planning documents mentioned this property for possible inclusion in the adjoining Battle Creek park. I was quite surprised and concerned when I saw this property considered for possible development.

I do a lot of hiking, birdwatching and nature photography at Battle Creek park. I've participated in the park master planning process and have submitted my comments as part of that process. I have been impressed by the dedication and expertise of county parks staff. I have not seen the same dedication lately from the City of Maplewood. I was very disappointed when they laid off all staff at the Maplewood Nature Center last spring. And I'm very concerned now to see that they're considering this property for development.

At the community forum, the city planners presented this property as agricultural. In fact, from my walks in the park, I have not seen any farming activity there in many years. It is this lack of farming activity that has allowed the development of a rich grassland habitat which is now home to Bobolinks and other grassland birds that are not found anywhere else in southern Ramsey County.

According to eBird reports, this is the only location in southern Ramsey County where Bobolinks were reported this year. Other species of note that have been reported at this location are American Kestrel, Eastern Meadowlark, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, and Dickcissel. All of these birds are declining due to habitat loss as they are all grassland birds that share the same types of habitat as the Bobolinks. The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S. A 2019 study published in the journal Science showed that grassland bird species such as the Bobolink experienced a 53-percent reduction in population across the United States and Canada since 1970. Breeding bird surveys specific to Minnesota indicate a 65% reduction in nesting Bobolinks since 1966. The fact that Bobolinks have been seen in the Workhouse fields as late as July 5 indicates that Bobolinks may be nesting there. This is unique habitat that should be preserved as part of Battle Creek Park.

The above reports are based on what's visible from Battle Creek Park. Most of this land is not accessible to the public. I tried walking in those fields a couple times and have been surprised how quickly guards drove out from the Workhouse to notify me that that I was trespassing. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Jim, you know that my wife Bonnie Watkins and I have been supportive of multiple uses at Totem Town. We appreciate everything you've been doing to advocate for affordable housing and other neighborhood needs. Multiple uses may be appropriate at Totem Town and the Ponds golf course, but I feel strongly that the Workhouse fields are different. At Totem Town and the golf course, birds and other creatures have had to co-exist with buildings and human infrastructure for many years. But at the Workhouse fields, the wild grasses and wild creatures have been able to return closer to what they once were. Development of this property will destroy its unique natural value and critical habitat for threatened species.

Sincerely,

John Zakelj

471 Mystic St

St Paul, MN 55119



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Therese Scheller](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#)  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 11:55:33 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo,:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely, Therese Scheller

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Jeanne Nyman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Maplewood Properties  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:14:04 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Nyman

6340 Lamar Ave S, Cottage Grove, MN 55016

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Julia Dady](#)  
**To:** [Lencowski, Kristopher](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** New Homeless Camps starting at Battle Creek Park - Water Park section  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 1:42:44 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello –

I sent an online form to Ramsey County and to the City of Maplewood late Friday, but I am not sure it will reach the proper persons.

While going for a walk Friday afternoon, I saw a small homeless camp that I have not seen before. It was nestled among some pine trees, not too far from a bench, and visible from the walking path. There appeared to be several tents and also a gas grill, so I presume they are planning on staying awhile.

Today, I became aware, through NextDoor, that there are actually two separate camps in the area – one being closer to McKnight/Upper Afton and the other further north.

I know Covid makes this more challenging, but I am asking you all to **please not let another homeless camp city get set up in Battle Creek Park**. The paths here have been extremely important reprieve from me during Covid. I generally feel safe and during the winter, it is one of the trail areas that are kept clear for walkers (by the way I am so grateful to you all for that!). Please do not allow this section of the park to deteriorate by allowing homeless camps to establish here. It seems more prudent to have them move to another place where services are already established and/or the city can monitor them.

When a camp is allowed in other areas, they just seem to grow and grow. They become trashy and sources of crime, including violent crimes and sexual assaults. Drug and alcohol abuse is common. This park has a playground. Please do not allow the camps to remain here. Many people also need this park to remain clean and safe so we can make it through covid and enjoy nature and exercise safely. Also, with the coming winter, it does not seem prudent to allow new camps to begin for the safety of the homeless, too.

The specific location for the camp that I saw:

It is on a small hill, in a section of pine trees, just to the east of McKnight Rd, on the Maplewood side. The nearest cross streets are Larry Ho Drive and North Park Drive, which are on the other side (St. Paul side) of McKnight Rd. The pine tree ‘hill’ camp is immediately south of the giant culvert that brings Battle Creek flowing underneath McKnight Rd.

I do not know where the second nearby camp is, but it was described on NextDoor social media as: “There are 2 encampments. One smaller than the other. When you enter off the corner of McKnight and Upper Afton, go left then veer left again, one encampment is beyond the bend off to the left in the woods where we usually see people hang there hammocks in the summertime.. the other is between the pines at the next turn, on the right.”

Thank you,  
Sincerely,

Julia Dady  
Battle Creek neighborhood resident

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Kathy Harvey](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** New master plan for Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 9:56:56 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,  
Kathy Harvey  
5424 Provence Lane  
White Bear Twp, MN 55127

Sent from [Outlook](#)

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Carole Gernes](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Plans to develop The Ponds of Battle Creek Golf Course and Grasslands adjacent to Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 4:00:48 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioners Carter, McDonough and Reinhart:

As a resident of both Ramsey County and Maplewood, I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The City of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

The Ponds of Battle Creek include waterways that support green frogs, one of only two sites of the 40 that were part of the Maplewood Frog and Toad survey that began in 2006.

The residents in the area who attended the city's online meeting were overwhelmingly against development of these open spaces. As a resident in the Hillcrest Golf Course neighborhood, I see the intense development of our few remaining area golf courses and grasslands as a disturbing trend. That development is being pushed through and existing neighborhoods will experience a huge increase in traffic, both along already busy roads (McKnight and Larpenteur) and through the quiet neighborhoods to the south. I love Maplewood for its history of preserving open space, providing access to nature experiences and environmental stewardship. We do not need to and should not try to compete with Woodbury for high density housing or shopping experiences.

## Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

I implore you; please save these properties from development. The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Carole J. Gernes  
Resident

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [JULIAN SELLERS](#)  
**To:** [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Please save Battle Creek Sites A and B  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 11:37:56 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Commissioners Carter and McDonough, Director McCabe, Mr. Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Julian Sellers  
1875 Juliet Ave  
Saint Paul, MN 55105



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Sherry Gray](#)  
**To:** [McCabe, Mark](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn](mailto:Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn)  
**Subject:** Please save the Battle Creek Grasslands from habitat destroying development  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 12:39:59 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Toni Carter:

We live in your district and what we have documented through 17 years of walks around this district is that there is very little to no habitat for wildlife here, which is hugely detrimental to the health of the people in our district. Frogtown Farms and West Irvine are rare areas where we can find what used to be common birds. I have data personally collected for Cornell Lab's eBird project on these locations.

Ramsey County and Saint Paul are both seriously suffering from lack of wildlife friendly spaces, especially for birds, and having so few spaces like this increase stress on all of us, from the children to the elderly. Access to nature is key for childhood development, pollution control, human health, relaxation from stress.

I know our county is suffering from tax revenue issues and so all development gets promoted as a solution, but creating a good environment for all of us is key, and please do not develop this important site.

Best, Sherry Gray and David Blaney  
Saint Paul

Here are some of the bird species documented in the grassland tract (Site A) during the 2019 and 2020 nesting seasons. The percentage by which those species have declined in Minnesota since 1967 is documented by the USGS Breeding Bird Survey. [\[i\]](#)

[\[i\] Patuxent Wildlife Research Center - Bird Population Studies](#)

### Patuxent Wildlife Research Center - Bird Population Studies

USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center - Bird Population Studies

Sherry Gray  
Saint Paul, Minnesota

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Anita McMurtry](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Possible loss to development, two county-owned properties near Battle Creek Park.  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 6:04:02 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Anita McMurtry

City of St Paul resident

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Vaillancourt, Michele](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Potential Development of Parcels in Ramsey County  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 5:46:43 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Benjamin Karp

Dear Mr. Karp:

I understand that comments are to be submitted to you regarding the development of two Ramsey County-owned properties near Battle Creek Park.

As a long-time resident of Ramsey County, I am concerned about the possible loss of these two tracts of open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides) and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents); and
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The City of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that Ramsey County would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors grassland bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform the management of this tract.

Please do the right thing and:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the Park and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat; and
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Michele D. Vaillancourt  
244 Stonebridge Boulevard  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
(651) 398-6600

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Becky Erickson and Dan Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** potential sale of count-owned open space and wildlife habitat  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 8:39:50 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

**Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Becky Erickson  
857 Lincoln Ave.  
St. Paul

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [ROGER BERGERSON](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Potential sale of land near Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Saturday, November 28, 2020 3:58:26 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Benjamin Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Thank you,

Val Cunningham

St. Paul resident and member,

St. Paul Audubon Society

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Robert Bowman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Subject:** Property development near Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 8:55:49 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:  
Director McCabe:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County. The availability of green (and slightly wild) space like these tracts is important to the quality of life in our communities. This has been amply demonstrated in our current pandemic. The properties:

The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);

The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments. For example Site A is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. Selling the 77-acre tract does real harm to our community by further limiting opportunities to enjoy a natural environment that harbors a variety of bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel).

Please consider doing the following:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Thank you,  
Robert J Bowman



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [L Gannon](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Protect Maplewood properties  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 8:37:46 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good morning,

I'm writing about the potential sale of the park properties in Maplewood. I understand a golf course is an expensive thing to run, but in light of the pandemic, this is the worst time to be losing parkland to more ugly, big-box development.

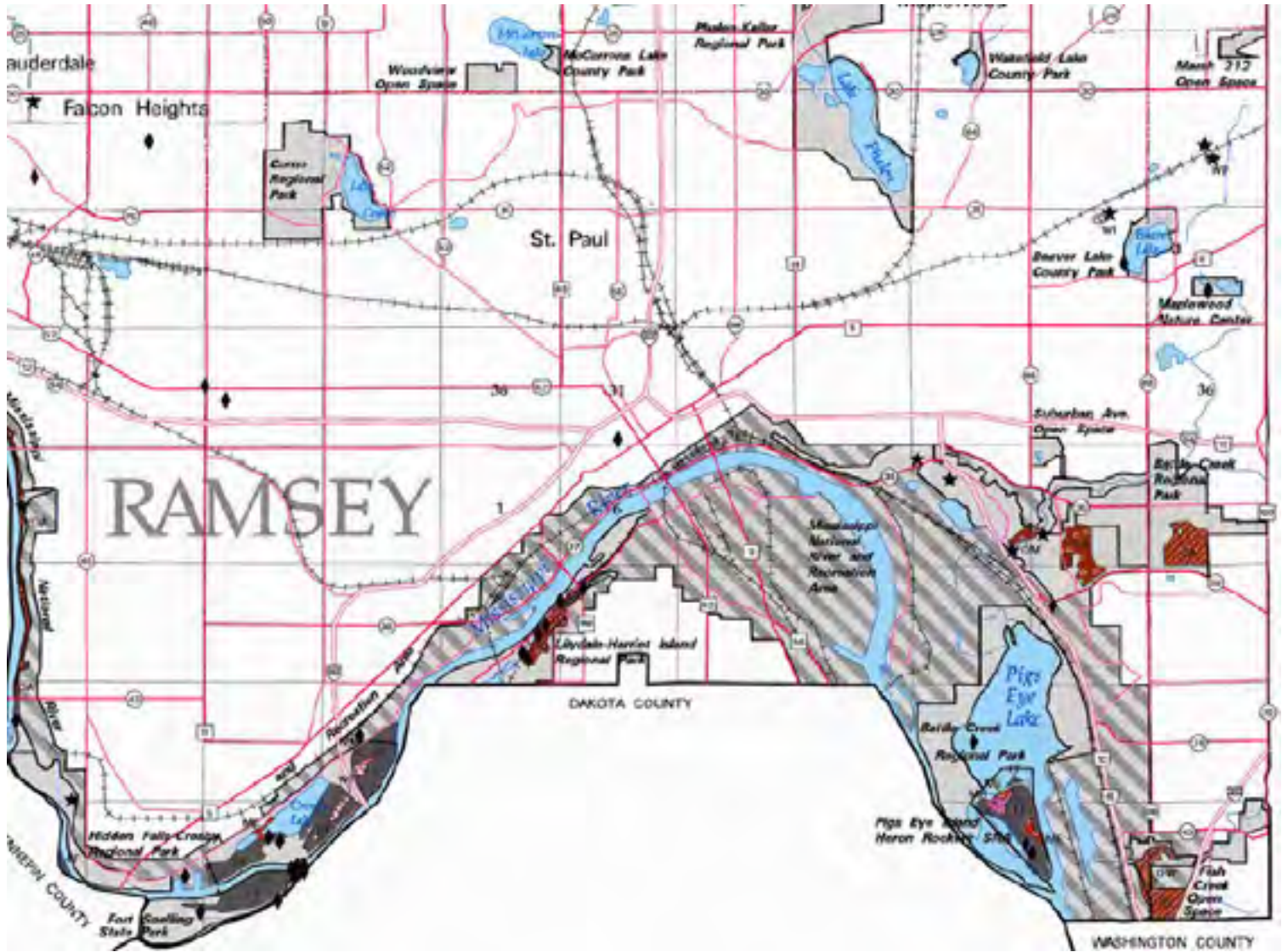
These parcels are important for wildlife habitat and recreation for Ramsey County residents! If you've been to any of the area parks during a remotely nice day during the pandemic, you will have found parking lots bursting with cars and trails crowded with people.

I think many groups would be interested in the golf course land being re-purposed for trail running or mountain biking, if it can't be managed for golfers anymore.

We've got plenty of hideous apartment complexes and high-end grocery stores. Do the right thing and protect this land for wildlife and parks!

Leah Gannon  
432 Victoria St S  
St Paul MN 55102

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [john.zakelj](mailto:john.zakelj@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
**To:** [McCabe, Mark](mailto:mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us); [Karp, Benjamin M](mailto:benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 24, 2020 7:35:22 AM

---

Mark and Ben, I just submitted my comments regarding the Battle Creek Master Plan on the official county "contact us" link. Here's a copy of what I submitted:

Thank you for everything you've done during the past 2 years to include the public in the development of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. I have participated in many of your activities. I hope that this inclusive process will build broad public support for the future of Battle Creek Park. The following are my comments for the Preferred concept 30-day public review.

I am generally supportive of the directions you are taking, including development of trails, public access and nature interpretation.

The big missing piece is the 77 acres which is currently controlled by the County Workhouse. A year ago, the Battle Creek draft materials mentioned this land for possible inclusion in Battle Creek park. I am really disappointed to see that this land is not included in your current maps. Although this land was agricultural at one time, that is not true today, at least not the section that I can see while hiking the trails in Battle Creek Park. I have not seen any farming activity there in many years. It is this lack of farming activity that has allowed the development of a rich grassland habitat which is now home to Bobolinks and other grassland birds that are not found anywhere else in southern Ramsey County.

According to eBird reports, this is the only location in southern Ramsey County where Bobolinks were reported this year. Other species of note that have been reported at this location are American Kestrel, Eastern Meadowlark, Clay-colored Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, and Dickcissel. All of these birds are declining due to habitat loss as they are all grassland birds that share the same types of habitat as the Bobolinks. The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S. A 2019 study published in the journal Science showed that grassland bird species such as the Bobolink experienced a 53-percent reduction in population across the United States and Canada since 1970. Breeding bird surveys specific to Minnesota indicate a 65% reduction in nesting Bobolinks since 1966. The fact that Bobolinks have been seen in the Workhouse fields as late as July 5 indicates that Bobolinks may be nesting there. This is unique habitat that should be preserved as part of Battle Creek Park.

The above reports are based on what's visible from Battle Creek Park. Most of this land is not accessible to the public. I tried walking in those fields a couple times and have been surprised how quickly guards drove out from the Workhouse to notify me that that I was trespassing. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

My other main comment regarding the Master Plan is to encourage you to continue working with the city of Maplewood regarding joint management of Fish Creek, and possibly a partnership with Maplewood Nature Center.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and please feel free to contact me at [jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com) if you have questions.

John Zakelj

471 Mystic St

St Paul, MN 55119

On Thursday, November 19, 2020, 08:26:27 AM CST, McCabe, Mark <[mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us)>

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

wrote:

Thanks for the follow-up John and best wishes.

**Mark McCabe** | Director of Parks & Recreation

Ramsey County

Parks and Recreation  
2015 North Van Dyke Street

Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

651-266-0303 | Cell 651-307-1389

[www.ramseycounty.us/parks](http://www.ramseycounty.us/parks)

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**From:** john zakelj [mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 19, 2020 6:26 AM  
**To:** McCabe, Mark <Mark.McCabe@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US>  
**Cc:** Karp, Benjamin M <benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US>; Catherine Zimmer <wow-mn@usfamily.net>; Mary A. Williams <lorax002@gmail.com>; Gordon Anderson <gpandersson@msn.com>; JULIAN SELLERS <juliansellers@msn.com>; Ann Hutchinson <aspennh@aol.com>; Carole Gernes <carole.gernes@yahoo.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land

Ben, thanks much for forwarding my message to Mark, and Mark, thank you for your reply. You make a great point about these 77 acres all being considered "Ramsey County" land as opposed to Parks & Recreation or Workhouse specific land.

I have registered for today's forum and will provide information regarding this unique grassland habitat and why it should become part of Battle Creek Park. I will also make the point that we need an environmental assessment of these 77 acres. I am able to report on the uncommon birds that I've seen in these fields while I was hiking in Battle Creek Park, but as far as I know, nobody has done a biological inventory of the site. I have tried walking those fields a couple times and have been amazed how quickly guards drove out from the Workhouse to notify me that I was trespassing.

I hope that we will get the opportunity to work together on an environmental assessment and future inclusion of this land in Battle Creek Park.

Sincerely,

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

John Zakelj

On Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 04:38:38 PM CST, McCabe, Mark  
<[mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:mark.mccabe@co.ramsey.mn.us)> wrote:

Hello John,

Ben Karp forwarded your message to me. I don't know that I have an exact answer for you other than I was informed that the County property at the workhouse that you are referring to would be part of the discussion at the City of Maplewood community forum that you've referenced. The land is all considered "Ramsey County" land as opposed to Parks & Recreation or Workhouse specific land. That said I know when land gets designated for certain specific uses such as park land there can be specific protections that are put in place. At any rate if you have opinions you'd like to communicate I'd recommend that you attend the public meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm. I have listed the meeting link below that you need to RSVP to if you'd like to attend. Thank you.

Online meeting [RSVP to the online Zoom meeting](#)

**Mark McCabe** | Director of Parks & Recreation

Ramsey County

Parks and Recreation  
2015 North Van Dyke Street

Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

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**From:** john zakelj <[jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 7:29 AM  
**To:** Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Hi Ben, it's been a few months since we last connected regarding the land between Battle Creek Park and the County Workhouse. Have you heard anything more as to why this land was removed from the acquisitions list for Battle Creek Regional Park?

I see that the city of Maplewood has included this land in this week's community forum regarding the Ponds at Maplewood. At that forum, I will provide information regarding this unique grassland habitat and why it should become part of Battle Creek Park.

I also see that you have a deadline of Nov. 30 for comments regarding Battle Creek master plan concepts. I hope that the county is still open to the possibility of transferring this land from Corrections to Parks.

John

On Monday, August 3, 2020, 08:34:42 AM CDT, Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us)> wrote:

Hi John,

I have not heard back from my contact with property management. I will let you know what I hear.

Thanks,

**Benjamin Karp** | Landscape Designer

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department  
2015 Van Dyke Street

Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

PH: 651-748-2500

[www.co.ramsey.mn.us](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us)

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**From:** john zakelj <[jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 3, 2020 6:51 AM  
**To:** Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Cc:** Julia Dady <[dadylady@usfamily.net](mailto:dadylady@usfamily.net)>  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land

Ben, thank you very much for following up on the possible partnership with Maplewood Nature Center.



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

I'm very happy to see that Maplewood has invited Ramsey County to be on their Nature Center task force, and the county will be appointing someone.

Were you able to get any more info about the county workhouse land? I do a lot of birdwatching and have observed bird species on this land, such as Dickcissels, Kestrels and Meadowlarks, which I have not seen anywhere within the current boundaries of Battle Creek Park, or anywhere else within 5-10 miles. This is unique habitat that should be part of the park. Even though it's county land, it's closed to the public. I hiked in those fields last year, barely within view of the Workhouse. A guard came out in his pickup to inform me that I was trespassing. Another time, I tried viewing the birds from the Workhouse parking lot. Again, a guard came out and informed me that was not an allowed activity, even though I was in the public parking lot.

John Zakelj

On Thursday, July 23, 2020, 02:04:30 PM CDT, Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:benjamin.karp@co.ramsey.mn.us)> wrote:

Hi John,

I forwarded on information to the Director of Maintenance & Operations as well as our lead programmer, I will follow up with them if you don't hear back directly. The land north of the county workhouse was at one time on the acquisitions list for Battle Creek Regional Park. I am pursuing a concrete answer as to why we were asked to remove this. I'm sure there is a development study or other feature conducted by property management but will get you that information once I have received it.

Thanks,

**Benjamin Karp** | Landscape Designer

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department  
2015 Van Dyke Street

Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

PH: 651-748-2500

[www.co.ramsey.mn.us](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us)

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**From:** john zakelj <[jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:54 PM  
**To:** Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Cc:** Julia Dady <[dadylady@usfamily.net](mailto:dadylady@usfamily.net)>; Ann Hutchinson <[aspenanh@aol.com](mailto:aspenanh@aol.com)>  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park / Maplewood Nature Center Possible Partnership

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures

or opening attachments.

Ben, thank you for taking my question today regarding a possible partnership between Battle Creek Park and Maplewood Nature Center. As you suggested, I am following up with this e-mail. I am on the board of the Friends of Maplewood Nature and would be glad to help facilitate communication if necessary.

Attached is a recent update from the Board. The City is in the process of establishing a Task Force to discuss the future of Maplewood Nature Center. I hope that we can figure out a way for Ramsey County to be part of that process.

The eastern section of Battle Creek Park is in Maplewood, only 3 miles from the Nature Center, about the same distance as from Battle Creek to Fish Creek. I was glad to see that you mentioned that a Nature Center was one of the main interests that you heard in the Battle Creek planning process.

As you mentioned, I hope you can forward this to individuals who are working on park programming. The Nature Center has provided high quality environmental education for the entire east metro area, including a wide diversity of kids, adults and families. Ann Hutchinson has been the lead naturalist at the Nature Center and could be a great resource as you consider nature programming for Battle Creek. Ann has about a month left in her job at the Nature Center. As indicated in the attached, all of the other naturalists have been laid off due to city budget cuts.

I'll look forward to hearing more from you.

John Zakelj

471 Mystic St

St Paul

p.s. I did not get a reply to the other question I posted today:

One of the online maps showed possible acquisition of land north of the County Workhouse, actually a transfer from County Corrections to County Parks. This is unique habitat which would should be part of the adjoining Battle Creek Park. Is this still in the plan?

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [John zakelj](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 7:29:49 AM

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Hi Ben, it's been a few months since we last connected regarding the land between Battle Creek Park and the County Workhouse. Have you heard anything more as to why this land was removed from the acquisitions list for Battle Creek Regional Park?

I see that the city of Maplewood has included this land in this week's community forum regarding the Ponds at Maplewood. At that forum, I will provide information regarding this unique grassland habitat and why it should become part of Battle Creek Park.

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Thanks,

**Benjamin Karp** | Landscape Designer

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department  
2015 Van Dyke Street

Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

PH: 651-748-2500

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**To:** Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Cc:** Julia Dady <[dadylady@usfamily.net](mailto:dadylady@usfamily.net)>  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park / County Workhouse Land

Ben, thank you very much for following up on the possible partnership with Maplewood Nature Center. I'm very happy to see that Maplewood has invited Ramsey County to be on their Nature Center task force, and the county will be appointing someone.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

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John Zakelj

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Thanks,

**Benjamin Karp** | Landscape Designer

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department  
2015 Van Dyke Street

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[www.co.ramsey.mn.us](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us)

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**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 1:54 PM  
**To:** Karp, Benjamin M <[benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US](mailto:benjamin.karp@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US)>  
**Cc:** Julia Dady <[dadylady@usfamily.net](mailto:dadylady@usfamily.net)>; Ann Hutchinson <[aspenannah@aol.com](mailto:aspenannah@aol.com)>  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park / Maplewood Nature Center Possible Partnership

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Ben, thank you for taking my question today regarding a possible partnership between Battle Creek Park and Maplewood Nature Center. As you suggested, I am following up with this e-mail. I am on the board of the Friends of Maplewood Nature and would be glad to help facilitate communication if necessary.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

Attached is a recent update from the Board. The City is in the process of establishing a Task Force to discuss the future of Maplewood Nature Center. I hope that we can figure out a way for Ramsey County to be part of that process.

The eastern section of Battle Creek Park is in Maplewood, only 3 miles from the Nature Center, about the same distance as from Battle Creek to Fish Creek. I was glad to see that you mentioned that a Nature Center was one of the main interests that you heard in the Battle Creek planning process.

As you mentioned, I hope you can forward this to individuals who are working on park programming. The Nature Center has provided high quality environmental education for the entire east metro area, including a wide diversity of kids, adults and families. Ann Hutchinson has been the lead naturalist at the Nature Center and could be a great resource as you consider nature programming for Battle Creek. Ann has about a month left in her job at the Nature Center. As indicated in the attached, all of the other naturalists have been laid off due to city budget cuts.

I'll look forward to hearing more from you.

John Zakelj

471 Mystic St

St Paul

p.s. I did not get a reply to the other question I posted today:

One of the online maps showed possible acquisition of land north of the County Workhouse, actually a transfer from County Corrections to County Parks. This is unique habitat which would should be part of the adjoining Battle Creek Park. Is this still in the plan?

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Meierotto, Richard R.](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 5:53:09 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Benjamin Karp:

We have frequently used Battle Creek Regional Park, upper and lower, for hikes and/or bird outings. It comes as a shock to hear that developments are being considered by Maplewood that would seriously impact the integrity of the park. In addition to their importance as habitats and buffers for the park, they also act as filters for water runoff, and as climate regulators. The areas are heavily used for passive recreation and for nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial development.

We ask you to expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat and to retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation. Park fans now and in future generations will be grateful and you will know that you have acted with foresight.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rick and Joan Meierotto



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Martha Osterberg](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding Battle Creek Park land  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 10:46:49 AM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

I understand that there are plans for Ramsey County to sell a 77 acre parcel on the east end of Battle Creek Park near the correctional facility. I am requesting that you use what influence you have to instead make this parcel part of Battle Creek Park. I grew up in Washington County, but for 10 years have lived in Ramsey County near Battle Creek Park. In my 65 years I have seen immense areas of agricultural and wild lands in the east metro turned into housing developments, Targets, Costcos, CUBs and fast food chains. I have seen old oak woodlands and prairie patches where I once walked bulldozed.

You probably know that we have 3 billion fewer birds in the US and Canada since 1970. I was in 10th grade in 1970. We had meadowlarks and red-headed woodpeckers in the east metro. They have disappeared because the oak woodlands and open grasslands are all but gone~ gone because of development, one piece at a time, year after year.

I have walked many times in that area of Battle Creek Park and I have seen fox and coyote there. It is a beautiful area. I have admired the grassland and oaks on the parcel that may be sold and developed. I understand that there are birds there that are desperately in need of nesting habitat.

As someone who is involved with planning at the Park, I imagine you value nature, and know that the missing 3 billion birds are the "canaries in the coal mine" that tell us we ultimately cannot survive without nature, as it is our home, and is not disposable.

Again, I appeal to you to use whatever influence you have over this acreage, and to steer it toward becoming part of Battle Creek Park. It matters that the fox and coyote and birds still find homes on the border of Ramsey and Washington Counties, and that people can still stroll there and find respite. I do not want to see one more oak and grassland parcel where I used to walk go under the bulldozer.

Thank you for the work you've done for the park, and for your attention to this.

Sincerely,  
Martha Osterberg  
651-331-9057

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Rosie Bunge](#)  
**To:** [Rafael.E.Orega@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Rafael.E.Orega@co.ramsey.mn.us); [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#)  
**Cc:** [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [trista.matacastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:trista.matacastillo@co.ramsey.mn.us); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [District1](#); [District1](#)  
**Subject:** response for Site A and Site B  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 12:44:05 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Commissioner Ortega, and others

I am writing to express my concern about Site A (adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park) 77.79 acres. Please do not use this valuable land for commercial nor residential use. Having natural spaces is important for the mental/emotional health of people. Spending time outdoors in natural settings is helpful to people. Having places in nature to walk and relax also helps physical health.

Also, this area is important for the environment and to preserve land for birds and other creatures.

Please keep it natural for people and the environment.

Secondly, I am writing about Site B (Ponds of Battle Creek). I am not a golfer. However, I understand the great health (physical and mental) benefits for people. I drive by the area often and just seeing open spaces of green is uplifting. Birds also can live on golf courses. This is a beautiful well-maintained golf course. People and our precious earth need this more than people need more commercial and residential buildings. Please preserve the Ponds of Battle Creek golf course.

Thank you,

Rosalie Bunge

880 Mound Street

Saint Paul MN 55106

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary Ann Davis](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** selling and development of Sites A and B near Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 2:11:27 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

I am asking you to please support inclusion of Site A adjacent to Battle Creek Park into the Regional Park System. And if possible, include the northern part of Site B to create a solid block of undisturbed natural area. Where else can I go to see Bobolink?

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Mary Ann Davis](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Carter, Toni](#)  
**Subject:** selling of Site A and B near Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 1:58:52 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Commisisoner,

1. I urge you to add the 77 acres of Site A into Battle Creek Regional Park. Having houses and businesses replace the natural area adjacent to the Park disrupts wildlife and lowers the quality of the park.

2. If you are going to close the golf course, could you please consider keeping the north part of Site B in a natural state and selling the rest for development.

My friends and family from the East coast and Colorado are amazed that St Paul has this undisturbed natural area right in the city.

I realize that we need a bigger tax basis, but not at the expense of never being able to replace one of the joys of living here.

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [David Heitzman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Site A, Site B  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 10:20:26 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hey All --

Please vote to deny permits to the city of Maplewood to Site A and Site B, where Maplewood is attempting to develop these nature sites. It's important that we have natural areas in the city with forests and fields, both for wildlife, conservation, and for individuals that enjoy getting out in nature, of which I am one.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

David Heitzman,  
St. Paul

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Burrichter Robert](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** The Ponds  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 2:41:14 PM

---

External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr Karp:

I am contacting you because of a rumor I've heard circulating in the golfing community. Is the Board of Commissioners seriously planning to let the City of Maplewood close and sell the Ponds Golf Course? I would hope that you oppose the plan.

Sincerely, Robert Burrichter  
ps if the city of Maplewood needs land to develop..... there is a choice bit at Larpenteur and McKnight Rd. N. The abandoned Hillcrest Golf Course.  
pps finding this site to comment on the plan the City of Maplewood has to sell park land was tough



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Renee Valois](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Urgent Concern from Ramsey County Citizen  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 7:51:23 PM

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

I was very disturbed to learn that the city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

These properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. They have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

Please do not allow development of the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. In fact, it harbors bird species such as American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America.

**For the benefit of all those who live in Ramsey County (including wildlife), please:**

- Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
- Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

I believe this is in the best long-term interests of the citizens of Ramsey County and the wildlife that depend on these lands.

Most sincerely,

Renee Valois  
2014 Cleveland Avenue N.  
Roseville, MN 55113

# Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Don Murphy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McDonough, Jim](#)  
**Subject:** URGENT: BATTLE CREEK PROPERTIES AT RISK - PLEASE READ  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 3:26:04 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Karp:

Director McCabe:

Commissioner McDonough:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

What I'm struggling to understand at this time is the development of these properties for housing or commercial. I will focus on the city of St Paul for my thoughts. There is enough vacant property to develop throughout the city, especially on the east side, for needed residential. Single lots are everywhere. The abandoned Hilcrest golf course. Former Hafners site. You develop the above mentioned Battle Creek properties for housing, how many Ramsey county residents will be in the market for those houses? How many will be able to afford them? As for commercial development, there is plenty of vacant business properties. Empty storefronts seem to be everywhere. Again the Hafners site? Do any of us really think that downtown St. Paul will automatically fill up post pandemic? 3M Campus in Maplewood. City and county workers? I think companies are finding that a lot of work can get done remotely. Could be a surplus of commercial property. What I'm asking is, what is the hurry? The Ponds turns a profit. The other property is not going anywhere. Lets take a step back and see where we end up down the road for business and housing needs.

## Please do the right thing:

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

Donald Murphy

2076 Ames Ave

St Paul, MN 55119

Life long Ramsey County Resident

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [lydwine sisson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** URGENT: BATTLE CREEK PROPERTIES AT RISK  
**Date:** Thursday, November 26, 2020 4:16:36 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

I am concerned about two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- \* The 77 acre bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides) and by Century Avenue and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (Site A in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- \* The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have with housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A). That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife (The National Audubon Society reports that the grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.). The tract harbors bird species (including the American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands will benefit.

Sincerely,

Lydwine T. Sisson  
[lydwinesisson@gmail.com](mailto:lydwinesisson@gmail.com)

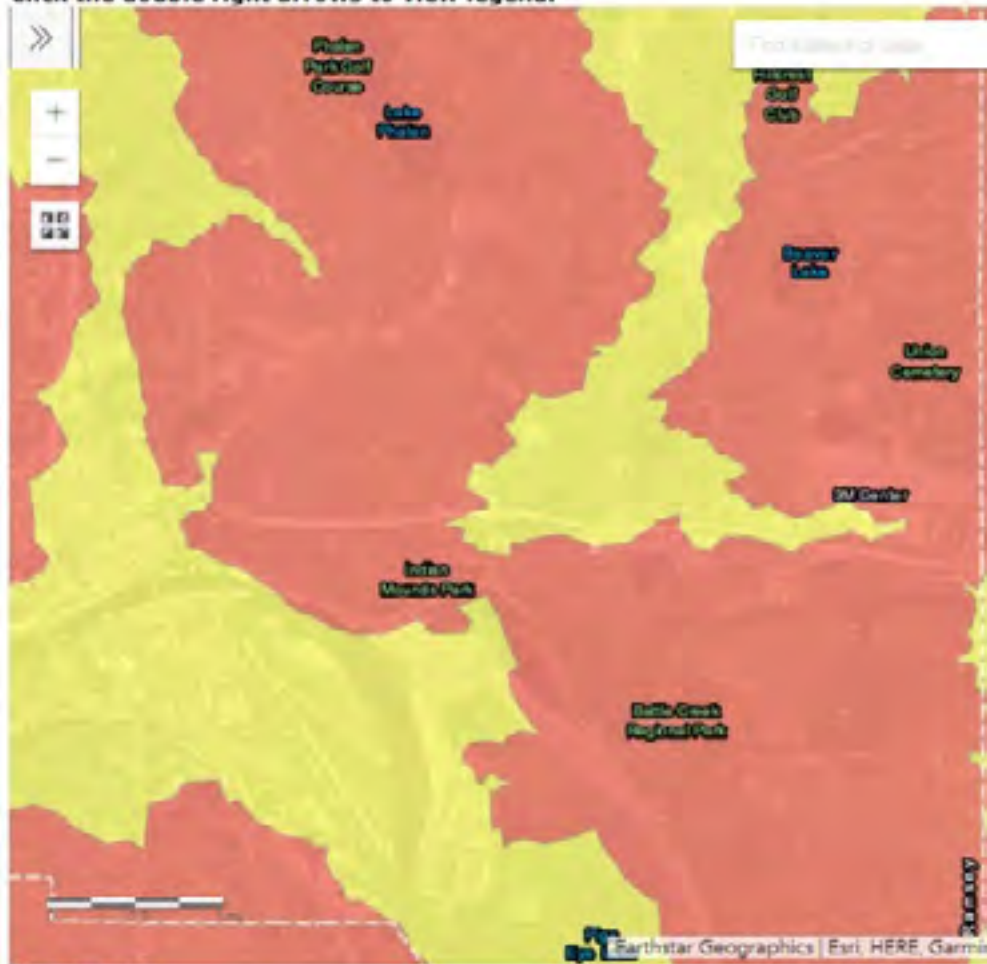
476 Brimhall Street #21  
St. Paul, MN 55105

## Rusty Patched Bumble Bee Map

Where the rusty patched bumble bee may be present

Map may be slow to load

Click the double right arrows to view legend.



[View larger map](#)

**Red Areas** = High Potential Zones: rusty patched bumble bee likely present

## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [sue.gilbertson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** WILDLIFE HABITAT FOR SALE  
**Date:** Sunday, November 29, 2020 5:38:07 PM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Mr. Benjamin Karp:

I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road (“Site A” in the city of Maplewood’s planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

The city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A) That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota

and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### **Please do the right thing:**

1. Expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Thomas and Susan Gilbertson*

2000 Cleveland Ave. No.

Roseville, Mn 55113



## Appendix - 30 Day Preferred Concept Review Comments

**From:** [Jerald Dosch](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** work to protect and expand Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Friday, November 27, 2020 10:26:33 AM

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good morning Mr. Karp:

As a Ramsey County citizen and PhD ecologist I am concerned about the possible loss of two tracts of county-owned open space and wildlife habitat in southeastern Ramsey County:

- The 77-acre tract bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park (on two sides), and by Century Avenue, and by the correctional facility on Lower Afton Road ("Site A" in the city of Maplewood's planning documents);
- The Ponds at Battle Creek golf course, bounded by Lower Afton Road on the north and Century Avenue on the east (Site B).

As you know, the city of Maplewood has initiated plans for development of these properties. Both properties provide critical wildlife habitat, water infiltration, climate regulation, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature study. These properties have far greater value for the metropolitan area in their current state than they would have as housing or commercial developments.

I am particularly astonished that the county would consider selling the 77-acre tract (Site A) rather than add it to Battle Creek Park. That tract is especially valuable as grassland habitat for birds and other wildlife. (The National Audubon Society reports that grassland species are among the most imperiled birds in the U.S.) The tract harbors bird species (including American Kestrel, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Dickcissel) that are in steep decline in Minnesota and North America. A complete biological inventory should be undertaken to inform management of this tract.

### Please do the right thing:

1. Advocate to expand the boundary of Battle Creek Regional Park to include the approximately 77 acre tract adjacent to the park, and manage it as grassland wildlife habitat.
2. Work to retain ownership and management of The Ponds at Battle Creek as open space with passive recreation.

The citizens of Ramsey County and the surrounding area, and the wildlife that use these lands, will benefit.

Sincerely,

*Jerald Dosch*

*40 Alice Ct.*

*St. Paul, MN 55017*

Scott Ramsey Voicemail from 30-day concept review perios

Plan looks good

Use park for nature, hike battle creek east. Totally against mountain bike trails in east section of the park no problem with expanding in west section where mountain bike trails already exist.

Against shared trails.

Understand popularity and use of mountain bike, and am for the development in the west section.

Keep east side as natural as possible with only ski and hike trails

Eastern portion should also include county correctional lands and ponds of battle creek, would make a nice corridor and increase wildlife habitat and recreational activities

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Joe Jansen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** 77 acre tract of land  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:29:49 AM

---

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I am against the sale of 77 acres of land adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood. Yes I am a resident of Ramsey County. Joe Jansen, 1491 N.W. 18<sup>th</sup> Ave, St. Paul, MN. 55112  
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [JULIAN SELLERS](#)  
**To:** [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Cc:** [John Zakelj](#); [Catherine Zimmer](#); [Carrol Henderson](#); [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [McCabe, Mark](#); [uppgren, nancy](#); [Monica Bryand](#)  
**Subject:** A Fact Sheet for the Battle Creek Grassland  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 4:56:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [Fact Sheet 2021-10-24 + Eco Services.pdf](#)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [juliansellers@msn.com](mailto:juliansellers@msn.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Ramsey County Commissioners:

John Zakelj, Catherine Zimmer, and I have met online with each of you to express our support for incorporating the 77-acre grassland adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park into the park as an Environmental Natural Area. I have attached a Fact Sheet developed by our team as a quick guide to the reasons for saving the grassland.

Please note that, although Appendix B refers to "native prairie," we are well aware that the grassland is covered mostly in non-native plant species. However, we believe the ecosystem services apply, to a large extent, to non-native as well as native grasslands. Furthermore, the rare and declining bird species that nest in that grassland find it to their liking, and we are not advocating converting it to native prairie anytime soon, if ever. The grassland needs to be managed to maintain its structure and to keep it from being overtaken by trees and shrubs. Any conversion to native prairie should be undertaken with caution.

Julian Sellers, member, Saint Paul Audubon Society Conservation Committee

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [David Haaland](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek - Mountain Bike Trails  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:26:48 PM

You don't often get email from [dphaaland@gmail.com](mailto:dphaaland@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Benjamin -

I'm writing to give feedback on the master plan for Battle Creek. I am a resident of St. Paul, and make use of Battle Creek primarily for mountain biking. Over the 5 years I have gotten into mountain biking, I have grown to love Battle Creek as my favorite local trail. It's expanse and layout makes it a great spot for multi-use, as the single track has very little conflict with the other trails, and is quite compatible with other uses in my experience. It's location along the bluff with the elevation change creates great trails, and also great opportunities for improving fitness.

I am also currently the head coach for the St. Paul Youth Mountain Biking program, which consists of kids in grades 6-12 from Highland Park, OWL, TCA, Mendota Heights, and many of the private schools in the area. I've seen how valuable Battle Creek is in their development as riders, and its central location and ease of getting to from St. Paul is pivotal in improving access for more kids to be outside and on the trails. That, and the variety of terrain creates challenges that are good and positive for them to overcome. The addition of trails will only make this a much better destination and further enhance their experiences.

I, along with the team, have volunteered to maintain the trails and see the intention and care that is put into maintaining the trails in a sustainable way, and our team will continue to do so. We are eager to help construct the new trails, and maintain what is there. It is great for the kids to give back and see what it takes to keep trails in good order. It's amazing what a group of 15 motivated kids can do in a few short hours.

I think it would be great to see more beginner to intermediate trails to help welcome new riders into the sport, and a skills park would be a great compliment to round out the system. You can see what it has done for places like Lebanon and Theo Wirth. That, and any improved park amenities like restrooms, a trail head shelter, and security and lighting would be great added value and make Battle Creek much more attractive as a mountain bike destination.

Glad to see the 4 miles of singletrack proposed - can't wait for the next 4 or 8 or 12 after that!

Thanks,

David Haaland  
[dphaaland@gmail.com](mailto:dphaaland@gmail.com)  
612-770-1772  
1931 Pinehurst Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55116

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [kesid@aol.com](mailto:kesid@aol.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek and Pig's Eye Parks master plan feedback attached  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 7:31:52 PM  
**Attachments:** [Battle Creek Regional Park and Pigs Eye Feedback\\_KS.pdf](#)  
[Lease Agreement-Redlined.pdf](#)

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I see from this web site that the Battle Creek Master Plan has a comment period until October 31.

I have been walking every week all summer and fall at the south end of Pig's Eye Regional Park with Kiki Sonnen and Tom Diamond. And walk in lots of parks within half hour of our east Saint Paul house with my husband.

So I reviewed the plan and attached my comments.

In my comments I mention a new lease for expanded sewer sludge dumping at the park. I went to a Zoom meeting about that so I am attaching the Lease document I refer to in my feedback - my feedback has a map from that document.

Thanks for extending the comment period. It is a lot of work to review the 2040 Regional Parks Plan that was mentioned plus the Battle Creek and Pig's Eye master plan.

Kathy Sidles



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Chris Malooly](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek biking  
**Date:** Sunday, September 26, 2021 10:11:56 AM

---

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Ben,

My wife and I regularly use Battle Creek bike trails as an outlet for mountain biking and trail running. The trails and terrain are fantastic. I drive 35 minutes from golden valley to use the trails. Hope to see a greater investment in this fabulous gem of a trail network as people from around the cities have enjoyed and will continue to do so.

Every trail in the twin cities that has been expanded and improved has seen tremendous growth in usage allowing residents an outlet from the everyday routine.

Battle Creek is a gem. I hope to see growth and expansion so more people can enjoy the resource.

Chris Malooly

--

Chris Malooly  
Malooly Homes, LLC  
5600 Loring Lane  
Golden Valley, MN 55422  
612-363-0633

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Victoria Walsh](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Development Plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 16, 2021 5:42:51 PM

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Dear Benjamin,

We are writing in support of you including the grassland adjacent to the park to be included in the master plan for preserving the native grassland and species who reside there. Please consider the natural habitat and open space that will be lost if it is developed. Since there is no developer currently interested in the space we ask that you consider the future of this space for the community To enjoy as open space. Thank you

Victoria Walsh

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Barb Fleig](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek development  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 11:26:35 AM

---

[You don't often get email from b.fleig@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Please, please, please DO NOT develop the 77 acres adjacent to the Battle Creek Park  
The last thing we should do to combat climate change is tear up green space!!!!  
Yes affordable housing is a great need but this is ABSOLUTELY the wrong place for it  
Do not pursue development

Barbara Fleig  
601 Fairview Ave S  
St Paul

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Bob D.](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:14:50 PM

---

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin,

I've been told a disc golf course is under consideration for addition to the Battle Creek Park master plan. I'd like to throw my support toward it in whatever way possible.

It's a great sport, low or no cost, and this would fill a hole around the twin cities where we don't really have a course. I'm up near the intersection of white bear ave. and minnehaha and this would be very close to me and super convenient.

I hope to see the course added. If you have questions or I can help in any way, please reach out via this email or my phone: 651-387-9024

Thanks!

Bob Dietrich

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Aaron Scherbel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 4:49:58 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

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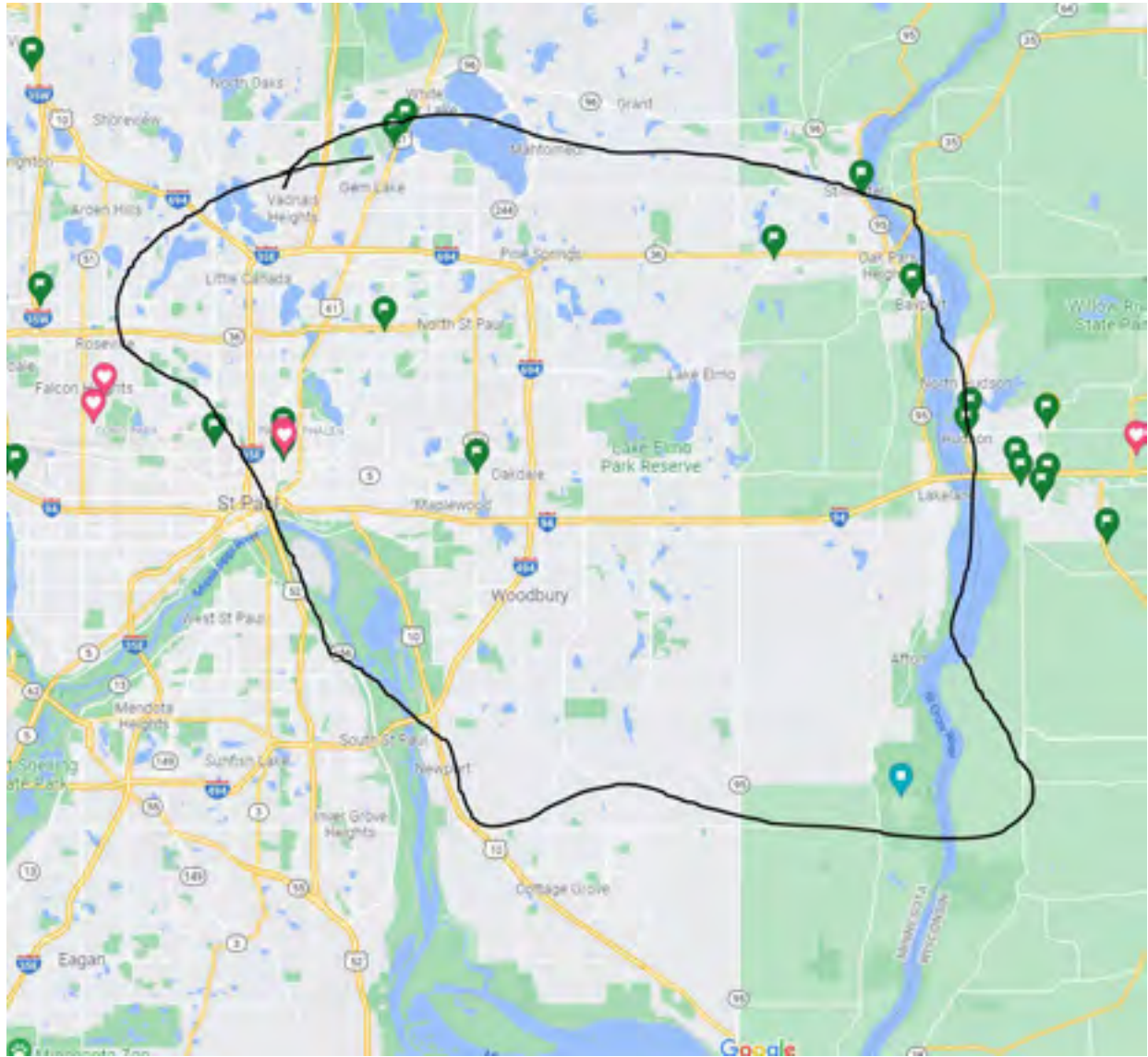
Hello,

I am writing to inform that I would be very much interested in a Battle Creek Disc Golf course. While there are dozens and dozens of 18+ hole disc golf courses all over the metro, there is a huge hole around Battle Creek where there is no 18+ hole disc golf course (see map below). I along with thousands of other disc golfers in the Twin Cities see this as a major oversight and if I had known Battle Creek was taking feedback for development I would have reached out far sooner.

I hope that this possibility can at least be explored, as disc golf is a great way to preserve public park spaces and is one of the fastest growing sports in the world.

Thank you!

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments





## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Will Blackmon](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf course  
**Date:** Saturday, October 16, 2021 12:57:06 PM

---

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Hello, I've heard there are plans to add a disc golf course in Battle Creek. I full support adding a course to the park.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jacob Day](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 6:52:12 PM

---

You don't often get email from jacobmday@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good evening!

I just wanted to show my support for installing a new disc golf course at Battle Creek Park.

The sport has grown off the charts over the pandemic! Often times causing very busy courses throughout the existing infrastructure! Building a new course at this location would be a huge draw for many families!

Thank you and I hope there is enough support to move this forward!

Jacob Day

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Adam Bastian](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf  
**Date:** Saturday, October 16, 2021 7:55:07 AM

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Hello Ben,

Battle Creek would be a perfect place for a disc golf course. The Battle Creek community has proven their capacity to contribute to outdoor activities through the years spent building one of the largest mountain bike trails in the twin cities. This will surely apply to a disc golf course as well. Disc Golf, like mountain biking, is a very kind community that only wants teach and recruit more people to it. Classes or workshops could be held by leaders in local disc golf for kids in the neighborhood. Providing a free, fun, and safe sport for them close by would not only be good for disc golf but good for the local community.

Please let me know how me and my small group of disc golf friends can help in making this happen.

Adam Bastian  
952-500-3269

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kate Jensen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Disc Golf  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 4:57:47 PM

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Dear Benjamin,

I live at Connemara Condominiums on London Lane, a stone's throw from the proposed DG course. I just heard about it today and am so excited!

I am part of a group of six 60+ women who play DG one to two times each week year round. Five of us live in Ramsey County. We would love to have a course that is located in the far east metro especially if it entails two baskets and two tees per hole so that those of us who don't have long throws would be able to be successful at the game by choosing appropriate layouts for our skill levels.

If you haven't spoken yet with Chuck Kennedy about concepts and design, I highly recommend him. He has at least 30 years of experience designing courses and he lives in IGH.

I know that there are many, many disc golfers in this part of town who would be pleased to learn about this plan and who would be highly supportive of it. I also believe that once you build it, people would learn about it, and begin to play regularly. It's an inexpensive sport for players and it's becoming more popular for women and families. Community Ed could even offer lessons and leagues!

Please let me know if you have any questions about my comments. I hope that you will be successful moving forward to get this course in the ground.

Regards,  
Kate Jensen  
651-494-2142

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Pennington](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek disc golf  
**Date:** Saturday, October 30, 2021 3:49:21 PM

---

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Benjamin

Please consider adding a disc golf course to the new Battle Creek site. This area is quite low on courses and we had active disc golf community in the Twin Cities

Brian Pennington  
650-544-5783

--

Rgds-  
Brian

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Colleen O'Connor Toberman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Alex Roth](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek draft master plan comments  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:32:34 PM  
**Attachments:** [FMRBattleCreekMasterPlanComments0921.pdf](#)

---

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Ben,

I've attached FMR's comments on the draft Battle Creek Regional Park master plan. We've really appreciated the many opportunities we've had to participate in this plan development process and can see that feedback from prior rounds of engagement has influenced this draft.

Please feel free to contact me or Alex any time about any of our comments or about opportunities to partner in plan implementation. Thank you!

---

**Colleen O'Connor Toberman** / River Corridor Program Director  
[ctoberman@fmr.org](mailto:ctoberman@fmr.org) / 651.222.2193 x29  
(she/her) [Why pronouns matter.](#)

**Join us for 'Our River Heals' September 30th:** [fmr.org/fallevent](https://fmr.org/fallevent)

101 East 5th Street, Suite 2000  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

[FMR.org](https://fmr.org)

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## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Owen Seltz](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Draft Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 5:32:12 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Ben,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this exciting plan to sculpt an already beautiful park into something that has the potential to become a true treasure of the Twin Cities. Battle Creek, specifically the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek, is a primary reason why I continue to live, work, and play in Saint Paul. I get a significant amount of my physical activity and mental wellbeing out of riding mountain bikes at Battle Creek more than I could at any other trail system in the Twin Cities. Simply put, mountain biking at Battle Creek keeps me sane and healthy.

If it wasn't apparent already, I'm a regular patron of Battle Creek, frequently enjoying the uniquely mountainous mountain bike trails in the summer and as the snow allows, I make it through winter on the XC ski trails. However, I am not only a user of the Battle Creek amenities, I regularly volunteer my time to help build and maintain the mountain bike trails as well as other natural restoration projects at Battle Creek. I love and am invested in this park!

Regarding the Draft Master Plan - While I'm happy to see some expansions/improvements to mountain bike and XC ski facilities included in the draft plan, I'm also dismayed and confounded by the drastic reduction of planned mountain bike trails from the 2018 Off-Road Cycling Master Plan and would like to take this opportunity to share my thoughts and desires for this public resource that is so near and dear to my heart:

- First of all, as alluded to earlier, I want to see mountain bike opportunities increased significantly at Battle Creek. While some of the reduction from ~27 miles of off-road trails contained in the 2018 Plan may have dropped off because they are not feasible build locations, that is a small portion of what has been cut with this Draft Plan. We are missing an incredible opportunity at Battle Creek if we limit the off-road/mountain bike trail miles to ~12 total miles as discussed further below.
- These are not just mountain bike trails. They are mostly multi-use trails enjoyed mutually by a range of interests including hikers, birders, families, snowshoers, scavengers (one year I made Christmas presents with the foliage I found during a hike on these trails).
- These trails are primarily maintained by mountain bikers who volunteer their time (including me!) to build/maintain these multi-use trails so they can be enjoyed by the broad range of users mentioned above.
- The return on investment for the county on mountain bike trails is absolutely

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

outstanding because of the overwhelming mountain biker volunteer dollars (funnelled through MORC) and volunteer hours that are used to build and maintain the trails.

- Mountain biking is an accessible activity enjoyed by a diverse user group which is ever expanding as the sport becomes more popular.
- More variation in trail difficulty is needed at Battle Creek to entice beginners and help them advance up through to the expert trails.
- Mountain biking is a fast growing sport as exemplified by the rapid increase in trail systems across the country, the recent inclusion in the olympics, and the interscholastic mountain biking programs that have swept over the country. I already see many middle/high school teams at Battle Creek and other trail systems around town. These kids need more and varied trails to practice on to hone their skills and become our next olympians.
- Battle Creek needs a more cohesive loop system as opposed to the spur-based system we currently have. The difficulty of navigation is one of the biggest reasons I've heard that keep potential users away from this trail and a loop system would go a long way toward solving that problem and increasing usership.
- Improving trailhead amenities with more designated parking, bike repair stands, bathrooms, water fountains will also improve user experience and increase traffic.
- Increasing traffic through mountain bike trails will reduce the opportunity and space for crime/vandalism which will create a safer park experience for everybody. As a bystander and witness to shots fired at the overlook parking lot while I was taking a rest from a mountain bike ride, I am all for improving safety at Battle Creek and I think increasing traffic through improved/expanded mountain bike trails is one crucial and effective way to achieve this.
- More sanctioned trails in areas where they don't already exist will also reduce the amount of bandit/rouge trails.
- Fat bikes should be allowed to use trails in the winter that do not conflict with groomed XC ski trails and/or that have obvious/controlled XC ski trail crossings. I say this as a mountain biker and XC skier. The two can coexist! Or at least exist separately if coexistence is too big of a step.
- Finally, I want to touch on the local and regional benefits to expanding mountain biking at Battle Creek. With the work from home situation that has taken our worlds by storm over the last couple years, more people than ever are able to choose where they want to work and the local recreation amenities are becoming more important than ever to attract residents and visitors. As evidence from the successful boom to the Cuyuna area after creating quality/quantity mountain bike infrastructure, mountain biking can result in a huge benefit and draw to an area. While the twin cities have a number of mountain bike trail systems, none have the wonderful elevation profile with which Battle Creek boasts. this unique topography at Battle Creek provides an incredible opportunity to create quality gravity mountain biking unlike anywhere else in the Twin Cities. Expanding and improving the quality mountain bike trails at Battle Creek holds the potential to not only boost the area and region by attracting a varied and talented population, but also retain and provide a needed outlet, physical fitness, and mental wellbeing for the existing residents such as myself.

Let's create a safer, more accessible Battle Creek that residents, such as myself, can enjoy and be proud of by harnessing the incredible potential for expanded and improved mountain bike trails at this amazing park. Thank you for taking these comments into consideration when finalizing this plan.

Sincerely,

**Owen Seltz**  
[okseltz@gmail.com](mailto:okseltz@gmail.com)  
612.770.6049

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Nelson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Draft Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 8:30:45 PM

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Hello,

I would like to provide some comments on the Battle Creek Draft Master Plan. For context, my wife and I are Saint Paul and Ramsey County residents who live one block from a Battle Creek park entrance. We use the park almost daily year-round to hike, walk our dog, bird watch, trail run, mountain bike, snowshoe, and cross country ski.

I applaud the decision to scale back the number of new off-road cycling trails in the plan. While I enjoy off-road cycling, I also enjoy birding and hiking, and the eastern segment of Battle Creek has the best natural areas. Allowing space for wildlife in the park is important - not every family can afford an expensive off-road capable bike, but the smooth paved trails in the eastern segment allow people of all means and abilities to connect with the natural world. Cycling trails should remain confined to the western half of the park.

I am happy to see that the Suburban Pond Open Space is being integrated into the rest of Battle Creek Park. I live by the pond and I believe it is an underappreciated and often neglected area, despite its great potential. I have observed over 45 species of birds and a family of otters swims there, but very few people consider it a destination for wildlife viewing (The master plan deems the natural resource quality "Generally low with areas of moderate quality" - I disagree). With the addition of a connector trail to the main Battle Creek Trail system, Suburban Pond can act as a trailhead and gateway for residents from underserved areas (like the Conway, Eastview, and Dayton's Bluff neighborhoods) to gain access to more recreation opportunities in the main park areas. A paved trail loop will also be nice, but the main priority should be the connector trail between Suburban Pond Open Space and the rest of Battle Creek. When the master plan implementation is prioritized, please make this connection a top priority.

Thank you for your time,  
Brian Nelson  
[emailbriannelson@gmail.com](mailto:emailbriannelson@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jean Davis](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#); [Carter, Toni](#)  
**Cc:** [Jean Davis](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Grassland Protection  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 2:14:50 PM

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Dear Mr. Karp and Ms. Carter,

I am a life-long resident of Minnesota and a resident of Mac-Groveland since 1989. I am writing in support of preserving the unique Battle Creek Grassland area and saving it from development. I strongly urge that this Grasslands be protected and included in the Battle Creek Regional Park as an Environmental Natural Area as it truly contains significant, sensitive and unique natural resources by providing habitat suitable for eight rare and declining bird species including the endangered Henslow's Sparrow. In addition, I understand that Minnesota's endangered state bee, the Rusty-patched Bumble Bee, has also been documented in this area.

As a life-long birder, I was stunned, shocked and delighted to learn that the Metro area actually has habitat for these rare and declining bird species. I can't tell you how many hours I have logged criss-crossing the State of Minnesota looking for Henslow's and Clay-colored Sparrows as well as Bobolinks and Dickcissels among other birds that are grassland specialists. I have never been able to find a Henslow's Sparrow despite my efforts. The grassland habitat for these rare bird and bumble bee species is so limited and patchwork throughout the State of Minnesota that we can not afford to destroy yet another grassland habitat for these bird and bumble bee species. Please, please, please do not do that.

While affordable housing is a real need, please focus those efforts on vacate, abandoned or under-utilized retail and other previously developed sites that have already paved over and eliminated the natural landscape that was once there. I am thinking about the huge Sears parking lot near the Capital or the abandoned area between HWY 94 and University Ave on the West side of Lexington Ave as examples of places that make better sense for housing development. Please don't eliminate another natural area for development. It just doesn't make good sense to do that. The Battle Creek Grassland area is home to two endangered species, and several other rare bird species, so it absolutely should be protected and preserved in the Battle Creek Regional Park as an Environmental Natural Area.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Best regards,  
Jean M. Davis  
1363 Osceola Ave  
Saint Paul, MN 55105  
Cell phone 651-208-4068

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Savanna Steinmetz](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek input  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 3:26:53 PM

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Hello Ben,

I have mountain biked a handful of times at Battle Creek. It is not my main MTBing location yet I live very close. Every time I go, I become exhausted from the amount of climbing that is necessary to traverse the trails. Therefore, I propose that an MTB escalator or tow line should be built. It would save my legs, in addition, all the bros won't need to push their DH bikes back to the top of GOAT.

In all seriousness, I would love to see the MTB trails expanded and maintained. I enjoy trails with a lot of features, e.g., skinnies, jumps, drops, scattered along the trail. It would be awesome if there was a better way to navigate the trail system. I feel like it's hard to figure out the best loop to hit every trail.

Thank you,

Savanna

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Andy Bert](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan - Mountain Bike Trails  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 11:01:54 AM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

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Hi Benjamin,

Thanks for being involved in the planning to improve this wonderful park.

I have been mountain biking at BC for the last 10 years. For the past 2 years with the recent improvements, BC has been the only place I ride in the metro. When I tell friends about BC I tell them that in 8 miles I can get roughly 1,000 vertical feet of riding. This is 3X more than any other trail in the metro. I travel every year to mountain bike, and mountain bike destinations typically offer increased vertical. We are very lucky to have BC in this respect.

I am very excited about the possibility that we could have another 4+ miles of trails that will utilize the terrain at BC.

When I reviewed the Master plan, the below numbers jumped out at me:

Off-Road Cycling Skills Area, Site Amenities, and Wayfinding/Signage	\$1,100,000
Off-Road Cycling and Hiking Trail Development	\$250,000
Off-Leash Dog Area Improvements	\$500,000

I am a little concerned that only 19% of the funds allocated to the mountain bike trails are going to be used to actually build trails.

I understand that the idea is to make it more accessible to everyone, by connecting the trails and providing amenities.

We have 2 other bike parks/skills areas within 10 minutes of BC (Carver and Cottage Grove Bike Park). These are close enough for anyone that wants to access BC. Between these two other parks, they have more features than could possibly be built at BC. This doesn't seem like the best use of funds.

With the combination of the funds allocated, and BC's terrain, we could have world class trails built in the park, which in the long term, would draw more riders than another skills area would ever draw. Being able to have 2-300 vertical foot downhills would have people from the west side even crossing the river to ride :)

Thanks again for your effort in improving the park, and I would really love to see more of the funds allocated to new trail construction.

Thank you!  
Andy Bert



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kendall Welch](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan - MTB Trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:35:30 PM

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Hi Ben,

I hope you are well. I just reviewed some of the additions to the Battle Creek master plan, including the proposed addition of more mountain bike trails. This is great to hear! I started mountain biking around 1.5 years ago, and it's been a massive help to my physical and mental well-being. I consider Battle Creek my home trail (I live in Saint Paul Park), and it is my favorite trail in the Twin Cities. It looks like I've logged 64 rides at Battle Creek in a little over a year.

I feel Battle Creek brings something unique to the Twin Cities mountain bike trails, and I would love to see any and all opportunities for future expansion. The amount of elevation and features the park provides makes for very exciting trails that I don't see elsewhere in the area. It's great to see the trails being used by everyone, including non-bikers. I feel I began mountain biking around the time where Battle Creek/MORC made new improvements to the trails, including one-way trails, better/new connectors, and new features. You can tell that those in charge are making a priority to increase the overall quality and flow of the mountain bike trail system. The trail is still a little sporadic in how it flows, connecting with ski trails and alike, but the future propositions look very good! The more official trails we have should result in less unofficial/bandit trails being used as well. I often find myself looking around Battle Creek as I ride, hoping for more trail expansion.

Although I generally prioritize the quality of the singletrack over anything else, the current park amenities and security could be improved, if possible. Additional restrooms, trash bins, security cameras and lighting could make others feel more welcome and willing to visit this trail system; something that would be beneficial for anyone visiting the park. One trail that comes to mind is Lebanon Hills; it feels very welcoming and safe, and is a place I like to frequently visit for night riding (although I know Battle Creek doesn't offer that within their park hours). A skills area at Battle Creek could also be beneficial for bringing in new riders looking to safely progress their skills before tackling similar features found on the trail system.

Anyway, thank you for listening! I don't typically write-in on things like this, but the future of this park and trail system really means a lot to me.

Thanks,  
Kendall Welch

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Carter Koleske](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan - Mtn Biking  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:50:56 PM

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Hi Ben,

My name is Carter Koleske and I would love to see increased mountain biking opportunities at Battle Creek. I am a resident of Hennepin county but make the drive to Battle Creek at a minimum two times per week to enjoy the trails. They truly are the best in the twin cities metro area and offer what no other trail system within a two hour drive can. I ride 4-5 days a week to improve my physical and mental health and has been a crucial part of my life especially during the pandemic. There is potential for the trails at Battle Creek to be improved. Currently there are a large amount of spur trails that could be connected to drive more people to enjoying the existing single track by providing easier navigation (a current deterrent for new riders).

Mountain biking has a very diverse user group and the increasing trail improvements have only expedited that and brought further diversity. I have brought my 57 year old mom, a novice rider, to Battle Creek to enjoy the single track with the increased additions.

If BC had a skills development area or areas it would help young and new riders foster new skills and increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur.

Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers). Also, having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop

It would be nice to see some increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, a drinking fountain and security cameras. In addition, Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

I truly appreciate you taking the time to read this and I'm excited to see how mountain bike trails will be added to the park!

Thank you,

Carter Koleske  
4208 Browndale ave  
Minneapolis, MN 55416  
612-600-0354

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Amanda Rice](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan - support for more mountain bike trails  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:24:59 PM

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Hello Ben,

I understand that the Battle Creek Master Plan is currently in the public comment phase. I am writing to support the mountain bike community in ensuring mountain biking remains thriving at Battle Creek.

I have worked near Battle Creek for 15 years, but just began mountain biking this year. The park is a beautiful area, and I have participated in many clean-up days throughout the years. Not only do I work nearby, but I am a resident of Ramsey County and have been for 16 years.

Mountain biking has been great for my physical health, but even better for my mental health. I can't help but be "in the moment" while on mountain biking trails. It is also great to have bike trails that are not on paved roads. Unfortunately, I was hit by a truck while walking my bike through a crosswalk at a four way stop in Ramsey County in January. It has been 9 months of recovery, and I try to stick to off-road trails as much as possible for my own safety.

The camaraderie of the mountain bike community is like nothing that I have been part of before. Everyone is friendly and willing to lend a hand if some help is needed. I can ride solo knowing I can count on my fellow riders to watch my back and is great to see the wide range of ages, activities and abilities out on the trails.

Battle Creek is one of the few mountain bike trails in the St. Paul area. It has potential to be even more of a gateway into the sport if it had more beginner trails and a skills development area. The volunteer community has been a huge part of all of the trail maintenance, and this benefits not only the bikers, but runners, hikers, bird watchers and snowshoers.

If the plan includes amenities like restrooms, trash bins, lighting and cameras, this would draw even more riders and park usage. I also advocate for winter fat biking usage as long as they don't interfere with groomed cross country ski trails. This would extend bike season to be all year round.

Amanda Rice  
Roseville / Ramsey County resident

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tim Walsh](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:58:51 PM

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Dear Mr. Benjamin Park,

My family and I would love to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek. My family and I have used the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek over the past 2 decades and consider them some of the best in the Twin Cities. More connected trails rather than the spur-based trails would unquestionably make it the best and the expansion noted in the plan would help towards that goal. As with many other trail centers in the Twin Cities, winter fat biking would add a whole new dimension to the winter use of the park. I have been actively involved in MORC trail building and maintenance over the year, which has allowed not only mountain cyclist the enjoyment of the trails but also many other user groups. I was also a past board member of the NICA high school racing program and saw first-hand how the sport of mountain cycling brought families together. Please support the expansion!

Tim Walsh  
762 226 4183

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Dwight Skinner](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan -  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:14:57 PM

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Writing as a user of Battle Creek Park

- Ramsey County Taxpayer
- Mountain bike coach for local NICA league
- Avid Mountain Biker
- Recreational Skier
- Cross Country Runner "dad"

Thanks for including improvement to mountain biking and skiing as part of the battle creek master plan.

Please consider

- Mountain biking has introduced literally thousands of youth to outdoor exercise and lifelong sport
- My mountain bike team annually clears trash from trails at Battle Creek
- My mountain bike team helped build Freight Train

As such --- suggestions

- Increased "beginner" mountain bike trails --- particularly on the east side of McKnight. Battle Creek is great for experienced riders but is daunting for beginners.
- Improved lighting at trailheads
- improved signage along trails
- Opportunities for "fat biking" in the wintertime ---- adding a trail system that doesn't interfere with skiing --- this has been quotes successful at Wirth

Dwight Skinner

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [adamwalbridge22@gmail.com](mailto:adamwalbridge22@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:49:15 PM

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Greetings Benjamin,

I'm writing as a Ramsey county resident and frequent Battle Creek Park user. Specifically the mountain bike trail system.

This park is the very first mountain bike trail system I used back in the summer of 2019, and I still regularly ride there. It was the gateway to my most treasured hobby and means to a healthier life. The trails here are far more physically demanding than others in the TC metro area due to the unique river bluff topography. For that same reason, this park has potential to be developed further into something that isn't even possible in other areas of the twin cities. A truly unique MTB/hiking experience within the metro. Expansion would also allow opportunity for improved trail organization and looping making it more attractive to first time users who are often told Battle Creek trails can be tough to navigate.

This is a beautiful area and the trail system is one of the closest to my home in White Bear Lake. I would love to see trail system improved and would be likely to volunteer with trail building initiatives.

Thank you for your time!

Adam Walbridge



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Graham Book](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan and Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 12:18:14 PM

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Hi Ben,

I'm writing to voice my support for increasing the Battle Creek mountain biking trail network and adding amenities to help support riders and others using the trails. I'm an avid rider that lives west of the Twin Cities, but I still make the trek over to Battle Creek because it's such a blast to ride and has some of the best downhill trails in the metro. It would be wonderful to see the trail system expanded with new routes and features, especially if more connectors can be built to loop the trails together. It would also be nice to have better trail markers and to open winter riding to fat tire bikes.

Mountain biking is a fantastic way to get exercise and clear your mind while enjoying nature. The trails can also be used by hikers, dog walkers, birders, foragers, and many others who appreciate getting out to walk in the woods. Having green spaces in the middle of the city is also beneficial for both recreation and the environment, and making them more accessible will have a positive impact on the community.

I hope that the plan for Battle Creek will continue to support mountain biking and expand the trail system so that everyone can have more opportunities to enjoy this natural area. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Graham Book

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Dan Seim](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Commentary  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 3:17:28 PM

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Hi Benjamin,

I am a Ramsey County resident and am reaching out in support of the mountain bike trail system enhancements that are proposed in the most recent Battle Creek Regional Park master plan. I mountain bike in the park on average 1-2 times per week and access to the trail system was a factor in my decision to live in the Lowertown part of St. Paul. In addition to riding the trails, I have volunteered my time during the MORC organized trail building and maintenance sessions. In my experience, the work the mountain bike community has put into building and maintaining trails in the park has benefited multiple user groups, including hikers and trail runners and my hope is that this can continue.

Beyond just adding additional trail miles, I agree with the master plan's proposal of more loop trails. A common complaint I see on social media about the trail system is that the current setup of single track trails being linked together by cross country ski trails is confusing to new users of the park as it is not common at other area trails. I agree that looped trails and improved signage will help provide a more cohesive trail system.

In addition to adding more beginner friendly trails, I would like to express my support for adding more advanced trails to help with intermediate and advanced rider progression. With the amount of new advanced trails being built in northern Minnesota, I think there is a strong need for more advanced trails in the Twin Cities as well. The Goat trail rebuild was a great start and I would love to see more sections of trail like it at Battle Creek.

Thank you for your work on the Master Plan and inclusion of mountain bike trail system enhancements.

Dan Seim

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Michaela Ahern](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan comments  
**Date:** Monday, September 27, 2021 2:32:21 PM

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Hello,

I would like to support additional mountain bike facilities beyond what's been presented in the draft Master Plan. I'm a St Paul resident who has participated in several kinds of activities at BC: summer fat bike and cyclocross races, mountain bike fitness classes from Endurance United, and general mountain biking at BC with friends. I'm excited there is a plan to improve the facilities at the park because it's an amazing amenity close to many St Paul residents. However I think the bike facilities could be even better with improved signage, a skills course, and a better layout of trails.

It's a running joke between my MB friends that we tend to avoid all of the trails at BC because we don't want to get lost. I've heard of some great trails that I've yet to find myself. If there was a more connected set of trails with improved signage I think that would help all trail users. I've been a winter fat bike user in the past and think BC would be a perfect location for winter fat biking as well.

Michaela Ahern  
864 St Paul Ave  
St Paul, MN 55116

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Richard Schultz](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 10:17:00 AM

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I am writing to show support for increased mountain biking opportunities at Battle Creek.

I don't intend to elaborate too deeply. I ride at BC often, I love the trail system there, I have brought friends from out of State there and new riders as well. Very convenient location in terms of where I live and work. I don't live in Ramsey County, however.

Increasing and maintaining multi use trails is a wise move on the County's behalf. Physical exercise is very important to me and I encourage more of it within the community. Be it biking, walking, running, you name it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this over. I hope I'm joining many voices in support of the plan!

--

Richard T. Schultz  
(612) 615 6185

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Paul Nigon](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 12:43:56 PM

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Dear Ben,

I am writing you to share input on the park's future.

I would like to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek. I use Battle Creek park regularly and throughout the year for Biking, Hiking and Nordic Skiing. I enjoy all of these activities at BC as being active and engaged in the outdoors improves physical and mental health.

I believe mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails. I do think improved signage continues to provide benefit to this. Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity into the sport. Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails in its present state. This would help those not familiar with the trail.

Mountain bikers volunteer to maintain the trails that are currently used by several groups including runners, hikers, snowshoers. I support the volunteer group MORC through financial donations. For skiing I support the trails through an annual ski pass. I would certainly enjoy riding my winter FatBike at BC in the winter should the trail be open for that purpose.

Increased amenities like trail head buildings, restrooms, lighting and garbage/recycling would be a major improvement to the continue growth and use of BC.

I look forward to the future of the parks.

Regards,  
Paul Nigon  
[paulnigon@gmail.com](mailto:paulnigon@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [mathew.wiest](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:29:30 PM

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Hi Benjamin,

It is great to see a plan being developed related to the amazing area that is battle creek. Since living in the twin cities since 2010 and having a college internship at 3M just up the road, I have grown very fond of the Battle Creek area. My friends and I frequent the mountain bike trails in the summer and the XC ski trails in the winter. The mix of forest and elevation is unmatched in the area for mountain biking. It is great to see a plan come together to further the development of the mountain bike trails.

Thank you for your work,  
Mathew Wiest



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Kopish](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Feedback  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 3:41:05 PM

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Greetings Benjamin,

I'm contacting you today to show my support for mountain bike trails in the Battle Creek Master Plan. Battle Creek offers a unique mountain bike experience in the Twin Cities and it's growing into what could be on par with the best mountain bike trail systems in the state. I've been an avid mountain biker since I first bought a mountain bike in 1989 and it's been an awesome experience watching the sport grow and the trail systems expand. It was clear that ridership was already on the rise with the development of the NICA and groups of high school kids practicing on the different trail systems. But with the onset of COVID, we saw another boom of ridership as people rediscovered the sport when they pulled their old bikes out of the garage and as new riders bought bikes for the first time. We are literally in the midst of the largest bike boom this country has seen since the 1970s!

As a resident of Hennepin County, I hadn't had much opportunity to explore the Battle Creek area in the past, but now it's one of my favorite regular ride spots. Personally, I enjoy riding for the mental and physical health benefits, but it's also been exciting to see trails progress in a way that challenges my skills and Battle Creek is on the forefront of progressive trails in the Twin Cities. I would love to see Battle Creek expand both on the beginner side and on the advanced side of the trail spectrum so there is vast and well-rounded riding options for all levels. As a more advanced rider, I would personally love to see more progressive trails in the Twin Cities that would compliment the trails we're seeing built in the Cuyuna, Iron Range and North Shore areas. Battle Creek has the space and terrain to make it happen.

Additionally, I think mountain bike trails are compatible with other trail users like hikers and trail runners who I see out on the trails every time I ride Battle Creek. And mountain biking is unique in that there is a dedicated group of volunteers who are happy to help build and maintain the trails that we use. I also think there's a great opportunity to attract a more diverse user group with trails located in the heart of the Twin Cities area. Anecdotally, it seems the increase in trails has brought a decrease in crime and car break ins (which were always an issue at Battle Creek in the past). Overall, if I had any say in the matter, I would love to see a diverse and well-connected network of trails representing all abilities in Battle Creek park. Amenities like a bike park, a jump line, bathrooms and winter trails would be the icing on the cake. A trail system like this would provide ample opportunities to ride, progress skills, and would be compatible with the greater Minnesota network of trails that we're seeing built throughout the state. In all honesty, Battle Creek as the natural terrain to be a showpiece for Minnesota mountain bike trails and trail building. I know that I would be thrilled to see this happen and I would gladly make Battle Creek my go-to trail system.

Thank you for your time and for allowing me the opportunity to share my thoughts on this topic.

Brian Kopish  
St Louis Park, MN

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Scott Thayer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan Feedback  
**Date:** Saturday, October 30, 2021 10:08:12 PM

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External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

To Ramsey County,

I write this email in support of expanded mountain biking trails and opportunities at Battle Creek Regional Park.

Over the past years, mountain bikers have worked with Ramsey County to improve the trail system. The past 3 years have seen improved signage and more connecting trails put in place through the volunteer work of the Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC).

As this happened, ridership went up, more women started using the trails, riders of diverse cultural backgrounds used the trails more often, and children are better able to use the trail system now.

At the same time, undesirable activities had less opportunity to take place unnoticed and anecdotally, less vandalism, theft, and graffiti happened.

The opportunity that Ramsey County has with mixed use trails at Battle Creek is quite exceptional. The park's geography allows for a wide range of rider experiences, from beginners to advanced, from double track to single track, from flat to significant elevation changes. By expanding the trail system in an ecologically sustainable way, the county will be able to both provide affordable and attainable recreational opportunities, and be good stewards to the land they oversee.

Specific aspects of the plan that deserve mention and support are:

- Completing connecting loop trails. Presently the trail are spurs, making it hard for beginners to both ride the trails and to navigate.
- Expanding the single track mileage. As hiking, trail running, and mountain biking have increased in popularity, the trails have not expanded as quickly as the user base has increased. There is ample space to put in sustainable single track without over stressing the land
- Mountain bike skills development area. Looking at the success of other mountain bike systems, such as Carver Lake Park in Woodbury, we need a skills development area for young and new riders. This is one of the best ways to provide opportunities for the next generation of riders and to bring in people who might not have experienced mountain biking yet. Adding something near the rec center on Winthrop, or if the County acquires the property on Battle Creek Road, putting something in that space would be great as well
- Expansion of the trail along the Creek Corridor south of Upper Afton. Presently, the trails are disconnected as hikers, trail runners, and mountain bikers cross the paved trail. Building new trail per the plan will significantly improve this present issue
- Expansion of gravity trails near the NE corner of Battle Creek Road and Lower Afton. The existing gravity trail, named "Goat", is the single most famous trail segment in the Metro area. With its elevation change, it draws riders to the park that are looking for a downhill experience. The plan calls for additional single track in that area and building it with the same sustainable, downhill mindset will go a long way to servicing the gravity oriented mountain bikers
- Finishing the beginner trail system around the rec center on Winthrop. New riders enter the trails at the rec center and immediately get lost on the ski trails out back. The beginner level trails on the plan will solve this and allow for new riders and skill building groups, such as the Little Bellas girls team to effectively use the park.

One opportunity that should be called out is for single track trail north of Upper Afton along the paved trail that follows the creek. There is ample space on the north side of the trail to put in a natural surface trail. Doing so will

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

provide hikers, runners, and riders an experience closer to nature, but will also allow for closing down social trails that have popped up. Having a formal trail is the best way to close down undesirable rogue trails.

Lastly, the partnership with MORC and its volunteer base has provided a model for an affordable and maintained trail building and maintenance model going forward. Investing in shared-use trails that allow mountain biking is one of the best decisions the county can do. It accommodates multiple user groups, it has a built-in volunteer base for ongoing maintenance, and it serves the county's purpose of providing recreational opportunities for its constituents and being a good steward of its resources.

I and the mountain bikers I represent are firmly in favor of this master plan and its expansion of mountain bike trails and opportunities at Battle Creek.

Thank you,  
-Scott Thayer  
Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists Trail Steward for Battle Creek  
5 White Bear Ave S.  
Saint Paul, MN 55106  
scott@5wba.com

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kurt Halverson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan- hiking on ski trails  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 8:57:44 AM

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Hi Ben,

I thought I would chime in on the master plan for Battle Creek, specifically the feedback that was received regarding winter hiking and snowshoeing opportunities and the proposed solution of “hiking to the side of the ski trail” (page 70). The groomers spend a great deal of time maintaining the trails, especially at Battle Creek which is well-known as one of the best maintained trail systems in the metro. Walking on the groomed trails creates divots in the snow, particularly where the toe pushes down during each stride. The warmer the conditions the deeper the divots. These are very difficult to ski over (fall hazard) and difficult for the groomers to remove, particularly if it happens on a daily basis. Also, if walkers are instructed to stay to the right (similar to a bike trail), they will quickly destroy the classic track. In my experience relying on voluntary compliance to “stay to the side” will lead to escalating conflict when walkers inevitably find their way to the center of the trail where the surface is firmer. In addition to damaging the groomed surface, the hilly profile of Battle Creek produces some high speed descents and the possibility of collisions or falling trying to avoid hikers exists. If sharing sections of ski trail is a must then at a minimum a walking/snowshoeing trail should be separated from the ski trail by a clear ungroomed boundary and significant signage to educate hikers to never walk on the groomed portion. A better solution would be to not allow hiking/snowshoeing on groomed trails at all. Granting permission to walk on the groomed trails is a step backwards and will significantly detract from the skiing experience at one of the premier trail systems in the metro. No other major ski trail system allows hiking on groomed ski trails and neither should Battle Creek.

Regards,

Kurt Halverson



STUBBINS NUMBER:

L.A.1

## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
111 E. Kellogg Blvd., Ste 105  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1250

October 29, 2021

Benjamin Karp  
Landscape Designer  
Ramsey County  
2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, MN 55109

RE: Battle Creek Master Plan

Dear Mr. Karp:

The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to provide comments on the Battle Creek Master Plan. The proposed project is partially encompassed within the boundary of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (NRRRA). Congress established the Mississippi NRRRA in 1988 to preserve, protect, and enhance the significant values of the Mississippi River Corridor in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

The Mississippi NRRRA appreciates the emphasis on connectivity of natural habitat and continuity of trail systems. The terrestrial habitat in Battle Creek provides connection between the bluffland habitat and the river. Grade separated crossings are ideal to improve visitor safety in the area and fits the goals of Mississippi NRRRA's Alternative Transportation Plan. As details preceding plan implementation are explored, grade separated crossings that also allow passageways for wildlife should be considered.

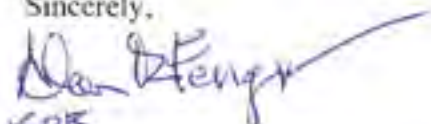
Preservation of the natural landscape, including habitat inventory and restoration, promotes healthy terrestrial ecosystems, a value outlined in the Mississippi NRRRA Foundation Document. The light touch approach outlined in the master plan will enhance the usability of the space for wildlife while allowing for a quality outdoor recreation experience. Incorporating natural surface trails throughout most of the park and concentrating the development of visitor amenities in areas of lower quality habitat and existing facilities are ideal. Improved trailhead facilities will enhance visitor experience and safety. Best management practices for lighting to be effective for safety and reduce the negative effect of light pollution should be included as the river corridor is a critical flyway for migrating birds, many of which navigate at night.

The Battle Creek Master Plan compliments other values identified in the Mississippi NRRRA Foundation Document, including preservation and access to geological resources, scenic views,

aquatic ecosystems and cultural sites. Mississippi NRRA particularly looks forward to continued progress and collaboration on the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment implementation.

If you any questions regarding these comments, please contact my staff, Karen Katz, at [karen\\_katz@nps.gov](mailto:karen_katz@nps.gov) or by calling 651-293-8458.

Sincerely,



FOR  
Matthew Tucker Blythe  
Superintendent



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Parker Ostertag](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan!  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 4:55:21 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin!

I am voicing my support for the Battle Creek master plan. I think what you and others are doing is great. I ride at BC 3-4 times a week as it's my absolute favorite place to mountain bike around the metro area. My legs wish I'd take more days off though!

I'd love to see this plan come through as I believe it will benefit everyone- not just mountain bikers as BC is multi-use. Mountain biking is my favorite passion and something I've introduced my closest friends and family into. Having more trails would be nice to dilute traffic (great for everyone, especially hikers!) and also add some variety as I'd assume some new trails would add some variety in difficulties so BC would be more accessible to way more people.

From my experience, mountain bikers are all very conscious of the environment and aware of the amazing places bikes can take us. Without the creation of new trails over time, a lot of us wouldn't have seen the sights, befriended the people we met, and indulged in such a healthy and exciting sport. I see all these awesome possibilities in the master plan and I'd be devastated to see it extinguished or reduced.

Thank you for reading,  
Parker Ostertag

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Betsy Fabel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:10:14 PM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

I wanted to drop a couple of lines in support of expanding and improving mountain biking trails at Battle Creek.

Our family lives in Saint Paul and one of our daughters is on a National Intercollegiate Cycling Association (NICA) high school team. In fact, members of her team will be doing their annual trail maintenance work on the Battle Creek Trails next Monday. Her Saint Paul Composite mountain bike team practices regularly at Battle Creek—the only mountain biking venue within their home city. In addition to her team practices I often bring her to Battle Creek to ride—our whole family loves it because some of us can bike and others can trail run/hike. We appreciate the multi use approach to enjoying the park.

Middle and high school mountain biking is the fastest growing youth sport in Minnesota. We want to see it continue to grow—for urban kids too. Battle Creek plays an important role in equitable access to trails and we hope that continues.

Thank you,

Betsy Fabel, Patrick Campion, Tess Campion  
1721 Princeton Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

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Betsy Fabel  
The Crown Construction Company, Inc.  
[betsy@crownmn.com](mailto:betsy@crownmn.com)  
651-431-1210

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Paul Thorsgaard](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 12:37:31 PM

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Hello.

My name is Paul Thorsgaard and I live in Cottage Grove, MN. I ride Battle Creek mtn bike trails about once a week. I have also been a long time MORC trail work volunteer putting in many hours of work on the current trails, and hoping to do more. There was a Master plan that was completed 2 years ago and we had started to make plans on those approved trails, but here we are again. If there were some beginner trails, I know several people personally that would ride BC and increase my time spent there.

Battle Creek could really use an entire loop around the main block of trails from the rec center. Many mtn bike riders do not ride BC due to the amount of climbing required. The last Master Plan had a beginner trail going around the edge of that block which would have created a less hilly trail. That should be included in the current master plan.

I mountain bike frequently, at many trails, for the pure enjoyment of the activity, and it is a bonus that it is also healthy and physically good for me. Being able to mtn bike in the city, and see all that nature has to provide is wonderful.

Mountain biking has proven it can be compatible with other activities. Sure, there can be some bad apples, but every activity has that, and an activity should be ruined because of those few. And, if this plan provides for more mtn bike trails that do not cross walking/hiking/running/skiing trails there would be less opportunity for situations to arise between user groups.

The improvements that have made to BC mtn bike trails over the last few years have increased the user group immensely.

There is not much of an expense for Ramsey County with mtn bike trails, as volunteers build most of the trails, and MORC helps cover costs of any machine-built trails. Do other user groups build and maintain their trails?

Security cameras would greatly enhance the experience to all user groups. There are frequent

break-ins in BC parking lots, and cameras could help catch the people doing the break-ins and also they are a deterrent for future break-ins. There is a large dumpster in the rec center parking lot but bins around the parking lot would greatly decrease the amount of trash left on the ground. A bathroom at the lower lot along Point Douglas Road would be a good amenity, and trash bins there also.

It would be great if winter fat biking on snow was an option at Battle Creek. If trails were built that do not cross the cross-country ski trails, both user groups would be satisfied. The area between Battle Creek Road and Point Douglas Road seems like a great place for this to occur the easiest.

More people in the area is also a deterrent for crime. Build the trails and they will come.

Thank you for listening!

Have a great day!

My JDRF rider page: <http://www2.jdrf.org/goto/PaulJDRF>

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Sam Olson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 4:20:13 PM

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Hello Ben,

I would like to voice my support for the inclusion of expanded mountain biking opportunities at Battle Creek. My family lives in St. Paul, and we regularly use Battle Creek's mountain bike trails. Even though we live in the Como neighborhood, Battle Creek is by far the closest option for us to mountain bike... and the only option in the city. In the summer I'm often on the trails every morning, and I bring my 8 & 6 year old kids with me every chance we get. My son loves Goat!

It would be wonderful to see more amenities at the trailheads, like a bathroom. An area for a skills course would greatly expand the reach to younger kids. I'd also love it to have winter fat biking allowed in areas where it doesn't get in the way of cross country skiing.

Battle Creek has the potential to be such an epic destination for mountain biking. As it stands, it already has some of my favorite trails. The terrain and soil conditions are like nothing else in the metro. I truly hope to see mountain biking opportunities expanded at Battle Creek.

Warm regards,  
Sam Olson

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Daniel Billig](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 5:06:39 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)

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Benjamin,

I reviewed the Battle Creek Park Master Plan – very comprehensive! I have a few questions about the Picnic Shelter area off McKnight and Upper Afton. I am specifically interested in discussing the potential to install a disc golf course in this area. I set up two temporary courses in 2019 (one for a work picnic and one open-to-the-public “Day of Disc Golf” with Ramsey County Parks and Rec) – the COVID-19 pandemic shut-down plans for 2020 and 2021. The assessment and plans for the area near the picnic shelter seem like it could mesh nicely with disc golf. For example, removing invasive species (e.g. buckthorn) and thinning out pine trees near Highway 94.

Could you give me a call on my personal cell at 651-442-5511?

Thank you,

Daniel



**Daniel A. Billig | United States and Canada Application Engineering Leader  
Abrasives Systems Division**

3M Center, 240-1-01 | St. Paul, MN 55144-1000 | United States

Office: +1 651 733 7261 | Mobile: +1 651 283 8186

[dabillig1@mmm.com](mailto:dabillig1@mmm.com)

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## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Nick Elle](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 2, 2021 6:13:01 AM

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Hello Benjamin,

I am a resident of St. Paul and frequent Battle Creeks mountain bike trails. I live near Phalen and frequently bike to and from the BC trail system. I am hoping to see more mountain bike trails that create a more continuous flow.

Formerly I lived near Theodore Wirth and enjoyed fat biking their groomed single track. I deeply wish for some legitimate fat biking trails that do not interfere with cross country ski trails it Battle Creek.

Thank you for your time,

Nick

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Joseph Meiser](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, October 17, 2021 10:10:29 PM

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Ben,

I am super pleased to hear that the master plan is in review and Mountain Biking is a key art of that plan. I have been really pleased to see the park work with Scott Thayer these last couple of years to turn Battle Creek into my favorite destination in the city to ride. Battle Creek park offers the most opportunity in the metro for development of trails. The elevation change from Pt. Douglas to the top of the park east of Battle Creek Rd is incredible. While the roughly 10 miles of trail has improved incredibly with additional connectors signage and an established loop the opportunity to expand trail and rehabilitate current for greater access and sustainability for all riders is incredible.

Battle Creek has, in many ways, greater potential than Wirth park in Minneapolis. While the terrain is what has attracted me; often times while riding there I think of the community much of the park sit in. There is a great diversity of population and I enjoy seeing families walking in the valley, hiking or riding on the trails when I am there. What incredible access to recreation BC provides. I could very much see the city of St Paul turning this into a hub of summer and winter sports of nordic skiing, mountain biking and much more.

There are other parallels to Wirth as well. There is a well known slang phrase in MTB culture; "The mountain bikers ruined it, they always do". While we sometimes don't do our selves any favors with our behavior we are often catalysts for renewal of land. A critical mass of riders on Battle Creek Road makes it less possible for that to be the dumping ground, the North End of the park from the valley lot on Pt Douglas to the Lookout is remarkably less littered than many years ago. There has been tremendous effort by land management to clean up, renew, and restore these areas; mountain bikers create a presence that helps keep them.

During the Pandemic Battle Creek became my home trail. My friends new that they could find me, most afternoons, parked on Battle Creek. I have been waiting for this master planning to learn what is next for BC and how I might get more involved with helping to maintain, rehab and build new trail that further takes advantage of the terrain while being respectful of other users, the diversity of plants and the historical use of the land. As I shared; Battle Creek has the opportunity to become the metro's premier trail center. I imagine a purpose built trailhead at the rec center with pump tracks, skills areas, jump lines and space where families and friends can spend time before and after a ride. I imagine miles more singletrack with additional lap-able descent trails near/around GOAT with climb trail. I imagine a rideable loop that takes advantage of the elevation for over a twenty mile connected loop. I imagine skiing and fatbiking living together in the winter much like they currently enjoy at Wirth. There is no reason why riders shouldn't be able to get the world class experience of a place like Cuyuna right in our back yard.

My 'big idea' for the twin cities is a concept I lovingly call TCRT (Twin Cities River Trail). This idea connects St Paul to Minneapolis, Trail Center to Trail Center along the Mississippi river. Battle Creek is a key part of that idea. There is so much terrain throughout St Paul along the river that has opportunity to be incredible, sustainable multi purpose off road trail. Today, many of these places have unsustainably built trails from the community. What if we could ride a purpose built, sustainable and accessible off road trail from Battle Creek to downtown MPLS?

Please let me know how I can be of help in making BC an outdoor recreation hub for all users!

Best Regards,  
Joe Meiser

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [aspenannah@aol.com](mailto:aspenannah@aol.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 23, 2021 12:28:55 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Ramsey County,

I am a citizen of Ramsey County, living at 1027 Edgewater Blvd in St. Paul. I often ski and walk at Battle Creek Park. It is a wonderful environmental amenity. I think there's a great gaping hole in your Master Plan, and that is the lack of inclusion of the 77 acre grassland that is adjacent to the park. It should be part of the plan. As the recent EIS study showed - there are several bird species of concern that rely on the grassland habitat. Many native bird species need larger parcels to survive, not cut up smaller parcels. The View from the existing trails looks out upon the grassland greatly enhancing the aesthetic feel of that side of the park. If that should be developed, The aesthetic would be greatly reduced.

Please amend the plan to include that parcel. An opportunity exists to create birding observation decks for all, including visually impaired people to LISTEN for meadowlarks, boblinks, sparrows and more t that site. The County already owns the land, no need to spend money to purchase a parcel. What a simple thing to do! How easy to amend the boundaries! Take advantage of the situation!

Thank you,

Ann Hutchinson  
ST. Paul, MN 55119

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Paul Thorsgaard](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 12:37:31 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello.

My name is Paul Thorsgaard and I live in Cottage Grove, MN. I ride Battle Creek mtn bike trails about once a week. I have also been a long time MORC trail work volunteer putting in many hours of work on the current trails, and hoping to do more. There was a Master plan that was completed 2 years ago and we had started to make plans on those approved trails, but here we are again. If there were some beginner trails, I know several people personally that would ride BC and increase my time spent there.

Battle Creek could really use an entire loop around the main block of trails from the rec center. Many mtn bike riders do not ride BC due to the amount of climbing required. The last Master Plan had a beginner trail going around the edge of that block which would have created a less hilly trail. That should be included in the current master plan.

I mountain bike frequently, at many trails, for the pure enjoyment of the activity, and it is a bonus that it is also healthy and physically good for me. Being able to mtn bike in the city, and see all that nature has to provide is wonderful.

Mountain biking has proven it can be compatible with other activities. Sure, there can be some bad apples, but every activity has that, and an activity should be ruined because of those few. And, if this plan provides for more mtn bike trails that do not cross walking/hiking/running/skiing trails there would be less opportunity for situations to arise between user groups.

The improvements that have made to BC mtn bike trails over the last few years have increased the user group immensely.

There is not much of an expense for Ramsey County with mtn bike trails, as volunteers build most of the trails, and MORC helps cover costs of any machine-built trails. Do other user groups build and maintain their trails?

Security cameras would greatly enhance the experience to all user groups. There are frequent

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

break-ins in BC parking lots, and cameras could help catch the people doing the break-ins and also they are a deterrent for future break-ins. There is a large dumpster in the rec center parking lot but bins around the parking lot would greatly decrease the amount of trash left on the ground. A bathroom at the lower lot along Point Douglas Road would be a good amenity, and trash bins there also.

It would be great if winter fat biking on snow was an option at Battle Creek. If trails were built that do not cross the cross-country ski trails, both user groups would be satisfied. The area between Battle Creek Road and Point Douglas Road seems like a great place for this to occur the easiest.

More people in the area is also a deterrent for crime. Build the trails and they will come.

Thank you for listening!

Have a great day!

My JDRF rider page: <http://www2.jdrf.org/goto/PaulJDRF>

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [derek brown](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [derek brown](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 1:33:33 PM

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Hello Benjamin,

My name is Derek Brown, I am a Ramsey County resident (Roseville).

I just got wind of the possible expansion of the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. That is very exciting news and I am writing to express my support. As an avid mountain biker I would love to see more trails closer to home. In 2018, I led a volunteer effort to get a pump track built at Autumn Grove Park in Roseville, which we later expanded during covid due to growing awareness and popularity. It is very popular with kids as old as high school. Skills parks are great additions to any trailhead areas. They allow riders to work on their skills and gain confidence before progressing onto more difficult trails.

I read that other groups have objected to the expansion, but user group conflicts are generally over hyped and/or exaggerated. I think many non-MTBERs have a false perception of what most MTBERs are like and how we behave. All it takes is one bad interaction and our image is sullied forever with that person. Another plus is that the more miles of trails you have (for all groups), the fewer interactions you will have because users will be more dispersed. Building more beginner trails also self selects for more family use. An adequate amount of "green" miles will draw more families and help introduce young riders into the sport and help develop a love for biking. Having a more contiguous loop system as opposed to spur based trails creates more user friendly experience as well.

Mountain Bikers have a strong history of both trail building advocacy, and trail maintenance. The pump track I mentioned was built almost entirely by volunteers with donated dirt, and is maintained entirely by a group of volunteers. This is typical of most trail systems as well. MORC does an outstanding job of organizing volunteer groups to keep trails in top condition.

I will be there on build day to help make this happen if its approved!

Thank you,

Derek Brown



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [sean](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek master plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:41:50 PM

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Hi Ben - just wanted to throw my support out there for the additional off road cycling trails planned for Battle Creek but sad that it's noted winter use is not allowed. I think there's a large and growing population of fat bike riders that would use the area and probably even pay for a trail pass if some trails were groomed and lit! I feel there is enough space to share with the Xc ski folks. I see a lot of events over in Mpls at Theodore Wirth that are full of skiers and bikers alike!

I also appreciate hearing about the clean up efforts needed for pigs eye lake and the surrounding waterways. Sad we used dump so much toxic stuff into the river!

Sean from St. Paul, Minnesota

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Shane Munyon](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 8:46:20 PM

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Hi Ben,

I'm writing to show my support for adding more singletrack trails to the Battle Creek location in St. Paul. I am a resident of Ramsey County, and I enjoy riding the trails at Battle Creek. I would probably ride there more often if there were more trails and more variety. Riding helps me maintain my physical and emotional health. I am only a 15-20 minute drive from BC, so it is the closet singletrack location for me. I would love to see more trails incorporated into the system and maintained by MORC. It helps so many people get outside!

Thanks,  
Shane Munyon

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Katz, Karen L](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 11:11:00 AM

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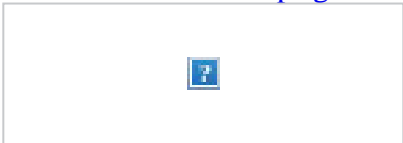
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Hi Benjamin,

Do you happen to have a copy of the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park plan? I'm reviewing the 2021 plan and curious to see some of the history on the park planning process.

--

**Karen Katz**  
**Outdoor Recreation Planner**  
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
111 Kellogg Blvd. E, Suite 105  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
phone: 651-293-8458  
email: [karen\\_katz@nps.gov](mailto:karen_katz@nps.gov)



*pronouns: she/her/hers*

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Mike Larson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 2:26:38 PM

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Hello,

I am and continue to be a regular user of Battle Creek for both mountain biking and cross country skiing. I am very happy to hear that snow making capabilities will be added to the park soon! This will be a great addition!

As far as the biking goes, I can say that Battle Creek has the potential to be one of the premier locations in the Twin Cities and the midwest. Compared to the other locations around the Twin Cities the terrain is unique with the very steep ups and downs and just the amount of space for future trails. It's location inside of St. Paul, also makes it special due to the ease of access and the potential draw.

I bike there regularly and have found a good route that works. When people come with me they always say this place is probably the best (terrain wise) in the Twin Cities and has so much potential. It just needs complete loops and better signage.

My disappointment with the new master plan is that a lot of trail was taken out. I have been telling people for years that Battle Creek is going to be amazing when they put all the trails in (I believe it was around 27 miles total when complete), but now I see it is down to around 12. That is a pretty drastic decrease.

Mountain biking is growing very quickly and it gets more people outside and to the park. When I am biking I see very few walkers compared to bikers and with more trails, with better signage, and complete loops (skills area and some easier single track would also help) the amount of people that come to the park will likely increase substantially. I can see it growing to the same usage level as Lebanon and Cayuna with a good trail system in place.

Thanks for listening and keep up the good work!

Mike

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Mike Korba](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Master Plan--Disc Golf  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 10:08:32 AM

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Benjamin,

I am writing to let you know that I am interested in seeing a disc golf course installed at Battle Creek Park. In addition to the fun my family and friends will have, equity with the surrounding underserved community could also be addressed by giving people a chance to participate in a healthy, low-cost activity.

Thank you!"

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Darren Dahlin](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Bike Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:03:50 AM

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Ben,

I do not live in Ramsey County, but I am an avid mountain biker. It has grown into a family activity for myself, my wife, and our two young sons. It has been an excellent opportunity for healthy and positive interactions for our little group. We do make "MTB Field Trips" to various metro facilities and parks. These trips have allow my family to better enjoy the outdoors, meet new and varied people, and truly enjoy the sport of MTB as a family. I strongly encourage you to look at creating additional beginner trails and skills areas within your park to encourage skill development for young and old alike to better prepare riders for success in the sport.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,  
Darren Dahlin



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Graham Kolb](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Bike Trail Plan  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 28, 2021 12:29:58 PM

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Hi Benjamin,

Writing to you about the Battle Creek mountain bike trail plans. I've had the privilege of riding the trails at Battle Creek for about 4 years, and I'm excited to hear that there's potential for expansion, growth in the community, and opportunities to help volunteer!

I live in nearby Washington County (Woodbury), and Battle Creek's proximity lets me use the trails there frequently. I love bringing my friends and family there as well to bike, and the variety of trails there provides me with a good selection of difficulties to choose from. I also bring people there to hike and cross country ski, and find that the trails accommodate all of these activities well.

I've been glad to see Battle Creek become more accessible to different groups of people as well; with the addition of easier green loops, better maintained trails, and more programs for underrepresented groups of people.

That said, I'd like to see a couple things change. One, there's not enough trails for beginner/intermediate. The easiest line down to the lower parking lot from the trails west of Battle Creek road is Luge (NOT a very beginner trail), or the paved trail (which has been closed recently for construction), and this somewhat restricts access to the easier one-way uphill trails perfect for beginners coming up from that parking lot. Additionally, the trails present would benefit from being linked up more and having better signage, it is still easy to get lost or forced onto different trails (and thus have newer bikers unintentionally head onto a blue, black, or sketchy bandit trail, which could be dangerous).

I've also seen the success of the practice skills area at Carver Lake park in Woodbury, and believe Battle Creek could benefit from a similar course, as a place to introduce new riders. I'd love to see opportunities to get involved with constructing or maintaining this or other trails as well.

Lastly, some bathrooms, bike repair stands, trash bins, security cameras at the main two parking lots, and changing rooms at trailheads would be welcome additions.

Looking forward to the future developments in the trails at Battle Creek!

Graham Kolb

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tony Vander Linden](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Bike trail system  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:46:53 PM

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Hi Ben,

I'd like to have my voice heard - I live in Woodbury and believe the Battle Creek mountain bike trail system is an incredible asset for the east metro. Maintaining the current system while improving and expanding is a very good investment for the community.

As a frequent rider of the trails in the summer, I've now become a XC ski rider there in the winter. There's no better system in the metro for climbing and variety.

I ride most of the trails in the metro area and Battle Creek has some of the most unique features - it's urban setting, walkers/runners co-habiting with bikers and terrain that's unlike any other facility.

Thanks for listening,  
Tony

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [John Moy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking improvements  
**Date:** Sunday, October 3, 2021 8:01:52 AM

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Hi,

My name is John Moy and I have been a resident of the Twin Cities my whole life, and am currently a student at the University of Minnesota. I am writing this to express my support of Battle Creek's improvement plan, specifically concerning its mountain bike trails.

I first started Mountain Biking in the Spring of 2020, during the initial stages of Covid. Since then, I have progressively gotten more into the sport and in return have been given an escape for mental health, physical exercise, and many friendships. This would not have been possible without the singletrack trails managed by MORC, Battle creek being one such example.

Although I am not a resident of Ramsey County, I have recently started to frequent Battle Creek (roughly two times a week). As such I would like to offer my beliefs on the Master Plan, if it is at all helpful in your work.

Battle creek is a technically difficult trail system. While this is arguably the trail's best and most unique feature, the absence of easier trails poses challenges to beginner riders. Having more beginner trails and a skills learning area will provide a much more enjoyable, and safe experience for riders to become comfortable handling a mountain bike.

Another improvement would be more continuous connected singletrack, rather than the current loops that meet with access roads and XC skiing trails. This would increase the feeling of immersion with nature, as well as make the system much easier to navigate. Battle Creek, regardless of how good signage is, is a very easy system to get lost in, largely due to the disconnected trails.

I also believe in increasing access to mountain biking in the park during the winter months. I know that fat biking is not allowed in order to protect XC skiing trails, but believe that when the trails do not interfere with each other then both activities should be permitted. Theodore Wirth is a good example of these two being used together harmoniously.

While there are concerns with Mountain Biking conflicting or being prioritized over other user groups. I personally have never had or seen a negative experience, and firmly believe the biking community is a very friendly group. Whatever negative encounters do happen, likely come from other trail user's unfamiliarity with mountain biking. Having beginner trails and a skills area could help people to try mountain biking and understand it better.

I also think that Mountain bikers make up the largest user group of the park. On any given visit, I see orders of magnitude more bikers than hikers or runners. The community center's parking lot, with the exception of occasional youth sporting events, is generally filled with cars with bike racks, pickup trucks with tailgate covers, and bikes being put into/taken out of trunks. While the park should by no means be only used by mountain bikers, the number of visitors per user group should be weighed.

On the whole, I believe that singletrack trails at Battle Creek positively promote mental and physical wellbeing for many, many people. The presence of mountain bikers also helps to create a safer and crime-free atmosphere, and a group of volunteers to maintain the trails also used by hikers, runners, and snowshoers.

I hope this email can be of some use, and I would like to thank you for your work in improving outdoor recreation.

Thank you,  
John Moy

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Nick Green](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek mountain biking plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:47:28 PM

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Hello!

I'm in support of increasing the amount of mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. I'm a regular biker there and think that the presence of mountain biking has proven to increase the quality of an area (see Cuyuna for example). Mountain bikers bring both a sense of community and economic opportunities for local businesses. If the quality/availability of the bike trails increase, it will attract more people to the area which can help foster economic growth among other positive community results.

Sincerely,

Nick Green

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Luke S](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek mountain biking support  
**Date:** Saturday, September 25, 2021 8:23:11 PM

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Hi Ben!

I live a few miles from battle Creek and primarily use the park for mountain biking with friends. I'd love to see more people in the park in general, and improvements to the trails will attract more riders from around the cities. More park usage will make it safer and ideally reduce criminal activity. I'm hoping the plan will proceed and everyone can enjoy the park for decades to come.

Thank you for your time,  
Luke Sisterman



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Peter Hall](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking Trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:59:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Ben,

My name is Pete Hall and I would love to see increased mountain biking opportunities at Battle Creek. I am a resident of Bloomington but make the drive to Battle Creek at a minimum weekly to enjoy the trails as they are my favorite! They truly are the most fun in the Cities and offer elevation change and challenge like no other trail system in the metro. I ride 5-6 days a week for fun, physical exercise and mental health and has been a crucial part of my life especially during the pandemic, with the reduced traffic last summer I was at BC riding twice weekly!

Every time I ride at BC, I notice all the other rolling hills and think of the potential for the trails at Battle Creek to be improved and expanded. Currently there are a large amount of spur trails that could be connected and expanded upon to drive more people to enjoying the existing single track by providing easier navigation (a big deterrent for new riders which I hear frequently).

Mountain biking has an increasingly diverse user group and the increasing trail improvements and opportunities for riding in the Cities have only expedited that and brought further diversity. If BC had a skills development area it would help young and new riders foster new skills and frankly increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur (the unfortunate thing about BC).

Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers), and myself and my coworkers at Salsa have helped build some of the newest trails at BC. Also, having well designed mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit trails that develop. It would also be nice to see some increased amenities at the various trail heads, such as restrooms, trash bins, some lighting, a drinking fountain and security cameras. In addition, winter fat biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this and I'm excited to see how mountain bike trails will be added to the park. I think Battle Creek has a bright future as a leading trail system in the Twin Cities!

Thanks much,

Pete Hall  
Design Engineer  
Not All Tires Are Guaranteed To Fit  
[www.salsacycles.com](http://www.salsacycles.com)



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tim Dunklee](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:39:19 PM

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Ben,

I was recently alerted by the community mountain bike group (MORC) that there is a master plan being approved for Battle Creek. I know you are probably getting flooded with emails about that, but I wanted to make sure my opinion was expressed too.

In my opinion, Battle Creek is easily the best mountain bike trail in the Twin Cities and has potential to be a regional destination. I've been mountain biking for almost 20 years and Battle Creek is still my local destination of choice if I have the time to make it there from my home in Savage. That being said, there are definitely some ways it could be improved such as:

- Better connected trails with proper signage. The trail system is very confusing for new riders right now.
- Completely separate mountain bike trails. Mixing hikers and bikers can be a dangerous situation for everybody and it would be great if they were separate like Lebanon Hills is.
- Safer parking options. There have been a lot of vehicle break-ins at Battle Creek. I know several riders that have chosen not to go there just because they are worried about their vehicle.
- More beginner trails. Although I love Battle Creek for my own riding, it is not a place I like to bring my 8-year-old son.

Hope these details help guide the master plan and thank you for everything you do to support trails! Let me know if you have any more questions.

Have a great day!  
Tim Dunklee

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Colleen Sylvester](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek mountain biking  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 4:40:36 PM

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Hello

I am writing to you about the need for more mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. Though I live in Minneapolis, I work in St Paul, and love to ride at Battle Creek after work. I ride for my mental and physical health, and love introducing new riders to the sport. Battle Creek needs more beginner friendly trails, and connected trails so that new riders, families, and young folks can enjoy riding. I was a mentor for the Little Bellas program at Carver Park this past summer, and having more beginner trails at Battle Creek would give Little Bellas the opportunity to explore a whole new place to ride. Increased amenities at the trailheads would also make riders feel more comfortable and excited to explore this part of the cities. Mountain biking at Battle Creek can be intimidating for new folks, and adding more beginner friendly trails and trail improvements would help make this park more accessible and attract more diverse riders.

I have found so much joy in biking at Battle Creek, and would love for other less experienced riders to have just as much enjoyment.

Thank you,  
Colleen Sylvester

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Solomon Wurm](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Sunday, September 26, 2021 7:33:15 PM

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Mr. Karp,

I am writing to comment on the Battle Creek Master Plan.

My cousin got me into mountain biking in the summer of 2020 by taking me to Battle Creek for the first time. We frequently returned there throughout the summer and after a summer of riding on one of his bikes, I bought my own mountain bike over the winter. I then continued to ride at Battle Creek frequently in the summer of 2021 as it has become my favorite trail in the Twin Cities. I have ridden more at Battle Creek than any other mountain bike trail in the Twin Cities. Compared to the other trails I have ridden, Battle Creek has a unique opportunity with the topography of the land. I believe this provides a great chance to expand on the mountain biking in the park to create one of the top mountain biking places in the region. I think it would be great to have a variety of new features that would improve the experience for riders of all skill levels. I believe adding more trails to connect the entire trail system would be of great benefit to all parties. This would be great for mountain bikers, but it would also benefit other trail users as mountain bikers wouldn't need to ride off the mountain bike trails like they often do now. This would also make the park easier to navigate (along with improved park maps). It can be difficult to navigate the mountain bike trails, even after riding there before, so I think more connecting trails and improved maps would be great.

Mountain biking is fantastic for both my physical and mental health. It is a good workout and I love being out in nature riding without needing to think about other problems. This trail was especially great going through a full year of college completely online. It was great to go out and ride after sitting on a computer all day. Mountain biking is also a thing that can bring people together. I got closer to my cousin as we rode a lot throughout summer 2020. This year, I even brought another cousin to Battle Creek and showed him around. I also recommended going there to my roommate from Wisconsin who loves mountain biking because it has my favorite trails. I think an increase in mountain biking would allow for more great experiences for more people in a variety of communities.

Thank you for your time,

Solomon Wurm

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jesse Sich](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Friday, October 22, 2021 8:23:53 AM

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Hello Ben,

I'm emailing you, a representative of the land manager of the Battle Creek Park, to make my opinion known regarding mountain biking at Battle Creek Park. Although, isn't there a sliver of trail by the overlook at the north end owned by the City of Saint Paul? Anyway, I live and work in Ramsey County, I've put in my time volunteering as a trail worker, and I doubt you could find anyone who has mountain biked at BC more in the last ten years. It is a privilege and an absolute blast to ride there. I hope you will consider my opinion. As you read you will find my opinions are different than most of the emails you are receiving from mountain bikers. You are probably getting a lot of "We Need More Mountain Bike Trails" because that is what someone told them to say. Some of those replies are coming from people who only ride BC a few times a year or maybe not at all. They happened to stumble across a "call to action." I'm not saying you should discount their opinion. I'm just saying I probably feel stronger about mine than they do about theirs. I know you have seen the topics Scott posted online so I'll go right down the list following his numbering convention.

0) You want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek

No, I don't. It's good the way it is. Maintain existing trails. Add volunteer built hand cut new trails when personnel and time permits. Keep all features natural, not man made wood features. Keep it on the advanced side. I am completely against a machine built overhaul with new beginner level "flow" trails everywhere.

1) (If true) You are a resident of Ramsey County

I have lived in Ramsey County since 2012. I have worked in Ramsey County since 2010.

2) You use Battle Creek park (regularly)

I mountain bike a lot, hike occasionally, and utilize the dog park occasionally.

3) You mountain bike at Battle Creek

I have mountain biked at Battle Creek 488 days in the last ten years. I have logged about one million vertical feet of climbing on the Battle Creek Park hills!

### 4) You mountain bike for physical and mental health

I mountain bike at Battle Creek because it is fun, to stay fit, and to train for races. I maintain friendships at trail work sessions (prior to 2018) and group rides. Mental health is a made up phrase but those things do make me happy. Since 2018 and up to today I've come away from rides angry because of the changes that are happening to the trails. Man made wooden features started popping up. Battle Creek has never had man made wooden features. Those are great at other trails but it isn't really what Battle Creek is. Trails are being rebuilt using machines instead of being hand built. Trail maintenance is neglected. We used to trim some sections three times a year to keep the trail from growing in. There are sections now that haven't been trimmed in four years. Some of these trails are moving as riders avoid the in grown weeds and the trails fall apart. Trim the trail and it stays where it's supposed to be and it doesn't fall apart. Simple. Cheater lines are everywhere and corners are becoming straight trails. Part of maintenance, especially when the number of riders increases and the average skill level decreases, is closing the cheater lines before they become the main lines. The current trail crew has taken on the opposite approach by closing the main lines and promoting cheater lines. This is completely the opposite philosophy of any trail builder literally anywhere. Where the trail used to go around the tree, it is now straight lined to the right. People avoid a rut so they ride around and develop a second trail. There are countless examples of this. Essentially the advanced trails at BC are becoming beginner level because of the lack of maintenance and in my opinion poor decisions being made by trail workers in the last four years. The worst example of this that I have noticed is someone consciously going to the trail with a chainsaw and cutting down live healthy trees in multiple locations to make the trail wider so it "flows" better or rides faster or some non sense intention like that. This is uncalled for and incredibly irresponsible. It takes technical riding skills to corner closely around a tree. Anyone can ride in a wide open straight line. Battle Creek is losing its advanced trails and I come away from laps angry lately because of that.

### 5) Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails

Yes, hikers, bikers, runners. I tend to bike during non peak traffic hours and sometimes I see more runners than bikers.

### 6) Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity (gender, ethnicity)

It is becoming a goal in the mountain biking community to make the sport appeal more to diverse users. I think of what Eliot Jackson is doing on a national scale.

Unfortunately, mountain biking does not have a diverse user group. Trail changes in the last few years have influenced diversity in mountain biking there minimally at best. Word gets out on the internet that somebody built a jump and everyone flocks. But they're all white and male. There are some female riders but percentage wise I don't think they have increased much in the last ten years. I used to see Hmong groups but not as much anymore. Kids 12 and under are pretty rare to see and it is very rare to see a person of color riding. The only group I've seen more of in the last four years is high school kids. They have practices there and numbers have blown up in the teenage bracket because of organized high school racing. Hikers and park users other than riders are definitely



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

diverse.

7) Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of  
Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport

Battle Creek is a network of trails. This makes it different than any other trail in the metro. All other trails in the metro are directional loops. People think that is what they want at BC too because it is all they know. I think they want to be spit out where they enter without needing to know where they actually are during the ride. All trails at BC should be two way. Ride wherever you want. The possibilities are endless! If someone is new they can explore and learn a route for next time. If someone wants uninterrupted singletrack, or can't handle a two way trail, then they can go ride loops at Elm Creek. BC is plenty connected enough to have a great riding experience.

My selfish opinion says Battle Creek does not need more beginner trails. This should be a network not to start out at, but to work up to. If a beginner mountain biker wants to try the sport, I would recommend Carver Lake Park in Woodbury. I've encountered too many riders who cannot physically pedal up some hills or do not have the skills to ride certain features. It's a safety hazard to have this gap in skill level on the same trail.

At the same time it is fair to say a beginner rider should be able to progress at a single venue. I know there is a flat contour along the park boundary by the Rec Center for a potential location for a green trail.

9) Battle Creek needs a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills

If a skills park is constructed I recommend it be outstanding. Make it be the reason people decide to make the trip there. If it is mediocre it will go unused, unmaintained, and become a massive eye sore.

As I said above, in my opinion Battle Creek should not have man made wooden features. It really isn't Battle Creek's style. They require regular inspections to ensure they are safe and I don't trust those are happening. I think a skills park should reflect the skills needed to ride the trails where it is located. This means minimal man made wooden features in the skills park. Constructing an outstanding skills park catering to all skill levels without man made wooden features would be difficult.

10) Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers)

BC is used by many. It was always satisfying to see a non mountain biker using a trail I helped build and maintain. It would have been nice to see volunteers from other user groups show up at trail work sessions. I only remember one consistent trail runner who ever contributed.

11) Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

I covered this in #4. The statement is false. Cheater lines, bandit trails whatever you call them is one of the biggest problems at Battle Creek right now and the current trail crew is addressing the issue with all the wrong methods.

12) (if true) You volunteer your time to build and maintain trails

I was regularly part of the trail crew from 2008 to 2017. Ten years of digging and trimming every Monday evening at 5:30.

13) Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur

The goal should be to create a park that can promote transforming a person using their time toward criminal behavior to one using their time away from crime and maybe even riding. The goal of this plan should not be to move criminal behavior from one space to another.

14) Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras

In my opinion, no additional amenities are needed. If anything, maybe an outdoor changing enclosure since the Rec Center isn't always open.

15) Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

It would be cool to allow mountain biking on packed snow trails at Battle Creek. There are sections of single track greatly separated from the groomed cross country ski trails. We wouldn't even cross paths.

I also wanted to bring up Battle Creek Road. Look at it on a map. It cuts directly through the middle of the park. In my opinion, motor vehicles should not be allowed to drive through the middle of the park. I think it should be a dead end just south of the homes and maybe some parking spots with a trailhead at the end. In talking with someone recently I found out it may be an emergency/fire route. I wish it would be possible to be closed to general through traffic since it's the middle of a park. I've heard of a catalytic converter being stolen along the road. There is a camera but it clearly doesn't work or at least isn't monitored. Drivers speed though here. There's clearly an issue here. A dead end doesn't seem to be an option so I don't know what the solution is.

I think Battle Creek does not need more mountain bike trails to be built at a rapid rate. There are plenty of opportunities for beginner riders to progress at pretty much any other trail in the metro where there is less elevation change. This includes Carver Lake Park which is very close to BC. If you have to build new trails, you have to have a plan in place for long term maintenance. Please don't close existing trails for any reason. I ride them A LOT. If you have to build new trail, make it hand cut and only natural like most of the existing trails.

This email is intended for Ramsey County employees. Please do not share publicly without my permission.

Thank you

Jesse

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Rob Mohs](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Saturday, October 23, 2021 9:07:03 AM

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Hello,

I wanted to comment in support of improved mountain biking trails during the review period for the Battle Creek Master Plan.

I have recently started coming to Battle Creek to use the Mountain Bike Trails. These trails have fantastic potential, and some, like the newly remodeled Goat trail, are truly some of the best in the Metro area.

However, what this trail system definitely lacks is a cohesive, connected, well planned routing. The current segments, connected by other use trails, is confusing, and does not flow together well as compared to other trail systems in the area. A well thought out plan, with proper execution (e.g. Pathfinder Trail Building) would certainly draw more bikers to this trail system.

Lastly, better signage is paramount. One of the biggest negatives I hear about Battle Creek Mountain Biking is that the signage is poor. This greatly compounds the first issue I mentioned of a poorly connected trail system. A couple well placed kiosks with mountain bike trail maps and info, along with smaller maps at trail intersections, would be HUGE in the improvement of Battle Creek. The Lebanon Hills trail system in Eagan can serve as an excellent example of fantastic trail signage.

It's important to say that I've seen exemplar behavior and respect by the mountain biking community in their interaction with all local trails. These are people who enjoy this sport for the mental and physical health benefits it provides, its way of immersing them in the local nature preserves of their communities, and how it connects them with friends and family.

I truly believe advancing the Mountain Biking trails in Battle Creek would be a wise decision that would result in benefits to the local community.

Thanks,

Rob Mohs

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Erik Thrawl](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mountain Biking  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 12:49:07 PM

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As an avid mountain biker that lives in Eagan I support and encourage any City / County to truly look at the impact of well designed, maintained biking trails. Lebanon Hills here in Eagan has done just this and expanded the trailhead park, facilities, parking, and continues to improve the trails themselves with volunteers passionate about biking. These improvements have made Lebanon Hills in my opinion the best mountain biking place to ride in the twin cities.

Now even I get tired of riding the same trails and my next best place to ride locally is Murphy or Battle Creek. Murphy is fast with minimal difficult sections while Battle Creek definitely has more steep inclines and with the Goat trail now complete has some exceptional trails. Every time I ride Battle Creek I always think to myself, "what a piece of land! If only the city would build more trails through the area this could be the best place in the cities to ride. People would travel from all over to come and ride these trails if someone had the vision." If you look at Duluth, Split Rock, Cuyana, Red Head mountain biking trails these cities are doing just that. People are flocking to these locations, coming from out of state to ride these trails. There is no reason why the City of St. Paul / Battle Creek couldn't be one of these destinations.

When I see the Master Plan to reduce the mountain biking trails at Battle Creek someone isn't seeing the benefits that others across the state and the country are seeing by building MORE trails not less. I strongly encourage someone at Ramsey County to head over to Lebanon Hills and see for themselves the sheer number of people using Lebanon Hills on a daily / hourly bases and the enjoyment that is received from these trails before considering reducing the number of trails at Battle Creek.

Sincerely  
Erik Thrawl  
1224 Wilderness Park Ct.  
Eagan, MN 55123  
651-341-5642

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Nick Ventimiglia](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mtb Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 10:10:30 PM

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Hello Ben,

This doesn't need to be a long, drawn out email. Instead, quick and easy.. I'm a resident of Ramsey county and mountain bike in Battle Creek regularly. I support the addition to and expansion of trails - at BC and anywhere, to be honest.

The mtb community has grown tremendously over the past 2 years. I see sooo many youths riding, which is great for the sport, but the added users require additional trails to support the demand.

Please push as hard as you can to get every bit of trail at BC, as long as there are no adverse effects.

Thank you for listening and I'm excited to see what the expansion will be at BC!

Nick Ventimiglia

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Steve Darr](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:11:21 PM

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Hi Ben,

I was told are overseeing the master plan at Battle Creek and wanted to share my support related to MTB. Please see my below comments:

- 0) I want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek
- 1) I'm a resident of Ramsey County
- 3) I mountain bike at Battle Creek and want to bring my kids there.
- 4) I mountain bike for physical and mental health
- 5) Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails
- 6) Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity (gender, ethnicity)
- 7) Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of. Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport
- 9) Battle Creek needs a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills
- 10) Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers)
- 11) Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop
- 13) Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur
- 14) Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras
- 15) Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

Thanks,

Steve



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Bruce Deger](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB support  
**Date:** Friday, October 22, 2021 3:14:06 PM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

Thank you for your work on the master plan for Battle Creek. At age 74 I purchased my first mountain bike 3 months ago. Since then I have endeavored to bike every green level trail that I can find in the metro area and have donated to MORC, the Club Mesabi, COGGS and WIKI (Wisconsin). I rode Battle Creek twice and, while I enjoyed the short segments that were at my beginner level, it would be wonderful to see the proposed plan come to fruition to offer more options for beginners. To grow the sport we need more entry level trails (for both young and old), and a skills area for practicing would be great.

Thanks again for all you do and please use my testimonial as support for the plan

Bruce Deger  
651-207-3375

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Nick Syman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB Trail Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 4:27:49 PM

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Hi Ben,

I am a Ramsey county resident that mountain bikes at Battle Creek regularly. Having great trails nearby has helped me stay healthy and happy for the last year and a half.

I hope that the county continues to increase the quantity and quality of the Battle Creek mtb trails. Particularly, improving the connectedness of trails amenities at trail heads.

Thank you for your time and work on this project.

Nick Syman

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Rickchard Rodriguez](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB Trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:17:01 PM

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Good Afternoon,

I just saw the master plan for improvements at Battle Creek, and I'd like to advocate for more trails. I'm an avid mountain biker and I use Battle Creek regularly since I live about a mile away. I'd love to see some more connecting trails. I'm also a coach for the Park, East Ridge and Woodbury MTB club, and we use this trail frequently for training. Our team loves the trail for the challenge, but it would great to have some easier trails for newer riders to progress.

Thanks for your time,  
Rick Rodriguez

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ben](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 5:58:03 PM

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Hello,  
I skipped to the part that proposed 4 miles of new off road cycling trails. Sounds great to me, thanks!

-Ben Johnson

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## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Aaron Arnold](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mtb Trails  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 12:30:00 PM

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Hello Ben,

I just wanted to say I bike at battle creek quite frequently and is close to where I live in St. Paul. So, with many trails up north stepping up the skill level of Minnesota riders I really wish someplace in the metro would be apart of the advancement also. Obviously I would really love that to be battle creek since I already do find it to be the most challenging and technical in the metro area. I feel like the land has plenty of opportunity for advancing riders skills! I enjoy the new GOAT alot. I also wish there were more drop features maybe a bit larger drops would be nice! Even if they are optional drops and table tops so it's still family friendly I am totally ok with that.

Also wanted to touch base on the winter riding situation. I do use the park in the winter for classic skiing but I would really love to fat bike in the park as well. I enjoy both sports but it's great to have diversity in the park and would really enjoy seeing that available someday.

Thanks again for hearing me out and making battle creek a great park.

Aaron

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kevin Schafer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek MTB trails  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 10:43:37 PM

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I just wanted to take a moment to express my support for more trail options at BC.

I make the drive from Richfield, often, to ride these beautiful trails. Truly one of the most unique urban trails systems I've ever ridden.

I love the vast exploration, challenging hills, and the unrefined wildness that exists on BC. There is a lot of polish on modern MTB trails, I greatly enjoy the rough around the edges aspect with these trails.

Every ride there, I'm also amazed by the history of riding this area. Much like the MN River trails, the indigenous history here astounds me, and is important to honor. I wander BC with great respect, in that regard.

In regards to trail expansion, I'd love to see some more developed exploration, from the community center, heading into the main trails, as it is a bit bland, at the very start of the ride.

I'd love options for winter riding, if that could happen. I'm mixed on better signage, because I love figuring out my own path and approach, when I do ride there, but I may be in the minority on that. More miles to explore would truly be fabulous, as I'd love to see more of the forest areas.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment, I look forward to riding more trails there, and always leave BC, looking forward to my return. It's a special place.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Schafer  
Richfield MN.



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Peter Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Mtn Bike Trails  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 9:52:34 PM

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Benjamin-

I am a Mounds Park resident delighted to have Battle Creek in my backyard.

I am also a cycling enthusiast -- I race road bikes and cyclocross, and mtn bike around the twin cities, most often at Battle Creek because its a literal roll down the hill.

I'm happy to provide more thoughts, in a more presentable format then below, and if that would help, please let me know, but for now, here are my thoughts on the evolution of Battle Creek Park:

You requested feedback regarding:

0) You want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek

Yes. But at the balance of every other person's ability to use the park in balance with the wildlife.

(I'm a neighbor, so I'd like to see other people get use the park)

1) (If true) You are a resident of Ramsey County

Yep. 55106

2) You use Battle Creek park (regularly)

All year round. Mtn + Nordic skiing and walking

3) You mountain bike at Battle Creek

Yes

4) You mountain bike for physical and mental health

Yes, and emotional health

5) Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails

This is true: I often interact with other walkers or cross country runners. And wildlife as well. I Like how "wild" the southwest side of the park is; limited and rustic paths have a very natural vibe. Its important for bikers to be aware of walkers and their dogs.

6) Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity (gender, ethnicity)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

This is true: every time I ride, I see a new group of multi-cultural cyclists; covering all ages. Many trying mtn biking for the first time.

With the energy surrounding high school mountain bike teams, there is an even greater audience part-taking in the sport. Just last week I rode with nearly 50 kids and several adults from White Bear Lake Sr High School Mtn Bike Team

7) Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of

I dont know. I'd rather keep what's there ridable (but prefer not to make it "groomed" like Theo Worth) than add.

8. Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport  
This is true. BC is a technical place. Hard for beginners to get the skills down easily.

9) Battle Creek needs a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills

If trails can do this, then we dont need more

10) Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers)

Is this true? I do not know. Maybe it should be true, but I dont see this

11) Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop

I dont know about this, but think we should try to preserve the nature (wildlife) and usage balance, so if we can work to prevent bandit riding, that would be good.

12) (if true) You volunteer your time to build and maintain trails

I do not, but would

13) Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur

this I would assume is true. And that a location that encourages usage, encourages people to come would create a safer neighborhood.

14) Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras

While this would help, a ton, I can see how wintertime participants would also appreciate these upgrades. That said, I do like that BC is not "perfect". There are plenty of "perfect" riding locations around the twin cities. Part of BC's charm is its natural, rougher state.

15) Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

Sure. I'd like to also walk my dog on snowy nights in the park, but there are signs that discourage this.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ryan Cerepak](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Off Road cycling Support  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:18:54 PM

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I'm writing to communicate my support of enhancing and/or expanding the off road mountain bike trails and facilities at Battle Creek Park.

I am not a Ramsey County resident but make the drive from Champlin several times per year to ride at Battle Creek. Often times it is the first to dry out in the spring or rainy summer periods so I ride there. I much prefer riding off road so I'll drive over 60 minutes round trip instead of riding paved trails at Elm Creek or the Coon Rapids dam which I can both ride from right out of my garage. Off road riding helps me clear my head better than road riding so with that and the extra fun, it's worth the drive.

I've seen more hikers and walkers over the past couple years as the biking trails have improved. I also no longer see as much of the shady element along the abandoned Point Douglas Road. You also don't see the bonfire remnants, garbage, or dumping of junk along abandoned Point Douglas Road or regular Point Douglas Road. With more usage I feel better that my car won't be broken into while I'm out riding. I've heard reports of catalytic converter stealing and think that an established trail center with cameras could help prevent this.

The additional ability to ride fat bikes in the winter on trails that don't interfere with XC skiing would be good. I don't know if you have issues with riders at this moment, but with dedicated portions of bike trails for fat biking hopefully any problems you have right now would stop. Theodore Wirth has fat biking and XC ski trails and doesn't seem to have an issue.

Thanks,  
Ryan Cerepak

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Aaron Nienaber](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 1:36:30 PM

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Hello Benjamin,

I am writing to you to express my support for the implementation of a disc golf course at Battle Creek Park. I live nearby and enjoy using the park regularly. I am always pleased to see the amount of people using the park and how well it brings together the diversity of our neighborhoods to enjoy the space together. I think that disc golf is a sport that is so accessible for people from all walks of life and would be a tremendous addition to the activities that are available.

I also can't help but notice how many opportunities there are to utilize unused spaces around the park. I see immense space available to creatively install disc golf holes throughout the park. In addition to the open space areas, additional holes could easily be added in the woods between the waterpark and ball fields, and around the perimeters to the east and north end.

Additionally, I work for 3M and I know many people that would enjoy playing a round of disc golf on their lunch hour or scheduling a casual tournament. I do not currently see a lot of people from 3M utilizing Battle Creek Park but I think a disc golf course is one way that we can bridge 3M with the neighboring community in this shared space.

I hope these considerations help in making a decision on adding a disc golf course and I respect the outcome whatever it may be.

Thanks,  
Aaron Nienaber

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Noah Billig](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park feedback  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 12:41:38 PM

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Dear Mr. Karp:

My brother Daniel described the Battle Creek Park Master Plan and sent me a link. I agree that a disc golf course would be a great program for the park. It is a truly accessible activity and is relatively easy in terms of hardscape and signage needed for a course. I am familiar with the Battle Creek Park and think this fits well. Although I now live out of state, it is still an important place to visit when I travel back to Minnesota.

On a side note, it's also great to email someone from our landscape architecture discipline. I feel like we all speak the same language.

Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Noah Billig

Noah Billig PhD, ASLA, AICP  
Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture  
Honors Program Director  
Fay Jones School of Architecture + Design  
University of Arkansas  
[noahbillig.com](#) | [ua web](#)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

From: [William Lutz](#)  
To: [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
Subject: Battle Creek Park Grassland  
Date: Saturday, October 30, 2021 8:52:44 PM

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Dear Mr Karp:

We are writing about the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland, which is adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park. We have friends near the Park, and so we have visited the Grasslands area many times, and enjoyed it for its native grassland setting and the habitat it provides to many species of plants, birds and wildlife.

We request that you please take steps to protect the Grassland. We write because in the most recent draft of the Battle Creek Park Master Plan, the Grassland is not included in the Master Plan. We feel it should be included and we request that you include it in Battle Creek Regional Park as an Environmental Natural Area.

This Grassland is very important and should be preserved for many reasons, including these:

- 1) The Grassland is home to rare and declining birds and other species, including many pollinators.
- 2) As confirmed during Covid, native green-spaces like this are extremely important to our community, and the importance of preserving them cannot be overstated. Nor can these native green spaces be replaced once they've been built over. With human populations increasing, natural areas like this will only become more important. Time and time again, communities that have native green-spaces like this are voted as top communities for livability.
- 3) Natural spaces like this have extremely high value to a community, including educational, scientific, and livability value. Research studies continue to confirm the high value of areas like this for mental health.
- 4) There are a number of other sites in the county -- already degraded properties -- that would better be used for housing, rather than destroying this important natural grassland space. We know you have very smart planners that could make housing as the highest and best use of these degraded properties.

In summary, we urge you to please protect and preserve this publicly-owned Grasslands property by including it in Battle Creek Regional Park as an Environmental Natural Area.

Sincerely,  
William M. Lutz  
Julie M. Brophy  
Victoria, MN



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Billie Ashton](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Master Plan Re: Disc Golf  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 12:07:50 PM

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Hi Ben,

I'm writing to help voice an opinion for you to add disc golf to the Battle Creek Park Master Plan. Disc golf is a great low cost recreation to add within the park system and it's a popular recreation for all age levels.

You should definitely think about adding it to the Master plan.

Billie Sage Ashton

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tynan Clark](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 1:58:59 PM

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Hello!

I heard through a group on Facebook that disc golf might be in consideration for part of the Battle Creek Park!

Though I don't live in Ramsey county I am near by in Oakdale. There is a bit of a gap without any disc golf courses for this part of the metro and Battle Creek would be a great addition to a large and ever growing community.

There are many of us that are passionate about the sport and enjoy volunteering to make things happen in the sport.

We appreciate your consideration!

Thank you,  
Tynan Clark

--

- Ty

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Cheryl Billig](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 6:38:55 PM

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Ben,

I am writing to request the inclusion of a disc golf course in Battle Creek Park. My kids and Grandkids love throwing discs and it a fun activity that we can do together.

Thank you,

Cheryl Billig

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Gus Juffer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:47:44 PM

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Hi Ben,

My parents live on Boxwood Avenue near Battle Creek park and my son and I ride there often. I saw that the master plan is up for comment, and I just want to say that I support the addition of new mountain bike trails and additional wayfinding signage.

Battle Creek is such a unique trail in the metro area. The elevation change makes it so fun and challenging, and the potential is definitely there to make it even better. I know there are plenty of hikers and XC skiers that also need to be accounted for (my parents included), but I hope you can find a way to really take advantage of the opportunity to make the park shine on the MTB side.

Cheers,  
Gus Juffer

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Don Osborn](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 3:58:03 PM

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Hello Ben.

I hear you are taking public comments on the park. Let me cast my vote for "more mountain bike trails." There was just an article today about how mountain biking brings business to communities and trails are popping up all over MN, including several on the Iron Range. I live in St. Paul and BC is the closest trail for me. But I also travel around the Midwest and put money into the other communities with trails.

Point is, the sport is growing and people will come to the places with the most challenging and interesting trails. BC is known for it's rugged trails but it is also known for poor signage and confusing arrangements. If it could be tied together better and be more of a unified whole, wow what a draw it would be. It has gotten better in the few years I've been riding there. I've seen new trails built and more sections got connected. Kudos goes to all the MORC volunteers who do that.

But yes, more trails and signs would be a great start.

thanks,  
Don Osborn  
St. Paul

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Donahue, Anthony Charles](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 7:06:48 PM

---

Hello Benjamin,

I recently heard some information that there was a possibility for a new disc golf course being designed for Battle Creek Park. This is extremely exciting news! Disc golf has become a huge part of my life over the last few years and I have watched first hand as the sport is growing exponentially from year to year over the last 3 years. I would love to get more information about the team who will be responsible for designing the course and choosing the baskets to be put in. I think adding a disc golf course in that location would be a huge success and generate a lot of new foot traffic to the park.

If you have any information on who is going to be designing to course and if there is any opportunity to be a part of that team please consider me as an option.

Contact Info:

Chaz Donahue  
606-416-1593  
[Chaz\\_donahue@hotmail.com](mailto:Chaz_donahue@hotmail.com)  
[Anthony.donahue@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Anthony.donahue@co.ramsey.mn.us)

Thank you!

Chaz



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jean Rivard](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek plan comment  
**Date:** Saturday, September 25, 2021 10:10:29 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system.  
**Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi =Benjamin,

As a resident of Mounds Park, Battle Creek is my favorite place nearby to be in touch with nature. It is worthy of preservation of it's wildness.

I hope the trails continue to be dirt paths. Please don't cut down any more big old trees. The woodpeckers will take care of them. Let the eco system thrive. Follow its guidance rather than tell it what to do.

I hope the name is changed to something more appropriate. L Is that what we want to remember when going to this beautiful place – our past cultural battles, war?

Thank you for listening to my comments.

Warmly,  
Jean Rivard  
959 Burns Ave  
St. Paul, MN

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [cathyjpetersen@gmail.com](mailto:cathyjpetersen@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Plan  
**Date:** Monday, October 4, 2021 8:37:20 PM

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Benjamin,

I'm very concerned about the lack of language in the Battle Creek Park plan document regarding pollinators and pollinator habitat. I'm sorry to have missed the meetings relative to this location, but I'm excited to have the opportunity to comment on the plan document.

Pollinators provide the food for other species that we've deemed critical to MN and the US by protecting them as well as limiting the types of chemicals, herbicides and pesticides that may be used by a variety of industries – especially agriculture. There is a need for the county to be proactive rather than passive in its actions regarding pollinator habitat. There are several steps that can be taken and should be added to the plan:

1. No mow policy or if mowing is deemed essential – mowing at 3" or greater
2. Plant clover, not grass
3. Put in native pollinator plants
4. Remediate Pigs Eye Lake – transforming it from being a dump (including this year's railroad broken brake line spill)
5. Provide signage along the paths regarding pollinators including those that used to exist as well as those that remain
6. Cooperate / collaborate with local groups that support pollinators

Thank you!

Earth's crammed with heaven – Elizabeth Barrett Browning

*Cathy Petersen*

651-690-4324 Office/Home  
651-261-1806 Cell  
[cathyjpetersen@gmail.com](mailto:cathyjpetersen@gmail.com)

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## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ben Hawkins](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle creek plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 16, 2021 9:28:40 AM

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Mr. Karp,

I'm writing you as a proponent of continuing to add mountain bike trails to Battle Creek park. I grew up just a mile from BC park and spent many years biking on the paths, and now I'm 'grown up' and still go biking at BC weekly! I'm old enough to remember when much of our single track was cut 15' wide and destroyed for the cc ski'ers...

The number of people biking has gone up dramatically since the beginning of the plague, and it would be great to be able to have more trails at BC for people to utilize for health and exercise.

The biggest need right now for BC for the MTB trail system is a return loop for the "goat" trail. As of now, when you go down that trail you can end up anyplace and nothing really makes sense. Some kind of loop return path would be great and would get a ton of use.

There's also a lot of opportunity for added spurs off of the grass loop on the south side of Battle Creek road, the bluff area is perfect for narrow bike trails and not much else.

Anything you can do to help improve BC mtb trails is super appreciated!

One other thing - as they look to 'develop' the totem town area, there is a great opportunity for more off road loops through that area. Oh, and one other thing - the "Highwood Preserve" area off of Springside would be another great single track area. That small park links into the entire bluff all the way up to Lower Afton, and there are already existing paths linking to Burlington Rd and Point Douglas. With a little creativity, Highwood Preserve could link into both new trails at the Totem town area as well as connecting into the BC trails near Lower Afton and Battle Creek road without requiring land acquisition. I believe the county already owns all the bluffs!

Thanks again, I'm excited to see what you folks swami up. Battle Creek has some of the best MTB trails in the entire metro but there is lots of room for improvement!

Ben Hawkins

Minnehaha Ave West, St. Paul.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Patrick Wells](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Plans need more for Mountain Bikers  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 5:34:26 PM

You don't often get email from patrick.d.wells@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Ben!

Just a friendly note to let you know that myself and my 4 sons all want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek.

We are a resident of Ramsey County, and we ride Battle Creek park, several weeks a month to mountain bike for our physical and mental health, as well as family time to accomplish our goals in increasing our skills and enjoyment of mountain biking. We regularly meet friends as well to mountain bike at Battle Creek.

A few more points:

- Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails.
- Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity.

But Battle Creek needs:

- more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of
- more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport
- a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills

It's cool how Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers).

I believe that Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop, and that Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur

As well, Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras ad we'd like to see Winter Fat Biking allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

Lastly, for safety, parking and speed controls are badly needed on Battle Creek Rd.

It's scary to use this road as local residents don't even slow down typically. While I'm sure this will get fixed once someone is killed, it's better to address it now!

Happy to chat or discuss anything further!

Patrick Wells

651.283.6800

[Patrick.D.Wells@gmail.com](mailto:Patrick.D.Wells@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Veronica Hudacek](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Master Park Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:13:46 PM

You don't often get email from [veronica.hudacek@gmail.com](mailto:veronica.hudacek@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Ben,

My name is Veronica Hudacek, and I would love to see increased mountain biking opportunities at Battle Creek. I am a resident of Washington county, but live close by in Cottage Grove and either drive or bike over to Battle Creek several times a week to enjoy the trails. They truly are the best in the twin cities metro area and offer what no other trail system within a two hour drive can (I recently attended a MTB jump clinic, and the general icebreaker of "what the best trail is" confirmed it by general consensus as well)!

I train and ride 5-6 days a week to improve my physical and mental health; this has been a crucial part of my life especially during the pandemic. There is a vast amount of potential for the trails at Battle Creek to be improved. Currently there are a large amount of spur trails that could be connected to drive more people to enjoying the existing single track by providing easier navigation (a current deterrent for new riders), increased signage and mini-maps similar to what other trails would be helpful as well.

Mountain biking has a very diverse user group and the increasing trail improvements have only expedited that and brought further diversity. I have met with several different groups and ridden with and met so many new friends this way.

If BC had a skills development area or areas it would help young and new riders foster new skills and increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur.

As a participating trail volunteer for Carver Lake, I know that mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers). Also, having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop.

It would be nice to see some increased amenities at the various trail heads as needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, a drinking fountain and security cameras. In addition, Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing (I myself am an avid Nordic skier, but wouldn't mind having that option available to me as well).

I truly appreciate you taking the time to read this, and I'm excited to see how mountain bike trails will be added to the park!

Sincerely,  
Veronica

Veronica Hudacek  
[www.veronichudacek.com](http://www.veronichudacek.com)  
(612) 987-6964

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Sam Crossley](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 9:13:56 PM

You don't often get email from sam.howard.crossley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello, Mr. Karp:

I'd like to register my support for mountain biking at Battle Creek Regional Park. Additionally, I'd like to advocate for additional bike infrastructure at the park as we continue to see interest in mountain biking grow.

I'm a regular visitor to Battle Creek mountain bike trails and love the steep climbs, bluff views, fast descents and the variety of trail offerings. I do think that Battle Creek Trails could benefit from the following:

- More connected trails vs. spur-based trails that currently exist.
- More beginner trails and skills park offerings like Lebanon Hills, Carver Lake and Theodore Wirth.
- More signage to mark trails and trail directions.

I'm excited to know that there's a master plan in the works for Battle Creek. This will surely mean increased access for nearby residents and as a destination for those living further away.

Thanks for logging my comments in support of mountain biking at Battle Creek.

Kindly,

Sam Crossley

Sent from my iPhone



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brandon Ollhoff](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park - Master Plan (MTB Trails)  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 29, 2021 10:46:06 AM

You don't often get email from 14brollhoff@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hi Ben,

I wanted to reach out to you today to voice my support for the preservation and increased commitment of MTB trails as part of the Battle Creek Park Master Plan. I recently moved to Roseville from the Milwaukee metro area last fall and have come to truly embrace the MTB culture here in the Twin Cities. While I've enjoyed riding at places like Lebanon Hills and Theo Wirth Park, I think it's important to recognize how special Battle Creek is and what it offers to MTB riders in the area. There are few places in the Twin Cities metro that have the elevation that BC does.

I think the question becomes how do MTB riders and the trails they frequent co-exist with non-riders (runners, hikers, skiers, snowshoers, etc). I'd point to Theo Wirth Park as an example to what Battle Creek could become in the long term. If time and investment is put into MTB trails, I think you'll see an influx of patrons, but also volunteers ready to help maintain and improve the overall park for events (trail running, MTB race series, winter skiing, etc.).

As someone local to the area, I ask that you consider the successes of Theo Wirth Park and include more trails for new and beginning riders and the development of a skills park capable of hosting new rider events, similar to the one seen at Lebanon Hills today.

Thank you for your time,

--

***Brandon Ollhoff***

C: 715-302-4081

[14brollhoff@gmail.com](mailto:14brollhoff@gmail.com)

### Battle Creek Regional Park and Pig's Eye Regional Park Plan Feedback

Kathy Sidles

1380 Winchell St.

Saint Paul, MN 55106

651-771-7528

Greetings – I live six blocks east of Lake Phalen but have been walking at Pig's Eye Regional Park every Tuesday morning all summer and fall. Also my husband and I walk at Battle Creek Park and other parks within 30 minutes of our house every day since I retired two years ago. I put in many hours picking up trash along the Vento Trail and Frost Lake Park and pulling Garlic Mustard. I am a long time urban bird watcher and urban bumblebee volunteer surveyor since 2016. I see a few native-planted (thanks to our watershed districts), and burned and maintained natural areas. But also large parts of parks are neglected, with buckthorn, garlic mustard, trash, tent campers with nowhere to go. And parks being chipped away at or removed like the nearby Bruce Vento Bike Trail being bulldozed by the Rush Line.

In Minneapolis I started an "empty house committee" in my neighborhood at Lake and Cedar when the 1912 era houses got old at once and abandoned. Now I see houses on the east side of Saint Paul mostly built after WWII getting older at once. I think having parks near older neighborhood helps keep them safe and recycled so saves us a lot of money, and all kids can have a good neighborhood. The Tree Equity web site map shows many Saint Paul neighbors benefit by trees in parks near them, including Battle Creek (except for a neighborhood in South Saint Paul): [www.treeequityscore.org](http://www.treeequityscore.org). So for these reasons I am offering this feedback on the Battle Creek and Pig's Eye Park plan.

1. **I support the feedback for the plan from Saint Paul Audubon (pasted below) and neighbor Tom Dimond (pasted below).** Please add the 77 acres of high quality upland prairie habitat to Battlecreek Park! High density housing should be distributed throughout the metro area so we can be more like small towns where all ages and incomes live together.
2. **I have been on almost 20 weekly walks at Pig's Eye Regional Park - parking at the sludge dump just past the tree and pallet chipping pile – that Kiki Sonnen and Tom Dimond held this summer and fall. Based on that experience –**
  - I especially support designating Pig's Eye Regional Park a Regional Park Reserve with 80% or more wildlife habitat. This park has snakes, toads, frogs, coyotes and birds we don't see in most parks in the area. It should be enhanced as described in Chapter 3, Park Reserves, in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.
  - The park plan should include monitoring for spills and resulting safety improvements to RR operation. On my walks at Pig's Eye Regional Park I saw the work done trying to contain the 360/720 gallon spill, from an engine hitting a track mechanism, into Battle Creek that then ran all the way through Pig's Eye Regional Park to Pig's Eye Lake. Previous to that spill we saw lots of frogs and herons from the rookery feeding on them. From a walk not long after that at adjacent Mounds Park I could see the removal of cinders and soil at the 1,000 gallon spill next to Bruce Vento Regional Park from a train collision due to delayed use of electronic devices. The Battle Creek/Pig's Eye park plan should include plans to monitor the effects of any spill to the park and monitor changes to RR operation for all spills (all spills over 5 gallons must be reported).
  - The park plan should include reclaiming acres taken from wildlife and public park use to pallet chipping by a private company, tree dumping and sludge dumping that is coming

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

from all parts of the region. Over the summer the size of the park was reduced once again by giving a big section of it up - where I walked and checked for birds and bumblebees - to the Board of Water Commissioners. The lease (sent with this feedback) says “Leased Premises The City does hereby lease to the Board, and the Board does hereby lease from the City, that certain tract of land situated in the City of Saint Paul, County of Ramsey, as more fully described and depicted in Exhibit “B” (the “Leased Premises”).” Exhibit B is pasted here – within the blue lines is the new area for a new building and road and more regional sludge dumping. The Red area shows trees but is all buildings and piles of trees and private company pallets stored for eventual chipping, with a sludge pile behind them. “Large Nest” is an occupied Eagle’s nest. Until recently it wasn’t legal to put paths near them since they quit nesting with people walking close by. The green dots are “Trees to be Preserved” – but look at how many trees don’t need to be preserved. We have seen Killdeer and Wild Turkeys in this area also. The lease is unclear if the public can walk here. My husband refused to walk there even though is a pull-over and its public land because a big sign says “Keep Out”. The way the lease reads this is no longer public land that the public can visit.



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- The Battlecreek Park Plan should include recognition that tree and pallet chipping and sewer sludge dumping have no good long term plan in the metro area and that resources to improve plans for them will be insisted on. A good long term plan would be for the sewer sludge to be recycled for growing food and the wood chips recycled to put back in the woods. Pallets can have chemicals that have spilled on them and from what I read from my volunteer work putting in pollinator gardens they are chipped and become the dyed wood chips you buy at the store – the dye hides the chemical discoloration. Pollinator gardens are encouraged to use non-dyed chips to keep the chemicals from killing the pollinators. Pallets should not be on public park land, so the lease to the private company who piles and chips them has to be changed. From what I read about sewer sludge it can have heavy metals from drugs and food that if not removed is not safe to put back on farm fields. Solving this and the pallet chipping problem (pallets are a big job-producer in Minnesota) should be a high priority state-wide. The city dump is capped over but Saint Paul parks are still a dumping ground for the metro. The public needs to hear more about recycling these things so we can support better solutions state-wide.  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewage\\_sludge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewage_sludge) and [www.pca.state.mn.us/water/biosolids](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/biosolids).



- I strongly support improved access for what is important to park neighbors – a park with non-motorized fishing access to Pig’s Eye Lake – at Red Rock Terminal road as at present is OK - and quiet walks in habitat you only find in larger river parks like this one. On our walks I have met neighborhood people who have been on walks at Pig’s Eye beyond the pallet and sludge dump, and others say this is the fifth time they have tried to find the park. One person grew up with his Dad fishing for Walleye in the lake. Others are looking for a place to launch a boat. Another remembered ruts trucks made planting trees that then died. I don’t think any of them are asking for bulldozing trees to put in roads to a big parking ramp that will be flooded many years. I have been to the boat access ramp at the south end of the lake. It isn’t usable or marked but could be fixed up again. If pallets were



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no longer allowed and the sludge pile removed that would be good access to the park. Or put parking and a trail where the north sludge dump is being expanded instead of expanding the dump. It would be terrible to see lots of terra-forming and more natural area removal because the easy access areas are given to dumping operations.

- Restoration of the park should include how it was when Dakota people lived, hunter and farmed in the area. From my work as our southern Iowa family farm manager I found this is the best and easiest restoration to do. It brings back the pollinators who depend on the native flowers and do the work to keep new plants growing. From many walks and counting birds for eBird and bumblebees for Bumblebee Watch at Pig's Eye I see that there are some native grasses and many native trees remaining, but the big patches of brome, Canada thistle, hemp, burdock, reed canary, and crown vetch should be replaced in a gradual way, with native plants and a burn cycle.
  - On one walk (08/25/21) I saw LOTS of Monarch butterflies flying south, during the week when I read the daylight time vs night time told them to do that. It could be they hatched from a big patch of Milkweed I saw at Pig's Eye east of the big sludge pile, or it could be they are channeled by the bluffs to fly over Pig's Eye Regional Park on their way south (some were flying high). I support better wildlife studies of the parks as in the plan.
  - On all these walks there were no odors from the waste treatment plant that I noticed but there is lots of noise from trains. Train brakes used to set adjacent prairies on fire (there are still lots of native plants along RR right of ways for that reason) but this problem was fixed. Maybe there is a way to fix the problem of breaks squealing and cars bumping each other. Noise pollution at the park from trains could be mentioned in the plan.
  - On two walks training was being done where helicopters hovered over Pig's Eye park at the Battle Creek bridge and people dropped in. They put down a dummy then were dropped in again to pick it up. We didn't walk in the area when this was happening. This present use of the park should be included in the plan.
3. **The park plan and all leases should include details of what will be done in both Battle Creek Park and Pig's Eye Park that matches the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services restoration recommendations for improving habitat for the endangered Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee.** Both parks are in rusty-patched red zones of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/insects/rpbb/> I HAVE SEEN 93 RUSTY-PATCHED BUMBLEBEES MOSTLY ON THE EAST SIDE OF SAINT PAUL, INCLUDING AT NEARBY MOUNDS PARK AND SWEDE HOLLOW, SINCE 2016. They have been verified at [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org) and at [www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org) (for the last three Backyard Bumblebee Count Week events they host). From my own data and from what I read these bumblebees really like land with prairies and woodlands, and I would say wetlands, if they have a rich variety of flowers blooming from early spring in the woods to late fall in prairies. These parks can be part of a wildlife corridor connecting Red Zones for rusty-patched bumblebees with Red Zones to the north and the south.
4. **The park plan should include an emphasis on buckthorn removal with a timeline for eradication like North Saint Paul did a few years ago.** And tie it in with buckthorn hosting soybean aphids for the winter, who fly south to farm soybean fields where farmers have to spray millions of acres to kill them per their crop insurance requirements. Scroll down at this web site to watch two videos the Soybean Council and University of Minnesota put together about this interaction. <https://extension.umn.edu/identify-invasive-species/common-buckthorn> Yesterday I congratulated three Conservation Corps young people trying to remove it at Round Lake near Lake Phalen. They were discouraged because there is so much. I don't see anyone removing it on the east side of Saint Paul. We need to do more to remove this plant. It shades

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

the forest floor so flowers and new oaks don't grow. It creates unsafe urban woods since you can't see through it – a requirement to prevent crime.

5. **The Pig's Eye Lake island building shouldn't be done. It's a very expensive solution without a problem and lots of possible unintended consequences – people can fish in the lake as it is with the boat launch fixed up.** It looks like a way to dredge elsewhere and dump something else of bad quality in this public park, to add to the logs, pallets and sludge.
6. **Please refer to the separate document 7-Pig's Eye Segment in the master plan, or add the picture in that document. It shows a proposed parking, picnic and fishing ramp that I don't see mentioned in the master plan. I don't think a road and parking and picnic area should be put there.** From what I saw on our walks LOTS of trees and hills would have to be bulldozed for the road and a build-up of wet areas that should be part of the 80% natural areas. A picnic area isn't needed – simple parking, port-a-potty and interpretation can be put at existing entrances on solid ground if pallet piles and sludge pile are removed. Lots of people use Belwin's Stagecoach Prairie paths with this kind of simple amenity, plus mowing of the paths. This could be done at low cost while figuring out any long term dumping removal.
7. **The plan should include that the north end of Pig's Eye Regional Park connects for wildlife to the south end that is part of the plan, in addition to already mentioning they are both polluted former dumps.** Lots of wildlife go back and forth between Little Pig's Eye Lake and Pig's Eye Lake and there are land corridors. My husband and I often walk at the Archery Park – I see a huge variety of bumblebees, and lots of waterfowl on the Little Pig's Eye, and migrating birds in the woods. The two parks, from a natural area perspective, are really one, so that should be mentioned in the plan.
8. Are there other nearby endangered species? If so they should be mentioned in the plan even if they haven't been seen in the area – cricket frogs, bats in caves and mussels in the river (are they for sure safe from dredging) – and why they do or don't affect park plans.
9. **Please fix the paragraph in Regional Points of Interest 4. Saint Paul – Pigs Eye. It implies parking at the archery range is difficult.** Its easy to park there. It's only difficult at the south end.

Sincerely,

Kathy Sidles

-----  
**KS: I SUPPORT THIS FEEDBACK FROM SAINT PAUL AUDUBON, WHICH I AM A LONG TIME MEMBER OF (CONSERVATION COMMITTEE, EAST SIDE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT) -**

October 16, 2021

Benjamin Karp  
[Benjamin.karp@ramseycounty.us](mailto:Benjamin.karp@ramseycounty.us)  
Ramsey County Parks Department  
2015 Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Re: Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan

Dear Mr. Karp,

Saint Paul Audubon Society welcomes this opportunity to share our ideas about the Battle Creek Regional Park Plan. Thank you for this opportunity.



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Our recommendations are:

- 1) Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park plan should be moved from Low Priority to High Priority. There is an urgent need for directional signage, public access, parking spaces, restroom facilities, basic maintenance of natural surface trails, resting benches, and viewing platforms.
- 2) Preservation and restoration of important habitats and ecosystems must be a high priority in Pig's Eye Regional Park and for the 77 acres known as Bobolink Fields. These fields should be transferred from County Corrections to Ramsey County Parks jurisdiction and incorporated into Battle Creek Regional Park. Bobolink Fields must be managed as important habitat for rare grassland birds and pollinators. Also, the wetlands, meadows, floodplain forest, and upland woodlots in Pig's Eye Regional Park must be preserved. Polluted areas must be cleaned up. Inappropriate industrial users now polluting on public parkland must be relocated out of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. Polluted soil should be cleaned up and native vegetation re-established and maintained. Pollution in Pig's Eye Lake should be cleaned up prior to adding experimental islands to the Lake.
- 3) Park funding and resource allocation should recognize the need for equity in the community surrounding Pig's Eye Regional Park. The neighborhoods of Battle Creek, Highwood, Dayton's Bluff have low incomes, high BIPOC populations, low numbers of white residents in comparison to the Metro Region, Ramsey County, and neighborhoods in SW St Paul. Parks Funding must be prioritized to areas of highest need.
- 4) The Battle Creek Regional Park Plan needs to re-establish and enforce No-Net Loss of Parkland as a core belief. Industrial users on public parkland should be relocated to more appropriately zoned lands. Parkland must be reclaimed and restored to native vegetation and landscape cover for birds, wildlife, and pollinators.
- 5) The Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park element of the Battle Creek Regional Park should be designated and managed as a Regional Park Reserve. This designation would emphasize preserving and improving native ecological landscapes to support birds, wildlife, and pollinators.

In conclusion, Saint Paul Audubon Society stands ready to help you build a better Regional Park which is open and responsive to all in the community and open and welcoming to all. Our Audubon chapter, founded in 1945, remains committed to conserve, educate, and advocate for birds, wildlife, and our Earth.

Sincerely,  
Donn Waage, President  
Saint Paul Audubon Society

-----  
**KS: I SUPPORT THIS FEEDBACK FROM TOM DIMOND WHO ALONG WITH KIKI SONNEN I TAKE WALKS IN THE PARK WITH, AS I RECEIVED IT IN EMAIL**

**Tom Dimond**  
2119 Skyway Drive  
Saint Paul, MN 55119

### **Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park – Plan Recommendations**

**1 – List as High Priority the implementation of Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plans and providing public access**

**2 – Protect and enhance this preeminent resource with a World Class Restoration of the waters, lands, habitat, and natural resource experience within this Urban National Park, State Critical Area, and State Scientific and Natural Area – “northernmost floodplain marsh of its type along the Mississippi River Valley”**

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

### 3 - Support Equitable Park Funding for BIPOC Majority and Less Affluent Residents

**4 – Support No Net Loss of Parkland.** The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park plan for Pig’s Eye Lake. Since then, we have lost hundreds of acres to uses other than park. Saint Paul’s planned replacement parkland includes the publicly owned wetland and flood plain forest outside the MWCC levee. MWCC has supported inclusion of this natural area as public open space after the waste treatment plant reconstruction was completed. That work has long been completed. Inclusion of this natural area within the public open space system is long overdue.

### 5 - Designate Pig’s Eye Lake Regional Park as a Regional Park Reserve

#### 1 – List as high priority the implementation of Pig’s Eye Lake Regional Park Plans and providing public access

Planning for this park goes back more than 100 years. The Regional Park Plans go back to the 1970’s. With a century of planning, implementation is way overdue.

The August 1979 update of the Saint Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan calls for development of the Pig’s Eye Lake Parkway as a spur of the Great River Road, a pedestrian/bike path that connects the Fish Hatchery Park Area to the Pig’s Eye Lake Area Entrance that provides access to the lake, and a Pig’s Eye Lake Regional Park Interpretative Center. Saint Paul ranks Pig’s Eye Lake Regional Park as a high priority for acquisition, planning, construction, site improvements, and operations. The Regional Park improvements and the Interpretative Center planning, construction and start of operations are scheduled for 1979 to 1985. Our SE neighborhoods deserve investment in our parks comparable to other parts of our City, County and Region. The promises of park funding and implementation are 40 years overdue.

There is urgent need for park entrance signage off Warner Road, Pig’s Eye Lake Parkway, and Red Rock Road. Also needed are identified parking areas, natural surface hiking/walking trails, wildlife viewing, fishing and bird viewing piers, and canoe/ kayak access to the lake. These are long overdue first steps to provide public access to nature. Park boundaries must be surveyed and signed. Paddle sharing should be available.

The 1970’s St. Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan ranks the priority of Pig’s Eye Lake Park as IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: At this time the Pig’s Eye area is in the most immediate need of attention, due to the inherent fragility of the area and the increasing demands for project activities in the area. Presently, it is the segment of the river corridor that is being subject to the most critical scrutiny. Efforts to implement recommended proposals in this segment should be undertaken at once to insure against irreparable environmental damage..... (Note: We are still waiting for the most basic of park facilities to serve park users)

The St. Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan states: Activities in the Pig’s Eye floodplain will take advantage of the unique natural resources and opportunities existing in the area. The emphasis will be on providing residents and visitors the facilities to experience a variety of recreational and educational opportunities at the same time maintain the overall ambience and environmental quality of the floodplain. Pig’s Eye to serve as the focal point of the entire downstream open space system...its preservation paramount. Development of this open space will be interpretive and passive in character.

As the focal point of the of the entire downstream open space system it is a high priority.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

### 2 – Protect and enhance this preeminent resource with a World Class Restoration of the waters, lands, habitat, and natural resource experience within this Urban National Park, State Critical Area, and State Scientific and Natural Area – “northernmost floodplain marsh of its type along the Mississippi River Valley”

Tell the amazing geological/natural history of the largest lake in Saint Paul. Pig’s Eye is a glacial lake. It precedes the existence of the Mississippi River in Saint Paul and the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Historical lake depth is 200 feet. Saint Paul and Ramsey County have submitted letters of support for the removal of 6 to 8 feet of unconsolidated pollutant/muck from the lake bottom. An essential first step in restoring depth, aquatic habitat, reducing pollutant and enhancing lake health. The Great River Passage calls for removal of pollutant and sediment from the lake bottom.

Pending Federal Infrastructure Legislation provides funding for cleanup of superfund sites. The lakes and wetlands have been negatively impacted by discharge of pollutant/waste. “Extinction is a consequence of human caused environmental change.” (USFWS) The goal should be World Class environmental restoration of this nature preserve within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The Rookery has seen significant population decline. Healthy habitat is essential to healthy wildlife.

### 3 - Support Equitable Park Funding for BIPOC Majority and Less Affluent Residents

The Park is designated of Regional, State, and Federal Significance. The Park serves the broad public and local residents. Local residents have the most direct benefits. Funding for BIPOC and less affluent neighborhoods should not be ranked as low priority. Planning for this parkland is in its second century. Park and natural resource restoration most directly benefits BIPOC and less affluent neighborhoods.

Starting in the 1960’s and 1970’s many environmental protections were put in place including the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Wetland Preservation, State Critical Area, Regional Parks, PCA, EQB, Met Council, and Designation of the National Park. Some parks in Saint Paul receive significant funding while the largest lake and park in Saint Paul has been starved for resources. The standard response is there are higher priorities and we will get to you later. Compare the funding provided to majority white and affluent neighborhoods.

The City of Saint Paul website lists population information from Minnesota Compass 2015-2019

	Metro	Ramsey County	Highland Park	Mac Groveland	Dayton’s Bluff	Battle Creek/Highwood
White	72.7%	61.9%	74.6%	88.6%	38.6%	32.1%
BIPOC	23.9%	33.7%	23.2%	9.3%	56.3%	60.4%
\$35,000 -	19.9%	26.1%	22.8%	17.5%	32.3%	38.8%
\$100,000 +	39.4%	30.4%	36.4%	46.1%	17.4%	17.5%

The census areas listed are the Metropolitan Area – Ramsey County – Highland Park and Macalester Groveland as SW St Paul – Dayton’s Bluff and Battle Creek/Highwood as SE St Paul. The categories are the percentage of White People, People of Color, Households earning less than \$35,000 annually, and Households earning over \$100,000 annually. Pig’s Eye Lake Regional Park is located in SE Saint Paul. The facts demonstrate the Pig’s Eye Lake Area is more diverse, and less well-off financially. Based on the environmental significance of this area and need for park equity this park is a funding priority.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**4 - No net loss of parkland.** The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park plan for Pig's Eye Lake. Since then, we have lost hundreds of acres to uses other than park. Saint Paul's planned parkland replacement includes the publicly owned wetland and flood plain forest outside the MWCC levee. MWCC has supported the inclusion of this natural area as public open space after the waste treatment plant reconstruction was completed. That work has long been completed. Inclusion of these natural areas within the public open space system is long overdue.

The Regional Park Plan was amended to allow railroad expansion. The rail expansion was based on the premise the MWCC would transfer land outside the levee to the open space system. The State Critical Area Legislation requires a balance of park and other uses at Pig's Eye. The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park. At the request of Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Council approved removal of 235 acres from the park boundaries for rail yard expansion. Saint Paul's River Corridor Plan calls for inclusion in the park of the MWCC property outside the levee. This would partially restore lost parkland. "The Metropolitan Waste Control Commission will continue their secondary treatment physical expansion program within levee wall.... East of the east levee wall the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission owns property. This will become part of the Pig's Eye Open space system, and will include sealing of the ash settling ponds." (Saint Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan)

1975 - The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plan

1979 – Saint Paul acquisition of 1,100 acres of the park

1979 - Saint Paul supports removing 235 acres from the park based on the transfer of MWCC property called for in the adopted River Corridor Plan that states East of the east levee wall the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission property will become part of the Pig's Eye open space system, and will include sealing of ash settling ponds.

At its December 17, 1979 meeting, the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission supported removal of 235 acres from the park for railroad expansion and supported adding the property owned by the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission outside the levee

January 18, 1980 – Met Council letter to pursue the option of an agreement with the City and County for interim recreational use and landscaping of land not needed for treatment facility

February 7, 1980 – EQB Review of Saint Paul Critical Area Plan – MWCC property outside and east of the levee wall around the Metro Waste treatment Plant is also to become part of the Pig's Eye open space system....city staff indicates that the objective is to insure that landscaping of the area would be compatible with the Pig's Eye Park, and recreation uses such as trails could be developed through the area.

Inclusion of this land in the park is also shown in Map 5 of the adopted St, Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan. The property outside the levee is designated Critical Area Open Space zoning.

### **5 - Designate Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park as a Regional Park Reserve**

In 1979, Ramsey County voted in support of Regional Park Reserve designation. Park reserves, like regional parks, provide for a diversity of outdoor recreation activities.

One major feature that distinguishes the park reserve from a regional park is its size. The minimum size for a park reserve is 1,000 acres. Additionally, regional park implementing agencies are required to manage at least 80% of the park reserve as natural lands that protect the ecological functions of the native landscape. As of 2020, a total of 12 park reserves were open to the public.

A Park Reserve designation is more in line with planned management of this natural area.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Sandy Law](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park birds  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 26, 2021 10:59:06 AM

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*Dear Mr. Karp,*

*I wish to provide input — in support of comments you have already received — regarding the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Management Plan proposal. Appreciating all the work that has gone into preparing the master plan for the Battle Creek Regional Park — and your reputation as a well-respected land manager — I am concerned about protection of the 77-acre grassland parcel between the southern boundary of the park and the Ramsey County Correctional property, south of that grassland. I understand that this area provides critical habitat to eight bird species listed by the MN DNR as species of greatest conservation need, including the state-endangered Henslow's sparrow. Other birds at risk include such iconic species as the bobolink, dickcissel and eastern meadowlark, in addition to the grasshopper sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, field sparrow and savannah sparrow. Destruction of their grassland nesting habitats through land development and land conversion to crop production have contributed to dramatic population declines over the past 56 years. As someone who values a healthy balance between the needs of people to enjoy nature and the need for us to carefully protect undeveloped parcels as important habitat for native and migratory species, I join others in asking you to preserve the 77-acre grassland in the Battle Creek Regional Master Plan and opt to leave that parcel undisturbed (with no trails or other features added). Further, I support the idea offered by Mr. Henderson and other noted birders and naturalists to create a special viewing area that overlooks the grassland parcel, giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to hear, see and experience from a short distance the unique songbirds that will be protected in that area. I believe that this would show true environmental leadership, which is increasingly appreciated by the public. Thank you again for your leadership and for considering this input.*

*Sincerely,*

*Dr. Sandra L. Law DDS, MS  
White Bear Lake MN  
651-230-7476*

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Stephen Greenfield](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Constance Pepin](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Management Plan proposal.  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 2:43:44 PM

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Mr. Karp, the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis joins other local organizations and many of your constituents in asking that the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan be modified to protect the 77-acre grassland parcel at the southern end of the park.

In the well-documented overall decline of bird populations in the last 50 years, no group has been hit worse than grassland species, due primarily to loss of habitat. This tract is one of the few remaining pieces of this grassland habitat in the Twin Cities, and probably the best, with at least eight breeding species listed by the DNR as "in greatest conservation need." The area is small enough that people can observe and enjoy it without with any additional trails or other development that would reduce the amount of native grassland.

Also well-documented in recent research is the benefit to people of exposure to nature, and this is the single best opportunity for residents of Ramsey and adjoining counties to observe the grassland habitat that was a major part of the original environment of our area. Our understanding is that a significant fraction of the public comments on the Master Plan spoke to the need to protect his grassland tract.

In addition, we have heard of Michael Hurben's proposal to make this Minnesota's first site in the "Birdability" campaign, providing access for residents with impairments in vision and other abilities to have nature-based experiences. This is a fabulous opportunity for Ramsey County to take the lead in establishing a site of this kind in the state.

Please make sure this unparalleled piece of land in the county and Twin Cities is preserved in its entirety as part of the plan.

Respectfully yours,

Constance Pepin and Stephen Greenfield

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis  
Advocacy Committee Co-chairs



# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [S L](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan - Draft plan 45-day public review (extended deadline)  
**Date:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 4:24:37 PM

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Mr. Karp,

I am writing to submit feedback on Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan - Draft plan 45-day public review (extended deadline). I reviewed the 175-page plan that is posted at:

[https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Parks%20and%20Recreation/Master%20Plan%20Document%20-%20Final%20Draft%202021\\_web.pdf](https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Parks%20and%20Recreation/Master%20Plan%20Document%20-%20Final%20Draft%202021_web.pdf)

The experiences which shape my feedback include the following:

- I grew up in the Woodbury Park Hills neighborhood, and graduated from Woodbury High School.
- I have lived in the Como Park neighborhood (Ramsey County) since 2006.
- I was a licensed coach for the St. Paul Central HS Mountain Bike Team for three seasons (2016, 2017, 2018) - a team which practiced once per week on the Morc off-road bike trails at Battle Creek Regional Park. The St. Paul Central High School is located in Ramsey County.
- I have worked at Saint Paul College near Downtown St. Paul since 2017 - also located in Ramsey County.

My feedback on the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan is as follows:

1. I support the expansion of the off-road bike trails in this area. I also support the development of bike repair stations, trailhead, bike skills area, etc. I frequently use the park for off-road biking. In particular, I ride the Morc-maintained trails that are bounded by HWY 61, upper afton, lower afton and Winthrop. I generally ride these trails April to Nov each year at least one time per week for 1-2 hours each time. I drive to the park, then bike on the trails.
2. I support the development of a trailhead, snow making on ski trails, and ski equipment rental. I frequently use the park for cross-country skiing in the winter months - as snow/weather permit. I ski the established ski trails that are bounded by HWY 61, upper afton, lower afton and Winthrop. I generally ski these trails Dec to March each year - sometimes multiple times each week for 1-2 hours each outing - if the snow/trail conditions are good.
3. Safety: I suggest adding signage (like caution pedestrian crossing) or speed bumps on Battle Creek road so that pedestrians and bikers are not hit by car traffic. I find the Battle Creek Road is really dangerous for skiers and bikers. Now that it has been resurfaced, cars drive by at high rates of speed. I read that there is a proposal to close Battle Creek Road, but that the proposal is a low priority. Assuming that the road is not closed, I suggest other options are reviewed - like signage or speed bumps.
4. Equity: I would suggest adding some signage in the Battle Creek park system that is in languages other than English. In particular, I would suggest adding some signage in Hmong and perhaps in Somali. Not all of the signage would need to be in multiple languages. But I think that some of the signage should be in multiple languages.

Thanks.  
Scott L. Johnson  
St. Paul, MN

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [candresen@comcast.net](mailto:candresen@comcast.net)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan | Ramsey County  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 8:47:45 PM

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Ben,

As a resident of Ramsey County for 33 years, and as a contractor in the restoration field (for 25 years and counting) dedicated to improving native prairies (and replanted prairies), oak savannas and oak woods, and who has done both contract work for the county, pro bono work in the county parks (Mike Goodnature can vouch for me), and who received state grants (with matching personal labor and funds) about 20 years ago to do work in Battle Creek Regional Park, I would like to offer two suggestions for the Master Plan.

1. Controlled burning must be done more frequently than it has been in the past (personally involved in nearly all the burns, now retired from burning). The woodlands have only been burned, at most, twice in the last 20 years (various areas and at different intervals). Though large areas were burned in the previous burns they did not cover the entire park. Controlled burns should be done every other year after buckthorn cutting and stump treatments to have any lasting effect for 8 to 10 years. I have proven this at Tony Schmidt Park on a much smaller scale by burning pro bono and/or paid contract burns on an annual or bi-annual basis. The burns not only help control buckthorn (killing seedlings), it is cost effective over recutting every 4 to 6 years. The burning also promotes native plants and oak regeneration.
2. The Master Plan mentions the white pines located within Battle Creek Park. They are the only remnant pine or spruce species in the park (located near the parking lot off the Highway 61 and just east of Battle Creek Road 2 to 3 yards north of Lower Afton Road). All the other spruce, red pine and Scott pine were planted outside of their normal range in Minnesota and should be eliminated from the park (the Scotch are from Europe). This will need to be done slowly to avoid a public outcry, however the evergreens do not lend themselves as host plants for insects and other wildlife in this part of the state. Locally adapted plants would enhance wildlife component and increase the enjoyment of the public at large.

I think the plans is great over all and a enormous undertaking, thank you!

Sincerely,

Craig R Andresen  
President  
Natural Resources Restoration, Inc.  
2013 Walnut Ave  
New Brighton, MN 55112  
Cell 651-955-2119

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Noah Nelson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Monday, September 27, 2021 4:20:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good afternoon,

I am contacting you regarding the plan for Battle Creek, specifically the mountain bike trails within the park. I would love to see an increase in Mountain Biking at Battle Creek. I am not a resident of Ramsey county anymore, but It is a draw for mw to return to the area regularly. I find it does wonders for both my physical AND mental health. I love being involved in a sport with such an inclusive community. It's no secret that the popularity of cycling has exploded over the last few years, especially mountain biking, and as I have watched the community grow, I feel it is more important than ever to create as many opportunities for as many people as possible to ride. As the sport grows, volunteering does as well. I've personally seen a significant increase in interest in trail building and maintenance in the past year alone.

So, the sum up an admittedly rambling email, I would love to see the mountain bike trail presence at Battle Creek increase, as it can only be a benefit for the cycling community and Saint Paul as a whole.

Thank you for your time,



**Noah Nelson**  
Engineering | [Pneumat Systems](#)  
[noah@pneumat.com](mailto:noah@pneumat.com)  
[507.345.4553](tel:507.345.4553)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [MJH](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Monday, October 18, 2021 12:20:21 PM

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Dear Benjamin:

I am writing so as to provide my comments, per the 45-day public review period, for the draft master plan for Battle Creek Regional Park.

My wife and I have been in the Twin Cities for just over 22 years. We are not native Minnesotans, but rather chose to reside here because of the outstanding quality of life. We have lived and raised our family in Bloomington, but we enjoy all of the metro area. We are wildlife enthusiasts and avid birders.

Birding is challenging for me because of a severe visual disability; I am legally blind due to a genetic condition, but as I still have some central vision left, I consider myself lucky. I am also interested in helping others with disabilities to access and enjoy the outdoors. To that end, I volunteer with a 501(c)(3) non-profit group called Birdability ([birdability.org](#)), which aims to help ensure that nature is accessible for everyone. I also serve on their Board of Directors.

So my interest was piqued when Carroll Henderson, the former Minnesota DNR Nongame Wildlife Program supervisor, told me about his proposal for the 77-acre grassland that is bordered by Battle Creek Regional Park to the north and west, Century Avenue to the east, and the county correctional facility to the south. He suggested that this truly unique open space, which holds enormous ecological value by providing nesting habitat for a variety of prairie birds, could also be developed as a model of accessibility and nature-as-therapy for Maplewood and Twin Cities residents. Specifically, he envisions several accessible, veranda-type seating areas along the periphery, where the rich variety of prairie birdsong could be enjoyed by visually disabled birders, as well as many others. Enhanced with feeders and nest boxes, it would provide fantastic birding opportunities. Few urban areas even have such a resource; a protected, wild habitat normally found only well outside of city limits. But with this plan, it would be the first of its kind, a grassland specifically set aside for city residents whose mobility or access issues might prevent them from enjoying such habitat otherwise.

I have met with Carroll and other local conservation advocates to discuss their plans, have visited the site with my wife, and have presented this proposal of an accessible prairie to the leadership of Birdability (the President and the Board). It was agreed that this would be an outstanding project, and we fully support the idea and advocate for it. Birdability can offer guidance on accessibility standards specific to birding that go beyond the ADA, and would be proud to endorse and bring attention and publicity to such a forward-looking and inclusive endeavor.

Please give your careful consideration to Carroll's unique proposal, and share this communication with anyone that might have an interest. You may contact me at any time, via phone or email, as well.

Sincerely,  
Michael Hurben, PhD  
Bloomington, MN  
[hurbenm@gmail.com](mailto:hurbenm@gmail.com)  
(952)-457-3626

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Dana Boyle](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [carrollhenderson](#); [Catherine Nicholson](#); [Theresa Lydon](#); [Joanna Eckles](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Comments  
**Date:** Monday, October 25, 2021 9:16:28 AM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

I wish to provide input — in support of comments you have already received — regarding the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Management Plan proposal.

Appreciating all the work that has gone into preparing the master plan for the Battle Creek Regional Park — and your reputation as a well-respected land manager — I am concerned about protection of the 77-acre grassland parcel between the southern boundary of the park and the Ramsey County Correctional property, south of that grassland. I understand that this area provides critical habitat to eight bird species listed by the MN DNR as species of greatest conservation need, including the state-endangered Henslow's sparrow. Other birds at risk include such iconic species as the bobolink, dickcissel and eastern meadowlark, in addition to the grasshopper sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, field sparrow and savannah sparrow. Destruction of their grassland nesting habitats through land development and land conversion to crop production have contributed to dramatic population declines over the past 56 years.

As someone who values a healthy balance between the needs of people to enjoy nature and the need for us to carefully protect undeveloped parcels as important habitat for native and migratory species, I join others in asking you to preserve the 77-acre grassland in the Battle Creek Regional Master Plan and opt to leave that parcel undisturbed (with no trails or other features added). Further, I support the idea offered by Mr. Henderson and other noted birders and naturalists to create a special viewing area that overlooks the grassland parcel, giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to hear, see and experience from a short distance the unique songbirds that will be protected in that area. **Birders and other nature enthusiasts can still enjoy seeing these special animals from the existing trail system; however, the birds need their nesting habitat in order to continue living in our area.** I believe that this would show true environmental leadership, which is increasingly appreciated by the public.

Thank you again for your leadership and for considering this input.

Sincerely,

**“There is in fact no distinction between the fate of the land and the fate of the people. When one is abused, the other suffers.”**

— **Wendell Berry**

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jesse Phillips](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan comments  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 10:27:10 PM

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I am writing to offer comments on the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. My residence is in Ramsey County, being a St. Paul homeowner for nearly ten years. Even prior to moving to St. Paul, Battle Creek has personally been a prized recreational park for its mountain biking, hiking, and skiing opportunities and I am supportive of significantly expanding mountain biking opportunities in the park.

Battle Creek has long been one of my favorite places to mountain bike because of the unique terrain, particularly the elevation changes within the park. With the increased interest of friends and family in the sport over the last few years, I have ridden Battle Creek trails more frequently, but I find the park lacks opportunity to attract less experienced bikers compared to other parks outside of Ramsey County. Expanding the mountain bike opportunities at Battle Creek would attract an increased public presence on the trails and bring more diverse users to the park. I bike for exercise and peace of mind, but I also find it an excellent bonding opportunity with my wife, children, and friends as well as an opportunity to engage with other community members sharing in the activities.

When I think of examples of what Battle Creek could be for mountain biking, I think of Lebanon Hills in Dakota County as a great example of a park that includes summer mountain biking and winter fat tire biking, hiking, and cross-country skiing, all coexisting for diverse and compatible recreational opportunities. Lebanon Hills, as well as parks like Carver Lake Park in Washington County, which also offers fat tire biking in winter, offer excellent mountain bike skills areas to challenge all experience levels, including newer and younger riders looking to safely increase their abilities. I also do enjoy relatively more secure and well-lit parking in other park areas and would love to see that available at Battle Creek.

I look forward to the future at Battle Creek and I hope expanded all-season mountain biking, hiking, and skiing will be part of the plan.

Regards,  
Jesse Phillips  
Highland Park, St. Paul



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Iker Chocarro](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan comments  
**Date:** Saturday, October 30, 2021 11:55:08 PM

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[You don't often get email from ikertxok@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

External message alert: This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Benjamin,

My name is Iker Chocarro, a resident of Ramsey County since 2017. I discovered Battle Creek Regional Park in 2018, and since then it has been a special place that I have enjoyed countless times. As a mountain bike cyclist, I try to enjoy the park and its off road trails at least once a week during the open season. I am not exaggerating when I say that Battle Creek has played a key role on my mental, physical and emotional wellbeing over the last few years.

When reviewing the Draft Master Plan, I wanted to provide the following comments:

- I noticed that the majority of new funding for off road cycling is towards a new skills area. The area has already similar offerings with Carver Lake and Cottage Grove. I would think that most of that funding would be better used on active management of the existing (and future) trail system. While the current team of volunteers and MORC do a good job at maintaining the trail system (for all users, not only off-road cyclists), there are some specific corners and sections of trails that would benefit from more stabilization and management, so erosion is kept at bay.
- Compared with other trail systems in the Twin Cities metro area, Battle Creek is unique, offering a open and varied environment, and good elevation gain. The only thing that I would improve would be better signaling, and additional sections tying to the existing ones. Also, there are a couple of trail sections that are for both directions with blind spots. The new trail extension should consider the elimination of these spots and try to have a single direction trail system (to the extent possible).
- The signage for off road trails has improved significantly over the last two years, but it could still be improved further. My experience so far has been that mountain biking in the park is compatible with many other types of users, but good signaling (in addition to citizen behavior of all users) will help in identifying sections of trails where more coordination is needed (especially on some of the downhill sections where speeds are higher)
- While I understand that most of the park should not be open for winter mountain biking (due to conflict with cross country skiing), I think there are a number of sections in management areas 1 and 2 where it could be possible to access without impacting other users.
- Additional amenities such as restrooms would be a welcome addition.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and the work you are doing on the conservation and development of Battle Creek Regional Park.

Sincerely,  
Iker Chocarro

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [adam.talajkowski](mailto:adam.talajkowski@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Feedback  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 5, 2021 11:23:41 PM

You don't often get email from adam.talajkowski@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Ben,

I'd like to provide comment and feedback to the Battle Creek Master Plan currently in its final stages. The admins on the Battle Creek Mountain Bike Trail Facebook page put out a call for comment, which I'm happy to provide.

I would absolutely love for mountain bike opportunities to expand at Battle Creek Regional Park. While I am not a Ramsey County resident (I reside in Hennepin County), I visit Battle Creek about 10 times per year, to mountain bike and hike year-round. I've also taken up cross-country skiing during the pandemic and look forward to visiting the groomed trails this winter. As a person who enjoys many different outdoor activities, I'm a huge advocate of multi-use trails, as long as safety is considered during planning (ex: posting 'no hikers' on the GOAT trail). On more than one occasion I've helped hikers or bikers at Battle Creek find their way back to the various entry points, and I hope the park continues to keep expanding user accessibility and posted signage. It would also be neat to expand on the educational aspect of the park - between the restored prairies, previous and current uses/utility of parts of the park, and even the name, there is a lot of history that could be covered and displayed, educating park-goers. I am aware the more secluded parking lots around Battle Creek have a history of car break-ins, and I hope by improving park entry point visibility (lighting, expanded parking, signage) and if park activity increases, criminal activity will decrease.

Should Battle Creek be approved for expanded mountain bike trails, I would absolutely volunteer to help build and maintain them, as nearly all of the mountain bike trails in the Twin Cities are sponsored, partially paid for, and maintained by volunteers. I've recently been volunteering with the new Lone Lake Park mountain bike trail system in Minnetonka, helping build it last year and maintain it this year. We've always had great support, and as one volunteer said: "Build it, and they will come (ride & volunteer)".

Regards,

Adam Talajkowski  
Minneapolis Resident  
Avid Biker and Public Lands Supporter

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Lundgren, Mark](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Heflin, Katherine](#); [Manning, Deborah](#); [Sventek, Judy](#); [Mullin, Emmett](#); [Chlebeck, John](#); [Kelly, Colin](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan, Public Comment  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 9:21:07 AM  
**Attachments:** [MCES Comment Letter 10.29.21 \(Battle Creek Master Plan Amendment\) \(part 1\) - signed.pdf](#)

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Good Morning Benjamin,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

We had a variety of minor comments related to consistency of how Council facilities are referred to in the plan. As a brief disclaimer, the attached comments from Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) are related solely to compatibility with the regional wastewater system, and do not satisfy the review requirements for the master plan amendment.

We appreciate all the work that went into preparing this plan and the responsiveness of Ramsey County to our previous comments.

Sincerely,

Mark Lundgren



### Mark Lundgren, PE

Pronouns: he / him / his  
Principal Engineer | WW P&CD Plant Engineering  
Metropolitan Council Environmental Services  
390 North Robert Street | St. Paul, MN | 55101  
P. 651.602.1868 | C. 651.263.7827  
[metro council.org](http://metro council.org) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/marklundgren) | [twitter](https://twitter.com/marklundgren)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kelcie Young](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:24:40 PM

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I would like to submit the following comments regarding the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

I regularly mountain bike at Battle Creek, and I find it important to my mental and physical health. The park's location provides easy access to mountain biking, important to making the sport accessible to urban populations. I've seen more people of color biking there than other metro area locations, which is amazing! For that reason, mountain biking should be expanded at Battle Creek. I also support:

- Improved facilities including access to water and restrooms - the plan includes improved trailhead facilities which I'm excited about!
- Improved connectivity between trails
- More beginner-friendly trails
- Added wayfinding and emergency response signage
- Added winter fat biking access

I fully support more mountain biking trail expansion at Battle Creek. Thank you for your consideration!

Kelcie Young  
Minneapolis resident

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Comcast](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan/Ramsey County  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 12, 2021 5:27:18 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp:

I understand that Comments to the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan/Ramsey County may be submitted until October 31, 2021. Please consider my comments.

I am a Maplewood resident and my family has lived in a neighborhood adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park since 1981. We have enjoyed the Park for many years, and I still visit the Park several times a week. I understand that the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland (also called Parcel A) is not part of the Battle Creek Park Master Plan. Why is that? It would enhance the Park and protect the Park ecosystem. It makes a lot of sense to include it in the Master Plan. The Battle Creek Grassland should have been added to the Park years ago, but it is not too late to right that wrong.

I know that Ramsey County wants to sell the parcel for a housing development. However, as a housing development, the land will at best marginally improve housing availability in Ramsey County. It is more than speculative to suggest that the development of Battle Creek Grassland into a housing development, based on the most likely development scenarios, would have a detectable effect on the lack of affordable housing in Ramsey County, yet that justification has been offered by the County to residents. It is not surprising that residents view the position with cynicism and frustration.

The Park is loved and valued by residents. Many members of the public have already expressed their desire that the Battle Creek Grassland be added to Battle Creek Park to enhance and improve the Park for the public and for future generations. Continuing to pursue development of the parcel when it has a greater use is myopic. Please, listen to the residents and Park users. Include the Battle Creek Grassland in the Park Master Plan.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eloise Maki

211 Ferndale Street North

Maplewood, MN 55119

651-444-9909

[ejmaki2@gmail.com](mailto:ejmaki2@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Richard Moore](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:52:48 PM

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You don't often get email from themnmoores@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I am excited by the proposed plan in general and would offer these comments.

As a mountain biker and cross country skier, I am excited by the new trails, but would oppose mountain bike trails in the east part of the park (as it is now) as I think it would be nice to have a section of the park exclusive of mountain bikes. Otherwise, I think all the new trails in the park would be a benefit to all that use the park.

The additional hiking trails in the fish creek park would be a great addition, and as someone who lives in South Maplewood, it would be nice to have a mountain bike trail or two in fish creek.

I look forward to the new improvements and thanks for your consideration.

Richard Moore



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Vaughn](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 6:11:14 PM

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Hello,

I am a mountain biker that currently enjoys riding at Battle Creek park. I am always impressed with the improvements I've seen to the trails over the past two years. Battle Creek is my favorite place to ride in the metro.

I would love to see more skills area features built at Battle Creek. I have seen what they built at Cuyuna and Tioga and would love to see something like that closer to home. Having a more advanced skills area would be great for riders compared to what was built at Carver Lake Park.

I would also like to have safer parking options. Possibly an area with better restrooms. Having a trailhead area similar to Lebanon Hills would be amazing.

Thanks you,  
Brian Vaughn

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jared Fuller](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 8:49:53 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)

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Good Morning,

I have heard that Battle Creek is looking at various improvements. I'd like to add my perspective as an avid mountain biker and one that takes my family mountain biking.

The current trails at Battle Creek have improved dramatically over the years. The signage and addition of one-way trails is especially appreciated. My request is for there to be more green lines with "blue" level obstacle options. What I mean by this is an easy, non-technical trail where there are off-line obstacles the adventurous green rider could try. I feel that the current green lines are too easy to engage my kids or new-to-mountain-biking wife. Having off-ride-line obstacles for them to try could challenge them without scaring them so badly that the ride turns into a bad experience.

This desire for off-ride-line upgrade challenges goes for blue trails and black trails I have ridden all over the state and Battle Creek has some of the steepest increase of difficult on a blue trail. The few black trails I ride there seem appropriate but that is not where I spend a majority of my time.

Bottom line is I'm asking for more consistency at Battle Creek with en-route options for increased difficulty.

Oh, a pavilion, bathrooms and a redesigned western parking lot would be appreciated. I don't park in the western lot anymore. Last time I was there, there was car window class in about 5 different spots. That parking lot is too isolated and invisible. Thieves see it as an easy target with little chance of getting caught.

Thanks,



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Jared Fuller | he/him | Account Manager |  
[jfuller@qbp.com](mailto:jfuller@qbp.com) | 952-941-9391 x1316 | [qbp.com](http://qbp.com)



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Annette Langdon](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 21, 2021 6:50:13 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

My name is Annette Langdon and I've lived in Maplewood and Ramsey County for 34 years.

I'm writing to strongly urge the county to preserve the natural environment of the 77 acres adjacent to Battle Creek Park. I understand that this area is in jeopardy of being developed for housing. Here are my thoughts:

The decline of species of birds, bees, insects and creatures in our area is alarming and the need for sustaining as much natural habitat now is critical for our future. (*Nature's Best Hope* and *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas W Tallamy)

Preservation of natural grasslands is vital for the survival of rare and declining birds, like Henslow's Sparrow. Grasslands also provide space for Meadowlarks and I so miss hearing their cheerful song like I did when I was younger.

An open field is also beneficial for humans as it provides a sense of calm and beauty. Every time I drive by this area, I find myself breathing a little deeper and enjoying the view of openness and nature.

If an area is needed for low-income housing, what kind of message is sent by developing land right next to the Ramsey County Corrections Facility? Rather demeaning in my opinion!

If we only think of monetary need or human needs, we are being short sighted with little regard for the needs in the future.

The best use of this land would be as an Environmental Natural Area that will hopefully provide protection for the future.

We were attracted to Maplewood and Ramsey County because of the Maplewood Nature Center and the dedication to open and natural space within the county. Please add and do not diminish this valuable asset to our living experience as a community.

Profoundly grateful for your service and leadership.

Sincerely,  
Annette Langdon  
744 Bartelmy Lane N  
Maplewood, MN 55119  
651-739-2220

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Martin Sahaydak](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:23:59 AM

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Hello Ben,

I understand there is a public review for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Because of my love for the trails there I thought I'd share some thoughts for consideration.

While I am not a resident of Ramsey County, I use Battle Creek for mountain biking often. I am riding 2-3 times a month from Spring through Fall. It is one of my favorites in the metro.

Mountain biking helps my health and helps clear my head from the stresses of life. I ride often with my wife and am grateful for an activity we can share together and that we have a trail system like Battle Creek easily accessible for us (we live in South Mpls). And while I haven't done this as much as I'd like to, volunteering with the crew at BC to maintain the trails is a great opportunity for me to give back to the activity I love.

One of the things we like about mtn biking is the diverse user group it attracts. People from many different backgrounds are able to enjoy what it offers. Battle Creek is also a great destination to bring our NICA riders from South Mpls to showcase a bit of a different flavor to riding that is close to the south mpls 612 team. I also appreciate that the trails we use at BC can be used by different user groups like hikers, runners, bird watchers, etc.

A couple suggestions that would be great to see if it were possible:

- I'd love to see winter fat biking allowed. I understand that there are XC skiers through the winter, but I believe those two activities complement each other well and can coexist. I think the terrain of BC would offer the metro a bit of a change from the other metro fat bike trails.
- It would be great to connect the existing trail system into a bit more obvious of a "loop". One thing I hear from other mtn bikers I take out there is they didn't realize how to piece the different trails together for the best route. I think this could be an improvement that makes BC easier for first-time-to-BC riders know how to best ride the system.
- More beginner level trails. I love BC because it gives some advanced options that are missing in other trails. But, I think there is room for some beginner level trails so those new mtn bikers that live close to the trail aren't quite as intimidated as they may feel riding these trails.
- It would be nice to see additional restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras at the different trailheads. I have heard of other mtn bikers having their vehicles stolen from. And extra restrooms are always welcome.

Thanks for letting me comment. I look forward to seeing updates in the future.

Martin Sahaydak

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Deborah Korthof-Stanton](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 11:56:11 AM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Honorable Ramsey County Commissioners:

The threatened species of the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland must be protected. To build human based affordable housing on land already occupied by a threatened species smacks of hubris, not social justice. This controversy over the Battle Creek GRASSLANDS reminds me of other events in Ramsey County's recent history, especially the disastrous destruction of the RONDO neighborhood by people who thought they knew best for everyone, or the displacement of West Seventh residents to create the I-35 connection through downtown Saint Paul.

As a 45-year tax paying resident of Ramsey County, I implore you to leave the Battle Creek GRASSLANDS alone, leave the grassland biome in place. Follow the science which shows endangered rusty-patch bumblebee, Henslow's sparrow, and nine other threatened grassland bird species live on that patch of Grassland and/or Ponds of Battle Creek; protect those species' right to life or forfeit human quality of life.

In the Star Tribune's GRASSLANDS UPROOTED article dated October 24, 2021, Patrick Lendrum a lead scientist for the World Wildlife Fund's Northern Plains program is quoted as saying about Minnesota's loss of 2 million acres of grassland since 2012: "This is an alarming trend of continued conversion of the least protected and most at-risk biome on the planet" and "This is happening in our backyard."

HAPPENING IN OUR BACKYARD, those words should have some impact on the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. Seventy-seven acres isn't a large tract of land but protecting it by including those acres in the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan as an ENVIRONMENTAL NATURAL AREA is a huge step forward in protecting species diversity and working toward CLIMATE JUSTICE.

Ramsey County Board of Commissioners should be looking at poor housing stock in Ramsey County cities and buying, upgrading that housing in established neighborhoods, not creating a new "neighborhood" in a field with endangered species. Why didn't Ramsey County demand affordable housing along Shepard Road at Randolph Avenue where the recently completed luxurious Waterford Bay Apartments were built? It was vacant land which nearly 30 years ago in a Saint Paul city development task force document (I was as member of that task force) recommended the land be put into parkland. River access for all.

Climate change is now. Species going extinct at a rapid pace is happening now. Place the Battle Creek Grassland in a safety net called the Battle Creek Regional Park. Put a label on it so it is known as an ENVIRONMENTAL NATURAL AREA.

Deborah Korthof-Stanton  
197 Isabel Street W  
Saint Paul Minnesota 55107  
651-238-8383

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Martin Sahaydak](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:23:59 AM

You don't often get email from msahayda@qbp.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Ben,

I understand there is a public review for the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Because of my love for the trails there I thought I'd share some thoughts for consideration.

While I am not a resident of Ramsey County, I use Battle Creek for mountain biking often. I am riding 2-3 times a month from Spring through Fall. It is one of my favorites in the metro.

Mountain biking helps my health and helps clear my head from the stresses of life. I ride often with my wife and am grateful for an activity we can share together and that we have a trail system like Battle Creek easily accessible for us (we live in South Mpls). And while I haven't done this as much as I'd like to, volunteering with the crew at BC to maintain the trails is a great opportunity for me to give back to the activity I love.

One of the things we like about mtn biking is the diverse user group it attracts. People from many different backgrounds are able to enjoy what it offers. Battle Creek is also a great destination to bring our NICA riders from South Mpls to showcase a bit of a different flavor to riding that is close to the south mpls 612 team. I also appreciate that the trails we use at BC can be used by different user groups like hikers, runners, bird watchers, etc.

A couple suggestions that would be great to see if it were possible:

- I'd love to see winter fat biking allowed. I understand that there are XC skiers through the winter, but I believe those two activities complement each other well and can coexist. I think the terrain of BC would offer the metro a bit of a change from the other metro fat bike trails.
- It would be great to connect the existing trail system into a bit more obvious of a "loop". One thing I hear from other mtn bikers I take out there is they didn't realize how to piece the different trails together for the best route. I think this could be an improvement that makes BC easier for first-time-to-BC riders know how to best ride the system.
- More beginner level trails. I love BC because it gives some advanced options that are missing in other trails. But, I think there is room for some beginner level trails so those new mtn bikers that live close to the trail aren't quite as intimidated as they may feel riding these trails.
- It would be nice to see additional restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras at the different trailheads. I have heard of other mtn bikers having their vehicles stolen from. And extra restrooms are always welcome.

Thanks for letting me comment. I look forward to seeing updates in the future.

Martin Sahaydak



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Deborah Korthof-Stanton](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 12:30:00 PM

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

The 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland is much too environmentally unique to be turned into yet another apartment complex site. Please merge it with the Battle Creek Regional Park network, and pursue needed affordable housing via upgrading existing poor quality housing stock in Ramsey county.

We live on St Paul's west side, and applaud each existing property improvement in our neighborhood; it's a win for our residents, and a win for the environment. Developing the Battle Creek Grassland would be a significant loss for the environment. The Minnesota DNR reports it's the site of six rare bird species of "greatest conservation need". Additionally, the Grassland has potential to return to it's prairie heritage.

History shows that humans are not very good at conserving natural resources. In Minnesota we have already depleted our "endless quantities" of passenger pigeons, buffalo, white pine forests, whitefish stocks, and prairie, to name a few. Now, are we reduced to exploiting a 77 acre environmentally important site? If we do, our children will surely judge us for our avarice.

Please vote against developing the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland and act to upgrade existing poor quality and underutilized housing stock instead.

Lee Korthof  
197 Isabel St W  
St Paul, MN 55107

Email: leekorthof@msn.com  
Cell phone / text: 612-309-9956

Sent from my iPad

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jeff Reinhart](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 7:07:33 AM

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You don't often get email from jeff.m.reinhart@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello. I am a resident of Ramsey County. I live at 840 Thomas Ave W, St Paul, MN 55104. I use the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek Park regularly. I am very interested in seeing them expand. I think part of the hesitancy for people to use the trails is the lack of signage geared towards mountain biking. It can be difficult for people unfamiliar with the park to actually find the trails. Better signage and better trail connections could improve this. It seems there have been conflicts between other trail users and mountain bikers, though I have not really experienced this. This could also be improved by better connectivity and signage so single track riders are able to stick to their trails. I also feel that more beginner and intermediate trails would give a more diverse group of people a chance to ride. I really enjoy the close proximity that Battle Creek provides for an activity that greatly improves my physical and mental health. I believe expanding on this is in the interest of residents of Ramsey County.

Regards,

Jeff

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

October 28, 2021

Ramsey County Commissioners  
Nicole Joy Frethem  
Ramsey County Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire  
Ramsey County Commissioner Trista Matas Castillo  
Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter  
Ramsey County Commissioner Rafael E. Ortega  
Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough  
Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt  
15 Kellogg Avenue West, Suite 220 St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for investing the financial and staff resources to update the Battle Creek Regional Park (BCRP) Master Plan. This park is a tremendous asset to community identity and the well-being of thousands of residents and visitors to this portion of the County.

Updating park master plans provides an important opportunity to assess the park; receive input from neighbors, agencies, organizations, and diverse users; identify issues, needs, challenges, trends, and opportunities; and integrate this information into a compelling vision and achievable goals, with implementation priorities and strategies. Park master planning is complex and challenging under normal circumstances, but BCRP is extraordinarily difficult given its diverse geography, adjacent land uses, hydrology, and jurisdictional partners.

My wife and I moved to South Maplewood in 1991 and a key element of that decision was the existence of BCRP. Since that time, we have immensely valued and used the park on a nearly daily basis by walking, running, skiing or simply driving past these protected open spaces. I have voluntarily removed hundreds of pounds of trash and acres of invasive species primarily in the portion of the park between McKnight Road and Century Avenue. Professionally, I have been an interpretive naturalist and program manager for Dodge Nature Center, environmental planner and program manager for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Regional Coordinator for the MN DNR and Land Conservation Manager for Dakota County for the last 19 years. I previously served on the Ramsey County Parks and Open Space Commission in the mid 1990's.

I have participated in the BCRP master planning process having attended a design charrette, completed the visitor poll and periodically provided comments to County staff. I have reviewed the entire final draft plan and offer the following higher level comments:

### **Regional and Sub-Regional Context**

As part of the Metropolitan Parks System, I think it would be important to also highlight BCRP's role within that system. The cross country ski trail and trail biking systems and Water Works are well-known regional recreational destinations because of the lack of comparable facilities in the eastern portion of the metropolitan area. The park exists in a larger regional and sub-regional context with direct and indirect impacts from both transportation and hydrologic systems. Given the geographic extent of BCRP in a highly developed suburban area, the multitude of streets, roads and highways provide exceptional

access, but also create issues with safety and ecological fragmentation. A section devoted to describing this system and an associated base map could be useful for establishing the access hierarch and recommendations and reduce some of the redundancy in the plan. Mass transit routes and stops should also be part of this section.

A second additional section that I believe would be useful would include an overview of the surrounding sub-watersheds since these areas have direct impact on the quality and quantity of water flowing to and through Battle Creek, Fish Creek and what is being called "Suburban Pond." There are inherent challenges given that most of these sub-watersheds exist outside of BCRP and that the County does not have jurisdictional authority. However, I believe it is important to include this discussion within the plan to foster better coordination amongst the different jurisdictional partners and to assist the public in recognizing that what they do on their own properties can have negative impacts. An additional base map showing the sub-watersheds and peripheral stewardship lands with a strategy of conducting collaborative landowner outreach could be very beneficial to the park.

### **Archaeological, Cultural and Historical Significance**

Most master plans that I am familiar with have included an archaeological, cultural and historical study as a foundational element of the master plan, rather than having such as study as one of the recommendations for future funding. Given the proximity of the documented Native American mounds just west of BCRP and the very similar topography of BCRP and more recent Native American history for which the park derived its current name, having this information is vital in determining the siting of existing or new facilities, natural resource management, interpretation, and programs. In addition, there are remnants of old farmsteads such as foundations, barbed wire and fence posts that still exist which can provide interpretive opportunities. Inclusion of historic photographs, old plats, aerial photos, etc. can assist the reader in better understanding the park. Inclusion of additional key decisions, to the extent that they exist and are documented, can also be valuable.

I would strongly urge the County to contact both a qualified consultant and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers to begin this foundational planning work as soon as possible. I would also urge you to consider including a formal acknowledgement of the Native Americans living and using the land which forms BCRP prior to European settlement.

### **Park Boundary**

Although there was some text about the historic origins of the park, the inclusion of old plats and a sequence of aerial photos provides visually interesting and useful element to assisting the reader to appreciate and understand how the park came to be and evolved into its current configuration.

Given the existing and proposed new units which I support, I think it would be valuable to have a map that clearly shows the existing park boundary and the proposed boundary. At the same time, I believe it would be very useful to establish names and unit boundaries to assist people in understanding the many facets of this diverse park. Some suggestions and questions related to these units are as follows:

#### Fish Creek Unit

It was not clear to me whether the City of Maplewood property is proposed for inclusion or subject of a joint powers/management agreement. Typically those types of discussions take place and there is a general sense of whether there would be political support for whatever is being recommended. Although outside the County, was there any discussion with the City of Woodbury regarding the relationship of this unit with Carver Lake Park since it is at the headwaters of the creek?

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### Mississippi River Bluffs

This proposed park addition would be considerably different than the other units given the steep topography and limited recreational opportunities except for the regional trail proposed at the base along Highway 61. Given the amount of private land, the use of permanent conservation easements might be a more appealing and less costly approach to preserving and managing the bluffs.

There could be a South Sub-unit between Fish Creek and Lower Afton Road and a North Sub-unit between the battle creek access near Highway 61 and actually extend a little further north to Overlook Drive.

### Pigs Eye Lake

It was not clear to me whether discussion have taken place with and that there is some level of agreement that pigs Eye Lake should be part of BCRP or included in the existing City of St. Paul Regional Park. Please clarify.

### Suburban Pond

Although it is currently known as “Suburban Pond” which I am guessing that this name was derived from the proximity to Suburban Avenue, it is technically a shallow, open water wetland. I am wondering if this might be an opportunity to rename this new unit. Perhaps there could be a naming contest among neighbors and businesses

### Battle Creek

Currently, Battle Creek is part of three “segments.” The thought occurs to me that there might be some value in revising to create just one Unit with a “West Sub-Unit” from Highway 61 to Upper Afton Road, the “Middle Sub-unit” from Upper Afton Road to McKnight Road and the “East Sub-unit” from McKnight Road to the northeast park boundary at Mayer Lane East. This approach would highlight and differentiate different creek characteristics and surrounding valleys for both water quality and natural resource management. Extending the East Sub-unit to include stewardship land on private properties from Mayer Lane to Century Avenue would bring needed attention to the eroding stream banks and resulting sedimentation. Ideally, this stewardship approach would extend the entire length of Battle Creek to Battle Lake in Woodbury. Given that PFOS has been documented in the creek, I would caution the encouragement of fishing in the ponds east of McKnight Road unless and until there would not be any fish consumption concerns.

This naming approach would leave the two large areas of the park between Highway 61 and Winthrop Street and McKnight Road to Century Avenue where the majority of the non-trail, recreational facilities are located. Each area is located in different municipalities and has distinctly different physical characteristics with steep rolling bluffs on the west and rolling hills and wetlands on the east. Although I have given considerable thought to possible names, nothing has emerged that I can offer as suggestions.

I am also disappointed that a possible expansion of the park area between McKnight Road and Century Avenue does not include discussion involving the correctional facility property. I know and have participated in the planning discussions between the County and the City of Maplewood regarding the redevelopment of the Ponds Golf Course and the underused portions of the correctional facility. All development options that I am aware of included at least the wooded portions of the correctional facility as an addition to the park. Yet, there is no reference that some of this property could or may be added to the park.

This potential naming convention has the advantage of creating consistency for describing locations and identity. It also provides a framework for organizing the plan. Rather than describing all of the various plan components such as access, trails, amenities, natural resource management, etc. for the entire park, these components could be respectfully described for each unit which I think people will more easily understand and appreciate. The maps showing all of the features can then be reduced from trying to include all or most of the park to a larger scale version for each unit which would be more readable.

The amount and complexity of the existing or new boundaries creates management challenges in its own right. Illegal encroachment from neighbors back yards, dumping and the spread of invasive species are just some of the issues that have to be addressed. At the same time there is a tremendous opportunity to have thee neighbors provide “eyes” and “ears” on unauthorized park activities and take personal ownership, value the park and contribute in other ways. Neighborhood citizens and students from the three adjacent schools could be organized to help with managing invasive species both on their properties and within the park. I’m not sure if and how those enforcement or voluntary activities are currently handled by County staff but having additional dedicated staff to be responsive and proactive to these diverse and extensive number of adjacent landowners could reduce issues and costs and leverage significant goodwill and in-kind contributions.

### **Acquisition**

This plan references private property in-holdings within the and park boundary considers significant expansion of the park boundaries which includes both public and private land, as well as future trail/greenway corridors which would link BCRP to other regional and state parks and trails. This is one of the most challenging and expensive implementation components for any park system. I am not certain if there are dedicated staff with that existing responsibility, but I know from personal experience of facilitating the protection of more than 13,000 acres in the metro region is that it requires talented staff who can build landowner relationships, work with different jurisdictional and organizational partners to leverage funds and cooperation and to understand and successfully implement the actual real estate process. If this is going to be a priority for the plan, there has to be a long-term commitment to provide staff capacity to fulfill this goal.

Using the Unit framework described above, the acquisition table could be separated and included in the individual Unit descriptions than for the entire park. I would also suggest that the categories of consideration consist of:

- 1) Natural Resources
  - Existing ecological quality
  - Restoration potential
  - Connectivity
- 2) Recreation
  - New trails or connections
  - Location for future facilities
  - Viewsheds (within and outside the park or trail)
- 3) Size (in acres)
- 4) Assessed Value (noting that assessed value is often significantly less than market value)



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### Natural Resource Management

The regional park system was created to protect and improve the region's best and representative natural resources and landscapes while providing compatible outdoor recreation. BCRP provides an exemplary example of meeting those goals. The park contains some of the highest quality natural communities in the region due to many portions not being suitable for farming or residential development and protection of portions in the early part of the last century. Yet, the absence of natural processes such as fire and grazing, fragmentation, and the continued influx of invasive species has resulted in the significant degradation of the park's natural systems. This is going to require significant short-term restoration and long-term maintenance if the natural resources that are the foundation of the park and the visitor experience are going to be maintained and improved.

I do appreciate the recent efforts to convert turf areas into native grasses and flowers and the initial stages of woodland restoration taking place on either side of Upper Afton Road east of McKnight Road. It has resulted in a dramatic and I would suggest very positive improvement for the park.

The Plan contains a significant amount of important though generalized natural resource information and objectives organized by management units. However, the Plan acknowledges that basic natural resource inventories have not been completed and therefore cannot inform and guide plan implementation. Preferably, a comprehensive Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) would have been completed prior to or in the early stages of this master plan for integration with proposed capital improvements, visitor services and operations. While much of the basic information has been completed, I believe the scale of the described management units is too large since there is significant diversity of plant communities and associated conditions, challenges and opportunities that is necessary for

Most significantly, the Plan indicates that much of the cost to make natural resource improvement will rely on parks staff. There are currently inadequate staff resources to strategically restore and take advantage of available non-County funds for BCRP, let alone the entire park system even under a contractor-based approach. This is a critically important issue that needs to be addressed. I also found it interesting that the itemized estimated restoration costs for each management unit was not included in the final summary of total park costs.

Aside from the significant natural resource restoration, there is one other related issue that I have observed with growing frustration over several years. When I was with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, we initiated and implemented the first reduced mowing policy and effort among the regional park implementing agencies. There were well documented benefits of reducing the mowing including:

- Reduced operational costs (equipment, supplies, labor, chemicals, etc.)
- Reduced pollution
- Improved water quality
- Improved habitat for small animals, including pollinators
- A more interesting and seasonal aesthetic

This became quite controversial for a variety of reason, but over time, the majority of people accepted the change. It was shortly afterwards that I and colleagues on the County Park and Recreation Advisory Commission began advocating for a similar policy for Ramsey County Parks in the mid-1990's. Then Director Greg Mack and his staff developed and implemented a similar policy which began to achieve

some of the aforementioned benefits. However, over time it appears that the policy and practices no longer exist according to some park department staff and the amount of unnecessary mowing continues to increase. This has resulted in additional public expense, soil compaction, erosion, damage to trees, and loss of pollinator habitat without providing for the legitimate reasons for mowing such as safety, visibility, and passive recreational opportunities. We have taken hundreds of pictures over the past several years to document the inconsistent and needless mowing that is occurring.

I'm not sure if this issue has come to your attention within BCRP or other parks, but I would strongly request that a mowing policy with principles and practices be reinstated and implemented across the County park and open space system.

### Climate Change

I believe I only found one reference to climate in the plan and I think this needs to be one of the most important considerations that the Plan needs to consider. There are four primary park impacts that are the result of our changing climate:

- The frequency of intense rain events was not contemplated in previous engineering standards used for designing and building improvements. Review of those standards and pre-planning to increase resiliency should be considered. A systematic assessment of soft surface trails should be undertaken to ensure that they are sustainable.
- There has already been a significant investment of funds for the cross-country skiing trails and center. Shorter winter season with increasing overnight low temperatures could impact planned future investments for winter activities, as well as extend the "shoulder seasons for spring and fall recreation.
- Ecologists predict that the metro landscape will become more savanna-like and similar to some of the pre-settlement vegetation found in the park when it was first established. The combination of invasive species, disease and climate will be important considerations in restoring and managing existing plant communities.

### Visitor Services

Aside from the importance of providing kiosks at the identified access sites, comprehensive wayfinding, the suggestion of the "Learning Trails" in association with Carver Elementary, Battle Creek Elementary and Middle Schools, and the possible development of a nature center as a standalone facility or in association with the existing Recreation Center, there does not appear to be robust recommendations for new or enhanced interpretive opportunities or park programs. No interpretive theme or framework was identified which I think is a shortcoming of the Plan.

With the emphasis on diversity and inclusion, and the demographics of both surrounding communities and current park users, including a diversity analysis and marketing strategy would be an important addition to the Plan.

Although the Maplewood Nature Center has re-opened and the new Wakan Tipi in facility below Mounds Park is under development, there is a void of interpretive programs in this part of the metro region. That said, I think it would be more effective to partner with the two school districts, DNR, cities of St. Paul, Maplewood and even Woodbury to create collaborative

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

informal and formal programs than invest significant funds constructing and operating a separate facility.

### Plan Document

This Master Plan document follows a traditional structure and format for park masterplans. I would consider revising the format to make it more user friendly for the diverse readers who would be generally interested or use it for their own planning and programming needs. Providing an Executive Summary at the beginning of the document that would include an overview, existing conditions, high-level research findings, vision, goals, five to ten-year priorities, and estimated costs would greatly enhance the Plan. If the reader was interested in more background, context or details, they could review other portion of the Plan. Significant sections of the Plan, such as the outreach process (which was exceptionally well done despite challenges associated with Covid) and natural resource management objectives could be included as Appendices for further background and context.

I recognize that a positive response to some of these comments could result in delays in final approval. However, I believe the BCRP Master Plan of such importance, that it is worth strong consideration - especially since it has been more than thirty years since the last plan was completed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments and I would be happy to discuss further if you would find that to be of value.

Respectfully,



Alan Singer  
49 O'Day Street North  
Maplewood, MN 55119  
[asinger582@gmail.com](mailto:asinger582@gmail.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jonathan Wawrzaszek](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Mountain Bike Trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:04:49 PM

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Mr. Karp,

I understand that the Battle Creek Master Plan is in the final stages leading to approval. This email is in lieu of my being unavailable to physically attend meetings to share my opinions on this matter.

Battle Creek (BC) is commonly viewed as having the best mountain bike (MTB) trails in the Twin Cities (TC) area. The topography of the park holds a ton of opportunities to expand to make BC the premiere MTB trail system in the region. Expansion of new trails and new trail types - such as rock gardens, pump track, dirt jumps, skills park, etc - are all trails that can be added to meet various levels of skill level and difficulty; given that BC has such a diverse topographic landscape. Many of the current trails are some of the most popular in the TC and I have seen the popularity increase rapidly over the last handful of years as trail crews have worked hard to connect some of the isolated trail sections and link together more than they were previously. I believe adding new trails and continuing to completely connect the trail system will not only offer the best experience for MTB riders but other trail users as well. The benefits of continuous connection can be seen at the MTB trail system at Lebanon Hills Regional Park where various trail types coexist without disrupting each other - this is due to the fact that MTB riders do not have to use hiking trails or other non-MTB trails as connecting routes to get to various isolated trail sections. With more connected MTB trails, hikers that wish to avoid sharing trails with MTB riders are given the choice to avoid the MTB trails entirely. Another area that BC can expand to make the trail system better capable of growth is to improve some of the amenities such as more trail maps, more parking, bathrooms, trash cans, etc. These improved amenities would make the park more easily accessible and understandable to first-time visitors. The current setup often required a bit of a guided experience by a rider who already knows the trail system.

I have been enjoying Battle Creek's Mountain Bike Trails since about 2009. I have used the trails for my own personal enjoyment to get active out in nature. Much like other outdoor recreational activities, MTB offers stability and improvements for my mental and physical health.

BC is by far my most commonly visited trail often going twenty or more times a summer. I have used the trails to expand the sport to many new riders. I got a crew of friends in high school to try mountain biking after taking them to Battle Creek. I have brought college friends and cousins mountain biking for the first time at Battle Creek. There are 11 new MTB

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riders in the TC because of their experiences at BC.

BC MTB trails offer immense benefits to the community. Friendships are formed, made stronger through trail riding and trail making/maintaining. The local restaurants and bars see traffic that they would otherwise not see - a lot of people ride to burn calories to allow themselves to justify eating pizza and drinking beer that day. After almost every ride, I stop by my favorite pizza place near BC for lunch or dinner on my way home.

MTB offers a mentally and physically beneficial activity to people no matter their demographic. Having been heavily involved in the sport for over 15 years, I have seen the popularity grow substantially. With this increased popularity, I have seen a more diverse group of riders on the trails than when I started riding. The full benefits of this positive unification of the community are hard to adequately calculate. The growth of the MTB trail system at BC would provide the ability of the TC community to foster more growth of a diversely connected community through MTB.

I appreciate your time in reading my opinion and your contribution to our local parks.

Thank you,  
Jonathan Wawrzaszek

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Matt Eichenlaub](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 3:04:10 PM

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Thanks for taking the time to consider changes and improvements to Battle Creek Park! I live in Roseville (1883 Ryan Ave W) and I use Battle Creek. It is one of the best, closest parks, in my opinion.

As always, I'd love to see the things I do increased. For 9 months out of the year, I love cycling. I love how I feel when I'm doing it. I love how I feel when I'm done. I love how recharged I am. I can get through a lot when a good ride is a few days away or a few days ago. I enjoy both road and mountain (or trail) riding.

Mainly, I'm writing about mountain biking/trail riding/single track riding. It goes by many names! I've used the Battle Creek trails several times. I like them, they're challenging, but I think they can be better. I'd like to see better signage for a looped course. I feel like Battle Creek has a lot of "out and back" trails. I'm a big fan of Battle Creek's cross country ski trails: the skier can always decide to turn off and go back. Signs are frequently posted and very clear. Many of the mountain bike trails have similar features. Loops are safer, too, because everyone is going the same direction. I'd like to see some better signage for cycling. It might be there but I might not have looked in the right spots.

Better signage and better trail design would be good, too. Runners, walkers, and snow shoe folks all use these trails, too. A well designed mountain bike trail will be set up so water drains favorably avoiding erosion, washouts, and slippery puddles. So better trail design is a benefit to a lot of other folks, not just cyclists.

Good trails are helpful for the winter, too. The fat bike craze seems to be going nowhere. Those fat bikes look fun, I'm more of an XC Ski guy for 3 months of the year and I know fat bikes can rip the corduroy and the classic tracks. So having better quality, better designed mountain bike trails encourages more winter use and keeping them in their own lanes. So that's good.

Beginner trails are great. I'm a moderately skilled but overly cautious rider. There are some gnarly spots right now! More beginner trails would help a guy like me warm up. It would also help bring by two boys along. So some beginner loops and skills areas would be great.

Anyway, that's for considering cycling improvements. I love the park, I love it for skiing (even though that last big downhill freaks me out!) and I look forward to this great park (and it's really cool views of the river valley) becoming even better!

Matt Eichenlaub



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Karla Myers](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek Regional Park--a sanctuary for birds  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 26, 2021 5:56:15 AM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

I wish to provide input — in support of comments you have already received — regarding the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Management Plan proposal.

Appreciating all the work that has gone into preparing the master plan for the Battle Creek Regional Park — and your reputation as a well-respected land manager — I am concerned about protection of the 77-acre grassland parcel between the southern boundary of the park and the Ramsey County Correctional property, south of that grassland. I understand that this area provides critical habitat to eight bird species listed by the MN DNR as species of greatest conservation need, including the state-endangered Henslow's sparrow. Other birds at risk include such iconic species as the bobolink, dickcissel and eastern meadowlark, in addition to the grasshopper sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, field sparrow and savannah sparrow. Destruction of their grassland nesting habitats through land development and land conversion to crop production have contributed to dramatic population declines over the past 56 years.

As someone who values a healthy balance between the needs of people to enjoy nature and the need for us to carefully protect undeveloped parcels as important habitat for native and migratory species, I join others in asking you to preserve the 77-acre grassland in the Battle Creek Regional Master Plan and opt to leave that parcel undisturbed (with no trails or other features added). Further, I support the idea offered by Mr. Henderson and other noted birders and naturalists to create a special viewing area that overlooks the grassland parcel, giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to hear, see and experience from a short distance the unique songbirds that will be protected in that area. I believe that this would show true environmental leadership, which is increasingly appreciated by the public.

Thank you again for your leadership and for considering this input.

Sincerely,  
Karla Myers

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kyler Liljenberg](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek trail update  
**Date:** Saturday, September 25, 2021 2:55:39 PM

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I would like to express my interest in expanding the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. I live in north St. Paul and ride there all the time, and have friends that drive from Wisconsin and across the metro come ride there as well. I am also involved with volunteer work at Sunfish In lake Elmo and would also like to help out at Battle Creek to expand with more quality trails

Thank you!

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**From:** [Marla Ordway](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 26, 2021 11:21:48 PM

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*Dear Mr. Karp,*

*I wish to provide input — in support of comments you have already received — regarding the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Management Plan proposal.*

*Appreciating all the work that has gone into preparing the master plan for the Battle Creek Regional Park — and your reputation as a well-respected land manager — I am concerned about protection of the 77-acre grassland parcel between the southern boundary of the park and the Ramsey County Correctional property, south of that grassland. I understand that this area provides critical habitat to eight bird species listed by the MN DNR as species of greatest conservation need, including the state-endangered Henslow's sparrow. Other birds at risk include such iconic species as the bobolink, dickcissel and eastern meadowlark, in addition to the grasshopper sparrow, clay-colored sparrow, field sparrow and savannah sparrow. Destruction of their grassland nesting habitats through land development and land conversion to crop production have contributed to dramatic population declines over the past 56 years.*

*As someone who values a healthy balance between the needs of people to enjoy nature and the need for us to carefully protect undeveloped parcels as important habitat for native and migratory species, I join others in asking you to preserve the 77-acre grassland in the Battle Creek Regional Master Plan and opt to leave that parcel undisturbed (with no trails or other features added). Further, I support the idea offered by Mr. Henderson and other noted birders and naturalists to create a special viewing area that overlooks the grassland parcel,*

*giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to hear, see and experience from a short distance the unique songbirds that will be protected in that area. I believe that this would show true environmental leadership, which is increasingly appreciated by the public.*

*Thank you again for your leadership and for considering this input.*

*Sincerely,*

Marla Ordway  
Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tom](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:02:37 PM

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Benjamin. I am a ramsey county resident. At age 70. !! I am still very active. Battle Creek is my favorite place to ski. All the years I raced I trained at BC if it had snow. Now I hear snow making is going to finally happen. My buddy Ahvo must be elated ! Been his customer since he started Finn Sisu over 40 years ago. But I write you about mtn biking. I still ski but my racing year round is biking. I am retired and this year I have done 13 mtn bike races!! Sadly none at BC. Nor have I trained at BC. That is because I have dozens of favorite trails I ride other than BC. BC needs to be like those fav trails I ride and I believe it can be. Please let that developement happen at Battle Creek. Please have at least 10 miles of flow trails to ride year round (fat biking for winter). Thanks. Tom Bengel  
Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Amy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Monday, October 4, 2021 3:25:29 PM

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Hi Ben,

Thanks for facilitating feedback for the Battle Creek project. I was very interested in seeing the “gaps” portion of the plan and the cooperation with the Great River project. How does the overall park change (or not) with wild spaces?

Thanks,  
Amy Jacky  
214 Kennard Street

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ethan Armbruster](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 10:26:49 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to let you know I would love to see more mountain biking trails at Battle Creek. I use Battle Creek as long as I can after and before the snow falls. I started using BC after significant updates were made to the trails and signage. Below is a list of reasons to have more trails at Battle Creek.

1. The Twin Cities needs to stay up to date with the rest of the trail systems in the state in order to bring in a diverse mountain bike group and more trails in BC would help us do that..
2. BC is usually the first trail to open in the metro area so it gets a lot of attention around that time and more trails would help reduce traffic.
3. Battle Creek could also use a more dedicated single track system for beginner riders that isn't just the ski trail.
4. Mountain bike trails are multi-use so many groups can volunteer to maintain the trail system. More signage indicating what trail users yield to who.
5. I would love to see a skills development area that riders could use at the trailhead to practice or while waiting for others.
6. Increased amenities at the various trailheads would attract more trail users
  1. this could include but not limited to; changing station, pavilion with tables, water, trail map because Battle Creek is already confusing to people
7. I think fat biking should be an option that would not bother the ski trails; they do that at Theodore Wirth just fine which is the reason I don't go to BC in the winter.
8. Increased park usage would reduce time and space for criminal activity.
9. I was a part of many group rides here that have consisted of friends, teammates and student athletes. I can only imagine more people and different groups will ride here with the additional trails that are added.

Thanks,  
Ethan

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Clint Hanson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:03:59 AM

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Ben,

Good morning thank you for taking a minute to read my email. I'm writing to you in regards to the Battle Creek mountain bike area. I work in Ramsey county and travel over the metro for work appointments. I love using all the parks as it provides an awesome mental and physical release for me.

Battle Creek is a wonderful facility that allows use from everybody. I would love to see it expanded more beyond just a spur trail. I think with a proper amenities at the trailhead and the expansion of the trails this really could be a destination for more people in the metro area.

As I travel around the Metro a lot, I love seeing the diversity at these mountain biking trails. And I think once Battle Creek expands it'll even be more so there.

Thanks for what you do,  
Clint Hanson

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jeremy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 8:49:30 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to express how much I want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek. I am not a Ramsey County resident but use Battle Creek park regularly exclusively to mountain bike and it is by far my favorite trail. Mountain biking is so good for my physical and mental health. Contrary to what I've heard being said, mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails. Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity (gender, ethnicity and age!). Battle Creek would benefit from more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of and needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport. A skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills would be awesome (like Lebanon Hills). I donate to MORC and volunteer and maintain the local trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers). Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop. Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur. Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras. Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

Thank you!

Jeremy

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [james.fuschetto](mailto:james.fuschetto)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 7:51:59 PM

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[You don't often get email from jafuschetto@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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Please support the mountain biking plan. It is the best place to bike in the twin cities and expansion will keep it the best!

During the summer I try to get there a couple times a week and the updates to the trails have been awesome over the last couple of years.

Thanks

Jim Fuschetto  
ABC Millwork and Cabinetry  
612-759-0265  
Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Michael Coates](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 10:09:44 PM

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Hi Ben,

I saw a post on Facebook about the opportunity for Battle Creek to grow and build more mountain bike trails and I believe this would be a great idea. The state of MN has become a mountain bike destination for the Midwest with many great trail systems throughout the cities, as well as northern MN. I live in Mankato, MN and a large group of us spend time riding in the cities and Battle Creek is at the top of our list for rides. Battle Creek offers a great selection of trails options for beginners and those who are advanced riders. I would love to see Battle Creek continue to grow and build more technical and flowy trails. This trail system is one of the best, if not the best in the Metro area. Another addition that Battle Creek would greatly benefit from is the addition of restrooms, changing stations, security cameras and a designated trail head.

Hope all is well,  
Michael

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brian Pennington](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Battle Creek  
**Date:** Saturday, October 30, 2021 5:28:43 PM

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Hi Benjamin

Please consider adding a disc golf course to the new Battle Creek site. This area is quite low on courses and we had active disc golf community in the Twin Cities

Brian Pennington  
650-544-5783



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Faye](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** BattleCreek Regional Park  
**Date:** Monday, October 25, 2021 9:13:00 AM

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I support Mr. Henderson's plan.  
Faye Duvall

Sent from my iPhone

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Scott Christensen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** BC Master Plan comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 10:09:05 PM

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Hi Ben,

My name is Scott Christensen and I have been a mountain bike trail builder out at Battle Creek for over a decade. For the last handful of years I have been one of the Dirt Boss leaders under Scott Thayer and before him, Tom Gehring. I have attended meetings with Mike Goodnature and I even met you at one of them.

I am a passionate advocate for the betterment of the single track trail system at BC and I have given countless volunteer hours in this pursuit. I am writing to give my two cents as to why I feel that the approval and implementation of of expanded mountain bike trails through the Master Plan is so important to me, the local riding community and the greater St Paul area.

I have seen first hand how impactful these mountain bike trails are on our community. As you know, we have several mountain bike high school NICA teams that practice, train and help us maintain and build trails the trails at BC. The youth that I help lead as a Dirt Boss feel a strong connection to these trails by spending time volunteering and riding there. Their parents are grateful for the opportunities that this has provided for their children. Every year this youth sports program has continued to grow exponentially. The young trail volunteers of today are the trail stewards of tomorrow. Mountain biking is one of those rare sports that can continue way beyond youth; in fact my weekly Wednesday riding group at BC is made up of middle aged guys to seniors and we don't plan on quitting riding any time soon!

As more trail users frequent the park, there seems to be less crime around the trails themselves. It is a known thing that as more people recreate, take pride and respect the local park system, it is also good for the greater community. We have even had trail runners volunteer to help us do trail work since they also see how import theses trails are. Mountain bikers are some of the largest growing users of park lands that allow trail riding and seeing whole families enjoying Battle Creek on mountain bikes is something that gives me great happiness.

The implementation of building new single track at Battle Creek will make it a premier mountain bike destination. You don't have to look far or read case studies to see how impactful mountain bike trails are on local communities. In Minnesota alone, Theodore Wirth Park, Cuyuna and The Duluth Traverse are all prime examples of how the building of single track trails has positively provided recreation, tourism, exercise and has overall enhanced the local communities they serve by connecting citizens to green spaces.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Ben, you are our advocate. You have a chance to leave a lasting legacy on the St Paul community. You are not alone in this pursuit but your voice can help cut through the bureaucracy and put this plan into action. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or need help in any way.

Thank you for your time and efforts,

Scott Christensen

South St Paul, MN

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [e.j.wolf@comcast.net](mailto:e.j.wolf@comcast.net)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 11:33:42 PM

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Dear Mr Karp:

The 2021 Battle Creek Master Plan's expressed intentions and strategies are laudable. I hope that Ramsey County can move forward accordingly.

However, the Plan is lacking in one respect. There are several habitats that are well worth protecting, without known impediments to do so. Yet these properties aren't included in this plan. I refer to the 77+ acres which share a border with both Battle Creek Regional Park and the Ramsey County Correctional Facility, and The Ponds, a now closed golf course across the road from BCRP.

It's my understanding that both properties are owned by Ramsey County. Both, and in particular the 77+ acres of grassland, are documented habitat for endangered, rare, and other wildlife of great conservation concern, according to the County's own recent expert studies.

As you know, the Master Plan includes goals such as "[r]egional parks and trails are developed in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to **preserve green space for wildlife habitat**...Our regional parks...also **protect significant green space and wildlife habitat**. The stewardship of these regional resources is one of five envisioned outcomes, achieved by **[r]esponsibly managing our region's finite resources**, including natural resources – such as lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater, **high quality natural habitats**, and agricultural soils...." [I have added all bolded highlights]

Further, the Master Plan's intent is to "[e]xpand the Regional Parks System to **conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality**." "Future long-term acquisition is proposed for Battle Creek Regional Park **when properties become available**."

So it's a mystery why the County would exclude the 77 acre grassland from the protections of the 2021 Master Plan, given the obvious perfect fit with the goals of the Plan. For instance, the grassland habitat indeed represents an unusual opportunity to preserve our finite green space. And it expands BCRP by connecting the Park to its

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

natural bordering property. The grassland provides high quality wildlife habitat, according to the County's own studies, attracting and sheltering birds and insects rarely documented in Minnesota and in dire need of such habitat. Acquisition costs are minimal as Ramsey County already owns the properties.

In fact, given this unique habitat, it wouldn't be a stretch to say that the County has a responsibility to protect it. The consequence of failing to do so might remove the final viable habitat in our region for some of these already struggling species, as I understand the situation, because some of the resident species can't survive in the remaining fractionalized habitats in this region.

This glaring omission should be corrected now by including the 77 acre grassland (and if possible The Ponds property) within the boundaries of Battle Creek Regional Park in order to ensure the preservation of this valuable and unique habitat and the protection of its precious wildlife.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Wolf

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Luke Van Santen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Battle Creek Master Plan - Singletrack / Mountain Biking Trail Improvements  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 6:24:58 PM

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Good evening Mr. Karp!

My name is Luke Van Santen and I am writing to you in support of any and all mountain biking trail improvements and/or enhancements that can be included in the Battle Creek Master Plan.

I am one of the "Dirt Bosses" at the new Lone Lake Park Singletrack in Minnetonka and as such have seen firsthand how much having a trail to take pride in drives volunteerism not just in the park but in other City parks that don't have singletrack. Additionally, as part of my long-term support for this trail I have seen that we are on pace for well over 10,000 visits from over 1400 unique riders in our first year, in every month (winter fatbikers, spring/summer/fall singletrackers). Many of these users are from area high school MTB teams that have used the mandatory scheduling process that the City has in place to prevent overuse (our volunteers help resolve any trail maintenance issues that do manage to arise). Other users are children visiting with parents, either as riders on their parent's bike, on a strider bike, or on their own pedal bike. Also, the trail (since it is a multi-purpose mountain bike trail) sees a number of walkers / dog walkers and trail runners in the summer, and last winter became an instant smash hit for snowshoers. All of my interactions with other trail users encountered while I biked or snowshoed the trail were positive with a universal expression of gratitude that the trail was built.

All of this clearly shows that a diverse user base (different ages and skill levels, non-bike users) can successfully enjoy different healthful activities with minimal to no conflict. It also shows there is a high level of pent up demand for such trails.

I am not a resident of Ramsey County, nor have I ridden (yet) at Battle Creek. However, my direct first-hand experience described above gives me every confidence that trail improvements at Battle Creek will have numerous important benefits. I hope that the Master Plan can include as many singletrack enhancements as possible!

Luke Van Santen  
Minnetonka MN



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Chuck Kennedy](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf - Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 12:23:13 PM

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You don't often get email from cgkdisc34@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Mr. Benjamin Karp,

Looking forward to the possibility, finally, of disc golf in a Ramsey County Park. As head of the international Disc Golf Course Designers group based in Inver Grove Hts., its Twin Cities members and players have been communicating with Ramsey County officials every few years about disc golf possibilities since the 90s. Higher priorities, funding and limited sites suitable for disc golf have regularly tabled further discussion through the years.

I assisted Daniel Billig in the test event at Battle Creek a few years ago that unfortunately was rained out. However, the enthusiasm for disc golf has continued and got a significant boost during the continuing Covid period as an outdoor activity where players could maintain proper spacing.

Hope your developing Master Plan will include disc golf. Good luck in your challenges to balance the various needs of park users in Ramsey County.

- Chuck Kennedy

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kevin Albertson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf at Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 11:50:48 AM

You don't often get email from kevin.e.albertson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello, my name is Kevin Albertson and I'm a lifelong resident of Maplewood on Lakewood Drive. I'm writing to petition you to consider a disc golf course for the park's master plan. I've been playing for almost 20 years, having discovered the sport at Highland Park in St. Paul. What started as a way to get outside is now a healthy obsession; disc golf has definitely changed my life. There are several great reasons for a course, but here are my top three.

- 1) A course at Battle Creek would bring in new commerce to Maplewood, whether it be a nearby convenience store, gas station, or restaurant.
- 2) It would provide the surrounding underserved community an activity that is healthy, fun, and low cost, if not free.
- 3) A new course is desperately needed in the Twin Cities metro. Disc Golf has exploded in popularity since the pandemic, due to it being outside and easily socially distanced. There are regular waits at the first tee due at peak times to its popularity. This is a good thing! Indeed, the motto of disc golf is "grow the sport." A new 18-hole course would provide another option for the substantial local disc golf community.

Minnesota (and particularly the Twin Cities) is known across the country for its abundance of excellent courses. A new course at Battle Creek Park could build our reputation even further.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

- Kevin Albertson

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Marshall Britt](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 1:45:01 PM

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Hello Benjamin,

I wanted to reach out and add my voice to those who think the addition of a Disc Golf course at Battle Creek would be prudent. The sport is growing at an exponential rate and the Twin Cities courses are all EXTREMELY heavily utilized. The sport has a very low barrier to entry and is a way for folks from all sorts of economic backgrounds to come together.

The Disc Golf community in MN is incredibly healthy and unbelievably kind. This last weekend a group of tournament players raised thousands of dollars for a Charity run by a professional disc golfer to put baskets and courses in less-developed countries.

As someone who occasionally rides the MORC maintained bike trails in the area, I've often thought that a large area of the Battle Creek parks seems suited to a course. Not only would I be happy to help plan the initiative in any way I can, I'd be more than willing to help design the course. I have a background in game design and work professionally in the tabletop game publishing industry. Building courses and general course layout is a passion of mine so if there is any opportunity there, I'd be happy to help.

In the event a course is improved and installed I'd also likely be willing to sponsor an "opening tournament" promoted by our local Saint Paul publishing company. Disc Golf is a great sport that has some incredible mental health benefits. I'd love to see a course at Battle creek and would be glad to help in any way I can.

Thanks and have a great weekend,

--

Marshall Britt  
Operations Director  
**Leder Games**  
210-381-9629

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [willbratzel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** disc golf at battle creek  
**Date:** Friday, October 15, 2021 11:18:17 AM

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hey I think it'd be a great low cost, environmentally friendly option for the parks development. Even a 9 hole layout to start with could spark a huge influx of interest in the park. There's a huge disc golf community in the twin cities that would love this.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Anthony Phelps CW](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** disc golf battle creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 3:07:00 PM

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Hi Benjamin, my name is Anthony Phelps and heard through the grape vine of a “possible” opportunity to install a disc golf recreation area in battle creek area. I work at the 3m across the street and can vouch that me and some others I work with would love to have a course so close and accessible. There are not many disc golf courses near that area and disc golf has beyond exploded in popularity the last 2 years. Just wanted to raise my hand and for some others here at 3m that are excited about the prospect of disc golf in battle creek. Thanks for taking the time to read, have a great day!

Anthony Phelps

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [ryan nielsen](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc golf course at Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 12:33:50 PM

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Hi Benjamin,

I just wanted to reach out and urge you to consider installing a disc golf course in Battle Creek Park. I lived off of White Bear and 94 the entirety of my childhood and teen years. I played for Battle Creek Rec for baseball during the summers of my youth. Some of the MN State Championship trophies we won are in the Rec Center trophy case. I currently live in White Bear Lake. I love the East Side and always try to advocate for positive changes to the area. Disc Golf has a very low barrier to entry as it is very low cost to get in to. It also gets people out in nature to be active. Disc Golf courses require minimal maintenance and typically are informally cared for by the passionate players who frequent the course. I know this course would have a lot of interest from the local community of players. We have some really excellent courses in the Twin Cities and would love to see an additional one to play. Please consider planning and installing a Disc Golf course in Battle Creek Park.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Nielsen



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Rachel Van Heel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc golf course at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:55:20 PM

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Hi Mr. Karp,

I am writing to request that you add a disc golf course to Battle Creek Park. The open space near the water park is underutilized, and would make a great disc golf course. Disc golf is an inclusive, low cost sport that can be enjoyed by a wide range of abilities and ages. It is a great way to get more Ramsey County residents outdoors and enjoying physical activity.

Based on the findings of the ecological assessment done on the grassland, I also support preserving this unique urban habitat and making it part of Battle Creek Park.

Rachel Van Heel

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Staci Petrich](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 12:13:20 PM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

Please consider installing a disc-golf course at Battle Creek Park. I have three small children and this is a great way for us to be outdoors together and doing something we all can enjoy, Our son has special needs, and he is not easily able to participate in sports events. This is a great physical activity he feels like he can do like everyone else. Thank you for considering this as you develop this area.

Sincerely,

Staci Petrich

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Aaron Hallberg](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf Course  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 3:47:59 PM

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Good afternoon, my name is Aaron Hallberg and I'm reaching out to give my enthusiastic support to the proposed disc golf course at Battle Creek Park. I had the opportunity to come out and support Dan Billig who set up a temporary pop-up course as an event two years ago and it is a great location as well as a beautiful park. Given the challenges facing some of the surrounding communities and a lack of access to engaging green spaces I believe it would be a fantastic opportunity to add a healthy, low cost, low impact, and low maintenance activity to the bevy of services the park already offers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Aaron Hallberg

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Grant Bastian](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc golf in Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Saturday, October 16, 2021 7:41:00 AM

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Hello Benjamin,

Overall the master plan is looking great! As a lifetime resident of the area I am excited about the future of battle creek park. I'm very familiar with the Park, I have been a weekly volunteer on the hiking/mountain bike trails alongside Scott Thayer (BC Mountain Bike Trail Steward) for the past 2 years. I was looking over the PDF's carefully and would like to add a recommendation.

I would love to see a Disc Golf course added to the master plan. Disc golf is one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, and would be an excellent addition to Battle Creek Park. [Here is a link](#) to the benefits of adding a disc golf course.

The closest course for the BC community is currently Lakewood hills park in white bear lake. I believe we could create a fantastic family friendly course within walking distance for thousands of locals.

There are two wooded areas that would work great.

- 1.) Behind 'WaterWorks',
- 2.) and just south of 94.

These areas are good because,

- Currently unused
- Disc golf courses adapt very well into odd shaped or unused areas of a park
- Disc golf works great in the woods due to trees adding a natural obstacle
- Shares a parking lot with 'WaterWorks'.

For a good example look at 'Acorn Park' in Roseville. They have a fantastic 18 hole course within their 40 acres.

I've spoken with Daniel Billig about helping on this project. I would be willing to volunteer in the creation and upkeep of a disc golf course, as well as spending time with underserved communities putting on clinics and teaching local kids how to play.

--

Grant Bastian

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ann Hawkins](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf in Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 10:14:27 AM

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Mr. Karp,

I would like to ask that you consider putting a disc golf course in Battle Creek Park. It is great exercise and low cost entertainment. My family loves to play, and would greatly appreciate access to a course in this area.

Thanks in advance for your consideration,

Ann Hawkins

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [dysc.net](mailto:dysc.net)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf in Battle Creek Park  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 4:28:10 PM

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"Benjamin,

I am writing to let you know that I am interested in seeing a disc golf course installed at Battle Creek Park. In addition to the fun my family and friends will have, equity with the surrounding underserved community could also be addressed by giving people a chance to participate in a healthy, low-cost activity.

Thank you!"

Michael Billig



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Erika Bailey](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf in Battle Creek  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 2:42:07 PM

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Hello!

My family and I would love to show our support/want of disc golf in Battle Creek Park!

Thanks!  
Erika Bailey

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Theodore Bischoff-Weyandt](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Disc Golf  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:49:20 PM

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Hello Ben,

Thank you for your consideration of locating a new Disc Golf course at Battle Creek Park. Disc Golf has exploded in popularity in the last few years. According to Disc Golf Magazine the sport has grown over 400% since the '20 season. Since the uprising of C-19 separating us all, Disc Golf has greatly benefited. Bringing friends and family safely together for countless hours of joy. From the moderate beginner player to the seasoned veteran, Disc golf brings us all together teaching us how to grow with one another inside nature. Allowing us all to further our respect of the land and to take pride in where we get to enjoy such beauty inside MN and in the land. To continue the growth of the sport and in preserving this wonderful and breath taking land in MN I am hopeful for another great course inside my home state of MN.

Thank you,

**Forward Final Mile**

Theodore Bischoff-Weyandt  
[TBWeyandt@forwardair.com](mailto:TBWeyandt@forwardair.com)  
C.952-486-2722  
W.952-222-1787  
9995 West 69<sup>th</sup> St  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

# THE BATTLE CREEK GRASSLAND

## Background

The Battle Creek grassland, approximately 78 acres in size, is adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood, MN. It is bounded by the park on the north and west, by Century Avenue on the east, and by the Ramsey County Correctional Facility on the south. The grassland is owned by Ramsey County and managed by the Corrections Department. It was farmed by inmates at the Correctional Facility with plantings of brome grass and alfalfa. It has not been farmed for perhaps ten years.

## Why is the grassland important?

The grassland is not “vacant” but a significant habitat and nesting site for rare and declining bird species. (See Appendix A.)

The avian survey conducted by Midwest Natural Resources, Inc., during the 2021 nesting season identified eight Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SCGN), including the Minnesota-endangered Henslow’s Sparrow. [The MNR report](#) summed up



The Bobolink, a species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Battle Creek grassland. Photo by John Zakelj.

the significance of the bird species as follows: ***“Taken individually, the SCGN birds ... are regionally uncommon.... Collectively, they represent a biological assemblage more typical of western grasslands, which is unique for Ramsey County and the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area.”***

Grasslands are one of the most threatened ecosystems. More than 98% of Minnesota’s pre-European grasslands have been [lost](#) to [agriculture](#) and development. (Unlike wetlands, grasslands have no protection in Minnesota.)

The biodiversity of the grassland is important for ecosystem services, *e.g.*, carbon sequestration, cleaning the air, cooling the urban heat island, and stormwater management as well as for the beauty it provides. (For more information see Appendix B: Ecosystem Services.)

Nature is important for human mental and physical health. During the pandemic people are spending more time outdoors and in Nature. The Metropolitan Council reports park visitation was up 6.3% from 2018 to 2019.

More than one million species are predicted to go extinct in the next few decades; the extinction crisis is real.

## Media coverage

The *Star Tribune* published articles about the grassland on [7/17/21](#), [8/25/21](#), and [10/16/21](#).

## County actions

County commissioners committed orally to delaying the development decision until after the eco-survey results were received, but the county issued a [Request for Developer Interest](#) on 8/16/21 (more than a month before the eco-survey report

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was created). The developers' proposals were due 10/4/2021. In a brief update on 10/10, the *Star Tribune* reported that no proposals were received for the grassland.

Ramsey County commissioners are concerned about the affordable housing crisis, and they are looking for county-owned properties to develop. But, in the words of the River Corridor Program Director of the Friends of the Mississippi River, "We can't make the mistake of responding to our housing crisis by worsening our environmental crisis."

### City actions

The Battle Creek grassland is currently zoned by the city of Maplewood as farm/residential. In addition, the city's Comprehensive Plan anticipates continued institutional use. Before any housing can be developed, the county and/or developer must submit an application to rezone the grassland. The city would have to approve the rezone and amend its Comprehensive Plan. In anticipation of this request, the city conducted a community engagement process from November 2020 to June 2021. A description of the process and a link to the planners' final report is available [here](#). It is not clear when a rezoning request will be submitted. It may be later this year or early next year. There will be an opportunity for the public to participate in the city's rezoning and plan amendment process.

### Benefitting people and the birds

The grassland is unique: it is highly diverse, already adjacent to a much-loved regional park, can help offset the urban heat island, clean the air, sequester carbon and manage stormwater. It could have a novel use as a "[Birdability](#)" site, where people with disabilities could see birds and hear the burbling of Bobolinks from platforms set at the periphery of the grassland.

Declaring the grassland an Environmental Natural Area and managing it as a grassland ecosystem is the "highest and best use" providing benefits for the entire community.



Minnesota's state butterfly, the Monarch on Goldenrod in the Battle Creek grassland. Photo by John Zakelj.

## Appendix A: Some of the bird species documented in the Battle Creek grassland and their population status.

Species	MN Endangered <sup>1</sup>	Greatest Conservation Need <sup>2</sup>	Area-Sensitive <sup>3</sup>	MN Stewardship Species <sup>4</sup>	Population Trend 1966-2019 <sup>5</sup>	
					Minnesota	U.S & Canada
Grasshopper Sparrow		●	●		-97%	-74%
Clay-colored Sparrow					-37%	-35%
Field Sparrow		●			-56%	-69%
Henslow's Sparrow	●	●	●		-67%	-63%*
Savannah Sparrow			●		-66%	-52%
Bobolink		●	●	●	-58%	-43%
Eastern Meadowlark		●	●		-68%	-74%
Dickcissel		●			-82%	-27%

\*Henslow's Sparrow is not found in Canada; the trend is for the U.S.

<sup>1</sup> MN DNR, Minnesota's list of endangered, threatened and special concern species (Aug 19, 2013), [https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural\\_resources/ets/endlist.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/ets/endlist.pdf), viewed Oct. 26, 2021

<sup>2</sup> MN DNR, Appendix B: Tomorrow's habitat for the wild and rare, species in greatest conservation need (Apr 2006), [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bigpicture/cwcs/chapters\\_appendix/appendix\\_b.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bigpicture/cwcs/chapters_appendix/appendix_b.pdf), viewed Oct. 26, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Herkert, J. R. The effects of habitat fragmentation on Midwestern grassland bird communities. Ecological Applications 4 (3):461-471 (1994).

<sup>4</sup> Audubon Minnesota, Stewardship birds of Minnesota, <https://mn.audubon.org/conservation/stewardship-birds-minnesota>, viewed Oct 26, 2021

<sup>5</sup> USGS, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center - Bird population studies, BBS trends 1966-2019, <https://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/>, viewed Oct. 26, 2021.

### Appendix B: Ecosystem Services<sup>6</sup>

#### Carbon sequestration

According to a collaborative study published in Nature Geoscience, major changes in land use from grasslands to urban areas have been estimated to contribute a 12.5% increase in carbon emissions between 2000-2009.<sup>7</sup> Native prairie grassland systems have extensive root systems and most of the biomass in prairies is below ground. A recently completed study from the US Department of Agriculture indicates a locally restored prairie can effectively sequester an average of 1.14 metric tons of carbon per acre per year.<sup>8</sup> Using this estimate, the grassland's approximately 76 non-wetland acres<sup>9</sup> could sequester 96 tons of carbon per year. The University of Minnesota's Department of Soil, Water and Climate wrote the mean household carbon emissions are approximately 8.7 tons per year per residence.<sup>10</sup>

#### Mitigating the urban heat island, water regulation

Ameliorating the urban heat island, water retention and filtration of water are other important ecosystem services. The Natural Capital project at the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment recently did a study comparing the ecosystem services provided by various land uses in the Twin City metro area. They found that natural spaces such as the prairie grassland would maintain nighttime temperatures approximately 0.2 degrees F cooler than an urban residential development.<sup>11</sup> The prairie grassland would retain approximately three times as much nitrogen and phosphorus run-off as an urban residential development and pollinator abundance would be at least twice as much depending on the amount of pavement, buildings, flora, grasses and pesticides used.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Information compiled by Catherine Zimmer, MS, Environmental Health, Coordinator, Legacy of Nature Alliance

<sup>7</sup> Friedlingstein, P et al, Update on CO2 emissions. Nat. Geosci. 3, 811–812 (2010).

<sup>8</sup> Markland, T., Carbon Balance and Evapotranspiration Rates of a Restored Prairie and a Conventional Corn/Soybean Rotation, University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/206697>, (2019).

<sup>9</sup> Magnuson, C. Ramsey Washington Watershed District, GIS calculation of wetland acres equal to 1.6 of the grassland total.

<sup>10</sup> Fissore, C. et al, Carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus fluxes in household ecosystems in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Minnesota, urban region, Ecological Applications, 21(3): 619–639, (2011).

<sup>11</sup> Lonsdorf E. et al. Assessing urban ecosystem services provided by green infrastructure: Golf courses in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area, Landscape and Urban Planning: 208 (2021).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.



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**From:** [John Richter](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback BC master plan parking lots  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 7:39:02 PM

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Hello Benjamin,

Under existing conditions there should be a mention that the Park has multiple parking areas that are under assault with vandalism and theft from vehicles. I have personally come across smashed car windows in **each** of the following lots and have swept up glass numerous times.

Battle Creek Rec Center lot,  
Battle Creek Dog Park south lot  
Battle Creek Dog Park north lot  
Point Douglas lot  
Battle Creek Water park

thanks,

- - -

John Richter *Executive Director*

*Pronouns: he/him*

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**From:** [John Richter](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback BC master plan pg 50  
**Date:** Friday, October 15, 2021 4:43:08 PM

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Hello Benjamin,

Battle Creek course certification, Homologation from 2011 **expired in 2016**.

Al Serano, Technical Advisor for FIS and US Ski & snowboard recommends that Ramsey County contracts with Nordic ski designer to review potential re-certification “Homologation” with FIS and also review the overall functionality of the venue for High School and FIS sanctioned races.

The overall objective for homologation “To create courses and stadiums that take care of the best traditions in Cross-Country skiing, are suited for all modern competition formats and techniques, and provide safe conditions and fair chances for all competitors”

The 2020 FIS Homologation manual can be used as a guide. The desire is to have Battle Creek course meet category C classification. C category would allow interval starts and mass start aces in both classic and skate techniques. There are four areas of concern to meet category C.

- a) expanded stadium area to category C specifications. Approx. 25 m x 85 m
- b) increase overall width of course to category C specifications, 6 m.
- c) access to warm-up loop.
- d) access to team areas, waxing, power, parking etc.

There is an application process to bid on US Ski & Snowboard and U.S. Paralympics events. Having a certified course is essential for any organizing committee to be awarded and host a regional or national event.

thanks,

- - -

John Richter *Executive Director*

*Pronouns: he/him*

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**From:** [Martha Flynn](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback on Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021 5:53:03 PM

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Hello,

I'd like to send my feedback on the Battle Creek Master Plan. I am a lifelong Ramsey County resident, mainly in St Paul and most recently Roseville. I was so pleased to read the first iterations of the Battle Creek Master Plan, specifically the addition of more miles of mountain bike trails, more beginner friendly trails and a skills park. I've heard that the amount of mountain bike trails has been reduced from previous versions and I want to throw my wholehearted support into keeping as much of the original plan in place as possible.

I work with an organization that mentors girls 7 - 13 on mountain biking. Mountain biking is such a great tool for this! We currently have chapters in Woodbury, Lakeville and the South Metro. I've always wanted to run a program at Battle Creek, but the difficulty of the trails got in the way. Based on the plans for improving trails, I have been approved to start a program there in 2022. We will start with one for older girls (10-13) then hopefully add the younger ages when more beginner trails are built.

My goal is to have this program available to girls from the neighborhood. Our other programs in the suburbs sell out quite quickly. To avoid those folks snatching up all of the entries we are going to do something like save off half of the entries for girls from the neighboring zip codes or something like that. I've met with the Parks and Rec folks and they will help me with getting the word out locally. I've also got funding from Quality Bicycle Products and Free Bikes 4 Kids to help with bikes and to cover registration fees for those who need it.

In 2022 this program will bring 20 girls to the park with about 12 mentors. From there the numbers will increase. I would love to see girls riding bikes from their house to participate in the program, and then ride on their own on other days! Without the additional trails, it will be more difficult to have a successful program with a high fun factor.

Please reach out if you would like to discuss this further, or hear more about Little Bellas. Here is a [video piece](#) that was done on the Woodbury program that does a great job of showing what we do. We need this for the girls of St Paul!

Thank you so much,  
Martha Flynn

--

Martha Flynn

Regional Coordinator | Prospective Chapter Support | Woodbury, MN Program Lead

Little Bellas

[littlebellas.com](http://littlebellas.com)



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**From:** [John Faughnan \(home\)](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback on Battle Creek plan  
**Date:** Sunday, October 17, 2021 7:54:57 PM

You don't often get email from [jfaughnan@gmail.com](mailto:jfaughnan@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Ben, I'm told I should write to you with personal thoughts on the Battle Creek Master Plan.

I live in Saint Paul and visit BC every few weeks. Most often I'm doing single track, but sometimes I'm riding the paved trails. In winter Emily and I ski there and appreciate the lighted trails.

I ride for fun and for health. I appreciate our trails are multi-use and I'm very respectful of runners and walkers. I feel the mountain bike community has done a good job with trail maintenance for all users. I think having cyclists on trails reduces criminal activity (I often enter through the Lookout north of the park — a notorious area that benefits from our visits).

As a XC skier and Fat Bike cyclist I hope you can support Fat Biking on trails that are not groomed for XC skiing.

Thank you!

John Faughnan  
[jfaughnan@gmail.com](mailto:jfaughnan@gmail.com)  
1660 Stanford Ave  
Saint Paul MN 55105

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Working to protect the Mississippi River  
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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www.fmr.org  
info@fmr.org

September 24, 2021

Ben Karp  
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Dear Mr. Karp:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer updated comments on the Battle Creek Regional Park draft master plan. We appreciate that Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) has been invited to collaborate throughout the planning process and we are pleased that the plan has continued to evolve.

The draft master plan is a notable improvement over earlier concepts we reviewed, particularly in its balance between recreational and ecological enhancements. All parks are challenged by an immense demand for recreational facilities as well as the urgent climate and environmental crisis. We appreciate Ramsey County's efforts to respond to both of these important needs in the draft plan.

Equity is another significant challenge for parks. Battle Creek is a regional destination for mountain biking and cross-country skiing (sports that tend to draw disproportionately white and wealthy users) while also being a neighborhood park for a more diverse surrounding community. Ramsey County should apply an equity lens as it prioritizes park investments to ensure that all visitors are equally served, not just those participating in two marquee sports.

The fishing program is one example of an activity that can serve a broad audience, and is indicative of the kind of programming the park can focus on. Affordable and culturally relevant skiing and biking programs targeted at neighbors can also help increase access. It might be helpful to study Theodore Wirth Park as an example of a regional park with similar dynamics.

### **Trail system**

We are pleased to see significant improvements in the proposed trail system versus what was in earlier park concepts. The draft master plan represents a much stronger conservation ethic by limiting trail expansions (and even reducing trails in some areas) and more carefully evaluating their impacts.

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Trail expansions are important for connecting visitors to important areas of the park and improving recreational functions. But trails can also cause significant ecological harm by increasing erosion in the park's fragile bluff areas, isolating wildlife populations, reducing habitat quality, and facilitating the spread of invasive species.

No trail expansions should be planned or constructed until natural resource inventories and environmental impact reviews are complete. We'd like to see this stated more consistently and clearly throughout the plan, ensuring that all stated timelines are in sync with this commitment.

There are also some inconsistencies between the trail concept and the stewardship plan about where trails may be expanded. For instance, Fish Creek Management Unit 13 is listed as a high-quality, high-priority area, and page 151 of the draft plan states that "recreation of area should not expand beyond what currently exists." Yet the trail concept appears to show expanded trails in this area. Such conflicts should be corrected in the final plan.

Shared-use trails for both hiking and biking, particularly narrow and winding single-track trails, can reduce enjoyment and increase safety risks for all modes. We know that it's common to permit multimodal use of these trails but it shouldn't be encouraged. We also recommend that maps and signage in the park be clear about which trails are shared-use and offer safety tips (such as heightened awareness and reduced speed) for users.

### **Other recreational improvements**

We support the expansion of fishing opportunities in the park. Fishing attracts park users of diverse ages, abilities, cultural backgrounds, and income levels. Few other activities appeal to such a diverse visitor base. Care should be taken to stock only ponds that won't connect to other water bodies in an overflow event, and also to stock species already present in neighboring ponds and water bodies.

We support the plan's commitment to limiting new trailhead facilities to basic amenities rather than expansive buildings. We agree that the park's existing recreation center could be improved or redeveloped to provide more visitor amenities and programming. This is likely preferable to adding large buildings elsewhere in the park, particularly given that some parts of the park have higher-quality habitat and/or are more geologically fragile than the existing recreation center area.

We also support the plan's commitment to limiting artificial lighting in the park. For areas that do require lighting, such as ski trails and parking lots, fixtures should be downward-shielded and compliant with International Dark Sky Association standards. These fixtures support safe passage for migrating birds along the Mississippi River flyway, reduce light pollution, and waste less energy.

### **Boundary adjustments**

We support the expansion of park boundaries as acquisition opportunities arise. In addition to the worthy expansion opportunities discussed in the plan, FMR recommends that the 77-acre county-owned grassland property near Century Ave. and Upper Afton Rd. be added to Battle Creek Regional Park. There is significant public support for adding this parcel to the park.



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This parcel is an important wildlife habitat worthy of permanent protection. As the draft master plan notes, “High quality natural communities are rare in Minnesota, and particularly in the Twin Cities Metro Area, and are worth protecting and enhancing because they are rare and difficult, if not impossible, to restore to natural condition.”

This particular property’s ecological value is exceptionally high given the statewide rarity of grassland habitat (fewer than two percent of Minnesota’s grasslands remain from what existed before European colonization) and the documented presence of several bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need on the site. Ramsey County is awaiting a final report from the ecological inventory it contracted for this property.

Grassland birds, such as those using this property, are among the most threatened species in the United States. Some of these bird species are very sensitive to habitat fragmentation, which is one of the reasons behind their staggering population declines.

The county’s grassland property presents a crucial opportunity for habitat preservation. The protection benefit is increased by the property’s adjacency to the park; large habitat areas and wildlife corridors are significantly more beneficial than small, fragmented parcels for sustaining wildlife populations. We urge Ramsey County to expand the Battle Creek Regional Park boundary to include this property already in county ownership. FMR could assist the county with funding and expertise to restore and maintain this or other parcels.

### Stewardship plan

We support the Stewardship Plan’s overall broad goals. Additional detail and clarity would help strengthen the subsequent plans and recommendations. For example:

- *“Management should seek to control or eliminate exotic invasive species that are damaging the health of park habitats.”*

As a best practice, we believe the term “non-native” should replace “exotic,” as the latter’s connotations can place too much emphasis on a species’ place of origin. “Exotic” could also simply be removed so that the focus is on invasive species regardless of their origin.

- *“The white-tail deer population should be managed to protect existing plant communities and aid the success of restoration activities.”*

This recommendation should specify that populations should be managed at densities lower than their current levels. Pre-settlement densities are often used as a benchmark for management. The “task” associated with the goal of managing deer populations is also confusing as written. The plan identifies the ideal level as the DNR’s recommendation of “20 deer per square mile of deer habitat.” The task then recommends that “deer populations be controlled to less than 25 per square mile of deer habitat.”

The ecological principle of “fragmentation” as a determinant of ecosystem health is called out as #3 in the “Goals and Principles for Management” section. It is gratifying to see that the extent of

proposed trails was reduced in line with this principle. The county should continue to consider this principle, especially when locating trails in high- and medium- quality habitats.

While the classification of high-, medium-, and low-quality habitat is important for utilizing limited resources, it is also important to note that these units may not always be distinct, and that adjacent low-quality units can influence habitat quality in high-quality units. Therefore, creating buffers of restored habitat around high-quality units, even if it means spending resources on a low-quality habitat, may be more important than restoring a medium-quality unit elsewhere. These decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis.

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) is mentioned frequently in the plan but discussed differently in different management units throughout the stewardship plan. We'd like to see a consistent commitment to following MRCCA recreational development guidelines included in the plan for each management unit within MRCCA, including a commitment to limiting trails and other construction in bluff areas.

Principle #7 – that management is a learning process – is more accurately called “adaptive management.” Managers should adapt to both changing park conditions and results of past and current management actions.

For Management Unit 10, climate adaptation should be stressed as a goal of the forest restoration on the islands being built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). FMR has consistently stated to USACE and Ramsey County that these constructed islands represent an important opportunity to both plan for climate resiliency and actively study how different floodplain community assemblages fare with current and future climate conditions.

FMR is currently working with the city of Maplewood on management planning and restoration of Unit 19 (the city-owned Carver Reserve). FMR received funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to conduct management planning and restoration of the 27-acre preserve. The plan will be complete by spring 2022 and restoration will begin shortly thereafter. The initial phase of restoration—involving woody invasive species removal, forest restoration, and grassland enhancement—will run through 2025. This is just one example of how partner organizations are providing resources to help the county achieve its management goals for the entirety of the Battle Creek complex. It's also an example of where the city and county should better align on plans, timetables, and goals for properties that fall within the larger Battle Creek complex.

### **Partnership opportunities**

FMR would be happy to assist the county in its land restoration goals. FMR partners with many metro-area public park agencies to support land conservation. We conduct natural resource inventories, develop and implement restoration and management plans, and engage community volunteers as park stewards. FMR can also secure private and public funding to support these projects, which could ease the resource constraints discussed in the plan. Please contact us if you'd like to discuss partnership opportunities.

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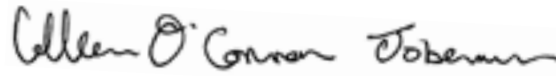
FMR is also happy to participate in further planning for the learning trails, including engaging students in the next phase of the creation process.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft master plan. If you'd like to discuss anything, please don't hesitate to contact us.

In partnership,



Alex Roth, PhD  
Ecologist  
aroth@fmr.org, 651-222-2193 x 33



Colleen O'Connor Toberman  
River Corridor Director  
ctoberman@fmr.org, 651-222-2193 x29

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**From:** [Friends of Maplewood Nature](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#); [Marylee Abrams](#); [Nikki Villavicencio](#); [Rebecca Cave](#); [Kathleen Juenemann](#); [Bill Knutson](#)  
**Subject:** Friends of Maplewood Nature Comments on Battle Creek Park Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 8:29:53 AM  
**Attachments:** [Friends of Maplewood Nature comments on BC Park Plan.pdf](#)

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Attached are comments from the Friends of Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves regarding the proposed Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John Zakelj, President

**Friends of Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves**

<https://friendsofmaplewoodnature.wordpress.com/>



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**October 29, 2021**

Ben Karp  
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Dear Mr. Karp,

On behalf of the Friends of Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Battle Creek Park is a very important part of Maplewood's natural resources. We love the park and appreciate everything you're doing to manage it wisely. But the plan has a glaring omission - the 77-acre grassland which adjoins the park. For those of us who frequently walk the trails in the Maplewood section of the park, this grassland feels like it is part of the park. Developing this grassland would be like developing the park.

The importance of our regional parks system to remain viable as a natural resource and community asset requires a holistic approach and foresight from its civic leaders and citizens. The County and City have a long proud history of collaboration on such issues and the loss of this community asset and natural resource is in very real jeopardy. It has become abundantly clear the recent pandemic and the acknowledgement of the importance of physical activity and mental respite fuels the rediscovery of "the outdoors".

Ramsey county is the smallest and most densely populated county in Minnesota and It is expected that this area of Ramsey/ Maplewood is slated for increased development and population growth that will surely increase demands on the natural environment and challenges for places to educate and recreate our citizens of this area. The closing of the Maplewood Nature Center and The Ponds golf course has taken away opportunities for citizens in this area to recreate and or reflect. Only Tamarack Nature Center in far northern Ramsey County offers the nature center experience and the game of golf is becoming unattainable both in access and ability to pay for most of us in this area. The importance of "land banking" cannot be understated here as we gain appreciation and importance of our natural resources and spaces while addressing the needs and demands of an ever growing population as is the case with both Ramsey County and Maplewood.

The 77-acre grassland has special value because it is immediately adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park on two sides. It enables the park trails to have beautiful unbroken sounds and views of nature. It provides important habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, sequesters carbon, cleans the air, cools the urban heat island and absorbs stormwater. In addition to these broader benefits, the recently released county-

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contracted natural resources report determined that the grassland is providing unique habitat for rare and declining bird species, specifically, eight different Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) including the state-endangered Henslow's Sparrow. According to the report:

*Taken individually, the SGCN birds present on the northern parcel are regionally uncommon, particularly outside of typical migratory windows. Collectively, they represent a biological assemblage more typical of western grasslands, which is unique for Ramsey County and the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area.*

This is a truly unique natural area which should be preserved as an Environmental Natural Area within Battle Creek Regional Park. Some have suggested that part of the grassland should be preserved and part developed. However, five of the 8 SGCN species identified in the report are area-sensitive, and the 77 acres is close to the minimum which is needed by four of those species for successful nesting. Any fragmentation or reduction of the grassland will probably eliminate those species.

We do appreciate everything that the county is doing to address the need for affordable housing. We feel that the city of Maplewood is doing its part to address that need. For example, note the 148 units of housing currently under development just across Lower Afton from the correctional facility at the former city fire station. There are other ways like this to meet the need for affordable housing without destroying sensitive natural areas.

Please include the entire 77 acres in the park plan, and please consider establishing these 77 acres as a model "Birdability" site for people with visual disabilities. We have collaborated with Carrol Henderson, retired DNR non-game supervisor, and Michael Hurben, local board member of the national Birdability organization, to identify and promote the potential value of this area for creation of Minnesota's first "Birdability" site for access by all nature lovers, regardless of disability. We suggest creation of a veranda-type site on the southern boundary of the grassland on Ramsey County correctional property where accessibility features could be provided and where the rich variety of prairie birdsong could be enjoyed by visually disabled birders, as well as many others. Enhanced with feeders and nest boxes, it would provide fantastic birding opportunities. Few urban areas even have such a resource; a protected, wild habitat normally found only well outside of city limits. But with this plan, it would be the first of its kind, a grassland specifically set aside for city residents whose mobility or access issues might prevent them from enjoying such habitat otherwise.

Sincerely,

(signed)

John Zakelj, President

Friends of Maplewood Nature Center and Preserves

cc.

Ramsey County Commissioners

Mayor Marylee Abrams

Members of Maplewood City Council



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Tristan Carlson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Battle Creek Regional Park off-road cycling trails  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:34:27 PM

You don't often get email from [tristan.carlson@gmail.com](mailto:tristan.carlson@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Good afternoon,

I am writing in support of expanding off-road cycling opportunities at Battle Creek Regional Park. I'm a resident of Ramsey County and a frequent user of the trails at Battle Creek, 3-4 times per week in the summer and 2-3 times per week in the winter. This past summer, I have mountain biked at Battle Creek for over 1200 miles and 140 hours, in support of my physical and mental health. Battle Creek offers off-road cycling opportunities that do not exist elsewhere in the Twin Cities; the elevation change and terrain found at Battle Creek (the height of the bluffs from the river to the heights, in particular) are unique among the existing trail systems.

Over the past several years, the expansion of trails at Battle Creek has brought diverse users and user groups to the park. I have never seen as many cyclists, hikers, and trail runners at Battle Creek as I have this past summer. Despite the increased use, I have had no negative interactions with other users. Battle Creek is also unique in that the trails are multi-use; most other trail systems discourage runners from using the cycling trails and vice versa. At Battle Creek, however, all users can share and enjoy the trail. I personally ride, trail run, snowshoe, and cross-country ski there. The only suggestion I would have to improve multi-use is to encourage hikers and trail runners to use the trails the opposite direction of mountain bikers, so both users can see the other coming.

The biggest drawback to the existing off-road cycling trails at Battle Creek is they are difficult to navigate for first-time users. I regularly give directions to puzzled cyclists and trail runners who can't find the next segment of trail, especially in the early season. I know many people come to Battle Creek once, can't find their way around, and never try riding there again. Better signage and more connector trails would make it much more user-friendly – riding out of a mountain bike trail that continues half a mile down a ski trail is unintuitive and confusing. Although Battle Creek is one of the more low-skill-rider-friendly trails (no unskippable technical features, and generally smooth trails), the addition of a skills development area would also encourage more use. Finally, allowing fat biking during the winter on non-XC-ski trails would allow year-round use and draw even more users. Lebanon Hills Mountain Bike Park has similar off-road cycling trails coexisting with XC ski trails and both are heavily trafficked all winter.

Thank you for your time,

Tristan Carlson

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [brook051 University of Minnesota](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** Grassland  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 13, 2021 10:52:01 AM

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[You don't often get email from brook051@umn.edu. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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Mr. Karp and Victoria

We live on the northern fringe of Maplewood - across from our Prairie Farm.

If the city of Maplewood had not had the foresight to save this 32 acre site many years ago we would not have a beautiful prairie and an historic farm site (used for events).

The Grasslands are such a site. Habitats need to be of a size that works for breeding birds. There are few places left. Please include the Grasslands in the future planning for Ramsey County lands.

Thank you.

Charlotte Brooker  
Gene Mammenga  
2172 Woodlynn Avenue  
Maplewood, MN 55109  
651-777-4945

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Barbara Belknap](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** I support Battle Creek Mountain Bike Trails  
**Date:** Saturday, September 25, 2021 11:48:02 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

You don't often get email from barbarabelknap@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Benjamin and Honorable Committee:

I am writing IN SUPPORT OF Battle Creek Park's plan for more mountain bike trails.

I am a regular biker, a Hennepin County Resident, and 58. I bike very regularly (approx 30 miles a week) and occasionally do mountain biking as well. I am a fairly regular rider with the Utepils Biking Group. I am also a XC Skier.

I definitely want to see mountain biking opportunities increase at Battle Creek!

I use Battle Creek Park!

I bike and mountain bike for physical and mental health. I have never hurt myself biking and it's the one thing I do that I feel I can do for years and years (unlike running.)

Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails. I've used the trails at the Eloise Butler Gardens (near Theo Wirth Pkwy) and it works there.

Mountain biking has a diverse user group and trail improvements over the last few years has brought about further diversity (gender, ethnicity) My Mountain Bike friends are a super nice, respectful, and fun loving adult group. They are not menacing delinquents. They love nature and the fun outdoor challenges mountain biking allows.

Here are a few extra points on the mountain bike trails:

- Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of
- Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport
- Battle Creek needs a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Did you know? Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers)

- Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop
- Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur
- Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras

PS I thin Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.

THANK YOU!  
Best regards,  
Barbara Belknap



612.875.0156 mobile

[barbarabelknapdesign.com](http://barbarabelknapdesign.com)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Daniel.Hooker2](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Improve mountain biking at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:13:55 PM

You don't often get email from daniel.hooker2@target.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi there –

I wanted to write in support of mountain biking at Battle Creek given the master planning process ongoing right now. I would like to see Battle Creek's mountain biking trails and facilities expand and improve! I live in Hennepin County but I am very near the county border on the SE, and I regularly go to Battle Creek. It's a unique spot with some very challenging trails, and the trails often dry quickly meaning Battle Creek is often the only trail system near me open in the early spring weeks or after major rain events throughout the summer.

Mountain biking is expanding rapidly in popularity over the past several years, and with that expansion there is also the opportunity to expand diversity within the sport and within the park user population. In order to do this, Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new riders, as well as improvements in the overall trail layout to avoid conflict and improve wayfinding. Improving and expanding the utility and accessibility of the trail system will encourage new and more diverse rider population by creating a more welcoming and intuitive park. Building new official trails may also help with reducing unofficial or "bandit" trails that appear within the park.

The multi-use trail system as it is currently shows that mountain biking is possible to integrate with other trail users. Additionally the mountain biking trail volunteers maintain and improve the trail system for all users! We are happy to contribute to the overall condition of the park in exchange for the great opportunity to practice a fun sport safely at Battle Creek.

Thank you!  
Daniel Hooker

Daniel Hooker (he/him) | Sr Manager – Site Experience | Target Plus 📍+ | 1000 Nicollet Mall, TPS 21270 | Minneapolis, MN 55403

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ryan Seidel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** In support of MTB trails at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:59:20 PM

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You don't often get email from seidelryan@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

I was recently made aware of the improvements being done to Battle Creek and would like to voice my support of more Mountain Bike Trails and increasing fat bike trails for winter use.

As a resident of Saint Paul, I have found Battle Creek to be a very enjoyable place to spend time with my family. It allows my children to develop bike skills in a fantastic nature environment without having to contend with automobiles.

I believe MTB is also a great draw when people are deciding to visit a destination or decide if they'd like to move to a city.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Ryan Seidel  
651-707-7282



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

October 29, 2021

Ben Karp  
Ramsey County Parks and Recreation  
2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, MN 55109

Dear Mr. Karp,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. This letter reflects my personal comments. Another letter sends comments on behalf of the Friends of Maplewood Nature in my role as president of the Friends.

My wife Bonnie Watkins and I have owned a home on the river bluff between Fish Creek and Battle Creek for over 30 years. Battle Creek Park and Pig's Eye were a big part of why we chose to buy a house in this beautiful neighborhood. Our property includes almost an acre of bluff land and some day we may be interested in donating the undeveloped part of our property as part of the proposed Mississippi River Bluffs Open Space.

Public Input for the 2020 Draft Plan

The current draft has over 20 pages describing public participation in the 2020 planning process, but never mentions that the majority of written comments asked for inclusion of the 77.8 acre corrections grassland in the park. Through a public records request, a colleague obtained a copy of all public comments regarding the plan. She counted a total of 129 written submissions, of which 87 specifically asked for inclusion of the grassland in Battle Creek Park. The current plan mentions public support for acquisition of many other areas but ignores the overwhelming public support for inclusion of the grassland.

I do applaud all of your efforts to include, and address, diverse public input. As an immigrant myself, I can relate to how difficult it is to participate in public policy discussions when you're not familiar with the language or the process and while your time and energy are needed to provide basic support for your family.

Inclusion of Battle Creek Grassland

Two years ago, I was thrilled to see the 77.8-acre corrections grassland included as a possible park acquisition in a previous draft of the Battle Creek Plan. A year ago, I was one of many who expressed their disappointment that the grassland was not included in the 2020 draft of the plan. This is again my primary concern with the most recent draft of the plan. New information published recently reinforces the unique, special value of this grassland.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

The 77-acre grassland has special value because it is immediately adjacent to Battle Creek Regional Park on two sides. It enables the park trails to have beautiful unbroken sounds and views of nature. It provides important habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, sequesters carbon, cleans the air, cools the urban heat island and absorbs stormwater. In addition to these broader benefits, the recently released county-contracted natural resources report determined that the grassland is providing unique habitat for rare and declining bird species, specifically, eight different Species in Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) including the state-endangered Henslow's Sparrow. According to the report:

*Taken individually, the SGCN birds present on the northern parcel are regionally uncommon, particularly outside of typical migratory windows. Collectively, they represent a biological assemblage more typical of western grasslands, which is unique for Ramsey County and the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area.*

This is a truly unique natural area which should be preserved as an Environmental Natural Area within Battle Creek Regional Park. Some have suggested that part of the grassland should be preserved and part developed. However, five of the 8 SGCN species identified in the report are area-sensitive, and the 77.8 acres is close to the minimum which is needed by four of those species for successful nesting. Any fragmentation or reduction of the grassland will probably eliminate those species.

Frequent walks in Battle Creek Park are a big part of my personal mental health. I especially love the 1,000+ feet of trail which runs alongside the corrections grassland. This grassland feels like it is part of the park. Developing this grassland would be like developing the park.

I understand the county board's desire to develop this grassland for housing, and I appreciate everything that the county is doing to address the need for affordable housing. I believe there are other ways to meet the need for affordable housing without destroying sensitive natural areas.

Inclusion of the grassland in the park is fully consistent with the values expressed on p. 92 of the plan:

*The health of communities depends on their size--in general, smaller and more fragmented communities support fewer species, are more vulnerable to extinctions and invasions, and are less able to recover their diversity, particularly if other sources of native populations are not available nearby. Management therefore emphasizes improving connectivity, avoiding fragmentation of contiguous habitats, protecting natural waterways, and identifying and protecting critical habitats.*

If the grassland is included in the park, please note that the traditional approach of restoring native prairie may not be the best approach for this area. There is some indication that many of the grassland birds using this area may prefer the vegetation that is there now (except for the encroaching woody vegetation). Future management of this area should include consultation with ornithologists and other experts. The park currently includes a diversity of habitat. Perhaps appropriate maintenance of the old farm fields in the corrections grassland should be part of that diversity.

Birdability and the Grassland

Please include the entire 77.8 acres in the park plan, and please consider establishing these 77 acres as a model "Birdability" site for people with visual disabilities. I have collaborated with Carrol Henderson, retired DNR non-game supervisor, and Michael Hurben, local board member of the national Birdability

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organization, to identify and promote the potential value of this area for creation of Minnesota's first "Birdability" site for access by all nature lovers, regardless of disability. We suggest creation of a veranda-type site on the southern boundary of the grassland on Ramsey County correctional property where accessibility features could be provided and where the rich variety of prairie birdsong could be enjoyed by visually disabled birders, as well as many others. Enhanced with feeders and nest boxes, it would provide fantastic birding opportunities. Few urban areas even have such a resource; a protected, wild habitat normally found only well outside of city limits. But with this plan, it would be the first of its kind, a grassland specifically set aside for city residents whose mobility or access issues might prevent them from enjoying such habitat otherwise.

### Acquisition of Residential Properties

The draft plan states on page 56:

*There are many residential properties including inholdings within the Battle Creek Segment of the park along Battle Creek Road that Ramsey County is interested in acquiring.*

*Residential properties would only be acquired when land becomes available and from willing sellers. 527 Battle Creek Road is a residential property of importance to the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. This property would provide a critical access point and trail head for the regional park.*

The plan has similar comments regarding properties along the bluff between Battle Creek and Fish Creek, and properties near Fish Creek. The plan to acquire 527 Battle Creek Rd makes sense since that comes with 4 acres centrally located within the park. However, I question the plan to acquire additional residential properties along Battle Creek Road, especially when we have a housing shortage. The other properties on Battle Creek Rd include much needed housing and include a relatively small area of land. Does it really make sense to destroy existing housing to add a small amount of land to the park?

The plan should include clear criteria for acquisition of residential property, including an evaluation of the amount and type of housing to be lost vs the quality and amount of land to be gained.

### Pig's Eye

Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park plan should be moved from Low Priority to High Priority. There is an urgent need for directional signage, public access, parking spaces, restroom facilities, basic maintenance of natural surface trails, resting benches, and viewing platforms.

The Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park element of the Battle Creek Regional Park should be designated and managed as a Regional Park Reserve. This designation would emphasize preserving and improving native ecological landscapes to support birds, wildlife, and pollinators.

### Proposed Expansion of Parking Lots

On pp. 64 - 65, additional parking is proposed at a number of park entrances. I have used the existing lots hundreds of times and have never seen them full. Does it really make sense to pave more parkland for those rare times when the lots are full? Does it make sense to have that many people in the park at the

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

same time? If we add more parking and the expanded lots do fill up, the sheer numbers of park users will reduce the quality of the experience for everyone.

### Proposed Expansion of Bike Trails

While I appreciate that the 2021 draft plan proposes less expansion of bike trails than the 2020 draft, there is still too much proposed expansion, especially in the eastern part of Battle Creek Park. I used to hike the "off-road cycling/hiking" trails in the western part of the park and stopped using them due to safety concerns. Almost every mountain biker that I have met has been respectful and responsible, but even the most responsible biker might not be able to stop in time for a hiker who is just around the bend. It's great that the mountain bikers now have their own trails in the western segment of the park, but please don't add mountain biking to the unpaved trails in the eastern segment. We already have enough risk with the casual bikers who use the paved trails in the eastern segment.

### Fish Creek

I support the proposed inclusion of Fish Creek Open Space into Battle Creek Park, as well as inclusion of connecting bluff land between Fish Creek and the main segment of Battle Creek Park. I support the plan to prioritize passive recreation in the Fish Creek segment and restore native vegetation. I also support connection of existing hiking trails in the upper part of Fish Creek with new hiking trails down along the creek itself. However, acquisition of residential property should be based on criteria recommended above, with proper consideration for the impact of loss of existing housing.

### Maplewood Nature Center

Thank you for acknowledging the impact of last year's closure of Maplewood Nature Center (page 89). MNC actually just re-opened this week, with very limited programming. As programming is developed, I will contact you as president of the Friends of Maplewood Nature regarding possible partnering opportunities. I also encourage you to be in direct contact with city staff.

Thank you for your consideration of this input, and please feel free to contact me at [jzakelj@yahoo.com](mailto:jzakelj@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(signed)

John Zakelj  
471 Mystic St  
St. Paul, MN 55119

cc.  
Ramsey County Commissioners

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [john zakelj](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** John Zakelj's Comments regarding Battle Creek Park Plan  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 12:42:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [John Zakelj comments on BC Park Plan.pdf](#)

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**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Ben, attached are my personal comments regarding the master plan. This is in addition to comments I have submitted as president of the Friends of Maplewood Nature.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for all your work on this important project!

John Zakelj

Dear Mr. Karp:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Battle Creek Regional Park 2021 Master Plan. I am a member of a small team representing the Saint Paul Audubon Society and other like-minded organizations who, for almost a year, have been working to educate the Ramsey County Commissioners, Maplewood officials, and the public on the importance of saving the 77.79-acre property bounded by Battle Creek Regional Park, Century Avenue, and the county's correctional facility. Since this property contains about 6 acres of oak woods and about 6 acres of wetland with shrubs and trees, and the rest is mostly covered with grass and forage plants, I will refer to it hereinafter as "the grassland."

As you will see, in addition to the ecosystem services and habitat that grasslands typically provide, this grassland, despite its modest size, ranks among the sites of highest value for nesting grassland bird species in all of southeastern Minnesota. It should be an Environmental Natural Area within the park.

### Grasslands decimated

Unlike wetlands, grasslands have no protection in Minnesota. Grasslands are too easy to convert to row crops or building sites, and they need some management to keep them from being taken over by shrubs and trees. As a result, Minnesota has [lost more than 98%](#) of its pre-European-settlement grasslands, whereas the state [retains about half](#) of its wetlands. The National Audubon Society [reports](#) that grassland species are among the most imperiled groups of birds in the United States.

### Impressive collection of grassland bird species

Ramsey County hired Midwest Natural Resources, Inc., to conduct surveys of birds, plants, and insects in the grassland. The bird surveyor posted on eBird.org the results of his surveys on [May 18, 2021](#) and [May 25, 2021](#).

The following table presents information about the grassland bird species documented by MNR. Note the population trends and the various status designations of those species, including the endangered status of the Henslow's Sparrow in Minnesota.



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Species	MN Endangered <sup>i</sup>	Greatest Conservation Need <sup>ii</sup>	Area-Sensitive <sup>iii</sup>	MN Stewardship Species <sup>iv</sup>	Population Trend 1966-2019 <sup>v</sup>	
					Minnesota	U.S & Canada
Grasshopper Sparrow		●	●		-97%	-74%
Clay-colored Sparrow					-37%	-35%
Field Sparrow		●			-56%	-69%
Henslow's Sparrow	●	●	●		-67%	-63%*
Savannah Sparrow			●		-66%	-52%
Bobolink		●	●	●	-58%	-43%
Eastern Meadowlark		●	●		-68%	-74%
Dickcissel		●			-82%	-27%

The surveyor found surprising numbers of Bobolinks and Henslow's Sparrows. He noted that the Bobolinks were all males. It can be assumed that a similar number of females were on nests on the ground. The Henslow's sparrows were probably males singing from perches to declare their territories (it is difficult to detect them otherwise). Most of the breeding range of the Henslow's Sparrow is south and east of Minnesota, as shown on the map below. That may indicate that Minnesota will play an important role in this species's adaptation to climate change.



A great number of professional and recreational birders report their bird sightings to the eBird.org web site. I have searched the eBird.org reports of Henslow’s Sparrows in Minnesota in the 2021 nesting season, and found that Henslow’s Sparrows were reported from 51 venues in Minnesota, but only two sites reported more than six Henslow’s Sparrows, and most reported only one or two. Here are the sites where four or more Henslow’s Sparrows were reported.

1	Date	How Many	County	Place Name
2	6/26/2021	10	Houston	Ferndale Ridge to SE
3	5/26/2021	9	Dakota	Carleton College Cowling Arboretum
4	5/25/2021	6	Ramsey	Correctional Facility Fields
5	5/26/2021	6	Washington	Grey Cloud Dunes SNA
6	7/1/2021	5	Washington	Afton State Park
7	6/24/2021	5	Hennepin	Crow-Hassan Park Resrve
8	7/3/2021	5	Fillmore	Richard J Dorer Memorial Hdwd Forest
9	5/22/2021	4	Washington	Lake Elmo Park Reserve
10	6/15/2021	4	Washington	Lake Elmo Park Reserve
11	5/28/2021	4	Jackson	String Lakes WPA
12	6/10/2021	4	Rock	Touch The Sky Prairie NWR

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

In addition to the relatively high number of Henslow's Sparrows, the "assemblage" of grassland bird species at Battle Creek compares well with the assemblages at the other sites that reported six or more Henslow's Sparrows, as shown in this comparison.

<b>Battle Creek 5/25/21</b> <a href="https://ebird.org/checklist/S90833348">https://ebird.org/checklist/S90833348</a>	<b>Houston County 6/26/21</b> <a href="https://ebird.org/checklist/S90833348">https://ebird.org/checklist/S90833348</a>
2 Grasshopper Sparrow	2 Sedge Wren
1 Clay-colored Sparrow	3 Field Sparrow
1 Field Sparrow	10 Henslow's Sparrow
7 Savannah Sparrow	5 Bobolink
6 Henslow's Sparrow	2 Eastern Meadowlark
16 Bobolink	2 Dickcissel
2 Eastern Meadowlark	
Plus Dickcissel*	
Sedge Wren*	
*These species, which are late migrants, are in MNR's final report, presumably found during plant or insect surveys. John Zakelj and I also confirmed these species on our July 1 walkthrough with a Star Tribune reporter.	
<b>Carleton College Arboretum 5/26/21</b> <a href="https://ebird.org/checklist/S89788689">https://ebird.org/checklist/S89788689</a>	<b>Grey Cloud Dunes SNA 5/26/21</b> <a href="https://ebird.org/checklist/S89059588">https://ebird.org/checklist/S89059588</a>
14 Grasshopper Sparrow	10 Grasshopper Sparrow
17 Clay-colored Sparrow	7 Clay-colored Sparrow
8 Field Sparrow	6 Field Sparrow
9 Henslow's Sparrow	1 Lark Sparrow
6 Eastern Meadowlark	2 Vesper Sparrow
	6 Henslow's Sparrow
	1 Eastern Meadowlark

In its summary of the bird surveys, MNR reported:

Taken individually, the SGCN birds present on the northern parcel [the grassland] are regionally uncommon, particularly outside of typical migratory windows. Collectively, they represent a biological assemblage more typical of western grasslands, which is unique for Ramsey County and the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area [*emphasis added*].

The above comparison shows this to be true, perhaps even an understatement.

### Area-Sensitive

A study by James Herkert<sup>vi</sup> identifies five Midwestern grassland bird species as “area-sensitive.” The probability that those species will nest in any grassland is affected by the size of the grassland (the “patch size”). The MNR surveyor found all five area-sensitive species in our grassland.

Herkert calculated the probabilities that the species will nest in a patch as follows:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Patch Size for 50% Probability of Nesting</u>	
	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Eastern Meadowlark	5	12
Grasshopper Sparrow	30	74
Savannah Sparrow	40	99
Bobolink	50	124
Henslow's Sparrow	55	136

Based on the size of our grassland (roughly 66 acres of actual grass cover), the Eastern Meadowlark is the only area-sensitive species we would expect to nest there. And yet, the other species were also present during the 2021 nesting season. It has been suggested that construction could be allowed on part of the grassland and the rest could be saved as wildlife habitat. Herkert's information tells us that any fragmentation or reduction in size of the grassland would, in all probability, eliminate at least four of the five area-sensitive bird species.

### Birdability

A nation-wide organization, [Birdability](#), is identifying sites where conditions allow people with mobility or vision impairments to enjoy birding. With the addition of suitable parking, handicapped-accessible portable toilets, and a veranda-like viewing platform along the southern boundary of the grassland, it could become a Birdability site where all people could enjoy the grassland birds—by sight and/or by sound. Our team member Carroll Henderson, creator of the

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Minnesota DNR's Nongame Wildlife Program (recently retired) has raised this possibility with the Birdability board, who have responded enthusiastically. A Birdability site would be a feather in the cap of Ramsey County, attracting birders of all abilities from near and far to take in the sights and sounds of the grassland.

### Managing the Grassland

We are well aware that the grassland is covered mostly with non-native plant species. The rare and declining bird species that nest in the grassland find it to their liking, and we are not advocating converting it to native prairie anytime soon, if ever. The grassland needs to be managed to maintain its structure and to keep it from being overtaken by trees and shrubs. Any conversion to native prairie should be undertaken with caution.

Trails should not be built through, or around, the grassland as the nesting bird species need as much contiguous coverage as possible (see "area-sensitive" above) and minimal human disturbance to increase nesting success.

### Environmental Natural Area

The grassland fits the definition of an Environmental Natural Area as described on page 45 of the final draft Master Plan. The grassland should be declared an Environmental Natural Area within Battle Creek Regional Park. Please make that happen.

Thank you.

Julian Sellers  
1875 Juliet Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN  
651-698-5737

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<sup>i</sup> [https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural\\_resources/ets/endlist.pdf](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/ets/endlist.pdf)

ii

[http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bigpicture/cwcs/chapters\\_appendix/appendix\\_b.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/bigpicture/cwcs/chapters_appendix/appendix_b.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Herkert, J. R. (1994c). The effects of habitat fragmentation on Midwestern grassland bird communities. *Ecological Applications* 4 (3):461-471

<sup>iv</sup> <https://mn.audubon.org/conservation/stewardship-birds-minnesota>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/>

<sup>vi</sup> Herkert, J. R. (1994c). The effects of habitat fragmentation on Midwestern grassland bird communities. *Ecological Applications* 4 (3):461-47



**LEASE AGREEMENT**

**between**

**THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

**and**

**THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

**THIS LEASE AGREEMENT** (“Lease”), is made and entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ by and between the **BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**, a municipal corporation under the laws of the State of Minnesota (the “Board”), and the **CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA**, a home rule charter city under the laws of the State of Minnesota (the “City”).

**WHEREAS**, the City is owner of certain real property situated in Section 10, Township 28, Range 22, commonly referred to as Pig’s Eye Regional Park, described and depicted in Exhibit “A”, attached hereto and incorporated herein (the “Property”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Board currently uses a portion of the Property and wishes to lease space from the City and to thereupon construct, maintain, and operate an excavated soils recycling and storage site; and

**WHEREAS**, the City is willing to enter into a lease agreement with the Board for said public purposes, consistent with the requirements and safety of the Board’s water works system, and consistent with the requirements and safety of City employees and property, now or in the future.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED** by and between the parties hereto as follows:

That, in consideration of the mutual promises and agreements of the parties hereto, the City hereby grants to the Board permission to enter upon those portions of the Property as shown in Exhibit “A” and to use the same to construct, maintain, and operate an excavated soils recycling and storage site (the “Facilities”), subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Leased Premises

The City does hereby lease to the Board, and the Board does hereby lease from the City, that certain tract of land situated in the City of Saint Paul, County of Ramsey, as more fully described and depicted in Exhibit “B” (the “Leased Premises”).



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### 2. Term of Lease

- a. The initial term of this Lease will commence on the date first written above and will terminate on December 31, ~~2041~~2050.
- ~~b. This lease will automatically be renewed for an unlimited number of additional five (5) year terms (each a "Renewal Term"), unless the Board is in default beyond applicable notice and cure periods of any of the terms or conditions of this Lease, or unless either party notifies the other six (6) months prior to commencement of the succeeding Renewal Term of its intention to not renew the Lease.~~

### 3. Rent

- a. The Board does hereby covenant and agree to pay the City as and for rent of the Leased Premises the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00) per annum.
- ~~b. The Board will pay 25% of the costs incurred by the City up to, but not exceeding, \$100,000, into the City's cost for schematic design of Pig's Eye Regional Park.~~

### 4. Board's Use of Leased Premises

- a. The Board may construct, operate, and maintain the Facilities and all other appurtenant facilities as have been approved by the City. Construction of such appurtenant facilities may not commence until acknowledgement of such approval is received.
- b. The Board will use the Leased Premises only in accordance with good engineering practices and in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local rules, laws, and regulations. This Lease is contingent upon the Board receiving all permits, licenses, or approvals from all local, state, or federal land use jurisdictions or agencies for the Board's permitted use of the Leased Premises. The Board will at its sole cost and expense, obtain all such necessary permits, licenses, or approvals, and the City agrees to cooperate with the Board in its pursuits thereof.
- c. The use of explosives of any kind or for any purpose whatsoever within the Leased Premises, including ammunition in hand-held impact-driven type tools, is expressly prohibited.
- d. The parties agree that the Saint Paul Regional Water Services General Manager or their designee and the City of Saint Paul Director of Parks and Recreation or their designee may from time to time, as deemed necessary, enter into a Memorandum of Understanding concerning operational requirements in a form similar to attached Exhibit C.

### 5. Board's Use to be Exclusive

- a. The Board will enjoy exclusive use of the Leased Premises, subject to the terms and conditions of this Lease.
- b. The City will not lease any portion of the Leased Premises to another party, except with the consent of the Board.

### 6. Planned Improvements

- a. The Board will provide plans and specifications for the construction of the Facilities, subject to approval by the City.
- b. The Board will not make any changes or additions to the Facilities, except with the consent of the City.

### 7. Board's Obligations and Responsibilities

- a. With relation to the design, installation, construction, maintenance, repair, modification, or operation of the Facilities, or portion thereof, located within the Leased Premises, anything not herein explicitly provided to be furnished, done, or paid for by the City will be furnished, done, and paid for by the Board.
- b. The Board is responsible for the actions of its staff, agents, and employees during their operation of the Facilities.
- c. The Board will at all times keep the Leased Premises free from litter or graffiti; keep all components located within the Leased Premises clean and in good condition and state of repair; and will not allow any condition to exist that would create a nuisance or hazard.
- d. The Board will not unnecessarily create, cause, or allow any nuisance or hazard to persons or property within or adjacent to the Leased Premises by reason of construction, operation, or maintenance of the Facilities, or permit its employees, agents, engineers, or contractors to do so.
- e. The Board has sole responsibility for maintenance of the Leased Premises, including but not limited to surface stability, snow removal, trash hauling, normal lawn care, tree-trimming, and other maintenance as may be required.
- f. The Board has the sole responsibility for ensuring that access remains open for active Minnesota Pollution Control Agency monitoring wells on or adjacent to the property, and that monitoring wells on site are not negatively impacted by site improvements. Monitoring well locations depicted by Exhibit D.
- g. The Board will promptly pay all costs in any way caused by, related to, or arising out of, or resulting from its Facilities, except as may arise out of the negligence of the City, and the City will not be liable for any expense whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, in connection with maintenance or other operation of the Facilities.

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- h. The Board will pay a portion of all special assessments levied against the Property in the percentage of the quotient of Leased Premises area divided by Property area.
- i. The Board will invest time and materials into a project to build a parking lot and entrance into Pig's Eye Regional Park. The project will be directed by the City's Parks and Recreation Design and Construction Manager and approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation.
- h.j. The Board will strive to minimize the removal of any trees within the Leased Premises, and if practicable, the Board will replace one-for-one any tree that it removes within the Leased Premises, with the species and the location determined by the appropriate persons within the Parks and Recreation Department.

### 8. City's Rights

- a. The City reserves all rights in the Leased Premises not herein or hereby expressly granted to the Board, including but not necessarily limited to: the right to install any facilities City might deem desirable or necessary; the right to alter, extend, relocate, or remove its facilities or portions thereof, now or in the future, as are located within the Leased Premises.
- b. At all times during the term of this Lease, the City has the right, by itself, through its agents, and employees, to enter into and upon the Leased Premises during reasonable business hours to examine and inspect the same or at any time in case of emergency.

### 9. No Liability on the City

- a. The City is under no obligation or responsibility to act as engineering consultant to the Board in any matter related to construction of the Facilities or any future Board improvements as may be permitted.
- b. It is understood and agreed by and between the parties hereto that any plan or data supplied by the City regarding the Leased Premises are approximations only and that the City explicitly does not guarantee such plans or data to be either complete or correct.
- c. The City has no obligation to repair or maintain any improvement, personal property, or equipment brought into the Leased Premises or installed therein by the Board for the Board's purposes. The Board is permitted to remove said personal property of the Board upon the termination of this Lease. The Board will, at its own expense, repair any damage to the Property caused or created by the installation or removal of the Facilities.
- d. Except due to the City's willful misconduct or gross negligence, the City is not liable for any damage to the Leased Premises or Facilities by third parties, known

or unknown, to the Leased Premises or Facilities, nor will the City be liable for any lost revenue, business, or profits of the Board.

### 10. Notices

- a. All notices herein provided to be given, or that may be given by either party to the other, will be deemed to have been fully given when served personally on the Board or the City, or when made in writing and deposited in the United States Mail, certified and postage prepaid, and addressed to the Board or the City at the addresses below:

If to the Board: Board of Water Commissioners  
Attn: General Manager, Saint Paul Regional Water Services  
1900 Rice Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55113

If to the City: City of Saint Paul  
Attn: Director, Department of Parks and Recreation  
City Hall Annex, Suite 300  
25 Fourth St W  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

- b. The address to which notices will be mailed may be changed by written notice given by either party to the other.

### 11. Each Party Liable for its Own Acts; No Waiver of Immunity

Each of the parties will be responsible for its own acts and for those of its agents, officers and employees, and for any liability, damages or consequences resulting therefrom. Each party reserves and expressly does not waive any immunities or defenses available under Minn. Stat. Chapter 466, et.al, or any other law related thereto.

### 12. Insurance

The Board and the City each individually certify and agree that each is a duly authorized self-insured entity in accordance with Minnesota State law for purposes of general liability, property damage, and workers compensation claims; and furthermore, the Board and the City each affirm and reserve entitlement to all available immunities, defenses, and protections to the fullest extent provided by law.

### 13. Assignment and Subletting

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

The Board will not assign, sublet, or transfer this Lease, or assign operation or management of the Facilities, without consent of the City, which consent must be obtained prior to the execution of any agreement to sublease the Leased Premises.

### 14. Termination

a. The City may terminate this lease for any reason upon one-year written notice to the Board after the first five years of the Term. The City will compensate the Board for the termination by paying a prorated amount of the Board's investments into the Leased Premises. This amount shall be the cost of the Board's investment into schematic design under § 3(b) and the Board's investment into a parking lot and entrance under § 7(i).

~~a.b.~~ If for cause, the Board or the City will provide the other party with sixty (60) days written notice of intent to terminate this Lease. If the notified party fails to cure the stated cause within sixty (60) days of receipt of notice, the Lease will be terminated, with no compensation for damages owed to the notified party.

~~b. If the lease terminates via non-renewal, pursuant to Section 2.b. of this Lease, no damages will be owed or due either party.~~

### 15. Ownership of Board Improvements Following Termination of Lease

Upon termination of this Lease under Section 14, Board improvements become the property of the Board. The City will be allowed to purchase from the Board any and all Board improvements it chooses, with purchase price to be 100% of the depreciated value of said Board improvements.

### 16. Miscellaneous.

a. This Lease constitutes the entire agreement and understanding of the parties regarding the Property. Any modifications of, addenda to, or amendment to this Lease must be in writing and executed by both parties. No provision of this Lease will be deemed waived by either party unless expressly waived in writing by the waiving party. No waiver may be implied by delay or any other act or omission of either party. No waiver by either party of any provisions of this Lease constitutes a waiver of such provision with respect to any subsequent matter relating to such provision.

b. This Lease will be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota. Any legal action may only be commenced and proceed in the relevant district court in Ramsey County, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

c. If any term of this Lease is found to be void or invalid, such invalidity will not affect the remaining terms of this Lease, which will continue in full force and effect.

- d. Exhibits “A”, “B”, “C”, and “D” listed below are hereby incorporated into this Lease by reference.

Exhibit “A” *Property*

Exhibit “B” *Leased Premises*

Exhibit “C” *MOU*

Exhibit “D” *Monitoring Wells*

- e. The parties may sign this Lease Agreement in counterparts, each of which constitutes an original, but all of which together constitute one instrument.
- f. The parties agree that the electronic signature of a party to this Lease Agreement will be as valid as an original signature of such party and will be effective to bind such party to this Lease Agreement. The parties further agree that any document (including this Lease Agreement and any attachments or exhibits to this Lease Agreement containing, or to which there is affixed, an electronic signature will be deemed (i) to be “written” or “in writing,” (ii) to have been signed and (iii) to constitute a record established and maintained in the ordinary course of business and an original written record when printed from electronic files. For purposes hereof, “electronic signature” also means a manually signed original signature that is then transmitted by any electronic means, including without limitation a faxed version of an original signature or an electronically scanned and transmitted version (e.g., via PDF) of an original signature. Any party’s failure to produce the original signature of any electronically transmitted signature will not affect the enforceability of this Lease Agreement.

*[the remainder of this page left intentionally blank]*



# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

## BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Approved:

By \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_  
~~Patrick Shea~~ Stephen P. Schneider, General Manager Mara Humphrey, President  
Saint Paul Regional Water Services

By \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Veith Mollie Gagnelius, Secretary  
Assistant City Attorney

## CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Approved:

By \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah Sullivan Jamie Tincher, Deputy Mayor  
Assistant City Attorney

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Hahm, Director of Parks and  
Recreation

By \_\_\_\_\_  
John McCarthy, Director  
Office of Financial Service

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Shari Moore  
City Clerk

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

1/21/2021

Ramsey County Parcel Report



## Ramsey County Parcel Report

Parcel Report Created: Jan 21 2021 14:45

<b>Parcel ID</b>	102822210002
<b>Address</b>	0 PIGSEYE LAKE RD
<b>City St ZIP</b>	SAINT PAUL MN 55119
<b>Tax Payer</b>	CITY OF ST PAUL
<b>Tax Address</b>	25 4TH ST W RM 1000
<b>Tax City St ZIP</b>	ST PAUL MN 55102-1692
<b>Lot</b>	No Data
<b>Block</b>	No Data
<b>Plat Name</b>	SECTION 10 TOWN 28 RANGE 22
<b>Parcel Deed</b>	No Data acres
<b>EMV Land</b>	\$8,459,700.00
<b>EMV Building</b>	\$NaN
<b>EMV Total</b>	\$8,459,700.00
<b>Total Tax</b>	\$0.00
<b>Special Assessment</b>	\$0.00
<b>Tax Exempt</b>	Yes
<b>Last Sale Date</b>	No Data
<b>Sale Price</b>	\$NaN
<b>Homestead</b>	No
<b>Use Type</b>	EXEMPT, VACANT LAND
<b>Dwelling</b>	No Data
<b>Home Style</b>	No Data
<b>Structure</b>	No Data
<b>Living Area</b>	No Data sq.ft.
<b>Year Built</b>	No Data
<b>Garage</b>	No
<b>Garage Area</b>	No Data sq.ft.
<b>Heating Type</b>	No Data
<b>School District</b>	St. Paul School District
<b>Watershed</b>	METRO WATERSHED



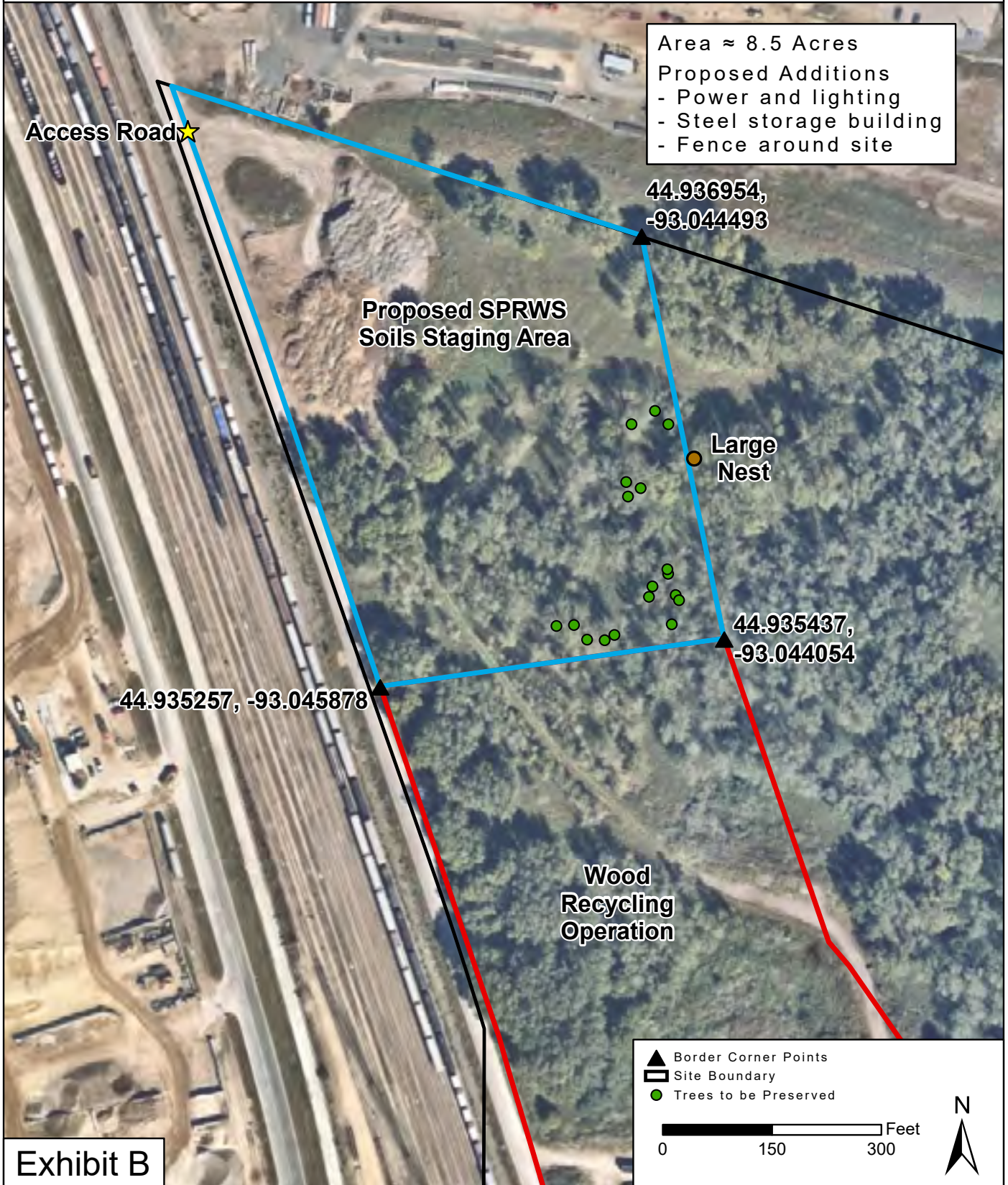
The user of this report acknowledges that the City/County shall not be liable for any damages, and expressly waives all claims, and agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City/County from any and all claims brought by the User, its employees or agents, or third parties which arise out of the User's access or use of data provided. \*Total Tax includes special assessment due if any.

**EXHIBIT A**

1/1



# SPRWS Leased Premises



Aerial Imagery courtesy of Nearmap

Exhibit B



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

between

**THE BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

and

**THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) made this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_, by and between the **BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL** (“Board”), a board established pursuant to the City of Saint Paul’s Charter and Ordinances d/b/a Saint Paul Regional Water Services (“SPRWS”) and acting through its General Manager, and the **CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA**, a home rule charter city under the laws of the State of Minnesota (the “City”), acting through the Director of its Parks and Recreation Department.

**Recitals**

- A. A Lease Agreement was made and entered into on the 139th day of July~~March~~, 2021 (the “Lease Agreement”) in which the City grants to the Board permission to enter upon certain portions of property owned by the City as shown in Lease Exhibit B of the Lease Agreement and to use the same to construct, maintain, and operate an excavated soils recycling and storage site.
- B. The term of said Lease Agreement terminates on December 31, 2041~~2050~~ ~~and will automatically renew for an unlimited number of additional five year terms, unless either party notifies the other six months prior to commencement of any succeeding renewal term of its intention to not renew the Lease Agreement.~~
- C. The Board and the City agree that ~~due to the open ended term of the Lease Agreement,~~ certain operational requirements are best addressed through a Memorandum of Understanding, which the parties will update from time to time as needed and agreed upon. This and any future MOUs will be added as an Exhibit to the Lease Agreement.

**Agreement**

Consistent with the foregoing Recitals, the Board and the City hereby mutually understand the following:

- 1) Board personnel will remove soils on an annual basis as practicable and as site conditions permit.
- 2) Testing of soils as those soils are removed from the site will be conducted by the Board and copies of the test results will be shared with the City.
- 3) Board personnel will develop the site on an as-need basis, keeping unused portions of the leased premises undisturbed until needed. Previously marked and recorded cottonwood

**EXHIBIT C**

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

trees, exceeding twelve inches in diameter at breast height, will not be disturbed by the Board without written consent from the City. See Exhibit B of the Lease Agreement.

- 4) Consent of the City for planned improvements under Section 6 of said Lease Agreement may be considered given upon written consent executed by the Director of the City's Parks and Recreation Department.
- 5) The Board and the City agree that the stipulations of this Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed on an annual basis and amended as agreed upon by written addendum executed by the SPRWS General Manager and the Director of the City's Parks and Recreation Department, and will become an Exhibit to the Lease Agreement.
- 6) The parties may sign this Memorandum of Understanding in counterparts, each of which constitutes an original, but all of which together constitute one instrument.
- 7) The parties agree that the electronic signature of a party to this Memorandum of Understanding will be as valid as an original signature of such party and will be effective to bind such party to this Memorandum of Understanding. The parties further agree that any document (including this Memorandum of Understanding and any attachments or exhibits to this Memorandum of Understanding) containing, or to which there is affixed, an electronic signature will be deemed (i) to be "written" or "in writing," (ii) to have been signed and (iii) to constitute a record established and maintained in the ordinary course of business and an original written record when printed from electronic files. For purposes hereof, "electronic signature" also means a manually signed original signature that is then transmitted by any electronic means, including without limitation a faxed version of an original signature or an electronically scanned and transmitted version (e.g., via PDF) of an original signature. Any party's failure to produce the original signature of any electronically transmitted signature will not affect the enforceability of this Memorandum of Understanding.
- 8) The undersigned concur with this Memorandum of Understanding and hereby certify that he or she is the duly authorized representative of their respective party.

**BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS      CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
**OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL**

Patrick Shea~~Stephen P. Schneider~~  
General Manager  
Saint Paul Regional Water Services

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

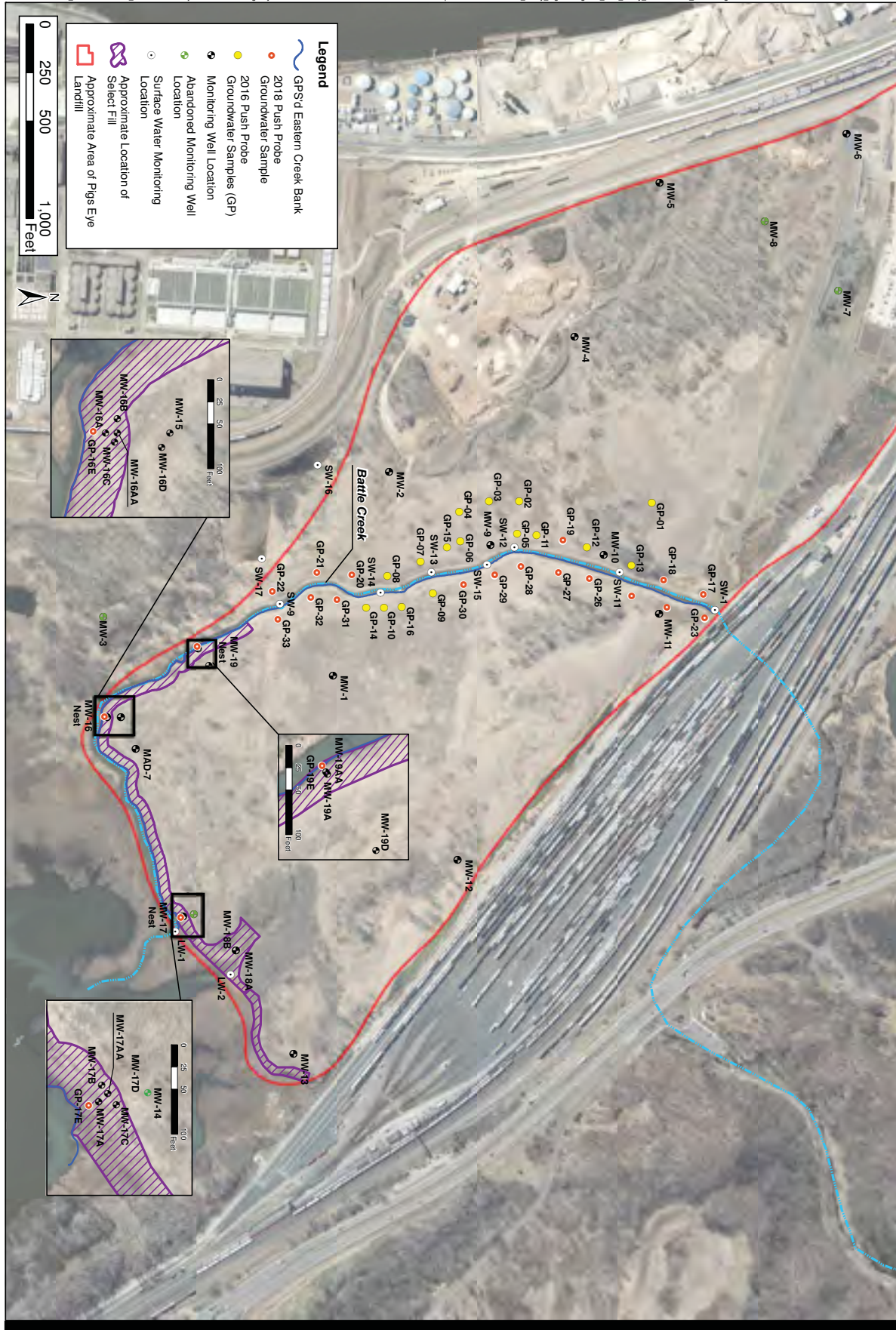
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Hahm  
Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT C**

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Last saved by: SCOTT.BUSKEY(2018-05-08)  
 Filename: P:\Water\_Env\MP\CAFY18\_MP\CAFY18 Projects\60562913 - Pigs Eye Landfill Pilot Studies\900-CAD-GIS\920-GIS or Graphics\PROJECTS\Pilot\_Study\_Figures\Figure2\_Pilot\_Study\_Groundwater\_Monitoring.mxd



**EXHIBIT D**

Pig's Eye Lake  
 Pilot Study  
 Saint Paul, MN  
 Project No.: 60562913 Date: 5/8/2018

Pilot Study  
 Groundwater Monitoring Activities

**AECOM**

**Figure: 2**



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments



P.O. Box 211453    651-645-7509  
Eagan, MN 55121    lona@wildernessinthecity.org

October 27, 2021

Mr. Ben Karp, Landscape Designer, [Benjamin.Karp@ramseycounty.us](mailto:Benjamin.Karp@ramseycounty.us)  
Chair Toni Carter, Ramsey County Commissioners, [Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Toni.Carter@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
Mr. Mark McCabe, Director, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation, [Mark.McCabe@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:Mark.McCabe@co.ramsey.mn.us)  
2015 Van Dyke St.  
Maplewood, Minnesota, 55109

RE: draft Battle Creek Regional Park master plan

Dear Mr. Karp, Chair Carter and Mr. McCabe,

Thank you for compiling the 2021 *draft* Battle Creek Regional Park master plan (Plan). The Legacy of Nature Alliance (LONA) brings together organizations and individuals with a unifying mission, “to ensure ecosystems are restored and preserved within the metropolitan regional parks system and throughout the entire region by providing high-quality habitat for wildlife and year-round Nature-based opportunities to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.” There are currently twenty-eight member organizations in LONA with thousands of metro residents on mailing and contact lists. We offer the following comments to the Plan.

### **Regional parks are Nature-based**

Here in the Twin Cities metro, we are fortunate to have a very good park system. From small city parks to park reserves we have parks for nearly every user. Small city and neighborhood parks are designed for horseshoes, pick-up basketball, soccer, softball and tennis; they accommodate more intensive recreation. The regional parks and park reserve system was initiated in 1974 to “protect and preserve” the last remaining large tracts of land for outdoor recreation. This Nature-based park system with its high-quality ecotypes such as Oak Savanna and Prairie, provides habitat for wildlife including endangered species, stormwater storage, climate resilience and respite for humans.

The Regional Parks Policy plan (RPPP), promulgated by the Metropolitan Council and the park implementing agencies (including Ramsey County) guides the regional park system. Regional parks are defined as, “Area(s) of natural or ornamental quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and trail uses.” In addition to the fifty-six regional parks and regional park reserves, the system has almost four hundred miles of regional trails. Trail miles within the parks themselves are not tracked by MetCouncil. The RPP states (p16), “The Regional Parks System plays a key role in providing parks and open space for the metropolitan area. But by itself, it cannot and was never intended to provide all the metropolitan area’s recreational opportunities.”

## Community engagement

We note the Plan includes an extensive overview of community engagement as part of the planning. We applaud the outreach focused on the diversity of communities that reside in Ramsey County. However, while outreach included intense recreational users such as mountain bikers, there was lack of engagement for environmental and conservation organizations.<sup>1</sup>

LONA members have often attended regional park planning meetings throughout the metro. A key deficiency in the community engagement process is failure to educate attendees about the role of regional parks in the larger park system and to emphasize regional parks as Nature-based. Rather, posterboards in which only built “amenities” are offered as options (e.g., photos of asphalt trails, extensive playgrounds, mountain biking) and information on the impacts of construction associated with the amenities is not provided. Rather, particularly for Nature-based parks, photos should show Nature, e.g., restored Prairie and Oak Savanna, wildlife and Nature-based activities. The draft Battle Creek master plan indicates many citizens emphasizing the need to protect Nature, yet the plan adds more access points, parking lots, trails and trailheads.

## Natural resource conservation, protection & restoration as Priority #1

Contained in the almost two-hundred-page Plan, approximately eighty pages are devoted to natural resource stewardship. A key conclusion of community outreach is to keep the park as natural as possible (p32). From p33 of the RPPP, “Natural resource restoration and protection is a key objective in the Regional Parks System.” With these caveats it is apparent the number one priority for the park is to conserve and restore the natural resource base. In the site conditions section of the Plan, it states animal and plant inventories are inadequate for making management decisions with fragmentation and exotic species degrading and threatening the native species trying to survive in the park. (p51)

In the 25-year Legacy Parks and Trails plan designed to guide spending of Legacy Parks and Trails funds, citizens state their primary reason for voting themselves a tax increase with the Legacy Amendment was for “clean water and to protect Nature”. Yet, the bulk of Legacy Parks and Trails funds these past 13 years has been spent on built infrastructure (approximately 80%) and less than 3% on Nature and the natural resource base of the regional parks.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to any further construction projects in Battle Creek Regional Park, animal and plant inventories must be conducted. Additionally, the sole natural resource manager for all Ramsey County parks must be supplemented with additional staff beyond Conservation Corps volunteers. The inventories and staffing including a full-time ecologist which would be an appropriate use of Legacy Parks and Trails funds under the “taking care of what we have” pillar in the 25-year Parks and Trails Legacy plan.

## Nature is the basis

To help ensure stewardship and natural resources are considered in all aspects of the Plan’s implementation we suggest overlaying the natural resource and stewardship portions with other plan components, especially “development.” This will help guarantee conversations about park projects are conducted between the various departments.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is the Ramsey County-provided list of those invited to the “enviros” meeting for community engagement: MNDNR MNPCA, NPS, RWMWD, USACE, USF&W, City of St Paul, Ramsey Soil & Water, Audubon Society, Great River Passage, NRRI RWMWD, NPS, Friends of the Miss River, city of St. Paul, city of Maplewood, CWMA manager, DNR non game, DNR wildlife Xerxes society. Note most invitees are agency staff and we were told very few on the list attended. We asked to be invited but were not.

<sup>2</sup>These conclusions are based on reviews of projects submitted to Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Legislature along with an assessment by LONA members of regional park spending 2018-2019. Park projects for 2020-2021 followed a similar pattern.

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

## Acquisition

We appreciate the draft plan's intent to acquire inholdings from willing sellers as they become available. Yet, the plan omits an obvious and important parcel, the 78-acre grassland adjacent to Battle Creek RP on the north and west sides. This grassland has been identified in a Ramsey County-directed ecosurvey as habitat and a nesting site for rare bird species including the Bobolink, Dickcissel and Henslow's Sparrow.<sup>3</sup> In previous iterations of Battle Creek plans, this grassland was slated for inclusion in the park. This would be a common sense action as the grassland is currently county property which would incur no land transfer costs, the grassland is a rare and highly diverse parcel and exactly the type that should be preserved as an Environment Natural Area.

## Trails

LONA understands the importance of trails in regional parks. However, too many trails and associated infrastructure threaten the very basis of these Nature-based parks. Our detailed concerns are listed below. We appreciate the Plan indicates the number of proposed trails (from the concept plan) has been reduced. However a great deal of park acreage is proposed for trails, particularly mountain bike tracks. Battle Creek is less than two thousand acres, yet thirty-two miles of trails, including seven miles of new trails, four of which are for mountain bikes, are proposed. We request the additional mountain bike trails, the paved trail through the center of the eastern portion of the park and along Highway 61 and the Nature trail corridors be removed from the Plan. Also, ensure connecting trails, p60, e.g., those proposed between Fish Creek and Battle Creek and the 494/Century Ave loop are constructed along roadways rather than fragmenting the park further. Any trail construction along the bluffs must be considered in the context of possibly rare habitats and historical uses.

## Mountain bike trails

There are a number of concerns associated with mountain biking. Shared trails lead to conflicts between users even when the mountain bikers are being courteous, it is very disruptive for hikers and wildlife to have mountain bikes on their tail. Also, the western portion of the park appears to have been completely given over to one user group comprised mostly of young white males (self-identified in the park mountain bike survey) and a private entity, the Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC).

We suggest rather, that mountain bike trails be instituted in degraded areas such as gravel pits, old mine sites and even amending unused ball fields at public schools for school-based teams. As is stated in the RPPP, "the regional park system... cannot and was never intended to provide all the metropolitan area's recreational opportunities."

Regarding Nature corridors, LONA supports the community desire to increase Nature programming. This is crucial for the community to learn, understand and respect Nature. Classes provided through the public school system and the community center can provide the programming without adding more trails to the park. Phenology and bird watching are good Nature-based activities that are easily accomplished on the current trail system. Observations and discussion can be reviewed back in the classroom or community center.

## Construction and effect zone

Construction of trails initiates the disturbance. The "effect zone" of trail construction can range from 20 to 50 feet. According to the parks manager at MetCouncil, each mile of regional trail with a 30-foot width utilizes 3.6 acres.<sup>4</sup> Trail construction includes grading which disturbs soil structure and can kill organisms living in the path of the grader, removal of trees and shrubs, noise and lighting. Removal of plants increases sedimentation into surface waters and diminishes habitat. Noise will diminish wildlife's ability to communicate with one another and lighting has been shown to disorient birds. Often, too, the corridor along a trail is not restored with native plants providing easy entre for invasive species.

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<sup>3</sup> Copies of the ecosurvey can be obtained from Jean Krueger, Ramsey County Property manager.

<sup>4</sup> Email conversation, Emmett Mullin, Sep 14, 2021.

## Fragmentation

A key concern with trails is fragmentation of habitat which has a number of impacts<sup>5</sup>:

- Animal travel corridors are disrupted and barriers are created that isolate populations from potential breeding opportunities. For example, we have seen turtles crushed by horses as they try to cross trails to lay eggs.
- Following fragmentation, habitat for forest species that favor forest interiors (such as Orioles, Tanagers and Wood Thrushes) is lost and there is greater vulnerability to predators and nest robbers (such as Raccoons). This is also true for grassland bird species.
- Species that cannot easily disperse, including reptiles and amphibians, are more likely than other species to be harmed by habitat fragmentation. Some plant species also cannot disperse across a trail.
- Smaller remaining habitats are more susceptible to invasive species, often resulting in a loss of species diversity. (Invasive and exotic species are often at the core of natural resource work.)
- Scenic views are lost, making the places we choose to live and visit less beautiful.
- By losing intact Forests and Prairies, we are losing the ability to clean the air and buffer the environment from pollution.

## Maintenance

Trails require regular maintenance, mowing, sometimes pesticide use and for asphalt trails, de-icing salt. Increasing trail miles increases maintenance costs which, as you know, have been grossly underfunded by the Legislature. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), 20% of the state's air pollution comes from "off road vehicles" including lawn and garden equipment<sup>6</sup>. Gas powered lawn equipment emits a number of criteria pollutants including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter < 2.5 microns. The MPCA estimates that the overall economic cost of health effects associated with exposure to current levels of air pollution in Minnesota may exceed \$30 billion per year<sup>7</sup>.

The impacts of pesticide use are widely known, from the precipitous decline of pollinating insects including bumble bees such as the Rusty-patched Bumble Bee to mental health deficiencies in children, pesticide use must be avoided as much as possible. Maintaining trail right-of-ways that may have been invaded by exotic species can lead to pesticide use.

Recently, the impacts of de-icing salt are coming to bear including the salinization of ground and surface waters. Use of de-icing salt on asphalt trails contributes to this problem and is of particular concern in the regional parks where water bodies tend to be smaller and more prone to contamination at lower concentrations.

## Winter recreation area

### The Climate Crisis

This year's drought and wildfires further elucidate the impacts the climate crisis will wreak on our human and non-human communities. Recent data from the University of Minnesota's Climate Adaptation Partnership indicate if greenhouse gas emissions are not substantially reduced immediately, under a high emissions scenario, approximately 20 days annually will exceed 100 degrees F in Ramsey County by 2100 (See figure "Average number of days per year when daily highs exceed 100 degrees F"). The heat will be in addition to other severe weather events. We are in crisis and business as usual increases the peril.

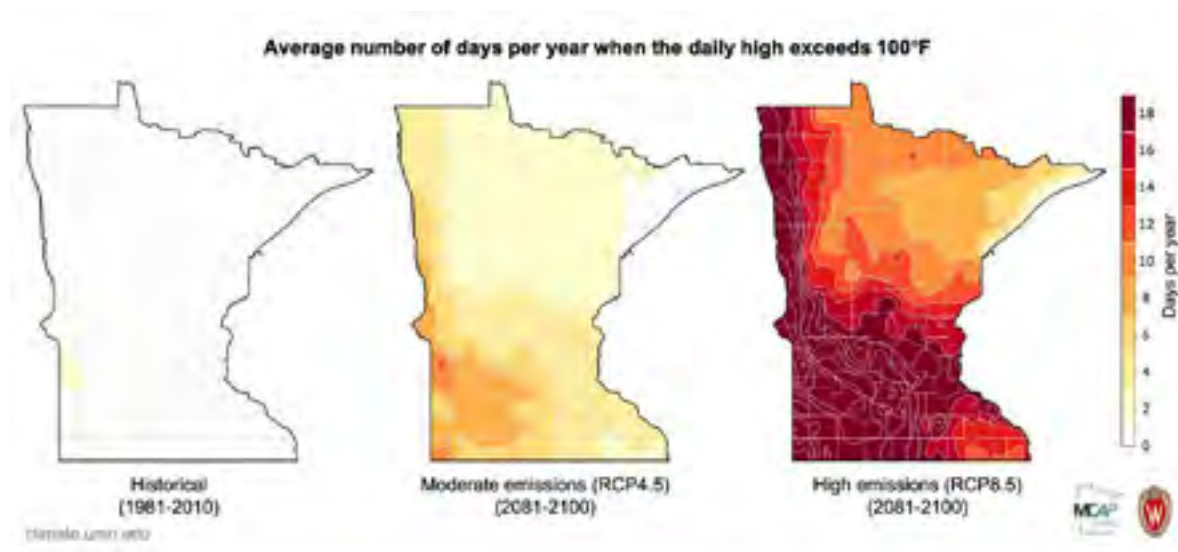
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<sup>5</sup> MN DNR, Forest Legacy project, Effects of Forest Fragmentation, <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestlegacy/fragmentation.html>.

<sup>6</sup> MN Pollution Control Agency, *Air Quality in Minnesota*, 2015, <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/raq-1sy15.pdf>, viewed Oct 31, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments



The Plan discusses how Ramsey County Parks with the Energy Action plan is working to improve the energy efficiency of operations with the installation of solar panels and LED lighting. However, to fully assess the climate impact of park operations, Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions must be identified and mitigated.

Snow making equipment will be part of the park's Scope 2 or 3 greenhouse gas emissions. However, global warming has made reliable snow less frequent and whether snow making equipment is the right tool for the times? How does making snow adhere to the plan to reduce energy consumption 35% by 2025?

Artificial snow often uses *Pseudomonas syringae* as a crystal forming element. The bacterial genus, *Pseudomonas* is widely acknowledged as one of the most opportunistic and hence most problematic bacteria. According to Nature Reviews Microbiology, *Pseudomonas syringae* is one of the most common plant pathogens, it enters plant cells using toxins. Has the risk of using this bacteria within a large botanic community such as a regional park and the runoff into surface waters been considered?

Another concern is the significant amounts of water to make artificial snow, estimated at five thousand gallons per minute. Where will this water come from, particularly during droughts such as we have experienced this year?

Based on these concerns, LONA asks the addition of snow making be reconsidered in light of the climate crisis, pollution with potentially pathogenic bacteria, water consumption and the availability of alternate winter sports such as snow shoeing and hiking.

### Pig's Eye Lake segment

Pig's Eye represents an opportunity to support important habitat for a variety of wildlife as well as clean up a highly polluted area. We suggest along with conducting risk assessments for contamination on and around the Pig's Eye segment, the impacts of the contamination to non-human species also be considered. Non-human species often live with near constant exposure to air, land and water and can uptake contaminants through dermal, inhalation and oral routes; these exposures are likely more life-threatening than what most humans would risk with a walk or kayak ride in this segment of the park. Any non-human exposures to toxic contaminants in the dredge spoils should also be considered.

## Pedestrian safety and park access points

Under current law, pedestrians have the right of way at intersections. Despite the law, too often motorists ignore pedestrians at legally designated crosswalks. And often pedestrians fail to ensure their own safety by looking both ways at a crosswalk. The draft plan adds a number of access points including some mid-road. Adding access points along roadways may diminish safety; motorists may ignore or not see the access points or pedestrians and, pedestrians may have a false sense of security. Using wayfinding to encourage pedestrians to cross legally at intersections is likely safer and less confusing for all park users than adding crossings at mid-road.

## Plan layout, amendments and implementation

We offer the following comments to the draft Plan layout:

- We appreciate the narrow margins which reduces paper use,
- Link the Table of Contents to plan sections,
- Link to all resources in the plan, e.g., the park energy plan, MetCouncil plans, etc.
- Include maps and page numbers for them in plan,
- Include the full appendices in the final plan.

We also request adequate citizen notification for plan amendments and keeping citizens apprised of plan implementation, esp. any development.

In closing, we appreciate and, Ramsey County park staff should be proud of, the high-quality natural areas in Battle Creek and the provision of habitat for increasingly rare and endangered species. Yet, as identified in the draft Plan, there are significant deficiencies in natural resource inventories leading to inability to make wise management decisions, limited access to Nature-based programming and recreational interests that conflict with the premises of Nature-based regional parks. LONA thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the Plan and looks forward to a final plan that conserves, protects and restores Nature in Battle Creek Regional Park and, engenders Nature stewards.

Sincerely,

Catherine Zimmer, Coordinator, Legacy of Nature Alliance

CC: LONA member organizations:

Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis  
Bloomington Natural Resources Stewardship Initiative  
Bush Lake Chapter Izaak Walton League of America  
Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association  
Cedar Lake Park Association  
Environmental Friends of Veterans Memorial Park  
Friends of Cullen Nature Preserve and Bird Sanctuary  
Friends of Lake Hiawatha  
Friends of Minneapolis Wildlife (FMW)  
Friends of Roberts Bird Sanctuary  
Friends of Thomas Lowry Park  
Kids for Saving Earth  
Lakeville Friends of the Environment  
Lower Phalen Creek Project

Minnesota Citizens for the Protection of Migratory Birds  
Minnesota Herpetological Society  
Nature of South St Paul  
Pollinator Friendly Alliance  
Neighborhood Greening  
Sierra Club - Forest and Wildlife Stewards  
St. Paul Audubon Society  
Urban Bird Collective  
Wilderness in the City  
Friends of Lake Hiawatha  
Friends of the Parks & Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County  
Sierra Club  
Bee Safe MPLS  
Urban Bird Collective



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [ryan\\_ryan](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:53:10 AM

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I'm in favor for the plan to expand Battle Creeks mountain biking. I want to see more advanced trails for people to grown into such as goat, wall of death and Jesus saves. Every trail in the metro are getting to be based on family riding which is great but we need to cater to the advanced riders or else people will illegally start building jumps and wrecking property to get their excitement. Please keep the greens and pump tracks off the hills where advanced trails can be built

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Ken Schauer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 9:52:00 AM

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Ben,

My name is Ken Schauer and my family and I live on the eastside of Saint Paul. I mountain bike and trail run several times a week at battle creek, often with my daughter. We love having such a beautiful and hilly park so close to home! As a trail runner I usually run the bike trails at low volume biking hours and have never had an issue with bikers. As a biker I occasionally come upon runners/hikers but it has never been an issue. I think the trails work quite well for multi use.

I am excited to for the Battle Creek Park master plan and just wanted to express my hope for more development in the mountain bike trails. Would love to see more trails at Battle Creek along with clearer signage, etc. Also, more easier single track would make the park more inviting for our family rides. Excited to see what develops and hopeful that mountain biking will continue to thrive at Battle Creek! Thanks so much for all your efforts! Ken

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [freddy\\_roman](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 4:05:28 PM

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Thank you for everything you are doing on the trails, when the pandemic began I began to know about this world of MTB and I fell in love with this Sport but I was much more encouraged when I started running in battle creek since my first experiences were in other trails like caver lake, but someone told me about Battle and as a cottage grove resident it is much closer to my home, but the truth is, I think battle creek is the best mtb trails that I run, here in minnesota if it is not the best this Among the first, so that said, I hope it continues to develop for the benefit of the many who enjoy the greatness of this trails and its nature, thanks Att . Alfredo Roman

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Lonna M](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Maplewood Nature Center (MNC)  
**Date:** Sunday, October 24, 2021 6:13:00 AM

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Dear Mr. Karp,

I am a resident of Maplewood in very close proximity to the MNC.

Please preserve this acreage for the wild life and for residents to enjoy.

We are already losing beautiful green space with the illogical development of the Hillcrest Golf Course land. Followed by a similar low income housing development proposal with the golf course at lower Afton & Century.

Green space is an endangered species in our county and if this idea of developing green spaces like the nature center rather than protecting it continues we will have none left. Enough is enough.

Our climate is in crisis and it's projects like these that are only making matters worse. Please have the decency to use common sense, logic and scientific information to prevent more unnecessary development.

Why don't your committees focus on redeveloping run down areas that have been abandoned and ignored which only devalue nearby properties? Everyone should be "recycling" these neglected areas instead of ruining areas that were or should be set aside to preserve green spaces for animals and residents.

Is ignorance a prerequisite to be on city councils and county committees? If so, that explains so much in these so called decision-making processes. There's no common sense being applied for the common good.

Sincerely,  
Lonna Mathison  
Maplewood, MN

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Rachel Van Heel](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Master plan comments  
**Date:** Sunday, September 26, 2021 8:05:26 AM

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- I understand that the grassland adjacent to the correctional facility was listed as a potential addition to the park in previous plans. This land is host to multiple rare and endangered birds and insects, including the rusty patched bumble bee. Large, unfragmented grasslands are quite rare in Minnesota, and habitat fragmentation is a serious threat to many species of migratory birds. There is currently an environmental review in process regarding any development at the site. Adding this land to the park fits in perfectly with the master plan's goals.

- I see that an enhanced pedestrian crossing at Lower Afton/ Londin is currently listed as low priority. Are you aware that the city of Maplewood just approved a large multifamily complex on that corner? The existing crosswalk is already quiet dangerous due to the speed on Lower Afton. With the additional pedestrian and vehicle traffic that the new building will bring, an enhanced crosswalk is necessary to allow all residents to safely access the park.

Thanks,

Ramsey County resident Rachel Van Heel

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Bell.Brian@dorsey.com](mailto:bell.brian@dorsey.com)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Bike Trails at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:30:36 PM

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Greetings –

I'm writing to support more mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. Battle Creek is a great place to mountain bike and has potential to be an even broader regional draw to St. Paul. I mountain bike at Battle Creek almost weekly, and it has caused me to make purchases in Ramsey County I would not have otherwise made. Please increase the development of mountain bike trails in the Battle Creek Master Plan. Specifically, a few points I would like to make:

- 1) Mountain biking is compatible with other user groups, as evidenced by the multi-use nature of the trails. I hiked at Battle Creek before mountain biking there and never found mountain bikers to interfere with hiking. I know I and others go out of our way to ensure we make other trail users feel comfortable with mountain bikers. We understand that we're moving faster than walkers and naturally produce anxiety, so I try very hard to be friendly to other trail users to ensure they know they're welcome. I recall recently directing some hikers to the best trails and telling them where they could and could not hike.
- 2) Having mountain biking trails in the urban core has, and will continue, to bring a diverse socio-economic group to the sport.
- 3) Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of
- 4) Mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers)
- 5) Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of unsanctioned trails that develop
- 6) Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur
- 7) Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras
- 8) Some of existing trails, e.g., the Luge, need complete overhauls due to years of use and erosion
- 9) Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing. The first cross-country ski race I ever participated in was at Battle Creek. I do not support allowing fat biking where it would interfere with cross country skiing. But there are places on the north side of the park where fat biking should be allowed (and is likely already taking place) that won't interfere with cross-country skiing.

- Brian



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kristofer Yahner](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Bike Trails in Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 7:14:33 AM

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Hi,

I am writing today to advocate for mountain bike trails in the Battle Creek Master Plan.

I'm a Ramsey County resident. I've ridden at Battle Creek, volunteered on the trail crew to build and maintain trails in the park and donated money to trail projects in the park through Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists and I believe it is the best place to ride a mountain bike in the Twin Cities.

While there is a definite need for more beginner trails in the Battle Creek system the terrain in the park lends itself well to expert level trails. We have many trails that are labeled as expert trails in the Twin Cities metro area but few that would be labeled as expert trails if they were to be located in a trail system outside of this area. Battle Creek has the potential to have trails that are as good as any trails in the state. I would encourage you to look at recent projects in the Duluth trail system, the Tiago system in Grand Rapids or the Redhead system in Chisholm and the many projects that are taking place in Northwest Arkansas to see that extremely fun trails can be built in areas with limited elevation especially when they are constructed by a professional trail building company.

New trails are always fun but I would like to see a quality over quantity assessment made when constructing new trails in the park. The number of miles of trails seems to be the statistic that is most cited about a trail system but I would rather see 10 miles of incredible well thought out and well built trail than 30 miles of mediocre trail. Trails like the Goat, Drop in Pines and The Wall are the types of trails that set Battle Creek apart from other trail systems in the region.

Thank you for considering these thoughts and for your stewardship of the park.

Kris Yahner

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Levi Kinsey](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking - Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 8:24:08 PM

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Mr. Karp,

I am writing in support of expanded mountain biking and hiking trails in Battle Creek Park. I regularly ride BC trails and really enjoy how you can feel isolated even in an urban environment. I feel that one of the drawbacks to the Battle Creek system is the lack of beginner trails and a skills development area. I also ride Carver Lake Park and see how many young families are at the skills area there and think something of this nature would be a huge benefit to the current trail system. All four of my kids ride mountain bikes but I rarely ride BC with them due to the more difficult nature of the current trails. The recent reworking of the GOAT and the addition of Freight Train have also made these trails some of my favorites in the metro area although the gap on the lower section of GOAT still scares me. Expanding the offerings at BC will only make things better.

Sincerely,

Levi Kinsey

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Cole S](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking and Trails in BC Master Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 2:26:06 PM

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Hi Ben,

As an avid mountain biker who visits battle creek on a regular basis (15-25 visits a year), I would love to see the trail network increase and improvements made to enhance the recreation ability at the park. Improvements to the mountain biking trail system would also bring more revenue to the local economy. I visit many trails in the metro and BC is my favorite by far to ride. The terrain and variation of trails is what makes it great and unlike any other trails in the metro area. However, there are many areas of the park that are currently not accessible that could use a trail network.

As a regular user of the park, below are couple things that could use improvement at the park for mountain biking as well as other user groups.

- Better signage and connected trails. This would require the building of additional trail to connect the various spur trails in the park. This is a main reason why BC does not generate new users - they cannot figure out how to navigate their way through the trail system.
- More trails in sections 1,2,3, and 4. These sections are mostly used by mountain bikers/hikers and have the best terrain for it. The hilly/steep terrain isn't really conducive to any other recreation activity.
- A main bandshell/pavillion/trailhead(s). This would increase the community gathering at BC and provide greater exposure to the park in general.
- Safe trail heads. Many people are scared to attend the park for fear of physical harm and/or car break ins.
- Trails in sections 8/9 and connector off-road trails along the creek in section 5 and lower afton road. most of the trails are currently located in sections 1/2/3/4 but many other areas of the park do not have trail. it would be nice to be able to ride the other areas of the park and have connected trails. connected trails to these areas would provide a unique experience in that you could ride a large loop and it would have an 'adventure' feel to it.
- Designated bike only trails. Although I appreciate multi-use trails as I am also a hiker(and I am respectful of hikers while biking), certain trails that are steep or fast in nature should be only for bikes for safety. There are many trails in the park that could hikers can use and or that are hike only. Also, some of the new mtb trails being planned could be mutli-use trails. Bike only trails shouldn't be viewed negatively. The fast, steep trails at BC are what makes it the best mtb trail system in the metro.

Overall one of the highest user groups of the park are mountain bikers that want to see improvements made. Mountain bike trails (being a natural surface trail) are one of the most sustainable and cheap way trails to recreate at the park. They wind and flow through forests and prairies preserving the natural landscape and allowing access to experience the whole park system. Finally, the building of mountain bike trails allows other users to have more recreation access (hikers, trail runners, snowshoeing, winter fatbiking).

Thanks,  
Cole

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Scott Haraldson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:06:29 PM

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Good afternoon Ben,

I have lived in Ramsey County for the past 15 years and have been riding my bike at Battle Creek for the last 25 years. I am writing to request that you continue to support the growth of mountain bike trails within the Battle Creek area.

The Battle Creek trails are where I cut my teeth learning to ride. The trails back then were a lot of fun but also not built to today's trail standards for sustainability. Seeing what folks like Scott Thayer and others before him have been able to do, when given the opportunity, has been nothing short of amazing.

When I first started riding there as a teen you could potentially see a few other riders out on the trails. Fast forward to today and the parking lots are loaded up with riders new and old, from all walks of life, getting out. What I believe has really fueled a lot of that is the addition of new trails, built properly. If we continue in this direction we will continue to see more use of the park and I believe it can easily rival what has been done in Eagan and Savage at their primary trails.

The more people using the park the better and I think there is plenty of land for everyone, bikers or not, to enjoy. Please support mountain biking in its fullest. It really has begun to transform the park from a place that always felt a little risky to be at in the evening to one where I feel a lot more comfortable taking my four kids riding because of the increase in people out on the trails and in the parking lots.

Sincerely,

Scott Haraldson

Maplewood, Minnesota

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Kyser, Scott \(MPCA\)](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 2:52:46 PM

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Hi,

1. I live in St. Paul.
2. I mountain bike at battle creek several times a week during the summer. I do it because I like it and it's great exercise.
3. Battle creek should have as many mountain bike trails as you can possibly fit into the area. I run and XC ski at battle creek as well and I see so many more mountain bikers than other users. It's really the big draw of the park. Parks are funded by the public and should be built to serve as many people as possible.
4. Battle creek needs more connected trails and maps! With just a bit of trail building BC could be the best trail network in the metro. It's amazing to be able to ride in the capital city limits...mountain biking can be an urban activity!
5. Battle creek could also benefit from some easier trails and a skill development area. Just go visit the skills area at carver on a Saturday morning...it's PACKED! BC should be the same.

Thanks,

Scott Kyser

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## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Matt Fetzer](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Saturday, September 25, 2021 6:39:09 PM

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Hi Ben,

I wrote a comment included below to support the further development of mountain bike trails at Battle Creek.

I am writing to express my support for further development of the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek park. I live roughly 15 minutes from Battle Creek park and go there often for the mountain bike trails. I enjoy mountain biking as it is an excellent form of exercise and recreation. Mountain biking keeps me both physically and mentally healthy.

I'm Asian American. In my experiences as a person of color, I have always found that being around other POC is very comforting when engaging in almost anything, certainly including mountain biking. Battle Creek, being located in one of the most diverse cities in Minnesota, has enormous potential to increase the diversity of participants in the sport. These new participants can then also enjoy the physical and mental benefits, along with the community. I know that there is great potential to build diverse communities around this sport. I lived in the Pacific Northwest, where mountain biking is extremely popular, and saw many diverse mountain bike communities, including very large women's groups and LGBTQ+ groups. These groups bring more people into this amazing sport, and give them a place where they can be themselves. I believe that the ability for one to be themselves is extremely important to one's mental wellbeing.

To do this, in such a diverse county and city, will require improvements to the existing trail system. Battle Creek already has some great things going for it, including some of the most challenging trails and the best climbs, but those generally only appeal to more advanced riders. To provide an asset for all communities, the trails need more diversity themselves, including trails and areas which will allow new users to improve their skills before tackling more advanced areas. Also, the trail network needs to be better connected and easier to explore for newer riders, as Battle Creek has a well deserved reputation for being difficult to learn and understand. Personally, I was very fortunate to run into an experienced rider there who offered to show me the trail system. Without that, it would have been a challenging and frustrating experience.

The Battle Creek MTB system has so much potential for community building. I hope that improvements can be made which will give community organizers the platform on which to build

Thank you for your consideration.

Matt Fetzer



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Jake Zimbric](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain biking at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, September 30, 2021 6:05:51 AM

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Hello!

I am writing in support of continuing to build the mountain bike trail system at Battle Creek. Mountain biking has been a life changing activity for me in terms of both mental and physical health. Every ride at BC leaves me rejuvenated, healthier and more appreciative of the park system Ramsey offers its residents.

Continue to extend the trail system by including more beginner friendly, kids skill parks, and more safe and inclusive spaces would allow a greater variety of riders to share in the love and grandeur that this park has to offer.

The multi use trails are something I have enjoyed as a rider, runner and family hiker so much so that I volunteer to help care for these trails. I continue to go to this park even after moving out of St. Paul due to the current work and stewardship by the volunteers and MORC.

Please consider the rising popularity of this sport and the many benefits it brings to the community as you finalize the plans for this park!

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Jake Zimbric

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Adam Brunner](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking at BC!  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:28:53 PM

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Dear Ben --

I have been mountain biking at Battle Creek for roughly 20 years. The improvements made in recent years have been incredible and I just wanted to drop a line to show my support for the expansion of MTB opportunities at BC as the master plan is being prepared.

I am a resident of Ramsey County and Battle Creek is the closest and best option for me to ride singletrack. I typically ride at BC about once a week, and this year was able to introduce my 14yo kid and several of his friends to the park. BC is also very popular among the kids on the NICA mtn team. The sport has given so much to these kids and it's exciting to see their enthusiasm for the future.

One of the things I love about BC is that the trails are multi-use. It's a good exercise in tolerance, patience, and good citizenship -- and BC is living proof that many users can share the same resource for different reasons. It's also worth noting that mountain bikers volunteer and maintain the trails that are used by multiple user groups (runners, hikers, bird watchers, snowshoers) -- so we are an asset to everyone who uses BC!

Some other general comments:

- Winter Fat Biking should be allowed on trails that do not interfere with groomed XC skiing.
- Battle Creek needs more connected trails rather than the spur-based trails it presently consists of
- Battle Creek needs more beginner trails to welcome new and novice riders into the sport
- Battle Creek needs a skills development area or areas to help young and new riders foster new skills
- Having mountain bike trails in areas presently without natural surface trails reduces the number of bandit/social trails that develop
- Increasing park users through mountain biking reduces time and space for criminal activity to occur
- Increased amenities at the various trail heads is needed, such as restrooms, trash bins, lighting, and security cameras

Thanks, Ben!

Adam Brunner  
1321 Kenneth Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55116

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [briane](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Mountain Biking Battle Creek feedback - Thank you for doing this!  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 1:16:24 PM

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Good afternoon, my name is Brian Eggen. I live at 1021 5th St E in St. Paul, MN 55106. It's a 1.8mi trip from my driveway to the beginning of the Overlook trail in the northernmost section of mountain bike trail at Battle Creek. I ride the trails almost every day during the spring, summer, and fall. I also ski the wonderful trails throughout the park in the wintertime. My wife and 12 year old son often walk the ski trails throughout various sections of the park throughout the spring, summer, and fall. The two of them XC ski the trails in the park during winter, just not as much as I do. I work in the behavioral health field and am a licensed drug and alcohol counselor. The majority of the mental health work that I do on myself outside of the therapeutic setting is on my bike. I would say the average week for me would be 4-5 days out of the 7, I ride all the trails (at least the ones open:-)) and I ride to and from the park on my bike rather than drive there. So, lets call it 40-50 miles of trail per week that I'm riding in the park and another 20 riding to and from the park.

I broke my hand and face up at Piedmont trail in Duluth and couldn't ride for a month this summer. My mental health went totally down the drain. I'm happy it happened now for two reasons, one is I'm riding again so I've already kind of forgotten about it, the other is that it made me diversify the areas where I reclaim energy and mental health into more things than just mountain biking.

Last night I was riding the trails, and there were more youngsters and coaches (must have been an organized team kind of a thing) and it was great to see a different group of folks out on the trails having fun. Young teens, male and female, talking and learning with each other and the coaches about how to be better trail riders. It was super fun to watch, especially because I'm 44 and can't ride the way I used to (my body doesn't know yet though).

In the same ride, there was a group of three riders who were at Battle Creek from out of town and weren't as familiar with the trails as I was. As I approached the bottom of G.O.A.T. I found them working on one of the bikes that had gotten a flat. We tried to reseal the bead and ended up deciding that the bike would not be able to be ridden out of the trails. Two of the three rode back to get the car, and I walked my bike along with the other rider out to Battle Creek Road and down a ways to where the car would eventually meet the rider and take all three of them home. I tell you this, because I see this kind of thing happen almost daily. Not so much the bike issues, but people stopping or asking if anything is needed or if everyone is OK. This is the biking community that I know and love and it makes me feel really good to be a part of it.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

One of the things that draws me to ride outside of Battle Creek is that my 12 year old son is starting to get into it. That said, he doesn't want much to do with any of the single-track at Battle Creek at this time. Too hard and scary for him. So, we go to Carver Lake, Lebanon, and Elm Creek. Now, as I ride these trails often too, I know there's plenty of hard stuff at all three. What is different about these trails compared to Battle Creek is that they have a skills area where kiddo's like my son can get up to speed without having to brave the really difficult parts of a green or blue trail, which we all know exist on the trails.

I could go either way on the connected/spur debate. I kind of like having sections that I can cycle over and over or move on to something else. Would I like to have one consistent trail that's 18 miles long as an option, heck yes. Do I need it to keep coming to Battle Creek, no. That said, as a daily rider in the park, I'd love it more than my birthday if there were more new trails to choose from. All of this said, I'll be the first to tell you that I'll volunteer any time you'd like as well. So long as it's in the evenings or weekends, I'd make myself available to help build/maintain trails.

Now for the fat biking paragraph. I would really, really, really like to be able to ride my fat bike on the Battle Creek single track during the winter. At this time, I mostly drive to Carver, Sunfish Lake, and Lebanon for my winter, groomed, fat bike adventures. Well, unless I do some bushwhacking down by the river/river bottoms when things get frozen over. I'll tell you right now that I may or may not have snuck on to Freight Train after an early winter snowfall of about 6 inches, and it was one of the most fun rides I've ever had in my life. Switchbacks on a fat bike with studded tires on groomed trails may be all the reason I need to keep biking into my 70's. Heck, I even take the occasion to go to Spirit Mtn or Giants Ridge when they close the runs to skiers and open them up for a day to fat tire bikes.

I could probably write another 4 pages, but I'm not going to, because if I received this email I would maybe form a little bit of a resentment having to read this much already:-)

If you want more information from me and my experiences at Battle Creek, and as a St. Paul resident of the East Side, I'd be more than happy to share with you. This email is my work email, and I'll provide my personal email and cell number as well.

Thank you for drafting some ideas for adding to the biking and trail experience at Battle Creek. I look forward to future endeavors.

Brian Eggen  
[brian.eggen@gmail.com](mailto:brian.eggen@gmail.com)  
763-458-3860

Brian Eggen, BS LADC (he, him, his)  
Transitions Outpatient Program  
366 Prior Ave N  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
P - 651-615-5578  
F - 651-646-0196  
[briane@transitions.pro](mailto:briane@transitions.pro)

"May you be well. May you be happy. May you be comfortable and know peace."

# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Charlie Browning](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** MTB @ BC  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 6:57:51 PM

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**Subject:** Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender  
**Date:** October 28, 2021 at 6:47:29 PM CDT  
**To:** [charliesanglesllc@me.com](mailto:charliesanglesllc@me.com)

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<[benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us](mailto:benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us)>: host  
[ramseycounty-us.mail.protection.outlook.com](mailto:ramseycounty-us.mail.protection.outlook.com)[104.47.64.110] said: 550 5.4.1  
Recipient address rejected: Access denied. AS(201806281)  
[BL0GCC02FT016.[eop-gcc02.prod.protection.outlook.com](mailto:eop-gcc02.prod.protection.outlook.com)] (in reply to RCPT  
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command)  
Reporting-MTA: dns; [ms11p00im-qufo17281901.me.com](mailto:ms11p00im-qufo17281901.me.com)  
X-Postfix-Queue-ID: 10A91740142  
X-Postfix-Sender: rfc822; [charliesanglesllc@me.com](mailto:charliesanglesllc@me.com)  
Arrival-Date: Thu, 28 Oct 2021 23:47:27 +0000 (UTC)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; \*\*\*\*\*@\*\*\*\*\*  
Original-Recipient: rfc822;[benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us](mailto:benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us)  
Action: failed  
Status: 5.4.1  
Remote-MTA: dns; [ramseycounty-us.mail.protection.outlook.com](mailto:ramseycounty-us.mail.protection.outlook.com)  
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.4.1 Recipient address rejected: Access denied.  
AS(201806281) [BL0GCC02FT016.[eop-gcc02.prod.protection.outlook.com](mailto:eop-gcc02.prod.protection.outlook.com)]

**From:** Charlie Browning <[charliesanglesllc@me.com](mailto:charliesanglesllc@me.com)>  
**Subject:** mtb at BC  
**Date:** October 28, 2021 at 6:47:26 PM CDT  
**To:** [benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us](mailto:benjaimin.karp@ramseycounty.us)

Ben, I hope to see the awesome trail system at Battle Creek grow along with the sport. BC has the unique landscape to have the best MTB trail within the MORC system. More and more of us are benefiting from exercising in the outdoors and the MTB community greatly appreciates additional trails to ride.

Charlie Browning

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Daniel Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** MTB at Battle Creek  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 9:28:01 AM

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I am a Hennepin county resident who mountain bikes at Battle Creek a few times per year. It has one of the best terrains for MTB in the metro area, given the elevation changes and landscape.

It's a beautiful area but sorely needs more investment to make it a better place for biking. The signage needs updated, and there is need for more bathrooms.

When compared with other Park systems in the area, this area has more potential due to its terrain, but clearly falls behind on maintenance and facilities.

Winter fat biking ( not on XC ski trails) is also a must in this area. Grooming this trail system would be an excellent resource to Minnesotans.

Best,

Dan Johnson



# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

From: [TOM DIMOND](#)  
To: [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
Subject: Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plan  
Date: Sunday, October 17, 2021 4:23:52 PM

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## Tom Dimond

2119 Skyway Drive  
Saint Paul, MN 55119

### Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park – Plan Recommendations

**1 – List as High Priority the implementation of Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plans and providing public access**

**2 – Protect and enhance this preeminent resource with a World Class Restoration of the waters, lands, habitat, and natural resource experience within this Urban National Park, State Critical Area, and State Scientific and Natural Area – “northernmost floodplain marsh of its type along the Mississippi River Valley”**

**3 - Support Equitable Park Funding for BIPOC Majority and Less Affluent Residents**

**4 – Support No Net Loss of Parkland. The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park plan for Pig's Eye Lake. Since then, we have lost hundreds of acres to uses other than park. Saint Paul's planned replacement parkland includes the publicly owned wetland and flood plain forest outside the MWCC levee. MWCC has supported inclusion of this natural area as public open space after the waste treatment plant reconstruction was completed. That work has long been completed. Inclusion of this natural area within the public open space system is long overdue.**

**5 - Designate Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park as a Regional Park Reserve**

**1 – List as high priority the implementation of Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plans and providing public access**

Planning for this park goes back more than 100 years. The Regional Park Plans go back to the 1970's. With a century of planning, implementation is way overdue.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

The August 1979 update of the Saint Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan calls for development of the Pig's Eye Lake Parkway as a spur of the Great River Road, a pedestrian/bike path that connects the Fish Hatchery Park Area to the Pig's Eye Lake Area Entrance that provides access to the lake, and a Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Interpretative Center. Saint Paul ranks Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park as a high priority for acquisition, planning, construction, site improvements, and operations. The Regional Park improvements and the Interpretative Center planning, construction and start of operations are scheduled for 1979 to 1985. Our SE neighborhoods deserve investment in our parks comparable to other parts of our City, County and Region. The promises of park funding and implementation are 40 years overdue.

There is urgent need for park entrance signage off Warner Road, Pig's Eye Lake Parkway, and Red Rock Road. Also needed are identified parking areas, natural surface hiking/walking trails, wildlife viewing, fishing and bird viewing piers, and canoe/ kayak access to the lake. These are long overdue first steps to provide public access to nature. Park boundaries must be surveyed and signed. Paddle sharing should be available.

The 1970's St. Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan ranks the priority of Pig's Eye Lake Park as IMMEDIATE ATTENTION: At this time the Pig's Eye area is in the most immediate need of attention, due to the inherent fragility of the area and the increasing demands for project activities in the area. Presently, it is the segment of the river corridor that is being subject to the most critical scrutiny. Efforts to implement recommended proposals in this segment should be undertaken at once to insure against irreparable environmental damage..... (Note: We are still waiting for the most basic of park facilities to serve park users)

The St. Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan states: Activities in the Pig's Eye floodplain will take advantage of the unique natural resources and opportunities existing in the area. The emphasis will be on providing residents and visitors the facilities to experience a variety of recreational and educational opportunities at the same time maintain the overall ambience and environmental quality of the floodplain. Pig's Eye to serve as the focal point of the entire downstream open space system....its preservation paramount. Development of this open space will be interpretive and passive in character.

As the focal point of the of the entire downstream open space system it is a high priority.

**2 – Protect and enhance this preeminent resource with a World Class Restoration of the waters, lands, habitat, and natural resource experience within this Urban National Park, State Critical Area, and State Scientific and Natural Area – “northernmost floodplain marsh of its type along the Mississippi River Valley”**

Tell the amazing geological/natural history of the largest lake in Saint Paul. Pig's Eye is a glacial lake. It precedes the existence of the Mississippi River in Saint Paul and the confluence of the

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Historical lake depth is 200 feet. Saint Paul and Ramsey County have submitted letters of support for the removal of 6 to 8 feet of unconsolidated pollutant/muck from the lake bottom. An essential first step in restoring depth, aquatic habitat, reducing pollutant and enhancing lake health. The Great River Passage calls for removal of pollutant and sediment from the lake bottom.

Pending Federal Infrastructure Legislation provides funding for cleanup of superfund sites. The lakes and wetlands have been negatively impacted by discharge of pollutant/waste.

“Extinction is a consequence of human caused environmental change.” (USFWS) The goal should be World Class environmental restoration of this nature preserve within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The Rookery has seen significant population decline. Healthy habitat is essential to healthy wildlife.

### 3 - Support Equitable Park Funding for BIPOC Majority and Less Affluent Residents

The Park is designated of Regional, State, and Federal Significance. The Park serves the broad public and local residents. Local residents have the most direct benefits. Funding for BIPOC and less affluent neighborhoods should not be ranked as low priority. Planning for this parkland is in its second century. Park and natural resource restoration most directly benefits BIPOC and less affluent neighborhoods.

Starting in the 1960’s and 1970’s many environmental protections were put in place including the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Wetland Preservation, State Critical Area, Regional Parks, PCA, EQB, Met Council, and Designation of the National Park. Some parks in Saint Paul receive significant funding while the largest lake and park in Saint Paul has been starved for resources. The standard response is there are higher priorities and we will get to you later. Compare the funding provided to majority white and affluent neighborhoods.

The City of Saint Paul website lists population information from Minnesota Compass 2015-2019

	Metro	Ramsey County	Highland Park Mac Groveland	Dayton’s Bluff Battle Creek/Highwood
White	<u>72.7%</u>	<u>61.9%</u>	<u>74.6%</u> <u>88.6%</u>	38.6% 32.1%
BIPOC	23.9%	33.7%	23.2% 9.3%	56.3% 60.4%
\$35,000 -	19.9%	26.1%	22.8% 17.5%	32.3% 38.8%
\$100,000 +	<u>39.4%</u>	<u>30.4%</u>	<u>36.4%</u> <u>46.1%</u>	17.4% 17.5%

The census areas listed are the Metropolitan Area – Ramsey County – Highland Park and Macalester Groveland as SW St Paul – Dayton’s Bluff and Battle Creek/Highwood as SE St

Paul. The categories are the percentage of White People, People of Color, Households earning less than \$35,000 annually, and Households earning over \$100,000 annually. Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park is located in SE Saint Paul. The facts demonstrate the Pig's Eye Lake Area is more diverse, and less well-off financially. Based on the environmental significance of this area and need for park equity this park is a funding priority.

**4 - No net loss of parkland. The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park plan for Pig's Eye Lake. Since then, we have lost hundreds of acres to uses other than park. Saint Paul's planned parkland replacement includes the publicly owned wetland and flood plain forest outside the MWCC levee. MWCC has supported the inclusion of this natural area as public open space after the waste treatment plant reconstruction was completed. That work has long been completed. Inclusion of these natural areas within the public open space system is long overdue.**

The Regional Park Plan was amended to allow railroad expansion. The rail expansion was based on the premise the MWCC would transfer land outside the levee to the open space system. The State Critical Area Legislation requires a balance of park and other uses at Pig's Eye. The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre park. At the request of Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Council approved removal of 235 acres from the park boundaries for rail yard expansion. Saint Paul's River Corridor Plan calls for inclusion in the park of the MWCC property outside the levee. This would partially restore lost parkland. "The Metropolitan Waste Control Commission will continue their secondary treatment physical expansion program within levee wall.... East of the east levee wall the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission owns property. This will become part of the Pig's Eye Open space system, and will include sealing of the ash settling ponds." (Saint Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan)

1975 - The Metropolitan Council approved a 1,511 acre Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park Plan

1979 – Saint Paul acquisition of 1,100 acres of the park

1979 - Saint Paul supports removing 235 acres from the park based on the transfer of MWCC property called for in the adopted River Corridor Plan that states East of the east levee wall the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission property will become part of the Pig's Eye open space system, and will include sealing of ash settling ponds.

At its December 17, 1979 meeting, the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission supported removal of 235 acres from the park for railroad expansion and supported adding the property owned by the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission outside the levee

January 18, 1980 – Met Council letter to pursue the option of an agreement with the City and County for interim recreational use and landscaping of land not needed for treatment facility

February 7, 1980 – EQB Review of Saint Paul Critical Area Plan – MWCC property outside and east of the levee wall around the Metro Waste treatment Plant is also to become part of the Pig's Eye open space system....city staff indicates that the objective is to insure that

landscaping of the area would be compatible with the Pig's Eye Park, and recreation uses such

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

as trails could be developed through the area.

Inclusion of this land in the park is also shown in Map 5 of the adopted St. Paul Mississippi River Corridor Plan.

The property outside the levee is designated Critical Area Open Space zoning.

### **5 - Designate Pig's Eye Lake Regional Park as a Regional Park Reserve**

In 1979, Ramsey County voted in support of Regional Park Reserve designation.

Park reserves, like regional parks, provide for a diversity of outdoor recreation activities.

One major feature that distinguishes the park reserve from a regional park is its size. The minimum size for a park reserve is 1,000 acres. Additionally, regional park implementing agencies are required to manage at least 80% of the park reserve as natural lands that protect the ecological functions of the native landscape. As of 2020, a total of 12 park reserves were open to the public.

A Park Reserve designation is more in line with planned management of this natural area.

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Brett Vandenbussche](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Please include MORE mountain bike trails in the Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Friday, September 24, 2021 12:42:47 PM

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Hello Ben,

I write to you as an avid mountain biker in the Twin Cities metro area requesting that the Battle Creek master plan include more designated mountain bike trails (or multi-use trails). I frequently mountain bike at Battle Creek and while the trails there have made great progress over the last few years, we definitely need more! Mountain biking is growing as a sport so quickly, the trails are more popular than ever and while this is great it also poses a number of challenges. Adding more trails will help increase rider safety by spreading out the riders across more mileage and offering a wider variety of trails that suit more riders experience appropriately. Increasing ridership by expanding the trail network also improves overall park safety by putting more eyes out to stop thieves, vandalizers, and deter potentially harmful scenarios. As a mountain biker who is an active MORC member I can tell you that the community maintains the trails, ensuring safe and responsible riding. Increasing the trail network will also help prevent non-sanctioned trail riding.

Lastly, I'll just say that mountain biking, as a low contact sport, is one of the few activities we can do as we get older. I hope Battle Creek will expand the mountain bike trails designed in the Master Plan so I can continue finding joy riding my bike with my wife through the beautiful bluffs and into our golden years.

--

Brett Vandenbussche

[Vandenbusschebr@gmail.com](mailto:Vandenbusschebr@gmail.com)

(248) 462 - 2346



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Barbara Sellers](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Please incorporate grassland into Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 2:37:30 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to ask you to please incorporate into Battle Creek Regional Park the approximately 77 acres of grassland that are adjacent to the Park, to provide assurance that the habitat the grassland provides to declining bird and insect species will be protected far into the future.

Thank you!

Barbara

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [DEBORAH STROHMEYER](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [District1](#); [District 2 Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire](#); [Matascastillo, Trista Louise](#); [Carter, Toni](#); [Ortega, Rafael E](#); [McDonough, Jim](#); [Reinhardt, Victoria](#)  
**Subject:** public input regarding the draft plan for Battle Creek Regional Park  
**Date:** Sunday, October 24, 2021 8:06:43 PM

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Dear Benjamin Karp,

These comments are in response to the request for public input regarding the draft plan for Battle Creek Regional Park.

I am specifically concerned about the grassland between Battle Creek Regional Park and the correctional facility on Century Ave. I understand that the future of this land is in question, so I would like to ask that you consider incorporating this grassland into the Battle Creek Regional Part as an Environmental Natural Area. The proposed low-income housing project should be built and existing degraded properties in the county.

Please note the recent Star Tribune article describing how endangered grassland ecosystems as well as their ecological value. I have visited this grassland and found it be precious from an ecological view. I have a M.S. in Wildlife Biology and I can attest that this parcel contains an enormously valuable and rare example of prairie habitat within an urban setting.

Sincerely,

D Claire Strohmeyer  
952-457-3543

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [jingram-mn](mailto:jingram-mn)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Ramsey County Battke Creek Draft Master Plan/Mountain Biking Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, October 28, 2021 8:46:19 AM

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Ben,

Thank you for your work on the thorough Draft Master Plan. I'm writing to provide comments in support of expansion and improvements to the multi-use mountain bike trail system.

While not a current resident, I grew up in Ramsey County and take advantage of community park amenities there. I am a trail steward (MORC Dirt Boss) for multi-use trails recently introduced in my community (Lone Lake Park in Minnetonka). That involvement has provided a perspective on the benefits and nuances of multi-use trails. A few of my insights and comments:

- 1) Natural surface trails have little enduring impact to environment. If usage declines. They can be allowed to revert to their natural state.
- 2) There is a massive social, physical, mental benefit to natural trail systems. Forest Bathing if you will.
- 3) Multi-use mtb trails engage a diversity of community members from a large ethnicity, sex and age range that other amenities cannot match.
- 4) The financial investment to community usage ratio is very positive. The cost to develop is low, the majority of the maintenance is performed by volunteers and the trailhead headcount is high (and increasing).

In addition to support for the expansion of the mtb trail system, I would like to suggest improved signage, interconnectivity of the trail system, inclusion of more beginner to intermediate trails, trailhead facility improvement and consideration for a skills development area.

Thanks again for your hard work.

Regards

Jeff Ingram

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Eric Alms](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Ramsey County Battle Creek Master Plan  
**Date:** Saturday, October 30, 2021 8:43:18 AM

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Good Morning Benjamin,

My name is Eric Alms and I am a resident of South Saint Paul. I have enjoyed using the Battle Creek MTB trail systems for many years and am excited to see the use expanding in the draft updated master plan. What I get out of mountain biking is an exciting source of exercise that is close to my residence, as well as a way to connect with others in the sport. Many of the friendships I have today are sustained and strengthened through shared outdoor recreational experience, often using public lands and resources, and we often share those at Battle Creek. I would encourage the plan to keep and expand on the current use framework to center on mountain bike trail development, maintenance, and growth in the coming years. The sport is only growing, and efficient and sustainable planning would go along way to keep this sport in good standing with the other groups we share the space with. Thank you for time, consideration, and have a great weekend.

Eric Alms  
651-380-1882

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Mark Larson](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Ramsey County  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 26, 2021 11:13:38 AM

You don't often get email from [l Larsonmarkd@me.com](mailto:l Larsonmarkd@me.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Karp,

I live in Ramsey County and am very disappointed that the County is considering development of the Battle Creek Grassland.

As a Minnesota Master Naturalist for many years, I have learned how Minnesota's grasslands play an integral part of Minnesota's ecosystem. An area such as the Battle Creek Grassland provides water management, grassland species diversity and habitat to the area. One of the biggest threats to our ecology preservation is the destruction of this biodiversity. An area such as the Battle Creek Grassland exists as an area that helps to provide that biodiversity.

Battle Creek Park provides a wooded habitat to our area. Battle Creek Grassland is the ideal compliment as it provides a habitat for prairie species. Some of the species that make home in the wooded area are able to do so because of the existence of the biodiversity of the grassland.

It is not only important that there is just "some" grassland. Nature needs the space that exists in the Battle Creek Grassland area to allow species to have their range and maintain important diversity.

Ramsey County should utilize other properties that can provide housing needs and not destroy our unique Battle Creek Grassland prize.

I have stressed how the Battle Creek Grassland is important to Nature and biodiversity. It is also an important area for the Ramsey County community. The Grassland is part of the area's landscape palette that makes Ramsey County beautiful. Its size and location are a needed break from the development just north of the area. The existence of this Grassland acreage shows the community the importance of biodiversity with its inclusion as an Environmental Natural Area along with wooded areas.

Just as you have worked with the biking community, I urge you to make the Battle Creek Grassland an Environmental Natural Area, preserving it for you, me and generations to come.

Thank you,  
Mark Larson  
894 Connor Court  
Maplewood

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Joseph Yamato](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Cc:** [ExploreAmericaInfo](#)  
**Subject:** Re: the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland  
**Date:** Sunday, October 31, 2021 11:54:16 AM

You don't often get email from joefromjapan@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use **caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Dear Mr. Benjamin Karp,

I'm writing this letter to you because we'd like the Ramsey County to preserve the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland and the Ponds at Battle Creek.

In the neighborhood of the Grassland and the Ponds at Battle Creek, we've been living for around 20 years. We enjoy walking, jogging, running, birding, photographing at the Grassland and the Ponds at Battle Creek as well as the Battle Creek Park. I believe there are only few places where you can see bobolinks and Eastern meadowlarks in the Twin Cities metro area.

As we all know, it's really important to preserve nature as much as possible to protect wildlife, natural lands, and our health. To be honest with you, the #1 reason why I, a scientist and engineer, stay in Minnesota is sure its abundant wildlife. I'm from Japan. It's awesome for Minnesota's counties to have quite a few parks and nature centers even near big cities such as Minneapolis and St. Paul, which is impossible for Japan to do. Even European countries seem to envy Minnesota's nature; for example, my two friends - one lives in Paris, France and the other, in Krakow, Poland - are amazed by Minnesota's abundant wildlife every time I e-mail them our photos of wildlife, taken here.

In addition to enjoying nature, for the past around two decades, we've been volunteering to make an information website, Explore America Info < <http://www.exploreamerica.info/> > for those who would like to know the U.S., and learn English and American culture. To understand wildlife in depth, I've also been volunteering to feed wildlife in the feeding place at the Maplewood Nature Center everyday for the last about two years.

Again we do hope that the Ramsey County will be able to preserve the 77-acre Battle Creek Grassland and the Ponds at Battle Creek.

Thank you so much.

With respect,

Joe

Joe Yamato and the other staff members  
Explore America Info < <http://www.exploreamerica.info/> >



# Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

From: [Nate Kobinsky](#)  
To: [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
Subject: Request to increase support of mountain biking in Battle Creek master plan  
Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:29:21 PM

You don't often get email from [nkobinsky@gmail.com](mailto:nkobinsky@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. Use caution when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Ben,

I am writing to request that the Battle Creek Master plan include greater support for mountain biking closer to or greater than the expansion suggested by previous plans: (<https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Parks%20and%20Recreation/Parks/Off%20Road%20Cycling%20Master%20Plan%20March%206th%2C%202018.pdf>). My passion for riding these trails and understanding the potential of what they could become is a driving factor in my desire to continue living in this area, to spend time volunteering for trail maintenance, and to participate in related community events.

Mountain biking at Battle Creek helps me connect to the natural world, relieve stress, get exercise, ride more and reduce my environmental impact, have incredible experiences with my family and friends and neighbors, increase what I spend locally for bike products and services, and increase my community connectivity. Throughout the pandemic especially, having access to the mountain bike trails in this park has become invaluable.

Increasing the trail skill levels and features, mileage and connectivity, as well as amenities and access would bring these benefits to even more people in the area. Battle Creek has the best mountain bike trails in the metro area, but only for those who know how to navigate it and those who have advanced physical and technical riding skills. With improved support it could become a flagship destination bringing benefits to riders of all skill levels, to local residents, to aspiring kids and school teams, to area businesses, and to those living in the metro and across the midwest region.

Increasing the variance of trail difficulties and adding skills areas would make the trail more attractive to those just starting, those looking to grow their skills, and to the most advanced riders. While Battle Creek is my favorite mountain bike destination, it is one I avoid taking the rest of my family to because of the physical and technical skills required to enjoy the park. With an increase in beginner, intermediate, and advanced trails and skill areas/parks the park could become one where riders spend a lifetime at upskilling their rides and pushing themselves to improve. This lifelong connection to the park would bring lifelong visitation, residents, and support for the area.

In learning to navigate the mountain bike, ski, and walking trails at Battle Creek I quickly realized the size in area as well as in connectivity across multiple neighborhoods. From seeing all those green spaces on a map, I saw the potential for a great loop of off-road adventure for hikers and bikers alike. If more of the sections of Battle Creek were connected by multi-use mountain bike trails, it would unite the currently disjointed sections of the park creating off-road connectivity benefiting bikers, hikers, snowshoers, and area residents. Additional mileage would not only connect the park better, it would also make it more attractive to participants by making it a place where more time and areas could be visited. This would make mountain biking more accessible to those living in the surrounding neighborhoods for quick rides as well as increase the duration and frequency of riders and hikers. Greater total mileage would also make these trails a must-visit destination for riders across the midwest.

Improved trail amenities would make this a trail a better experience for all in the area. When I first rode at Battle Creek years ago I found it frustrating to figure out where the mountain bike specific trails were, and how to connect the areas. After a group ride and improved signage from the trail boss and crew I was able to take a neighbor to the trails. He said that after living in the area for more than 30 years and hiking and biking the trails, he had never known about or seen some of the areas we explored. Adding amenities like improved parking, access areas, restrooms, water access, and additional signage would make a better experience for first time visitors and to long time residents alike. Making these trails accessible at later times of day and to fat bike riders in the winter (where trails are separate from ski trails) would increase these benefits year round.

It is my belief that increasing the trail skill levels and features, mileage and connectivity, as well as amenities and access would make Battle Creek rival some of the top trails in the midwest. I often hear Battle Creek described as a hidden gem in the mountain bike community. Increasing support for mountain biking in the master plan has the potential to turn it into a crown jewel. I look forward to supporting and enjoying the park with my growing family for years to come.

Thank you for reviewing,

-Nathan

Raintry Salk  
1635 Burns Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55106

October 31, 2021

RE: Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Draft

I write to note my opposition to the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Before I begin, however, I'd like to provide a bit about my background for context. I am a Ramsey County resident, living in the Battle Creek neighborhood near Highway 61 in Saint Paul. The sole reason I moved to Ramsey County was to be in close proximity to Battle Creek Regional Park. Since I moved here seven years ago, I have spent nearly every day in the park—rain, snow, or shine. (The only days I have missed are either due to being out of town or your annual hunts restricting my access.)

I possess a master's degree in Parks, Recreation and Leisure and a PhD in Recreation Resource Management. During the span of my long career, I have worked for municipal, regional and federal park agencies. For nearly two decades, I performed parks-related research studies, exploring various aspects of recreation behavior. Given this background, I am not your typical park user.

To date, I have been actively engaged in the process to develop the master plan. I attended multiple public meetings, participated in planning charettes, completed multiple engagement surveys, met with park commissioners, sent email correspondences to staff and elected officials. I have raised my concerns at each opportunity. For instance, on May 12, 2020, I submitted an 8-page letter to the parks commission and my county commissioner (who also shared it with park staff). In that letter, I raised my concerns as it pertained to the proposed trail system. I bring all of this forward to note that I have consistently voiced my concerns and pointed to issues during this entire planning process. This is not me swooping in at the 13<sup>th</sup> hour to provide my comments. I am a parks management expert who deeply values Battle Creek, who has spent countless hours engaged in a planning process. And, I, again, note that I oppose this plan.

There are a few things that propel my opposition: 1) the trail system, 2) the lack of racial equity analysis, 3) the exorbitant cost associated with vision put forward, and 4) the lack of requisite demonstrated demand for future build-out.

### The Proposed Trail System: A Collision Course

With regards to the trail system, it is rife with management issues. The trail plan (see Figure 1 on the following page) is ill-conceived and unresolved. There are multiple trail classifications in the concept plan that include 1) paved trails, 2) natural surface walking and hiking trails, 3) hiking and cross-country ski trails, and 4) off-road cycling and hiking trails.

These classifications, while important, leave open many possibilities for conflict and the need for active and costly management. For instance, let's take the hiking and cross-country ski trails. The trail system assumes that in winter months those trails will be for cross-country skiing. So where do those hikers go? The off-road cycling and hiking trails? Nope. According to the plan, those trails are closed in the winter

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

months (p. 70). So, where are the hikers and snow-shoers to go in the winter months? The plan stipulates that more planning in this vein needs to occur, noting “Ramsey County may need to further engage community members, stakeholders, partnering agencies and others in regards to the development of winter recreation trails in Battle Creek Regional Park to determine final uses, areas, and trail lengths for winter snowshoeing and hiking.” So, in essence, the County spent four years developing a master plan and did not determine where this large segment of recreationist, hikers, should go during winter months? For the last two seasons, the ski trails have had signage that says the trails are for cross-country skiers only. Does that mean with passage of this plan, you’ll cease the use of those signs because you haven’t figured out where to put us? Because I can guarantee you, we will not stop hiking on ski trails because you’ve failed to accommodate hiking in winter months anywhere in the park. This in turn, will lead to increased maintenance costs due to excessive grooming or bad reviews of ski conditions due to ruts and boot prints on ski trails. I raised this issue years ago, as did many other trail users, so I am just baffled why this aspect of the trail system continues to be unresolved.



Figure 1. Overall Concept Map from the Battle Creek Master Plan.

I have also consistently raised concerns about the Off-Road Cycling and Hiking Trails. There has been some responsiveness to my concerns, but the overall trail system continues to be problematic. Notably, as it pertains to recreational conflict and environmental degradation. Recreation conflict, a highly studied phenomenon, arises when competing uses occur on a given resource. In the context of Battle

Creek, with the exponential growth of mountain bikers accessing the park, conflicting trail use is on the rise. I can't tell you how many times I have been yelled at to get out of the way. This is particularly an issue on steep slopesides wherein cyclists will come upon us going at dangerous speeds. While there is signage of multiple uses of the existing trails, it has not decreased the degree to which I am perceived a secondary user and need to get off the trail to accommodate their use. While I am adamant that I will not be displaced from trails that I love, I wouldn't doubt it if many hikers have been displaced from narrow width paths in the park due to burgeoning takeover of trails by off-road cyclists.

The concept plan also includes additional trail miles in areas that are on slopes that should not be developed. We have ample evidence of the call for halted trail development in the park. For instance, some of the newest trail additions were built on a bluff side that has required extensive trail stabilization and already shows evidence of slope side erosion. Much of the trail expansion in the last few years has occurred on similar slopes and evidence of on-going erosion issues are prevalent. From an ecological perspective, the erosion in a park like Battle Creek has significant impact, considering bluffs lead directly to waterways including the creek and flowage to the Mississippi River.

### Racial Equity Tool Analysis: Really? Where?

Currently, I am employed at a national racial justice organization, wherein my body of work explores how government create, maintain, and perpetuate racial inequities. I am very familiar with our tendency within government to make decisions without the use of an equity analysis and the resultant negative consequences, often unintended, that arise from that failure. As someone who has engaged in this work for some time, it is evident to me that decisions made over time, perhaps made by very well-intentioned individuals, have created structural and institutional inequities as it pertains to access, use, and enjoyment of the park. Early on, I identified a lack of a racial equity analysis in the planning process.

Now, the table of contents states that an equity analysis can be found on page 155. On page 155, there is no equity analysis. I did find a section labeled equity analysis on page 170. This section included subheaders on project data, public engagement, and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. The project data delineates the demographic profile of Ramsey County and residents near the park. The public engagement section points to all the endeavors planners underwent to try and capture different audiences. The section related to Government Alliance on Race and Equity asserts that the use of a racial equity tool was performed to evaluate the plan. The content in that section provides glaring evidence that staff do not know how to use a racial equity tool, nor do they have the requisite ability to perform such an analysis. It reads as if it was an afterthought and is just blowing smoke up our asses. A tool is supposed to disaggregate data by race and ethnicity as it pertains to the decision before you. If the tool was used for real, the plan preparers would be able to demonstrate with data what different racial and ethnic subgroups desired in the park and how the plan reflects that input. You can't just say that because some people live nearby and we plan to put some safe crossings in, we've done equity. There is literally no data provided to back up the claims put forward. For instance, the plan claims the following:

From community engagement that has been targeted at diverse audiences Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has learned that these communities desire:

- Safer park access points
- Park programming in a variety of subjects and disciplines such as beginner outdoor recreation courses, nature courses, after school programming, and community events

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

- Trailhead and park amenities such as water fountains, restrooms, benches, picnicking infrastructure
- Implementation of a free splash pad or the redevelopment of waterworks
- Educational programming in the park
- Nature center development
- Playgrounds (p. 174)

What has actually happened here is that “diverse audiences” and “these communities” got lumped into one category and this is the exact opposite of the intention of an equity analysis tool. You don’t just aggregate “difference” and call it due diligence to mitigate unintended consequences. The approach used in the plan essentially treats everyone from diverse backgrounds to ultimately possess the same desires. You have not done an equity analysis. All you’ve done is manage to propagate the notion that historically unrepresented groups are homogenous and thus can be systematically lumped together. It is actually the converse of an equity analysis, as you have actually silenced the different voices central to an equity analysis. Until you can show the justification with data to aggregate “diverse audience”, you’ve failed to perform an equity analysis. Revisions to this section need to adequately spell out what various constituencies desired, and how the proposed plan centers their desires and needs, expressly. It is wholly insufficient to say you performed an analysis when the content provided illustrates it has negated the very aim.

### Exorbitant Costs: Implementation Insanity

The Met Council requires a cost estimate to be included in master plans. Page 168 in the plan specifies that it will cost \$38.3 million dollars to implement the vision put forward in the plan. That does not include the acquisition costs for boundary adjustments or other hidden costs of the plan. In essence, this is a billion-dollar vision being put forward during a time when the county is actively selling off other nearby lands held in the public domain (e.g., Ponds at Battle Creek Golf Course, Ramsey County Corrections lands, etc.) to address tax revenue shortfalls. Are we to assume the build out of this plan will be largely paid by Ramsey County residents, given it’s a known fact that regional and state dollars are grossly underfunding the regional park system? What will be the tax burden for Ramsey County residents? My property taxes have gone up 17-22% each year since 2018. The plan needs to be based in reality, what is plausible given funding options, available and forecasted, in timeframe of this plan, not some pie-in-the sky ideals of designers.

### Where is the Demand?

One Met Council required component of a master plan is a projected demand forecast. I do not see this in the plan. Without which, it is hard for the reader to see the merit of this proposed plan and what justifies all the future development and associated expenditures. Currently, the park is grossly underutilized. How does this development plan bring forth new and additional users? How does this plan offer additional recreational opportunities for diverse user groups? What growth justifies the expansion of park boundaries, extension of trail miles, build-out of new structures, propagation of more area for recreational opportunities? The plan includes a laundry list of what folks asked for, but that is not the same as demonstrating a public investment of this magnitude will have a positive net impact on the community and region. For instance, much of the proposed developments cater to existing users already. How does that benefit the community at large? How does that provide greater community health and wellness when it essentially only provides greater amenities to those who are already benefitting from the resource? The proposed infrastructure caters to recreational activities that have a

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

huge cost associated with participation. So, essentially, the build-out does not cater to local residents who you've already acknowledged are lower income than the county at large. This plan is essentially a dream board of the desires of affluent county residents who belong to outdoor enthusiast organizations with power and influence, with very little justification provided for the vision put forward. Just because you engaged a broader audience does not mean that one can see the impact of that reflected in the plan.

In closing, actively managing for activities that are pursued by a select demographic at the exclusion of others has detrimental consequences. One does not have to look far to see that in real time. Theodore Wirth Regional Park underwent extensive development to provide amenities to provide for the same activities: cross-country skiing and mountain biking. They created a space that fosters exclusivity versus inclusivity. While they have seen increased participation in the desired activities, they have displaced others and created a space that nearby residents despise and resent. In fact, local community members in north Minneapolis often refer to it as "white space" and do not use it.

For all of the reasons above and more, I oppose this draft plan.

Thanks,

Raintry Salk, PhD



## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [zoey](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Strongly support Mountain Bike Trails in Battle Creek!  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:13:39 AM

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You don't often get email from zoeymelf@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin,

I'm writing to express support for the Mountain Biking trails at Battle Creek Park. I live in Minneapolis, and visit Battle Creek park regularly.

The trails are great as they are, but could definitely serve the community better with improvement. The trail sections themselves are disjointed and hard to navigate. This is a big deterrent for new users of the trails. Also, in my opinion, it contributes to the problem of unsanctioned trails in that people who can't find the official trails are more apt to get drawn into the woods on unofficial trails. Bolstering and refining the mountain bike trail system would both improve the experience for new and existing people who like to mountain bike, and also help to control the problem of unsanctioned trails.

Thanks lots for supporting Battle Creek. It is a great asset to the Twin Cities. The mountain bike trails at Battle Creek are often cited as some of the best in the area. Here's hoping that you will work to make them even better!

Sincerely,

-Zoey Melf

zoeymelf@hotmail.com  
612-770-1991

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Monica Bierma](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** thoughts from a Battle Creek neighbor  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 5, 2021 1:39:35 PM

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Hi Ben, I am forwarding on to you some comments from a friend who lives near the park. Thanks!

A few thoughts...Truly, to use the park one currently has to park on the road...a road that splits the whole park...that has been known for vandalism. There should be a 20-30 space parking lot which would allow for safe unloading of bikes, x-country skis, etc. pulling them from the road. I refer to this as the east entrance.

The west entrance (next to hwy 61) is fine the way it is set up from my perspective.

Path improvement needed.

The unique bike paths are pretty cool there although they are 1/2 dirt (or billy goat path).

Improved security is always good.

--

**Monica Bierma** / Administrative Assistant & Bookkeeper

[mbierma@fmr.org](mailto:mbierma@fmr.org) / 651-222-2193 x10

(she/her) [Why pronouns matter.](#)

Working Monday-Thursday

## Appendix - 45 Day Draft Plan Public Review Comments

**From:** [Sheri Smith](#)  
**To:** [Karp, Benjamin M](#)  
**Subject:** Wildlife Advocacy  
**Date:** Friday, October 29, 2021 9:52:44 AM

You don't often get email from sherismith1212@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**External message alert:** This message originated from outside the Ramsey County email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Hello Benjamin:

I am writing to request that the Battle Creek Park Master Plan be amended to include **habitats that \*MUST\* be protected** -- but that are not specifically noted in the Plan.

There are more than 77 acres of grassland that abuts / shares the border with Battle Creek Regional Park .

These 77+ acres are natural habitat for wildlife -- some wildlife which are rare and endangered according to Ramsey County and according to other studies.

It is unfortunate that the Master Plan seems to abandon responsibility for preserving and protecting the green space for wildlife habitat.

Please take these concerns seriously to heart. We need leadership in Ramsey County to stand up and protect and preserve wildlife habitat so that future generations can enjoy what Minnesota is all about.

Thank you for hearing my voice on this.

Sheri Smith -- Ramsey County Resident and concerned advocate for wildlife  
4345 Whitaker Court  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
651.325.6552







Battle Creek Regional Park -  
Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment

May 4, 2021



# PREFACE

Ramsey County is requesting a focused master plan amendment to the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan to address natural resource and public safety improvements to the Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye section consisting of:

- Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements).
- Other Natural Resource Restoration activities and projects.
- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study).

This master plan amendment does not address boundary adjustments, park acquisition, recreational infrastructure and programming improvements, or access within the Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park. These components will be addressed in a later amendment/update to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Please refer to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan for information relating to boundary adjustments, park acquisition, long-term recreational infrastructure and programming improvements.

This master plan amendment is intended to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake section of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendment as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan. The main unit of Battle Creek Regional Park is at a different level of development than the Pigs Eye Lake unit. The main Battle Creek unit is moderately developed with maintained trail systems, signage and other recreation facilities. Pigs Eye Lake remains undeveloped. The entire Pigs Eye section is within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This section of park is subject to MRCCA regulations (State statute under Minnesota Rule 6106) which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor.

### Background:

Battle Creek Regional Park is in the southeast corner of Ramsey County in the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park is within the City of Saint Paul and consists of Pigs Eye Lake, which is a back water of the Mississippi river and is surrounded by a mixture of upland and floodplain areas.

In 2015, funding became available through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Continuing Authorities Program Section 204 Beneficial Use of Dredged Material to develop a feasibility study with an integrated environmental assessment worksheet for the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake. The Corps in collaboration with Ramsey County initiated an agency-wide planning effort comprised of federal, state, and local agencies to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders and process for developing the feasibility study in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The feasibility study was completed in 2018 and identified the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake was feasible and did not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under NEPA or MEPA guidelines.

In 2019, Park staff initiated a focused master plan amendment process to better address natural resource needs for Pigs Eye Lake. The focus master plan amendment includes:

- Sequencing of natural resource improvements for Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements).
  - Other natural resource preservation projects.
  - Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study).
- Address MRCCA policy standards and criteria.
- Public engagement process.

## Public Engagement:

A multi-level engagement process was utilized for the development of the master plan amendment from 2015-2020. Both partner engagement for agency coordination and involvement, and community engagement for general participation by the general public was completed for feedback. Below is a summary of public input options.

- Pigs Eye Feasibility Study – There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state, and federal agencies throughout this study such as Ramsey County, St. Paul, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD), Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), Corps, National Park Service (NPS), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study. Additionally, non-governmental agencies and organizations such as the Friends of Pool 2, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) and the Friends of Parks and Trails were also included in the review and approval process of the feasibility study. Public engagement was completed with two concurrent 30-day public review periods from March 12, 2018 to April 12, 2018 for both the MEPA and NEPA process to allow general feedback from the public.
- Lessard Sam’s Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Funds – The island building feasibility study was presented to the LSOHC in an effort to obtain \$4.3 million in local funding. The LSOHC is comprised of 12 members made up by the State Legislature (House and Senate) and public appointees by the Governor, House and Senate. Due to high project significance and benefit received, the LSOHC and State Legislature approved project funding and a grant agreement for the implementation of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
- Master Plan Amendment -
  - Previous public engagement completed – Past engagement for development of the 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan, and the overall Battle Creek Regional Park master plan amendment process that was initiated in 2019.
  - Additional public engagement - The Parks department launched a 45-day public review period from August 17, 2020 through September 30, 2020. A virtual public meeting was hosted on September 17, 2020 to allow additional public comment. Notification of the public review period consisted of multiple notifications through social media, email blasts, and the County Parks website, in addition to a press release in the Pioneer Press. The Parks department also sent out email notifications to the City of Saint Paul, other Federal and State agencies, in addition to non-profit organizations such as FMR.
- Agency support – Following the public engagement period, the Parks department initiated a process for agency support of the master plan amendment from the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. There was broad agency support including federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations. Supporting letters received and included in the document from the NPS, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and FMR.

## Engagement Results:

The following themes emerged from analysis of input received through the community engagement process.

### Community Participation Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – These themes are discussed more in detail in the Conflicts section of the plan.
  - Project planning/intent – Project understanding as a habitat restoration project and the need for additional public safety components related to long-term environmental clean-up.
  - Constructability.
    - Utilization of dredge material.
    - Testing.
    - Existing pollution.

# PREFACE

Ramsey County is requesting a focused master plan amendment to the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan to address natural resource and public safety improvements to the Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye section consisting of:

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- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study).

This master plan amendment does not address boundary adjustments, park acquisition, recreational infrastructure and programming improvements, or access within the Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park. These components will be addressed in a later amendment/update to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Please refer to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan for information relating to boundary adjustments, park acquisition, long-term recreational infrastructure and programming improvements.

This master plan amendment is intended to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake section of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendment as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan. The main unit of Battle Creek Regional Park is at a different level of development than the Pigs Eye Lake unit. The main Battle Creek unit is moderately developed with maintained trail systems, signage and other recreation facilities. Pigs Eye Lake remains undeveloped. The entire Pigs Eye section is within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This section of park is subject to MRCCA regulations (State statute under Minnesota Rule 6106) which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor.

### Background:

Battle Creek Regional Park is in the southeast corner of Ramsey County in the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park is within the City of Saint Paul and consists of Pigs Eye Lake, which is a back water of the Mississippi river and is surrounded by a mixture of upland and floodplain areas.

In 2015, funding became available through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Continuing Authorities Program Section 204 Beneficial Use of Dredged Material to develop a feasibility study with an integrated environmental assessment worksheet for the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake. The Corps in collaboration with Ramsey County initiated an agency-wide planning effort comprised of federal, state, and local agencies to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders and process for developing the feasibility study in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The feasibility study was completed in 2018 and identified the implementation of islands within Pigs Eye Lake was feasible and did not require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under NEPA or MEPA guidelines.

In 2019, Park staff initiated a focused master plan amendment process to better address natural resource needs for Pigs Eye Lake. The focus master plan amendment includes:

- Sequencing of natural resource improvements for Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements).
  - Other natural resource preservation projects.
  - Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study).
- Address MRCCA policy standards and criteria.
- Public engagement process.

## Public Engagement:

A multi-level engagement process was utilized for the development of the master plan amendment from 2015-2020. Both partner engagement for agency coordination and involvement, and community engagement for general participation by the general public was completed for feedback. Below is a summary of public input options.

- Pigs Eye Feasibility Study – There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state, and federal agencies throughout this study such as Ramsey County, St. Paul, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD), Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT), Corps, National Park Service (NPS), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study. Additionally, non-governmental agencies and organizations such as the Friends of Pool 2, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) and the Friends of Parks and Trails were also included in the review and approval process of the feasibility study. Public engagement was completed with two concurrent 30-day public review periods from March 12, 2018 to April 12, 2018 for both the MEPA and NEPA process to allow general feedback from the public.
- Lessard Sam’s Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Funds – The island building feasibility study was presented to the LSOHC in an effort to obtain \$4.3 million in local funding. The LSOHC is comprised of 12 members made up by the State Legislature (House and Senate) and public appointees by the Governor, House and Senate. Due to high project significance and benefit received, the LSOHC and State Legislature approved project funding and a grant agreement for the implementation of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
- Master Plan Amendment -
  - Previous public engagement completed – Past engagement for development of the 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan, and the overall Battle Creek Regional Park master plan amendment process that was initiated in 2019.
  - Additional public engagement - The Parks department launched a 45-day public review period from August 17, 2020 through September 30, 2020. A virtual public meeting was hosted on September 17, 2020 to allow additional public comment. Notification of the public review period consisted of multiple notifications through social media, email blasts, and the County Parks website, in addition to a press release in the Pioneer Press. The Parks department also sent out email notifications to the City of Saint Paul, other Federal and State agencies, in addition to non-profit organizations such as FMR.
- Agency support – Following the public engagement period, the Parks department initiated a process for agency support of the master plan amendment from the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. There was broad agency support including federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations. Supporting letters received and included in the document from the NPS, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and FMR.

## Engagement Results:

The following themes emerged from analysis of input received through the community engagement process.

### Community Participation Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – These themes are discussed more in detail in the Conflicts section of the plan.
  - Project planning/intent – Project understanding as a habitat restoration project and the need for additional public safety components related to long-term environmental clean-up.
  - Constructability.
    - Utilization of dredge material.
    - Testing.
    - Existing pollution.

- Timing for implementation – potential delay of the project until long-term cleanup activities have been completed.
- Effectiveness.
  - Benefits of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Long-term clean-up efforts.
  - Impact and or benefits to existing wildlife.
- Public Safety – need for additional long-term planning.
- Need for future access and recreation improvements.
- Climate resilient vegetation.
- Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations

#### Agency Participation Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – Extensive support from all levels of federal, state, and local agencies through benefits achieved from this project.
- Public Safety – need for additional long-term planning.
- Climate resilient vegetation.
- Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations.

Theme outcomes related to both community participation and agency participation have been analyzed and incorporated were feasible in the master plan for continued participation, and evaluation/completion of projects identified in the master plan.

#### Equity Analysis:

Public engagement for the focused master plan amendment was intended to reach as wide of an audience as possible and focused on gathering information both from residents who live near the regional park and county-wide as well. Even though no recreational infrastructure improvements or programming amenities are proposed in this master plan amendment an equity analysis was still conducted to provide approximate values for areas within one mile of the Pigs Eye Lake area.

Comparing census blocks from 2010 data and approximate values in 2017 between tracts that fall within 1 mile of the Pigs Eye Lake area with Ramsey County overall provided some meaningful data. Ramsey County, as of 2017, had a population of 537,893. The median household income of the county was \$60,301, with a poverty rate of 15%. The subset of the population living in a census tract within 1-mile of Pigs Eye Lake had a population of 72,623, with a median income of \$53,911 and a poverty rate of approximately 20%. The area surrounding Pigs Eye Lake is very diverse with approximately 49.5% people of color comparing to Ramsey County overall with approximately 36.94% people of color. Additional data for neighborhoods within the immediate surrounding area shows a higher percentage of population in 25-64 age range with 25-34 age range with the highest.

The engagement process with the community consisted of numerous project information notifications through social media, website, newspaper in addition to making information available through the County Parks project website. The level of engagement as defined by the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum was "consult" for development of the focused master plan amendment.

#### Development Plan:

This focused master plan amendment addresses natural resource and public safety improvements to the Ramsey County Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park.

- Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements) - The selected plan includes six islands with sand benches totaling approximately 35.69 acres. Three of the islands would utilize a "split" design that would establish sheltered areas in the centers of the islands, allowing for the creation of approximately 17.6 acres of protected wetland habitat. Island vegetative cover will consist of native grass and shrub land plantings. The recommended plan was developed to address the following objectives in Pigs Eye Lake:

- Improve aquatic habitat – Create depth and habitat diversity in Pigs Eye Lake. Increase acreage of aquatic vegetation. Incorporate structural habitat features to promote fisheries.
- Improve the quantity and quality of habitat for migratory bird species – Create suitable habitat for migratory birds such as dabbling ducks within Pigs Eye Lake.
- Maintain or enhance the quantity of shoreline habitat – Protect existing floodplain forest and marsh habitat along the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake from wind and wave erosion.
- Other Natural Resource Restoration activities and projects
  - Conversion of mixed woods to floodplain forest (i.e. reforestation of native floodplain tree species).
  - Continued enhancement of existing wetland.
  - Removal of invasive species.
  - Revegetation of the existing shoreline.
- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection
  - Initiate an agency-wide planning process for public safety planning activities.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## OVERVIEW

Ramsey County is requesting a focused master plan amendment to the 1981 Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan to address sequencing of natural resource and public safety improvements to the Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye section.

Sequencing of Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment Improvements consist of:

- Pigs Eye Island Lake Project (first step of improvements).
- Other natural resource preservation projects.
- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study).

This master plan amendment does not address boundary adjustments, park acquisition, recreational infrastructure and programming improvements, or access within the Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park. These components will be addressed in a later amendment/update to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan. Please refer the overall Battle Creek Regional Plan master plan for information relating to boundary adjustments, park acquisition, long-term recreational infrastructure and programming improvements.

This master plan amendment is intended to act as a separate natural resource guiding document for the Pigs Eye Lake section of Battle Creek Regional Park and is written to fulfill the requirements of the Metropolitan Council for regional park master plan amendment as outlined in the 2040 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan. The main unit of Battle Creek Regional Park is at a different level of development than the Pigs Eye Lake unit. The main Battle Creek unit is moderately developed with maintained trail systems, signage and other recreation facilities. Pigs Eye Lake remains undeveloped. The Pigs Eye Lake segment of Battle Creek Regional Park is located within the MRCCA.

## BATTLE CREEK REGIONAL PARK – PIGS EYE SECTION BACKGROUND

Battle Creek Regional Park is located in the southeast corner of Ramsey County in the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The park is comprised of four regional segments: Indian Mounds (97 acres); Fish Hatchery (105 acres); Pigs Eye (610 acres); and Battle Creek (846 acres). In accordance with the 1981 joint master plan, the city of Saint Paul owns and operates the Indian Mounds and Fish Hatchery segments of the park. Ramsey County owns and operates the Battle Creek and Pigs Eye segments, consisting of 1,456 acres.

The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park consists of Pigs Eye Lake, which is a back water of the Mississippi River, surrounded predominately by mixed woods to the west and wetlands to the east and northwest of the lake, which is in the floodplain wetland.

See appendix page 109, Battle Creek System Plan section, for additional information regarding habitat land types and acreage.

## PIGS EYE LAKE ISLAND BUILDING BACKGROUND

The Corps, in close collaboration with Parks & Recreation, completed a Feasibility Study for constructing habitat enhancements in Pigs Eye Lake. The project will enhance and restore backwater habitat by creating island and wetland features. Project features include six islands, sand benches, marsh habitat and land plantings. These enhancements will improve aquatic and land habitat as well as maintaining the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake. This project will utilize clean material that was dredged from navigation channels from the Mississippi River Pool 2 in an environmentally beneficial way. Dredged material was tested per MPCA standards and was approved to be utilized for placement within public water. The benefit for utilizing this material allows for cost effective (i.e.



Pigs Eye Lake - Island Building Graphic  
U.S Army Corps of Engineers

free material) to be used for the construction of islands to help increase the size of a project allowing for higher aquatic ecosystem benefits than if the project had to pay for construction material.

See Page 2 for Corps Island Building Graphic

See appendix page 107 for Dredge Material Testing Data.

## Feasibility Study

In 2015, funding became available through the Corps Continuing Authorities Program Section 204 Beneficial Use of Dredged Material. This authority for the island building project was strictly for the construction of a project with the goal of enhancement of aquatic ecosystem. The authority is provided to give local Corps Districts, like the Saint Paul District, the opportunity to utilize dredged material (i.e., sand fill) for positive use in the community by helping pay extra costs above and beyond routine material management incurred for building something beneficial.

The Corps in collaboration with Ramsey County initiated an agency-wide planning effort comprised of federal, state, and local agencies (study team) to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders and process for developing the feasibility study with an integrated Environmental Assessment to comply with NEPA and MEPA requirements. The feasibility study was developed by the Corps and investigated the feasibility of alternative measures to address problems and opportunities associated with Pigs Eye Lake including habitat within and immediately around Pigs Eye Lake. Specific investigative components within the feasibility study included:

- Physical setting.
- Problem identification.
- Plan formation.
- Evaluation and comparison of alternative solutions.
- Recommended Plan.
- Environmental effects.
- Plan implementation.

The study team developed three project objectives as a basis for development of the feasibility study, which consisted of improve aquatic habitat, improve the quantity and quality of habitat for migratory bird species, and maintain or enhance the quantity of shoreline habitat. In addition, the study team identified a variety of measures that could be taken to achieve project objectives, including full and split island designs, sand benches, and the creation of wetland (marsh) habitat. The measures were combined in various logical combinations to form alternative project plans. The habitat concerns within the project area primarily include high levels of turbidity, wind-induced shoreline erosion, lack of depth diversity, and lack of shoreline habitat for birds and aquatic plants.

The study team also considered pollution and Pigs Eye Lake's history as part of the feasibility study. The study included contaminant testing, past data analysis, and formation of an interagency group of experts to evaluate the project from a contaminant's perspective. Specifically, the Corps and interagency team determined that: (1) The low levels of contaminants within the lake in the proposed project area would not pose a large risk of bioavailability or uptake of contaminants in wildlife, (2) Constructing the proposed ecosystem restoration features within the lake would have positive environmental benefits to the lake and surrounding areas, and (3) Constructing the proposed project would not interfere with any ongoing or future cleanup actions associated with the Pigs Eye Dump site.

Additionally, the study also concluded the Pigs Eye Island building project would not have an adverse impact to the Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area (SNA). The introduction of islands within Pigs Eye Lake will create additional habitats that will support other waterfowl species. This would ultimately provide a long-term benefit for reducing congested upland areas for nesting habitats with the creation of areas more unique to specific species.

Outcomes of the feasibility study concluded island building was the most beneficial method for achieving overall project objectives. The islands will greatly reduce the wind fetch allowing for turbidity to improve, aquatic vegetation to establish, depth diversity to increase and shoreline erosion to decrease. All these outcomes will improve the habitat quality on the lake. Without action, it is estimated that a loss of .75 acre per year of valuable wetland vegetation and habitat will occur on the shoreline of the lake. This equals approximately 37.5 acres over 50 years.

Implementation of a restoration plan in this area will directly benefit the entire Pigs Eye Lake ecosystem and restoration efforts are essential for restoring aquatic habitat in the lake.

The feasibility study was prepared in accordance to NEPA and MEPA requirements and consisted of:

- Extensive coordination between local, state, and federal agencies.
- Additional coordination efforts with local advisory groups/organizations.
- A 30-day public review for both the State and Federal from March 12, 2018 to April 12, 2018.
- Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) Record of Decision in April 2018.

### Project Plan

The selected plan includes six islands with sand benches totaling approximately 35.69 acres. Three of the islands would utilize a split design that would establish sheltered areas in the centers of the islands, allowing for the creation of approximately 17.6 acres of protected wetland habitat. Island vegetative cover will consist of native grass and shrubland plantings. Were feasible, there may be opportunities to either experiment and or implement climate adapted native vegetation to provide greater diversity in a changing climate. In efforts to advance the utilization of climate resilient vegetation, it is likely partnerships may be created with other governmental agencies and/or non-profit organizations like FMR and the University of Minnesota, providing the opportunity to apply different habitat restoration approaches within Pigs Eye Lake.

The Corps has constructed many habitat islands on the Upper Mississippi over the past few decades. Many of the features and recommendations have been denoted in the Corps Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program - Environmental Design Handbook, December 2012. Several features of the proposed island layout have varied from more typical sections. This has been done in part to provide a better design for construction on very soft sediments. Changes have also been proposed to improve the island and lake habitat value.

One of the main features that differ from the more traditional island design is the 'submerged berm'. The submerged berm would function as a significant step toward creation of a beach zone around the islands. The beach zone helps dissipate wave energy as waves approach and break on the islands. This reduces the wave's erosive action on the higher island portions. Over time the beach material is regularly rearranged by the waves and the bank material becomes more stable.

Three of the project's islands would be constructed as 'split' islands. Conceptually these islands evolved from the full section island. The thought was that if one of the berms was split off of the island and separated from it by a short distance, the island should still have little risk of erosion along the split since the fetch would be very small. This gap between the two sides could be enlarged further as long as the interior remains very sheltered. These islands are generally constructed in pairs where a portion of one section that has the higher island elevation and another island that is similar to an independent split off berm.

The alternative plans incorporate varying island designs. The northern three islands show a split design with two narrower sections and provides sheltered interior embayment's for protected wetland areas. The southern three islands are most like traditional Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project (HREP) islands with the addition of a perpetually submerged berm.

See page 2 for the island building graphic.



## Island Construction Material and Placement

A variety of fill material including rock, sand, and topsoil will be utilized for the habitat island construction in Pigs Eye Lake. The rock would be clean and sourced from a quarry, however the sand and topsoil material will consist primarily of material generated from dredging in the southern portion of Pool 2. Material dredged in lower Pool 2 is placed on one of three temporary placement islands (Pine Bend, Upper Boulanger, and Lower Boulanger) to be later moved to a permanent location. The material utilized for the Pigs Eye Islands project will come from one of these temporary placement islands.

The Corps has had great success using dredge material from the Mississippi River on past island construction projects. Dredged material is often used for habitat enhancement projects. Reuse of this material can provide substantial cost savings and is an environmentally beneficial way for island construction. Approximately 413,329 cubic yards (CY) of sand and topsoil material is anticipated for island construction. The Corps tested all dredged material for this project per MPCA guidelines. This material was approved per MPCA testing standards for placement in water for habitat creation. MPCA guidelines have been developed specifically to protect the creatures that use these habitats.

### Island Construction Steps



The Corps collects sediment samples annually from the parts of the river that are dredged. Sediment samples are sent to independent chemical testing labs. The material is tested for pollutants such as metals, pesticides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and cyanide. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) (or perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs)) are sampled separately and sent to specialized labs because only a few labs perform these tests. MPCA guidelines were followed for testing locations, amounts, and test types. MPCA standards were used to evaluate material safety - the "Soil Reference Values" for upland uses and the "Sediment Quality Targets" for in-water placement. New sampling at dredge cuts and dredged material placement sites was performed and analyzed with all past dredging data to ensure the material was safe for island building. Similarly, sampling was conducted within Pigs Eye Lake for the project and combined with published sediment studies to make sure the site of the islands and lake access were safe for construction. All



# Appendix - Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan



results were coordinated with the MPCA and other local agencies who participated in a specially formed work group which resulted in agreement that the project would be safe.

See appendix page 107 for Dredge Material Testing Data.

After offloading material from a temporary placement island, material will be transported via barge approximately 12 river miles up the main channel of the Mississippi River through the access channel of the Red Rock Terminal to a staging location at the southern end of Pigs Eye Lake. Analysis has concluded that the southern end of the lake can be reached through the access channel for the Red Rock Barge Terminal (8-9+ ft draft). Additional coordination will continue with businesses utilizing the Red Rock Terminal prior to project construction.

The typical construction process of habitat island building on the Mississippi River starts with the placement of a sand base via the use of either hydraulic or mechanical dredging equipment. Following the sand base construction, rock vanes will be placed at locations along the outer edges of the islands to prevent erosion. After rock vanes are in place topsoil material will be spread on top of the sand bases, followed lastly by seeding and planting of natural vegetations.

### Island Construction Steps



Sand Placement

Stabilize with Rock

Topsoil Placement

Planting and Seeding

### Project Schedule – Next Steps

1. Final Design - September 2019 – Summer/Fall 2020
2. Anticipated Project Construction – Spring 2021- Fall 2024
3. Complete Construction –Fall 2024

### OTHER NATURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS BACKGROUND

The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek is within natural resource management Unit 10 as defined within the 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan – Battle Creek Regional Park section (see appendix page 102). Management of Pigs Eye natural resources will be coordinated by the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources.

### Current State

The entire Pigs Eye section is within the MRCCA, which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. This section of park is subject to MRCCA regulations (State statute under Minnesota Rule

6106) which is in place to protect the unique natural and cultural resources and values within this corridor. Much of the existing landcover within the Pigs Eye section of the park consist of mixed forest and wetland habitats. In order to provide and increase healthy aquatic, land and wildlife habitats it is critical that these environments are maintained, protected and restored. Primary habitat concerns for the Pigs Eye section of the park include:

- Protection of the Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery SNA.
- Lack of wildlife and vegetation diversity.
- Invasive vegetation
- Lack of nesting area for migratory birds.
- Lack of aquatic depth diversity in Pigs Eye Lake for aquatic invertebrates, aquatic vegetation, and fish species.
- High levels of wind-fetch and turbidity in Pigs Eye Lake
- Shoreline erosion.
- Lack of shoreline habitat for birds and aquatic plants.

## Need and Long-term Outcome

Pigs Eye natural resources projects and activities will be coordinated by the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources. Natural resource projects and activities within the Pigs Eye section will be implemented in accordance with MRCCA regulations, which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Additional natural resource preservation projects include:

- Conversion of mixed woods to floodplain forest (i.e. reforestation of native floodplain tree species).
- Continued enhancement of existing wetland
- Removal of invasive species
- Revegetation of the existing shoreline.
- Introduction of climate resilient vegetation

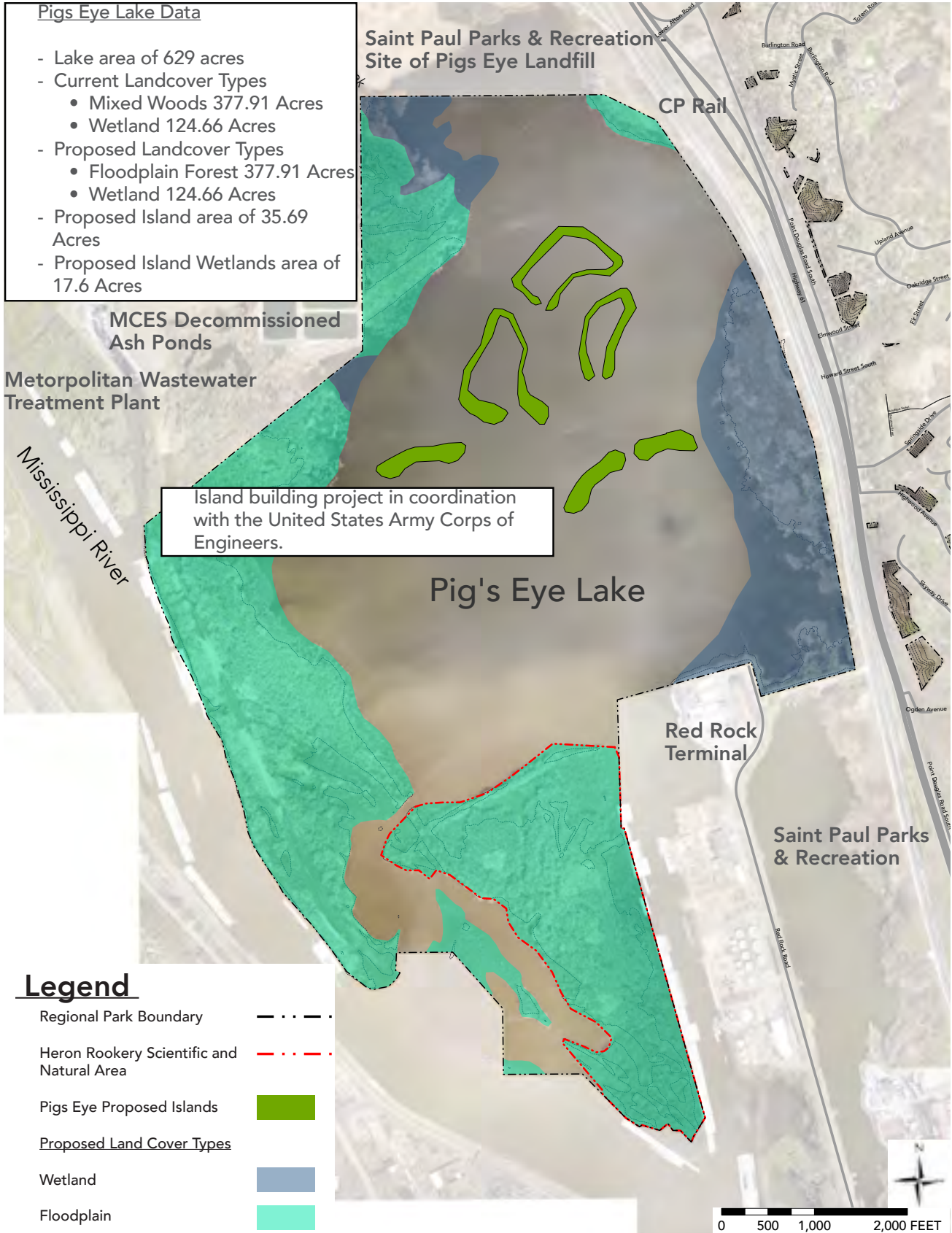
It is likely additional site surveys will need to be completed within the Pigs Eye Lake area prior to any restoration work to gather more information about the current state of the area. Inventory information will include wildlife, plant and shoreline surveys and will focus on determining restoration needs for shoreline erosion, invasive plant species removal, and reforestation of floodplain tree species, such as cottonwood. Habitat restoration for upland and flood zone areas includes transition of the mixed forest to floodplain forest, through mainly removal of invasive species.

The Pigs Eye island building project will provide much needed wildlife habitat within the lake itself, prevent further erosion to the lakeshore, compliment the surrounding natural resources, and will directly benefit the entire Pigs Eye Lake ecosystem. These restoration efforts are essential to restoring aquatic habitat within Pigs Eye lake and for providing greater diversity of other vegetation and wildlife habitats.

Where feasible within the island building project or other natural resource projects there may be opportunities to either experiment and or implement climate adapted native vegetation to provide greater diversity in a changing climate. In efforts to advance the utilization of climate resilient vegetation, it is likely partnerships may be created with other governmental agencies and or non-profit organizations like FMR and the University of Minnesota, providing the opportunity to apply different habitat restoration approaches within Pigs Eye Lake.

See appendix page 109, Battle Creek System Plan section, for additional information regarding habitat land types and acreage.

# Appendix - Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan



## PIGS EYE LAKE PUBLIC PROTECTION BACKGROUND

Public protection identified in the master plan is meant to provide a high-level summary of public safety components for Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding areas within the regional park boundary. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation acknowledges there is a need to address public health protection for the Pigs Eye Lake area due to surrounding past and current land uses, existing land conditions and potential contamination. Public safety components will need to be addressed before recreational and access improvements can be implemented into the Pigs Eye Lake area. Please refer to the overall Battle Creek Regional Plan master plan for long-term recreational and access improvements for the Pigs Eye Lake section of Battle Creek Regional Park.

Public Safety components covered:

- Existing site and environmental conditions.
- Past testing and environmental studies.
- Additional planning required for long-term contamination cleanup activities.

Overall, the majority of Pigs Eye lake and riparian area is owned by Ramsey County. Adjacent land to the regional park consists of park and industrial land uses. The north end of the lake and adjacent riparian land is owned by the City of Saint Paul. Land northwest of the lake is owned by Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES). A portion of MCES land contains four decommissioned wastewater ash ponds from which MCES has removed ash sludge. The Saint Paul Port Authority owns portions of the lake and riparian land on the southern tip of the lake around the outlet of Pigs Eye Lake into the Mississippi River. The Canadian Pacific Railway, or CP Rail System, is near highway 61 and the east edge of Pigs Eye Lake. Saint Paul Port Authority maintains Red Rock Terminal on the south end of Pigs Eye Lake.

### Pigs Eye Landfill

To the north is the 300-acre site of the former Pigs Eye Landfill on City of Saint Paul property, which was used for the disposal of mixed municipal, commercial, and industrial waste beginning in the mid-1950s until 1972, and for disposal of incinerated sludge ash from 1977 to 1985. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, although commonly referred to as a landfill, the site did not operate according to MPCA landfill rules, which were not yet in place when the site was in operation. Therefore, the site is more accurately described as a dump where refuse of various types was disposed of with minimal control (Minnesota Department of Health, 2000).

As a result of the various types of waste dumped at the site over the years, it is currently listed on the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Comprehensive Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) and is a Minnesota Superfund site addressed by the MPCA Superfund Program.

Currently, the MPCA is coordinating cleanup activities at the dump site, as required by the Minnesota Superfund Program.

### Hazardous, Toxic, Radioactive Waste

Environmental studies by several agencies, including the Corps, have been conducted in the project vicinity of Pigs Eye Lake. Because there are known sources of hazardous, toxic, and radioactive wastes (HTRW) in the project area, a Phase I HTRW analysis was conducted in June 2016, in accordance with ER-1165-2-132, Water Resource Policies and Authorities HTRW Guidance for Civil Works Projects. The Phase I analysis identified the primary sites with the highest potential for soil and water contamination, which are the Pigs Eye Landfill, a 350-acre site immediately north of the lake, and the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant property boundary which is approximately 150-feet from the shoreline. As a result of the Phase I report, a Phase II investigation with additional sampling at the proposed project locations was conducted in order to better quantify any potential chemical or environmental contamination that may exist and thereby impact the proposed project. The results of the tests conducted are summarized in Section 2.3.4 of the Island Building Feasibility Report, while full results are included in Appendix E - Sediment Report (see appendix page 303). Section 7.1.6 presents a discussion and



conclusion about the results in regard to the proposed alternative.

### Pigs Eye Lake Sediment Contaminant Testing Summary

The Corps collected sediment samples throughout Pigs Eye Lake and analyzed them for a suite of routinely-tested physical and chemical parameters as part of the Feasibility Study that was completed in 2018. The Corps also collected and incorporated results of tests previously conducted by other entities in Pigs Eye Lake. Contaminant levels found in the tests were compared with several sets of reference values developed by the MPCA to evaluate the acceptability of constructing potential project measures within the lake. The results were coordinated and discussed with local and regional resource agencies. The analysis and coordination led to the conclusions that: (1) The northernmost portion of the lake near the former Pigs Eye Landfill should be avoided as part of this project (incorporated as a planning constraint, see Section 4.2 and Figure 15), and (2) of the Island Building Feasibility Study). Construction of habitat features in the remainder of the lake are not expected to pose an unacceptable risk to wildlife and therefore, overall project planning should continue.

Targets used to interpret the degree of contamination are divided into Sediment Quality Targets (SQTs) and Soil Reference Values (SRVs). The SQTs consist of level I guidance for a high level of protection for benthic invertebrates and level II guidance for the moderate level of protection for benthic invertebrates. The MPCA's SRVs were also compared to the results to determine if the material is suitable for upland placement.

The MPCA oversaw and/or conducted sediment sampling in the northernmost portion of Pigs Eye Lake between 1992 and 2007. Results of the various investigations conducted in the lake indicate that cadmium, copper, lead, zinc, and PCBs are present in Pigs Eye Lake sediments at concentrations that exceed respective level I and level II SQTs. Additionally, perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs), including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) have been detected in lake sediments. However, PFCs are ubiquitous throughout Mississippi River Pool 2, and with the exception of the area directly around the landfill, PFC levels within Pigs Eye Lake do not appear to be significantly elevated compared to the general region.

The Corps conducted two sediment surveys; 3 boreholes were tested in 2015 and 10 boreholes were tested in 2016. The samples were analyzed for grain size, metals, PCBs, pesticides, PAHs, cyanide, total organic carbon, percent moisture, percent solids and percent total volatile solids. In addition, PFCs were analyzed for 6 of the 10 2016 boreholes. Under MPCA's current SQT and SRV levels, the only exceedances detected in the 2015 sampling were for SQTs and only for the borehole closest to the former landfill (15-1M), except for cadmium which exceeded the SQT I in all three boreholes. Under the proposed changes to the SRVs, cadmium levels from boreholes 15-1M and 15-2M and benzo(a)pyrene from 15-1M exceeded the Residential/Recreational limit but were below the Commercial/Industrial SRVs.

The 2016 results showed similar results as the 2015 survey, with a large number of SQT exceedances, but again there were no SRV exceedances under the current MPCA guidance. Similar to the 2015 results, however, several boreholes showed recreational/residential use exceedances for cadmium and benzo(a)pyrene under the proposed MPCA SRV values.

As an outcome of the Corps surveys, it is believed that the highest levels of contamination are limited to the area adjacent to the landfill. The rest of the lake shows contamination of PFCs, widespread low level (SQT I) exceedances for heavy metals and PAHs, limited locations with higher exceedances for cadmium and PAHs (SQT II and proposed Recreational/Residential SRVs) and no recent detection of PCBs. A detailed discussion of the sediment analysis conducted for the project is identified in the Feasibility Study Appendix E section on page 310.

## Per- and Poly-Flouro Alkyl Substances (PFAS)

The MPCA, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and MNDNR have been working to understand the presence and levels of PFAS in Minnesota's environment, especially surface and groundwater. PFAS in Pigs Eye Lake is a concern from a recent discovery of PFAS foam. The extent of PFAS in Pigs Eye or sources of PFAS entering Pigs Eye Lake is unknown at this time however, a site assessment is being conducted by the MPCA, to identify the source of the chemicals and potential clean-up options. This is concerning for Pigs Eye Lake, surrounding areas, and other downstream locations for this pollutant. PFAS are understood to have impacts on human health and environments. Additional planning activities and assessments should be conducted, especially in Pigs Eye Lake to determine the extent of PFAS, sources, remediation efforts, and to implement long-term goals and outcomes to protect the environment and human health.

## Canadian Pacific Railway

The CP Railway, or CP Rail System, is near highway 61 and the east edge of Pigs Eye Lake. The rail yard was built in the 1950s, and currently more than 110 trains pass through this area daily.

## Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant

To the west of Pigs Eye Lake is an upland area, including the Metropolitan Wastewater Plan. The Plant, the largest wastewater plant in Minnesota, is a heavily developed, secure industrial site. The site operates 24 hours per day, 365 days per year treating wastewater and solids from the seven-county metropolitan area as well as receiving some waste from beyond the metropolitan area. Four decommissioned ash ponds, from which MCEC has removed the ash, are located to the east of the treatment facilities.

## Saint Paul Port Authority

Red Rock Terminal is located on the south end of Pigs Eye Lake which encompasses a variety of industrial businesses for land and barge access.

## Public Safety Planning Activities

Additional planning and agency coordination will be required to develop a plan for long-term environmental cleanup for Pigs Eye Lake. It is anticipated that Ramsey County would likely take a lead role within the Pigs Eye Lake segment for engaging a multi-agency planning study to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders, agency and public engagement, funding strategy, and process for developing a long-range plan. Outcomes of planning activities will determine the extent and actions required, but for successful outcomes it is anticipated remediation activities and funding will need to be a coordinated effort across agencies and include public interests.

Next steps:

- Secure funding for planning activities
- Initiate an agency-wide planning team to determine project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders, agency and public engagement, funding strategy, and process for developing a long-range plan for remediation.
- Initiate an agency and public engagement process
- Initiate additional site assessments and testing to determine the extent of contaminants within Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding areas.
- Develop an agency wide monitoring and stewardship plan.
- Other required planning activities as required dependent on outcomes from long-term planning.
- Secure funding for remediation.



Even though the initial focus for Pigs Eye Lake is for natural resource improvement and public safety improvements, an additional public safety component that may be included within the agency-wide public safety planning process or initiated as a separate planning process following remediation should be considered for required safe public use of Pigs Eye. This process will be a critical step for additional planning, evaluation, and coordinating potential long-term recreational and access improvements after remediation is completed. Please refer to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan for potential long-term recreational and access improvements in Pigs Eye Lake.

## MASTER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The following information responds to 6 of the 11-master plan requirements identified in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan with a focus on the Pigs Eye Lake Island building project, and other natural resource activities.

### ACQUISITION COSTS

No Acquisition is proposed in this focused master plan amendment. Potential future access easements may be required by other governmental agency partners related to long-term natural resource improvements for the Pigs Eye islands, other natural resource projects, and environmental cleanup activities.

### STEWARDSHIP PLAN

The natural resources within the Pigs Eye section of the regional park will be restored and managed according to the 2018 system plan. Restoration and maintenance of restored areas will be a priority throughout the Pigs Eye Lake area to carry out the mission of providing adequate sustainable habitats to support populations of native wildlife species. Future restoration projects are listed in the appendix. This list shows the current land cover and proposed land cover changes with associated restoration efforts, ongoing maintenance practices, and costs. Some examples of projects listed include the conversion of mixed woodland to floodplain forest, mainly through the removal of invasive species.

The Pigs Eye island building project will provide much needed wildlife habitat within the lake itself, prevent further erosion to the lake shore, compliment the surrounding natural resources, and will directly benefit the entire Pigs Eye Lake ecosystem.

There is a need to develop a long-term agency wide monitoring and stewardship plan in Pigs Eye Lake as part of public safety planning activities for assessment and restoration of Pigs Eye Lake and the surrounding area after remediation is completed. It is anticipated that Ramsey County would likely take a lead role within the Pigs Eye Lake segment, but this will likely require a coordinated effort across agencies for ongoing maintenance obligations and funding for successful outcomes.

### DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

This focused master plan amendment addresses natural resource improvements to the Ramsey County Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park. This master plan request does not address recreational improvements but will address sequencing of natural resource improvements for the Pigs Eye Lake Island building project, other natural resource activities, and public protection for the Ramsey County section of Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding land area. Recreation improvements for the Pigs Eye Lake section will be addressed in conjunction with long-term improvements in the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan.

#### Sequencing of Natural Resource Improvements

- Pigs Eye Lake Island Building Project (first step of improvements)

- Other Natural Resource Restoration activities and projects
- Pigs Eye Lake Public Protection (may include as a future amendment or agency-wide planning study)

See page 8 for the Pigs Eye Lake Development Graphic

## Pigs Eye Lake Island Building

The development design features include six islands with sand benches with the objective of improving aquatic habitat, terrestrial habitat, and reduction of shoreline erosion by reducing lake wind fetch and water turbulence. Three of the islands would utilize a “split” design that would establish sheltered areas in the centers of the islands, allowing for the creation of approximately 17.6 acres of protected wetland habitat. The other three islands will be constructed as full islands with the addition of a perpetually submerged berm for improved wind fetch and water turbulence control. The recommended plan was developed to address the following objectives in Pigs Eye Lake:

1. Improve aquatic habitat – Create depth and habitat diversity in Pigs Eye Lake. Increase acreage of aquatic vegetation. Incorporate structural habitat features to promote fisheries.
2. Improve the quantity and quality of habitat for migratory bird species – Create suitable habitat for migratory birds such as dabbling ducks within Pigs Eye Lake.
3. Maintain or enhance the quantity of shoreline habitat – Protect existing floodplain forest and marsh habitat along the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake from wind and wave erosion.

The total estimated cost for constructing the project is \$15.6 million. The Corps Operation and Maintenance budget would provide \$3.2 million toward the project. The remaining \$11.3 million would be cost-shared by the Section 204 program (\$8.1 million) and the local sponsor, Ramsey County (\$4.3 million). In efforts to off-set the local share cost, Ramsey County submitted a LSOHC application for the Pigs Eye Lake Island Building project. In September 2018, Ramsey County received preliminary LSOHC grant approval in the amount of \$4,377,200 and in the 2019 Minnesota Legislative session, Ramsey County received final approval.

## Other Natural Resource Projects

The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek is within natural resource management Unit 10 as defined within the 2018 Parks & Recreation System Plan – Battle Creek Regional Park section (see appendix page 102). Natural resource projects and activities within the Pigs Eye section will be implemented in accordance with MRCCA regulations, which shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Pigs Eye natural resources projects and activities will be coordinated by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources.

Additional natural resource preservation projects include:

- Conversion of mixed woods to floodplain forest (i.e. reforestation of native floodplain tree species).
- Continued enhancement of existing wetland
- Removal of invasive species
- Revegetation of the existing shoreline.
- Introduction of climate resilient vegetation

Surveys of the Pigs Eye area will need to be completed prior to any restoration work to gather more information about the current state of the area. Additional natural resource survey will include wildlife, plant and shoreline surveys and will focus on determining restoration needs for shoreline erosion, invasive plant species removal, and transition of landcover habitats. Anticipated natural resource preservation project costs are estimated at

\$380,000 however, additional project cost may increase depending on outcomes of surveys completed within the Pigs Eye Lake area.

### CONFLICTS

There are a number of items that may be a conflict for implementation of projects and or components addressed in this master plan.

#### Pigs Eye Lake Island Building Project

During the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment process some questions and concerns were raised by members of the public regarding the island building project. To adequately address these questions and concerns the Corps and Ramsey County synthesized this information into frequently asked questions and responses found below.

##### Project Planning/Intent

- What is the island building project intent?
  - The island building project is a natural resource habitat project designed to preserve and enhance the aquatic ecosystem. The intention of this project is not environmental clean-up for Pigs Eye Lake.
- Who was involved in developing the feasibility study?
  - There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state and federal agencies throughout this study including Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, RWMWD, Metropolitan Council, MNDOT, MPCA, Corps, NPS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this project. Additionally, groups including Friends of Pool 2, FMR and the Friends of Parks and Trails were included within the development of the feasibility study process. Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota.
- What public outreach has been done as a part of the project?
  - The project feasibility report was made available for public review and was open for comment from March 12, 2018 through April 12, 2018. A public comment period was conducted by the Corps in accordance with NEPA requirements and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Ramsey County published and requested comments concurrently as part of MEPA requirements and the project was published in the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Monitor. Public notices for this review were listed on the EQB website and were also sent out to the public through press releases and identified in the local newspaper, Ramsey County website, and on Ramsey County social media outlets regarding public feedback. All comments received from both the 30-day public comment periods were reviewed, and responses were prepared for development of an EAW Record of Decision (ROD).
- Why was an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) not completed?
  - During the development of the feasibility study environmental impacts were reviewed. A mandatory EAW was prepared according to NEPA and MEPA Administrative Rules and was submitted to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board for review and public comment. All comments received were reviewed based on criteria specified in NEPA and MEPA rules and statutes to determine if the project had the potential for significant environmental effects. Based on federal, state and local agency review of these findings, an EIS was not required for the project. These findings were identified in an EAW ROD and submitted to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board under law.

## Constructability

- What is dredged material?
  - Dredged material is sediment removed from below the surface of a water. The Corps' dredged material is removed from the Mississippi River, and is mostly sand. River currents continuously move sand downstream, and the sand builds up in similar locations each year. The Corps removes material that builds up in the navigation channel so that barges and large boats can travel between Minneapolis and New Orleans.
- Isn't dredged material just waste?
  - All sediments removed from a water body in Minnesota are defined as a "waste" and "other waste material" by Minn. Stat. § 115.01. The statute does not indicate safety or usefulness of the material. All dredged material utilized for this project was tested by independent chemical testing labs in accordance with MPCA standards and was approved for placement in public waters under MPCA standards for habitat creation.
- Is dredged material safe for wildlife?
  - The Army Corps orders tests of dredged material to ensure whether material can be utilized. The dredged material for this project must meet the MPCA guidelines for placement in water for habitat creation. The MPCA guidelines have been developed to protect the creatures that use these habitats. Dredged material is often used for habitat enhancement projects. The Corps has developed thousands of acres of habitat within the Mississippi River using dredged material.
- How is dredge material tested?
  - The Army Corps collects sediment samples from the parts of the river that are dredged. Sediment samples are sent to independent chemical testing labs. The material is tested for pollutants such as metals, pesticides, PAHs, PCBs and cyanide. PFAS (or PFCs) are sampled separately and sent to specialized labs. The MPCA guidelines were followed for testing locations, amounts and test types. MPCA standards were used to evaluate material safety - the SRVs for upland uses and the SQTs for in-water placement.

New sampling at dredge cuts and dredged material placement sites was performed and analyzed with all past dredging data to ensure the material was safe for island building. Similarly, sampling was conducted within Pigs Eye Lake for the project and combined with published sediment studies to make sure the site of the islands and lake access were safe for construction. All results were coordinated with the MPCA and other federal, state and local agencies who participated in a specially formed work group.

- Is Pigs Eye Lake polluted?
  - Testing was performed within and around the project area in Pigs Eye Lake for Level I and Level II SQTs, MPCA's Residential SRVs. Low levels of contaminants such as metals, pesticides, PAHs, PCBs, cyanide and PFAS were found in the Pigs Eye Lake sediments in the area of the proposed islands. The project team consulted with an interagency group of contaminant experts and it was determined that these low levels of contaminants would not pose a risk to wildlife.

There is known pollution nearby that was considered during planning. The former Pigs Eye Dump is located to the north of the lake and operated from 1956 to 1972. Sludge ash from the wastewater treatment plant was placed on MCES property near the northwest corner of Pigs Eye Lake from 1977 to 1985. Remediation efforts started in 1999 and focused on removing drums and batteries that might cause the most environmental harm, and on reducing the erosion and leaching of waste into water exiting the dump site. The dump site is not part of the project area for habitat restoration. The wastewater ash ponds on MCES property have been decommissioned and ash sludge has been removed by MCES.

- Is pollution the problem and not wind-fetch or turbidity?
  - An EIS was completed in 1973 by the Corps when the coal terminal was proposed. The EIS listed pollution as one of three potential causes for a lack of plant growth and limited waterfowl habitat. Biological surveys were also completed in 1972 as referenced in the EIS document. The water quality has improved greatly since the dump was closed and remediated, however, the pollution impact before that certainly impacted a healthy ecosystem. Additionally, the other two factors that are listed in the 1973 EIS are mucky substrate and turbidity. This project will solidify substrate and reduce turbidity thus meeting the other two factors.

### Timing for Implementation

- How is the project funded?
  - The funding being contributed to this project from federal, state and local programs are intended strictly for habitat enhancement. Funding allocated for the project totals approximately \$15.6 million which consist of \$11.3 million in federal funding and \$4.3 million in local funding provided through the LSOHC. All funding is specifically earmarked for the island building project. Implementation of the island building project will start in the spring of 2021 in order to successfully comply with availability of funds.

### Effectiveness

- How would building islands improve Pigs Eye Lake?
  - The islands will provide habitat and shelter for migrating birds and ducks using the lake. The underwater portions of the islands will provide structure and add different sediment types that fish, reptiles, amphibians and water-dwelling invertebrates use. The calm, shallow and stabilized areas around and inside of the sheltered islands will promote aquatic plants for increased wildlife shelter and food. The islands will be strategically placed in Pigs Eye Lake to achieve the greatest benefit for blocking the wind fetch across the lake and breaking up waves. This will help shelter the shorelines from the wind-generated waves and reduce the loss of aquatic plants and shorelines.
- Will the project result in harassing or killing birds?
  - No. The Corps coordinated the project with airport stakeholders because of the proximity of Pigs Eye Lake to the Saint Paul Downtown Airport. The Corps included willow plantings in the project design around the islands to discourage Canada goose nesting, which was the primary concern identified. The Corps has also agreed to monitor bird use and share the data with the Metropolitan Airport Commission. If a potential issue is identified within the interagency team, the Corps will consider modifications or management actions that might be appropriate.

### Adjacent Land Uses

Surrounding land uses consist of regional park and industrial land uses. Most adjacent land uses are industrial except regional park land located on the north side of the lake. Regional park land on the north side of the lake is owned and operated by the City of Saint Paul which is the location of the landfill. These land uses are complex in nature and require additional planning and coordination for improvements within Pigs Eye Lake.

### Public Safety

Additional planning and agency coordination will be required to develop a plan for long-term environmental cleanup for Pigs Eye Lake. Outcomes of planning activities will determine the extent and actions required but for successful outcomes it is anticipated remediation activities and funding will need to be a coordinated effort across agencies and include public interests.

- **Access and Recreation Improvements:** It should also be noted that no recreation or access improvements are proposed in this master plan. Public safety components will need to be addressed before recreational

improvements and access can be implemented in the Pigs Eye Lake area. Please refer to the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan for long-term recreation and access improvements in Pigs Eye Lake.

- **Contamination:** From past testing and environmental studies, contamination has been found on adjacent land and within the northern portion of Pigs Eye Lake. Two sediment surveys completed by the Corps in Pigs Eye Lake were analyzed for Level I and level II SQTs, and MPCA's Residential SRVs. It should be noted that testing completed by the Corps within the project area did not find contamination that would result in not proceeded with the island building project.

Summary of the sampling found:

- The northern portion of the lake near the existing landfill had the highest levels of contamination which is consistent with MPCA testing.
  - There were low level exceedances for level 1 SQTs.
  - There were limited locations with higher exceedances for level II SQTs and SRVs
- **PFAS:** PFAS in Pigs Eye Lake is a concern from a recent discovery of PFAS foam. The extent of PFAS in Pigs Eye or sources of PFAS entering Pigs Eye Lake is unknown at this time. This is concerning for Pigs Eye Lake, surrounding areas, and other downstream locations for this pollutant. Additional planning activities and assessments should be conducted, especially in Pigs Eye Lake to determine the extent of PFAS, sources, remediation efforts, and to implement long-term goals and outcomes to protect the environment and human health.
  - **Monitoring:** There is a need to develop a long-term agency wide monitoring and stewardship plan in Pigs Eye Lake as part of public safety planning activities for assessment and restoration of Pigs Eye Lake and surrounding areas after remediation is completed. Additional coordination efforts and steps may be required to monitor and evaluate either the spread or reduction of contaminants within the Pigs Eye Lake area. It is likely monitoring may be combined and or coordinated with other governmental agencies.

## Partner Engagement with MCES

Additional planning meetings were conducted with MCES and Ramsey County Parks & Recreation to discuss projects and initiatives identified within the master plan amendment. MCES demonstrated a need for further collaboration and participation to mitigate potential impacts to the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant. The items of greatest concern for MCES are listed below.

- **Security.** Additional coordination for necessary security steps will need to be considered for improvements within Pigs Eye Lake. For example, the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant follows the strategic guidance laid out in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan for security of critical infrastructure. Additional coordination and necessary security steps will need to be considered to mitigate security concerns for implementation of projects within the Pigs Eye Lake area.
- **Access and Recreation Improvements.** It should be noted that no recreation or access improvements are proposed in this master plan amendment. MCES has indicated that the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant property is not available for these amenities. MCES has demonstrated long-term access and recreational improvements within the Pigs Eye Lake area should not be considered until public safety components have been completed. Additional planning, evaluation and coordination should be considered following completion of public safety components in order to better provide these amenities at that time.
- **Monitoring Plan.** It should be noted that a 10-year monitoring plan will be initiated following the implementation of the island building project. MCES has demonstrated a need for additional collaboration with the Corps and Ramsey County for the development of the monitoring plan for pre- and post-construction activities.



### Island Building Dredge Material

There was public concern relating to the utilization of dredge material for the construction of islands in Pigs Eye Lake. All dredge material utilized for island building had testing completed for both SRVs and SQTs. All dredge material utilized for island building is from Lower Pool 2 in the Mississippi River. No material from Pigs Eye Lake will be utilized in the construction of islands. Data shown in Appendix E Sediment Report and dredge material results (see appendix pages 100 and 303) identified testing results for previous dredge material in Lower Pool 2 for both level 1 and level 2 exceedances of SRVs and SQTs.

- Level 1 – No impact to aquatic invertebrates
- Level 2 – Some impact to aquatic invertebrates

Only dredge material from river mile 828.2 and lower and from year 2000 to present will be utilized for construction of islands. Only a small portion of dredge material qualified as level 1, but no material qualified as level 2. Material that was dredged prior to 2000 was either used in building other islands in the Mississippi River or used elsewhere.

### OPERATIONS

Management of Pigs Eye natural resources will be coordinated by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources.

#### Pigs Eye Islands

The Corps is responsible for determining ecological success for the ecosystem restoration projects it constructs for up to 10 years following project completion. Monitoring tasks and project evaluation reports will be Corps responsibilities. Close-out of monitoring task would occur when the level of success of the project is determined adequate or when the maximum 10-year monitoring period has been reached. The level of success would be based on the extent to which the project objectives have been or will be met based upon the trends for the site conditions and processes. After the 10-year monitoring period, Ramsey County would assume maintenance and operation activities for the islands.

The Corps will be providing monitoring for the islands for a period of up to 10 years. Monitoring activities will consist of water quality sampling, bird counts, vegetation surveys, elevation surveys, and GIS analysis of the lake's shoreline. The Corps plans to utilize other federal agencies such as the NPS if possible, for some monitoring activities such as bird counts.

Active adaptive management actions by the Corps for the project may include tree, wet prairie, or marsh replanting and herbivory and weed control may be required in the event vegetation establishment fails and replanting is required. Specific adaptive management replanting strategies have not been developed but would be based on the landscape plan and vegetation monitoring activities. In extreme events, adaptive management for vegetation replanting are estimated to be as much as \$120,000 dependent on the amount of vegetation failure, however actual vegetation adaptive management costs are likely to be much lower than that.

#### Other Natural Resource Maintenance and Operation

Management of Pigs Eye natural resources will be coordinated by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources.

Within the parks system plan, habitat restoration of Pigs Eye includes information on the transition of the mixed forest to floodplain forest, mainly through the removal of invasive species, with an estimated cost of \$380,000 and ongoing maintenance cost of \$90,000 every three years.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engagement for the master plan was completed on multiple levels for items identified within the master plan from 2015-2020. Both partner engagement for agency coordination and involvement, and community engagement for general participation by the general public was completed for feedback.

Additionally, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation initiated a process to allow further feedback regarding development of the master plan amendment. Below is a high-level summary of public input options.

### Public Input Options

- **Pigs Eye Feasibility Study** – There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state, and federal agencies throughout this study such as Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, RWMWD, Metropolitan Council, MNDNR, MPCA, MNDOT, Corps, NPS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study. Additionally, non-governmental agencies and organizations such as the Friends of Pool 2, FMR and the Friends of Parks and Trails were also included in the review and approval process of the feasibility study. Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota. Public engagement was completed with two concurrent 30-day public review periods for both MEPA and NEPA processes to allow general feedback from the public.
- **Lessard Sam’s Outdoor Heritage Council Funds** – The island building feasibility study was presented to the LSOHC in efforts to obtain \$4.3 million in local funding. The LSOHC is comprised of 12 members made up by the State Legislature (House and Senate) and public appointees by the Governor, House and Senate. Due to high project significance and benefit received, the LSOHC and State Legislature approved project funding and a grant agreement for the implementation of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
- **Master Plan Amendment** -
  - **Previous public engagement completed** – Past engagement for development of the 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan, and the overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan process that was initiated in 2019.
  - **Additional public engagement** - Ramsey County Parks & Recreation launched a 45-day public review period from August 17, 2020 through September 30, 2020. A virtual public meeting was hosted on September 17, 2020 to allow additional public comment. Notification of the public review period consisted of multiple notifications through social media, email blasts, and the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation website, in addition to a press release in the Pioneer Press. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation also sent out email notifications to the City of Saint Paul, other Federal and State agencies, in addition to non-profit organizations such as FMR.
  - Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota

## Engagement Results

- Agency engagement responses (subject matter experts) - There was extensive agency coordination and support consisting of local, state and federal agencies throughout the Pigs Eye Lake Feasibility Study including Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, RWMWD, Metropolitan Council, MNDNR, MPCA, MNDOT, Corps, NPS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study.

There was broad agency support from government agencies and non-profit organizations for the Pigs Eye Master Plan Amendment. Supporting letters from the NPS, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department and FMR submitted are included in the master plan appendix on page 26.

### Agency Engagement Themes:

- Pigs Eye Island Building Project – Extensive support from all levels of federal, state and local agencies through benefits achieved from this project.
  - Public Safety – need for additional long-term planning.
  - Climate resilient vegetation.
  - Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations.
- Community engagement responses – There was mixed support from the public regarding the Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment. While most of the master plan amendment was supported by the public, there was mixed support by the public regarding the island building project. Most questions and concerns that were raised by members of the public that did not support the island building project revolved around planning/intent, constructability, timing, and effectiveness. Please refer to the Conflicts section on page 14 and Appendix A on page 224 for more detail information regarding questions received and provided responses.

### Community Themes:

- Constructability.
  - Utilization of dredge material.
  - Testing.
  - Existing pollution.
- Timing for implementation – potential delay of the project until long-term cleanup activities have been completed.
- Effectiveness.
  - Benefits of islands in Pigs Eye Lake.
  - Long-term clean-up efforts.
  - Impact and or benefits to existing wildlife.
- Public Safety – need for additional long-term planning.
- Need for future access and recreation improvements.
- Climate resilient vegetation.
- Opportunity for partnerships and collaborations.

### Supporting Master Plan Amendment Recommendation.

Following the 45-day public comment period, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation initiated a process to obtain supporting resolutions for the master plan amendment. This process including gaining municipal support from the City of Saint Paul, other governmental agencies and organizations. There was broad agency support including federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations. The master plan amendment was presented to the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission on January 13, 2021 and received unanimous support. The master plan will be presented to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners on February 16, 2021 for approval and submission to the Metropolitan Council. Additional supporting letters were received and are included in the document from the NPS, Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, and FMR.

As part of the agency support process, a request was also sent to the City of Saint Paul for support of the master plan amendment. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation received notification back from the City of Saint Paul in December 2020 indicating a lack of desire to move a supporting recommendation forward for the master plan amendment due concerns and dissatisfaction relating to the public engagement process for the island building project that was included within the master plan amendment.

Although it is preferred to have a supporting resolution from the municipality, it is not required for final approval by the Metropolitan Council. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation continued to move forward in the Ramsey County and Metropolitan Council approval processes. This will allow the current approval process to proceed and not cause delays in the island building project nor jeopardize funding towards the island building project.

- Determination factors. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation rationale for moving forward with the master plan amendment process was based on the following items.
  - Pigs Eye Feasibility Study - There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state, and federal agencies throughout this study including Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, RWMWD, Metropolitan Council, MNDNR, MPCA, MNDOT, Corps, NPS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study. Additionally, non-governmental agencies and organizations such as the Friends of Pool 2, FMR and the Friends of Parks and Trails were also included in the review and approval process of the feasibility study. Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota. Public engagement was completed with two concurrent 30-day public review periods for both MEPA and NEPA processes to allow general feedback from the public.
  - Island Building Project – Delay in the approval of the master plan amendment would substantially affect the island building project and jeopardize LSOHC and Federal funding provided through the Corps. The estimated time to fully complete the island building project is approximately two years and would require the island building project to start in the Spring of 2021 in order to be fully complete and in compliance with the LSOHC grant funding timeline which has an expiration date in 2024.
  - Master Plan Amendment – Ramsey County Parks & Recreation developed a focused natural resource master plan amendment to specifically include the island building project, additional natural resource restoration activities and project, and Pigs Eye Lake public protection. Although the first step of planned improvements is the island building project, the two remaining project components for additional natural resource restoration and public safety project are also equally important for providing long-term habitat outcome benefits and public safety in the Pigs Eye Lake area. The island building project is fully documented in the master plan amendment in addition to supporting information per the completed Pigs Eye Feasibility Study. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation launched a 45-day public review period from August 17, 2020 through September 30, 2020, in addition to a public virtual meeting on September 17, 2020 to allow greater awareness and public participation on master plan amendment components.

### Pigs Eye Lake Island Building Feasibility Study

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation reached out to the Corps Saint Paul District in October 2012 to identify a need for developing a feasibility study within Pigs Eye Lake. In late 2014, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation was made aware that funding for the study would be made available in 2015. The study was initiated in January 2015 and the Federal Interest Determination was approved by the Corps Mississippi Valley Division on May 14, 2015. The Feasibility phase began immediately to identify the project scope, objectives, coordination, stakeholders and process for developing the feasibility study with an integrated Environmental Assessment.

There was extensive agency coordination consisting of local, state, and federal agencies throughout this study including Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul, RWMWD, Metropolitan Council, MNDNR, MPCA, MNDOT, Corps, NPS, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. These agencies had direct involvement in the development and approval of this feasibility study. Additionally, non-governmental agencies and organizations such as the Friends of Pool 2, FMR and the Friends of Parks and Trails were also included in the review and approval process of the feasibility study. Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota.

In an effort to comply with the MEPA and NEPA processes to allow public feedback, there was a concurrent State and Federal public comment period on March 12, 2018 – April 12, 2018 for the Feasibility Study with an integrated EAW. 30-day public notices for both the State and Federal review were listed on the EQB website in accordance to requirements for both State and Federal process to ensure the public had an opportunity to review and comment on all material identified within the Feasibility Study with EAW.

Public comment involvement regarding the development of the project plan and feasibility study ended as an outcome of the Feasibility Study EAW ROD in April 2018. (see appendix for the attached Feasibility Study EAW Appendix A; EAW Record of Decision).

### 2018 Park and Recreation System Plan

Significant public participation was completed to gauge additional amenity improvements in addition to future planning considerations. In preparing this System Plan update, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation recognized a need to engage the community. The System Plan community engagement process was conducted using two methods:

- Electronic Online Survey
- Pop-Up Table Meetings

Electronic media such as social media, website, and email blasts were used to inform residents of upcoming engagement opportunities. An online survey was launched in July 2017 and remained active until February 2, 2018. Almost 1,000 responses were received. In addition, a series of nine informal or “pop-up” table meetings were conducted at various libraries, community centers, and ice arenas located across the county.

### Overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan Amendment/Update

A robust two-phase public participation process was launched to include pop-up workshops, community meetings and collaborative design sessions to gather community feedback on what is and is not currently working. Phase 1 public engagement started spring 2019 which included an online survey, several pop-up events with the public, multiple stakeholder discussions, (3) community forums, and (1) design work shops. Phase 2 public engagement is planned to be completed in 2020 to gather additional feedback for proposed master plan amendment changes. A similar process to phase 1 engagement will be utilized for phase 2 engagement.

- Phase 1 started spring 2019 (online survey, several pop-up events with the public, multiple stakeholder discussions, (3) community forums, and (1) design work shops)
- Phase 2 public engagement is planned to be completed in 2020 for completion of the overall master plan amendment/update in spring 2021.

## **Battle Creek Regional Park Master – Pigs Eye section focused master plan amendment**

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation launched a 45-day public review period from August 17, 2020 through September 30, 2020. A virtual public meeting was hosted on September 17, 2020 to allow additional public comment. Notification of the public review period consisted of multiple notifications through social media, email blasts, and the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation website, in addition to a press release in the Pioneer Press. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation also sent out email notifications to the City of Saint Paul, other Federal and State agencies, in addition to non-profit organizations such as FMR. Coordination notices seeking engagement were also sent out to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park consists of a 629-acre lake, which is a back water of the Mississippi river, surrounded by 378 acres of land to the west and 125 acres of wetlands to the east and northwest of the lake, which is in the floodplain. Pigs Eye Lake water levels fluctuate with the river and the land within the park boundary is often inundated by water for varying lengths of time. The Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park also contains one of the largest heron rookeries in the State of Minnesota and is designated as a State SNA by MNDNR. The Pigs Eye section is included in the National Great River Park and is also defined as an Environmental Natural Area, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department System Plan, which warrants additional protection and preservation.

Most of the Pigs Eye area land cover consists of mixed woods located on a peninsula of land that separates the lake from the main channel of the Mississippi River. This peninsula of land is historically a floodplain forest but is presently defined as a mixed woods, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department System Plan. The wooded peninsula consists of typical floodplain trees such as cottonwood, silver maple, green ash, willows, American elm, and some swamp white oak, however several invasive tree species have encroached into this area, such as buckthorn and boxelder. The area is also prone to constant flooding creating an open understory with few shrubs or saplings. Ground cover can consist of forest pools, mucky depressions, bare silt or sand, and dense patches of wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) or impatiens (*Impatiens capensis* or *I. pallida*), which can all constantly shift due to movement of water. The wetlands within the park consist of native vegetation, such as prairie cord grass, and various rushes and sedges. Invasive cattails and reed canary grass also dominate a lot of the wetland edges.

The majority of Pigs Eye will remain a natural area to provide benefit to wildlife and for increase diversity. Natural phenomena, such as hydric soils, areas prone to flooding, water features, and wetlands, make up much of the park and will dictate which recreational amenities should be planned for the area. The south portion of the peninsula will remain a SNA for the protection of the heron rookery. Wetlands will remain protected under the State and Federal wetland conservation act.

Management of Pigs Eye natural resources will be coordinated by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and will include ongoing protection in coordination with partnering agencies, site inventories, and restoration of the land and lake resources. Additional surveys will need to be completed within the Pigs Eye area prior to any restoration work to gather more information about the current state of the area. Inventory info will include wildlife, plant and shoreline surveys and will focus on determining restoration needs for shoreline erosion, invasive plant species removal, and reforestation of floodplain tree species, such as cottonwood. Past natural resource management within the park has included controlled deer hunts, wildlife surveys and planting of native vegetation in conjunction with a sanitary sewer pipe project on the west side of the park.



The Pigs Eye Lake Island Building Project will provide much needed wildlife habitat within the lake itself, reduce wind-fetch, and prevent further erosion to the lake shore. This project is anticipated to, compliment the surrounding natural resources, and will directly benefit the entire Pigs Eye Lake ecosystem. These restoration efforts are essential to restoring aquatic habitat within Pigs Eye Lake and for providing greater diversity of other vegetation and wildlife habitats.

See appendix page 109, Battle Creek System Plan section, for additional information regarding natural resource conditions for the Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park.

### Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA)

The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program is a joint state, regional and local program that provides coordinated land use planning and zoning regulations for the 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River through the seven-county metropolitan area covering 54,000 acres of land in 30 local jurisdictions. The MRCCA shares a boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Any development within the MRCCA in Battle Creek Regional Park would need to adhere to the standards and criteria for the preservation, protection, and management of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area under Minnesota Statute 6106.

Per Minnesota Statutes, section 116G.15, subd. 1, the purpose of the designation is to:

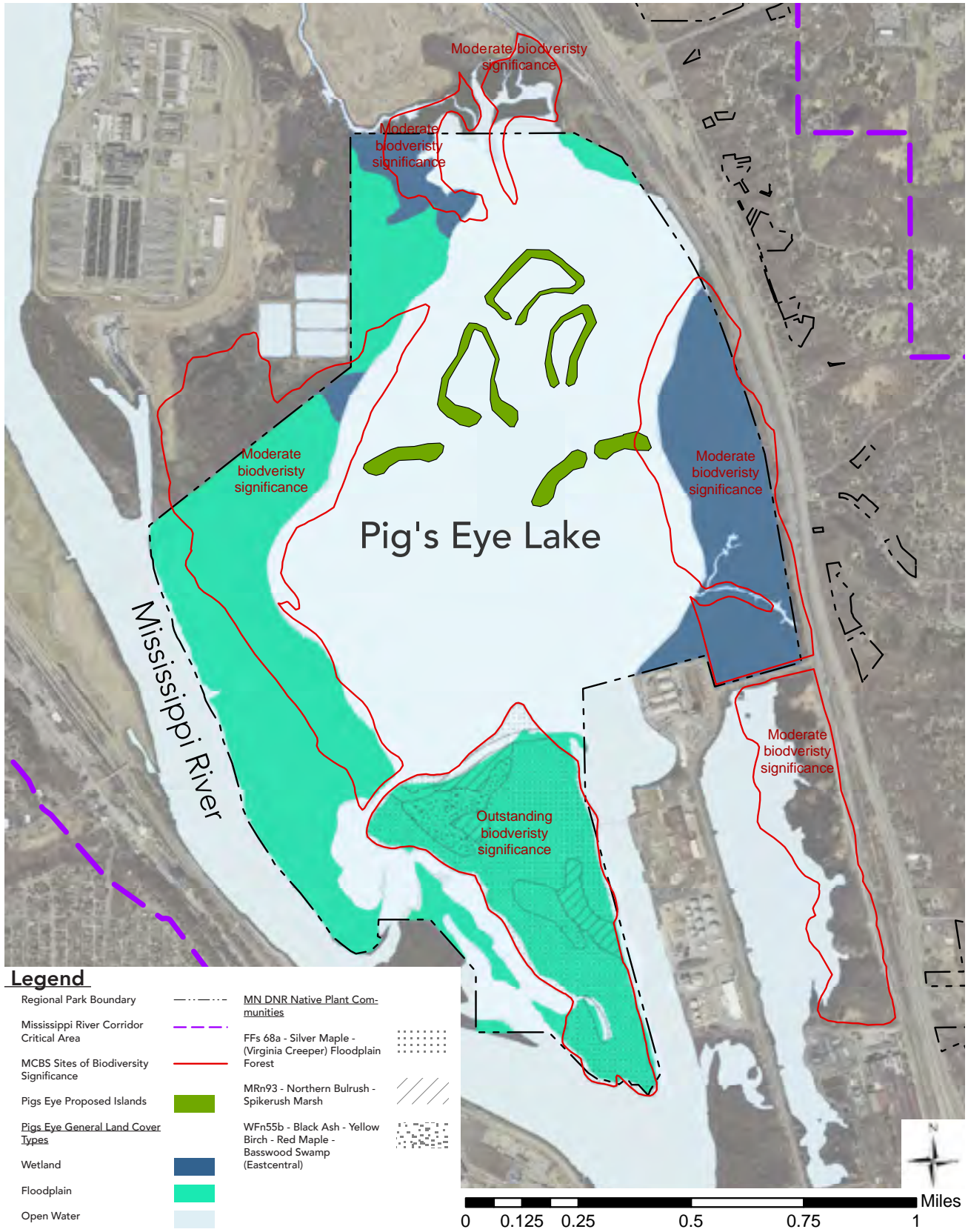
1. Protect and preserve the Mississippi River and adjacent lands that the legislature finds to be unique and valuable state and regional resources for the benefit of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the state, region, and nation.
2. Prevent and mitigate irreversible damages to these state, regional, and natural resources.
3. Preserve and enhance the natural, aesthetic, cultural, and historical values of the Mississippi River and adjacent lands for the public use and benefit.
4. Protect and preserve the Mississippi River as an essential element in the national, state, and regional transportation, sewer and water, and recreational systems; and
5. Protect and preserve the biological and ecological functions of the Mississippi River corridor.

This master plan amendment does not propose the implementation of any public facilities at this time as defined by Minn. Rules 6106.0130 such as, public utilities, public transportation facilities or public recreation facilities. However, the master plan amendment recognizes that the design and construction of future park facilities must comply with the standards contained in Minn. Rules 6106.0130 and will need further evaluation and planning with the public, adjacent landowners, and public agencies. This process will be a critical step for coordinating and implementing potential park facility improvements after public safety improvements are completed as defined in the master plan amendment. Further, any future park facilities and/or projects will be planned, designed and constructed in a manner that protects primary conservation areas and public river corridor views identified by local units of government in their comprehensive plans.

The MRCCA was designated in 1976 to protect its many unique natural and cultural resources and values. These resources and values are protected through development standards and criteria implemented via local land use plans and zoning ordinances.

The MRCCA is home to a full range of residential neighborhoods and parks, as well as river-related commerce, industry and transportation. Though the river corridor has been extensively developed, many intact and remnant natural areas remain, including bluffs, islands, floodplains, wetlands, riparian zones, and native aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna.

## Pigs Eye Lake - Natural Resources Inventory Graphic



### Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)

Battle Creek Regional Park Management Unit: 10  
Dominant land cover type: floodplain forest  
Dominant soil type: silt loam  
Dominant Terrain: flat  
Marschner Pre-settlement Vegetation: Wet Prairie

Government recognition and protection status:

- The entire unit is within the state Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Program (MRCCA) and federal National Park Service, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA).
- Regionally Significant Ecological Areas and Regional Ecological Corridors.
- Scientific and natural area (SNA): Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery SNA.
- MN Native plant Community.
  - Sites of biodiversity significance, moderate and outstanding
  - FFs68a - Silver Maple - (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest. Southern Floodplain Forest. 107.7 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation.
  - MRn93 - Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh. Southern Floodplain Forest. 13.3 acres. Vulnerable to Extirpation.
  - WFn55b - Black Ash - Yellow Birch - Red Maple - Basswood Swamp (Eastcentral). 11.7 acres Northern Wet Ash Swamp. Vulnerable to Extirpation.

Community Structure and Quality: Medium  
Management Priority: High

This unit is the Pigs Eye section of Battle Creek Regional Park and consists of an open water lake (Pigs Eye lake) approximately 628 acres, which is connected to Pool 2 of the Mississippi river. Since this lake is a backwater of the Mississippi River, the water level can fluctuate however, the average maximum depth is approximately four feet. Historically, this water body was a shallower wetland with vegetation throughout. After the lock and dam system along the Mississippi River was installed in the 1930's the water level rose along with the river, making Pigs Eye lake an open water shallow lake. The lake is recognized as a public water by the MNDNR, but since the water body is connected to the Mississippi river, the Corps has regulatory jurisdiction over the water body. Another surface water contributor to Pig's eye lake is Battle Creek, which discharges through a series of wetlands on the north side of the lake. The lake has the longest section of natural shoreline in the park system. The lake edge, where vegetation grows, is prime habitat for waterfowl, shoreline birds, raptors, amphibians, and reptiles. The substrate of the lake is a soft bottom throughout. Within the open lake area there is very little structure or submerged aquatic vegetation, due to the water clarity, which is less than one meter and high turbidity. The open lake produces wind-induced shoreline erosion and provides little to no habitat for waterfowl, native fish or other aquatic species in its current condition. In 2015, the Corps began working with the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation department to discuss the construction of islands within the lake to address some of the environmental concerns. Since this time, the Corps completed a feasibility study for constructing island habitat enhancements and a portion of the funding was secured through a habitat grant approved by the Lessard Sam's outdoor heritage council through the Clean Water Land and Legacy amendments Outdoor Heritage Fund. A construction and design plan were completed by the Corps and the island construction is anticipated to begin in 2021 with additional funding provided by Ramsey County. The project will enhance and restore backwater habitat by creating island and wetland features. Project features include six islands, sand benches, marsh habitat and land plantings. These enhancements will improve aquatic and land habitat as well as maintaining the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake. This project will utilize clean dredged material from the Mississippi to construct the islands, similar to the numerous islands the Corps has constructed in river pools to the south of the metro.

The majority of Pigs Eye area land cover consists of mixed woods located on a peninsula of land that separates the lake from the main channel of the Mississippi River. This peninsula of land is historically a floodplain forest, but is presently defined as a mixed woods with moderate biodiversity significance, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department system plan, due to a number of invasive and tree species that have encroached

into the area, such as buckthorn and boxelder, however, the woods consists of typical floodplain trees such as cottonwood, silver maple, green ash, willows, American elm, and some swamp white oak. The constant flooding of the area creates an open understory with few shrubs or saplings. Ground cover can consist of forest pools, mucky depressions, bare silt or sand, and dense patches of wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) or impatiens (*Impatiens capensis* or *I. pallida*), which can all constantly shift due to movement of water. The wetlands within the park consist of native vegetation, such as prairie cord grass, and various rushes and sedges. Invasive cattails and reed canary grass also dominate a lot of the wetland edges. The east side of the lake has some cattail wetlands and patches of lotus. The island in the south portion of the park is of great significance, outstanding biodiversity and is a state protected scientific natural area: Pigs Eye Island Heron Rookery SNA. This island, around 137 acres, is a floodplain forest of green ash, silver maple, cottonwood and black willow which provides excellent nesting habitat for colonial water birds. The Pig's Eye Island rookery is the largest and longest-occupied site for colonial nesting birds in the metro area, and among the largest in the state.

Floodplain forest systems as large as the Pigs Eye unit are rare within the metro and additional preservation and protection, especially for the designated SNA, should be ongoing. The Pigs Eye section is within the MRCCA corridor area and shares the boundary with the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Additionally, the Pigs Eye section is included in the "National Great River Park" and is also defined as an Environmental Natural Area, within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department system plan, which warrants additional protection and preservation.

Surrounding land use has had historic and current environmental impacts in this area. The open space, owned by the City of St. Paul, abutting the Pig's eye section to the north, was historically the largest unpermitted dump site in the state and was listed as a federal superfund site. Past remediation efforts continued cleanup and monitoring is being completed by the MPCA. The Metropolitan Council Wastewater Treatment Facility is located to the northeast of the site and land use practices, such as abandoned pond holdings, previously used for containing ash sludge, are on the edge of the parkland. To the east is commercial and industrial land use consisting of railroad yards and shipping docks. Barges are docked and line the channel to Pigs eye lake throughout the shipping season. Recreation within the unit is minimal because of limited to no access from land due to surrounding land use. Kayakers and other small boats use the lake.

The wildlife diversity of the park is very high and includes a variety of nesting songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, and wild turkeys. Larger mammals include white-tailed deer, coyotes, red fox, raccoons, and river otters. The Pigs Eye section of the park is especially unique and contains the heron rookery, nesting area for bald eagles, and habitat for countless amphibian, reptiles, migratory waterfowl, and shorebirds. Fish species within the lake consist of common native river fish, such as, black bullheads, crappie, bluegill, catfish, sunfish, freshwater drum. Invasive fauna species within the lake include zebra mussels and carp.

## Management issues

Continued coordination with the Corps is required to ensure the island building project will be successful. A native planting plan and implementation is required, beyond the current willow and grass base design, to ensure quality wildlife habitat following island build.

The extent of survey work being completed by State and local agencies is unknown. Internal park surveys of the Pig's Eye area are severely lacking and will need to be completed to gather more information about the current state of the area prior to any restoration work.

There is pressure for increased access and recreation within the unit.

Coordination and communication with surrounding land use owners is lacking and knowledge of development or restoration on adjacent lands is unknown.

The deer population can exceed the carry capacity of the land in this area.



## Appendix - Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan



Management objective, tasks, schedule and cost:

Objective 1:

Communicate with Corps monthly to review status and receive updates of island building progress until islands are established.

Tasks:

- Review current design, budget and plan and discuss any changes.
- List stakeholders to involve in developing native planting plan.
- Engagement with stakeholders to develop and implement plan following island build.

Schedule and costs:

- 2020 - 2024, Monthly: meet with Corps.
- Cost = parks staff time.

Objective 2:

Review existing survey data and determine and complete survey methods necessary to define the diversity level and habitat quality to guide resource decision making.

Tasks:

- Connect with agencies, such as the MN PCA, MNDNR, and NPS, to find most current survey information completed in the area.
- Coordinate with local and state agencies, such as the MNDNR, to help determine sound survey methods for plant and animal data collection.
- Surveys will focus on determining restoration need for shoreline erosion, invasive plant species removal, and reforestation of floodplain tree species, such as cottonwood.
- Parks staff complete surveys if applicable or hire contractor to complete survey and draft restoration guide.

Schedule and costs:

- Year 1: Jan – March. Complete review of existing survey data and determine required surveys and methods to meet objective.
- Cost = parks staff time.
  
- Year 1: April – October, complete surveys of Pig's eye area and draft guide.
- Cost = contractor cost \$20,000.00.

Objective 3:

Ensure that this unit exists foremost as natural land for wildlife habitat and that all proposed recreation and development will have minimal impact on resources and avoid sensitive areas

Tasks:

- Coordinate with all stakeholders, primarily environmental groups and government agencies, to review any proposed development plans.
- While reviewing plans, the following should be considered at a minimum, but not limited to:
  - No development or recreation will be considered on or around the south portion of the island and peninsula. This area will remain protected for the protection of the scientific natural area heron rookery and follow all state rules.
  - Natural phenomena, such as hydric soils, areas prone to flooding, water features, and wetlands, make up most of the park and will dictate which recreational amenities should be planned for the area. These entities will not be altered for development.
  - List and follow all federal and state regulations, including, but not limited to wetlands will remain protected under the State and Federal wetland conservation act, County recognized Environmental Protection zone, MRCCA rules, national park rules, etc.

Schedule and costs:

- Ongoing: as development is proposed.
- Cost = parks staff time.

Objective 4:

Build stronger relationships with surrounding land use representatives to promote the environmental preservation and improvement of the area.

Tasks:

- Connect with surrounding landowners (Saint Paul Parks, Railroad personnel, Met. Council staff) annually to share work being completed by the parks department and learn about tasks being completed on surrounding lands.
- Share natural resource survey data and promote the importance of preserving unique features in and around the park.

Schedule and costs:

- Annually: ongoing.
- Cost = parks staff time.

Objective 5:

Control deer population.

Tasks:

- Complete annual survey of area.
- Continue with annual special archery hunt.
- Coordinate and contract sharp shooting removal service if population exceeds State standards.



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BATTLE CREEK  
Off-Road Cycling Master Plan

March 6th, 2018

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### Executive Summary

#### Concept

The goal of this Plan is to implement the proposed trails and amenities for the expansion of the off-road cycling system within Battle Creek Regional Park. RCPRD believes this will encourage novice and young riders to try off-road cycling, while improving the quality of the system for current users. The execution of this Plan will occur over the next 10 years, with more detail of phasing explained within the Implementation section of this document.

Off-road cycling within Battle Creek has grown in popularity ever since the Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC) began working on trails within Battle Creek in the year 2000. With increased demand placed on the current trail system there is both a need and opportunity to expand the trail system at Battle Creek Regional Park. Ramsey County is proposing an increase of approximately 21.22 miles of single track off-road cycling trails to aid in accommodating off road cyclists, hikers and many other user groups. These trails will serve to strengthen the links between the parks setting and natural overlooks through connected trail heads, site amenities and an expanded trail system. The proposed amenities may include storage buildings, trail shelters, restrooms, benches, picnic tables, bike washing stations, drinking fountains, gates, lighting and signage. Together these trails and amenities will allow for patrons of the park to further explore and enjoy Battle Creek Regional Park.

The Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling Master Plan will continue to be managed per the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation System Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan. The Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing universal accessibility at all trail facilities. Care will be taken to design facilities that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as principles for universal accessibility to provide all visitors with a meaningful experience.

#### Implementation

No specific timing has been identified for the implementation of the Off-Road Cycling Master Plan within Battle Creek Regional Park. Construction of trails and site amenities could be built in phases. The phasing of the trail system would include the construction of major loops first, followed by secondary and tertiary loops as well as the associated site amenities.

RCPRD will use a variety of tools to promote awareness and use of these additions to Battle Creek Regional Park. Wayfinding signage will be updated as needed following the existing RCPRD Wayfinding Master Plan for consistency with other regional parks and trails.

## Off-Road Cycling Community Outreach

As we move forward with the Off-road Cycling Master Plan, we will invest in developing programs and partnerships to provide better access to the trails for all Ramsey County residents. This will include concerted efforts to increase the diversity of trail riders.

The Battle Creek off-road cycling trails have a few challenging barriers to participation: equipment costs and trail difficulty level being two of the most prominent. To address the latter issue, a beginner level practice area will be developed over time. Until that is constructed, focus will be placed on adult and young adult programs as they will be better suited to handle the trail difficulty. To combat equipment costs, and without our own fleet of bikes, we will need to partner with organization that can provide access to bikes. Some of the identified potential partner agencies include:

- **Cycles For Change** - a non-profit organization working at the intersection of social justice and the bicycle movement.
- **Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC)** - a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to safeguarding the future of mountain biking in Minnesota
- **The Major Taylor Cycling Club of Minnesota** – a nonprofit social/recreational club that promotes safe and fun cycling geared towards the African-American communities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, although all are welcome to join us.
- **The Minnesota High School Cycling League** - state-wide independent activity provider for student-athletes in 7th to 12th grade.
- **St. Paul Police Activities League (PAL)** - PAL promotes youth engagement in a variety of after school and summer recreational activities
- **East St. Paul Bikes** - provides tangible skills to East St. Paul youth while empowering them to provide a service to their community.
- Councilmember Jane Prince whose office represents this area of St. Paul as well as the District 1 Community Council.

Community engagement and outreach will include East Side Somali community via direct outreach, connections with government officials, community members and residential areas such as the Shamrock Court Apartments, Park Apartments and Townhomes and Maplewood Gardens.

Efficiently and effectively monitoring off road cycling programs and community outreach is a priority. Using techniques such as surveys and community engagement sessions, we will regularly analyze what is offered through a performance measurement guideline. Examples may include:

### What We Do

- Number of programs
- Number of program participants
- Number of community partners (groups that help deliver programs)
- Number of partner organizations (groups providing participants) How Well We Do It
- Program attendance
- Do the participants reflect current Ramsey County's demographics?
- Partner organization satisfaction
- Volunteer satisfaction rate (If we have volunteer bike instructors)
- Hours of instruction time/safety training per participant
- Percentage of satisfied participants



### Factors Impacting the Results

- What are the continuing barriers to participation?
- Does this meet a community need?
- Are we communicating effectively?
- Do we have all the equipment we need?

### Is Anyone Better Off?

- Will participants keep riding outside of staffed programs?
- Are participants spending more time exercising? Outside? In a park?

## Planning Framework

### Overview

The purpose of the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling Master Plan is to guide the development, preservation, management and improvement of new and existing off-road cycling trails and associated infrastructure within Battle Creek Regional Park. Together these trails and amenities will allow for patrons of the park to further explore and enjoy Battle Creek Regional Park.

### Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space System

Regional parks and trails are developed in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to preserve green space for wildlife habitat and provide a wide range of natural resource-related recreational opportunities such as off road cycling. Established in 1974 the Regional Parks and Open Space System is managed by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with cities, counties, and special park districts. While the operation of the system is the responsibility of cities, counties, and special park districts, the Metropolitan Council supports the regional system with planning, funding, and advocacy. Each implementing agency, such as Ramsey County, is responsible for the development of a master plan for its regional park and open space system. Battle Creek Regional Park is part of the Regional Parks and Open Space System which is overseen by the Metropolitan Council and is operated by the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department.

### Ramsey County Parks and Recreation

Ramsey County is the most densely populated county in the State of Minnesota and the parks and open spaces held by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation represent the largest undeveloped land area in the County at over 6500 acres. Within the system there are 6 regional parks, 6 regional trails, 9 county parks, 9 protected open spaces, 5 golf courses and numerous recreation facilities. Ramsey County Parks and Recreation works in cooperation with the Metropolitan Council, the National Park Service, St. Paul Regional Water Services, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), its municipalities, and other governmental units to advance park, recreation and leisure opportunities for all Ramsey County Residents.

The Vision of Ramsey County is “A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive,” and the mission within the county is “A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.” The RCPRD follows this mission by preserving, developing, maintaining and managing a system of parks, open space, trail corridors and special use areas; and providing year-round recreational programs, services and facilities which are responsive to changing needs, compatible with the resource base and most effectively provided at the county level.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation supports the county vision and mission through:

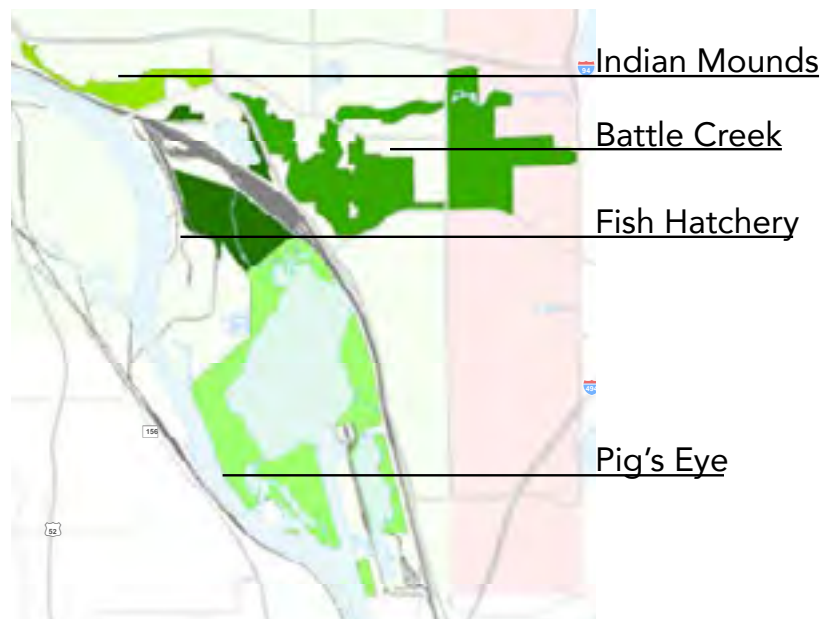
- **Trail Services:** we coordinate establishment of a Ramsey County-wide system trails plan that connects significant natural and cultural features and implement those segments of county or regional significance that are located on Ramsey County Park and Open Space Land.

- **Open Space Preservation:** we acquire, protect and manage unique, fragile and aesthetically attractive natural resources that contribute positively to the urban landscape, and perform critical natural functions.
- **Natural Interpretation:** we promote positive environmental values through an increased awareness, knowledge and appreciation of natural resources and natural processes.
- **Outdoor Recreation Programming:** we sponsor or co-sponsor recreation programs that encourage development of resource-oriented outdoor recreation skills and promote wellness. We also organize special events that introduce people to recreation opportunities available within the system.
- **Special Recreation Services:** we provide areas, facilities and programs of significance county-wide to meet specialized indoor or outdoor recreation needs of Ramsey County Residents.
- **Park Services:** we provide diverse and accessible areas and facilities primarily for self-directed Ramsey County oriented outdoor recreation that complement the natural features of each site.
- **Equitable Use:** we are strengthening equitable use of regional parks and trails, across all ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, national origin and abilities.

## History

Battle Creek Regional Park, which is under the ownership of Ramsey County through the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation, is in the southeast corner of Ramsey County in the cities of St. Paul and Maplewood. Battle Creek Regional Park is comprised of four segments: Indian Mounds, Fish Hatchery, Pigs Eye and Battle Creek. Ramsey County owns and operates the Battle Creek and Pigs Eye Park segments consisting of 1,456 acres.

The City of St. Paul owns and operates Indian Mounds and the Fish Hatchery segments consisting of 500 acres. The park derives its name from Battle Creek which flows from east to west through the length of the park then south to the Mississippi River. The creek was named following a Dakota and Ojibwa battle that occurred along the creek in 1842.



## Off Road Cycling in Battle Creek

Since 2000, Minnesota Off-road Cyclists MORC has been building off-road cycling trails within Battle Creek. Under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department, MORC's responsibilities have included building off-road cycling trails. MORC helps provide technical support to RCPR in determining the location and design of technical features consistent with the planned ability level of bike trails in accordance with International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines. MORC provides and supervises volunteers in the construction of these approved trails. Ramsey County Parks and Recreation's responsibilities include reviewing and approving trail designs and implementation, purchasing materials if needed, and working with MORC in the closing of any trails and beyond. A copy of the complete MOU, which details all responsibilities, can be found within Appendix A.

Several hiking trails at Battle Creek were reshaped and converted into off-road cycling trails. These trails are now considered "Legacy Trails" since they predate International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) off-road cycling trail design standards. A good example of a Battle Creek legacy trail is the "Luge Trail". The Luge has switchbacks tightly down a steep ravine often exceeding traditional IMBA design standards for off-road cycling trails. Of the existing 5 miles of dedicated single track trails, 2/3 of the trail system consists of legacy trails. This makes the Battle Creek off-road cycling trail system one of the most unique in the region. MORC has enhanced or installed all of the off-road cycling trails within the Park, including the most recent addition, the "Overlook" trail, which is over 1 mile long, and was completed in Spring of 2017 by MORC members and volunteers.

## Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department met with agencies, stakeholders and held community engagement meetings to gather information and input for the creation of the off-road cycling master plan. Agency and stakeholder information was collected first and then a citizen involvement process was initiated that included a public open house, online survey and a comment period on draft materials for public input.

In early 2016 and summer of 2017 RCPRD met with the MORC Battle Creek Trail Steward, whom provided information on all facets of MORC's past, present and future trail building and maintenance within Battle Creek. RCPRD also met with Endurance United, a nonprofit that promotes skiing and trail running within Battle Creek Regional Park. Endurance United contacts were in favor of the plan for off-road cycling expansion in Battle Creek. Endurance United wanted to share that off-road cyclist rarely use the ski trails for cycling so there is little conflict on designated ski trails and that the ideology of any off-road cycling trail should continue to be multi use.

Additionally, RCPRD met with the City of St. Paul and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) to discuss the idea of potential off-road cycling trail expansions through their jurisdictional boundaries that border Battle Creek in the northwest corner of the Park. Both entities favored neighboring trail expansions and were receptive to the use of State and City land for a trail access, pending a site plan and approval.

### Highway 61 Overlook

The Highway 61 Overlook is a 10 acre historic site owned and operated by MNDOT and boasts an exceptional view of the Mississippi River Valley. The site consists of a stone overlook wall that was constructed around 1950, a parking area and landscape features. The site is registered as a MNDOT historic roadside development and must maintain its preservation. Any trail expansion or amenities built upon the site would need to be approved by MNDOT and take into consideration a low impact approach.

### Indian Mounds Regional Park

Indian Mounds Regional park is owned and operated by the City of St. Paul. The park extends along a bluff line overlooking downtown Saint Paul and is home to six Native American burial mounds high atop 450 million-year-old limestone and sandstone bluffs. The majority of the Park is west of highway 61 and there is a small 3.8-acre parcel owned by The City of St. Paul that abuts Battle Creek Regional Park. Historically off-road cycling has not been allowed within the park West of Highway 61 because of the steep topography and concerns over potential erosion. City staff were open to the idea of formalizing the trail through the Cities 3.8 acre parcel adjacent to Battle Creek, to create a better connection through the city and county land and assess how trails are built and maintained through a cooperative effort with MORC.

In February through June of 2017 RCPRD conducted an online survey to gather more information from the public on use of the Battle Creek off-road trails. The online survey included questions about current trail use, access, demographics and a needs analysis. There were 142 survey responses submitted. The survey questions and results can be found in Appendix F.

On February 28, 2017 RCPRD held a public meeting with an open house forum. There were over 60 people in attendance. RCPRD encouraged all attendants to make comments and share ideas on site maps of Battle Creek depicting the current trail system. Features were drawn on the map by some attendees and many comments were submitted as well, See comments in Appendix B.

In the summer of 2017, RCPRD drafted a proposed concept map of the Battle Creek off-road cycling trail expansion and future amenities, incorporating information gathered and internal analysis of the site. The map was posted online for public review and comment, 43 comments were received.

Incorporating information taken from stakeholders, the survey and public input, the Battle Creek Trail Steward and RCPRD staff laid out the proposed trail expansion locations included within this Plan.

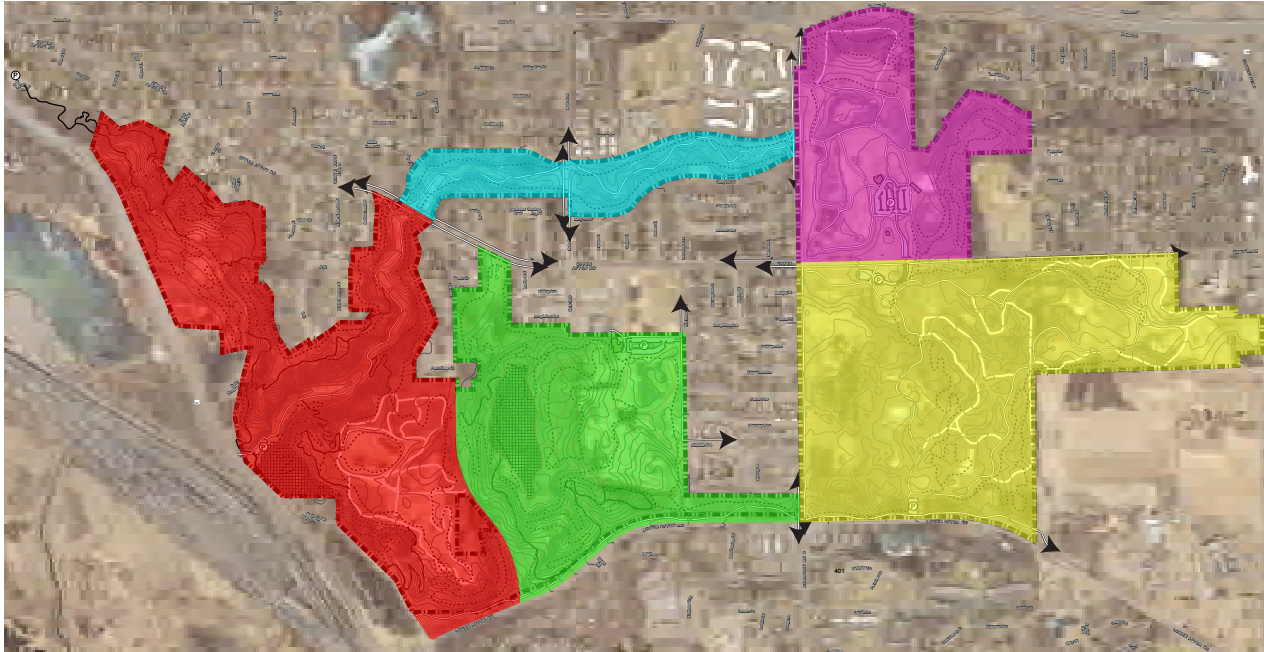
## Demand Forecast



Off road cycling is one of the fastest growing categories in cycling sports, and with the increase of riders comes the need for more trails and additional amenities. Varying the trails to accommodate differing skill levels of riders is also an objective to the trail expansion. In addition to adult riders schools are creating more and more off-road cycling clubs and leagues, such as the Minnesota High School League, to introduce riders of all abilities at a younger age. Statewide there are over 60 high school clubs in MN, with around 25 clubs in the Metropolitan area. Battle Creek has been a destination for many off-road cyclists because of the unique terrain and number of legacy trails, which many other trail systems do not offer. Stakeholders and the public made it clear that additional trails would increase the capacity and breadth of riders at Battle Creek Park, while providing more continuity and a more pleasurable riding experience. Currently, there are an estimated 150 off-road cyclists that use Battle Creek on a consistent basis, with most being intermediate to advanced riders. Expanding the trails system and incorporating varying skill level trails will expand the use from beginners to more advanced riders.



## Existing Conditions

Battle Creek Regional Park consists of approximately 850 acres of total park space. The park has 5 parking lots throughout with space for 648 vehicles. For the purposes of this report the park has been separated into 5 activity zones:



- |                                |   |                     |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| North Programmed Activity Zone |  | Eastern Trails Zone |  |
| Central Trails Zone            |  | Western Trails Zone |  |
| Battle Creek Corridor Zone     |  |                     |   |

- 1) North Programmed Activity Zone: North of Upper Afton Road and East of McKnight Road North.

The North Programmed Activity Zone within Battle Creek Regional Park serves as the primary active recreation area within the park. The area consists of several informal picnic areas, a large group pavilion and medium sized pavilion available for rent and a 265 car parking lot.

In addition there are 2.04 miles of in park bituminous trails and 0.42 miles of mowed grass trails. Waterworks, a family oriented aquatic center which includes an interactive water play area, leisure pool, water slide and sand play area is also located within the North Programmed Activity Zone of Battle Creek along with a large turf open space for unprogrammed recreational opportunities, such as special events and cross country running meets.



2) Eastern Trails Zone: South of Upper Afton Road and East of McKnight Road South.

The Eastern Trails Zone is primarily wooded space with prairies and wetlands that serve as passive recreation opportunities. The Battle Creek Dog Park is located in the South West corner of this zone and consists of approximately 42 acres. The dog park is completely fenced in with 3 main access points. Walking, biking, hiking and cross country skiing are the main uses of this area with 3.54 miles of in park bituminous trails and 2.59 miles of grass mowed trails. The Zone is served by two parking lots. The north parking lot off of Upper Afton Road has 102 parking stalls and also serves as an overflow lot for the pavilions and Waterworks.



Eastern Trails

The south parking lot is located off of Lower Afton Road and has 64 parking stalls. The Battle Creek Bike Path runs along the southern edge of the site eventually leading to the Sam Morgan Regional Trail.

3) Central Trails Zone: South of Upper Afton Road, East of Battle Creek Road, North of Lower Afton Road and West of McKnight Road South



Central Trails

The Central Trails Zone consists of various trails including ski trails, off-road cycling trails, paved trails and hiking trails. The ski trails in this section of Battle Creek Regional Park have been homologated by the International Ski Federation. A homologated trail is one that has been designed and inspected to the standards set forth by the FIS. There are 4.74 miles of dedicated cross country ski trails in this zone, 2.5 miles of this is lighted trail. There are also 1.29 miles of single track off-road cycling trails and 0.41 miles of in park bituminous trails. The Battle Creek Community Recreation center also lies in this zone, the recreation center and associated 179 stall parking lot were developed by the City of Saint Paul under a joint powers agreement. Per this agreement the parking lot is available for all trail users and Ramsey County has priority rights to use the recreation center for interpretive programming. A lighted sledding hill also sits adjacent to the recreation center.

4) Western Trails Zone: South of Upper Afton Road, North East of Highway 61, North of Lower Afton Road and West of Battle Creek Road.



The Western Trails Zone consists of trails primarily for use by hikers, bikers, and cross country skiing. The zone lies almost completely undeveloped other than the trails and a 38-stall parking lot which is adjacent to Highway 61 and north of Lower Afton Road. There are 3.73 miles of single track off-road cycling trails, 1.85 miles of in park bituminous trails, and 2.42 miles of grass mowed trails. This zone is highly undeveloped providing a unique opportunity within the greater metropolitan area for hikers, birders and many other user groups to explore the natural beauty of the site. The trail underpass near the parking lot off of Park Entrance Road allows for safe travel under Highway 61 and links the site with the Sam Morgan Regional Trail. Single track off-road cycling and hiking trails follow the site along Highway 61 and links the park with the Burns Avenue Historic Overlook, owned and managed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

5) Battle Creek Corridor Zone: Battle Creek West of McKnight Road, North of Larry Ho Drive, East of Upper Afton Road and South of North Park Drive.

The Battle Creek Corridor Zone consists of the land surrounding Battle Creek connecting the Western Trail Zone to the North Programmed Activity Zone. The corridor is primarily used by walkers and bikers containing 1.04 miles of in park bituminous trails.

### Off-Road Cycling Trails:

A total of 5 miles of dedicated single track off-road cycling trails exist today within Battle Creek Regional Park, with most trails located in the Western Trails Zone and the remainder of the trails located within the Central Trails Zone. Approximately 2/3 of the trail system consists of legacy trails and 1/3 of the trails are built to IMBA standards. Many of the legacy trails are named for their unique features and consist of the following:

The Luge: An expert rated trail approximately 0.35 miles in length located in the Western Trails Zone. The Luge starts atop a bluff and then twists and turns down a natural ravine before flattening out and exiting onto the paved trail near the creek.



The Luge

**Wall of Death:** An expert rated trail approximately 0.18 miles in length located in the Western Trails Zone, that starts along the bluff ridge and descends toward the Creek. The Wall of Death boasts a rock garden technical feature and is typically ridden downhill, with some riders trying to ascend the Wall of Death to see how far they can ride without dismounting.

**Jesus Saves:** An intermediate section of trail approximately 0.21 miles in length located in the Western Trails Zone. The trail starts at a point along the paved trail adjacent to Battle Creek and then ascends slightly to the east until rising sharply in elevation before reaching the peak. Upon reaching the peak of the trail riders come across an abandoned ski jump foundation. This trail also contains small rock gardens at the beginning of the trail. This section of trail is used frequently by hikers on foot so riders should use caution. The trail was named Jesus Saves because of some eccentric graffiti that was painted on a rock adjacent to the trail.

**North Rim/Dingo:** An intermediate rated trail approximately 0.57 miles in length continuing from Jesus Saves. The North Rim trail descends from the top of the hill and has a few sections of rooting drops and sandy landings. There are many smaller trails branching off that are either mainly hiking trails or end in rutted, abandoned descents. Off-road cyclists are encouraged to use the main trail leading to a series of switchbacks at the end of the hill, at the bottom of the descent the trail transitions to the Dingo nickname weaving tightly between trees as it goes along a section of prairie. The end of the trail exits onto an abandoned section of Old Point Douglas Road.

**Goat:** an expert rated two way trail approximately 0.59 miles in length. Consistently rated as one of the best trails in Battle Creek Regional Park the trail descends quickly and begins with some rollers and easy jumps. As the trail steepens there are a couple of drops in the trail. A large rock-over is a qualifying technical feature for a much steeper downhill rock garden, there is a filter trail to go around the rock-over with some tight turns but it provides a gentler way down the hill. Riders who decide to take the more difficult rock-over and downhill rock garden should stay on the rocks and not ride around them, due to the trails steepness when riders go around the trail they cause rainwater to gully their tracks widening and rutting the trail causing excessive erosion. After the rock garden the trail widens and continues on to Fern Gully.



Goat Trail

**Overlook:** A two way intermediate rated trail approximately 0.59 miles in length located in the Western Trails Zone. This trail connects the north end of the abandoned section of Old Point Douglass Road and the Highway 61 Overlook. From the end of Point Douglass Road the single track curves around a hiking trail that is worn in a straight path through the woods. Approximately 3/4 of the way north along the trail there is a technical feature consisting of a long skinny foundation, several concrete drops and crumbling steps. The trail is heavily used by hikers and off-road cyclists alike so caution should be exercised to avoid any collisions.



### Natural Resources Inventory

#### Ecological Significance:

At over 800 acres Battle Creek Regional Park is the largest expanse of land owned and operated by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation. The Park is surrounded by medium to high density urban and residential land use, which makes Battle Creek a natural area of high ecological significance for flora and fauna within the twin cities metro ring.

#### Land Cover:

The natural vegetation within Battle Creek is a mixture of prairies, oak savanna, oak woods and wetlands. Current vegetation includes these native land cover types plus brome grass fields, pine plantations and mixed forest. There are also several smaller unique habitats throughout Battle Creek. These include seep swamps with skunk cabbage and marsh marigolds as well as mesic hardwoods with yellow birch and white pine. Much of the natural vegetation has been highly degraded. Invasive species have become widespread in most habitats. The most troublesome species include buckthorn, black locust, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife.



Native Spotted Joe-Pye Weed and Jewelweed (background) growing in a wetland seep. There are several wetland seep open areas along the hillsides of Battle Creek

#### Water Resources:

Battle Creek Park encompasses Battle Creek, which flows from Battle Creek Lake in Washington County and south to southwest into Pig's Eye lake which is a backwater of the Mississippi River. Approximately half way downstream the length of the Creek a series of ponding reservoirs were created on Battle Creek Parkland for storm water volume control to aid in flood prevention. Improvements to the creek and surrounding watershed made by the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District has corrected numerous erosion problems and restored natural areas along the creek within the Park. Although the creek has been altered to accommodate storm water run-off from the surrounding development, it remains a positive natural resource feature within the Park.

#### Topography:

The most prominent visual characteristics of the park are the steep wooded slopes of the Battle Creek Bluffs, including limestone outcroppings and caves. Battle Creek flows through the steepest terrain varying in depth from 25 feet to over 150 feet. The bluffs are significant in the development of the park as they provide a corridor and barriers as well as panoramic views of the river valley.

## Wildlife:

The park hosts diverse wildlife especially on the Pig's Eye Lake segment with its heron rookery, bald eagle nests, migratory waterfowl and shorebirds. The Battle Creek unit has a variety of nesting songbirds, waterfowl, raptors, and wild turkeys. Larger mammals include white-tailed deer, coyotes, red fox and raccoons.

Wildlife management in the park involves the control of white-tailed deer and Canada goose populations. Deer are managed using special hunts under the Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Plan in partnership with the cities of Maplewood and St. Paul. Geese are controlled by selective removal of nesting birds in areas where they are nuisances. Nesting boxes are provided for wood ducks and eastern bluebirds within select areas of Battle Creek.

## Natural Resource Impacts of Trail and Amenity Expansions:

The protection and restoration of natural resources will be an utmost priority. The construction of trails will be completed in a manner to avoid long term erosion problems and sensitive natural areas. Any trail builders including MORC will obtain approval of trail alignments by the Ramsey County Natural Resources Manager prior to building any trails. The County Natural Resource Manager will continue to work with trail users on preventing the spread of terrestrial invasive species. Future steps to prevent the spread of invasive species within the Park will include increased educational online material, invasive species signage along the trail system and the potential for bike washing and boot brush stations to clean tires and footwear of any invasive seed material.

## Historic Resources Inventory:

Battle Creek Regional Park holds historical significance as the Creek is named after a Native American conflict that occurred along its shores. All future expansion plans within the Park will determine the requirements set forth by Federal, State and Local regulations in regards to historic preservation and archaeological review and follow these guidelines prior to any development.

## The Plan

### Development Concept

The Battle Creek Regional Park Off-Road Cycling Master Plan has been developed to guide the development of the future trail system as well as create uniform standards. In an effort to help develop a framework for the plan, Ramsey County has worked alongside various user groups, agencies and the public through a series of individual and open house public engagement meetings. The future trail system will primarily focus on connecting looped single track off-road cycling trails to limit the use of paved/grass trails as connections. Other key components of the plan address standards for trail building, access points to trails, parking lots, signage, skills areas, and site amenities. See page 14 for full concept plan.

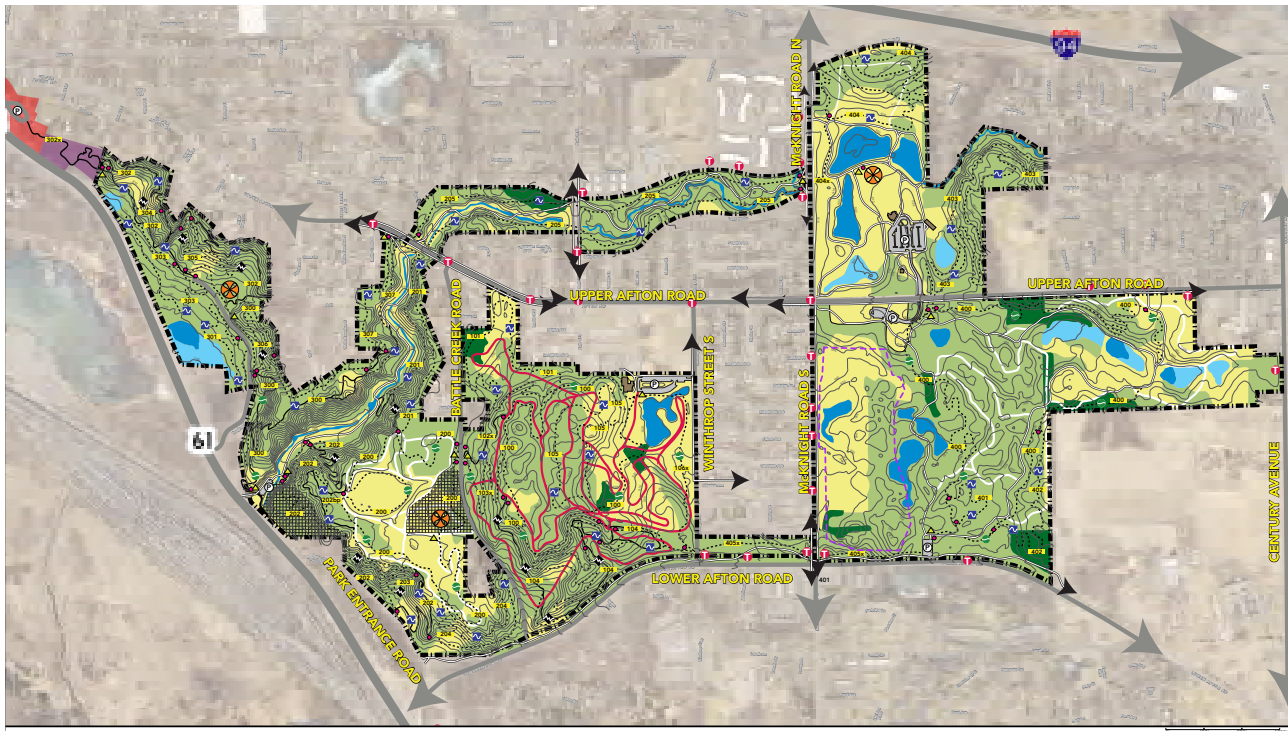


### Single Track Off-Road Cycling Trails

A single-track trail system has been developed through multiple public meetings and design sessions coordinated with the Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC). The plan focuses on creating a stacked looped system that is attainable for off-road cyclists of any skill level. Stacked loops allow for a wider variety of trails and creates an overall loop, which provides off-road cyclists the ability to traverse the entirety of Battle Creek Regional Park. The existing off-road cycling trail system was originally developed primarily within the Western Trails Zone, with very few single-track trails in the Central Trails Zone, and did not accommodate future expansion for trail variety and skill levels. Single track trails utilizing stacked loops are proposed to be developed throughout all zones within the park. This will greatly expand the variety of trails with varying skill levels, increase use and access from additional parking lots and public transportation stops. There is also an emphasis on developing an overall loop for novice riders. All Trails within Battle Creek Regional Park are multi-use, which means that hikers, walkers, trail runners and other user groups will continue to be allowed to use any current or future off-road cycling trails.

Currently Battle Creek does not allow organized off-road cycling races on the trails. This is partly because the current trail configuration is not conducive for racing. However, with the development of the stacked loops and greatly expanded connectivity of the park, racing could be looked at as an option in the future.

All proposed single track trails shall adhere to IMBA trail building Standards when being planned and constructed.



### Legend

Multi-Use Paved Trails	Proposed Skills Areas	Countours: Interval 10'	Landcover Types	Trail - Length - Difficulty	Total Trail Miles: 26.22
Existing Off-Road Cycling Trails	Future Development Area	Metro Transit Stop	Deciduous Forest	1500 1.46 Miles	1500 1.47 Miles
Proposed Off-Road Cycling Trails	Existing Buildings	Easy Trail Difficulty	Grassland	1501 0.94 Miles	1501 1.74 Miles
Grass Mowed Multi-Use Trails	Parking Lot	Moderate Trail Difficulty	Coniferous Forest	1502 0.40 Miles	1502 0.40 Miles
Cross Country Ski Trails	Wayfinding Signs	Hard Trail Difficulty	Open Water	1503 1.59 Miles	1503 1.59 Miles
Dog Park Fence	Directional Signpost		Emergent Wetlands	1504 0.20 Miles	1504 2.49 Miles
				1505 0.42 Miles	1505 2.06 Miles
				1506 2.06 Miles	1506 1.82 Miles
				1507 1.82 Miles	1507 0.09 Miles
				1508 1.64 Miles	1508 1.47 Miles
				1509 0.00 Miles	1509 1.47 Miles
				1510 0.05 Miles	1510 0.50 Miles
				1511 0.40 Miles	1511 0.29 Miles
				1512 1.59 Miles	1512 1.47 Miles
				1513 0.62 Miles	1513 1.39 Miles
				1514 2.49 Miles	1514 1.39 Miles
				1515 0.25 Miles	1515 0.25 Miles
				1516 0.09 Miles	1516 0.09 Miles
				1517 1.47 Miles	1517 1.47 Miles
				1518 0.48 Miles	1518 0.48 Miles
				1519 0.53 Miles	1519 0.53 Miles
					Other Public Lands
					City of Saint Paul
					MN DOT

## Proposed Trails

The single track off road cycling system has been developed so that zones within the park coincide with a corresponding number. The designated single track series are as follows:

- Central Trails Zone - 100 Series Trails
- Battle Creek Corridor and East of Battle Creek Within the Western Trails Zone - 200 Series Trails
- West of Battle Creek within the Western Trails Zone - 300 Series Trails
- Eastern Trails Zone and North Programmed Activity Zone - 400 Series Trails

All Trails within Battle Creek will be rated based on the scale below, see Appendix D for further information on how trails are rated.

- Green = Easiest
- Blue = More Difficult/Moderate
- Black = Expert
- Red = Extremely Difficult/Most Difficult

Upon final build out of the proposed trail system set forth in this master plan there will be approximately 27.52 miles of single track trails developed and split into the following ratings:

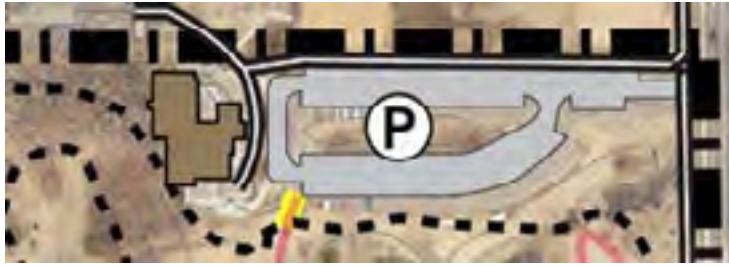
- 7.75 Miles of Green Rated Trails
- 15.42 Miles of Blue Rated Trails
- 4.35 Miles of Black Rated Trails

## 100 Series Trails



The 100 series trail system is proposed for development within the Central Trail Zone and contains approximately 5.94 miles of single track trail. This area within Battle Creek Regional Park is an ideal location for off road cyclists to begin due to the large parking lot available at the Battle Creek Community Recreation Center as well as a mix of easy to intermediate trails available. The 100 series trail improvements are as follows:

**100x:**



A short connection trail leading to the 100 loop from the Battle Creek Community Center parking lot approximately 0.02 miles in length and given a trail rating of Green.

**100:**



The main loop within this area of the park to be used by off-road cyclists as the access to the other stacked loops in the 100 system. Approximately 1.44 miles in length and given a green trail rating.

**101:**



A blue rated trail loop off of the 100 section replacing the use of Big Sandy which is a designated ski trail. Approximately 0.94 miles in length.

**102x:**



An existing connector trail to Battle Creek Road Approximately 0.2 miles in length and given a green trail rating.

**103x:**



A proposed connection trail to Battle Creek Road developed with more switchbacks than the current connector. Approximately 0.42 miles in length with a green trail rating.

**104:**



An existing trail with modifications to be made in the future to enhance the long term durability. Established sections such as the Goat Path and Fern Gully are to be preserved in the future. A Black rated trail off of the 100 loop approximately 1.64 miles in length.

**105:**



A proposed loop off of the main 100 trail. Approximately 0.85 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**106x:**



A connection trail leading from the Battle Creek Community Recreation center leading to trail 405x which connects the Central Trails Area to the Eastern Trails Area off-road cycling trails. Approximately 0.43 miles in length, green trail rating.



200 Series Trails



The 200 series trail system is proposed for development to the East of Battle Creek within the Western Trails Area and extending up the Battle Creek Corridor and eventually connecting with the 400 loop system in the North Programmed Activities Area. Overall the 200 series trails will contain approximately 7.96 miles of single track trail upon final build out. This section of trail would be an ideal area to develop overlooks as the bluff top area offers spectacular views of the surrounding landscape. This system would include the following trail improvements:

**200:**



New proposed off-road cycling single track trail encircling the bluff top. Approximately 1.74 miles in length, green trail rating.

**201x:**



Short connection trail over Battle Creek leading to the 300 loop system. Approximately 0.03 miles in length, blue trail rating.



**201:** Proposed expert level loop leading off of trail 200 and using parts of existing trail. The Wall of Death feature would be retained in the new layout of the trail as well as the connection to the paved multi-use path along Battle Creek. Approximately 1 mile in length, black trail rating.



**202x:** A short connection trail allowing bikers the opportunity to enter or exit the 202 loop onto the in park bituminous trail running along Battle Creek. Approximately 0.03 miles in length, blue trail rating.



**202bp:** A short approximately 0.05 mile bypass trail allowing less experienced trail riders to go around a more difficult, technical section of trail. Blue trail rating.



**202:** A proposed difficult and technical trail section to be built by hand. Approximately 0.44 miles in length, black trail rating.



**202:** A combination of proposed and existing trail. The 202 loop would contain the Luge and instead of exiting onto the bituminous trail along Battle Creek would instead loop back towards the South West running along Park Entrance road before climbing back up towards the bluff top and doubling back to the 202bp and black rated sections of the loop. Approximately 1.61 miles in length, blue trail rating.



**203:**



A proposed technical trail section breaking off of the 202 loop. Approximately 0.40 miles in length, black trail rating.

**204:**



Proposed new trail exploring a piece of Battle Creek which currently has no trails developed. The loop will take off to the South from the bluff top towards the intersection of Lower Afton Road and Park Entrance Road running alongside Battle Creek Road before doubling back in the same direction and returning to about the same spot along the 200 loop. Approximately 0.82 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**205:**



A proposed trail section running along the North and South of Battle Creek within the Battle Creek Corridor Zone. The trail would connect the 200, 300 and 400 loops. Approximately 1.82 miles in length, blue trail rating.

## 300 Series Trails



The 300 series trail system is proposed for development to the North and West of Battle Creek within the Western Trails Zone of Battle Creek Regional Park. Overall the 300 series trails will contain approximately 6.86 miles of single track trails. This area of the park would add the most black rated trails and contain almost no beginner level trails, keeping experienced riders interested in returning to the Battle Creek Regional Park off road cycling system. This system would include the following trail improvements:

**300:**



This trail section is proposed to contain Jesus Saves, Dingo and North Rim while constructing new portions of trail to link them all as well as create a loop. Approximately 1.45 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**300x:**



An existing trail connecting the 300 loop to the Park Entrance Road parking lot. Approximately 0.15 miles in length, blue trail rating.

- 301:** A proposed new trail loop extending to the South of Old Point Douglass Road. Approximately 0.5 miles in length, blue trail rating.



- 302x:** An existing connection trail containing a portion of the Overlook Trail connecting the new looped system to the Highway 61 Historic Overlook. Approximately 0.19 miles in length, blue trail rating.



- 302:** An existing trail consisting of a piece of the Overlook trail and a recently finished portion of trail to make a loop. Approximately 1.60 miles in length, blue trail rating.



- 303:** A proposed trail loop breaking away from an existing portion of the Overlook Trail heading to the south following the park boundary to the North East of Highway 61. Approximately 0.62 miles in length, blue trail rating.



- 304:** A proposed difficult trail section cutting from the top of the bluffs along trail loop 302 heading down toward the old section of the Overlook Trail. Approximately 0.09 miles in length, black trail rating.





**305:**



A proposed loop breaking off of and returning to the North section of the 302 loop. Approximately .048 miles in length, black trail rating.

**306:**



A proposed loop breaking off of the reconstructed portion of Dingo trail loop 300. Approximately 0.3 miles in length, black trail rating.

**307:**



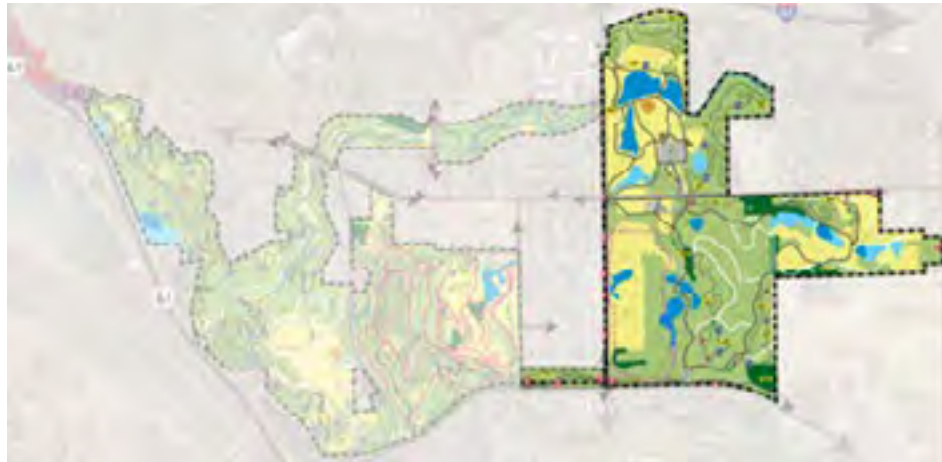
A proposed loop off of the 300 loop heading to the North along the West side of Battle Creek. Approximately 1.45 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**307x:**



A proposed trail connection off of loop 307 heading North to Upper Afton Road, connects the 300 system with the 200 trail system. Approximately 0.03 miles in length, blue trail rating.

400 Series Trails



The 400 series trail system is proposed for development within the North Programmed Activity Zone and Eastern Trails Zone of Battle Creek Regional Park. Overall the 400 series trails would contain approximately 6.78 miles of single track trail upon final build out. Previously these two zones of the park did not have any dedicated single track off road cycling trails. Expanding to this area would help to greatly increase off road cycling and help to introduce the sport to a wider audience. This system would include the following trail improvements:

**400:**



A proposed trail loop encircling the Eastern Trail Zone, this trail would be extremely approachable for new off-road cyclists. Approximately 2.75 miles in length, green trail rating.

**401:**



A proposed loop off of the 400 section. Approximately 0.25 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**402:**



A proposed loop off of the 400 section. Approximately 0.25 miles in length, blue trail rating.



**403:**



A proposed loop off of the 400 section, breaking off near the Upper Afton Parking Lot and heading North across Upper Afton Road. The trail would head to the East of Water works looping around to the North of Afton Heights Park before returning to the South near where the trail broke off of 400. Approximately 1.57 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**404x:**



A proposed connection trail leading to the Battle Creek Corridor and connecting to 404 as well as the in park bituminous system within the North Programmed activity Area of Battle Creek. Approximately 0.18 miles in length, green trail rating.

**404:**



A proposed loop North of the in park bituminous trails within the North Programmed Activity Zone. Approximately 1.21 miles in length, blue trail rating.

**405x:**



A proposed trail connecting the 400 and 100 trail sections between the Lower Afton Road parking lot and trails 104 and 100x. Approximately 0.57 miles in length, green trail rating.

### Trail Rules:

In Addition to the Regional Park Rules already in place riders should also obey the Rules of the Trail. Rules of the Trail are taken from IMBA trail rules and include the following:

- Ride Open Trails: Respect trail and road closures
- Leave No Trace: Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you and the environment around you. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable damage than dry ones. When the trail is soft, consider other riding options. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Don't ride around standing water which results in widening the trail. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in. Consider improving the trail experience for those that follow by picking up and removing any litter.
- Control Your Bicycle: inattention for even a moment could put yourself and others at risk. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations, and ride within your limits. Social conflicts on trails often result when riders are going too fast.
- Yield Appropriately: do your utmost to let your fellow trail users know you are coming, a friendly greeting or bell ring are good methods. Try to anticipate other trail users as you ride around corners. Off-Road cyclists should yield to other non-motorized trail users, unless the trail is clearly signed for bike-only travel. Bicyclists traveling down hill should yield to all users headed uphill, unless the trail is clearly signed for one-way or downhill traffic only. In general, strive to make each pass a safe, controlled and courteous one.
- Never Scare Animals
- Plan Ahead: Know your equipment, your ability and the area in which you are riding and prepare accordingly. Strive to be self-sufficient: keep your equipment in good repair and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

### Parking and Areas of Development

Currently the best available parking locations for the off-road cycling system are at the Battle Creek Community Recreation Center, the Park Entrance Road parking lot and there are limited numbers of pull over/parallel parking stalls along Battle Creek Road. As the system expands more of the parking lots already built within Battle Creek will become more viable for parking as well.

### Access Points and Trail Heads

Trail heads should be developed so that they have a consistent feel as well as components located at each access point. Access points should at a minimum have a wayfinding sign which has a system map as well as park and off road cycling rules. Trail heads should be developed to include at a minimum a wayfinding sign comparable to the signs located at access points, as well as park and off road cycling rules, a bike fixing station, and a bike washing station.

### Signage

Park signs shall conform to the standards that have been developed for all Ramsey County Regional Parks. Battle Creek off road cycling trails are planned to have a numbered system, and intersections will have an associated letter, similar to the trails system at Lebanon Hills.

Wayfinding & Rules Kiosks are planned to be located at all access points and trail heads as well as some major intersections within the park. Large wayfinding kiosks are intended to display park and trail rules along with a large overall map of the Battle Creek Trail System. These signs will help trail users by pointing out exactly where in the park they are located and the trail system throughout the park. Rules Kiosks will display park and trail rules which are expected to be followed by all park patrons.

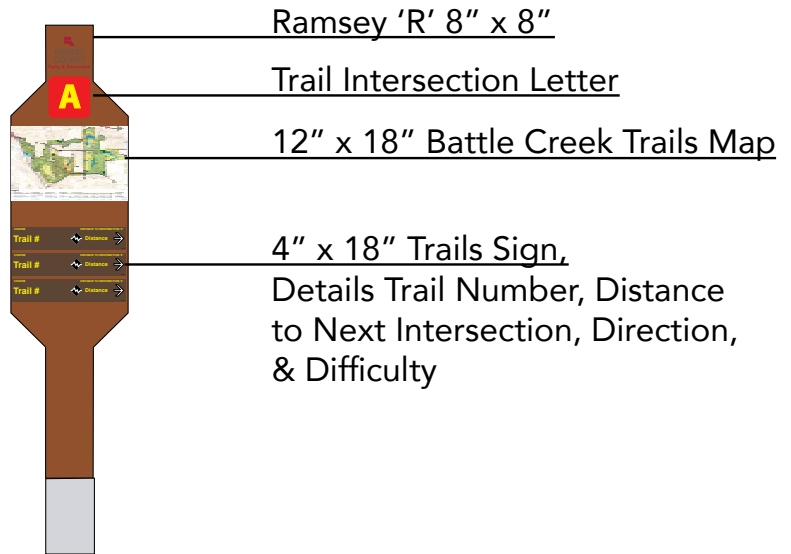
### Understanding the Signs:

Existing wayfinding and rules signs would be modified to present the Battle Creek Off Road Cycling Trails Plans and rules. Pictured are the Battle Creek Cross Country Skiing wayfinding and rules signs.

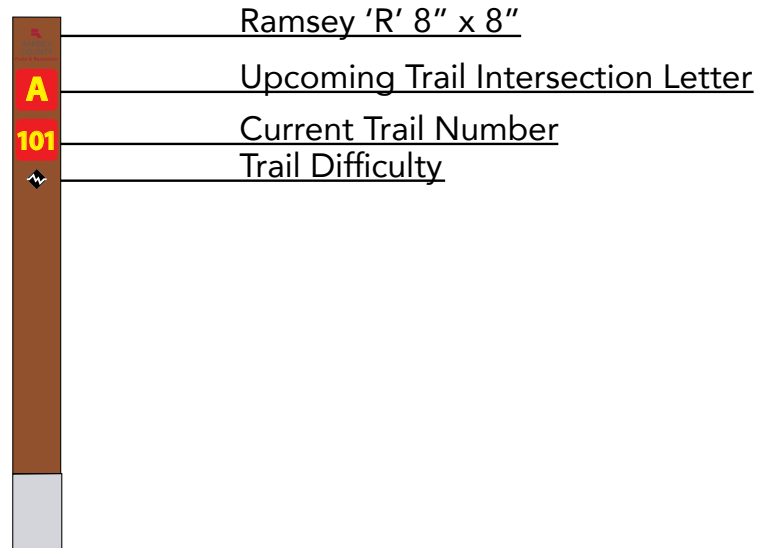


Trail Intersection Posts:

Trail intersection posts should have a smaller trails map and a letter to indicate where you are. The letter on the post will also be indicated on the map as a you are here spot location. Each letter corresponds to a unique intersection, while numbers are reserved for the individual trails in the system.



Trail direction posts contain both the letter of the next intersection post if you travel in that direction, the number of the trail you are on and the specific intended trail use and difficulty level designation. For off-road cyclists it is important to note the difficulty level on signs and respective colors.  
 Green = Easiest  
 Blue = More Difficult/Moderate  
 Black = Expert;  
 Red = Extremely Difficult.



### Skills Park Areas

The proposed construction of one or more off-road cycling skills development and training parks within Battle Creek Regional Park was requested through the community engagement process. A skills park can consist of a constructed subset of features riders will encounter on the trail system such as rock crossings, boardwalks, bermed turns, and tabletop jumps to name a few. The skills park is a more controlled environment of features that consist of safer landing zones, located closer to a parking lot for easier access. Within Battle Creek one option would be to set up one large skills park for various experience levels from beginners to advanced riders, with more difficult and technical features being added as you progress through the park. Another option is to separate the park into two or more areas so that each rider class would have their own area to develop skills. Ramsey County would like to see the development of skills areas range to accommodate novice riders who are new to off-road cycling all the way to an advanced technical skills park to retain and maintain the relationship the park has and will continue to grow with advanced riders throughout the metro area.

As funding becomes available more public involvement meetings will be necessary to facilitate the design and development of the skills park component. As this process progresses the International Mountain Biking Association's published document on how to help a community design and develop a skills park can be referenced. Many of these steps coincide with the steps taken for trail building and the development of the Off-Road Cycling Plan in general. These steps are a good place to start once the skills park portion of the plan is being undertaken. These steps can be found in Appendix E.

## Site Amenities

Additional site features have been identified as potentially beneficial through the community engagement process and stakeholder review. Features could consist of site overlooks/rest areas with benches, picnic tables or perhaps even small gazebo type structures. These overlooks would ideally occur where there are major trail intersections with multiple trail types and have expansive or unique views for park patrons.

Other site amenities that have been explored to be installed as a part of the Off Road Cycling Master Plan include:

A Fixit Station similar to the station installed near the Battle Creek Community Recreation Center. The Fixit station is an ideal component to any trail head and could include components such as:

- Hanger arms to accommodate most types of bikes
- QR code takes smart phone users to a comprehensive bike repair web site
- Large surface area for sponsorship, branding etc.
- Tools are secured with braided stainless steel aircraft cables
- Reinforced pump hose for protection
- Pump holster can be mounted to side or back of station
- Includes most commonly used tools for simple bike maintenance
- Pump head accommodates Presta and Schrader valve stem types



Bike Washing Station: an ideal component to heavily used trails heads so that park patrons can immediately wash bikes after heavy use. Components may include:

- Ideal design for indoor or outdoor use
- Vandal resistant hose and nozzle with stainless steel fittings
- High Velocity Low Consumption (HVLC) nozzle optimized for strong cleaning power without damaging bicycle bearings while also minimizing water usage
- Vandal proof auto shut off water valve
- Cleaning brushes attached by braided stainless steel cable
- Requires municipal water and sanitary drain or dry well hookup
- Optional Coin Operated Timer Box



## Stewardship Plan

Trail Stewardship shall continue to be arranged as set forth in the memorandum of understanding between Ramsey County Parks and Recreation and The Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists.

Currently this is an annually renewing policy and as such has room to expand and change the scope of stewardship.

## Implementation

### Phasing Priorities and Costs

The off road cycling trail system and site amenities outlined in this plan will go through several phases of development.

Trail building and signage will have the highest priority of development followed by the skills park(s) and any other future development.

### Trails

Trail building has been outlined and separated into three priority tiers: A, B, C & D. The following tables have been grouped into tier A, B, C, D and outline the trail designation number along with length in miles, build type, cost/mile and cost of trail. Trail costs were estimated based upon values provided by the MORC Trail Steward using current contractor pricing.

In past construction of off-road cycling trails, it has always been a priority to build natural surface trails with minimal impact to the environment and to maintain a buffer between trails and homes, for the privacy of the homeowners and off-road cyclists alike. Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department, in conjunction with MORC, will continue to make these efforts a priority for all future trail expansions.

Priority	Trail	Length Miles	Build Type	Cost/Mile	Cost
A	100x	0.02065	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$258.09
A	102x	0.2	Existing	\$0.00	\$0.00
A	103x	0.4214	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$5,267.50
A	200	1.74025	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$21,753.18
A	304	0.09431	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$1,178.85
A	302x	0.18872	Existing	\$0.00	\$0.00
A	302	1.60275	Existing	\$0.00	\$0.00
A	300	1.47	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
A	300x	0.15178	Existing	\$0.00	\$0.00
A	100	1.46	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$18,250.00
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$46,707.61</b>

Priority	Trail	Length Miles	Build Type	Cost/Mile	Cost
B	104	1.6436	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$10,683.43
B	307	0.59217	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$3,849.08
B	201x	0.03714	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
B	201	1.03	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$6,695.00
B	202x	0.03389	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
B	202 bp	0.05246	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$340.98
B	202	0.44082	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
B	202	1.61184	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$10,476.97
B	307x	0.03143	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$32,045.45</b>

Priority	Trail	Length Miles	Build Type	Cost/Mile	Cost
C	101	0.94185	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$6,122.04
C	105	0.8454	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$5,495.13
C	204	0.81662	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$5,308.05
C	205	1.81956	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$22,744.53
C	301	0.49853	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$3,240.41
C	303	0.62189	Machine + Hand	\$6,500.00	\$4,042.28
C	305	0.47786	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
C	306	0.2927	Hand	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$46,952.44</b>

Priority	Trail	Length Miles	Build Type	Cost/Mile	Cost
D	106x	0.44596	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$5,574.48
D	400	2.49	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$31,125.00
D	401	0.25	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$3,125.00
D	402	0.53	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$6,625.00
D	403	1.47	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$18,375.00
D	404	1.39	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$17,375.00
D	405x	0.5033	Machine	\$12,500.00	\$6,291.25
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$88,490.73</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>					<b>\$214,196.22</b>
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## Signage

The following table outlines conceptual cost of various Sign types throughout the off road cycling trail system, including an approximate sign cost and quantities.

Rules Sign	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
24" Concrete Foundation	2	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
8 x 8 Wood Post	2	\$60.00	\$120.00
8 x 8 Steel Base Plate	2	\$60.00	\$120.00
8 x 8 Metal Cap	1	\$30.00	\$30.00
8x8 Metal Cap Water Cut	1	\$45.00	\$45.00
60 x 48 Sign	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
8 x 8 R Logo	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
Installation	1	\$700.00	\$700.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$3,547.00</b>

Wayfinding Kiosk	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
24" Concrete Foundation	2	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
8 x 8 Wood Post	2	\$60.00	\$120.00
8 x 8 Steel Base Plate	2	\$60.00	\$120.00
8 x 8 Metal Cap	1	\$30.00	\$30.00
8x8 Metal Cap Water Cut	1	\$45.00	\$45.00
Kiosk Graphic Panel	1	\$343.00	\$343.00
8 x 8 R Logo	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
Installation	1	\$700.00	\$700.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$3,390.00</b>

Wayfinding Trail Post - Intersections	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
24" Concrete Foundation	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
8 x 8 Wood Post	2	\$60.00	\$120.00
8 x 8 Steel Base Plate	1	\$60.00	\$60.00
8 x 8 Metal Cap	1	\$30.00	\$30.00
8x8 Metal Cap Water Cut	1	\$45.00	\$45.00
12 x 18 Wayfinding Map	1	\$100.00	\$100.00
8 x 8 R Logo	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
8 x 8 Trail Intersection Letter	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
4 x 18 BC Direction Marker	3	\$30.00	\$90.00
8 x 8 Recreation Symbol	3	\$32.00	\$96.00
Emergency Location Marker	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
Installation	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$2,137.00</b>

Directional Trail Post	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
18" Concrete Foundation	1	\$700.00	\$700.00
4 x 4 Wood Post	1	\$50.00	\$50.00
4 x 4 Steel Base Plate	1	\$50.00	\$50.00
4 x 4 R Logo	1	\$16.00	\$16.00
3.5 x 3.5 Trail Number	1	\$10.00	\$10.00
3.5 x 3.5 Recreation Symbol	3	\$10.00	\$30.00
Installation	1	\$500.00	\$500.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$1,356.00</b>

Sign Type	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Wayfinding Kiosk	12	\$3,390.00	\$40,680.00
Rules Sign	12	\$3,547.00	\$42,564.00
Wayfinding Trail Post	36	\$2,137.00	\$76,932.00
Directional Trail Post	117	\$1,356.00	\$158,652.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$318,828.00</b>

Site Amenities

The following table outlines bike fixing and washing stations, which are proposed to be located at all existing parking lots as well as an additional pair at the future site of the skills park and another pair at a site of future development.

Site Amenity	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Bike Fixing Station w/ Air Kit	7	\$3,000.00	\$21,000.00
Bike Washing Station	7	\$5,000.00	\$35,000.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$56,000.00</b>

## Future Development/Skills Park

At this time no cost estimates or locations of specific structures, skills parks, or other type of development has been decided. During the development planning process public involvement will be a high priority and will include public surveys, needs assessments and public input on development location(s).

## Trails and Signage Cost

Mtn. Bike Component	Total QTY	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Priority A Trails	1	\$46,707.61	\$46,707.61
Priority B Trails	1	\$32,045.45	\$32,045.45
Priority C Trails	1	\$46,952.44	\$46,952.44
Priority D Trails	1	\$88,490.73	\$88,490.73
Site Signage	1	\$318,828.00	\$318,828.00
Site Amenities	1	\$56,000.00	\$56,000.00
Project Total			\$589,024.22

## Appendix A

### Memorandum of Understanding

#### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN THE

#### Ramsey County Parks and Recreation

AND THE

#### MINNESOTA OFF-ROAD CYCLISTS

Battle Creek Regional Park – Ramsey County, MN

##### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation (RCPR) of MN and the Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) are interested in promoting mountain biking as an outdoor recreation and fitness activity and in developing and maintaining quality trails and bike parks for cyclists of all ability levels at the Battle Creek Regional Park.

This memorandum identifies specific projects, including the design and construction of bike park features, bike park maintenance, and mountain bike patrol activities, which MORC volunteers have agreed to provide as service to the RCPR, establishes the responsibilities and conditions under which that volunteer service will be provided, and delineates the responsibilities of the RCPR.

##### SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT

###### **Ownership of Improvements**

All improvements, constructed on RCPR park property, shall be, and remain the property of the RCPR. All materials, including records, data, and other information acquired, developed or documented under this MOU shall be the property of the originating party, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by both parties.

###### **Term of Agreement**

The term of this MOU shall start May 1, 2016, and extend through December 31, 2016. RCPR and MORC can subsequently agree to extend this agreement on an annual calendar year basis with the approval of both parties.

###### **MORC Volunteers**

Volunteers assigned to work under this agreement at the Battle Creek Regional Park are volunteers of MORC and are covered under the policies and procedures of MORC in relation to volunteer organization and management. Volunteers are not employees of or individual volunteers of the RCPR, however they will receive training enabling them to represent the relationship between MORC and the RCPR.

###### **MORC Responsibilities**

1. Provide technical support to the RCPR in determining the location and design of technical features consistent with the planned ability level of bike trails in accordance with International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines.
  2. Provide and supervise volunteers in the construction of approved technical features.
- Utilize tools owned by MORC and the RCPR tools that may be made available by the designated RCPR Maintenance or Parks Supervisor.



- Technical features and trail development must conform to IMBA guidelines and the RCPR approved designs.
  - Train and supervise volunteers in appropriate construction techniques in accordance with IMBA guidelines.
  - Identify a crew leader and submit name to the designated the RCPR Recreation Services Supervisor (position currently filled by Jennifer Fink).
  - Coordinate work schedule and on-site public notification, when needed, with the designated Recreation Services Supervisor.
  - MORC volunteers may use bikes in the on-site planning and testing of technical features and trails prior to opening features to the public as coordinated with the Park Recreation Services Supervisor.
3. Provide volunteers to assist with the inspection and hand-work maintenance of the trail.
- Seasonally submit to the RCPR department for approval a schedule identifying minimum timetable for park observation/inspection.
  - Ensure that all volunteers have received training in bike park inspection and maintenance responsibilities as well as an orientation to the RCPR department.
  - MORC volunteers are authorized to sculpt and/or remove dirt as need throughout the biking area.
  - Perform routine maintenance activities. In the event that MORC is unable to safely and promptly address an identified issue that may create an unsafe situation, the MORC volunteer should notify the RCPR Recreation Services Supervisor.
4. Work with the RCPRD in developing a routine inspection log report sheet for use by volunteers for the regularly scheduled inspections that will identify desired items for inspection and implement the use of this report sheet in the regular inspection of biking facilities.
- Copies of reports should be submitted to the RCPR Recreation Services Supervisor.
5. Prior to making any bike trail alignment changes, submit recommendations to the RCPR for any significant alignment changes that may contemplated by MORC in carrying out the volunteer duties as outlined in the MOU.
6. Recommend to the RCPR for consideration the types of trail, location and language directional, cautionary and informational signs and install (if requested by RCPR).
7. A designated MORC representative(s) may make recommendations to the RCPR Recreation Services Supervisor as to when to close and re-open the bike trails due to poor conditions or other unforeseen circumstances observed during bike patrol or maintenance activities.
8. Provide trail patrol volunteers (Ambassadors) as an optional service to assist in monitoring bike activities and providing assistance to bike trail users.
- MORC may provide volunteers identified and trained by MORC as trail patrollers to ride and monitor the park trails.
  - Trail patrollers can offer assistance to bike park users within the scope of their training and volunteer status under MORC.
  - Trail patrollers should call 911 for emergency assistance. To contact the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department at 651-484-3366 specifically for non-emergency situations such as, to report suspicious activity, uncooperative behaviors, or unauthorized bike park use, call 911 and request to be put in contact with Ramsey County Sheriff's Department Officer.
  - Provide the RCPR with summary bike park safety reports as generated by MORC volunteer trail patrol.
9. Hold Harmless Agreement
- Each party agrees that it will be responsible for its own acts and the results thereof and shall not be responsible for the acts of the other party and the results thereof. Each party, therefore, agrees that it will assume all risk and liability to itself, its agents or employees, for the injury to persons or

or property resulting in any manner from the conduct of its own operations, and the operation of its agents or employees under this agreement, for any loss, cost, damage, or expense resulting at any time from any and all causes due to any acts or acts of negligence, or the failure to exercise proper precautions, of or by itself or its own agents or its own employees, while occupying or visiting the premises under and pursuant to the agreement.

10. MORC may not interfere with the enjoyment of park users and must abide by RCPR Park Ordinances.

#### **RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. To review and approve design and implementation plans for all agreed to volunteer activities.
2. To purchase materials, if needed, to be used in the construction of approved technical features and trail development.
3. To loan hand-tools for construction and maintenance activities, upon request and approval of designated by the Recreation Services Supervisor.
4. To provide RCPR Maintenance Supervisor support for approved work on a schedule agreed to by the Recreation Services Supervisor.
5. To review and approve recommended technical features and trails construction schedules and bike trail maintenance schedules.
6. To recognize MORC's contributions for bike trail design and construction and volunteer maintenance, support in appropriate signage at an appropriate location in a manner approved by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners and to be coordinated through the Director of Park Operations.
7. To display a message about the MORC organization and event opportunities in manner approved by RCPR at a location approved by the designated Director of Park Operations.
8. To authorize MORC to have an informational display/booth at the trailhead up to six times per year for the purposes of providing information about MORC memberships and mountain biking events, as approved and coordinated with the RCPR Recreation Services Supervisor. Informational displays may also be approved for the RCPR permitted biking events. Requests for a permit for direct financial solicitation (membership sales) must be approved in advance by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
9. To notify MORC of bike park closures or events which affect the use of the bike park for posting on the MORC web site.

#### **Termination of Agreement**

This MOU may be terminated by either party upon delivery of 30-day written notice to the other party.

#### **Amendment of Agreement**

This MOU shall not be altered, changed or amended except by written mutual agreement of the parties

#### **MORC Contacts**



## Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Contacts

Recreation Services Supervisor  
Office: 651-748-2500

Park Maintenance Supervisor  
Office: 651-748-2500

Director of Park Operations  
Office: 651-748-2500

MOU Administration  
(insert name)  
(insert address)  
(insert phone number)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have entered into this Memorandum of Understanding as of this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

**Ramsey County Parks & Recreation**  
2015 N Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109

**Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists**  
PO Box 19520  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419-0520

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**  
Concept Map Developed at  
Public Engagement Meeting



### Appendix C

#### Battle Creek Public Engagement Meeting Comments

##### Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling Master Plan 2-28-2017 Public Meeting Comments

1. Cameras in parking lots
2. Signage for Trails
3. Restrooms with running water & showers
4. I want to reach out to local youngsters and get them involved in building and riding Battle Creek
5. Reach out to 3M, helping Battle Creek Park is consistent with 3M values of community support and healthy living:
6. Signage and maps at all intersections
7. Picnic areas covered with grills
8. Professional design build to complete park
9. Contact local breweries to sponsor Battle Creek: Summit, Bad Weather, Surly etc.
10. The high school teams contribute much to trail building efforts, allow them to race here once per year:
11. Look to Duluth and the "Duluth Traverse" for funding ideas
12. Parking lots for more people
13. Trails for all: beginner, intermediate, advanced etc.
14. Jumps & Technical Features
15. Many different skill level trails & technical features
16. One way trails
17. Bathrooms
18. Safe intermediate & beginner area
19. Signage, wayfinding, Risk Management
20. Designating trail difficulty and setting up more beginner & intermediate trail
21. Battle Creek Road needs to support traffic
22. Need to respect homes on parks and traffic
23. Skiing must stay
24. Building for restrooms and water is needed
25. What benefits to non-bike riders? \$
26. I want to reach out to first responders who cover Battle Creek Park. They can help build trail and learn an area they may need to respond to
27. Signage, risk management. More single track, downhill trail runs. Bathroom. Water access. Trail head signage
28. Would like to see better signage. Much like Lebanon Hills
29. Changing areas
30. Maintain Legacy Trails

## Appendix D Trail Difficulty Rating System

Trail Difficulty Rating System					
	Easiest White Circle 	Easy Green Circle 	More Difficult Blue Square 	Very Difficult Black Diamond 	Extremely Difficult Dbl. Black Diamond 
<b>Trail Width</b>	72" or more	36" or more	24" or more	12" or more	6" or more
<b>Tread Surface</b>	Hardened or surfaced	Firm and stable	Mostly stable with some variability	Widely variable	Widely variable and unpredictable
<b>Average Trail Grade</b>	Less than 5%	5% or less	10% or less	15% or less	20% or more
<b>Maximum Trail Grade</b>	Max 10%	Max 15%	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater
<b>Natural Obstacles and Technical Trail Features (TTF)</b>	None	Unavoidable obstacles 2' tall or less  Avoidable obstacles may be present  Unavoidable bridges 36" or wider	Unavoidable obstacles 8" tall or less  Avoidable obstacles may be present  Unavoidable bridges 24" or wider  TTF's 2' high or less, width of deck is greater than 1/2 the height	Unavoidable obstacles 15" tall or less  Avoidable obstacles may be present  May include loose rocks  Unavoidable bridges 24" or wider  TTF's 4' high or less, width of deck is less than 1/2 the height  Short sections may exceed criteria	Unavoidable obstacles 15" tall or greater  Avoidable obstacles may be present  May include loose rocks  Unavoidable bridges 24" or narrower  TTF's 4' high or greater, width of deck is unpredictable  Many sections may exceed criteria



### Appendix E

#### Proposed Skills Parks Development Standards and Rule Additions

##### Skills Parks Proposed Development Standards

- 1) **Set the Stage:** in your campaign to develop a skills park, you should start with the following tasks: identify allies in local government, find sources of volunteer labor, search out funding, and conduct an educational campaign, including tours of the potential area, to familiarize people with bike parks.
- 2) **Address Risk Management:** Bike skills parks provide a level of managed risk that many riders and parents will find reassuring. Develop standards for structures and emphasize how this will be a safe place for kids to ride while saving the city or county money spent tearing down unauthorized areas.
- 3) **Design a Visually Appealing Facility:** Communities often reject plans that might lead to eyesores. Emphasize planting and other beautification efforts to help convince skeptics who claim a bike park would be visually unappealing. You might try partnering with gardening clubs and other community groups on your beautification efforts.
- 4) **Create a Maintenance Program:** Develop a thorough maintenance plan for your park, and set it down in writing. Name each structure and plan on having the staff use an inspection form to check the park. This will help standardize maintenance records and allow you to easily identify an area that needs repair after a rider reports a problem.
- 5) **Train Your Builders:** Identify potential crew leaders and make sure they're well trained before you start building the park. You're going to need these people to direct groups of volunteers several days a week, so make sure they have the building skills and leadership qualities needed to produce a first rate facility.
- 6) **Progression is Key:** Any bike park should include smaller stunts that allow for a safe progression to more difficult terrain and attract new riders and parents who otherwise would be watching from the sidelines. Parent support helps build momentum for future expansions.
- 7) **Plan For Growth:** Parks are long-term community assets. Most should be overhauled every two to three years to keep them fresh and Exciting. The most advanced riders may leave the park, but this will help retain and attract other riders.
- 8) **Consider Hiring a Pro Builder:** Communities often prefer working with a professional contractor. When hiring a builder to construct a bike skills park, be prepared to articulate your needs, longer term plans, education and other goals and any in-kind contributions you may have. Less important is to know about the specific materials or technical specifications. (<https://www.imba.com/resources/freeriding/developing-bike-skills-parks>)

### Skills Parks Proposed Rule Additions

A separate set of rules should be in place for the skills park. Some rules to consider are:

- Use skills park at your own risk. Skills park is not supervised
- You are responsible for determining safe conditions
- Off-Road cycling can be hazardous – use caution and wear safety gear.
- Ride with control and within your ability level and be considerate of others
- Building or modifying skills park features is prohibited
- Only one person may use a feature at a time, wait for a clear bike path
- Ride only in designated areas
- Non-motorized use only
- Emergencies: Call 911
- The Skills park is closed when the lot and off-road cycling trails are closed

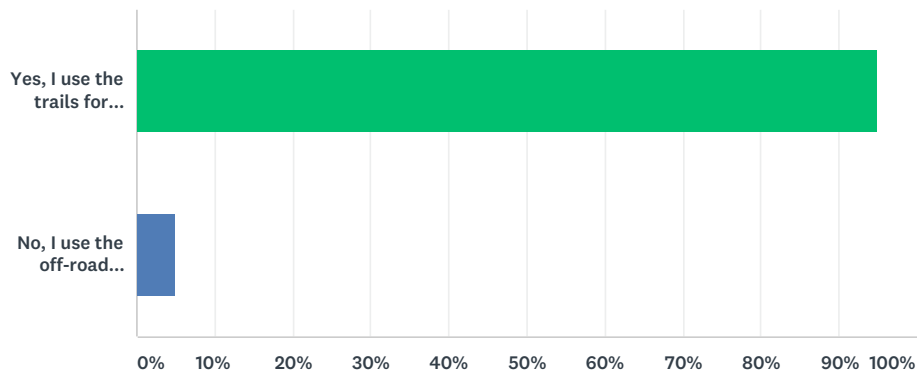
Other rules may have to be considered or altered as the skills park is developed.

## Appendix F Online Survey

### Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

#### Q1 Do you use the off-road cycling trails at Battle Creek Regional Park for off-road cycling?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 0

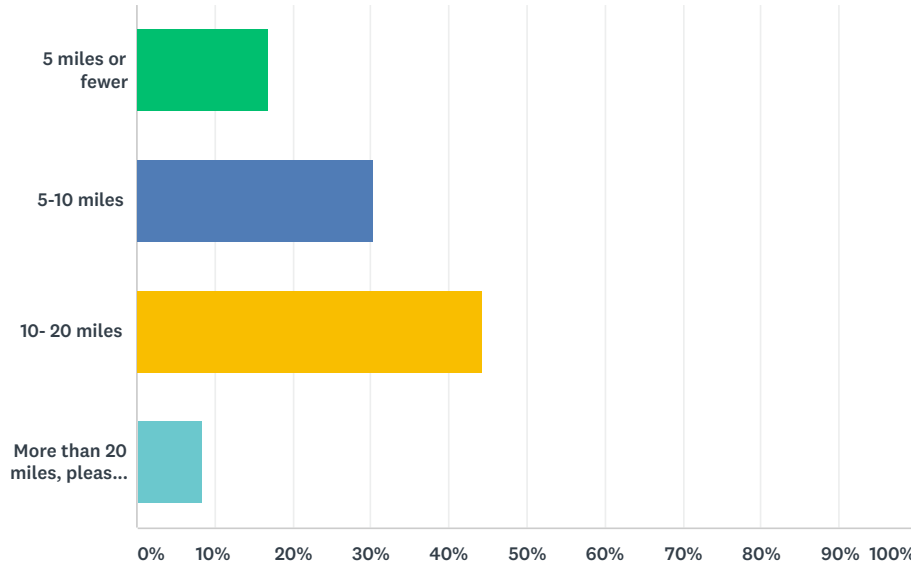


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I use the trails for off-road cycling	95.07%	135
No, I use the off-road cycling trails for an alternative use. (please specify use below)	4.93%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>142</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

## Q2 How far do you travel to get to the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 0

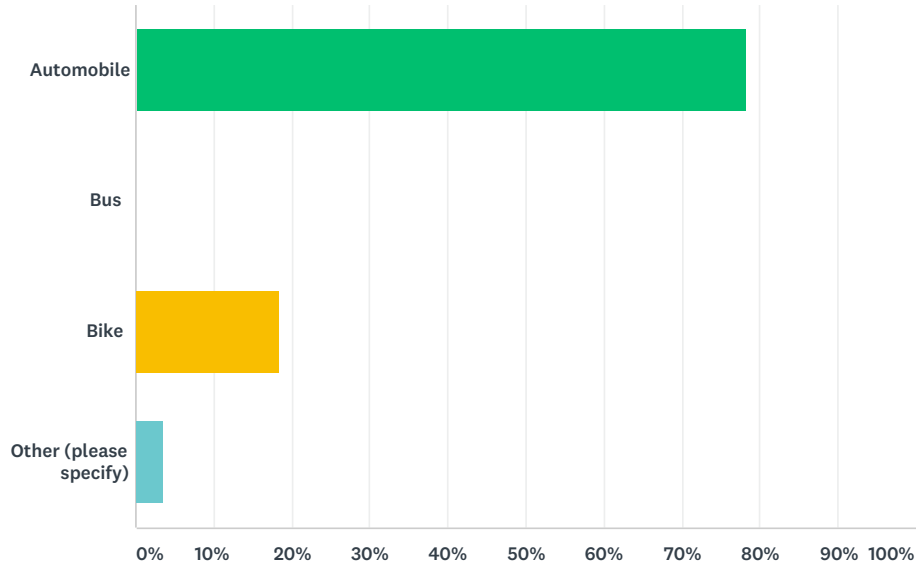


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
5 miles or fewer	16.90%	24
5-10 miles	30.28%	43
10- 20 miles	44.37%	63
More than 20 miles, please specify	8.45%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>142</b>

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q3 What mode of transportation do you use to get to the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 0

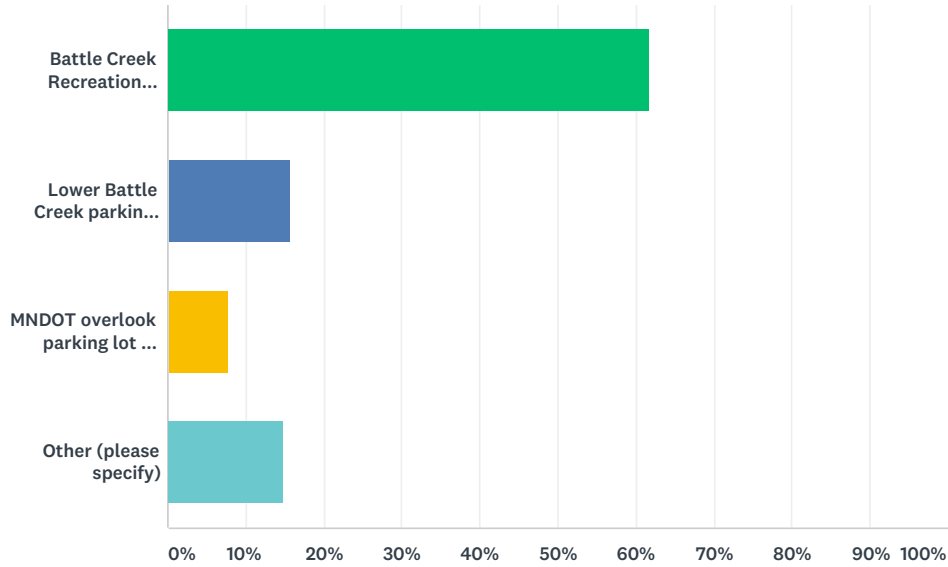


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Automobile	78.17%	111
Bus	0.00%	0
Bike	18.31%	26
Other (please specify)	3.52%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>142</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q4 What access point do you use the most to enter the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Battle Creek Recreation Center parking lot off of Winthrop Street	61.70%	87
Lower Battle Creek parking lot off of Park Entrance Road (adjacent to Highway 61)	15.60%	22
MNDOT overlook parking lot off of Burns Ave and Highway 61	7.80%	11
Other (please specify)	14.89%	21
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>141</b>



### Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

## Q5 In a few words, what attracts you to use the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 132 Skipped: 10

Close to downtown, big hills  
Views, hills and not over crowded  
Elevation changes  
Actually hilly and technical riding  
The hills  
It's close to home and trails are rad. I like the challenge.  
Trail layout, routes, and features  
Challenging trails  
Technical, fast, fun, rugged. They are the best trails in the Metro because of the difficulty and technical features.  
The terrain and variety of trails, also the views and woods!  
Closest trail to White Bear Lake  
beautiful forest, hills, less crowded than other parks  
Significant elevation changes, close to Minneapolis  
Close proximity to home  
Raw trails with bluffs and scenery  
Close to downtown, views  
Downhill Section  
Biking  
Having a great trail that is close to the cities  
Quality aggressive descents compared to the other metro trails.  
hilly terrain, difficulty of trails and how different they are from other local trails  
beautiful fun  
Friends, Millage  
Elevation changes, expanse, and variety of trails  
difficulty and scenery and wildlife  
The topography is a little different than other area trails.  
The technical aspect of the trails and the scenic views of the river valley.  
The exposed rock, the climbs and descents. It's one of the few trail systems around here that is NOT machine-built-smooth-flowy-single-track.  
Excellent terrain! The best hills in the area. Downhill trails with berms and some jumps like nothing else in the Twin Cities.  
Fun and technical trails with more elevation change than other local mtb trails  
Actual elevation change, some ripping downhill  
Can bike there, don't have to drive  
Elevation change -- challenging climbs and exciting downhill  
The trails are less groomed than others in the area (making them more fun), and they are frequently open when other trails are not.

The terrain is unlike any other trail system in the metro area. Battle Creek offers challenging climbs. Very rugged, natural "trail" trails (rather than machine cut , designed trails seems more natural then most metro trails  
 It is one of the few MTB destinations in town that has some decent vertical climbing topography, local, views, fun.  
 The flowy nature and challenging hills/climbs, while less technical trails (fewer obstacles)  
 I like to ride the various trail systems in the area  
 Different terrain.  
 hills, old-school singletrack feel  
 Its location to the city, the elevation gain/topography, the amount of trail, and that the trail system is not tightly compact.  
 BC has the most technically challenging trails in the metro.  
 old school mountain biking  
 More elevation than other mtb trails in area  
 Challenge, hills, amazing scenery  
 Nearby and good trails  
 access to natural areas  
 Hills  
 Great terrain.  
 The scenery and the challenge.  
 Proximity to home, which is the Macalester Groveland Neighborhood in Saint Paul. Would prefer to be able to ride my bike from there to the park if it were easier and more direct.  
 Best place for getting elevation gain and downhill riding  
 I can ride to them  
 Their fast and flowy sections (when trees aren't down) and the up or downhill super technical climb.  
 It's actually in the city, there is real elevation changes which is a rarity in the cities, beautiful views that other trails do not have, decent mountain bike riding.  
 Quick escape from the city without actually need to technically leave the city  
 Great variety of terrain  
 Narrow dirt paths with inclines  
 The relative undeveloped nature of the park. It feels like you have left the city.  
 Great location and great park!  
 Battle Creek provides off road riding within riding distance of my home in St. Paul.  
 They're a fun intense workout like nothing else in the metro  
 terrain  
 They are unique to the Metro. Old school. Hills. Obstacles/features.  
 Fun trails with good designs.  
 Close to work  
 The varied terrain/trails, the undeveloped feel of the park  
 Layout of the trail is rugged and natural. Differs from many other off-road cycling locations. It's great!  
 Connection to nature  
 proximity to home and topography  
 raw, steep, challenge  
 better terrain than anything else in the metro  
 The elevation change, technical challenges  
 Steep hilly terrain, challenging trails  
 The hills and ruggedness of the trails.  
 hilly technical trail  
 Not over maintained like some of the other trails like Elm Creek. It's nice to have somewhere more technical to ride.

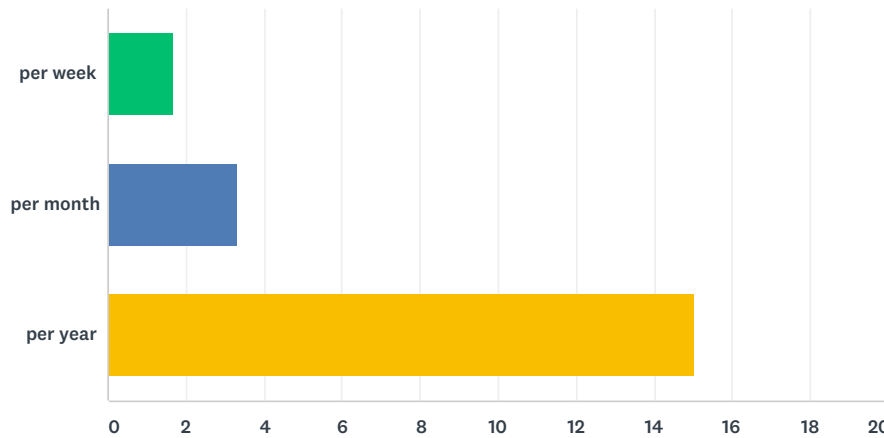
It is the most traditional off road trail, it is NOT groomed and sterile  
it's one of the few local trails that offers climbing.  
Close location, and great terrain. I choose to live in Highwood Hills to be close to a park like BC.  
Challenging trails, elevation gains are unique among the metro area trails  
The "old school" hilly trails  
The challenging climbs and fast downhill.  
They are the best mountain bike trails in the metro.  
It is a different style of trail system than most others in the area.  
It's often open when others are closed  
Diverse trails and natural lines  
Technical challenges not found at other trails  
challenging trails, well maintained  
Only off road bike trail in Ramsey County  
That is is unique compared to many of the other local trails.  
Scenery  
Variety  
Elevation change, technical terrain, and it's never crowded  
Variety of trails  
Location. River bluff views.  
Rugged, hilly, close to home, quiet  
underdeveloped  
Tough, challenging, technical trails. Hills.  
Hills  
Challenging trails, hills, good views  
Beautiful terrain, love being outdoors while in St. Paul!  
Close to work and can go with workmates after work.  
The varied, hilly terrain and large land area  
Great views and lots of climbing and descents.  
It has a more raw feeling than some of the other trails.  
the beautiful park lands, existing bike trails are less groomed than other area trails, lots of elevation  
Beautiful scenery and feels cut off from world  
Unique terrain for the area.  
Best natural trail system in the metro!  
Variety of terrain and technical difficulty of the trails  
Great hill training, old- school trails and new work being done.  
Hilly terrain and woods close to city  
The variety of elevation, trail types, and the views  
It is close which is nice, but also challenging.  
I love that they are close to home and offer a nice getaway from the city into nature.  
The rugged terrain and downhill features  
hilly trails  
It's locality, challenging terrain and potential.  
The current trails have a different flavor than other metro trails. I'd suggest most new builds keep this  
character rather than try to recreate other metro flow trails. BC has very sandy soil that won't lend itself  
well to "flow" trails. More trails like GOAT which is between two xc ski trail segments on the south end  
of the park east of BC road would be excellent  
Its close  
The ruggedness of the trails and the elevation changes.  
The feel of being in nature while still in the city. Seeing wildlife

A nice alternative to the hiking/ski trails @ BC  
 beauty and the great trails  
 loved the park  
 Not to many MTB trails in the east metro, one of the few options  
 Single track trails and rolling terrian  
 It offers a wide variety of difficulty levels

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q6 How often do you visit the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 138 Skipped: 4

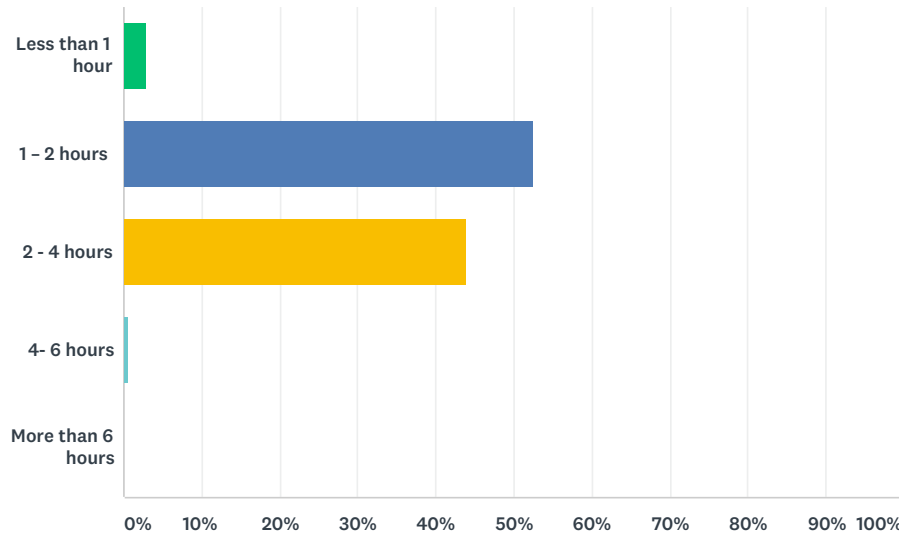


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
per week	2	86	52
per month	3	226	68
per year	15	1,156	77
Total Respondents: 138			

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q7 On average, how much time do you spend on the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails per visit?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

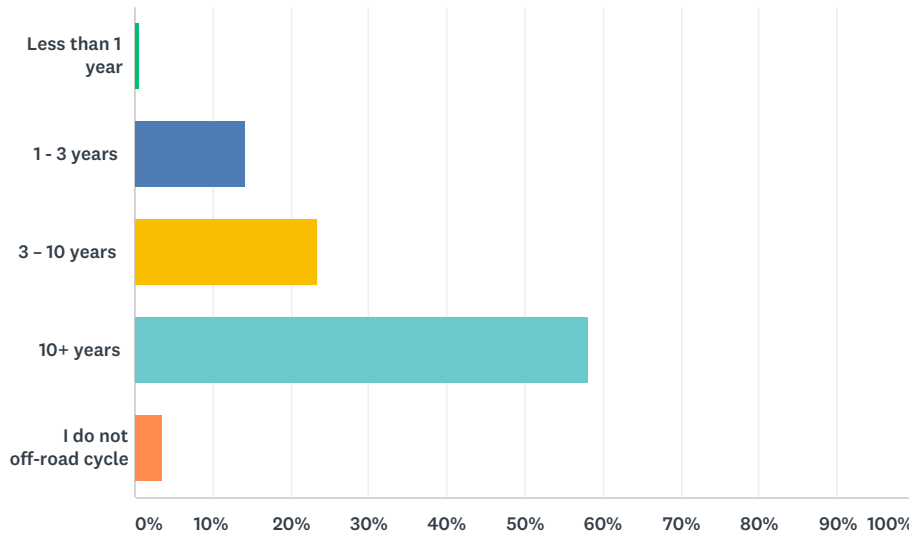


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 1 hour	2.84% 4
1 – 2 hours	52.48% 74
2 - 4 hours	43.97% 62
4- 6 hours	0.71% 1
More than 6 hours	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q8 How long have you been an off-road cyclist?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1



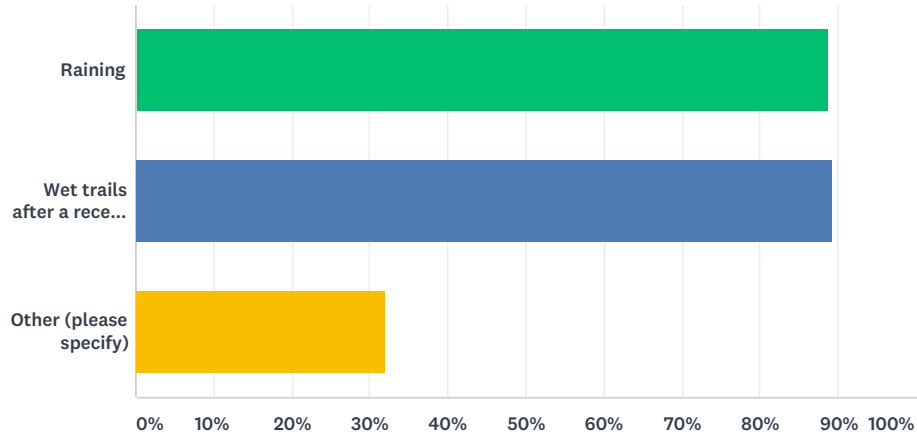
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 1 year	0.71% 1
1 - 3 years	14.18% 20
3 - 10 years	23.40% 33
10+ years	58.16% 82
I do not off-road cycle	3.55% 5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>



## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q9 What weather conditions would cause you not to use/ride the trails? Check all that apply

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

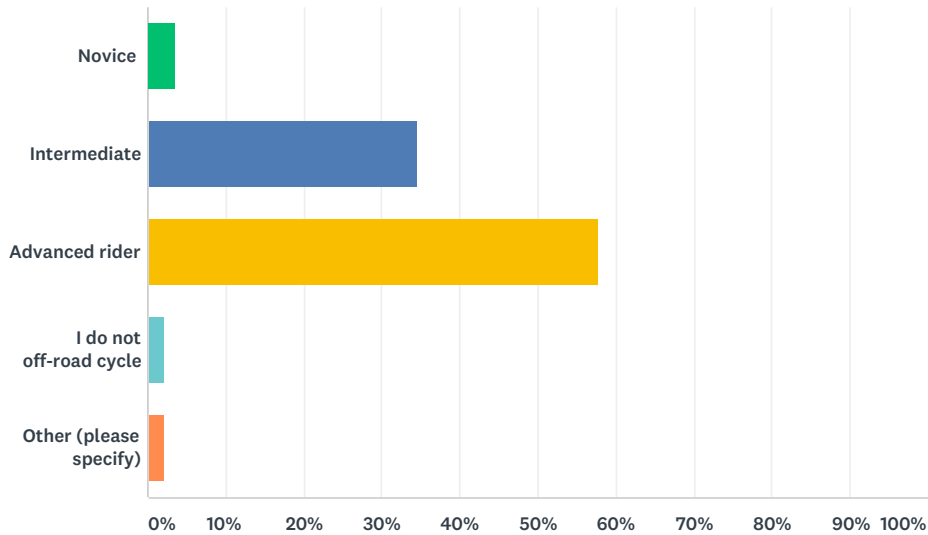


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Raining	88.65% 125
Wet trails after a recent rain	89.36% 126
Other (please specify)	31.91% 45
Total Respondents: 141	

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q10 Please rate your experience level as an off-road cyclist?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 0

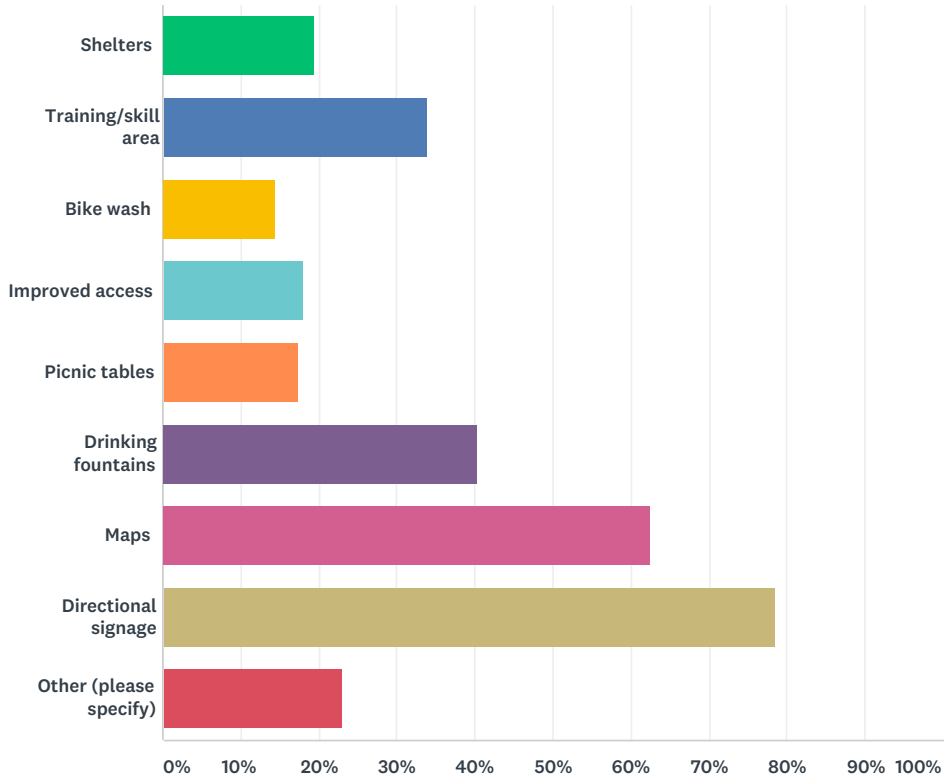


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Novice	3.52%	5
Intermediate	34.51%	49
Advanced rider	57.75%	82
I do not off-road cycle	2.11%	3
Other (please specify)	2.11%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>142</b>

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q11 Other than trail improvements, what other amenities do you wish existed within the trail system? Check all that apply

Answered: 139 Skipped: 3

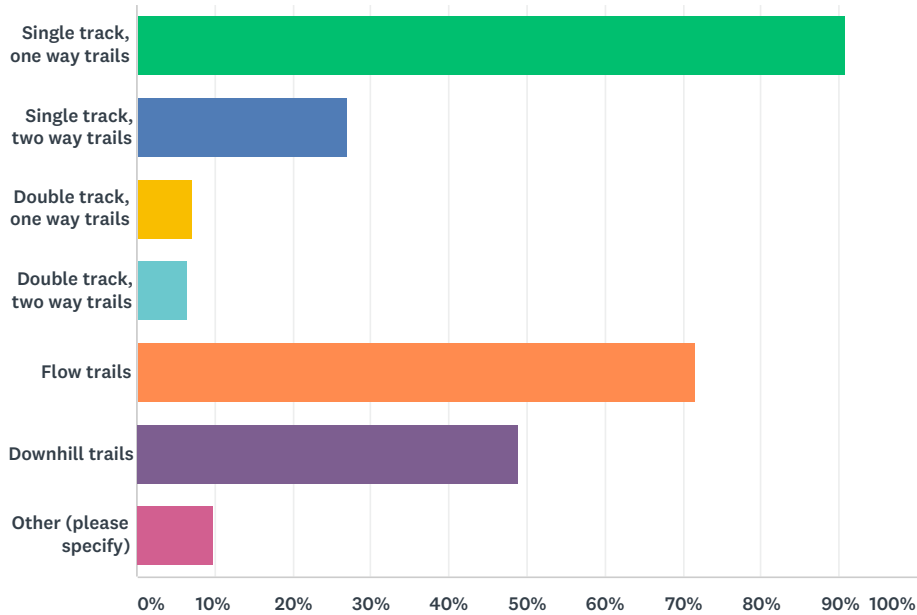


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Shelters	19.42%	27
Training/skill area	33.81%	47
Bike wash	14.39%	20
Improved access	17.99%	25
Picnic tables	17.27%	24
Drinking fountains	40.29%	56
Maps	62.59%	87
Directional signage	78.42%	109
Other (please specify)	23.02%	32
Total Respondents: 139		

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q12 What types of off-road cycling trails would you prefer to use at Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails? Check all that apply

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

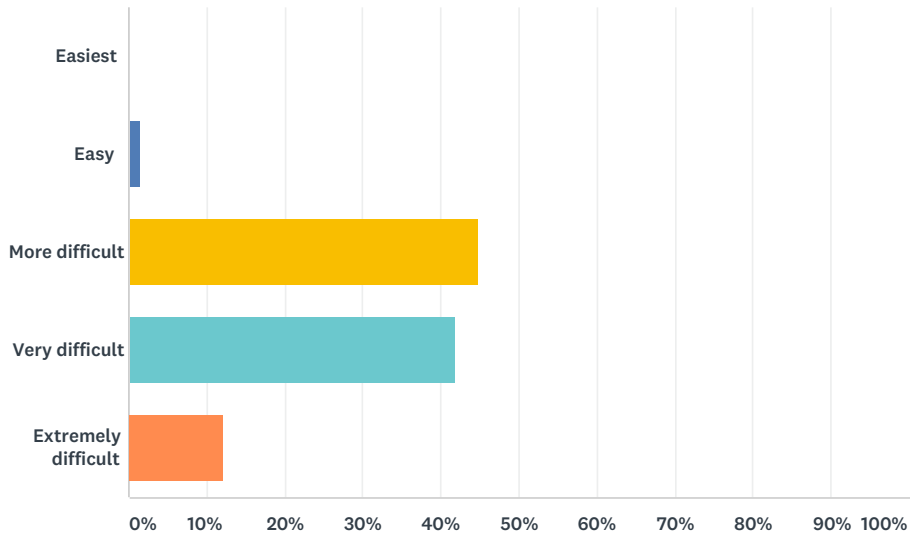


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single track, one way trails	90.78%	128
Single track, two way trails	26.95%	38
Double track, one way trails	7.09%	10
Double track, two way trails	6.38%	9
Flow trails	71.63%	101
Downhill trails	48.94%	69
Other (please specify)	9.93%	14
Total Respondents: 141		

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q13 What trail difficulty do you prefer? (see graph below for description)

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

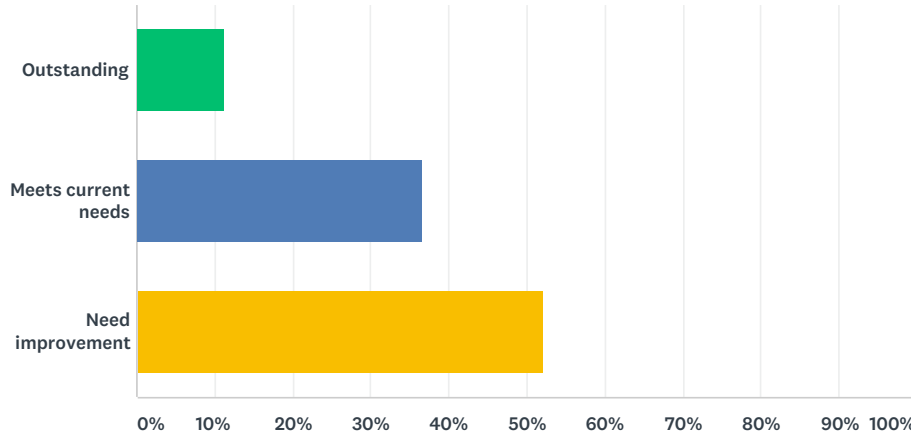


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Easiest	0.00%	0
Easy	1.42%	2
More difficult	44.68%	63
Very difficult	41.84%	59
Extremely difficult	12.06%	17
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>141</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q14 In general, how would you rate the quality of the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 0



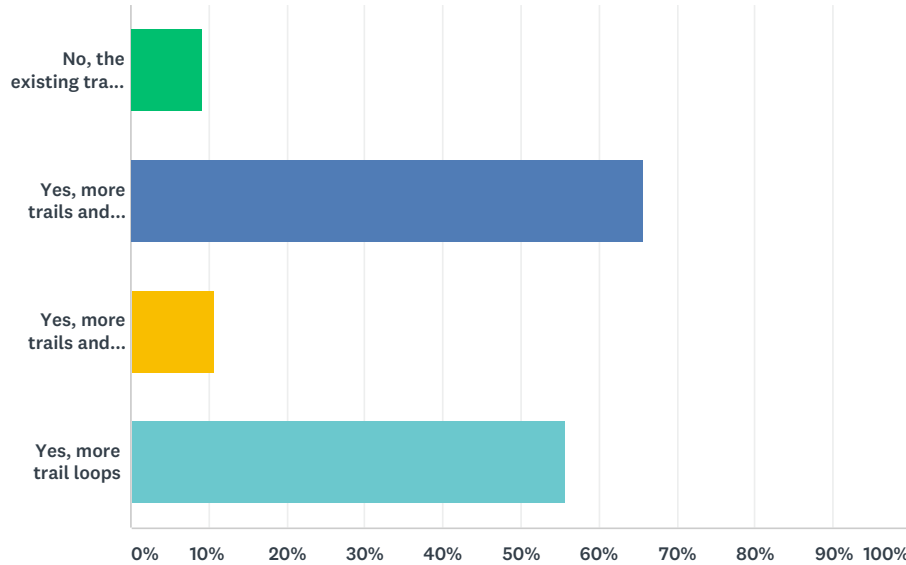
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Outstanding	11.27%	16
Meets current needs	36.62%	52
Need improvement	52.11%	74
TOTAL		142



## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q15 Do you think more trails need to be added to the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trail system?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 2

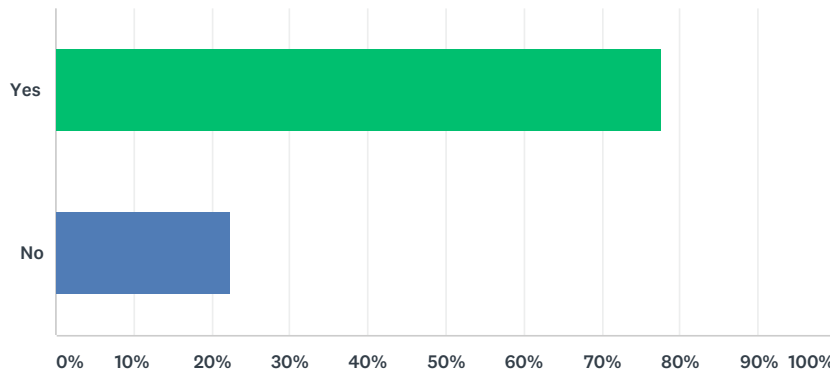


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No, the existing trails are adequate, no need for expansion	9.29%	13
Yes, more trails and longer runs are needed	65.71%	92
Yes, more trails and shorter runs are needed	10.71%	15
Yes, more trail loops	55.71%	78
Total Respondents: 140		

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q16 The Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling trails are closed during wet and winter conditions. If fat tire and/or winter off-road cycling biking were available elsewhere in the Ramsey County park system, would you use this area?

Answered: 139 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	77.70%	108
No	22.30%	31
TOTAL		139

### Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

## Q17 Do you have any specific comments regarding present and future recreation demands and needs for off-road cycling in Ramsey County?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 81

We need off road cycling trails in northeast Ramsey county, or a trail system in the former munitions facility in Arden Hills.

I look for trails that have sections like Spirit Mountain and Colorado so it's obviously difficult to do that here but the more trails the better. Battle Creek is a great place to train and have some fun. I would like to volunteer some time to help build / improve trails if needed.

I'd like to see trails in northeast metro, no current system close. I'd like to see County open space in bald eagle-otter lake park developed for cycling.

I like that the trails are sometimes confusing to follow and not always in great shape. It gives a sense of adventure and exploration that you don't get on some of the other over-developed bike areas. I also sometimes hike on the trails, and wouldn't like to see that option go away. Too many bikers or too-fast trails would make hiking difficult - keep it low-key and multi-use.

There needs to be a stronger focus on way-finding and separation of uses between hiking and mountain biking (including one-way trails). Way too many close calls and wrong turns. I generally don't choose to visit Battle Creek for mountain biking due to these issues, although it is fairly close to where I live.

I do not understand why fat biking is not allowed here in the winter. That is outrageous.

Keep it raw and natural--not overly maintained and artificial.

Aim for something different than all the other metro trails.

Specifically to Battle Creek... This place suffers badly from poor/no signage. Everyone I talk to complains about how hard it is to get around that trail system. I have been there many times and still don't understand how to put together a decent ride. Signs would make this place a TON better.

More trails for all abilities

1. Because Question 13 only allows for a single answer I feel it is a poor representation of how I use off road trails. I bike with some very advanced riders that pull me through Double Blacks from time to time. When I ride solo I mainly stay on the Blue/Black trails. I also take my 6 and 3 year olds out biking with me weekly and they only can hand the white/green trails. I believe a good trail system has a variety of all levels of trails. Even advanced riders use the easy trails to warm up or cool down. This allows a more diverse group of riders to enjoy the area and allows the development of young riders.

2. Any trail system that closes its doors completely to winter riding is missing out on a core of your most dedicated riders and it cuts the use of the trails in half. Other trails have found a way to keep winter biking open without sacrificing the CC ski trails that intermix.

3. My favorite trails are those that give me an hour plus of riding that does not repeat on itself, flow well, have obvious character to them, challenge me but allow me to bail out, and I can take my kids to. Connecting existing trails would help. More trails are always welcome! Developing some Extremely Difficult/Advanced trails would draw more people to Ramsey County trails.

Battle Creek is the only one I know; I travel a lot further for other singletrack in the metro area. It'd be really nice to utilize northern Ramsey County, if there is some space, for a more technical-style track. The trails at Battle Creek are special because of the elevation available, the large space they occupy, and how remote things feel despite being so close to the city. Adding trail, making them more sustainable, and improved mapping/signage will bring significant numbers of additional mountain bikers to the park. It is also important for skill building areas, as there are many people in the area that have not previously had access to mountain biking.

I really enjoy technical trails BC has to offer.

Used to bike here a lot more, but trails are not sufficiently maintained, and signage is poor. Better options elsewhere, but I'd love to see Battle Creek improved.

Thanks for soliciting input!

Go easy on the plants; do not transport invasive plants by accident

I think multi-skill trails would encourage many more riders and skill levels.

The demand for MTB trails is increasing significantly as is ridership with the High School Leagues. Battle Creek is only one of two trails inside the 494/694 loop and located where the densest populations and highest population of riders are located.

Battle Creek needs a vastly improved layout to utilize the terrain properly. Currently many of the Grades are too steep and create erosion. Better connections of loops, signage and maps are required so riders can find the trails and not get lost.

With the amount of area available in the park and a professional design with proper use of terrain, there could be many more miles of trails. With better quality trails, riders would return more often, including myself.

Today the lack of signage, maps and poor layout keep most riders away. Every time I am out there I run into riders that are lost and cannot find sections of trail.

By improving the design and having stacked loops of trails from beginner to intermediate to advanced you can satisfy a larger group of riders and get many more riders to return to the park.

An improved trail system and promotion of this to the St. Paul Urban High Schools would benefit Ramsey county and it's residents.

Bicycling is a lifetime sport and the St. Paul urban schools need better representation and the option to participate in the HS Leagues.

Please build trails that attract advanced riders as well as intermediate level riders.

Why not Fat Biking in winter?

A few flow trails and more downhill style runs at battle Creek along with much improved signage would really go a long way. A lot of us st paul residents never go to Theodore Wirth because it's far away and traffic is always a pain thus cutting us off from that type of riding. In general elevation changes are very welcomed here, we're lacking in that area in the twin cities

Make sure trails are either multi use or offer enough of different trails for various uses so that the park does not become dominant to one or two activities. 3/4 of your park is closed off in winter to anything but one activity type because of the trail system.

I believe off-raod cycling is needed now and in the future at Ramsey County. Thank you!

Off road cycling is still growing. Youth leagues should be encouraged.

Appreciate the opportunity for comments

Additional trail is always an attractive idea, but we need to improve and maintain what is currently there.

More and better signage, one way trails.

More trails are not the answer, trail crew can't maintain what they already have. It will be difficult to build flow trails, because the dirt is too sandy, it will be too much maintenance to keep up. All man made features wash away over time. Trails should be more natural, raw, and steep. If new trails are to be made, a longer sustained downhill trail would be great, similar to Goat, but longer (if possible).

In my opinion, there does not need to be any more trails there. The existing trails are not maintained enough, and it has taken workers all year to build one new section of trail that is not completed yet. An effort to improve existing trails would be better suited for any efforts.

Needs signage and loops that don't use asphalt or ski trails

This park has always been a great multiuse trail for those of us that live nearby. (I live across the street.) I fear that if more bike trail development is done it will ruin the multiuse aspect of this trail and hikers/runners who live in the area will not be allowed or welcome on the trail. Please don't let this happen. Some of us like to bike AND run on this trail and don't want to be told we can only bike on it.

There are very few singletrack trails left for runners where they aren't yelled at by bikers. I also hope that this does not become a fee-based biking area. This is a lower income neighborhood. Many of the people who live nearby cannot afford to pay to use the park. Asking for a fee just makes the park more accessible to people who don't even live in the area and less accessible to those who do. If a fee box is placed it should be donation only.

There is a ton of space, as seen at other parks, trails can be added without looking like trails have been added. I advise anyone to tour some other local trails that started from the ground up, like Cuyuna, Elk River and Maple Lag Resort.

I'm also a XC skier, but since natural snow has been a challenge at BC, I would prefer that more trails be opened to off road cycling. If BC made snow that would change of course, but there are parks like Hyland, and Elm Creek that both make snow and have winter MTB trails, so this should be included if BC has a future with manmade snow.

More funding please!

The downhill trails are very unique to metro area riding. I feel like they are the greatest asset to the trail system. Would love to see them expanded on.

Develop BC first, then additional trails along the river hill areas would be nice  
With the exponential growth of High School mountain bike racing has come a need for more places for young people to ride and train.

Battle Creek is the best place to mountain bike in the metro in my opinion because of the elevation and size of the park. I really like the two way trail network instead of one way loops. It would be nice to have more singletrack so mountain bikers don't have to use paved/ski/doubletrack trails as connectors between singletrack.

Great bones but boy do the trails need modern design

If future trails are created have the trails accessible for all types of activities. In addition, keep the emphasis on promoting the beauty of Battle Creek and not stripping away the beauty to making it assessable. It is a great sanctuary in the middle of an urban setting and if that changes too much it takes away from the vitality of this area.

North end of the county could use some trails. Like legalize the rogue trails around snail and sucker lakes

More winter access

My boy is finally old (and strong) enough to ride off-road with me. it is a recreation experience unlike anything else we do!

There are not many mountain biking opportunities in Ramsey County. I generally have to go to Hennepin County or elsewhere in the Metro Area.

I hope the expansion of the trails continues, the recent developments and re-works I've seen over the last few years are greatly appreciated.

Keep Battle Creek "unpolished". Carver, Lebanon, etc are all great trails but Battle Creek offers a unique experience that is rugged, washed out, and full of tree roots. It's great!

Battle creek desperately needs better signage for navigation.

The trails are unique but the signage is poor and there are some big hazards which are not marked.

Keep BC natural and lengthen current trails. I've been leading a group ride every Wed during open conditions since 1998 and this is my go to trail even though I live in Minneapolis!

Battle Creek provides the greatest opportunity in the metro area to truly develop and extensive trail system that caters to a wide range of riders. Battle Creek's terrain is unlike any other in the metro, which provides the opportunity to develop flow-style and downhill trails, which are currently only found in northern Minnesota. It is also easily accessible by car and bike path. I would like to see the trails continue to be build in addition to having improved amenities, such as porta-potties or restrooms, a changing area and picnic tables. Lebanon Hills has done a nice job with this and I think improved facilities would bring in more riders.



Reservoir Woods is an ideal place for trails.

I like Battle Creek's difficulty and challenge even though I am sometimes not adequate to the task. I would appreciate some compromises of an easier loop alongside a tougher trail so we can kind of ride together.

Only that I would hate to see the current, rugged and downhill trails go away without a similarly challenging replacement. Ideally, those stay and more are added.

As a long-term tax payer of Ramsey County and avid off-road cyclist, I would like to see the county take a step forward in utilizing park lands not just BC as off-road recreational opportunities for the benefit of residents and local tourism. I'm tired of seeing garbage filled woods with transient people occupying county park land. Off-road cycling not only offers excellent human powered recreational opportunities, but as well establishes an inviting community that cares for the preservation of the land. The local economy also receives a boost from well-organized and maintained human powered trail systems through tourism opportunities.

If you build it, they will come. I think Battle Creek should retain its existing character which is really unique in the whole Metro area and the county should build beginner or flow trails at a another location.

Winter fatbiking is a natural extension of summer use, so that should be a consideration. Signage issues hurts Battle Creek's reputation in the cycling community.

Thanks for your support and willingness to grow the off road cycling opportunities in Ramsey County!

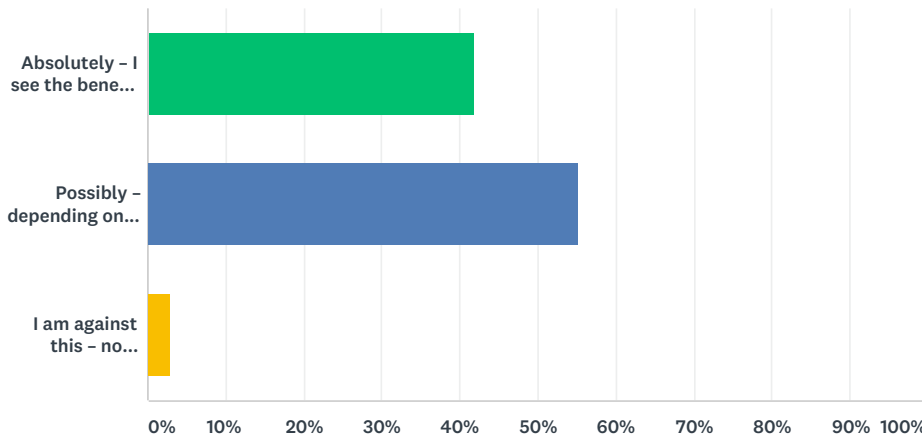
Maintain present trails before expanding & keep separate from hiking/skiing trails

Mountain biking as a hobby is growing very quickly. High schools have bike clubs and racing now. Battle creek has enormous potential to be one of the premier trail systems in Minnesota.

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q18 Currently there is not a fee to use the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling Trails. If a donation box was placed on-site and funds collected were used for trail improvements and maintenance at the Battle Creek Off-Road Cycling Trails how willing would you be to donate?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

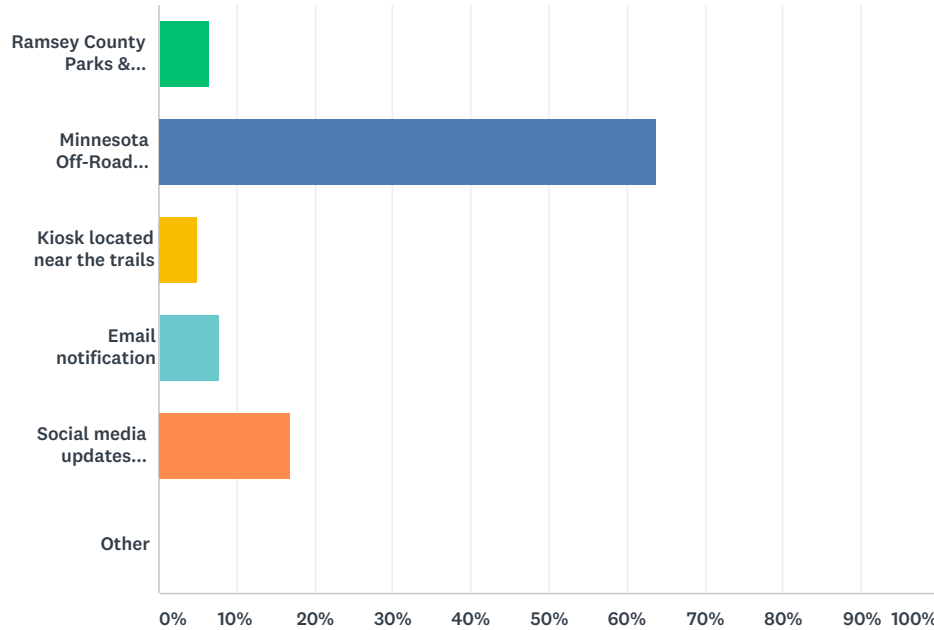


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Absolutely – I see the benefit in investing in these areas above and beyond current funding	41.84%	59
Possibly – depending on the long term plan for investment and improvements	55.32%	78
I am against this – no donation box should be used.	2.84%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>141</b>

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q19 Where would you prefer to get information on the Battle Creek Off-Road cycling trails?

Answered: 141 Skipped: 1

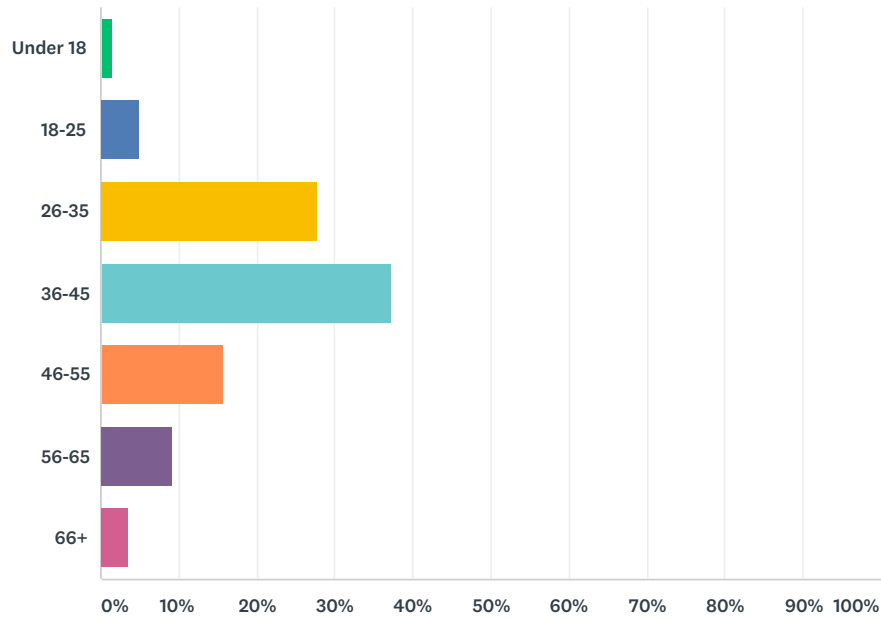


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Ramsey County Parks & Recreation website	6.38% 9
Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) website	63.83% 90
Kiosk located near the trails	4.96% 7
Email notification	7.80% 11
Social media updates (Facebook, Twitter)	17.02% 24
Other	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q20 What age group are you in?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 2

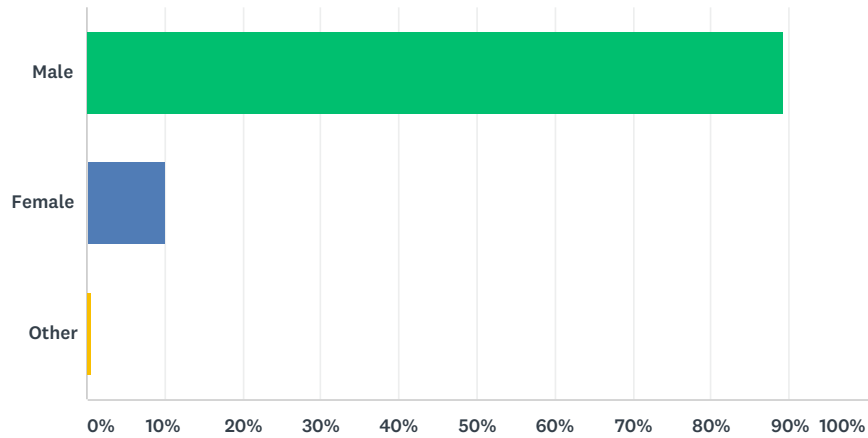


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.43%	2
18-25	5.00%	7
26-35	27.86%	39
36-45	37.14%	52
46-55	15.71%	22
56-65	9.29%	13
66+	3.57%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>140</b>

## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q21 What is your gender?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 2

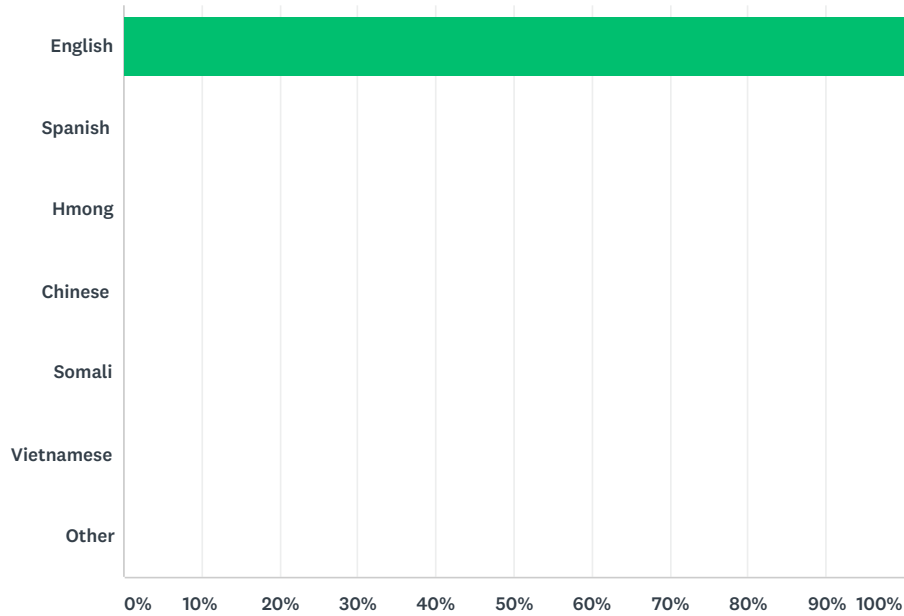


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	89.29%	125
Female	10.00%	14
Other	0.71%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>140</b>

Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q22 What is your primary language?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 2



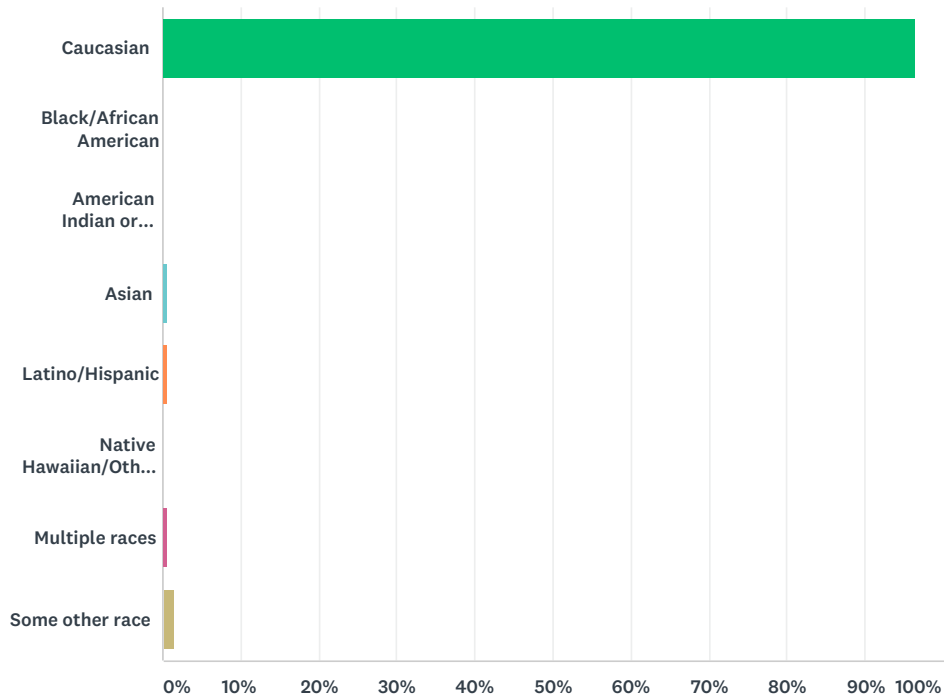
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
English	100.00%	140
Spanish	0.00%	0
Hmong	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Somali	0.00%	0
Vietnamese	0.00%	0
Other	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>140</b>



## Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

### Q23 What race or ethnic group do you identify with?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Caucasian	96.43%	135
Black/African American	0.00%	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00%	0
Asian	0.71%	1
Latino/Hispanic	0.71%	1
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
Multiple races	0.71%	1
Some other race	1.43%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>140</b>



Battle Creek Off-Road (Mountain Biking) Cyclist Questionnaire

Q24 Contact information (if you would like to receive emails/newsletter)

Answered: 58 Skipped: 84

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	96.55%	56
Email	100.00%	58

### Appendix G

#### Comments Received After Concept Plan Public Review Period

7/25/2017 12:09 P.M.

Good afternoon. I just wanted to comment on how excited I am that Ramsey County is supporting the building of more singletrack mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. As a regular trail worker I have seen the weekly efforts put into gaining and maintaining trails at this great park. Like other metro trails, more singletrack miles will bring more users in turn making it an even better place for individuals, families and high school mountain bike teams to recreate and train. This will be a great asset to the City of St Paul and for all user groups of the trail, not just mountain bikers. Kudos to Ramsey County Parks & Rec!

7/25/2017 12:12 P.M.

I am super excited to see Ramsey County looking to dramatically expand mountain bike / single track trail riding opportunities in Battle Creek Regional Park. It's already a good place to ride. This significant expansion could elevate it to a destination trail.

Trail ridership in the Metro has grown exponentially over the last few years with the expansion of High School mountain bike racing. It's a very inclusive sport getting kids outside and being active.

Thanks for having such great vision.

7/25/2017 12:27 P.M.

I just looked over the Concept Map for Battle Creek - Looks great! It's a fun area to ride now, but adding more miles/variety, and a more cohesive routes would really be a boon to the trail..

As it is now, I would never just tell someone to just ride there on their own the first time, you need to be guided a couple of times to know the full trail.. I've talked to more than a few that just missed sections of the trail due to not knowing how they connect.

Thanks for the trail - it's a nice addition to our Twin Cities trail system!

7/25/2017 12:27 P.M.

Thank you for the Battle Creek mountain bike trails project and development! It's already a great trail and will only be getting better. Thanks!!!!

7/25/2017 12:46 P.M.

As a former member of the traibuilding crew at Battle Creek ( and current Trail Steward @ Salem Hills), I have seen the potential that Battle Creek holds. If the current plan comes to life, it would make Battle Creek one of the premier mountain bike destinations in the metro area. Utilizing all areas of the park would also cut down on riff raff as well.

7/25/2017 12:54 P.M.

I am regular user of the current BC mtb. trail system. I ride 2-3x/week and run 1-2x/week on the existing trails. Let me be the first to write, I am extremely excited about the future development and plan of the trail system! The mapping looks great! Thank you for your hard work. I look forward to the expansion process and spreading the word with other trail users.

7/25/2017 1:14 P.M.

Hello!

I ride at Battle Creek regularly and I just reviewed the plans for expansion. First off, WOW! This looks like an amazing opportunity for the park, the city, and outdoor recreation in the East Metro! Thank you for considering this project!

I have a big concern about routing. As I understand the plan (from talking to others involved in the project) calls for all trails to be two way. I feel that this creates more safety concerns than it solves. It would be great if we could expect all riders to ride with the upmost caution and be aware of everything coming at them, the reality is that they do not. When they have a close call it can cause them to lose interest and to seek other trails to ride that they feel are "safer". Virtually all metro trails, with the exception of very short sections, are one way trails. The biggest exception that I can think of in all of Minnesota is the Cuyuna Lakes Recreation Area which is managed by MN DNR. But, as part of the Cuyuna Master Plan, all of the trails will eventually be one way.

Please strongly consider revising the plan to make all of the trails one way. This will result in a greater perception of safety and better ridership and enjoyment of the trails!

Thank you for your time!

7/25/2017 1:29 P.M.

I'm in full support of expanding the Battle Creek MTB trail system. I think what's most important in the design is taking advantage of the elevation change and ensuring the Twins Cities region has more intermediate and advanced downhill features. While there are many options for novice riders in the regional trail system, few options are available for steep, technical features. Integrating this into planning for Battle Creek expansion would serve the Twin Cities well and increase engagement with the trails.

Please consider making use of the elevation change to create downhill trails that are fast, fun, and challenging!

7/25/2017 1:32 P.M.

I'm pretty excited to see news of the proposed expansion of trails at Battle Creek! BC is perhaps the only place in the twin cities metro that you can ride some proper downhill trails, so the prospect of having more challenging trails like that without having to drive 1-2 hours away to Duluth or Welch Village is great for our community.

The terrain available at BC gives incredible opportunities for advanced riders to get their fix, when the flipside is riding other MORC trail systems that really only cater to cross country and beginner riders. I hoped that the proposed map would have more downhill trails like Goat Trail and The Luge (though Luge is probably a bad example because it's old and built unsustainably).

If I could have one wish, it would be for several short, fast, and challenging DH lines going from the top of the hill to the creek, with an easy access climb back to the top. The aggressive trail riding scene in the twin cities is underserved, and it will continue to be passed over as a destination city to go riding in unless that need is met. As it stands, I'd rather wait several weeks to take a 7 hour trip to Marquette than ride nearly all of MORCs current trail offerings. In my mind, there's no point in having 100 miles of trail under their stewardship if no one save beginners and cross country riders want to ride their trails. I understand however that riders like myself are in a vocal minority, but I believe other trail organizations have done a much better job of creating diverse trail networks that appeal to all skillsets and leave none of them wanting for more.

Thanks for reading, I hope these comments are helpful

7/25/2017 1:49 P.M.

I just looked at the map for Battle Creek and the proposed trail expansion. I wanted to toss in my \$.02 for what it's worth.

I have been riding there off and on for maybe fifteen years. I am a pretty infrequent visitor but it is one of my favorite trail systems in the metro. It ranks high on my list due to the technical nature of the terrain, the difficult climbs, the use of topography (esp. the newest stuff being built in the far NW reaches of the park. I love that it is hand-built versus all of the modern machine built trails in Duluth, Cayuna, and CAMBA systems to name a few.

I hope that if and when a revamping/expansion of the trails happen that the original nature of the park is retained. IMHO, there is nothing worse that a completely "dumbed" down trail system that is readily accessible to all skill levels. They have done a nice job at perhaps the most popular metro area Lebanon Hills by installing filters that force one to display adept biking skills before entering into more difficult sections.

One thing about BC that is really frustrating, unless you ride there often, is the complete lack of signage. I have to ride there multiple times before I can figure out a good way to get the most miles in (w/o riding boring grass XC ski trails).

Finally, as you are probably aware, the lower parking lot has a lot of broken glass in it sometimes accompanied by sketchy characters. I will no longer park there as I worry about my vehicle. I hope that something can be done to remedy this not only for park user's convenience but for the safety of all concerned.

I'm really excited about the prospect of an expansion/updating/modernization. I will do my best to follow any and all updates on Facebook.

7/25/2017 2:13 P.M.

I'm writing with comments about the proposed new trails in Battle Creek Park.

I'm a fairly active mountain bike rider who lives in St. Paul and works quite close to Battle Creek and I look forward to the proposed trails using much more of the park than are currently being used. I'm familiar with trail design and construction, and I volunteer my time with MORC at a close by trail about once a week in the summer.

My comments mostly deal with how to make BC better, and I hope that the new trails will incorporate them.

- Build them sustainably. Many of the current trails channel water, and the resulting 'gully' trail is no fun to ride and continues to erode. There are lots of instances of this in the park, and I don't feel as safe riding in them because it's much harder to handle a bike down in a gully. Plus, they'll dry faster and have less damage when it rains.
- Build options for all skill levels. With the current trail design, it's hard to get from one trail to others without riding harder sections (e.g. down the Luge or Wall of Death). Dedicated loops, stacked loops, or lots of junctions with options makes this easier. Also easy access to hard trails (so the fast folks don't run over new riders on their way to the hard stuff). The map looks like you have this, but I try to imagine someone on their first ride vs. someone that wants to bomb and jump everything.
- Multiple kinds of trail. Going along with the above, have easy wide open trail, stuff that flows well, tight technical trail, technical features, jumps, etc. More flow trail, and trails that flow well both ways if it's to be 2 direction trail.
- Going along with the above, making the trail bench flatter and wider on sides of hills. I rode the new parking lot overlook return (back down to Pt Douglas Rd) for the first time last night, and almost everything felt narrow and off camber. It wasn't really fun and I didn't feel as safe riding it.
- One way trails! BC is pretty hilly. Imagine riding quickly down hill and coming across someone headed up!
- Signage! Maps! With all the singletrack, ski trails, etc. It's really tough as a new visitor to navigate BC. Labeled waypoints at junctions (and arrows at other ones) make this easy. "I ride from A to C to D to N to P to A for tonight's loop".
- More signage! When is the trail closed? Where do you check? Is it ok to run on the trails, or is it bikes only? Have simple answers to this all.
- In addition, put the maps up on Singletracks, MTB project, Trailforks, Google Maps, Ramsey County Parks, etc. Make it easy to find information.

- B-lines around tech features. Unless it's a technical-only section, make dedicated ridearounds for folks that don't feel comfortable riding certain features, or make it possible to walk over them.
- More connectivity. The park is sectioned off by roads, trails, etc. Make it easy to get from one section to another. The extreme example of this is the paved walking path along the creek. It's no fun to ride up Luge or Wall of Death, and Big Wheezy is further away. There doesn't seem to be a good climb up between them on the proposed map. Could there be one there somewhere other than 201 and 202?
- Put a skills area near the parking lot too. It's nice to have something close to the parking area.
- Have a good plan for maintenance. This is a lot of trail! I know the volunteers do a lot of work, but it's a lot of trail.

Thank you! I'm really happy there's going to be more trail at BC and hope you can figure out a design that works for all riders.

7/25/2017 2:14 P.M.

Hello,

I am a cyclist and in full support of the plan for improving the mountain bike trail system in Battle Creek. Having trails of varying levels of difficulty and improved signage will make it easier for my wife and two children to ride there. It will also help encourage others from the community into the trail system, which currently is not very welcoming or signed clearly.

Improving the trail network will also increase the number of users in the park which will help drive off undesired activities that take place in some of the back areas of the park.

Thanks!

7/25/2017 2:22 P.M.

I am so proud to live in a county that is expanding its mountain bike trail system. I can't begin to describe how stoked I am to see this new plan. Keep up the good work!

7/25/2017 2:33 P.M.

This new concept looks amazing! PLEASE make this happen!

7/25/2017 2:40 P.M.

Looks great! Would be a welcome addition to the current cluster-f\$%@ of trails currently at Battle Creek. Such a great location and would rival the legendary Theo Wirth trails on the other side of the Cities.

Go for it!



7/25/2017 2:50 P.M.

Just wanted to say that I like what I see and I hope it materializes.

Battle creek would be much more enjoyable if it were looped, connected and properly signed. I would even be willing to pay a trail fee to ride there if it meant better trails in my backyard. A skills park would also be great, as would year round usage. Fatbiking is growing in popularity every year, and it is a family friendly sport that everyone can enjoy. This park should be open year round.

7/25/2017 3:01 P.M.

Yes. With increasing demand for mountain biking with youth, increased need for equitable sports, and MN setting the national model for high school mountain biking, we need more access to more trails throughout the region. Ramsey County is lacking in trails but has an amazing space to make this happen.

Let's build this.

7/25/2017 3:02 P.M.

I am writing today in support of the proposed mountain bike trail expansion at Battle Creek. I think that this is a great idea and will benefit the community. I just recently brought my son to Battle Creek for the first time and he had a blast. He is excited to get back out there and ride again. Thank you for putting this forward and I am looking forward to seeing the trail develop.

7/25/2017 3:05 P.M.

I would like to commend the City's efforts to create a better Battle Creek Park. This east side park is brimming with potential, and the expansion of the mountain bike trails would maximize use and provide a draw for area residents, expand wellness opportunities, and be a cornerstone for revitalization. Expansion of this underutilized open space through a collaborative effort with MORC will provide a certain amount of ownership to the safety and cleanliness of the site, while minimizing government resources. Expanded use of the more isolated areas of the park will create a safer environment for all to enjoy.

As a user of this park myself, I have two requests:

- Please provide adequate wayfinding where the mountain biking trail and XC ski trails intersect. It's easy to get lost when biking.
- Please develop the more remote western sections of the trail plan first. These areas can benefit the most from expanded use by putting more eyes on the ground - offering a safer environment for all.

7/25/2017 3:20 P.M.

This area is so underutilized and has the potential to be a really amazing MTB course. I am a Woodbury resident and use the trails now but not as much as I would if they were logically connected.

Now that mountain biking is a yearlong sport with Fatbikes as well as a High School sport I only see this as a great addition to the East Side.

Great work. Please add me to your contact list for updates etc. I would really like to support this effort!

7/25/2017 3:33 P.M.

I'm super excited to see Ramsey County's concept map for the single track trail network at Battle Creek. Some thoughts:

- The biggest benefit that I see from the map is getting the mtb trails off of the ski trails. This is key. Not only would new singletrack be more fun than ski trails, but it'll also open the possibility for fat biking in the winter (don't want to ruin the ski trail grooming)
- I also like that the proposed routes would eliminate the need for connecting trails via paved bike paths and along Point Douglas Rd. For similar reasons, riding single track is more fun than roads.
- I like seeing the proposed skill areas on the map. I've always thought the top of the hill above the community center would be a great area to develop for something like this. Between the ski trails, it seems the area is under utilized, but it's really nice, with big trees and relatively clear under story.
- I'm surprised to see East Battle Creek included in the concept map. This would be great for getting some tamer, less hilly trail in the network. Not everyone enjoys hilly, challenging trails. When I take my kids biking, for example, I try to bring them to less hilly trails so that they can have a good time. I look forward to bringing my kids to this trail!
- I'm amped to see the hilly terrain on the west end of the park included. There's a lot of terrain potential here. BC is already one of the hilliest trails in the region. With these changes, it'll be even more challenging! That's awesome. One thing that I've always loved about BC is that at the end of the ride, I feel like I've accomplished something.

Thank you for sharing the concept map and inviting comments!

7/25/2017 3:53 P.M.

I support this project.

7/25/2017 3:59 P.M.

The map looks fantastic. What a great proposal to utilize a wonderful area. As an avid biker, I frequently go other local trails, which also results in me going to local businesses – restaurants, grocery stores, liquor stores, and other errands. I'm excited to hear about the funding and progress.  
7/25/2017 4:25 P.M.

I fully support the improvement if the single track mountain bike trails and believe this would be a great investment in St.Paul. I currently choose to mountain bike at Carver Lake versus Battle Creek due to the good trail flow and design, as well as trail maintenance.

I am really disappointed in the Twin Cities with their lack of trails for dirt bikes, four wheelers, and snowmobiles. Also I think it would be worthwhile looking into creating a whitewater park for kayakers off of the River in St.Paul. (Yes I know this is very expensive) these are investments if you want people with money to move into your city.

7/25/2017 6:15 P.M.

Would love to see this happen!

7/25/2017 7:12 P.M.

I enthusiastically support the Battle Creek concept map. I coach with a mountain biking team that draws from students across St Paul. We would use this very often. My family will love it as well.

7/25/2017 8:21 P.M.

I am a senior rider who first started MB riding a BC. The current proposal is one that makes great use of the park total space, the terrain, access points, views, challenges, welcoming to all levels, close to a population group that we can get new riders from, and the deer won't care so you can still have the annual deer hunt in the fall.

The current trails in the park are getting quite worn and some aren't designed for the long term use. Good signage for a Metro/Urban park is a good idea to help keep people safe and oriented. Even in a park surrounded by roads and houses you can get very disoriented and it can be challenging to be able to tell someone where are if injured. I would think even the Police/Fire/EMTs would support the signage.

Good use of resources, carbon free, efficient use of land, and supports a healthy lifestyle. Good luck.

7/25/2017 8:59 P.M.

This plan looks awesome. Battle Creek has some great topography and amazing potential. Seeing this plan makes me realize that I had no clue how big this park actually is.

I hope this plan moves forward.

7/25/2017 9:57 P.M.

I would love for something like this to happen. Currently Battle Creek is not at all beginner-friendly. The proposed changes would mean I could ride my bike to a good trail system and not have the hassle of driving to Leb, Theo, etc.

7/26/2017 6:53 A.M.

Very impressive. The proposed plan takes advantage of the terrain and space that Battle Creek park possesses. It would definitely be draw for me and my family. I'm even excited about signage, that will help enhance the experience of new visitors to this trail system.

7/26/2017 10:53 A.M.

Hello - budding singletrack rider here, just wanted to clearly show my support for the overhaul of the MTB trails in Battle Creek.

As it stands there is a giant mess of trails back there, it is extremely difficult to learn, and while there are some really great segments, they are frustrating to get to.

Switching over to a loop system is going to be fantastic all around, not to mention one that is so comprehensive and LONG! I am really excited to come try this out once complete!

7/26/2017 11:18 A.M.

As a former Minnesota resident and ten-year resident of Saint Paul I'm very excited to view the concept master plan for Battle Creek Park. When I lived in Saint Paul I always enjoyed hiking in Battle Creek, walking under large oak trees and looking out over the Mississippi River always wishing the mt. bike trails were better. I had to drive to the south metro, or Minneapolis to get in some good singletrack time. Take my comments as you will since I no longer live in the area, but I fully support the plans. My only suggestion would be to encourage the trail to be single direction. With all the hills in the park biker to biker and biker to hiker encounters can be reduced and make for a more enjoyable experience for everyone. I've lived in Colorado now for three years and the trails are endless, but there's the problem of hiker-biker encounters. Hikers and bikers travel at different speeds, so rightly hikers can be very startled by bikers. Very few of the trails around here are single direction unlike MN. I think the single direction model reduces injuries and increase the experience for all users.

Thanks for your time and good luck with the plan development.

7/26/2017 11:46 A.M.

This is awesome, it's incredible to see a great trail system expanded on. I am seeing a lack of new higher difficulty trails in the map though. Battle Creek has some amazing down hill sections and more difficult features that are not seen on other MORC trails. Please keep up this tradition and consider the culture of these trails going forward. Moderate to advanced riders love Battle Creek for it's feature rich trails and chalange. Thank you for all your hard work on this project.

7/26/2017 11:47 A.M.

This plan looks amazing - it will be a true destination!

7/26/2017 12:49 P.M.

I ride Battle Creek regularly. It's the closest to my house and one of the best and challenging (most climbing) trails in the area. The new trail managers have done an awesome job within the last year and it is very obvious. New return trail from overlook is awesome!

I hope their plans gets approved. I totally support it!

7/26/2017 7:56 P.M.

I'm glad to see Ramsey County is considering expanding mountain biking. It's a great recreational activity that can involve the whole family and besides Carver Park in Woodbury, Battle Creek is the only real trail in Ramsey or Washington County. For those of us in the east metro it would be a welcome Investment.

Battle Creek to date provides challenges in that the signage is poor and the trail layout is confusing. I would love to see a centrally backed initiative.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

7/26/2017 9:03 P.M.

Time to move forward with this bike trail initiative. Thanks

8/1/2017 12:56 P.M.

Greetings!

I'm writing to you in support of the Battle Creek off-road biking project. As an avid cyclist, Ramsey county resident, and bike industry professional, I've seen firsthand the positive difference that bike trails can make in peoples' lives. The example that stands out to me most is the story of Cuyuna. While Ramsey isn't in the same financial position that Cuyuna was in, singletrack trails still have the potential to improve recreational opportunities for the area and bring the community together.

My only concerns are that road crossings are safe and that the trails that aren't open to walking/dogs are clearly marked.

Thank you for your time!

8/1/2017 1:46 P.M.

I'm an avid off road and road cyclist. I support this project and would ride here.

8/1/2017 2:07 P.M.

I wanted to send some comments on the concept map for Battle Creek MTB trails. I live in St. Paul and ride these trails 2-3 times a week, so am very excited to hear of the possibility of more trail!

I noticed is that not all of the existing trails are updated on the concept map. I believe it is 304, 305 and 306 that have already been completed. I'm sure there are better sources for this information as I am not involved in the actual trail building, or perhaps you left these trails as incomplete for a reason.

Battle Creek is easily my favorite area to ride in the metro, part of this is due to the relative solitude offered here and how wild the area feels compared to Theo for example. You may not be the person to direct this input to, however my concerns about the development of more trails would be that the natural terrain gets "white-washed". I sincerely hope that the difficulty of existing trails isn't affected by these plans.

Moving the Minnesota from Colorado I have found that trail builders are big fans of fast rolling flow trails (I am too!), but not at the expense of existing terrain. Battle Creek happens to have great elevation and I think it would be a shame to not take full advantage of this. To give some context to these comments, existing trail 104 is a prime example of the type of trail that makes this area so fun to ride; 104 uses the gravity of the hillside to offer a sweet descent over the area's natural rocks and roots.

The proposal outlines only 1.43 miles of new black trails. The other 2.5 miles of black trails, I believe are all already in existence (as per my earlier comment on 304-306). I would argue that the metro area is not necessarily in need of more green or blue trail, the nature of Minnesota terrain is such that there is already a lot of land that makes for great beginner/intermediate trail. I am all about getting more people into the sport of mountain biking, however there are few trails in the metro where riders can challenge themselves and expand their capabilities (the Brownie Lake trails and the Extreme loop at Leb are the only places that come to mind).

In light of this, and my earlier comments on the great elevation available at Battle Creek, I would like to advocate for the development of more miles of black trail. What I hope comes across from my ramblings is that to make trails at Battle Creek less difficult would be a shame because this area is one of a kind in the metro.

As far as the proposal goes, I think that skills areas would be a great addition to Battle Creek. I would love to see one of these be a pump track, as there aren't any well maintained pump tracks at existing parks outside of Cottage Grove.

My final thought is that any trail is better than no trail, and I am so excited to see this on the table!

8/1/2017 2:51 P.M.

I have been riding mountain bikes at Battle Creek for over a decade and have been pleased with some of the trail additions/improvements that have occurred in recent years. BC has always been a place that riders get mad at because there isn't a 'loop' per se. Of course if you ride there a bunch, you learn how to loop it together, but it still involves tar trail and road segments.

It's great to see that more trail may be built at BC! Making a real loop is hopefully a priority of this plan as opposed to continuing with disjointed trails. Build it and riders will come...especially if you do a good job maintaining the trails during the season.

Thanks for reading.

8/1/2017 3:41 P.M.

I love the plan! It's exciting to think of all the mountain bike potential at Battle Creek. I don't live in Ramsey county, but I travel to Battle Creek often, because it has unique topography for our area (hills!)

The other thing that Battle Creek has is some dedicated downhill trails. Battle Creek has always been ahead of the other trail systems in regard to berms, jumps and technical downhill trails. It would be very exciting to see that aspect of the trail enhanced (in the expert areas of course!) and it would be disappointing to see that aspect of the trail disappear. I'm writing to encourage you and your team to develop some of the expert trail with downhill in mind. Having a few chunks of trail as one way downhill would provide a space for local riders to develop downhill riding skills. With the growing boom of lift-access trails both in MN and, even more so, in the mountains to the East and West, downhill is definitely a growing mountain bike discipline, and a demographic that is currently underserved. Developing trails with downhill in mind would help preserve Battle Creek's place as the most unique and challenging trail system in the Twin Cities.

Thanks and keep up the good work!

8/3/2017 10:43 A.M.

The scale and detail of the concept map makes it difficult for me to make out exactly what is contemplated, but as a concept of adding a significant amount of mountain biking trails at Battle Creek, I'm very supportive of the idea.

I live near Battle Creek Park, but I frequently drive to other trails in the east and south metro because the existing trails at Battle Creek are crudely built and sporadic. Thoughtful expansion and skillful building of additional trails has tremendous potential at Battle Creek because of the park's large size and significant topography. My experience of other metro-area mountain bike trails is that the user groups are conscientious about their impact on the trails and on other trail users.

The concept map shows a total of more than 20 miles of mountain bike trails. If that much trail is built, and it is done with the thoughtfulness and skill demonstrated at places like Carver Lake, Lebanon Hills, Murphy-Hanrehan, and others, Battle Creek would absolutely become one of the premier trails in the area.

Please keep me informed of the progress of this planning effort, and of additional occasions when I might provide additional support in person or in writing. Thank you!



### Appendix H

#### Comments Received After Master Plan Draft Public Review Period

1/19/2018 8:38 A.M.

Thanks for sharing the update on the Battle Creek MTB Master Plan. I'm super excited for this project and I can't wait to see what the first phase looks like. The proposed trail segments look like they'll make the most of the landscape on the western end of the park to make some good, challenging trails!

The only feedback I could think of when looking the plan over regards the proposed washing station(s). I guess I would recommend not including the washing stations at trail heads. If the county is going to invest in some new trails, it doesn't make sense to encourage people to ride them when they're wet and destroy them. It stands to reason:

- Having a washing station implies that people's bikes will get dirty
- Bikes only get dirty if it's muddy
- Riding muddy trails damages them

One could argue that the washing station would be useful for cleaning dust off a bike (since the trails at BC can get dusty at times), but in that case, it's just dust. A washing station is mostly helpful for muddy bikes, when people don't want to ride a muddy bike home or get the inside of their car all muddy.

Thanks for soliciting feedback!

1/19/2018 2:03 P.M.

I'm not sure if the comment period is still open (web site says Feb 3 2017), but the link is active so I'm giving it a shot...

I'm a resident of Roseville and a frequent mountain biker. I read through the plan and looked over the map, and I'm thrilled by them.

My impression is that Battle Creek is currently underutilized relative to the more outlying trails such as Elm Creek or Lebanon Hills, or Theodore Wirth- I never see nearly the traffic at BC as the other areas. The proposed improvements to signage alone seems like it would draw more users, and the trail additions seem to be prioritized really sensibly.

My impression is that Battle Creek is currently underutilized relative to the more outlying trails such as Elm Creek or Lebanon Hills, or Theodore Wirth- I never see nearly the traffic at BC as the other areas. The proposed improvements to signage alone seems like it would draw more users, and the trail additions seem to be prioritized really sensibly. Much of the county feels like it's in a dead zone of trail opportunities with the higher traffic areas all about a 45 minute drive in various directions, and having a more cohesive trail system in this part of the metro would be fantastic.

1/19/2018 2:15 P.M.

I am very excited to see the plan for the additional mountain bike trail at Battle Creek and fully support the Master Plan. There will be a lot of excitement in mountain bike community and it will bring many new visitors to the area.

1/19/2018 3:43 P.M.

Would be a welcome change/addition! Hard to recommend mountain biking here currently, even to friends who are advanced riders. Really tricky sections, confusing layout and unclear trail signage. And 21 miles - wow! What is there like 5 currently? I also think with more people using the park, will help diminish the number of undesirables in the area.

StP needs its own "Theo" on the east side of the river. Good luck out there!

1/19/2018 4:50 P.M.

We used to picnic at Battle Creek in the early 70's with extended family. It is an amazing place and is perfect for mountain biking. I love the plan and can't wait!

1/19/2018 6:37 P.M.

I have been very frustrated everytime I try to ride there because the signage is terrible or should I say nonexistent. Hopefully the plan is to not only add signs but make the trail easier to follow. Should just get rid of any really confusing intersections so you can get on the trail and ride for miles and not worry about which way you need to go every half mile. I'm actually disappointed that they collect MORC money and don't take care of the most obvious problem at Battle Creek

1/20/2018 1:28 P.M.

I do not reside in Ramsey county, however, I work near Battle Creek and bike there often. Thank you for working on the continued development of this park. I think that the terrain of the park offers a unique opportunity for single track trails. I think that the draft plan and map are great and if executed, it will turn the park into an awesome riding experience.

I also help out with the Stillwater High School Mountain Bike team. We currently do not have practice there, but drive past it, for two reasons. First, the current skill level is beyond new riders. Second, the lack of signage can be confusing for riders not familiar with the park. I think that the existing plan addresses both of these issues well.

1/20/2018 2:03 P.M.

I absolutely love the idea of additional trails at Battle Creek! We have three kids, aged 10-16 who bike frequently at Carver. Having more trails will be great!

1/20/2018 8:15 P.M.

Do it!

1/20/2018 8:49 P.M.

Very excited to see the work being to bring more trails to the Battle Creek Park! I did some work on a REI National Trails Day event last year out there and have gotten to ride it a few times. It really has some great woodlands and views of the area. Building 20+ miles of purpose-built single track will be a great year-round additional to the park and to the community. Battle Creek could really become a great local asset for generations to come. Thanks for doing the hard work to help bring this to reality. Let me know if you need anything else from me – thanks!

1/21/2018 9:19 A.M.

New trails are nice. Being able to ride a fat bike in the winter would be stupendous.

Look to the Hayward/Cable, WI, area to see how winter biking and skiing can coexist. It can be done.

1/21/2018 12:19 P.M.

I am a current Resident of Stillwater so Washington County. I have heard from some Mountain biking friends about Battle Creek looking to expand the trail system. I want to support this master plan. I have to admit I cannot read the plan and map. I will recommend that whatever you do look to Cuyuna Mtn Bike area and Duluth as we have spend time at both trails. I absolutely love Cuyuna and in my opinion the area is reaping the benefit of lots of bikers going to the area. The staging area and trails are phenomenal. Anything that resembles that down in the Metro I think would be awesome. We are involved in the Mountain Bike Team in Stillwater which just won the 2018 State Championship and at the races the participation is expanding every year. Stillwater has I believe 80-90 students on the team and expected about 100 next year.

Anyways long winded but wanted show support in that it would bring our dollars to St. Paul. I was a resident of St. Paul for 20+ years. If you could improve the public school options I would move back as that is why we moved to Stillwater. That is a different topic though.

1/21/2018 5:02 P.M.

I fully support this!

1/21/2018 5:14 P.M.

I want to offer my enthusiastic support for your proposal. What an exciting opportunity for the Battle Creek community.

For the last 3 years I have led the St. Croix Valley Athletic Association Mountain Biking Club. We serve kits 3-12 grades and focus on generating excitement for a lifetime of fitness through cycling. This area would be a boon to our club.

I am also a parent volunteer coach with Stillwater Mountain biking. The expansion of Battle Creek would add another great venue for the team.

Lastly I am an employee of 3M. This area would be well used during noon breaks and after work.

Please support this plan.

1/22/2018 11:25 A.M.

Please approve the plan to expand mountain biking at Battle Creek. This would be an amazing asset to the community!

1/22/2018 1:48 P.M.

I am greatly looking forward to expanded trails in Battle Creek. With some of the best elevation change and terrain in the cities, Battle Creek has the potential to be the premier trail in the Metro!

1/22/2018 7:56 P.M.

This proposal is well thought out. The proposed mix of green/blue/black trail is appropriate and I especially like the emphasis on signage, one aspect in which BC is particularly lacking.

This is great work and as a Ramsey county taxpayer, general outdoor enthusiast, and as an off-road cyclist I heartedly endorse this plan and encourage its adoption and implementation.

1/24/2018 7:56 A.M.

I fully support the development of new single track mountain biking trails at Battle Creek Park. I'm an assistant high school mountain biking coach and cycling enthusiast in Stillwater. Our student athletes and adult cyclists are always looking for new single track riding opportunities. Currently we need to drive to Riverfalls WI or Woodbury to ride significant single track trails.

I would love the opportunity to support MORC and the Park Board in the development of additional mountain biking trails at Battle Creek.

1/24/2018 8:20 A.M.

I would just like to voice my support and excitement over the proposed plan of expansion of the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek park. I am new into the mountain bike scene, and have heard from many friends and coworkers that Battle Creek is great, albeit mostly advanced and technical trails. I run there during the summer and ski there during the winter, so I know and love the park and would love to be able to enjoy it in another mode as well (mountain biking). The addition of new trails of varying levels would help me enjoy the park even more.

On a less selfish note, the high school mountain bike scene has blown up over the last few years (unfortunately it wasn't an option when I was in high school) and I think they would be able to capitalize on the new trails. Thanks for working on this.

1/24/2018 8:37 A.M.

Hi I am a 3M employee and a mountain biker. I am very supportive of the proposed improvements to the mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. In addition to the extra miles of single track the new signage is critical. I don't ride at Battle Creek because I've heard from a number of people that it is extremely confusing to figure out where you are and where you are going due to lack of signage. I think the proposed changes will truly make Battle Creek a "destination" for a much larger group of cyclists.

1/24/2018 9:27 A.M.

I would like to offer my support for the proposed mountain bike trails at Battle Creek. I think the proposed setup is excellent. If there is appropriate signage and a decent mix of trail vs technical this location could serve a tremendous area in the east valley and draw in a large number of people. If there is anything else you need please let me know!

1/24/2018 9:50 A.M.

I think that the trails at Battle Creek would be a great resource to the community, especially for individuals and families living within the city limits. For those who lack a means of transporting bikes to far-away trails, having resources close to the city can significantly lower the barrier to entry.

1/24/2018 12:53 P.M.

I am very excited to see the plans for additional mountain biking paths in the park. I personally do not ride the current mountain bike trails, but as an avid year round bicycle commuter I do support the idea of more options to get folks out cycling. I frequently bike through the park on the paved trails either to or from my job (at 3M). It's a great park and perfect spot for more bike trails.

1/24/2018 1:05 P.M.

This would be a great addition to the east side. I have recently rediscovered Battle Creek trails and look forward to expansion and new challenges.

1/24/2018 2:14 P.M.

I am writing to you in support of the expanded trails and better signage at Battle Creek. Mountain biking has become very popular as demonstrated by other trail systems in the area (Lebanon Hills, Theodore Wirth, Elm Creek). This would be a great asset to the East Side community and I think it would go a long way to help the area.

As a transplant to the cities, I am always impressed with how great the parks are here. We are lucky. Other US cities are starting to see the importance of parks, and it's key that we keep the bar high. This is a project to do that.

Thanks for your time!

1/24/2018 3:41 P.M.

As a citizen of Ramsey County (Shoreview) and an avid user of the regional park system, I applaud your efforts for adding single track mountain biking trails to Battle Creek Regional Park. The topography is excellent for a diverse trail network and if built right will become a regional destination. The investment in this project will be worthwhile and serve a great need.

Thank you!

PS- I have 2 children ages 14 and who I mountain bike with on a regular basis.

1/25/2018 6:54 A.M.

I wanted to submit my comments about the proposed Battle Creek MTB trail plan. As a resident of Battle Creek Rd. for 13 years I used the park on a daily basis and I truly feel it's one of the greatest assets in St. Paul. I'm also an avid cyclist and XC skier. The ski trail upgrades to the park some years back were fantastic and brought hundreds of new skiers to the park weekly. I have no doubt that improving the mtb trails as proposed will do the same for the summer months and make this park a truly great year round destination. The park is vast and even the large amount of trail being proposed will not overwhelm the space.

I can't encourage this improvement enough. I'm still a local work resident as I work at 3M and use the park several times a week.

1/29/2018 12:22 P.M.

My family and I want to thank the county to revisiting the appropriate uses for Battle Creek Park. This is an amazing park with significant untapped potential. We are firmly in favor of the expansion of development of mountain bike trails in Battle Creek park. We live in the community and our house is within easy riding distance of the parks' access points.

We would like to encourage the county to look at trail alignment when the time comes to ensure that adequate space is provided between private houses and yard space, and where the trail gets established. I think the trail as proposed, with proper setback, will be a great thing for Ramsey County and am looking forward to helping make it happen.

Keeping the trail multi-use, when appropriate, is also important to bring more users safely into the park and to help drive out unwanted user groups.

1/29/2018 12:56 P.M.

I am not in favor of expanding and improving the bike trail in Battle Creek. It appears already that the trails are very near the homes on the bluff. This will encourage people to explore in our back yards as I have already seen this last summer visitors exploring the land and exiting via the back of my house. I have lived here for 35 years and the crime keeps on growing.

1/29/2018 3:33 P.M.

I will add one other comment. We have very little police presence in our area currently and our neighborhood over the last several years has been subject to home invasions.

1/29/2018 9:15 A.M.

I would just like to express how happy I am to see that a mountain bike trail system as well thought-out and ambitious as the one planned is even being considered for a home at battle creek. I love parks, paved trails, etc. But since recently getting in mountain biking a little over a year ago I've found that I have a greater appreciation for nature and a better understanding of the importance of having parks in general. Mountain biking allows me to go deep in the forests, ride alongside streams, maneuver between the different families of trees, and every other ride it seems I cross paths with deer. When it comes to exercise, having fun, overcoming challenges and learning to appreciate our forests and wildlife mountain biking is a phenomenal way of doing all of this at once. I can't tell you how valuable having something like this in the metro area is, and I greatly appreciate its consideration.

1/30/2018 7:21 A.M.

with all the new bike trails that will be added to battle creek park, there will be no need to have trails in the back of our yards on A & B & C & White Bear streets. The streets are narrow and the neighbor hood kids play in them. The kids also play in the backyards with the trails rate next to them.



1/30/2018 9:45 A.M.

As someone who has lived in this neighborhood since 1968 and seen the growth and resulting changes in the area, I must say that mountain bike trails near the houses on White Bear, A, B and C streets are definitely not in the majority's best interest. Our neighborhood is unique, in that we are surrounded by the park. Our area streets are enjoyed all year round by families out walking and yes – leisurely biking! Increased traffic and parking would greatly restrict that.

For years, we've been told by the police that our area (from Upper Afton south to C Street) is the "best kept secret" and calls to the police are low. While we've seen a general increase in crime in our city, our neighborhood still remains fairly quiet and a great place to live. The neighborhood is a great mix of seniors and new, growing families, for whom safety is a concern. Increased traffic near our homes, both in the park and on our streets, is a negative.

Bike paths just below our streets will only bring more undesirable traffic, congestion, garbage, and increased crime. Not by the bikers, but by those undesirables who see new ways to access the neighborhood. I see no positives in that. The park has been here for many years; mountain biking became popular in the 1950's. I doubt it was considered in the original park plans.

If there's a way to keep these trails away from homes, that's one thing, but locating them practically in peoples' back yards is not necessary. The objectionable trails are: 300, 302, 306, 307 in our immediate neighborhood.

It seems that more study needs to be done. Trails need to be located away from homes.

1/30/2018 9:58 A.M.

On a aside note, Dorothy summary does not speak to my beliefs entirely. I greatly appreciate the expansion of mountain bike trails through battle creek park, and I believe the consensus of the neighborhood email chain is as such too. The main concern is the proximity of the proposed trails to the property lines. I believe the trails would have much more approval if there was a strong 100-150ft buffer from any property line.

2/1/2018 8:26 A.M.

I own a home on Battle Creek off White Bear Ave and have read through the proposals for bike trail expansion. I have concerns in regards to the plans. Let it be said that I walk and use the park often. I clean trash out of the park with every walk as a habit. I have watched changes in the park due to erosion and traffic.

Concerns:

- Location of bike trails behind my home and/or close to the backyards of homes on battle creek. This would bring people too close to property lines and bring people into our yards and bring down our property value for privacy and yards. I am against this period.
- Currently I walk the trails and find trash, drugs, and human feces quite often.. (actually my dogs find it) this would increase

- Currently the people who ride the trails make other routes where they should not be and do dangerous routes down the hills
- I want to be able to walk in the woods and feel this expansion would prevent this.
- I feel we do not have ample parking and do not want them on our streets
- I do not want to upset the wild life
- I do not want the trails to destroy the nature of the park in general, erosion of the space
- Bring more opportunity for people coming in the area, which many now set camp fires and do drugs in the woods. This might increase and or it may deter that is an unknown.

Improvements that could be made:

- Bathrooms
- Trash Cans
- Cameras for parking lot
- Signs for the trails that we have
- Oversight of those who bike these trails and oversight of the trails
- Community using the park to exercise

2/1/2018 6:37 P.M.

I want you to be aware that not everyone on south white bear Ave in St. Paul (and A-B-C streets) is opposed to the single track trail being proposed. Frankly I'm embarrassed about the NIMBY reactions of some of our neighbors, I hope they don't speak for everyone. I understand it's not "my" park land, it's our park land.

I think you'd be advised to have the best answers possible about potential parking impacts.

Thanks, I'm happy to chat if you'd like to.

2/2/2018 8:42 A.M.

My wife and I live on B St and as you know by now the neighborhood has had quite a flurry of emails with concerns about the bike trails. I agree that the trails would deter bad elements as argued in the proposal. I also support more public use of a very nice city park area. My only concerns would be a lot of traffic and parking in our residential area at the end of White Bear Ave, erosion of the trails as some are already pretty eroded in the park, and sharing multi-use on the trails with walkers. I would hope that the trails would also be open for hiking use.

## Appendix I

### County Representative Responses to Concerns

#### Public Comment:

Hello Mr. Goodnature,

Perhaps to get a better perspective the real question is how many feet from the neighbors' property line is the will the trail be? The map does not really provide this answer. There is an existing bike trail behind White Bear Avenue according to the Ramsey County website. My understanding is that bikers are required to yield to pedestrians and biking is only allowed sunrise to sunset. The bikers that we have observed entering on C St. have never been a problem. Maybe there should be a fee similar to the nordic ski pass that is required by the county to pay for trail upkeep. My only comment is the parking on White Bear between A and C St. The parking issue is probably a city council matter.

#### County Representative Response:

Hello everyone,

I have received several e-mails from differing people in the A, B, C neighborhood on the matter of the proposed trails. First, I wanted to make it clear that this Plan is showing where trails could be installed as a representation and that we have no timeline set for any of the proposed trails to be built. The build out phase of different proposed trails will be completed over the next decade and will depend heavily on time and money, these trails are not all going to be built at once. Therefore, I have not walked every proposed trail corridor to determine the exact layout, including the trails around the ABC neighborhood.

As I mentioned in my previous e-mail, we are aware of your concerns and the need for a buffer, and when the money and time comes to install the trails adjacent to ABC street, I can assure you a buffer will be implemented. This Plan also calls out for increased signage, which will tell bikers where trail heads and trail points of access are located, neither of which are proposed to be installed around your neighborhood. Once signs are installed, this should keep rogue vehicles from parking and bikers accessing the trails out of the ABC neighborhood, as there will be clear points of entry.

I appreciate everyone's comments and when the time and funding comes to install the trails of concern, I can reach out to this group to inform all of you about our next steps.

Michael Goodnature | Natural Resources Manager  
Ramsey County  
Parks and Recreation Department  
2015 Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

### Public Comment:

Dear Mr. Goodnature:

I write in response to the emails currently being circulated in our neighborhood, which I assume you've received. If not, let me know and I'll do a synopsis and send them to you. FYI, our neighborhood is active in the National Night Out, and we have our own email group to get important messages to one another. I keep this list and update it as needed. This has worked very well for us, as people note suspicious cars and people in the neighborhood, report any incidents that have happened to them, and generally keep in touch with one another.

As someone who has lived in this neighborhood since 1968 and seen the growth and resulting changes in the area, I must say that mountain bike trails near the houses on White Bear, A, B and C streets are definitely not in the majority's best interest. Our neighborhood is unique, in that we are surrounded by the park. Our area streets are enjoyed all year round by families out walking and yes – leisurely biking! Increased traffic and parking would greatly restrict that.

For years, we've been told by the police that our area (from Upper Afton south to C Street) is the "best kept secret" and calls to the police are low. While we've seen a general increase in crime in our city, our neighborhood still remains fairly quiet and a great place to live. The neighborhood is a great mix of seniors and new, growing families, for whom safety is a concern. Increased traffic near our homes, both in the park and on our streets, is a negative.

Bike paths just below our streets will only bring more undesirable traffic, congestion, garbage, and increased crime. Not by the bikers, but by those undesirables who see new ways to access the neighborhood. I see no positives in that. The park has been here for many years; mountain biking became popular in the 1950's. I doubt it was considered in the original park plans.

If there's a way to keep these trails away from homes, that's one thing, but locating them practically in peoples' back yards is not necessary. The objectionable trails are:  
300, 302, 306, 307 in our immediate neighborhood.

It seems that more study needs to be done. Trails need to be located away from homes.

### County Representative Response:

Thank you for your response and expressing your concerns, we appreciate your, and fellow neighbors, feedback and fellowship of Battle Creek Park.

In constructing previous off-road cycling trails within Battle Creek, it was always a priority to build natural surface trails with minimal impact to the environment and to maintain a buffer between trails and homes, for the privacy of the homeowners and off-road cyclists alike. In future trail expansion these will continue to be priorities, as it is not the intention to expand off-road cycling trails within residences back yards, but to provide access to other portions of Battle Creek Regional Park for public use.

Now that we have your response, we are aware of your and neighbors' concerns to maintain a buffer between residences and newly constructed trails.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me, best regards,

Mike

Michael Goodnature | Natural Resources Manager  
Ramsey County  
Parks and Recreation Department  
2015 Van Dyke Street  
Maplewood, MN 55109-3796

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# OFF LEASH DOG AREAS MASTER PLAN

June 30, 2018

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### Executive Summary

#### Concept

The Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan assesses the current state of off-leash dog areas within the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation system using information gathered from internal staff, stakeholder groups, an online survey, and public engagement meetings to plan for the future of off-leash dog areas. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department believes that by looking at the current state of off-leash dog areas and using the input from current users the parks department can create a baseline design for all of the off-leash dog areas to follow and standardize the minimum requirements of off-leash dog areas in parks under the jurisdiction of Parks & Recreation.

After meeting with stakeholders and conducting public engagement meetings throughout the county it is clear that there is a passionate support group for off-leash dog areas. It is also evident that there is room for improvement to site amenities, park rules, and the maintenance and operations of off-leash dog areas within the Ramsey County parks system.

#### Implementation

No specific timing has been identified for the implementation of the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan within the Ramsey County parks system. Construction of upgraded site amenities and features could be built in a series of phases. Phasing would most likely begin with upgrading current sites and follow with the possible expansion of more off-leash dog areas.

#### Off-Leash Dog Areas Community Outreach and Equity Plan

As Parks & Recreation moves forward with the development of the Off-leash Dog Areas Master plan, the department will invest in developing programs and partnerships to provide better access to the off-leash areas for all Ramsey County residents. This will include efforts to increase the diversity of off-leash area users.

Maintaining off-leash dog areas that are free and open to the public is one way that Parks & Recreation offers opportunity for everyone. Programs should be developed in the future to encourage people of different ethnic groups to enjoy the off-leash areas, meet, and socialize. Parks & Recreation could organize “open house” days where people are invited into the off-leash areas for educational programming teaching people about the rules and etiquette for off-leash dog areas, and introducing them to the park with the help of volunteers. In marketing such a program, the county can reach out to various racial groups who have previously not felt comfortable coming to off-leash areas.

## Planning Framework

### Overview

The purpose of the Off-leash Dog Areas Master Plan is to assess the current state of Ramsey County off-leash dog areas and plan for future aspects of development. This would include the redevelopment of existing infrastructure as well as any new park that may be developed. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation will also be assessing the state of the volunteer program along with how maintenance is handled within the off-leash dog areas and laying out a plan for the future of the volunteer program as well as maintenance and operations.

### Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space System

Regional Parks and trails are developed in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to preserve green space for wildlife habitat and provide a wide range of natural resource related recreational opportunities such as walking and hiking. Many people enjoy these activities and desire the ability to exercise their dogs off-leash and for this reason areas have been set aside for patrons to enjoy natural spaces with their pets. Established in 1974 the Regional Parks and Open Space System is managed by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with cities, counties, and special park districts. The Metropolitan Council supports the regional system with planning, funding, and advocacy. Each implementing agency, such as Ramsey County, is responsible for the development of a master plan for its regional park and open space system.

Ramsey County currently operates off-leash dog areas within Battle Creek Regional Park, Bald Eagle Otter Lakes Regional Park, the Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor, and Woodview Open Space which are a part of the regional parks and open space system overseen by the Metropolitan Council.

### Ramsey County Parks & Recreation

Ramsey County is the most densely populated county in the State of Minnesota and the parks and open spaces held by Ramsey County Parks & Recreation represent the largest undeveloped land area in the county at nearly 8,000 acres. Within the system there are six regional parks, six regional trails, nine county parks, nine protected open spaces, five golf courses and numerous recreation facilities. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation works in cooperation with the Metropolitan Council, the National Park Service, Saint Paul Regional Water Services, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), its municipalities, and other government units to advance park, recreation, and leisure opportunities for all Ramsey County residents.

The vision of Ramsey County is "A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive," and the mission within the county is "A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life." The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department follows this mission by preserving, developing, maintaining, and managing a system of parks, open space, trail corridors, and special use areas as well as providing year round recreational programs, services, and facilities which are responsive to changing needs, compatible with the resource base, and most effectively provided at the county level.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation supports the county vision and mission through:

- **Trail Services:** Parks & Recreation coordinates the establishment of a Ramsey County-wide system trails plan that connects significant natural and cultural features and implement those segments of county or regional significance that are located on Ramsey County Park and Open Space land.

- **Open Space Preservation:** Parks & Recreation acquires, protects, and manages unique, fragile, and aesthetically attractive natural resources that contribute positively to the urban landscape, and perform critical natural functions.
- **Natural Interpretation:** Parks & Recreation promotes positive environmental values through an increased awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of natural resources and natural processes.
- **Outdoor Recreation Programming:** Parks & Recreation sponsors or co-sponsors recreation programs that encourage development of resource oriented outdoor recreation skills and promote wellness. We also organize special events that introduce people to recreation opportunities available within the system.
- **Special Recreation Services:** Parks & Recreation provides areas, facilities, and programs of significance countywide to meet specialized indoor and outdoor recreation needs of Ramsey County residents.
- **Park Services:** Parks & Recreation provides diverse and accessible areas and facilities primarily for self-directed Ramsey County oriented outdoor recreation that complements the natural features of each site.
- **Equitable Use:** Parks & Recreation is working to strengthen equitable use of regional parks and trails, county parks, open spaces, along with other recreation facilities across all ages, races, ethnicities, incomes, national origins, and abilities.

### History

Responsible Owners of Mannerly Pets (ROMP) first approached the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission at a meeting on October 8, 1996 to request the establishment of one or more designated off-leash dog areas, citing several successful programs throughout the United States. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation staff at the time recommended the establishment of two off-leash dog areas based upon the expressed demand and the fact that owners were illegally allowing dogs off-leash throughout the Ramsey County parks system. Current ordinance allowed for the creation of off-leash areas.

After review of local and national responses to requests for off-leash dog areas the Parks & Recreation Commission endorsed a staff proposal on January 11, 1997 to establish two off-leash areas for a pilot program operating within the Ramsey County parks system beginning on June 27, 1997 and running through December 31, 1998.

Upon the completion of the pilot program the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department determined that the off-leash dog areas were successful and moved towards developing an administrative policy that would

- Identify the characteristics, amenities, and operation of Ramsey County off-leash areas.
- Define the number and general geographical location of the site(s) in the Ramsey County park system.
- Establish a process for reviewing and evaluating sites.

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department passed a policy to govern the general rules, guidelines, site characteristics, support facilities, disabled access, use policies, and the review, evaluation and site selection of off-leash dog areas on April 13, 1999. This policy will be used in the evaluation and future direction of off-leash dog areas as set forth in this master plan. This policy can be found in Appendix A , "Off-leash Dog Area History."

Beginning on March 14, 2000 the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department began implementing the off-leash dog areas program as adopted by policy on April 13, 1999. Four sites were chosen by the Parks & Recreation Commission Liaison and department representatives

- Battle Creek Regional Park (Part of Pilot Program)
- Woodview Open Space (New Site)
- Bald Eagle Otter Lakes Regional Park (New Site)
- Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor (Part of Pilot Program)

### Public Engagement Meetings:

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation held three public engagement events in which a short presentation was made followed by a group exercise to help develop an ideal dog park. The presentation material can be found in Appendix B. The main information that Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department hoped to gather was what the public saw as most important in a dog park and how those amenities or site features should be designed in the future. This would aid the county in both standardizing as much as possible the current off-leash dog areas, as well as inform the design of any future off-leash dog area areas.

The public engagement meetings were held on the following dates:

- Monday September 11 at Tamarack Nature Center
- Thursday September 21 at the Battle Creek Recreation Center
- Wednesday October 4 at the New Brighton Community Center

Public engagement meetings started with a short presentation approximately ten minutes long aimed at focusing attention on dog parks across the system and not just the park patrons felt the most attached to. The purpose was to focus the group not on the park that meant the most to them but rather on what makes an off-leash dog area good in their opinion. Parks & Recreation staff asked them what amenities were important, what site features they sought out and what would make a park stand out as a destination worth going to. After the presentation, the attendees were split into groups for a design charrette to both write down as well as sketch out an idealized dog park. All the meetings carried some common themes as shown in the breakdown below.

### Tamarack Nature Center, Monday September 11th, 2017

The meeting at Tamarack Nature Center was the first of the three meetings to be held and was the only meeting that began without an introductory presentation. It was hard to get the attendees to talk about what would make a better dog park in general but staff did learn what could be altered at Otter Lake to make that site better. As a result the format of the meetings was changed to include the presentation. Comments from the public engagement meeting at Tamarack Nature Center can be found in appendix C. The main points from this meeting were

- The department needs a better maintenance agreement between the county and Volunteers/Guardians to help take care of day to day maintenance of the park
- Would like wood chips available to be spread by volunteers and/or county
- Would like to be able to fence off wetland areas or fill in the wetland
- Is it possible to add additional fencing so that the volunteers could rotate areas of use



- Patrons would like an easier way to contact the county about periodic maintenance as well as when/if there is a problem patron in the park.

Comments gathered from this meeting can be found in Appendix D.

### Battle Creek Community Center, Thursday September 21, 2017

The public engagement meeting at the Battle Creek Community Center began with a short presentation after which we broke into groups for a charrette exercise. In the group exercise participants were asked to draw out, list or in any way they could think to relate information to Ramsey County representatives what made a great dog park. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is looking to not only improve the current state of its existing off-leash dog areas but also gather information on the creation of an ideal off-leash area if the opportunity to create one arose. All comments and charrette exercise documents can be found in Appendix D. The main points take from this meeting were:

- The off-leash dog area at Battle Creek is generally highly regarded as one of the best in the metropolitan area and is greatly appreciated by patrons for its size, and varying environments among a multitude of other reasons.
- Users of the park would like to see some of the tables in large open areas go away. People tend to congregate and socialize while losing track of what their dog is doing, which is against park rules, this causes issues such as dog fights. These could be replaced with smaller benches along trails and away from open areas providing the seating opportunity without the ability for large groups of people to congregate.
- Security of the parking lots is a concern, and patrons would like a camera or other security measure implemented.
- Overall maintenance is a concern and users would like an established rule or plan for how they interact with the county and how Parks & Recreation handles dog parks.
- There was also an expressed interest in some type of licensing fee or other donation method to use the dog park if those funds went directly into off-leash dog area maintenance and development.

### New Brighton Community Center, Wednesday October 4th

The public engagement meeting at the New Brighton Community Center followed the same format as the meeting at the Battle Creek Community Center. The meeting began with the presentation on dog parks, participants were broken into groups, and the group reconvened for a question and answer session. Comments and charrette drawings can be found in appendix E. The major take aways from this meeting included:

- Rice Creek off-leash dog area is most likely the best maintained off-leash area in our system, a reflection of the volunteer based and correctly sized park.
- Shade is needed on site
- Overall satisfaction is extremely high at this off-leash area

## Public Survey

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department representatives met with stakeholders, posted an online public survey, and held community engagement meetings to gather information and input for the creation of the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan. Department representatives first met with various guardians and volunteers of established off-leash areas to gather information before formulating the online survey which can be seen in its entirety in Appendix B. After completing the online survey Ramsey County Parks & Recreation also held a series of three public engagement meetings aimed at gathering information on what park users would ideally like to see in an off-leash dog area.

### Public Survey

The online survey that was conducted by the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department provided a lot of valuable information and with over 1,000 respondents the department feels confident in its findings moving forward with the Off-Leash Dog Areas Master Plan.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation asked many questions of its off-leash dog area user base as a part of the online survey gathering insight into that group of park users. Overall the satisfaction level with county off-leash dog areas was good with most respondents indicating that off-leash areas either meet current needs or are in outstanding condition. Through the survey staff has learned a lot about the dogs that are in off-leash areas as well, most dogs do not have any certified skill set, are licensed within their municipality at 62 percent, and are a diverse mix of species with the sporting group of dogs being most popular. When given a choice it was indicated that all other things being equal most people would prefer to exercise their dogs off-leash, showing that Parks & Recreation is providing a valuable resource to the community through its off-leash areas.

Ramsey County off-leash dog areas currently have very few amenities beyond the natural settings provided for them. All but one, Woodview off-leash area, are fully fenced, have benches or tables, paths, and parking lots. Two of our off-leash areas have separate small and large dog enclosures, which is a feature that ranks high on a lot of lists for off-leash area amenities. Rice Creek off-leash area is the only county facility that does not provide for shade through a natural means at this time. These are important to note as most of our off-leash areas have a lot of good qualities there are still areas that each could improve upon. The top features/amenities as voted in our online survey are as follows:

1. Size of Off-leash Dog Area
2. Paths
3. Shade Trees or Shade Structure
4. Dog Drinking Fountain or Hose Bib
5. Natural Water/Water Play Areas
6. Restrooms
7. Benches
8. Separate Small and Large Dog Areas
9. Location Within Walking Distance
10. People Drinking Fountain
11. Obstacle or Agility Course

A common theme of most concern at our off-leash dog areas is trash and animal waste pick up and maintenance. Currently Ramsey County relies heavily on volunteers to monitor and maintain trash and waste pick up within off-leash area boundaries. This is performed differently at each park depending on number of volunteers and time commitment to each park. Battle Creek is by far the largest off-leash area in the county requiring more effort than most, it also has the most dedicated following of volunteers in the county. At the Battle Creek off-leash dog area volunteers have placed trash receptacles within the boundaries and collect them for waste management. The

other off-leash areas in our system have trash receptacles placed at entrances and users are required to bring animal waste and trash back out of the park individually. There is a rule in place stating that owners are responsible for picking up after themselves and their dog, the county will look at ways to make this easier for park users to accomplish. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is also looking at ways to change or expand the stewardship/volunteer program as only 4.68 percent of respondents said they currently participate. With the large numbers of people and dogs that use our off-leash areas this number is most likely too small to accomplish all of the tasks needed to keep up off-leash areas in the size that the county has provided.

Current policy provides for four off-leash dog areas within the county park system, users are split roughly in half as to whether this number is enough or not. County policy also sets as a goal that residents be able to drive 20 minutes or less to any county run off-leash area. The survey results also indicate that the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has met this goal as a vast majority of people drive 15 minutes or less to get to an off-leash area. The county also asked how far people would be willing to drive to get to an off-leash area and 74.74 percent of respondents indicated that they would drive up to 15 minutes.

Some important statistics that were gathered from the survey include:

- 91.8% of dogs in county off-leash dog areas do not have any certified skills or training
- 61.92% of dogs are licensed within their municipality
- 77.81% of respondents exercise their dog(s) off-leash in a dog park
- 75.2% of respondents prefer to exercise their dog(s) off-leash
- 74.78% of respondents currently use a Ramsey County off-leash dog area
- 4.68% of respondents currently participate in the volunteer/stewardship program
- 74.74% of respondents are willing to drive 15 minutes to reach an off-leash dog area

### Battle Creek Off-Leash Dog Area

- Of the respondents who use the Battle Creek off-leash dog area 9.5 percent visit daily, 31 percent visit weekly, and 59.5 percent visit the park monthly
- Among the most commented favorite part of Battle Creek off-leash dog area were the parks large size, variety of landscapes and topography, the vast trail system, access to water, and the fact that there are mature trees providing shade opportunities.
- Respondents were asked to rate their concerns for security of personal property, safety for themselves and their pet(s), site improvements, length of volunteer commitment to the park, trash and animal waste pickup and rules and regulations of the park. For these categories the level of concern was low at the Battle Creek off-leash dog area.
- Respondents felt that the top three items that needed to be addressed at the Battle Creek Off-leash dog area were security of personal property, site improvements, and safety for patrons and their pets.
- The clear majority of patrons drive to the Battle Creek off-leash dog area at 97.98 percent, and most people (58.69 percent) drive 15 minutes or less.

### Otter Lake Off-Leash Dog Area

- Of the respondents who use the Otter Lake Off-leash dog area 12 percent visit daily, 35 percent visit weekly, and 53 percent visit the park monthly
- Among the most commented favorite part of the Otter Lake off-leash dog area were the parks variety of landscapes, separate small and large dog areas, mature trees and the shade they provide, proximity of the park to their home, trails, and the parks size. Many respondents also commented that they enjoyed being able to let their dog off-leash at the boat launch, which is against park rules and indicates that there is a need for better signage or education about park rules.
- Respondents were asked to rate their concerns for security of personal property, safety for themselves and their pet(s), site improvements, length of volunteer commitment to the park, trash and animal waste pickup, and rules and regulations of the park. For these categories the level of concern was low at the Otter Lake off-leash dog area.
- Respondents felt that the top three items that needed to be addressed at the Otter Lake off-leash dog area were site improvements, trash and animal waste pick-up, and safety concerns.
- The clear majority of patrons drive to Otter Lake Off-leash dog area at 98.61 percent , and most people (68.66 percent) drive 15 minutes or less.

### Rice Creek Off-Leash Dog Area

- Of the respondents who use the Rice Creek off-leash dog area 10.5 percent visit Daily, 36 percent visit weekly, and 53.5 percent visit the park monthly
- Among the most commented favorite part of the Rice Creek off-leash dog area were the parks proximity to home, size, the park is very open and provides great vision of dogs, and the park is close to the Rice Creek Trail system so it is very accessible.
- Respondents were asked to rate their concerns for security of personal property, safety for themselves and their pet(s), site improvements, length of volunteer commitment to the park, trash and animal waste pickup, and rules and regulations of the park. For these categories the level of concern was low at the Rice Creek off-leash dog area.
- Respondents felt that the top three items which needed to be addressed at the Rice Creek off-leash dog area were site improvements, trash and animal waste pick-up, and safety concerns.
- The clear majority of patrons drive to Rice Creek Off-leash dog area at 96.79 percent, and most people (67.89 percent) drive 15 minutes or less.

### Woodview Open Space Off-Leash Dog Area

- Of the respondents who use the Woodview off-leash dog area 6 percent visit Daily, 21.5 percent visit weekly, and 72.5 percent visit the park monthly
- Among the most commented favorite part of the Woodview lake off-leash dog area were the parks proximity

to home, and the separate small and large dog areas

- Respondents were asked to rate their concerns for security of personal property, safety for themselves and their pet(s), site improvements, length of volunteer commitment to the park, trash and animal waste pickup, and rules and regulations of the park. All categories received a low concern rating other than site improvements which respondents saw as a medium concern.
- Respondents felt that the top three items that needed to be addressed at the Woodview off-leash dog area were site improvements, safety concerns, and trash and animal waste pick-up.
- The clear majority of patrons drive to Woodview off-leash dog area at 96.15 percent, and most people (77.19 percent) drive 15 minutes or less.

The public survey shows that people visit Ramsey County off-leash dog areas for many reasons but the top three are that they enjoy the designated open exercise area, like the parks environmental features, and they like the other dogs and people that use the park. A full copy of the Off-leash Dog Area Survey can be found on our website at: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/sites/default/files/Parks%20and%20Recreation/OLDA%20Survey.pdf>

### Current Dog Park Rules & Department Policy

The current department administrative policy was passed on April 13, 1999 after the pilot program had been deemed a success.

#### Current Policy:

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department will endeavor to provide off-leash dog areas that serve multiple communities within the county. Off-leash dog areas will be separate from any current or planned recreational areas.

The following additional general guidelines will apply:

- Attempts will be made to locate an off-leash area within a twenty minute drive of any residence in the county. However, it is recognized that Ramsey County does not own parkland in the south and west portions of the city of Saint Paul. Accordingly, the city of Saint Paul will be encouraged to provide these regional facilities.
- County off-leash areas will be geographically located to compliment "close to home" municipal areas.
- Sites will be designated in areas that will have minimal impact to significant natural resources. Proposed sites will be evaluated by the county's Natural Resource Specialist for potential impact.
- Up to four sites will be established in the Ramsey County Park System.
- Sites must be consistent with municipal zoning and/or park master plans.

#### Size

Sites will be approximately ten acres, including buffer zones.

#### Buffer Zones

Where feasible, sites will include a 100' buffer zone around their perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses. Improvements within the buffer zone will be limited to perpendicular access trails. Off-leash dogs will be allowed in the buffer zone at the discretion of their owners.

#### Perimeter Markings

The boundary of each site will be delineated with carsonite type markings located at 100' intervals around the perimeter. Each carsonite marking will have a decal applied to both sides indicating the boundary of an off-leash dog area.

### Fencing

Where a 100' buffer zone is feasible, fencing will not be installed. However, if a 100' buffer zone is not feasible due to specific site characteristics or proximity to other recreational use areas, a fence will be considered, subject to funding availability.

### Signage

Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to the off-leash dog area. Directional signs may be placed at parking areas or trail entrances where necessary to direct users to the off-leash areas.

### Water Access for Dog Use

Access to water for dog use will be a high priority in selecting off-leash sites. Where suitable water resources do not exist within an off-leash site, auxiliary water access sites may be considered in areas adjacent to off-leash sites. Water access for dogs at other park use areas (Such as swimming areas, boat access sites, etc.) will not be permitted.

### Parking

A minimum of ten vehicular parking spaces will be provided at each off-leash area. In areas where multiple activities exist (such as trail use), additional parking will be provided where feasible.

### Drinking Water (Potable)

Potable water will not be provided for the off-leash sites, unless currently provided.

### Restroom Facilities

Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.

### Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional trash receptacles may be placed in parking areas or where deemed necessary.

### Picnic Tables/Benches

Picnic tables and/or benches will be provided in each off-leash area.

### Disabled Access

Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site within the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site. At other sites where access is limited, the county will work with users to improve accessibility.

### Use Policies:

The following use policies will apply:

- Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated
- Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash area and in transition corridors.
- Owners must be in verbal control of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting or excessive barking.
- Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs
- Owners must have a visible leash at all times
- Owners must clean up and dispose of feces
- Dogs in heat are not allowed
- Owners must comply with all other park rules and regulations

Fees will not be charged for the use of the off-leash areas.

### Review, Evaluation, and Site Selection

The implementation of this administrative policy will begin a process for reviewing, evaluating, and selecting sites. This Process will involve five steps:

1. County staff will identify candidate sites that meet the criteria outlined in this policy.
2. A planning team comprised of four off-leash dog area users and county staff will review candidate sites, including on-site visits.
3. County staff will identify expenses associated with establishing and maintaining each site. Staff and users will work together to explore possible funding sources for development and ongoing maintenance.
4. County staff will develop a timeline for establishing each site.
5. County staff and users will work to establish each site.

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department will monitor the criteria and sites established under this policy. It reserves the right to modify the policy and/or sites to maintain park resources, address public health and safety issues, or to meet changing use patterns.

### Current Rules As Posted at Off-Leash Areas:

1. Dogs must be leashed before entering and when leaving the park.
2. Owners are legally and financially responsible for the actions of their dogs.
3. All dogs must be licensed and vaccinated.
4. No female dogs in heat or puppies under four months old are allowed.
5. Owners must clean up after their dogs using plastic bags and provided trash containers.
6. Dogs must be in sight and under verbal control at all times. No digging holes.
7. No aggressive dogs allowed. Aggressive dogs must be leashed and removed from the park immediately by their owners.
8. Children under 12 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, and should be educated about safe behavior around dogs (no running, screaming, food, etc.).

### Current Maintenance Program/Guardians

Current maintenance by Ramsey County for the dog parks is minimal:

- Fence repair
- Removing trees fallen over trails, or dangerously hanging branches
- Habitat restoration
- Trail maintenance and erosion control
- Trash Removal

There is trash removal outside the fence of each off-leash dog area, and in the case of Battle Creek, volunteers disperse garbage cans throughout the park, and bring them out to be emptied on Thursdays.

There are a few maintenance costs associated with the off-leash dog areas as well:

- 2 year round portable toilets – \$1,200
- 2 half year portable toilets – \$600
- Garbage disposal – \$11,800

Mulch will often be brought in to help during the muddy spring months, which is typically dropped near the park entrance and dispersed by volunteers.



## Existing Off-Leash Dog Areas

### Battle Creek Off-Leash Dog Area Inventory & Analysis

#### History

The off-leash dog area at Battle Creek Regional Park was a part of the initial pilot program of off-leash areas in Ramsey County running from the summer of 1997 to December 31, 1998. The area was initially approximately four acres located near the intersection of Lower Afton Road and McKnight Road South. A mowed corridor between the parking lot and the off-leash area provided a transition area. A mowed perimeter trail and signage defined the limits of the off-leash area as no fences were initially installed.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation accepted the current policy regarding off-leash dog areas on April 13, 1999 and the off-leash area at Battle Creek was chosen as a permanent site in March of 2000. Due to the publicity and popularity of the site during the pilot phase the off-leash area saw considerable use. It was decided that a number of actions would take place as a part of the permanent installation of the off-leash area including:

- Extending the border North to provide access to a pond.
- Relocating existing boundary markings to accurately reflect off-leash border
- Relocated trails away from ponds to reduce erosion
- Maintaining existing trails
- Install fencing along McKnight Road South
- Install a gate at the McKnight Road South entrance
- Increase the size of the off-leash area by 5-15 acres for a total of 10-20 acres

As part of future development additional fencing was installed around the entire off-leash area and the site expanded by at least 24 acres. No policy action is recorded for this development but the total size of the off-leash area is approximately 44 acres today. Benches and tables and additional signage has also been implemented within the off-leash area.

#### Site Amenities

- Two parking lots one along Upper Afton Road with space for 98 vehicles, and another along Lower Afton Road with space for 66 vehicles.
- Security cameras in both parking lots
- Fully Fenced area encompassing approximately 44 acres
- Miles of natural surface trails meandering through a variety of environments including woods, ponds, wetlands, and open spaces.
- Three entrance gates
- Rules signs at all entrances
- Tables and benches throughout
- Well shaded by a natural tree canopy
- Considered by many to be the best off-leash dog area in the entire metro area

#### Planning Considerations

Currently the off-leash dog area at Battle Creek Regional Park has entirely natural surface trails which do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities act, as part of redevelopment access into and through the off-leash area should be considered for everyone regardless of ability.

Security of personal belongings left in vehicles has been raised as a concern. Security cameras have been installed in both the Upper Afton Road and Lower Afton Road parking lots. Ramsey County has and will continue to encourage everyone visiting the park to not leave any valuables left unattended whether they are in a locked vehicle or not.

There is no potable water source near the off-leash dog area and future plans should incorporate either drinking water or a wash station as part of a trailhead facility at one or both of the parking lots.

Additional trails and activities are planned to be developed in spaces adjacent to the off-leash area. The off-leash portion of the park should continue to be kept separate from other recreational activities so that conflicts do not arise.

### Natural Resources

Natural resources within the parks are impacted by invasive vegetation and by the dogs and people using these areas. The numerous barriers attributed to the use of off-leash dog areas makes the restoration of natural resources a priority below the greater park system. To reestablish or maintain natural resources within these areas would include the partitioning off of off-leash sections for alternate use, term closures for an unknown amount of time, or permanent closures of specific sensitive areas within the current boundaries.

The land cover within the Battle Creek off-leash dog area consists of cultivated conifers, mixed woods with scattered open fields, oak woods, and several wetlands, which are state and federally protected resources. Invasive vegetation has degraded most of the natural areas within the park. Most wooded areas contain invasive buckthorn and open fields consist of brome grass and other invasive herbaceous vegetation. In addition to the invasive species, the park use has a negative impact on the natural resources. The foot traffic by dogs and humans through heavily used areas has caused erosion and aids in the spread of invasive species. Wetlands are heavily impacted where use is concentrated. Wetland shoreline edges are eroding and consist of mostly bare soil with minimal vegetation. The dog use along the wetland edge causes exposed soil to enter the water, negatively impacting the use for aquatic life and dog use within the water disturbs the overall wetland habitat. The constant presence of dogs within the off-leash area also disturbs the habitat for upland wildlife as well.

Restoration within the off-leash dog area is difficult because of the consistent heavy use and apprehension for herbicide use on invasive vegetation. Restoration of eroding areas would require long term to permanent closure to regain and maintain vegetated cover. Removal of buckthorn would require areas to be partitioned off so that herbicide stump treatment could be applied. Past restoration within the off-leash dog area has been limited and consisted of some cutting and stacking of buckthorn on site with no herbicide stump treatment, which results in re-sprouting of cut stumps. To preserve wetlands, access to these areas should be permanently closed to regain plant growth and for continued protection of wetland habitat.

Battle Creek Regional Park Off-leash Dog Area Features:

1. Both parking lots at the Battle Creek off-leash dog area have been equipped with security cameras.
2. Erosion issues persist along many of the wetland ponds present within the off-leash area, fencing may be required to limit access and restore these features.
3. Miles of trails exist within the off-leash area traversing a variety of environments.
4. Multiple entrances to the site exist, however only one has a double gated entrance
5. There is an abundance of duplicative and excessive signs at the two busiest entrances
6. Certain sections of trails become quite wet during certain season and after rain events, it must be remembered that the area is a low lying wetland complex.
7. Large open spaces allow plenty of room to exercise dogs
8. Battle Creek is one of the most accessible off-leash areas by public transportation with quite a few bus lines stopping nearby.



Legend

Park Border		Park Paved Trail	
Park Entrance		Park Turf Trail	
Feature Point		Off Leash Area Trail	
Metro Tranist Stop		Regional Trail	



### Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area Inventory & Analysis

#### History

The off-leash dog area at Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park was identified as a new site after the acceptance of the county policy on off-leash dog areas was passed in March of 2000 because it could serve residents in the northeastern part of the county, the site is a large open space that was not established for other types of recreational use, and there was existing parking available. It was decided that a number of actions would take place as a part of the permanent installation of the off-leash area including:

- Main site access would be from the boat launch parking lot on Otter Lake
- The area along Otter Lake Road may need to be fenced in

As part of future development fencing was installed around the entire off-leash area.

#### Site Amenities

- Parking lot off of Otter Lake Road for 44 vehicles and 3 trailer stalls
- Fully Fenced area encompassing approximately 10 Acres
- Natural surface trails meandering through a variety of environments including woods, wetlands, and open spaces.
- One entrance gate
- Rules sign at main entrance
- Tables and benches throughout
- Well shaded by a natural tree canopy
- Separate small and large dog areas

#### Planning Considerations

Currently the off-leash dog area at Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park has entirely natural surface trails which do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities act, as part of redevelopment access into and through the off-leash area should be considered for everyone regardless of ability. As a part of path redevelopment an additional access gate should be considered at the southwest corner of the off-leash area. There is a planned multi use trail along Otter Lake Road and this access would provide easy entrance for trail users and neighborhood residents.

Security of personal belongings left in vehicles has been raised as a concern. A security camera should be considered in the parking lot. Ramsey County has and will continue to encourage everyone visiting the park to not leave any valuables left unattended whether they are in a locked vehicle or not.

Additional trails and activities are planned to be developed in spaces adjacent to the off-leash area. The off-leash portion of the park should continue to be kept separate from other recreational activities to prevent conflicts.

Potable water and a restroom are located on the west side of the parking lot. Water could be brought up closer to the off-leash area entrance for the installation of a drinking/washing station.

## Natural Resources

Natural resources within the off-leash dog areas are impacted by invasive vegetation and by the dogs and people using these areas. The numerous barriers attributed to the use of off-leash dog areas makes the restoration of natural resources a priority below the greater park system. To reestablish or maintain natural resources within these areas would include the partitioning off of off-leash area sections for alternate use, term closures for an unknown amount of time or permanent closures of specific sensitive areas within the current boundaries.

The land cover within the Otter Lake off-leash dog area consists of cultivated conifers, mixed woods, an open field area and several wetlands, which are state and federally protected resources. Invasive vegetation exists within the park. Most wooded areas contain invasive buckthorn and the open field consists of brome grass and other invasive herbaceous vegetation. Restoration has included the removal of buckthorn through the woodland areas. Park use has caused the loss of vegetation and erosion within the woodlands and on heavy use trail areas within the open field area. Wetlands are located mainly within the wooded area and are ephemeral features with saturated soils. Wetlands are heavily impacted where use is concentrated. Wetland shoreline edges are eroding and consist of mostly bare soil with minimal vegetation which negatively impacts aquatic wildlife. The constant presence of dogs within the park also disturbs the habitat for upland wildlife.

Restoration within the off-leash dog area is difficult because of the consistent heavy use and apprehension for herbicide use on invasive vegetation. Restoration of eroding areas would require long term to permanent closure of sections to regain and maintain vegetated cover. Past restoration within the off-leash dog area has been limited and consisted of some cutting and stacking of buckthorn on site. To preserve wetlands, access to these areas should be permanently closed to regain plant growth and for continued protection of wetland habitat.



**Bald Eagle Otter Lakes Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area Features:**

1. Multiple entrances to the off-leash area, southern entrance is not double gated
2. There is an abundance of duplicative and excessive signs at the entrance
3. Parking lot is not monitored by a security camera
4. Natural surface trails throughout, traversing both open spaces, and shaded wooded areas
5. Wetland is troublesome for some park users, don't like that their dogs get muddy. permanent or temporary fencing may be necessary with boardwalks over wetland for trail crossings.
6. Off-leash area is split into separate areas for small and large dogs.
7. Trial planning for a regional or in park trail has been identified through the corridor, adding to the accessibility of the site.
8. Site is fully enclosed by fence

## Legend

Park Border		Park Paved Trail		Parking Lot	
Park Entrance		Park Turf Trail			
Feature Point		Off Leash Area Trail			
Metro Tranist Stop		Regional Trail			



## Rice Creek Regional Trail Off-Leash Dog Area Inventory & Analysis

### History

The off-leash dog area at Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor was a part of the initial pilot program of off-leash areas in Ramsey County running from the summer of 1997 to December 31, 1998. The area was initially approximately five acres located off of Lexington Avenue North south of County Road J. Parking was available but the popularity of the site exceeded parking capacity.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation accepted the current policy regarding off-leash dog areas on April 13, 1999 and the off-leash area at Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor was chosen as a permanent site in March of 2000. Due to the publicity and popularity of the site during the pilot phase the off-leash area saw considerable use. It was decided that a number of actions would take place as a part of the permanent installation of the off-leash area including:

- Expand the northern boundary of the site
- Relocate the access trail to reduce erosion around the pond
- Realign and redevelop the existing parking lot to increase capacity
- Security camera in the parking lot

As part of future development fencing was installed around the entire off-leash area.

In 2013 the parking lot was redeveloped and a restroom building, drinking fountain, and small watercraft access to the Rice Creek Water Trail were constructed as a part of the regional trail head development for the Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor.

### Site Amenities

- Parking lot off of Lexington Avenue North, with the lower lot being dedicated to small watercraft with space for five vehicles, and the upper lot serving the trail and off-leash area with space for 30 vehicles.
- Fully Fenced area encompassing approximately 13 Acres
- Natural surface trail meandering through a prairie
- Two entrance gates
- Rules signs at all entrances

### Planning Considerations

Currently the off-leash dog area at Rice Creek North Regional Trail Corridor has entirely natural surface trails which do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as part of redevelopment access into and through the off-leash area should be considered for everyone regardless of ability.

Security of personal belongings left in vehicles has been raised as a concern. A security camera has been installed overlooking the parking lot. Ramsey County has and will continue to encourage everyone visiting the park to not leave any valuables left unattended whether they are in a locked vehicle or not.

Additional trails and activities are planned to be developed in spaces adjacent to the off-leash area. The off-leash portion of the park should continue to be kept separate from other recreational activities so that conflicts do not arise.

Potable water and a restroom are located near the parking lot. Water could be brought up closer to the off-leash area entrance for the installation of a drinking/washing station.



### Natural Resources

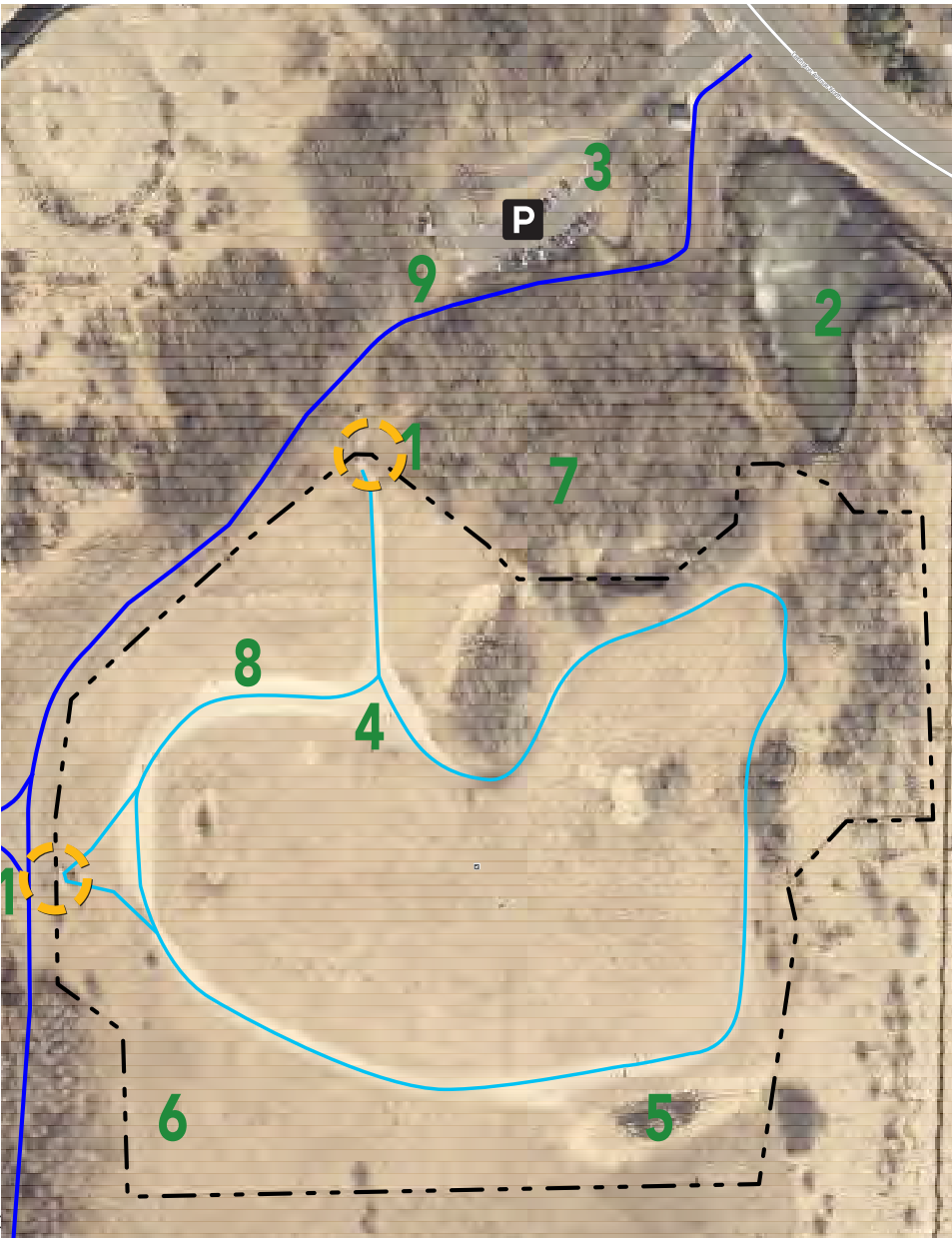
Natural resources within the off-leash dog areas are impacted by invasive vegetation and by the dogs and people using these areas. The numerous barriers attributed to the use of off-leash dog areas makes the restoration of natural resources a priority below the greater park system. To reestablish or maintain natural resources within these areas would include the partitioning of park sections for alternate use, term closures for an unknown amount of time, or permanent closures of specific sensitive areas within the current boundaries.

The land cover within the Rice Creek off-leash dog area is mostly an open field consisting of brome grass and other invasive herbaceous vegetation. There is little native habitat or wildlife use within the Rice Creek off-leash dog area because of the presence and impact of dogs and park users. There is a well-worn trail with no vegetation that encircles the field. This trail is getting wider and is eroding in high use areas. There is currently no access or impact to any water features within this park. In the past, there was access to a wetland water resource on the east side of the site. This wetland area is a mitigation site that is regulated for added protection, and because of the damage to the wetland shoreline through off-leash dog area use, the permanent closure of access to the wetland area was prompted. The areas damaged were replanted with native wetland vegetation.

Re-growth of vegetation along the trail would require the temporary closing of the area for many growing seasons to establish high use turf or hearty vegetation which could sustain heavy use. Once the vegetation re-grew the off-leash dog area could be partitioned for alternate use to maintain a certain percentage of vegetation and allow regrowth of vegetation.

Rice Creek North Regional Trail  
Corridor Off-Leash Dog Area  
Features:

1. Multiple entrances to the off-leash area, both are double gated
2. Nearest open water body is a wetland mitigation site, and therefore dogs are not allowed entrance.
3. Trail corridor parking lot does have a security camera
4. Natural surface trails throughout, traversing open prairie space
5. Area is sometimes wet, sometimes muddy. Owners are split as to whether this area should be fenced off or not.
6. No Separate area for small dogs, plenty of room to add fencing and create two spaces
7. No natural shade currently on site. Opportunity to perhaps add some area under tree canopy or man made structure.
8. Site is relatively flat, lending itself to development making the space accessible
9. Nearest water source is located by the parking lot, and would be relatively easy to bring potable water to an off-leash area entrance.



**Legend**

Park Border		Park Paved Trail		Parking Lot	
Park Entrance		Park Turf Trail			
Feature Point		Off Leash Area Trail			
Metro Tranist Stop		Regional Trail			

### Woodview Open Space Off-Leash Dog Area Inventory & Analysis

#### History

The off-leash dog area at Woodview Open Space was identified as a new site after the acceptance of the county policy on off-leash dog areas was passed in March of 2000 because it could serve residents in the central part of the county, the site is a large open space that was underutilized. The primary use area was identified as a part of the open space that previously was being used for garden plots. Parking did not exist on site at the time, however there were future plans in place including a trail through Reservoir Woods that included a trailhead parking lot. It was decided that a number of actions would take place as a part of the permanent installation of the off-leash area including:

- Primary site access would be located off of Larpentuer Avenue
- A trail or path route would need to be determined and cleared
- Create an additional accessible fenced site

As part of future development fencing was placed around the entire small dog and accessible area, and along the path and Larpentuer Avenue partially encompassing the large dog area. The trail and a trailhead parking lot were also developed in conjunction with the city of Roseville as a part of Reservoir Woods Park.

#### Site Amenities

- Parking lot off of Larpentuer Avenue with space for 19 vehicles
- Fully fenced and accessible small dog area and a partially fenced large dog area approximately 4 acres
- Rules sign at all entrances
- Well shaded by a natural tree canopy
- Separate small and large dog areas

#### Planning Considerations

Currently the off-leash dog area at Woodview Open Space has entirely natural surface trails which do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities act, as part of redevelopment access into and through the off-leash area should be considered for everyone regardless of ability.

Security of personal belongings left in vehicles has been raised as a concern. A security camera should be considered in the parking lot. Ramsey County has and will continue to encourage everyone visiting the park to not leave any valuables left unattended whether they are in a locked vehicle or not.

Additional trails and activities are planned to be developed in spaces adjacent to the off-leash area. The off-leash portion of the park should continue to be kept separate from other recreational activities so that conflicts do not arise.

Potable water and a permanent restroom would be difficult in this location as there are no services nearby at this time.

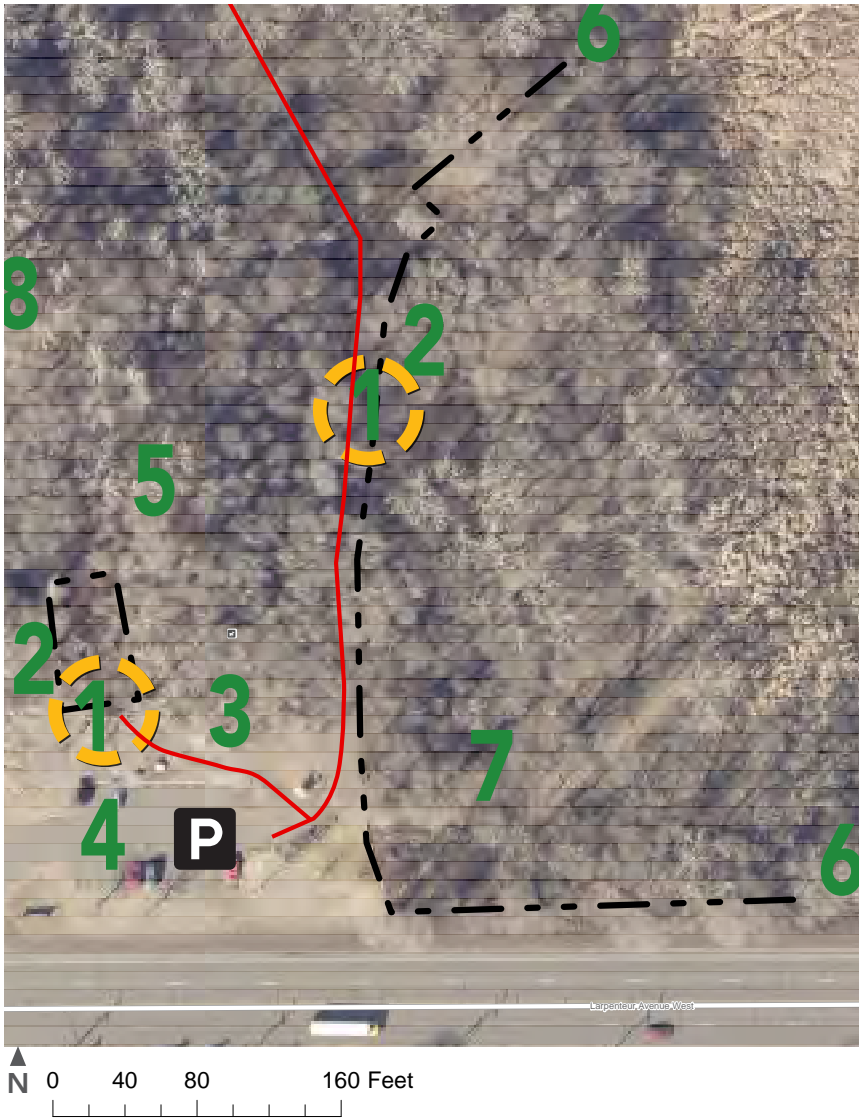
Ramsey County Community Corrections owns a 17.8 acre parcel directly to the west of the off-leash dog area. This parcel has been identified in the Parks & Recreation System Plan as a possible area of expansion for Woodview Open Space. If this occurred expansion of the off-leash dog area and trailhead facilities would be possible, as this is the smallest off-leash dog area that the county maintains and it is under our suggested 10 acre regional off-leash area goal it would help to serve the central area of the county and its residents much better.

### Natural Resources

Natural resources within the off-leash dog areas are impacted by invasive vegetation and by the dogs and people using these areas. The numerous barriers attributed to the use of off-leash dog areas makes the restoration of natural resources a priority below the greater park system. To reestablish or maintain natural resources within these parks would include the partitioning of park sections for alternate use, term closures for an unknown amount of time or permanent closures of specific sensitive areas within the current boundaries.

The land cover within the Woodview off-leash dog area consists of mainly mixed woods abutting a wetland, which is a state and federally protected resource. Invasive vegetation exists within the park. Most wooded areas contain invasive buckthorn and the wetland consists of a cattail edge. Limited restoration has been completed through the woodland areas. Park use has caused the loss of vegetation and erosion within the woodlands and trails leading to the wetland edge. The constant presence of dogs within the park disturbs the habitat for wildlife.

Restoration within the off-leash dog area is difficult because of the consistent heavy use and apprehension for herbicide use on invasive vegetation. Restoration of eroding areas would require long term to permanent closure of sections to regain and maintain vegetated cover. To preserve wetlands, access to these areas should be permanently closed to regain plant growth and for continued protection of wetland habitat.



**Woodview Open Space Off-Leash Dog Area Features:**

1. Entrance to the small dog and accessible area is double gated, large dog area is not
2. Signs should be removed from within the off-leash area and moved outside entrance gates
3. Currently the only accessible off-leash area run by Ramsey County
4. Relatively undersized parking lot does not have any security camera
5. County staff has observed rogue paths and dog prints, indicating off-leash activity outside of designated area
6. Fences do not completely contain large dog area, but could be modified to do so
7. Many widow makers, overhanging limbs, and unkept underbrush conditions along with trash make Woodview off-leash area the least safe and most unattractive off-leash area in the county.
8. Site to the west has been identified for acquisition.

## Legend

Park Border		Park Paved Trail		Parking Lot	
Park Entrance		Park Turf Trail			
Feature Point		Off Leash Area Trail			
Metro Transit Stop		Regional Trail			

## Comparison To Other Off-Leash Dog Areas

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has taken a look at the surrounding region’s off-leash areas in order to compare the existing rules, permitting, and physical characteristics to those of the county’s own. These findings will help the county make decisions, along with public input received, when evaluating and making any recommended changes to the current off-leash dog area structure.

### List of Park Districts Surveyed for Comparison:

Local: off-leash areas looked at for a direct comparison of rules, regulations, and general size in contrast to Ramsey County

- Three Rivers Park District
- Dakota County Parks
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
- Saint Paul Parks & Recreation
- Anoka County Parks & Recreation
- Carver County
- City of Woodbury
- City of Oakdale

National: Off-leash areas looked at for a comparison of rules and regulations in contrast to Ramsey County

- Salt Lake County
- City of Denver Parks and Recreation

### Off-Leash Dog Area Classifications

Off-leash dog areas are generally broken into a few classifications defined roughly by their size, service area, and function. Larger parks will serve a larger service area and are intended to be a regional draw, whereas a smaller park is better suited to a smaller service area and function as a neighborhood draw to get a quick workout with your pet. Classifications have been derived from the public input process as well as through the department’s research of other park systems.

OFF-LEASH DOG AREA CLASSIFICATIONS		
TYPE	APPROXIMATE SIZE RANGE	SERVICE AREA
Regional (Large)	10 Acres or Greater	Regional, at a Minimum Countywide
Community (Medium)	2-10 Acres	5 Mile Radius
Neighborhood (Small)	0.5-2 Acres	Up to a 2 Mile Radius

### Regional Off-Leash Areas

Regional off-leash areas are typically 10 acres or greater and have a service area encompassing the entire county and, in cases where they are located in a regional park, beyond. Many of the larger parks in this category have areas that remain unfenced with small dog areas being completely fenced in. These parks often have a variety of environments and terrain for users to explore with miles of established trails. Regional off-leash areas may have fewer amenities, or amenities which are concentrated near entrances due to their more remote locations and undeveloped nature. Care should be taken when choosing sites for regional off-leash areas to mitigate or prevent negative impacts in sensitive areas such as wetlands, riparian zones, high value habitat areas, protected watersheds, and to make sure there is not a conflict with another recreational activity.

Common amenities for regional off-leash areas include but are not limited to fencing, double entrance gates, looping paved or unpaved trails, dog waste dispensers and trash cans, restrooms, drinking fountains, and regulatory signs.

### Community Off-Leash Areas

Community off-leash areas are typically 2-10 acres or greater and have a service area of up to a five mile radius. Off-leash dog areas of this size are typically fully fenced, and divided to allow for separate small and large dog facilities. Common amenities for community off-leash areas include but are not limited to perimeter fencing, double gated entries, paved paths, drinking fountains, dog waste bag dispensers, trash cans, shade structures or naturally shaded areas, benches, restrooms, and regulatory signs.

### Neighborhood Off-Leash Areas

Neighborhood off-leash dog areas are typically 0.5-2 acres and have a service area of one to three neighborhoods, making the park a walkable destination for many. Off-leash dog areas of this size seem to always be fully fenced with a double gated entry. Other common amenities include but are not limited to paved paths, drinking fountains, dog waste bag dispensers, trash cans, benches, and regulatory signage.

### Size & Amenities Comparison

ANOKA COUNTY				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEES
Bunker Hills Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Areas, Short Trail, Wood Chips	Community	6.5 Acres	Vehicle Entry Permit \$30
Locke County Park	Fully Fenced, Shaded, Wood Chips	Neighborhood	1.5 Acres	Vehicle Entry Permit \$30
CARVER COUNTY				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Lake Minnewashta Regional Park Off-leash Area	Fully Fenced, Ponding Area (Water Access), Open Areas, Wood Chip Trail, Aggregate Trail	Regional	17 Acres	Vehicle Entry Permit \$25
CITY OF OAKDALE				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
City of Oakdale Bark Park	Fencing, Vestibule Gate, Grass Trails, Picnic Tables/Benches, Dog Waste Bag Dispenser, Trash Cans, Signage	Community	4.6 Acres	Dog License \$12-20
CITY OF WOODBURY				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Andy's Bark Park	Partially Fenced, Mowed Trails, Benches, Shelter Area, Picnic Tables, Pet Water Station, Dog Waste Disposal and Bag Stations, Portable Restrooms, Rules Sign	Regional	70 Acres	Dog License \$10-18



DAKOTA COUNTY PARKS				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Dakota Woods Dog Park	Fully Fenced, Wooded, Open Space, Wood Chip Trail	Regional	16 Acres	Annual Pass \$42.85
MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Franklin Terrace	Fully Fenced	Neighborhood	1.37 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
Lake of the Isles	Fully Fenced, Designated Small Dog Area	Neighborhood	1.87 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
Loring Park	Fully Fenced	Neighborhood	0.22 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
Lyndale Farmstead	Fully Fenced, Crushed Granite Play Surface	Neighborhood	0.62 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
Minnehaha	Pay To Park Lot,	Community/ Regional	6+ Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
St. Anthony Parkway	Fully Fenced	Community	2.17 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
Victory Prairie	Fully Fenced	Community	2.62 Acres	Resident \$35 Nonresident \$60
SAINT PAUL PARKS & RECREATION				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Arlington/Arkwright	Wooded Trails, Opens Space	Community	4.5 Acres	Dog License \$58/Year \$68/Life if Microchipped
High Bridge	Shade, Fully Fenced, Parking, Open Space	Community	7 Acres	Dog License \$58/Year \$68/Life if Microchipped
Meeker Island	Benches, Trail, Water Access	Community	N/A	Dog License \$58/Year \$68/Life if Microchipped
Lowertown	Fully Fenced	Community/ Neighborhood	N/A	Dog License \$58/Year \$68/Life if Microchipped

THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Bryant Lake	Fully Fenced	Community/ Regional	9 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Carver Park Reserve	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Areas	Regional	27 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Cleary Lake Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Wetland Pond	Regional	28 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Crow-Hassan Park Reserve	Unfenced	Regional	40 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Elm Creek	Fully Fenced, Wetland Pond	Regional	29 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Fish Lake Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog area	Community/ Regional	7 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Lake Sarah Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Area, Picnic Tables	Regional	30 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Murphey Hanrehan Park Reserve	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Area	Community	3 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
Spring Lake Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Area, Watering & Rinsing Station	Regional	10 Acres	\$6 Daily \$45 Annual
RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION				
NAME	AMENITIES	CLASSIFICATION	SIZE	FEE
Battle Creek Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Picnic Tables, Benches, Miles of Trails, Wetland Ponds	Regional	44 Acres	None
Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park	Fully Fenced, Separate Small and Large Dog Area, Wooded, Open Space, Footpaths	Regional	10 Acres	None
Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor	Fully Fenced, Natural Surface Trail, Open Prairie	Regional	13 Acres	None
Woodview Open Space	Fully Fenced Small Dog Area, Partially Fenced Large Dog Area, Small Dog Area is Accessible, Trails, Wooded, Wetland Pond	Community	2.25 Acres	None

The information provided in the table above suggests that most government agencies accommodating off-leash areas fall into their respective categories of service. Overall, amenities offered within the region seem to be very consistent across the board. In comparison to other urban areas Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has the largest off-leash areas by size. Woodview Open Space is the one off-leash dog area that currently does not fit the county's goal of providing regional, county-wide service due to its size. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is also the only provider regionally that does not see any form of compensation for providing off-leash areas to residents.

## Rules & Regulations

Current Ramsey County off-leash dog area rules and regulations are posted at most off-leash areas as follows:

1. Owners must clean up and dispose of feces.
2. Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash area and in transition corridors.
3. Owners must be in verbal control of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting, or excessive barking.
4. Owners must have visible leash at all times
5. Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs
6. Dogs must stay within signed boundary.
7. Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated.
8. Dogs in heat are not allowed.
9. Owners must comply with all park rules and regulations

Ramsey County's posted rules are not consistent at every off-leash area or in some cases different entrances for the same off-leash area. The posted rules also do not follow the rules which were passed by policy in 2000, and there is another differing set of rules that has been posted to the Ramsey County website. Signage that is posted also varies wildly from off-leash area to off-leash area, some have flea and tick warnings, additional rules posted about picking up after one's pet etc. An important step forward through the Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan will be the establishment of common rules that shall apply throughout the Ramsey County park system as they pertain to off-leash dog areas. Another step in the master plan will be to set a standard for all off-leash areas as to what is posted and where rule posting shall occur.

Rules and regulations among park districts that administer off-leash dog areas seem to be very consistent both regionally and nationally with a few rules that many other agencies have instituted in their off-leash areas. It is worth looking at these differences in order to open a discussion about the county's own rules and help determine whether or not a change in the stated rules is necessary. Some differences also come in the way that a rule is stated or phrased. In many cases the rule as prescribed by Ramsey County could be made clearer with a change in phrasing. A general discussion of these differences follows.

1. Many off-leash areas have a minimum age requirement below which children must be accompanied by an adult. In one version of Ramsey County rules that is posted online there is a rule that states "Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, and should be educated about safe behavior around dogs (no running, screaming, food, etc.)" Concern was raised at public engagement meetings about the age of some handlers entering the park without supervision.
2. Almost every other park system has a maximum number of dogs per handler to ensure that the dogs stay under their control. The most commonly accepted number of dogs per handler is 2. This is also an issue that came up during some of the public engagement meetings. Off-leash area patrons had brought up the fact that they will occasionally see dog walkers coming through the park with large numbers of dogs, sometimes they keep the dogs leashed and this could lead to more problems than intended to prevent.
3. It is very common for off-leash areas to bar outside food, toys, and dog food with the exception of dog treats.
4. Nationally, it is common for off-leash areas to explicitly state that pit bulls and other breeds considered to be more aggressive/violent are not allowed in off-leash dog areas. This rule has not been noted on the regional level. Other rules observed on a national level are consistent with Ramsey County Rules.

## The Plan

### Rules & Regulation Recommendations

An important objective of the Off-leash Dog Areas Master Plan is to standardize the rules and regulations that are posted at county designated off-leash areas. Currently not every park, or even every entrance, has the same look and feel. Many entrances are littered with signage that is repetitive of what has already been posted on the rules and regulations signs. To rectify this all miscellaneous signs should be removed from fences and posts, and the rules and regulations sign should be the prominent source of information. A posting board may also be provided for any additional rotating information that may be needed.

The following set of rules is recommended based upon what is currently posted by Ramsey County through various materials, what was learned through public engagement, and what has been observed in other off-leash areas both regionally and nationally

1. Owners must clean up and dispose of feces.
2. Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash area and in transition corridors.
3. Owners must be in verbal control of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting, or excessive barking. If a dog becomes aggressive, or gets into a fight it shall be leashed and escorted out of the park immediately.
4. Owners must have visible leash at all times
5. Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs
6. Dogs must stay within signed boundary.
7. Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated.
8. Dogs in heat are not allowed.
9. For every handler there shall be a maximum of two dogs.
10. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by an adult, and should be educated about safe behavior around dogs (Do not run, scream, offer food, pet a strange dog without permission, etc.)
11. Owners must comply with all park rules and regulations



Typical Ramsey County Rules Sign at Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor



Repetitive and obnoxious signage clutters off-leash area entrances which may be causing users to bypass rules board all together as a result of over stimulation

## Off-Leash Dog Area Design Standards

Ramsey County off-leash dog areas have been developed somewhat simultaneously with different results from park to park, mostly influenced by the user base. The county would like to standardize the look and feel of its off-leash dog areas to the extents possible. Parks & Recreation will be working with and expanding upon the guidelines for off-leash dog area developed in the original policy to determine site standards.

From the public survey, public engagement, internal dialogue, and research of various other facilities the following guidelines should be followed whenever possible:

### Off-Leash Dog Area Site Selection:

**Size:** Ramsey County originally decided that a 10 acre park would be of sufficient size to accommodate a regional draw for an off-leash area. After comparing our own system to others in the region a size of 10-20 acres would be most acceptable for a regionally sized off-leash area. The county has four off-leash areas serving the region all within a 15 minute drive of any resident so another way to fill in gaps where municipal off-leash dog areas do not exist would be considering the addition of community sized off-leash area in the range of 2-10 acres. Many county parks may be better able to fill this role.

**Parking:** Ramsey County Parks & Recreation previously stated that a minimum of ten parking spaces will be provided, however this number does not seem to be sufficient given the size of most of the county off-leash areas combined with the fact that the parking lots all serve another purpose than just the off-leash areas. Parking should be looked at on a case by case basis along with other recreational uses that the parking lot is serving. Woodview, for example, has an undersized parking lot for a combined trail head/off-leash area and is often at capacity during peak hours.

**Shade:** Shade is a highly desirable aspect to off-leash dog areas. In the public survey conducted by Ramsey County shade was the second highest amenity sought out by park users. Whenever possible a site with natural shade should be utilized, if natural shade is not available trees should be planted or a man made shade structure installed.

**Conflict with Recreational Activities:** It is important to maintain a buffer between off-leash dog areas and other recreational uses such as playgrounds, trails, or another programmed recreational area. A minimum of a 100 foot buffer has been established in the previous Ramsey County policy and should be maintained in the future.

**Accessibility:** Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation strives to gain and maintain an equitable use of all its facilities. Current sites that are not accessible should be retrofitted in the future so that at least a portion of the site is accessible to all.

**Natural Resources:** Ramsey County is home to a diverse landscape and animal population, with more than 1,250 species found in or adjacent to the county. County staff manage the land, plants, and animals throughout the park system to ensure their health and sustainability. As a natural resources based park system Ramsey County will weigh all impacts that any future development may have on the environment. All efforts shall be made in site selection so that no off-leash dog area has a negative impact on any native plants, animals or water bodies.

It is extremely important that all off-leash dog area users follow rules and clean up after their pets immediately as dog waste has been declared a nonpoint source of pollution by the Environmental Protection Agency. Improperly disposed of, or pet waste which is not picked up negatively impacts water quality in lakes, ponds, creeks, wetlands, and rivers. Pet waste decays in water and depletes oxygen which in combination with the warming of water bodies may lead to fish kills. The nutrients in pet waste also aid in weed and algae growth further reducing water quality, algae blooms are stinky, cause water discoloration, and in the case of blue green algae can be lethal to pets and

extremely toxic to humans. These blooms can result in fewer recreational uses for the water body which affects swimmers, boaters, and many other park recreational uses.

Improperly disposed pet waste may also make water unsafe for swimming. Diseases and parasites can be transmitted from pet waste to humans. Pet waste is not the biggest source of pollution to the regions water bodies, but it is one of many small sources that add up to larger issues, dog owners are at the front line of picking up after themselves in a responsible manner.

**Water Access:** Access to water for dogs in the county off-leash dog areas has been identified as an important aspect that many users would like whenever possible. While not a possibility on every site, where suitable water sources do exist within an off-leash site access should be granted. Water access for dogs will not be permitted if there is conflict with another recreational use such as swimming areas, boat launches, etc.

### Site Amenities

**Fencing:** Where a one hundred foot buffer is not possible fencing will always be installed. Fencing shall be 4' in height and constructed of vinyl coated chain link. Almost all Ramsey County off-leash areas as well as those found regionally are fully enclosed areas. This adds to the safety of an off-leash area so that if a dogs control is lost by voice alone the owner has some reassurance that their pet will not get far.

**Drinking Water:** All efforts shall be made so that potable drinking water for humans and dogs is placed near at least one off-leash area entrance per park.]

**Restroom Facilities:** Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to off-leash areas, in most cases these will come in the form of portable facilities. Wherever possible, if there are multiple recreational programs located in the vicinity of the off-leash area, more permanent restrooms should be accommodated.

**Trash Receptacles:** Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional trash receptacles may be placed in parking areas or any other space deemed necessary.

**Picnic Tables & Benches:** Picnic tables and benches will be provided in each off-leash area, the placement and siting of the amenities should be coordinated between site volunteers and county staff.

**Surfacing:** A variety of surfacing will be used at off-leash dog areas. Efforts will be made to make as much of the off-leash area a natural surface. Crushed fines such as limestone or granite may be considered for trails or low lying areas to deal with erosion. An asphalt trail may be considered to make the site accessible to all users, and may aid the county in future maintenance operations within off-leash dog are boundaries.

**Separate Areas for Large & Small Dogs:** County off-leash dog areas shall accommodate separate areas for large and small dogs.

**Signage:** Rules shall be clearly posted, including codes of behavior, hours, and requirements for entry. Entrances shall also be allowed an extra posting/bulletin board for miscellaneous information. Additional and often repetitive signage posted on fences shall be removed.

**Americans with Disabilities Compliance:** Barrier free access to off-leash dog areas shall be provided, as well as an area through the double gated entry. Barrier Free paths should be provided throughout the off-leash area.

**Entrances:** Double gated entrances shall be provided at every off-leash dog area entrance. The double gated entry shall consist of an 8 foot by 8 foot fenced area with two gates, allowing for owners to safely unleash their dogs prior to letting them into the park.



**Ease of Maintenance:** Service gates should be provided at every off-leash dog area at a minimum of ten feet wide and located so that maintenance vehicles may easily enter from an existing road, parking lot, or street frontage.

**Waste Bag Dispensers:** Waste bag dispensers should be installed and refilled by the county. These dispensers should be placed minimally at every off-leash area entrance.

**Agility Equipment:** Agility equipment was the lowest rated site amenity from the public survey, and little interest was voiced in the public engagement process. As such, there are no immediate plans to include an agility course but one could be considered in the future if a user group expresses interest.

**Shade:** Trees and/or shade structures should be provided if a site has insufficient shade to allow humans and dogs to retreat from the sun.

**Trails:** Trails encourage owners to interact with and monitor their dogs and provide easier access to the entire site. At least on trail loop should be made accessible to all. Trail material should be evaluated on a case by case basis for every site, a variety of surfacing materials will likely be used for every site. Trails will vary from natural surfaces, wood chips or crushed limestone for low lying and erosion prone sites, to asphalt paths for accessible and maintenance vehicle routes.

### Management & Enforcement of Off-Leash Dog Areas

**Staffing:** It is recommended that county staff monitor the off-leash dog areas during heavy periods of use.

**Fines:** Warnings, followed by tickets and fines are recommended for repeat offenders to help reduce any illegal off-leash dog activity outside of designated off-leash areas.

**Hours of Operation:** Hours of operation should remain consistent with current park hours: one half hour prior to dawn until one half hour after dusk.

**Volunteers:** Volunteer involvement should continue to be encouraged to promote the stewardship of off-leash dog areas. County staff shall work with volunteers to help develop programs, events, and to aid in the recruitment of new volunteers.

**Fees or Donations to Off-Leash Dog Areas:** When asked through the off-leash dog areas survey whether patrons would be willing to pay a fee or donate to county run off-leash dog areas 87.71 percent of respondents said they would be possibly likely or very likely to do so. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is also the only agency in the region that does not ask for fees, licensing fees or donations to aid in the management or future development of its off-leash areas. It is recommended that the county look into a donation system to aid with maintenance and development costs for current and any future off-leash areas.

**Education:** County staff should work with off-leash dog area volunteers to develop educational programs addressing park etiquette, dogs, and off-leash dog areas among others.



### Future of the Volunteer Program

The volunteer program that has been implemented in a majority of the county's off-leash dog areas has been vital to the success of the off-leash program. Volunteers have aided in the enforcement of park rules, gone above and beyond in their capacity to maintain and clean the off-leash areas, and report maintenance issues to Parks & Recreation staff, among many other responsibilities.

#### Volunteers

Volunteers are a group of people on our email list who are available for when there are service projects, programs or awareness projects that need to take place in the park. They can lend a hand when we have spring cleanup or wood chips to spread, or they can help spread the word when we have a program, like a dog training seminar or nail trimming opportunity.

#### Stewards

Stewards are frequent users of the park (daily or weekly), who are invested in the maintenance and character of the off-leash dog area. Some of the tasks can include:

- Be the eyes and ears on the ground at the dog parks and communicate any problems or concerns that the dog park may have: maintenance issues, dangerous users, ideas and input.
- Clean up the park as you walk around: pick up any trash, pick up stray dog poop, refill poop bags. Stewards will often help to shovel snow around the entrance gates when snow piles up.
- In Battle Creek, moving the trash cans out to the entrance on Thursdays.
- Have an open line of communication with the Ramsey County Recreation Services Supervisor, so that we can get your input on issues.
- Recommend ideas to help improve the dog park and pitch in your talents to make those ideas come to life.
- Recruiting volunteers.
- Foster a positive spirit of community for those who come to the park.

### Future Maintenance and Operations within Off-leash Dog Areas

One of the largest concerns that was identified through the online survey and public engagement was how maintenance operations are handled within off-leash dog areas. Volunteer groups and general park users agree that more could be done on the part of the county in regards to how trash collection is performed as well as general maintenance of the off-leash areas.

Currently volunteers are charged with moving trash receptacles from within park boundaries to the curb where waste management picks them up. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation would like to assist in park maintenance in any way we can. One way this may be accomplished in the future goes along with the development of an accessible route. Accessible Routes could be developed as a 10' wide asphalt path which maintenance workers could use to drive a county vehicle to trash receptacle pads installed along the perimeter of the site making trash disposal a faster and easier operation. Individuals would still be charged with picking up after their pets and making sure animal waste makes it into a trash receptacle.

Miscellaneous repairs are currently requested by off-leash dog area users by calling Parks & Recreation staff to alert them to any issues. County staff generally enters the park to make fence repairs, cut and remove dangerous trees etc. on a regular basis during heavy use periods. County staff shall continue to work with volunteers to find the best way to take care of and address these issues.

## Improvements to Existing Facilities

An important step in the development of off-leash dog areas within Ramsey County will be to bring our current facilities up to the development and design standards addressed in the Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan. Many of our current parks are beloved in their current form, however all of our off-leash areas would benefit from improvements both in constructed amenities and maintenance. Many of our off-leash dog areas are very close to being up to standards set in the master plan, such as Rice Creek, and would need minimal development. Others, such as Woodview, need quite a bit of work just to make the site walkable and safe. Following is a map and description of first steps to take in each of the Ramsey County off-leash areas. Maps are for conceptual purposes only and do not imply final locations for any improvements made to the off-leash areas. Any developments made within the off-leash areas would need to go through further public engagement and design procedures.

### Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area

1. Addition of an accessible route for the inclusion of all park users as well as maintenance operations.
2. Permanent fencing around wetland and sensitive area.
3. Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
4. Bring a dog and human drinking fountain and water line up to the off-leash area entrances
5. Double gated entry at south entrance
6. Install trash receptacles throughout the off leash area along with waste bag dispensers
7. Remove miscellaneous and duplicative signage on fences and relocate to bulletin board



## Battle Creek Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area



1. Addition of an accessible route for the inclusion of all park users as well as maintenance operations.
2. Accommodate an area within the off-leash dog area for small dogs only by fencing off a portion of the site with double gated entry
3. Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
4. Bring a dog and human drinking fountain and water line up to the off-leash area entrances
5. Double gated entry at North and West entrances
6. Remove miscellaneous and duplicative signage on fences and relocate to bulletin board
7. Install 10' maintenance gate
8. Standardize rules boards at entrances, currently not the same rules are posted at each entrance
9. Install trash receptacles throughout the off leash area along with waste bag dispensers

Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor Off-Leash Dog Area

1. Addition of an accessible route for the inclusion of all park users as well as maintenance operations.
2. Accommodate an area within the off-leash dog area for small dogs only by fencing off a portion of the site with double gated entry.
3. Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
4. Look into the possibility of expanding the off-leash area boundary to include more trees for shade, planting additional trees for shade, or constructing a shade structure.
5. Install 10' maintenance gate
6. Bring a dog and human drinking fountain and water line up to the off-leash area entrances
7. Accessible concrete bench pads and trash receptacles.
8. Install trash receptacles throughout the off-leash area along with waste bag dispensers



### Woodview Open Space Off-Leash Dog Area



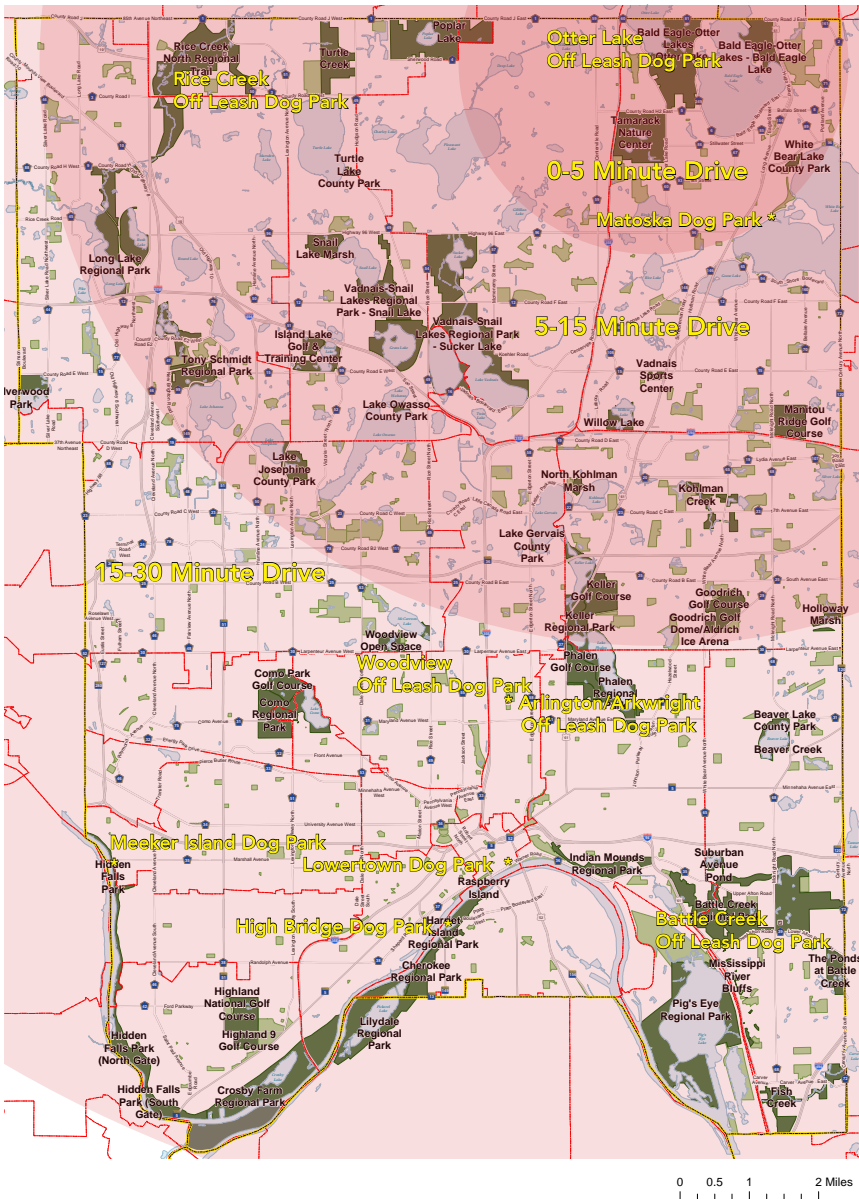
1. Woodview off-leash dog area has an accessible small dog area, finding an accessible route into the large dog area will be more difficult due to the topography of the site but should be explored and executed if possible by Parks & Recreation
2. Woodview is the only current site that does not meet the size requirements of a regional off-leash area, making this off-leash area the top priority among the county's current system. Every effort should be made to expand the current site. The system plan has identified the county owned parcel to the west of Woodview Open Space for acquisition, this area would be a prime location for an expanded off-leash area as there are few if any conflicts.
3. The off-leash dog area at Woodview Open Space is in the worst condition of any in the Ramsey County system, and is identified as the top priority for future development of off-leash areas. There are many overhanging hazardous trees, brush, and other debris making the site difficult and unsafe to traverse. This should be the number one priority going forward to make this site safe.
4. The rules signs and bulletin board should be moved out of the off-leash dog areas and relocated to the front of the entrances.
5. A water line for a human and dog drinking fountain should be brought to the entrance.
6. A double gated entry should be installed for the large dog area
7. Fencing should be installed to fully enclose the large dog area, along with any expansion area
8. Install trash receptacles throughout the off-leash area along with waste bag dispensers
9. If possible install a 10' maintenance gate.



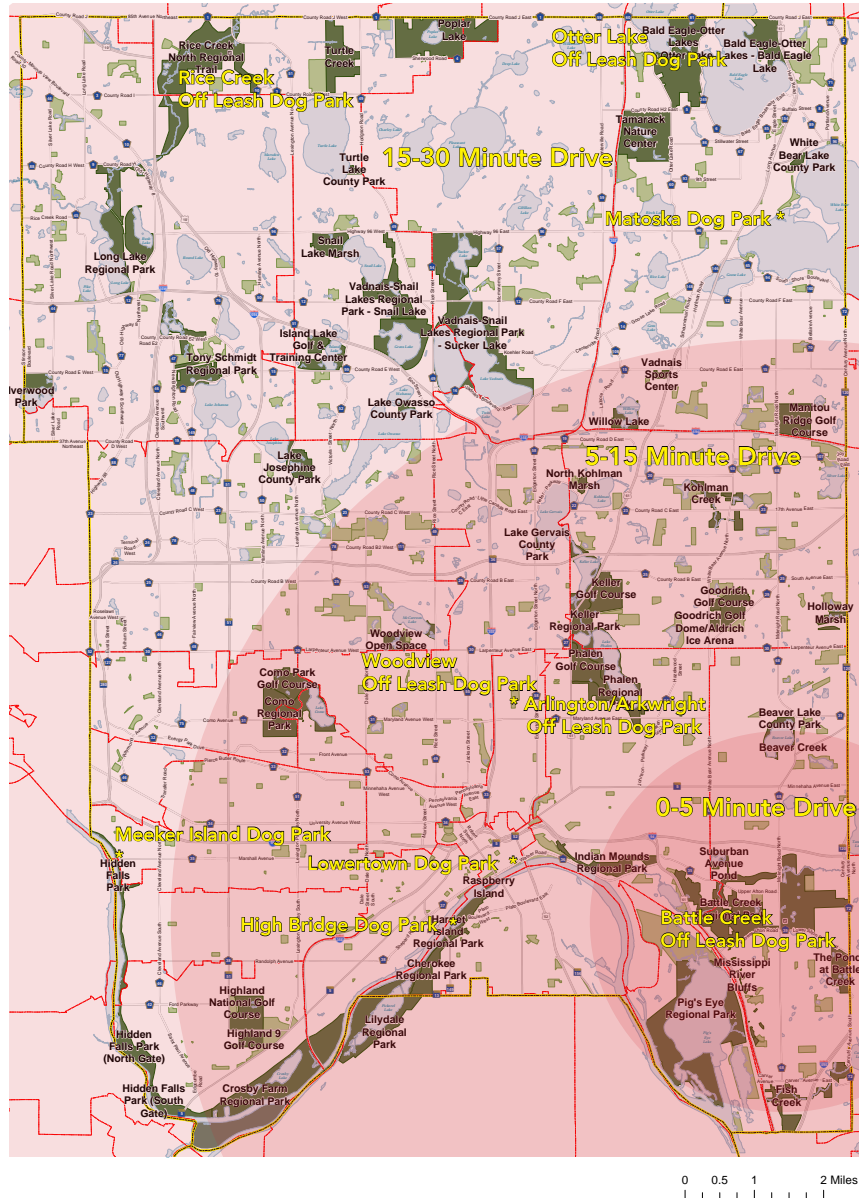
### Future Development of Off-Leash Dog Areas

An original goal of the policy passed by Parks & Recreation was to locate a regionally serving facility within a 20 minute drive of any county resident, allowing for other municipalities to fill in gaps with neighborhood and community sized off-leash dog areas. The current system accomplishes this goal with the exception of the Woodview Open Space off-leash dog area due to its size, reinforcing the need for improvement at this facility or another area nearby to serve this segment of the county. The following maps show the distribution of the county's off-leash dog areas along with drive times and other supporting off-leash areas not provided by the county. Only off-leash areas within Ramsey County boundaries are shown, there are others very close by such as Lock County Park near the northwest corner and Andy's Bark Park located in Woodbury.

#### Bald Eagle Otter Lakes Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area

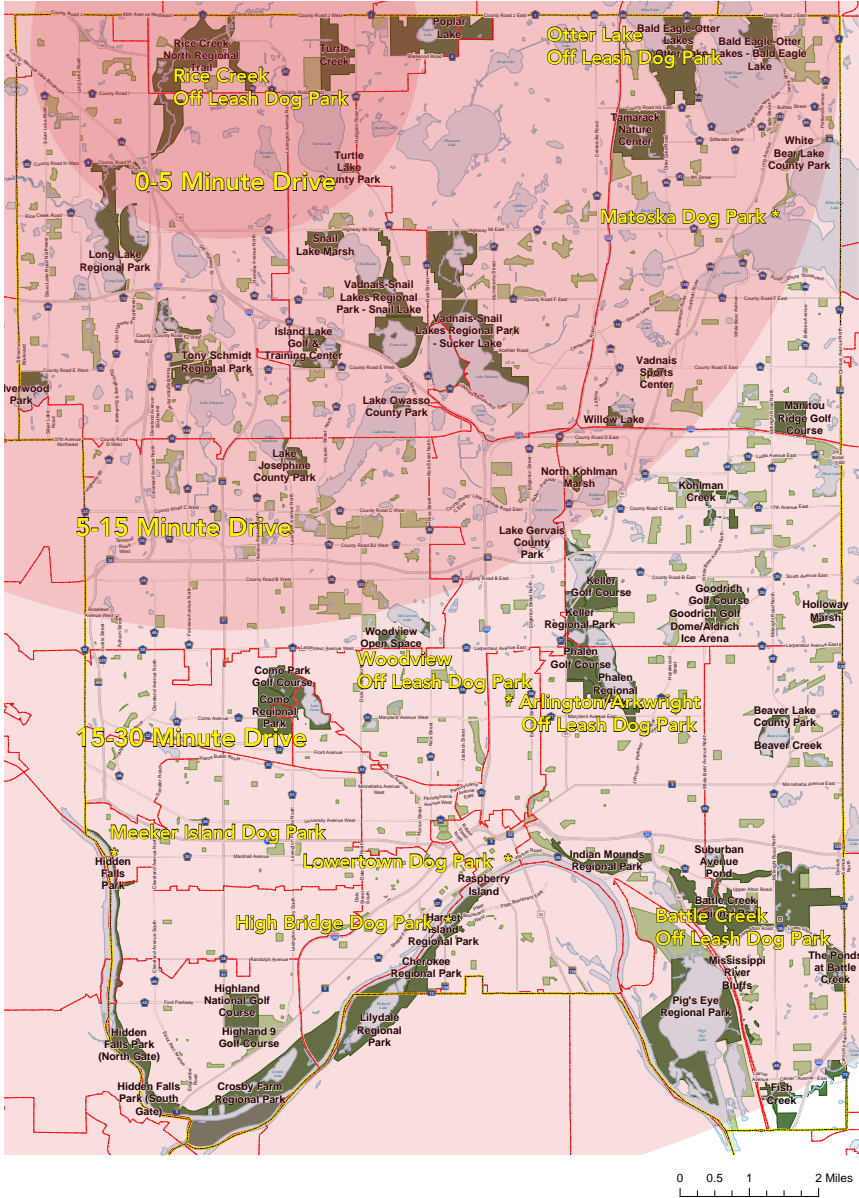


## Battle Creek Regional Park Off-Leash Dog Area

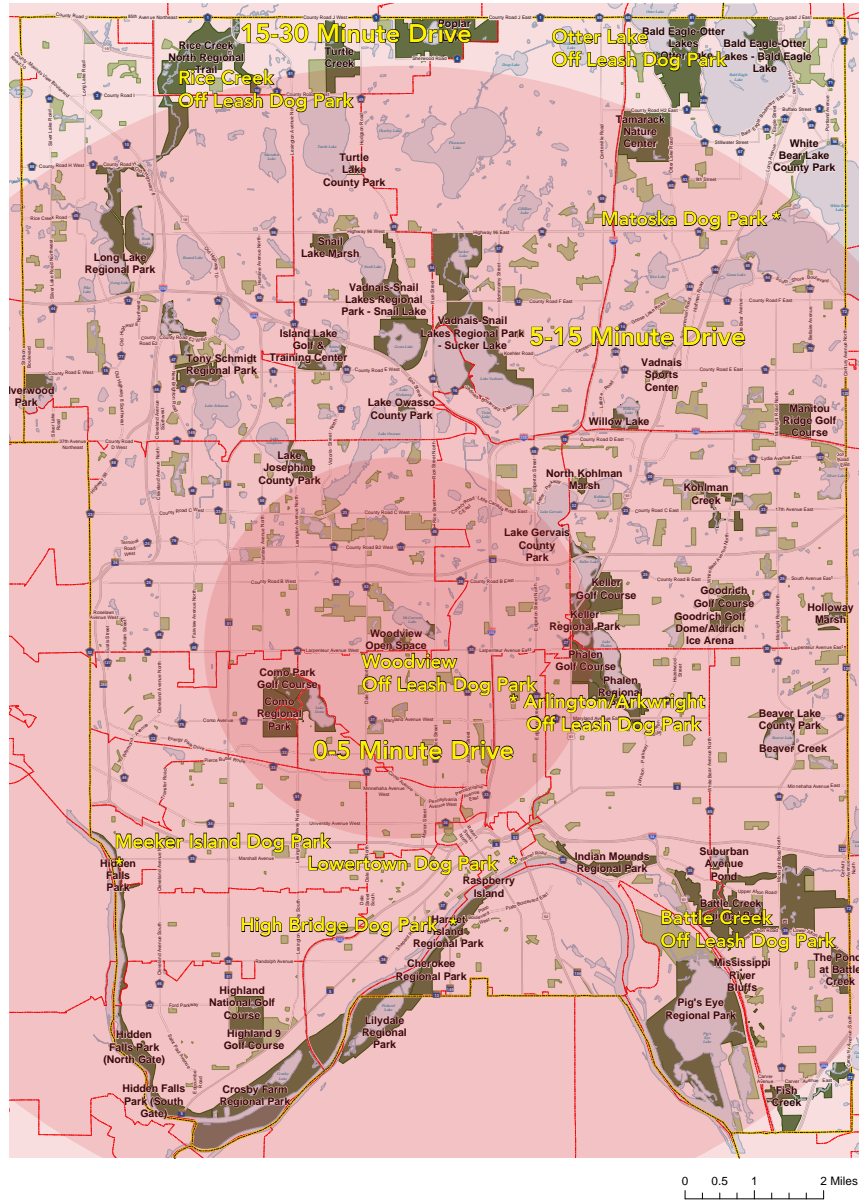




Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor Off-Leash Dog Area



## Woodview Open Space Off-Leash Dog Area



Although Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has accomplished the original goal of placing an off-leash area within a twenty minute drive of all county residents there still may be a future need or demand to develop new off-leash dog areas within the park system. Care shall be taken in the selection of any new site that may be developed, taking into account natural resources, proximity to other off-leash dog areas, and the demand for service weighed against conflicts with other recreational programming.

If public demand and support exist to establish a new off-leash area site selection and design shall conform to the standards discussed in the Off-leash Dog Area Master plan. The following process for review, evaluation and site selection of off-leash dog areas shall be followed:

1. A planning team comprised of county staff, off-leash area users and volunteers, and the natural resources manager shall work together to identify potential sites using the guidelines and standards enclosed in the master plan.
2. The planning team will evaluate potential sites according to the master plan guidelines and standards to identify the best possible location(s).
3. Public engagement meetings shall be coordinated to develop a concept plan for the proposed site(s)
4. As a part of the public engagement process a questionnaire shall be developed to address any potential conflicts with other recreational programs/uses, neighbors, trails, etc. that may have been overlooked during site selection.
5. Once a concept plan for the off-leash dog area has been developed it shall be presented at another public engagement meeting for any final changes and to address whether or not there is general support for the project, and to double check the appropriateness of the site making sure that the off-leash area is serving an under served area within the county that does not currently have an off-leash area nearby.
6. Upon acceptance through public engagement of the final concept, Ramsey County staff will evaluate the plan to make cost estimations for the implementation of the project.
7. The final concept along with project cost estimates shall be presented to the County Parks & Recreation Board for acceptance.
8. Upon acceptance county Parks & Recreation staff will work internally and with volunteer groups to fund, create construction documents following the final concept, go through any necessary design reviews, and implement the project.

### Implementation

#### Phasing Priorities

There have been many aspects to off-leash dog areas that have been identified as a part of the Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan that Ramsey County Parks & Recreation needs to address in the future. As such development and implementation of the plan will need to be phased over a period of time. The following list is a proposed timeline of implementation based on needs according to the findings of the master plan.

1. Woodview Open Space Off-leash Dog area is currently in the worst condition of any of the county's off-leash dog areas. There are numerous hazardous trees making the large dog area unsafe along with litter, tractor tires etc. The top priority concerning off-leash areas should be to clean up and make this area safe for the numerous users that use the open space.
2. Woodview Open Space is also the only off-leash dog area that does not meet criteria for a regionally sized off-leash area. Efforts should be made to expand the usable space of the off-leash area. Park patrons are already using space not designated in the off-leash area as evidenced by unmarked trails and dog tracks observed by county staff. The Parks & Recreation System Plan has identified property to the west for acquisition which would be one option. Another would be to expand the off-leash area to the north and west of the path where tracks and trails have been observed. A rough take off shows that the county could expand the current site to approximately ten acres by designating additional space, which would provide a more regionally sized off-leash area serving the southwest area of the county.
3. All existing county off-leash dog areas shall be evaluated and reviewed according to the design guidelines and standards outlined in the Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan. Cost estimations should be put together for each park in order to bring the off-leash area up to the design standards of the master plan. These improvements should then be executed as funding becomes available. Cost estimation should be re-evaluated prior to any new funding request to make sure the amount allotted is in alignment with current construction costs.
4. New off-leash dog areas shall be explored according to the review, evaluation, and site selection criteria outlined in the Off-leash Dog Area Master Plan.

#### Alternative Delivery Options to Meet Demand

An alternative to the creation of additional fenced off-leash dog areas may be to adjust some park rules to accommodate off-leash activities at some county parks and open spaces. One Precedence of this comes from the city of Minnetonka, where a rule is in place allowing for off-leash dogs on dirt paths or in non-mowed spaces. Another option may be to designate certain fields, open areas etc. for off-leash activity which could be limited to certain hours of the day or week. This would greatly expand off-leash options within the Ramsey County park system with minimal cost.

## Programs

Adding programs at the off-leash dog areas seems to be a huge opportunity, and one that people have interest in. Socialization and training programs seem to be popular choices.

If Ramsey County Parks & Recreation considered adding an agility training course, programs could be built around the feature creating an exciting opportunity.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is interested in continuing a program implemented in the past where veterinary technical schools come to the park to do free nail trimmings.

## Donation System Options

Adding the option of giving donations had overwhelming support in the survey. 32 percent said that they would be very likely to donate, and 55 percent said that they were possibly likely to donate depending on proposed improvements.

People were wary of donations being stolen if a donation box were implemented, but perhaps posting on the bulletin boards an online location to donate would be a good way of collecting donations, or even holding special events once in a while to make improvements. People were especially interested in donating to specific projects for specific dog parks knowing that their donation is going to an area they use. The county could make an event out of it, doing a dog costume contest in Halloween, or other fun events.

### Appendix A Off-Leash Dog Area History

#### Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department Off-Leash Dog Area Pilot Program January 8, 1997

##### Summary

There are several areas throughout the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation system where owners are illegally allowing their dogs off-leash. Recently, a group of dog owners requested that the department consider developing off-leash areas. Parks and Recreation staff have reviewed national and local trends and responses to requests for off-leash areas. Based on expressed demand, historical uses and capacity of park resources, staff recommends establishing a pilot program of two off-leash dog areas.

##### Background

As urban areas develop, owners increasingly use parks to exercise their dogs. Ordinances control dogs in parks by requiring the use of leashes and restricting areas where dogs are allowed. However, dog owners have recently become more vocal and organized against these restrictions, petitioning for increased freedom with their pets. In response, many agencies have designated spaces where dogs are allowed to exercise and socialize without being leashed.

There are several areas throughout the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation system where owners of dogs are illegally allowing dogs off-leash. Staff regularly observes users at Rice Creek, Grass Lake, Battle Creek, and other parks with dogs off-leash.

Responsible Owners of Mannerly Pets (ROMP) made a presentation at the October 8, 1996 Park and Recreation Commission meeting, requesting establishment of one or more designated off-leash dog areas. ROMP cited several successful off-leash programs throughout the United States.

Current park ordinances allow for the creation of specialized off-leash areas. Chapter III, section T, Subsection 3 states: "It shall be unlawful for any person to bring a pet into an authorized area of a park unless caged or on a leash not more than six (6) feet in length, except in a designated pet exercise area."

##### Comparative analysis

###### National

Based on an Internet literature search, it appears that the development of off-leash areas is most active on the East and West coasts. This development has been in direct response to citizen's requests for areas where their dogs can exercise and socialize off-leash.

Although not a complete nationwide list, the following is a sample of off-leash areas available on the Internet:

###### San Francisco Bay Area

- Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve, a 290-acre site, permits dogs off-leash in a 17 acre area located inside a loop road.
- Marin County Open Space District allows dogs off-leash on fire roads.
- The East Bay Regional Park District operates about 76,000 acres, dogs may run off-leash in undeveloped areas.

#### New York City Area

- 18 neighborhood parks within the New York City area have dog runs.

#### City of Seattle

- Seattle recently established off-leash areas in seven geographically distributed city parks for a 12-month pilot program.

#### **Local**

A survey of Twin Cities agencies that operate regional parks was conducted in the fall of 1996. The following is a summary of metropolitan off-leash policies:

#### Anoka County

- No official sites, but owners run dogs off-leash in the Chain of Lakes area.

#### Carver County

- No off-leash sites.

#### Dakota County

- No off-leash sites.

#### Hennepin Parks

Hennepin Parks has three designated areas available by special permit for training and exercising pets. The sites are located at Elm Creek Park Reserve, Crow-Hassan Park Reserve, and Lake Sarah Regional Park. Sites are approximately 30 acres. The Elm Creek area is fenced; Crow-Hassan and Lake Sarah have fencing along adjacent roads.

Special use permits of \$25/year provide access to the off-leash area for the permit holder and immediate family members residing in the same household. In addition, an annual parking permit of \$25 is required. 125 special use permits were issued in 1996.

#### Minneapolis

- No off-leash sites. In 1994, a citizen's group presented a proposal for the creation of an off-leash dog area in Powderhorn Park. According to Park Board staff, the Board initially authorized staff to create the off-leash area for a one-year pilot program. However, this required amending the park ordinance to permit dogs off-leash, which apparently raised additional Board concerns about the impact of this type of activity. The proposal was not implemented.

#### St. Paul

- There is a designated "Pet Park" in a fenced area near I-94 and 6th Street in Lower Town. The area is approximately one acre, fenced, and covered with wood chips. There is no fee to use the area.

#### Washington County

- No off-leash sites. There have been requests, but Washington County has decided against providing off-leash sites.



## Proposed Pilot Program

<u>Issues</u>	<u>Literature Review</u>	<u>Battle Creek Regional Park-Lower Afton Site</u>	<u>Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor</u>
<b>Site Characteristics</b>	<p>Off-leash areas provide an opportunity for dogs to exercise and socialize. Ideal locations for off-leash activities are areas that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can withstand free-running by dogs without interfering in activities in or around the area.</li> <li>• Are fenced to park boundaries, have natural boundaries, or require minimal fencing.</li> <li>• Are not associated with established recreation interests or attract high concentrations of users.</li> </ul>	<p>Battle Creek Regional Park site is located east of McKnight Road and north of Lower Afton Road. The terrain is hilly and the site contains tall grasses, shrubs, and scattered trees.</p>	<p>Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor site is located north of Sherwood Road and west of Lexington Avenue in Shoreview. The terrain has a slight slope and the site contains tall grasses and shrubs.</p>
<b>Size, Site Layout and Design</b>	<p>The following is a general summary of ideal site areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The size of the area is generally less important than its location and suitability for dogs' use.</li> <li>• Generally, a "rougher" setting is more suitable than a mowed area for free running; however, owners using the area for specialized training prefer a mowed area.</li> <li>• Sites that can be both mowed in part and retain natural areas are best.</li> <li>• Paving is not recommended, but wood chips or paving can be used on paths if necessary.</li> <li>• Contour which varies adds to the appeal for dogs and plants add to the interest and diversity.</li> </ul>	<p>Both sites possess the characteristics desired in an off-leash area: a "rougher" setting, varying terrain, tall grasses, and some trees and shrubs. Each site has sufficient space to establish a 5-6 acre off-leash area and maintain the necessary buffer from existing paths and roads.</p> <p>The following changes would be made to the sites for the pilot program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mowed corridors would provide a transition area from trails and parking lots to the off-leash site. Dogs would be required to be leashed on this corridor until reaching the off-leash area boundary.</li> <li>• Mowed perimeter trails on the sites would help define the off-leash area boundaries.</li> <li>• Additional trails could be mowed to create a more interesting experience for dogs and their owners.</li> </ul> <p>Site drawings can be found in Appendix A.</p>	
<b>Boundaries</b>	<p>In most cases, boundaries where free-running is permitted need to be fenced. Fencing is also used where natural barriers are not available to prevent dogs from straying, being injured, or causing a traffic hazard. Finally, clearly identified boundaries are a barrier to other park users who might unknowingly wander into it.</p>	<p>The west boundary of the proposed area would be located approximately 150 feet off of McKnight Road, allowing a growth of pine trees to establish a natural boundary. Other natural boundaries include a ravine to the north and woods to the south and east.</p>	<p>The south boundary would be established approximately 300 feet from the trail corridor's border. The remaining boundaries would be at least 100 feet from any trails.</p> <p>In general, the site would be set apart from the remainder of the trail corridor by trees and tall grasses in the area.</p>
<b>Fencing</b>	<p>A four-foot-high fence will restrain most dogs and slow down others. Higher fences may be needed in some places, such as adjacent to busy public roads and neighboring residential properties.</p>	<p>Although fencing is desirable in some situations, the natural boundaries of these sites would be adequate for the pilot nature of this program.</p>	
<b>Signage</b>	<p>Two types of signage are normally used at off-leash areas: regulatory and advisory. Regulatory signage displays the rules of the facility. Advisory signs caution unsuspected</p>	<p>Signage would be required at each site. The following types of signs would be installed at each location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One general access sign at each corridor entrance directing users to</li> </ul>	

	park users of the activity and indicate park boundaries.	<p>the site;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One rule sign at each entrance to the off-leash area; and,</li> <li>• Site markings to identify the off-leash area boundaries.</li> </ul> <p>Additional signage would be posted in other park areas informing users of the designated off-leash areas as needed.</p>
<b>Support Facilities</b>	Support facilities to consider in the establishment of off-leash areas include shelter, toilets, seating, drinking water, and parking.	Parking areas with trash containers currently exist at each site. Restrooms, water, and additional facilities are not proposed for this pilot program.
<b>Disposal of Feces</b>	<p>Users are normally required to clean up after their pets. Some agencies choose to provide bags or scoops for cleaning up, while others require users to supply their own clean-up tools. Feces is usually disposed of in trash containers; however, some disposal units are buried in the ground which permits natural decomposition back into the soil.</p> <p>Dogs are instinctually attracted to long grass for defecating. If a site contains tall grass, feces that is not in mowed areas or on paths could be left to naturally decompose.</p>	Owners would be required to supply their own clean-up tools, pick up after their pets, and dispose of feces in a designated trash container.
<b>Impact on Wildlife and Vegetation</b>	The impact on wildlife and vegetation needs to be determined for each facility. Generally, dogs will have a minimal impact on natural grasses and brush. However, an area might see a decrease ground wildlife and an impact on nesting birds.	<p>Directing pet owners to designated off-leash areas would reduce the negative impact of dogs on natural areas where illegal off-leash activity is occurring, thus resulting in positive system impact.</p> <p>No significant vegetation is present at either site.</p>
<b>Maintenance of Site</b>	Maintaining paths and parking lots, mowing, collecting trash, and other general maintenance is generally required.	<p>Each site currently has parking and limited support facilities. Increased maintenance needs would include mowing the access paths and a portion of the off-leash site, collecting trash, and general upkeep. Parking lots would be plowed in the winter; no other winter maintenance would be performed.</p> <p>Some of the increased maintenance activity could be assumed by R.O.M.P. or other organizations through the Ramsey County Park Partners program.</p>
<b>Rules</b>	<p>The following is a list of rules typically posted at a dog run area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated.</li> <li>• Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash area and in transition corridors.</li> <li>• Owners must be in verbal control of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting or excessive barking.</li> <li>• Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs.</li> <li>• Owners must have a visible leash at all times.</li> <li>• Owners must clean up and dispose of feces.</li> <li>• Dogs in heat are not allowed.</li> <li>• Owners must comply with all other park rules and regulations.</li> </ul>	Rules would be as stated on the left column.

<b>Fees/Charges</b>	Fees and charges vary. Hennepin Parks currently charges \$25 for an annual permit. Many agencies such as the Cities of Seattle and New York City require a city license only.	Ramsey County provides all existing park areas (excluding shelters, pavilions, and Long Lake Beach) free to park users. No additional fees or charges are proposed during this pilot program.
<b>Penalties and Enforcement</b>	Varies.	Ramsey County Parks and Recreation would work closely with the Ramsey County Sheriff to actively enforce the existing dog ordinance. Enforcement would include informing dog owners of the new areas and consistent ticketing of repeat offenders who illegally have their dogs off-leash in non-designated areas.

## Recommendation

Parks and Recreation staff proposes a pilot program creating two off-leash dog areas within the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation system, one at Battle Creek Regional Park and one at the Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor. The pilot program would be initiated in early summer 1997 and run through December 31, 1998, subject to funding availability. The department reserves the right to discontinue this program at any time if it is found unacceptable.

## Cost

### Implementation

The following costs are directly associated with the development of the off-leash areas, excluding staff time:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost by Location</b>	
	Battle Creek	Rice Creek
Signage and Boundary Markings	\$1,500	\$1,500

### Projected Annual Operating Costs

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost by Location</b>	
	Battle Creek	Rice Creek
Mowing and General Site Maint. (Bi-weekly, May-Oct, \$105/site)	\$1,260	\$1,260
Trash Removal (Twice per week, year round at \$9)	\$936	\$936
Winter Plowing (10 snowfalls X \$142/snowfall)	currently plowed	\$1,420
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,196</b>	<b>\$3,616</b>

## Monitoring and Evaluating the Program

This program would have a baseline study prior to opening to estimate current use at each site. The sites would be monitored throughout the program to record number of users. Users would also be asked to complete evaluations periodically throughout the program.

All information would be reviewed at the conclusion of the program and a decision to discontinue, continue as is, or expand the program would be made at that time.

## Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department Off-Leash Dog Area Pilot Program Summary February 5, 1999

### BACKGROUND

A citizens' group, Responsible Owners of Mannerly Pets (ROMP), made a presentation at the October 8, 1996, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting requesting establishment of one or more designated off-leash dog areas within the park system. ROMP cited several successful off-leash programs throughout the United States.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation staff reviewed both local and national response to citizen requests for off-leash areas. On January 11, the Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed a staff proposal to establish two off-leash areas for a pilot program beginning June 27, 1997 and running through December 31, 1998.

The off-leash areas were located at Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor in Shoreview and the Lower Afton area of Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood. The areas were not associated with established recreation areas, one of the criteria in site selection. The Rice Creek site was approximately five acres; Battle Creek was approximately 4 acres. Mowed corridors (where pets are required to be leashed) provided transition areas from trails and parking lots. Mowed perimeter trails and signage defined the off-leash area boundaries.

The creation of the sites was not part of the department's 1997 operating budget. In recognition of the cooperative effort between the department and the citizens' group, ROMP provided a donation of \$3,000 for the signage and boundary markings. The department provided staff time and equipment to prepare the sites.

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

Ramsey County's pilot off-leash dog area program concluded on December 31, 1998. The proposal to establish the pilot program indicated that an evaluation of the program would be conducted at its conclusion. This evaluation would determine the future direction of the program, which included discontinuing the program, continuing as is or expanding the program.

In order to effectively evaluate the program and determine the future direction, seven evaluation criteria were established:

1. Number of users;
2. Public comments;
3. Natural resource impact;
4. Reduction of illegal activity in other park areas;
5. Expenses associated with the program; and,
6. Off-leash activity occurring in other agencies.

### Number of Users

Two methods of monitoring were used to determine the number of users: staff counts and a ROMP sign-in book. However, since department staff is not typically in the park system continuously throughout the day, exact use numbers are not available. The following represents an estimation of use:

#### a. Staff Counts

Prior to opening the off-leash areas, some off-leash use was observed by staff, although usually not in designated sites. Throughout program: Use would depend on day and time visited. Use was most prevalent during the late afternoon/early evening on weekdays, and Saturday and Sunday throughout the day. Staff

most frequently observed 5-10 human users.

b. Romp Sign-In Book Examples (1998) for Battle Creek

Dates	Number of Users
February 13 - February 19	95
April 11 - April 17	211
June 11 - June 17	196
August 11 - August 17	188
October 11 - October 17	196

(ROMP estimates number under-reported by approximately 30%.)

### Public Comments

Public comments on the program were received in a variety of methods, including letters, e-mail, web site comments, and phone calls. In addition, the department held a community meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 1999, before the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission to receive comments on the program. Eighty-one members of the community attended the meeting.

a. **In Support of the Program**

- 14 e-mail comments
- 31 telephone calls
- 7 letters
- 127 comment cards

b. **Concerns About the Program**

- Three calls received regarding a perceived increase in illegal off-leash activity near sites.
- One call reporting owner’s dog being attacked by stray dog.
- One call reporting injured dog. Owner originally thought injury was caused by a trap, but no traps were found.

c. **Community Meeting**

Members of the community who attended the meeting were asked to respond to four questions. Comments were summarized as follows:

*Should Ramsey County provide off-leash dog areas?*

There was unanimous consent that Ramsey County should provide off-leash dog areas. Individuals cited several positive outcomes of the off-leash dog areas in support of their position, including:

- Off-leash dog areas help build community by bringing together individuals of varying interests, abilities and ages.
- Off-leash dog areas help keep dogs and people active by getting out of their homes and into the parks.
- Dogs have an important role in families and the off-leash areas provide a positive focus for families.
- Off-leash activity is a valid recreation use of parkland.

*How well did the pilot off-leash dog areas function?*

Individuals were generally satisfied with the pilot program sites. However, they frequently suggested changes that would enhance the sites. Comments included:

- The pilot program sites provided common meeting space for dogs and their owners.
- Dogs had the opportunity to socialize with people, other than their owners, meeting strangers and learning tolerance and manners.
- People followed the rules, cleaned up after their dogs, supervised and controlled their dogs and even extended themselves beyond baseline responsibility.

*What were the positive aspects of the off-leash dog areas in the pilot program and what changes would you recommend?*

#### **Positive Aspects**

- Dogs could run free of the usual hindrances without breaking the law.
- Increased health, longevity and well-being for people and dogs.
- Off-leash recreation benefits the dogs, their owners and the general public.
- Sites are used throughout all seasons of the year.

#### **Recommended Changes**

- Add more sites.
- Increase the size of the sites to 10-20 acres.
- Add more trash receptacles.
- Install fencing.
- Consider lighting for winter use.
- Allow dogs off leash on entry paths.
- Consider inner-city locations.
- Provide "clean" water for dog swimming and cooling-off.
- Provide people facilities, including restrooms and drinking water.

*In your opinion, what are the desirable elements of an ideal off-leash dog area?*

- Clean water for dogs' use.
- Drinking water for people.
- Restroom facilities.
- Variety of terrain.
- Safe, convenient parking.
- Fencing.
- Safety from traffic.
- Trash receptacles.
- Sites with 10-20 acres.
- Inner-city location.
- Lighting for winter use.
- Adequate signage to inform users and non-users of the areas and the associated rules.

*Additional comments:*

- Consider time-share areas such as waterfronts and trails.
- Consider use fees to provide off-leash dog areas.

#### **Natural Resource Impact**

The department's Natural Resource Specialist conducted an evaluation of the impact off-leash dog areas have on the natural resources associated with the pilot program sites:

- No apparent impact on vegetation or larger wildlife species.
- Some impact on nesting birds is possible.
- Would not recommend using wooded areas due to potential for increased erosion and greater impact on wildlife.

### Reduction of Illegal Activity in Other Park Areas

The department attempted to determine the effect the off-leash dog areas had on reducing illegal off-leash activity in other park areas. Generally, enforcing illegal off-leash activity is a low priority for law enforcement. Therefore, data is difficult to obtain. The Ramsey County Sheriff Lakes and Trails Unit indicates no perceived difference. In addition, the City of Maplewood indicates that the areas have had little impact, either positive or negative, primarily due to lack of knowledge of the sites.

### Expenses Associated With the Program

- Rule and Directional Signage: \$550 per site
- Boundary Markings: \$425 per site
- Temporary Fencing (Battle Creek only): \$650
- Minimal operating costs. (Bi-weekly trash removal, occasional mowing, occasional snow compaction with groomer.)
- Materials provided by donation made on behalf of ROMP.
- Department provided all labor.

### Off-Leash Activity Occurring in Other Metropolitan Agencies

#### Anoka County

- Occasional requests from the public, primarily received by operations staff.
- Discussed concept internally and identified one possible site (Rum River Central) when park undergoes redevelopment in 2-4 years.
- Park users generally disregard current ordinance due to limited enforcement.

#### City of Bloomington

- Task force established to consider issue.
- Preliminary findings indicate two one-acre sites in city parks.
- Early summer implementation.

#### Dakota County

- Department has received informal requests from the public.
- Discussed internally, but no current plans.
- Expect to consider issue in 1999.

#### Hennepin Parks

- Currently has three sites in operation, each approximately 30 acres in size located in the outer tier areas of the county. No planned modifications to current sites.
- Special use permit (\$25) required for use of any site.
- Some discussion to add a site in one Southern Division park, but no site selected.

#### City of Minneapolis

- Citizens Advisory Committee established to study issue.
- Recommended that the City and Park Board establish a minimum of six to ten initial sites throughout Minneapolis that will be operational within the next 12-18 months.



Suggested one site per park district, with additional sites placed in areas of identified need.

## City of St. Paul

- One small area (<1 acre) near Mears Park to accommodate condominium residents.
- Internal discussion, but no formal discussion at the Park Commission level.
- Mayor's Office has received complaints regarding leash laws, primarily after being cited for illegal off-leash activity.

## Washington County

- No formal request from park users, except for ski touring and dog sledding.
- Have identified a potential area in Lake Elmo Park Reserve, but without expressed need, will not move concept forward.

## FUTURE DIRECTION

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department has determined that the two off-leash pilot areas were successful. In order to implement the complete program, the department will develop an administrative policy on off-leash areas. The administrative policy will:

- Identify the characteristics, amenities, and operation of Ramsey County's off-leash areas.
- Define the number and general geographical location of the site(s) in the Ramsey County park system.
- Establish a process for reviewing and evaluating sites.

The pilot program sites will remain in operation as established in the pilot program until the administrative policy is developed and implemented. These sites will then be subject to review based on the criteria established in the administrative policy.

# Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department Off-Leash Dog Area Administrative Policy April 13, 1999

## Background

A citizens' group, Responsible Owners of Mannerly Pets (ROMP), made a presentation at the October 8, 1996, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting requesting establishment of one or more designated off-leash dog areas within the park system. ROMP cited several successful off-leash programs throughout the United States. Ramsey County Park Ordinance Chapter 3, Section T requires pets to be caged or on a leash not more than six (6) feet in length, except in a designated pet exercise or training area.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation staff reviewed both local and national response to citizen requests for off-leash areas. On January 11, 1997, the Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed a staff proposal to establish two off-leash areas for a pilot program beginning June 27, 1997 and running through December 31, 1998.

Upon conclusion of the pilot program, it was evaluated based on six criteria:

1. Number of users;
2. Public comments;
3. Natural resource impact;
4. Reduction of illegal activity in other park areas;
5. Expenses associated with the program; and,
6. Off-leash activity occurring in other agencies.

Results of the pilot program found that the provision of off-leash dog exercise areas are a legitimate recreational program that can be accommodated at carefully selected sites within the County park system. The following administrative policy defines the number and general geographical location of the site(s) in the Ramsey County park system; identifies the characteristics, amenities, and operation of Ramsey County's off-leash areas; discusses accessibility goals; and establishes a process for reviewing, evaluating, and selecting sites.

## POLICY

**The Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department will endeavor to provide off-leash dog exercise areas that serve multiple communities within the County. Off-leash dog exercise areas will be separate from any current or planned recreational use areas.**

The following additional general guidelines will apply:

- Attempts will be made to locate an off-leash area within a twenty-minute drive of any residence in the county. However, it is recognized that Ramsey County does not own parkland in the south and west portions of the City of St. Paul. Accordingly, the City of St. Paul will be encouraged to provide these regional facilities.
- County off-leash areas will be geographically located to compliment "close to home" municipal areas.
- Sites will be designated in areas that will have minimal impact to significant natural resources. Proposed sites will be evaluated by the County's Natural Resource Specialist for potential impact.
- Up to four sites will be established in the Ramsey County Park System.
- Sites must be consistent with municipal zoning and/or park master plans.

## Site Characteristics

### A. Size

Sites will be approximately ten acres, including buffer zones.

### B. Buffer Zones

Where feasible, sites will include a 100' buffer zone around their perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses. Improvements within the buffer zone will be limited to perpendicular access trails. Off-leash dogs will be allowed in the buffer zone at the discretion of their owners.

### C. Perimeter Markings

The boundary of each site will be delineated with Carsonite type markings located at 100' intervals around the perimeter. Each Carsonite marking will have a decal applied to both sides indicating the boundary of an off-leash dog area.

### D. Fencing

Where a 100' buffer zone is feasible, fencing will not be installed. However, if a 100' buffer zone is not feasible due to specific site characteristics or proximity to other recreational use areas, a fence will be considered, subject to funding availability.

### E. Signage

Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to the off-leash area. Directional signs may be placed at parking areas or trail entrances where necessary to direct users to the off-leash areas.

### F. Water Access for Dog Use

Access to water for dog use will be a high priority in selecting off-leash sites. Where suitable water resources do not exist within an off-leash site, auxiliary water access sites may be considered in areas adjacent to off-leash sites. Water access for dogs at other park use areas (such as swimming areas, boat access sites, etc.) will not be permitted.

## Support Facilities

### A. Parking

A minimum of ten vehicular parking spaces will be provided at each off-leash area. In areas where multiple activities exist (such as trail use), additional parking will be provided where feasible.

### B. Drinking Water (Potable)

Potable water will not be provided for the off-leash sites, unless currently provided.

### C. Restroom Facilities

Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.

### D. Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional trash receptacles may be placed in parking areas or where deemed necessary.

#### E. Picnic Tables/Benches

Picnic tables and/or benches will be provided in each off-leash area.

#### Disabled Access

Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site within the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site. At other sites where access is limited, the County will work with users to improve accessibility.

#### Use Policies

The following use policies will apply:

- Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated.
- Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off-leash area and in transition corridors.
- Owners must be in verbal control of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, biting, fighting or excessive barking.
- Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs.
- Owners must have a visible leash at all times.
- Owners must clean up and dispose of feces.
- Dogs in heat are not allowed.
- Owners must comply with all other park rules and regulations.

Fees will not be charged for the use of the off-leash areas.

#### Review, Evaluation, and Site Selection

The implementation of this administrative policy will begin a process for reviewing, evaluating, and selecting sites. This process will involve five steps:

1. County staff will identify candidate sites that meet the criteria outlined in this policy.
2. A planning team comprised of four off-leash dog area users and County staff will review candidate sites, including on-site visits.
3. County staff will identify expenses associated with establishing and maintaining each site. Staff and users will work together to explore possible funding sources for development and ongoing maintenance.
4. County staff will develop a timeline for establishing each site.
5. County staff and users will work to establish each site.

The Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department will monitor the criteria and sites established under this policy. It reserves the right to modify the policy and/or sites to maintain park resources, address public health and safety issues, or to meet changing use patterns.

4/16/99

## Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department

### Off-Leash Dog Area Program Implementation

March 14, 2000

#### Background

A citizens' group, Responsible Owners of Mannerly Pets (ROMP), made a presentation at the October 8, 1996, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Commission meeting requesting establishment of one or more designated off-leash dog areas within the park system. ROMP cited several successful off-leash programs throughout the United States. Ramsey County Park Ordinance Chapter 3, Section T requires pets to be caged or on a leash not more than six (6) feet in length, except in a designated pet exercise or training area.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation staff reviewed both local and national response to citizen requests for off-leash areas. On January 11, 1997, the Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed a staff proposal to establish two off-leash areas for a pilot program beginning June 27, 1997 and running through December 31, 1998.

The pilot program was evaluated based on six criteria:

1. Number of users;
2. Public comments;
3. Natural resource impact;
4. Reduction of illegal activity in other park areas;
5. Expenses associated with the program; and,
6. Off-leash activity occurring in other agencies.

Results of the pilot program found that the provision of off-leash dog exercise areas is a legitimate recreational program that can be accommodated at carefully selected sites within the County park system. The Off-Leash Dog Area Administrative Policy was developed, which established criteria for the program, including:

- The number and general geographical location of the site(s) in the Ramsey County park system;
- The characteristics, amenities, and operation of Ramsey County's off-leash areas;
- Accessibility goals; and,
- A process for reviewing, evaluating, and selecting sites.

#### Site Review Summary

In August of 1999, a site review team was formed to examine possible changes to the pilot program sites, and considered additional sites for program expansion. The site review team members were off-leash users who resided in different geographic regions of the County, as well as a Parks and Recreation Commission liaison and department representatives:

- Roseanne Carbone, St. Paul
- Barb Heideman, Falcon Heights
- Rose Quaday, Shoreview
- Laura Jean Rathmann, St. Paul
- Deb Schneider, White Bear Lake
- Philip Jenni, St. Paul (Park and Recreation Commission Liaison)

- Larry Holmberg, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department
- Greg Mack, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department
- Bill Schnieder, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department
- Mark Themig, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department

The review team examined six sites to determine how each site would meet the criteria established in the Administrative Policy. The following are the results of the review:

Site	Summary of Review	Summary of Findings
Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood  (Pilot Program Site)	Reviewed site for possible expansion to north to increase size and permit access to water.	Existing site meets criteria and expansion will better serve increasing use. Expansion will also provide access to water for dog use.  <i>Expansion of site to north is recommended.</i>
Woodview - Reservoir Woods Open Space,  Roseville	Reviewed both the Woodview Open Space (operated by Ramsey County) and the Reservoir Woods Open Space (operated by the City of Roseville) for possible location of additional off-leash area.	Reservoir Woods: Roseville's master plan for this site will not accommodate off-leash activity.  Woodview: Site meets criteria and serves population in the center of the County. Potential for accessible area at site.  <i>Creation of site at Woodview Open Space is recommended.</i>
Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park,  White Bear Township	Two sites were reviewed for possible creation of off-leash area: Bald Eagle segment and Otter Lake segment.	Bald Eagle Segment: Site lacks close parking. Master plan indicates trail development, which may interfere with off-leash use.  Otter Lake Segment: Site meets criteria, has existing parking, and a variety of terrain and vegetation.  <i>Creation of site at Otter Lake is recommended.</i>
Rice Creek Regional Trail Corridor, Shoreview	Site was reviewed for possible dog access to Rice Creek.	Water access would be separate from existing facility, require extensive fencing, and provide limited access area.  <i>Providing access to water at Rice Creek is not recommended. Minor expansion of existing site is recommended.</i>
Vadnais-Snail Lakes Regional Park, Shoreview	Two sites were reviewed for possible water access: north side of	Sites do not meet criteria. North side has extensive vegetation along

	Snail Lake and south side of Snail Lake.	shoreline. South side has limited space and is adjacent to active recreation areas.  <i>Providing water access is not recommended at either site.</i>
Island Lake County Park, Shoreview	Site was reviewed for possible water access to Island Lake.	Site does not meet criteria. Vegetation is extensive along shoreline and site size is limited.  <i>Providing water access is not recommended at this site.</i>

**Proposed Action**

The following outlines proposed action. However, implementation of any of these steps depends on the availability of funding.

1. Expand the Battle Creek site north to provide water access.\*
2. Create an additional off-leash site at Otter Lake.\*
3. Realign parking lot and conduct minor expansion at Rice Creek.\*
4. Create site at Woodview Open Space with additional accessible area.\*
5. Continue to research and attempt to identify additional water access areas.

(\*Details on proposed action follow.)

**Funding**

Funds have not been allocated in the department's operating budget for this program. In order to implement the program, funding sources will need to be explored. As with other elements of the off-leash efforts, a partnership with the off-leash area users to explore funding will facilitate implementation of the program. Three possible funding opportunities have been identified:

1. Corporate Sponsorship and/or Grants

Funding may be available from corporations such as pet food suppliers, veterinarian suppliers, granting agencies, etc. If these types of sources are identified, it might be more beneficial to have off-leash users apply for any funding, rather than the County.

2. User Donations

Donations were received for the creation of the pilot program. Additional funds could be solicited from users to continue development.

3. User fees

The concept of user fees could be explored. Although fees are charged for special use areas such as picnic shelters and pavilions, fees are not charged for general park use. In addition to developing fee policies and procedures, the issue of enforcement would need to be considered in greater detail.

**Battle Creek Regional Park**



## Off-Leash Dog Area

### Summary

- This pilot program site was evaluated for its current use, as well as possible expansion.
- Due to increased publicity and proximity to St. Paul, use at this site has grown considerably over the past three years.
- User comments have indicated a desire for increased space, as well as access to water for dog use that is currently out of the site boundaries.
- Many users have expressed concern regarding McKnight Road. Fencing should be installed along McKnight.

### Proposed Action

- Extend off-leash border north to provide access to pond.
- Relocate existing boundary markings to accurately reflect off-leash border.
- Relocate trail away from small pond to reduce erosion.
- Install crossing or bridge at deep culvert.
- Re-route trail around second culvert.
- Maintain existing circular trail.
- Install fencing along McKnight from southern border of area to north of pond.
- Install gate at McKnight entrance.

### Potential Future Action

- Create new access to the off-leash area from the new Upper Afton parking lot.
- Install bulletin board at picnic table.
- Improve turf in high use areas.

### Timeline

- Spring 2000, pending available funding.

### Application of Administrative Policy

Characteristic	Policy Goal	Review Team Findings	Estimated Costs
Size	Sites should be approximately 10 acres.	Expansion of the site to the north would create an additional 4.5 acres, creating a total off-leash area of 10.9 acres.	
Buffer Zones	100' buffer zone should be established around perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses.	Buffer zone could be established throughout the majority of the site. However, the perimeter may come close to a trail running along McKnight.	

Perimeter Markings	Carsonite markings with labels placed every 100'. Estimated pricing per marking (with labels on front and back) is \$17.25.	Perimeter is approximately 4,000'. Approximately 30 markings exist. Additional 10 markings would be needed.	\$170.25
Fencing	Where 100' buffer zone is not feasible, fencing may be considered to buffer use areas. Estimated pricing on "hog wire" type fencing (installed) is \$3.50/linear ft. Double gates run approximately \$400.	Fencing along McKnight should be considered. Pilot program users have expressed concern about the proximity of the site to McKnight. Approximately 1275 feet of fencing would be required.	Fencing = \$4,500 Double Gate = \$400
Signage	Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to the off-leash area. Directional signs may be posted where necessary. Estimated sign pricing is \$250 for rules signs, \$100 for directional signs.	Two rule signs exist. A third rule sign and directional sign may be required if an official access is created to the north.	\$350
Water Access for Dogs	Access to water for dog use will be a high priority.	Expansion of the site will provide water access to small pond on north end of site.	
Parking	A minimum of 10 vehicular parking spaces will be provided.	Ample parking exists at the Lower Afton lot. Additional parking exists at Upper Afton.	
Drinking Water	Potable water will not be provided, unless in place.	Drinking water available at picnic pavilion.	
Restroom Facilities	Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to the off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.	Portable restroom currently being provided at the Lower Afton parking lot.	\$55/month
Trash Receptacles	Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional receptacles will be provided where necessary.	Two receptacles are in place. If access is created from the north (Upper Afton Lot), an additional receptacle may be required.	
Picnic Tables/Benches	A picnic table or bench will be provided for each off-leash area.	One picnic table in use. No additional tables proposed.	
Accessibility	Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site in the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site.	Developing an official trail link to Upper Afton parking lot could provide accessibility to site. However, making entire site accessible would be difficult due to terrain.	

## Woodview Open Space

### Off-Leash Dog Area

#### Summary

- This possible expansion site was identified because it could serve the population in the center of the county.
- It is a large open space site that is currently underutilized. The primary use area would be an area that was previously used as garden plots. However, this site may not be useable during wet period.

- An additional 1.2 acre area could be made accessible but would need to be fenced.
- Parking does not exist on the site. However, future plans include a parking lot and trail access to the Reservoir Woods area. Fencing may be needed along trail segment.
- Larpenteur Avenue is a busy street and fencing may be necessary on the roadside perimeter.
- There is no water access.

## Proposed Action

- Create site with primary access off of Larpenteur Avenue.
- Trail/path route would need to be determined and cleared.
- Create additional accessible fenced site.

## Timeline

- Summer 2000, pending available funding.

## Application of Administrative Policy

Characteristic	Policy Goal	Review Team Findings	Estimated Costs
Size	Sites should be approximately 10 acres.	Initial boundaries indicate that the primary site would be 8 acres, with an additional 1.2 acre accessible area.	
Buffer Zones	100' buffer zone should be established around perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses.	No existing uses. However, future trail and parking lot would require fencing in some areas.	
Perimeter Markings	Carsonite markings with labels placed every 100'. Estimated pricing per marking (with labels on front and back) is \$17.25.	Perimeter is approximately 2,500'. Approximately 25 markings would be needed.	\$431.25
Fencing	Where 100' buffer zone is not feasible, fencing may be considered to buffer use areas. Estimated pricing on "hog wire" type fencing (installed) is \$3.50/linear ft. Double gates run approximately \$400.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing along Larpenteur should be considered (900').</li> <li>Additional fencing along trail may be needed (770').</li> <li>Entire accessible site would need fencing (900').</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fencing along Larpenteur = \$3,150</li> <li>Fencing along trail = \$2,695</li> <li>Accessible area fencing = \$3,150</li> <li>Double Gates (2) = \$800</li> </ul>
Signage	Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to	Two rule signs would need to be installed.	\$500

	the off-leash area. Directional signs may be posted where necessary. Estimated sign pricing is \$250 for rules signs, \$100 for directional signs.		
Water Access for Dogs	Access to water for dog use will be a high priority.	No water access available.	
Parking	A minimum of 10 vehicular parking spaces will be provided.	Construction of 20-car parking lot is planned for 2000 and funded by the City of Roseville.	
Drinking Water	Potable water will not be provided, unless in place.	No drinking water.	
Restroom Facilities	Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to the off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.	Portable restrooms would be provided.	\$55/month
Trash Receptacles	Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional receptacles will be provided where necessary.	Trash receptacles would be provided at each entrance.	
Picnic Tables/Benches	A picnic table or bench will be provided for each off-leash area.	One picnic table would be provided.	
Accessibility	Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site in the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site.	Potential for creation of smaller accessible area with paved trail access. Due to proximity of parking lot and trail, fencing would be needed.	Cost of paved trails (to be determined).

## Bald Eagle/Otter Lakes Regional Park

### Off-Leash Dog Area

#### Summary

- This possible expansion site was identified because it could serve residents in the northeastern part of the County. The site is a large open space area that is not established for other types of recreational use. It is relatively flat, with both wooded and open areas.
- Although much of the site is adjacent to Otter Lake, weeds would limit water access to only the boat launch area. It is thought that this would not conflict with boaters because the launch has relatively low use.
- Existing parking is available.
- Fencing along Otter Lake Road may need to be considered.

#### Proposed Action

- Create site with access from the parking lot south of the boat launch.
- Boat launch area could provide water access.
- Area along Otter Lake Road may need fencing.

#### Timeline

- Spring, 2000

## Application of Administrative Policy

Characteristic	Policy Goal	Review Team Findings	Estimated Costs
Size	Sites should be approximately 10 acres.	Initial boundaries locations indicate that the site would be 12.3 acres.	
Buffer Zones	100' buffer zone should be established around perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses.	The only existing use is boat launch parking and unofficial walking trails. Throughout the majority of the site, a buffer zone could be established. However, additional signage may be needed in the boat launch area if water access is permitted.	
Perimeter Markings	Carsonite markings with labels placed every 100'. Estimated pricing per marking (with labels on front and back) is \$17.25.	Perimeter is approximately 3,568'. Approximately 35 markings would be needed.	\$603.75
Fencing	Where 100' buffer zone is not feasible, fencing may be considered to buffer use areas. Estimated pricing on "hog wire" type fencing (installed) is \$3.50/linear ft. Double gates run approximately \$400.	Fencing along Otter Lake Road may need to be considered. Approximately 1,111 feet of fencing would be required.	\$3,900
Signage	Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to the off-leash area. Directional signs may be posted where necessary. Estimated sign pricing is \$250 for rules signs, \$100 for directional signs.	One rule sign would need to be installed	\$250
Water Access for Dogs	Access to water for dog use will be a high priority.	Water access is available at the boat launch. Weeds prohibit access at other points.	
Parking	A minimum of 10 vehicular parking spaces will be provided.	The current parking lot can accommodate users.	
Drinking Water	Potable water will not be provided, unless in place.	No drinking water.	
Restroom Facilities	Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to the off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.	Portable restrooms would be provided.	\$55/month
Trash Receptacles	Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional receptacles will be provided where necessary.	Trash receptacles would be provided at the entrance.	
Picnic Tables/Benches	A picnic table or bench will be provided for each off-leash area.	One picnic table would be provided.	
Accessibility	Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site in the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site.	Accessibility to site is possible, but gravel lot would make accessibility difficult. In addition, terrain limits accessibility in the site.	

# Rice Creek Trail Corridor

## Off-Leash Dog Area

### Summary

- This pilot program site was evaluated for its current use, as well as possible access to Rice Creek on the east side of Lexington Avenue. However, the shoreline, vegetation, and distance from the existing parking lot do not make this option feasible. A small pond is used by some dogs, although the water level drops in late summer.
- Parking is available, but the popularity of the site has exceeded the lot's capacity. A realignment of the existing site is needed to create additional spaces.
- Expansion of the site to include the wooded area will provide better access and a variety of vegetation.

### Proposed Action

- Expand the northern boundary to include the wooded area.
- Relocate the access trail to reduce erosion around pond.
- Realign the parking lot to increase the number of parking spaces.

### Future Action

- Construction of new entrance road and paved parking lot.

### Timeline

- Spring, 2000

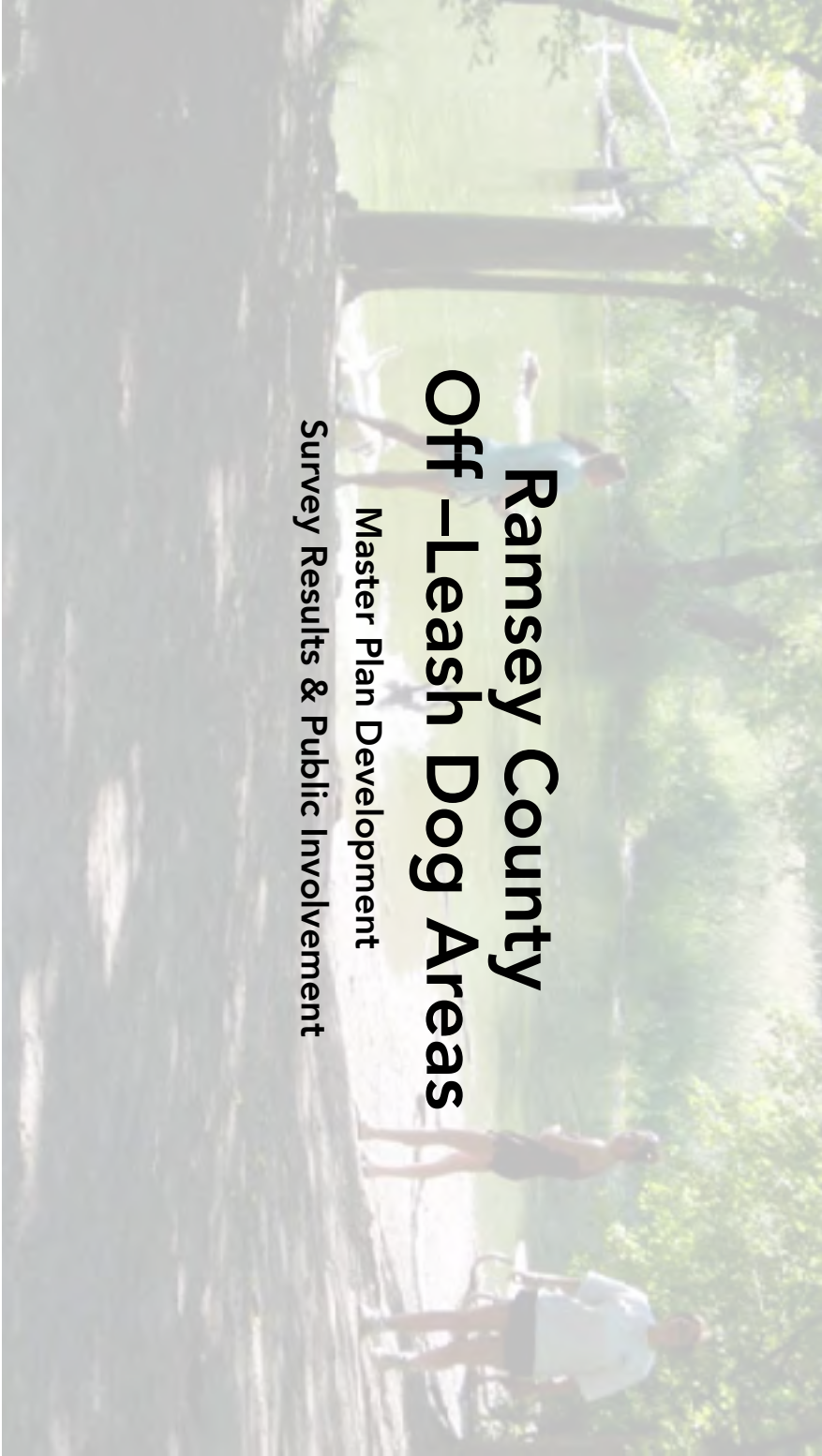
### Application of Administrative Policy

Characteristic	Policy Goal	Review Team Findings	Estimated Costs
Size	Sites should be approximately 10 acres.	Minor expansion of this site would result in approximately 14.8 acres.	
Buffer Zones	100' buffer zone should be established around perimeter to avoid conflict with other park users or adjacent land uses.	Appropriate buffer zones currently exist, and could also be incorporated when relocating the buffer zone.	
Perimeter Markings	Carsonite markings with labels placed every 100'. Estimated pricing per marking (with labels on front and back) is \$17.25.	Perimeter is approximately 3,253'. Approximately 20 markings exist. An additional 13 markings would be needed.	\$224.25

Fencing	Where 100' buffer zone is not feasible, fencing may be considered to buffer use areas. Estimated pricing on "hog wire" type fencing (installed) is \$3.50/linear ft. Double gates run approximately \$400.	Not required at this site.	
Signage	Rules signs will be posted at each entrance to the off-leash area. Directional signs may be posted where necessary. Estimated sign pricing is \$250 for rules signs, \$100 for directional signs.	Two rule signs exist. No additional signs required.	
Water Access for Dogs	Access to water for dog use will be a high priority.	Water access is available at the pond. No other water access will be provided.	
Parking	A minimum of 10 vehicular parking spaces will be provided.	14 parking spaces exist, but it is not adequate capacity. Realignment of the existing lot would result in 24 total spaces. Master plan for the Regional Trail Corridor calls for removal of existing parking lot and creation of 30-carpaved lot with access road, funded through regional park funds.	\$1,000
Drinking Water	Potable water will not be provided, unless in place.	No drinking water.	
Restroom Facilities	Restroom facilities will be provided in close proximity to the off-leash areas. In most cases, these will be portable facilities.	Portable restroom would be provided.	\$55/month
Trash Receptacles	Trash receptacles and removal service will be provided at each entrance point. Additional receptacles will be provided where necessary.	Trash receptacles are located at the parking lot.	
Picnic Tables/Benches	A picnic table or bench will be provided for each off-leash area.	One picnic table is provided.	
Accessibility	Priority will be given to sites that can accommodate access for individuals with disabilities. At least one site in the system will include an accessible trail from the parking lot to the interior of the site.	Long-term plans include installation of paved parking lot that could provide accessibility in the future.	

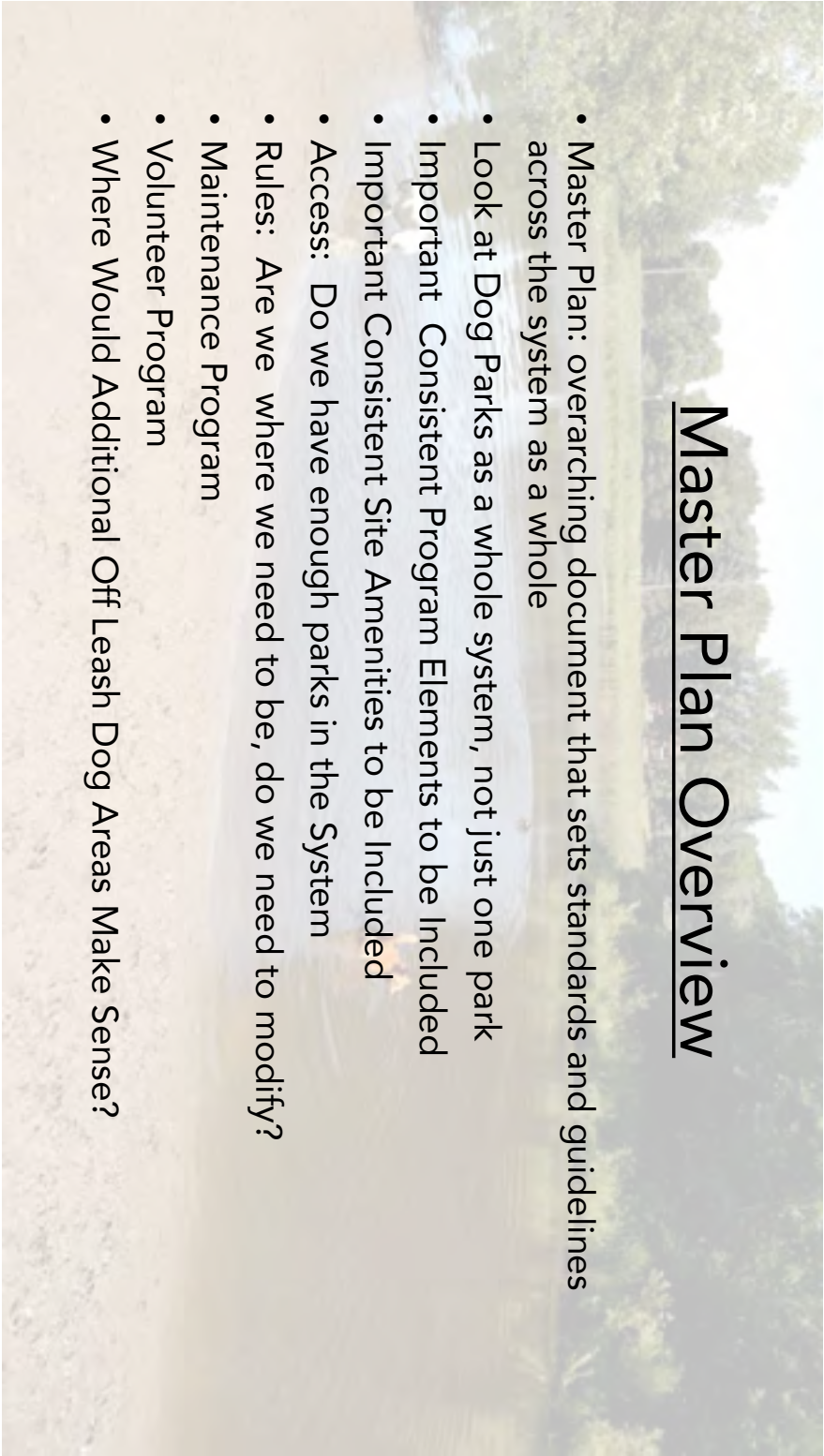


Appendix B Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department Public Engagement Presentation



## Master Plan Meeting Schedule

- 5:30 Introduction & Short Presentation Appx. 10-15 Min.
- 5:45 Break into Groups for Diagramming Exercise Appx. 45 Min.
- 6:30 Re-Convene for Question & Answer Appx. 30 Min.



## Master Plan Overview

- Master Plan: overarching document that sets standards and guidelines across the system as a whole
- Look at Dog Parks as a whole system, not just one park
- Important Consistent Program Elements to be Included
- Important Consistent Site Amenities to be Included
- Access: Do we have enough parks in the System
- Rules: Are we where we need to be, do we need to modify?
- Maintenance Program
- Volunteer Program
- Where Would Additional Off Leash Dog Areas Make Sense?

## Do We Need More Off Leash Dog Areas In Our System

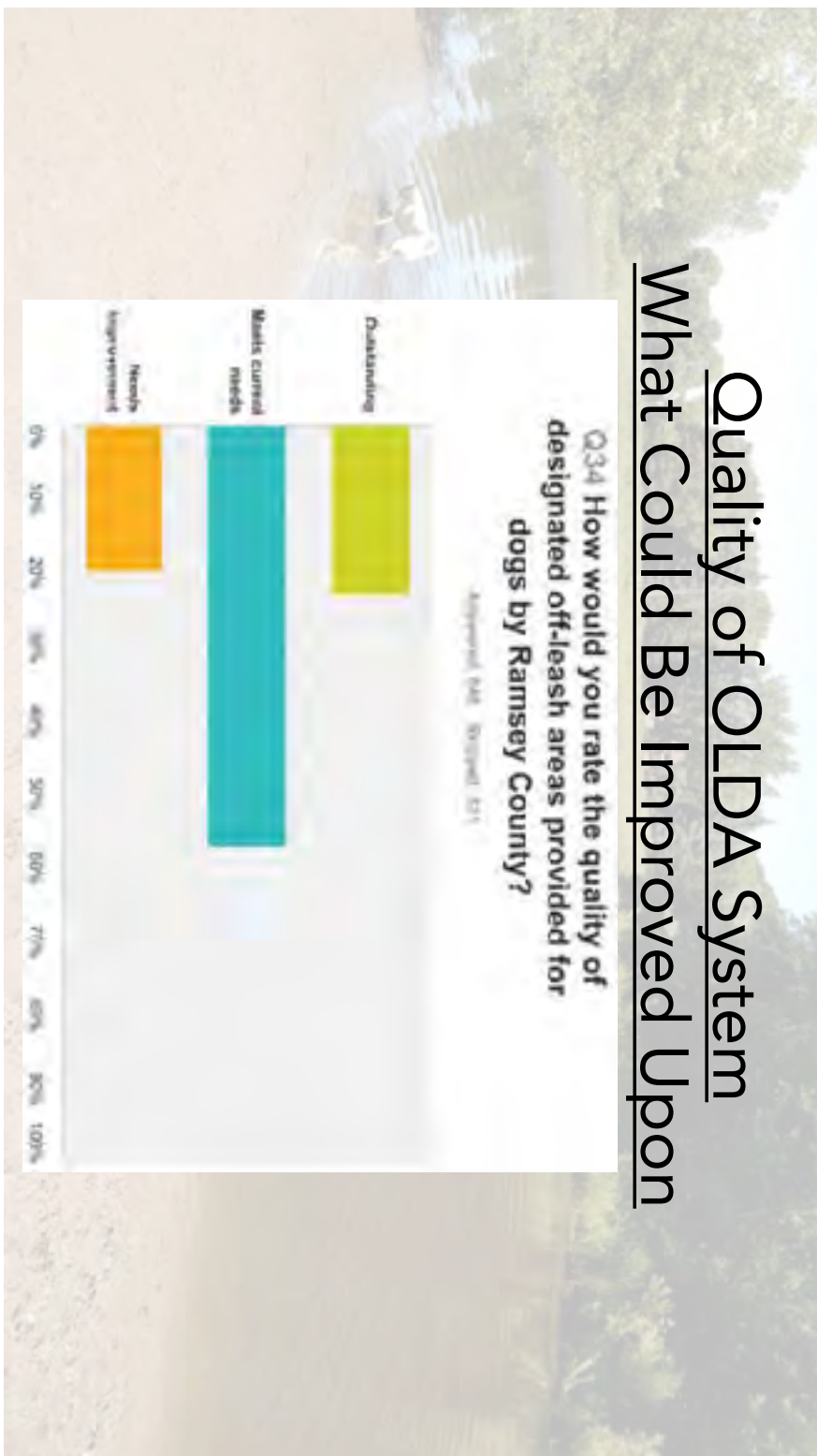
- Average Drive Time Maps
- People Overwhelmingly Drive to the Park, Greater Than 95%
- Average of 35 MPH





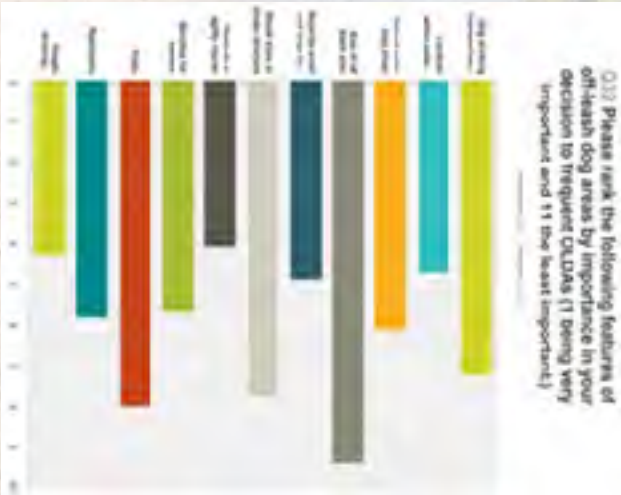


# Quality of OLDA System What Could Be Improved Upon



# Quality of OLDA System What Could Be Improved Upon

- Top 4 Features/Amenities
  1. Size
  2. Paths
  3. Shade
  4. Drinking Fountains
- Followed by
  - Natural Water Play Area
  - Restrooms
  - Benches
  - Separate Small And Large Dog Area
- Other Ideas?





## Visual Example Survey



### • Paths

- Aggregate Surface
- Bituminous
- Wood Chips
- Other?

# Visual Example Survey



- Shade
- Elaborate
- Sails
- Trees
- Combine with Benches/Tables etc.

Visual Example Survey



- Drinking Fountains
- Dog Only
- Multi-Species





Visual Example Survey



- Water Play
  - Natural
  - Man Made
  - Combination

## Visual Example Survey



- Restrooms
  - Central Piece with Shade, Benches/tables
  - Stand Alone
  - In Park
  - At Trailhead/Parking Lot




# Visual Example Survey



- Other Amenities or Features
  - Separate Small and Large Dog Areas
  - Agility Course
  - Others?







## Dog Park Rules

- Existing Rules
  1. Owners must clean up and dispose of feces
  2. Dogs must be leashed prior to entering and upon leaving the off leash area
  3. Owners must be in verbal command of their dogs at all times and prevent aggressive behavior, fighting or aggressive barking
  4. Owners must have visible leash at all times
  5. Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by other dogs
  6. Dogs must stay within assigned boundary
  7. Dogs must be properly licensed and vaccinated
  8. Dogs in heat are not allowed
  9. Owners must comply with all park rules and regulations
- Proposed Rule Changes/Additions



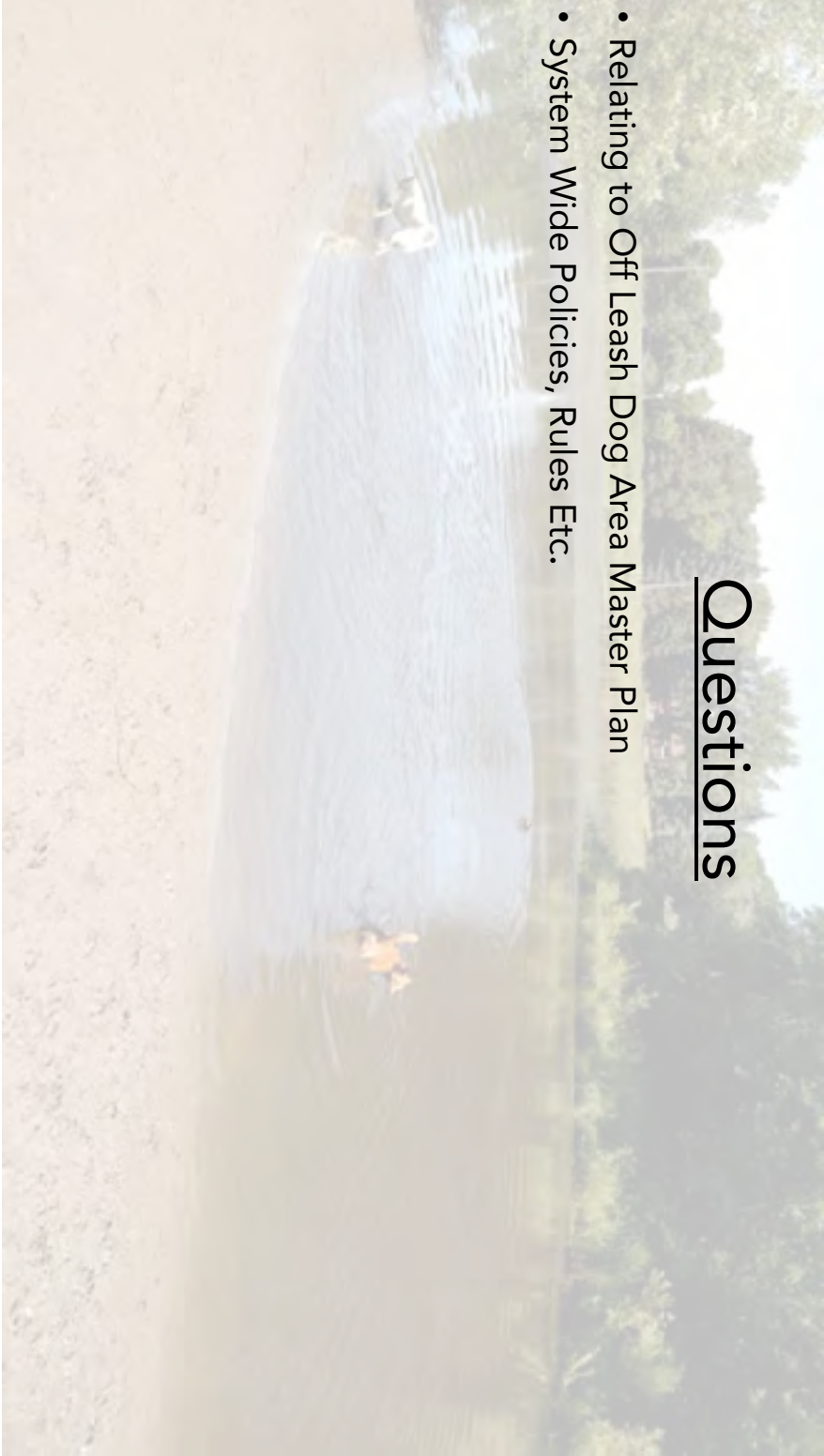


# Volunteer/Maintenance

- **Guardians**
  - Help Identify and Report Dog Park Maintenance Issues
  - Make Suggestions and Recommendations for Dog Park Improvements
  - Identify Inappropriate Use and Report to Department Staff or Law Enforcement
- **Ramsey County**
  - Interior Trail Maintenance Physical Trails & Brush)
  - Invasive Species Control
  - Mowing
- **Other Ideas & Suggestions**

## Break For Group Diagramming Exercise

- Assume Brand New Off Leash Dog Area Development
  - Where would amenities be located?
  - Fully fenced/separate large dog small dog areas?
- May Assume access to Water Feature
  - Schematic Drawing of Ideal Layout
    - Think of a Bubble Diagram
- No Specific Park in Mind
- Gathering Ideas for Off Leash Dog Area Standards System Wide



# Questions

- Relating to Off Leash Dog Area Master Plan
- System Wide Policies, Rules Etc.

### Appendix C Comments from Public Engagement Meeting at Tamarack Nature Center 9-11-2017

1. Move to the south, make larger, split in half. Open ½ one week ½ the next
2. There seems to be a need to improve the email list – to make it easier to sign up, and to get updates like survey requests, meeting notices, dog park information, etc.
3. Animal control/trainers provide seminars at dog park
4. Start counting users at each of the dog parks
5. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on planning for Ramsey County Off-leash dog areas. I'm aware of the problems with establishing a dog beach, but also of the potential solutions. The county beach area has great potential
6. RE: otter lake. Issue – Drainage, establish better holding ponds. County Needs to budget for maintenance within the park
7. RE: Otter Lake. Fencing needs to be replaced. Small dogs are able to escape and there are barbs on the top which can cause injury.
8. Otter lake Dog Park Suggestions: Additional parking lot on SW corner, with entry into both large and small parks. Keep newly – proposed trail on east side of otter lake road to the north. Expand larger park to south, closing the north area of the park. Add one more restricted time for small dogs only to the smaller dog park area.
9. RE: Otter Lake. Add additional dog park land to the south, replacing the lower/wetland which can be removed from park and fence off that area. 2nd access point to the south to relieve congestion at entrance. Possible walking path access 2nd entrance from parking lot.

## Appendix D Comments and Charrette Drawings from Public Engagement Meeting at Battle Creek Community Center 9-21-2017

1. Emergency personnel need to know where the park is located when 911 is called (geolocation Markers)
2. Thanks, great meeting
3. Small dog parks with separate entrance, no seating or minimal seating at entrance. Open space as well as paths. Minimal seating throughout so people don't congregate
4. We need a stronger fence at the Battle Creek Dog Park. Thank you for this spectacular park.
5. Battle Creek needs more security for the parking lots. Despite the camera, cars are still getting broken into
6. Would like water for dogs. Do not cut tall weeds – limit to grassy areas. Natural paths
7. Take picnic tables out of common big areas – there is one up in a secluded area (that's good!) the one in the upper meadow should be moved to. People congregate and the problems arise from people gathering and not exercising their dog
8. Little Library Installation for informational material
9. Minimize places where people will sit and congregate. When dogs congregate in one place, problems can arise. Best to keep moving. Ok for benches in various places, but not to create an area where people gather. Natural paths are best! Dirt paths, wood chips. No asphalt – gets too hot on dogs feet in summer, slippery in winter
10. It would be nice if Ramsey County could help with pulling up the plants that have burrs on them that would be helpful. Add to Rules: no digging.
11. In my perfect world, it would be nice to have a little station where we could rinse the dogs off after leaving the park with warm water. That is only needed in a park with swamps. (like BC) places where dogs get muddy
12. Battle Creek Off-leash dog area just needs more attention from the county. Most users love it the way it is; though the volunteers could use more assistance from the county. For example, access to a wood chipper to dispose of the buckthorn trees would be good, or putting down sand on the slippery paths in the winter would make park better
13. Thank you for the awesome BC dog park
14. Water at Battle Creek. Poison Ivy Removal. Ice Reduction in Winter. Please help.

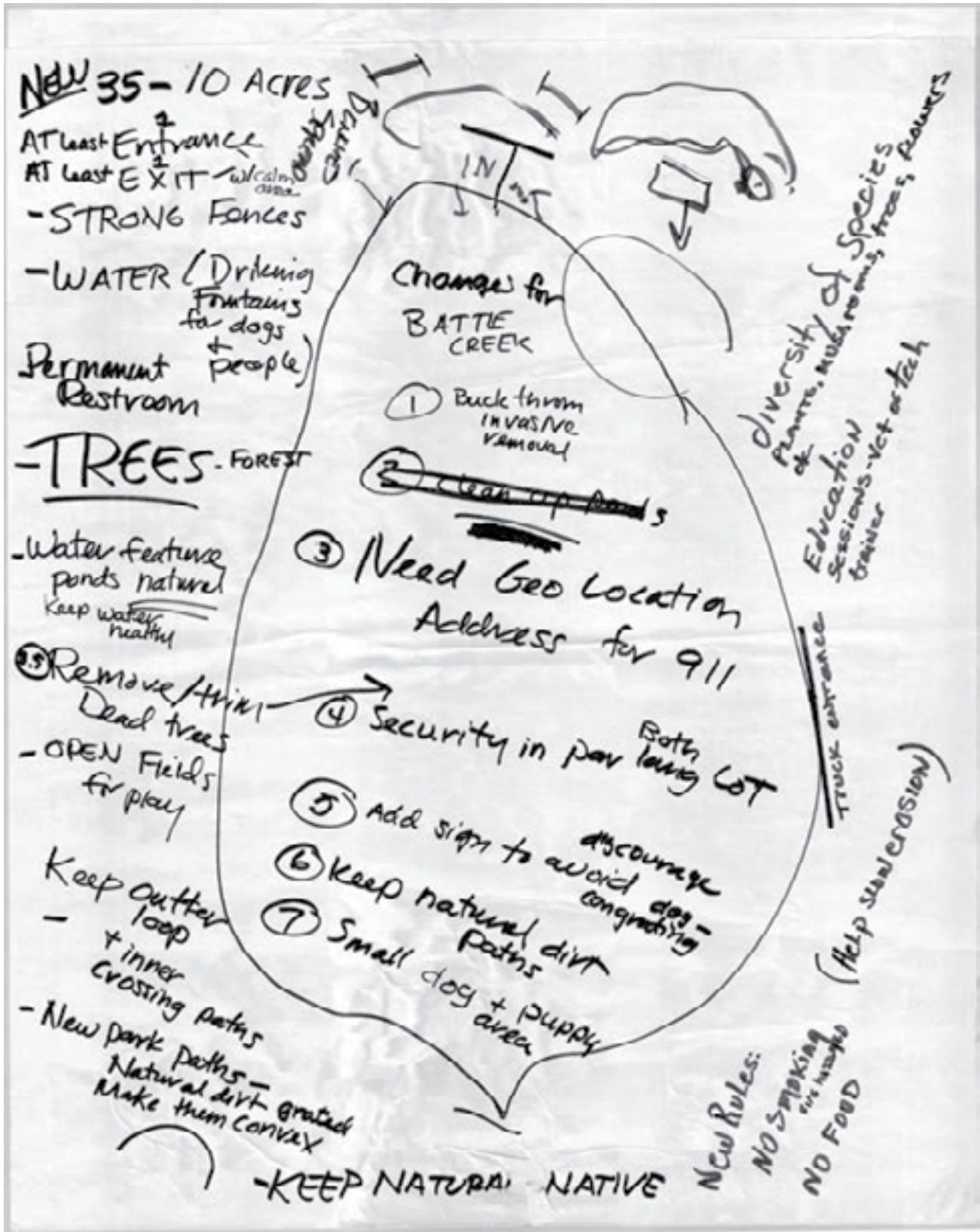


We love Battle Creek off-leash dog park!!

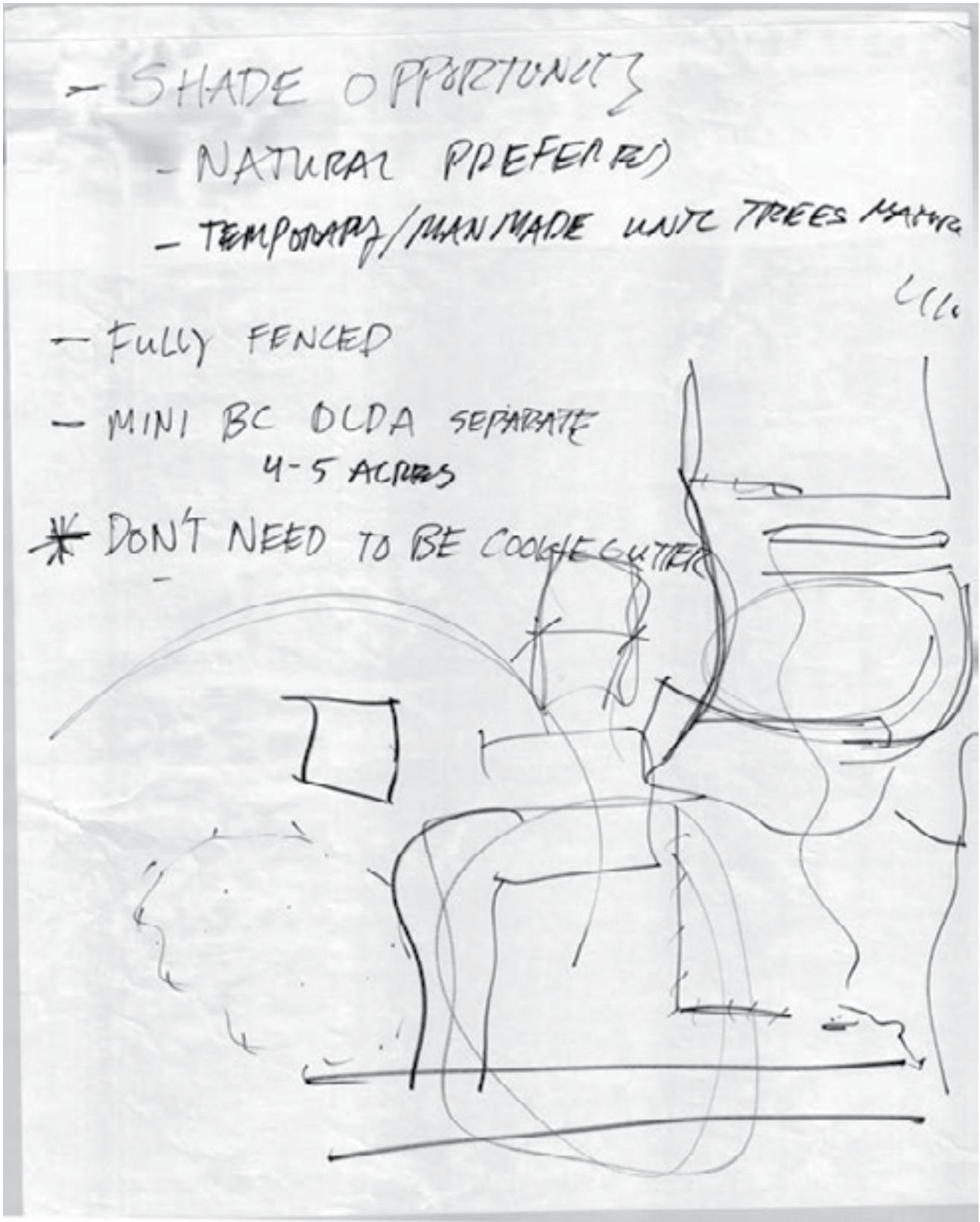
- Lots of entrances (there are two off the parking lots and several just from the street, so there are plenty of access points!)
- Natural pathways! (wood chips are nice addition!)
- Wash station\* and bathrooms outside the entrance \*for rinsing muddy dogs & boots (people)
- Charge a permit fee (and provide incentives so people with lifetime licenses could pay less! :) Also people could donate extra for a fund for people who can't afford the \$)
- Do not create space for people to congregate! Benches open so often on trails is great! Picnic tables... wrong message
- Keep in mind this is a dog park where the "amenities" should be aimed more toward dog joy than people convenience. :)

Battle Creek OLDA is the BEST! :)

\* Little kids  
Make some dogs  
VERY anxious &  
!snout!

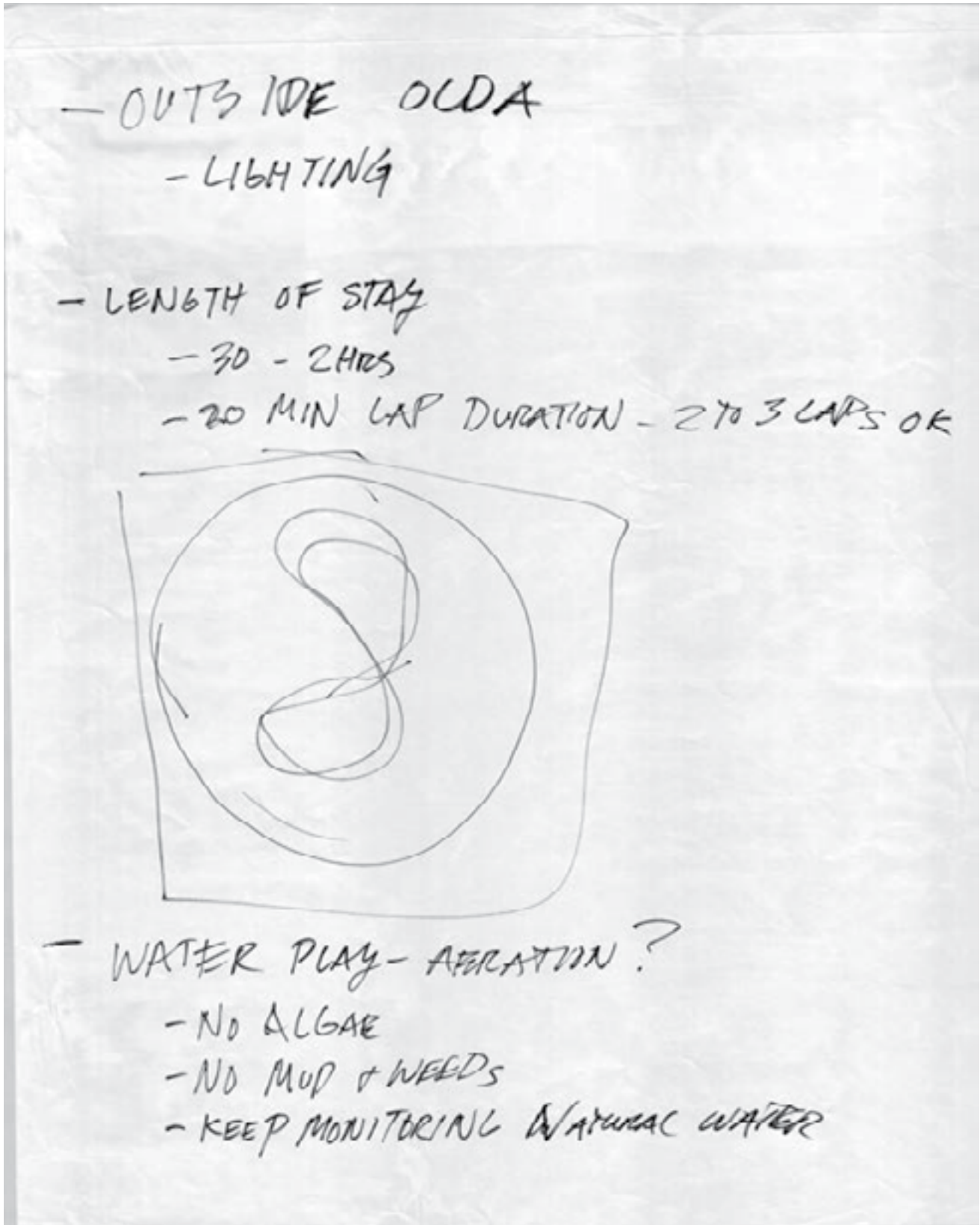




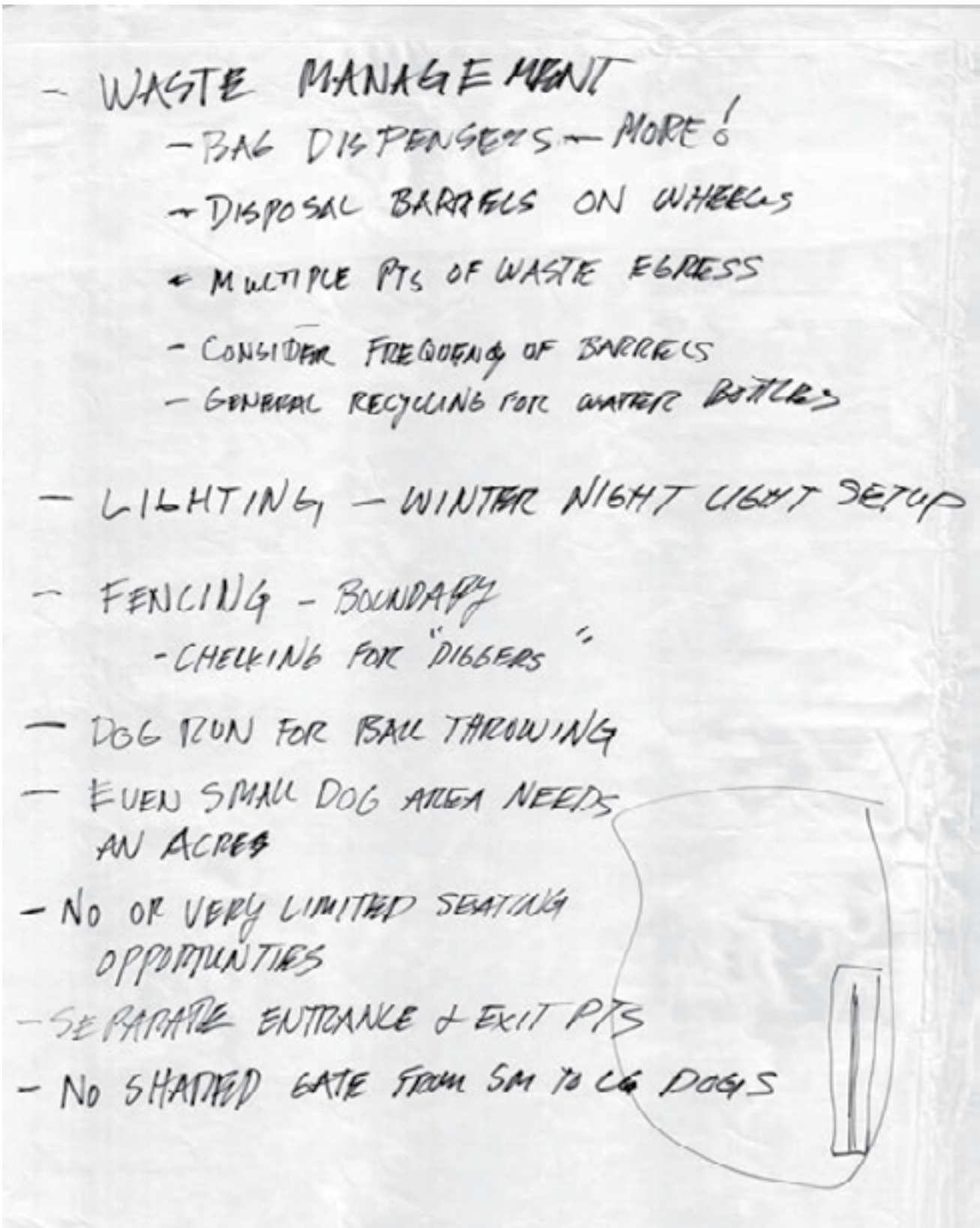


- SMALL DOG / BIG DOG SEPARATE ENTRANCES
- ~~KEEP~~ KEEP PEOPLE RUNNING
- NOTHING AT ENTRANCE; GET PEOPLE TO OTHER AREAS  
ENTRANCE SEQUENCE
- DIVERSE TERRAIN
- OVERUSE LEADS TO EROSION
- NO PAVILION; NATURAL TREES PREFERRED
- \* WATER - BOTH PEOPLE + DOGS
  - IN THE OLDA
- USE AVAILABLE PARKING TO CONTROL USER #s
- NATURAL TRAILS
  - WOOD CHIPS
  - GRAVEL









Volunteer Groups:

- Are needed
- ~~find~~ balancing Maint between Staff & vol.
- get more volunteers.
  
- interior trail Signage
- Maps
- Separate double gates work
  - 1 for in
  - 1 for out
  
- Dog fountain @ Entrance or ~~to~~ Main sitting area
  
- All Fenced in
  - wire & chainlink work
  - no angle or corners (Reduce dogs to be ~~contained~~
    - Reduce
  
- Dog Signage/Educational in larger areas
  - help avoid fights
  
- TREAT NATURAL WATER SOURCES
  
- Reduce amount of picnic tables
  
- Bridges - natural material
  - no-metal



9/21/17

- Benches - inside park  
(add to park - more seating)  
- (small benches 1-2 people)

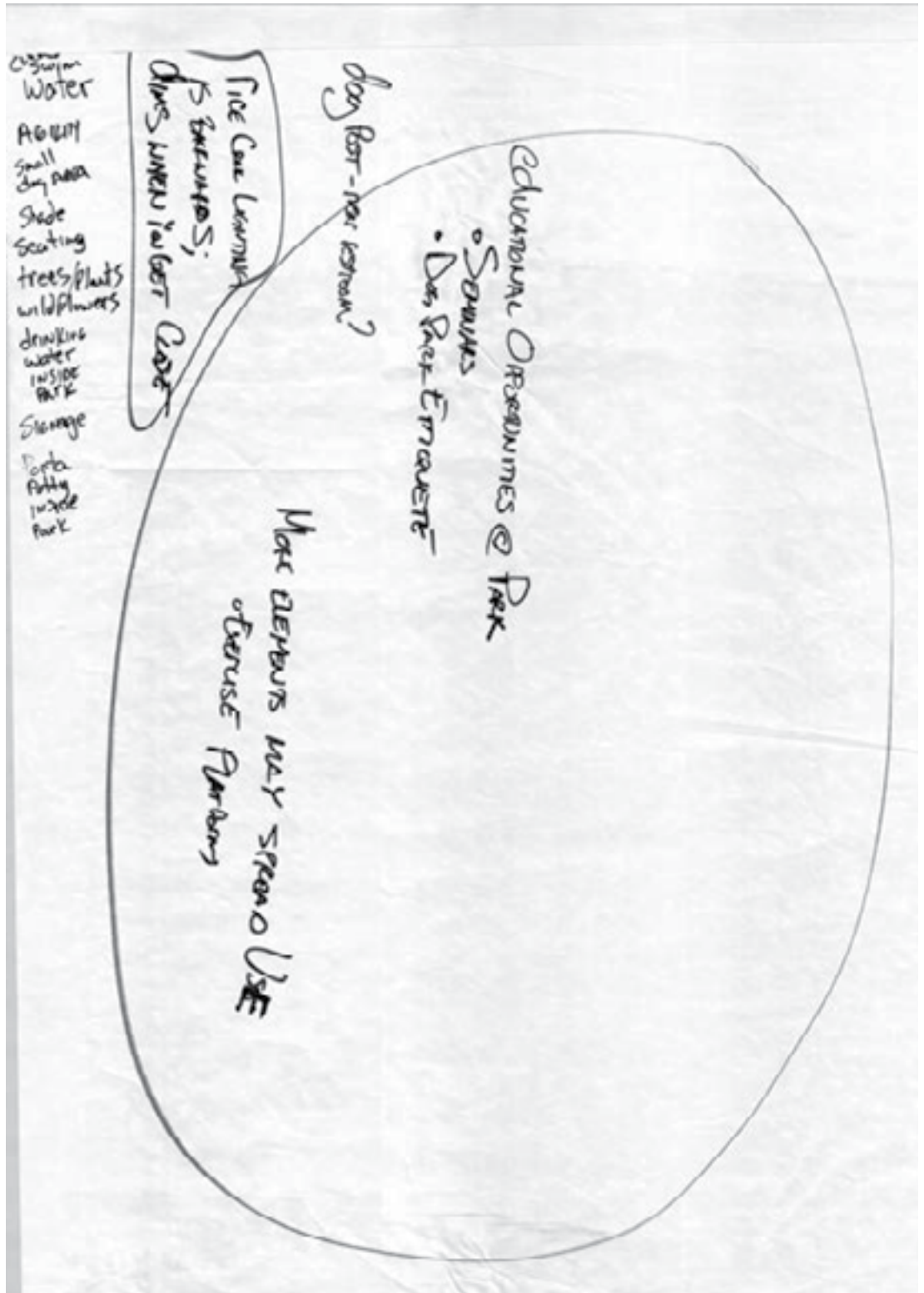
Have:  
Option for small dog area.

**NO ASPHALT!!**  
(only into areas for entry/seating)

- Natural v.s. man-made water area: washing area. - outside of gates  
- mult areas.  
not near gate entrances
- Small water feature
- Natural water not runoff
- INCREASED SAFETY  
- Camera's
- \* MORE DISPENSERS & RECYCLE BAGS
- + Educational signs for proper dog use.
- \* Safety of kids (should they be allowed under a certain age).



Appendix E Comments and Charrette Drawings from Public Engagement Meeting at the New Brighton Community Center 10-4-2017









- less emph. on larger free play areas
- MORE trails -
  - Wider - ~~to~~ min 8-10' min
  - loops
  - maps
- \* Sitting areas should be in the OLDA further.
  - creates less gathering of Dog Fights
- \* prefer trees over hard structure
- \* lights.
  - Depends on park
  - Could be a safety problem with lights
- \* like the mail boxes throughout the park
- \* Education kiosk boards
- \* Porta potty - in dog park area
- \* post dog safety & education
- \* like variety in dog parks. small to large  
offer different amenities

### Appendix F Comments Recieved From Final Draft Open Comment Period

1. What kind of feedback are you soliciting? I just read the survey results and the report, and thank you, it is really a good set of information. But now, as I said, what kind of feedback are you asking for?

There are a group of us in St. Paul's District 10 who have been meeting to try to establish an OLDA in or adjacent to Como Regional Park aand I would like to forward this for their review.

2. Thank you for continuing to provide recreational opportunities for people and their dogs in the Ramsey County off-leash dog areas.

First, I'm disappointed that more wasn't done to find new opportunities for aquatic exercise areas. As you know, the City of White Bear Lake has been providing a dog beach on a wonderful spot with clear water and a sandy bottom, but has been under pressure from several neighboring residents to move it to a place that's not so near their homes. It would be great if an alternate site could be found and developed to satisfy both dog owners and neighborhood residents.

Second, although I've been involved in buckthorn removal at Otter Lake dog park--including cutting, treatment of the stems with herbicide, and removal of the slash offsite--I don't know what the following sentence in the master plan means: "Restoration within the off-leash dog area is difficult because of the consistent heavy use and apprehension for herbicide use on invasive vegetation." And I believe that the following statement is incomplete: "Past restoration within the off-leash dog area has been limited and consisted of some cutting and stacking of buckthorn on site."

Third, I don't believe there's any disagreement from dog owners on the need to fence-off muddy wetland areas in the dog parks. Several such areas have been fenced-off in Otter Lake dog park without controversy. There's no need to make the process seem so complicated or controversial as in the following statement: "To preserve wetlands, access to these areas should be permanently closed to regain plant growth and for continued protection of wetland habitat."

Fourth, in relation to the point about wetland conservation that's been made in the plan, I think that there's potential to develop one or more of the larger wetland areas in Battle Creek dog park for improved aquatic recreation, rather than for improved wetland conservation. Although our family dogs aren't swimmers, I've watched many times with delight as people and their dogs play in and out of the water in these ponds. There's nothing like it.

Finally, despite the critical nature of my comments above, the thing I'd like most to say, again, is thank you for continuing to provide recreational opportunities for people and their dogs in the Ramsey County off-leash dog areas.

3. Should not have included peoples email addresses in the final document.  
Love that someone listed their primary language as Husky. Good one.
4. I would like to thank everyone involved in this process. I really appreciate the time and effort put into understanding, conserving, and improving our dog p arks. As for comments; I read the report briefly and I have some first impressions, however, I do need additional time to do further analysis.
  - 1) Equity Plan- Community Outreach: Battle Creek is a model of cultural and ethnic diversity. We have sizeable Asian, Black, Hispanic, Muslim (best guess by dress), and many other ethnicities including Canadian. We also have a LGBTQ population. Elderly people frequent the park as do young people. We have a number of disabled individuals on a regular basis. All people are welcome.
  - 2) Open Space Preservation: At Battle Creek we have volunteers pull Buckthorn up by the roots. Much

work is done to encourage natural plants, grasses, milkweed and trees. Of course more help would always be welcome.

Erosion is a problem, but I personally believe, amateur eradication of erosion can be troublesome. Case in point, the swimming hole at Battle Creek. Logs used to "stop erosion" create safety hazards for people and dogs trying to reach the water. There should be at least one straight access to water that is not obstructed. Seniors, people with disabilities, children, and others should be considered when building erosion breakers.

Trails are a similar issue. I'd like guardians to work with professionals to come up with solutions to trail issues. Not two groups each working alone.

Please do not fill in any wetlands for dog parks even if you can. Preservation of the natural state is important.

3) As the population of the St Paul metro area grows, use and number of dogs per person increases. Week-end are sometimes packed with families, strollers, multiple dogs. Each year use increases exponentially. We have several commercial dog walkers who use the park daily. We also have people who bring packs of huskies or other breeds and just let them run. Many of the "rules" are completely ignored. Perhaps we should revisit the rules and the placement of rule signs so we have better hopes of some type of compliance.

That's all for now more to come with further analysis.

5. \* Most of this looks good.

\* Fencing should be installed regardless of any buffer area for safety of the dogs.

\* It'd be nice to have drinking water \*inside\* the fenced area, not just outside of the entrance. Right next to the entrance on the inside is fine - it doesn't need to be in the middle or anything, just not require actually exiting through the gates to access.

\* While providing double-gated entrances is good, there is also a need to teach people how to use them - I constantly see people opening the second gate while the first is still open.

\* The hours of operation REALLY need to be expanded. 30 minutes after sunset is before people even get off work in the winter, much less home to pick up the dog, then to the dog park, then an hour or so in the park. As you might expect, nobody actually follows this rule currently as a result. I would suggest just using times - either 5 or 6am to 10pm.

\* With respect to fees, I don't mind paying one to use "area dog parks", but I definitely DO mind paying a bunch of different fees for parks managed by different government entities. One of the biggest reasons I use the Ramsey County ones is to avoid that headache. A donation system sounds nice. I would expect to make any donations online with a credit card, but others surely would prefer cash or check on-site, so both options should be available. If you went to a fee, there really ought to be a reciprocity arrangement with the municipal ones in Oakdale, Stillwater, and Woodbury. It should be noted that the statement on page 25 that a vehicle entry permit is required for the two in Anoka County is incorrect - they are associated with parks that require a permit, but the dog park itself is exempt.

\* For the volunteer program, it's generally unclear to the public what the relationship is between the county and volunteer groups, who is responsible for what, and who should be contacted either with concerns or how to help - that's just a communication issue.



6. These plans look dynamite and we are pretty excited about it all.  
Water and some shade!  
There are many dogs in my neighborhood (snell-ham) and we'd love a place we did not have to DRIVE to.  
I have 2 Boston Tertiars and we frequent many of the DP'S. Today we brought a jug of water and did a little clean up.  
THANK YOU for your work on this project, it is much appreciated.

7. I want to thank you and others for all the work that's been done to discuss the off-leash dog areas. I am a dog person who thinks dogs in the US have a long way to go being socialized and such compared to many places in Europe (for example). I've loved taking our dog to the off leash dog parks and I think they are phenomenal. We've frequented Arkright mostly and Battle Creek now and again.

I love our natural areas and having room to run. I also like having wet areas that can be chosen or not chosen--there are days/times when I don't want a wet dog to deal with in the car. While I applaud being open minded in discussion and presenting options, in reviewing the whole discussion, presentation and plan as well as feedback, I feel strongly that we do not need and shouldn't have an amusement park for dogs. I'm not against some agility but i really didn't like the fake pools which were called Man-Made water play or Combination. I strongly feel it's a waste of tax payer dollars that could be better used elsewhere rather than a special interest group for dogs.

I love my pet and most every dog I meet and I love our dog parks. I'd like to see more dog parks and a dog friendly attitude across the United States starting in Ramsey County, but please don't go overboard and spend incredible dollars to build some amusement park for dogs when dogs can be well served otherwise and our people programs and tax base is what it is.

That's my opinion and feedback on the off-leash area plan. Thank you and your staff once again for having an open ended discussion to determine likes/dislikes and perceived needs.