



BEAVER LAKE COUNTY PARK MASTER PLAN

January 2021

Prepared by:



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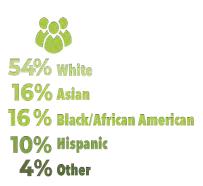
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Project Overview

Ramsey County is in the process of preparing a redevelopment master plan for Beaver Lake County Park. Beaver Lake Park is located in the cities of Saint Paul and Maplewood. The majority of the 55-acre park consists of Beaver Lake and its surrounding wetlands, stormwater retention areas and other natural areas. The park has a small, developed area that includes a grass play field, a picnic area and shelter, a playground, a fishing pier, a parking lot, and a trail. The County is interested in expanding and modifying the facilities and programming in the park to both enhance the natural features of the park and better serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

Ramsey County's objectives for redeveloping Beaver Lake County Park are to:

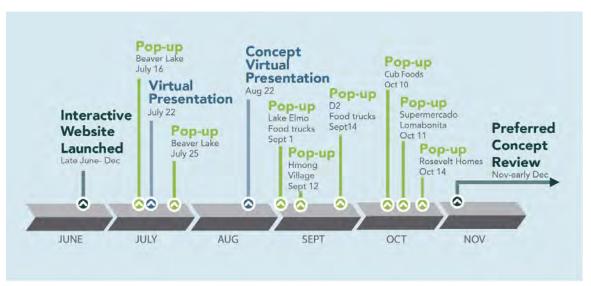
- Provide outdoor recreational facilities and amenities that represent the needs and wants of the neighborhood community.
- Provide high quality community spaces that promote an enriched culture for all people, all ages, and all abilities.
- Provide outdoor recreation facilities and amenities that complement the natural resource base.
- Provide outdoor recreation facilities, amenities, and site components that incorporate sustainability and green infrastructure for long-term resiliency.



Beaver Lake area race and ethnicity

Engagement Summary

The County engaged people who live in the surrounding neighborhoods in the master planning process for the park using a mix of strategies (see engagement timeline below). About half of the people within two miles of the park are people of color - primarily African American, Asian and Latino/Hispanic - and about a third are children under the age of 18. The County wants to ensure that all people, regardless of ethnicity, age, or ability, are included in the planning process.



Schedule of engagement events and locations in the community.

Engagement Highlights

The following are the key findings from the engagement activities for both phase 1 and 2.

People want trail improvements. Most people visit Beaver Lake County Park to walk, bike or run on the trail. People said that the existing trail is in poor condition and the trail connection around the lake should be completed.

The health and vitality of the natural environment, lake, and wildlife should be prioritized over any other park upgrades or improvements. Multiple people said there should be efforts to improve water quality and add plantings, trees, and native grasses.

Park users are concerned about crime and safety. People said more lighting should be added along the trail and additional security cameras should be installed in the park.

Fishing is an important activity at Beaver Lake County Park. People said the existing fishing pier is regularly used and another fishing pier should be constructed.

People support upgrades to the playground. Several people expressed interest in a nature playground or nature-based learning and play stations located throughout the park.

People are interested in organized programs and activities at the park. Several people supported a music or movies at the park summer program.

There are mixed feelings about bathroom facilities. Several people supported constructing a permanent bathroom facility to replace the existing portable toilet and some people were concerned about vandalism and arson.

There are mixed feelings about canoe, kayak, and paddle boat rental services. Several people supported these services, and some people were concerned about drawing too many people to the lake and potentially harming the natural environment.



Phase 1 General Engagement

Ramsey County prepared a new redevelopment plan for Beaver Lake County Park and engaged the community to help decide park improvements. Between June 25 and August 31, 2020, community members provided input to help identify issues, opportunities, and priorities for park improvements.

There were five engagement activities to collect input from Beaver Lake County Park users and the neighborhoods surrounding the park. Below are the engagement activities and the number of unique comments or participants. Promotional and informational materials were developed to encourage participation and provide more information (see Appendices A, B, D, and E). In addition, an online survey, online interactive map and an online ideas board were available to collect comments in both phase 1 and 2 engagement, and the number of participants/comments are included below.

Engagement Activity	Description	Number of comments/participants
Pop-up table #1 July 16, 4-6 p.m. Beaver Lake County Park	Pop-up table at Beaver Lake County Park to collect preferences on park improvements and new features	25 participants
Pop-up table #2 July 25, 9-11 a.m. Beaver Lake County Park	Pop-up table at Beaver Lake County Park to collect preferences on park improvements and new features	50 participants
Online survey (Phase 1 & 2)	Survey asking participants how they use the park and their preferences for park improvements	76 participants
Interactive map (Phase 1 & 2)	An online park map that participants can place comments on to show exactly where they would like to see improvements	97 comments
Ideas wall (Phase 1 & 2)	An online community forum to discuss additional ideas for park improvements	30 comments

Nearly 85% of people who reported their race/ethnicity in the survey identified as white, and most people who participated in the pop-up events were presumed to be white. After completion of the first phase of engagement activities, the project team determined there was a need to collect additional insight from BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and other multicultural community groups for more diverse perspectives.

Phase 2 Target Under-Represented Engagement

As part of the master plan process, Ramsey County and consultant staff provided engagement activities with the goal of soliciting community feedback on the design elements presented in the two concept drawings of Beaver Lake. Our goal was to reach out to under-represented residents to ensure that the final master plan would be representative of the community that use and live around Beaver Lake. We conducted pop ups where underrepresented communities would be to get their input on the park design.

Key stakeholders for the engagement activities included:

- Residents who live within a mile from the Beaver Lake site
- Underrepresented populations: people with disabilities, senior citizens, youth, low-income and people of color
- Cultural groups

Between September 1 - October 14, members of the community were invited to provide feedback and ideas on the four design approaches. Several engagement activities including an online interactive mapping activity, an online survey, a virtual open house, a conversation circle, pop-up events, and emails and phone calls were available for people to provide comments, feedback, and ideas. The number of people engaged through each of the engagement activities is included in the table below.

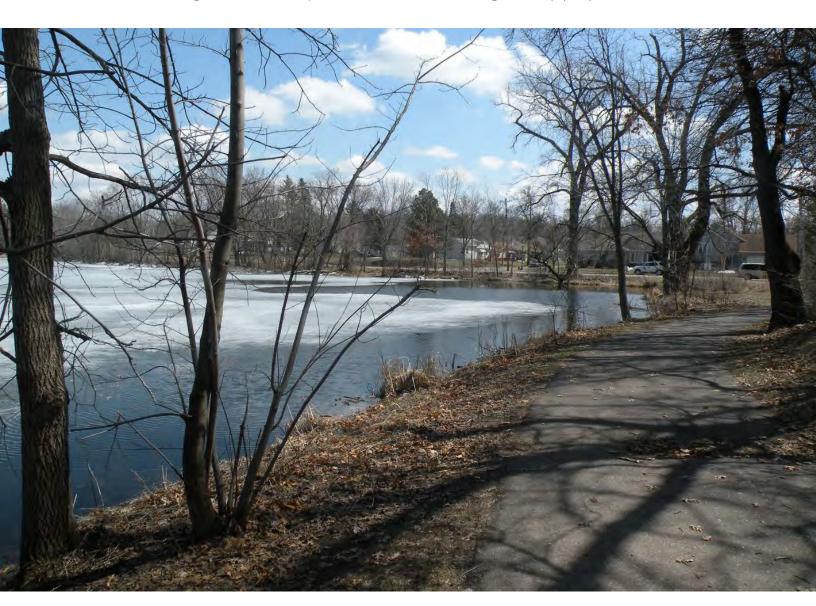
Activity	Dates (2020)	Number of People Engaged	Demographics*	
Pop-Up Event				
Lake Elmo White Bear Avenue food truck lot (White Bear Avenue/ Hoyt Avenue) and Beaver Lake	September 1	Food trucks - 14 Beaver Lake - 4	BIPOC - 11 White - 7	
Hmong Village (indoors)	September 12	26	BIPOC -22 White - 4	
District Council 2 Food Truck Court/Phalen Food Truck Court (Rose Ave/Clarence St)	September 14	19	BIPOC - 10 White - 9	
Cub Foods	October 10	25	BIPOC - 19 White - 6	
Supermercado Lomabonita	October 11	19	BIPOC 19	
Flyers				
Roosevelt Homes, East Side	October 14	65 residences	Not identified**	

^{*} Phase 2 of engagement - BIPOC and White people were either self-identified or determined by staff on

^{**}Roosevelt Homes is an affordable housing development managed by the Saint Paul Public Housing Authority.

Within the second phase of engagement, we listened to many BIPOC community members talk about the future of Beaver Lake Park, much of what we heard directly influenced the design.

- Fishing is an activity that many people talked about and the need for various areas such as smaller nodes of the shoreline as well as a larger dock was suggested by the community and is reflected in the final master plan.
- Another suggestion from the Hmong community was a Tul Lub court. The park has a
 history of people playing Tul Lub in the open field, but a dedicated court was a desire of
 the people we spoke to.
- We spoke to many people during phase 2 that desired a place to have large gatherings with family and friends. The pavilion in the new design is a larger space, with picnic tables and grills.
- Safety is a big concern for all communities in the area. Ramsey County is committed to providing safe parks for all users. In the new design, lights will be along the pathways and clear sightlines will be implemented into the final design to keep people visible and safe.



Engagement Outcomes

Ramsey County reached out directly to community members and multicultural groups to collect input on park improvements to ensure a more inclusive perspective for the park's future. People who participated were asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity. Throughout the community engagement conducted, themes began to emerge, as well as culturally relevant needs that could be incorporated into the design.

THEME	FEEDBACK	SUGGESTIONS
Safety & Crime	Users are concerned about safety and security in the park.	LightingSecurity camerasVegetation management for sightlines
Trail & Connections	People reported that they go to Beaver Lake County Park to walk, run, bike, or walk their dogs.	 Trail pavement upgrades Connection of trail around lake Safer crosswalks and better lighting Wayfinding and cultural art
Lake & Park Ecology	Park users regularly reported they would like to see improvements to ensure the health and vitality of the natural environment and wildlife at the park.	 Improve water quality Manage vegetation on shoreline Educational signs in multiple languages Protected areas to view wildlife
Fishing & Lake Access	Park users commonly stated that they enjoy visiting Beaver Lake County Park because they get to experience nature and the lake. Fishing is a very popular activity at the lake.	 Building additional fishing areas or a fishing boardwalk on the lake People are interested in canoe, kayak rental/storage services at the lake Water access that is ADA compliant
Park Amenities & Programs	Many park users and neighbors expressed interest in new park amenities, facilities and programs. Some people stated that the existing amenities are outdated or no longer working properly and could use some upgrades.	 A rentable picnic facility for 75 people Playgrounds - toddler site, 6-12 year old site with a water feature and a natural play space site Constructing new restroom facilities Organized programs, classes and activities at the park Community gardens
Open Field Space	Many people reported that that the open field space is not used often. Some people were supportive of keeping the openfield space for all variety of play, exercise and recreational activities or classes.	 Open field space for all variety of play, exercise, and recreational activities Cultural games Benches and picnic tables near path

Summary of engagement feedback and suggested design elements

Comment Summary

Below is a summary of comments collected through all engagement activities. Comments are organized by their key themes.

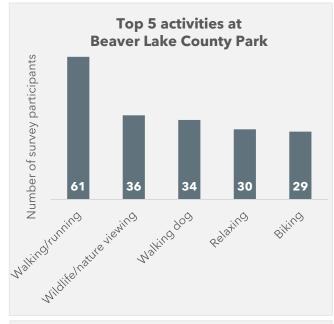
Trail and Trail Connections

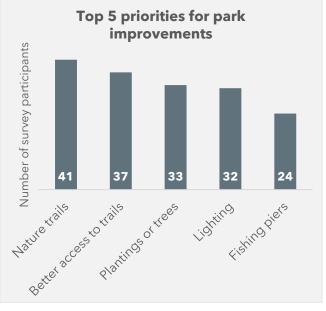
Most people reported that they go to Beaver Lake County Park to walk or run. As the primary activity that draws people to the park, it is not surprising that trail improvements were identified across all engagement activities as one of the top priorities for future improvements.

Many people reported that the **trail pavement** needs to be improved throughout the park. There were multiple comments received indicating pavement is buckling or cracked and making walking, running, and biking bumpy or uncomfortable. Some people reported the pavement is particularly rough through the wooded area north of the park because tree roots are growing under and breaking through the pavement.

People also commonly recommended extending the multi-use trail around the park's southeast perimeter to complete the **trail connection around the park**. Many people recommended creating a multi-use trail on McKnight Road and Case Avenue or Stillwater Avenue. Some people also suggested completing the connection by building a lake front trail around the southeast segment of the lake.

Additional feedback on the trails included constructing more and **safer crosswalks** between the park and surrounding neighborhoods, adding **fitness stations or outdoor exercise equipment** along the trail,





adding more **trash and recycling receptacles** or a **dog waste station**, improving **trail lighting**, and adding **landscaping and greenery** in the boulevard on Lakewood Drive and Maryland Avenue to create more separation between cars and pedestrians and bicyclists. There were also some suggestions to add more **benches or protected areas to stop and view wildlife** along the trail.

Lake and Park Ecology

In addition to the trails, participants regularly reported they would like to see improvements to ensure the health and vitality of the natural environment and wildlife at the park. Multiple people mentioned that the enjoyment they receive from the park is largely because they get to experience nature, wildlife, and the lake environment near the city. Many participants stated that they would prefer investments to the natural park environment over new park amenities.

Lake users at the Beaver Lake pop ups reported they would like to see **water quality improvement** efforts. There were some comments that the algae in the lake is smelly, the cattails and lily pads are overwhelming some parts of the lake, and there appears to be fewer fish in the lake and fewer birds nesting.

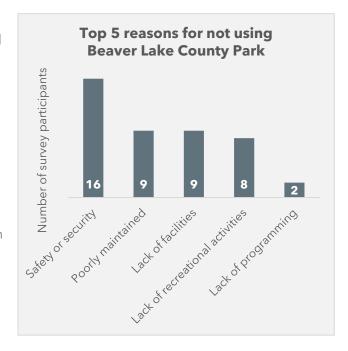
Users recommended adding more **plantings, trees, and native grasses** throughout the park and particularly around the shoreline. There were also multiple comments about dead trees, buckthorn, poison ivy and shrubs needing to be cleared out, especially on the wooded north side of the park.

There were some comments supporting **nature education for kids and adults** in the park with either programs, play stations, or educational signs on park wildlife, lake ecology, and how individuals can support environmental health.

Safety and Crime

The top reason participants provided for not using Beaver Lake County Park amenities and facilities was concerns for safety and security. Multiple people reported there is a problem with people selling drugs in the parking lot, shootings, and vandalism or arson of park amenities. There were some comments as well about potential safety concerns with homeless encampments in the wooded area north of the park.

Because of safety issues, more **lighting** on the trail through the park, especially the north section of the trail where it is more wooded. People also recommend more **security cameras**, and some stated that they like the existing mobile surveillance camera located in the parking lot. Some people also recommended more **police presence and patrolling** in the park and parking lot.



Fishing and Lake Access

As mentioned before, park users commonly stated that they enjoy visiting Beaver Lake County Park because they get to experience nature and the lake. While few people who participated in engagement activities stated they fish in the lake, many people still identified that fishing is an important activity for the county to prioritize in park improvements. People also commonly reported the existing fishing pier is regularly used.

Building additional fishing piers or a fishing boardwalk on the lake would allow for more space for fishing. Some people recommended constructing a fishing pier in the southwest area of the lake. People also recommended providing **more non-motorized boat accesses** around the lake, particularly on the east side of the lake, and **better signage** for the existing non-motorized boat launch on the west side of the lake.



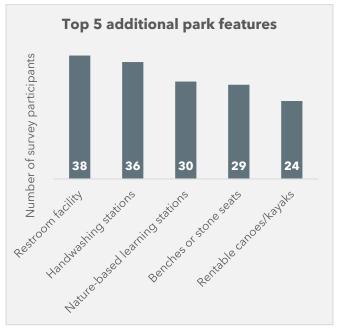
Community members around the park interested in **canoe**, **kayak**, **and paddle boat rental services** at the lake. However, some people were concerned about the rental facility drawing too many people to the park and harming the natural environment. There were also some concerns about overfishing at the lake and requests to stock more fish each year.

Additional Park Amenities & Programs

Many park users and neighbors expressed interest in new park amenities, facilities, and programs. Some people stated that the existing amenities are outdated or no longer working properly and could use some upgrades. There were also multiple comments about the need for the county to better **maintain existing facilities** and ensuring maintenance is included in the master plan.

Open Field Space

Community members were supportive of keeping the **open field space** for all variety of play, exercise, and recreational activities or classes. There was some interest in making it a **dedicated sports field or court** like a volleyball court, tuj lub court, tennis



court, basketball court, pickleball court, badminton court, skate park, or baseball field.

There were some recommendations to **enclose the field or provide a barrier between the field and the trail** to better define the space for activities and keep wayward balls from hitting people walking, running, or biking. There were also some recommendations to **redesign the space** and use it for a picnic space or a pavilion for music and movies at the park.

Picnic Facilities

Several people were supportive of constructing a new picnic facility. There were multiple comments about constructing new **restroom facilities**. Many people were supportive of building a facility to replace the portable toilet; however, some people were concerned about vandalism and arson because previous bathroom facilities in the park were burned down.

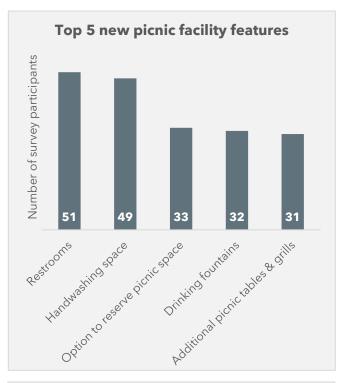
Many people also expressed support for a handwashing station and/or water fountains at the picnic facility, and people were also interested in the option to reserve picnic space and adding additional picnic tables and grills throughout the park so there is more space for multiple gatherings at one time.

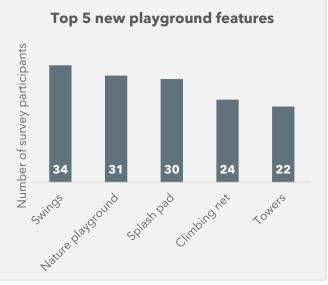
Playground

Many participants were supportive and excited about potential upgrades to the playground.

The most common feature requested was **additional swings**. The existing swing set is regularly used and sometimes there is not enough swings for everyone who wants to use them. There were also requests for accessible swings, tire swings, and full bucket toddler swings.

There was also support for a **variety of new, upgraded playground features** like a children's splash pad, climbing net, towers, slides, zip lines, rock wall, monkey bars, and a climbing dome. There were also a number of comments about the **playground surface**.



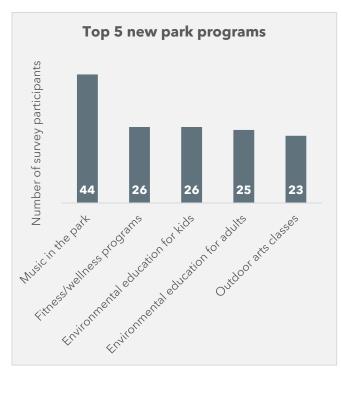


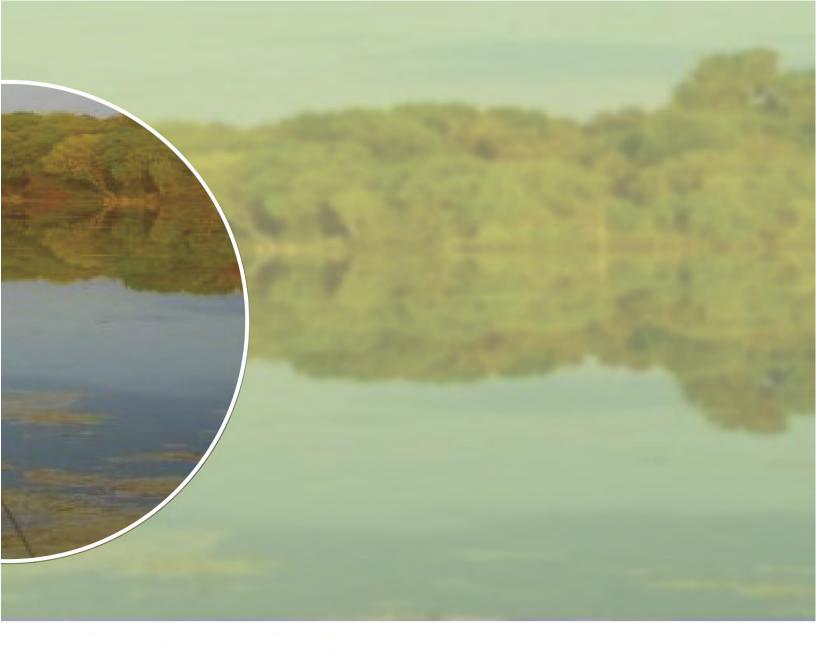
Some people said they did not like the existing sand because it is dirty, and other people said they like the sand because kids can play and dig in it. There was some support for a more accessible playground surface like poured rubber.

Many people were also supportive of **nature-based play stations for kids** throughout the park. People were interested in a playground with a nature-theme or having stations of educational play activities throughout the park to inform kids about nature and blend in cohesively with the natural environment. Some people also stated that the county should keep **older kids in mind when planning playground features** and that the existing playground is catered more to young children.

Programs

There was support for organized programs, classes, and activities at the park. Many people were interested in **music or movies in the park**. There was also some support for **fitness classes**, **educational programs for kids and adults**, and **outdoor art classes**. There was also some interest in organized birdwatching or fishing groups.





Apprendix A: One Pager



Ramsey County is preparing a new redevelopment plan for Beaver Lake County Park and we want to hear from you! Pop-up events and community meetings will be held virtually and within the park. Your feedback will help determine park infrastructure improvements and new recreational opportunities. Please check out our interactive website and give us some feedback on what you would like to see in the future at Beaver Lake County Park.



ramseycounty.us/designbeaverlake





Ramsey County is creating a new county park redevelopment plan based on the project objectives and the county's vision and mission. Our goal is to apply uniform standards and amenities for natural resources, infrastructure, recreation and programming improvements to ensure high quality community spaces and experiences.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES



Plan and facilitate a public involvement process with meaningful engagement.



Obtain feedback from people living in the neighborhood surrounding Beaver Lake County Park with an emphasis on obtaining feedback from people of color.



Provide recreational facilities and amenities that represent the needs and wants of the neighborhood community.



Provide high quality community spaces that promote an enriched culture for all people, ages and abilities.



Provide recreational facilities and amenities that complement the natural resource base.



Incorporate sustainability and green infrastructure for long-term resiliency.







Ramsey County yuav tsim txoj kev rov qabtxhim kho lub zej zog cov chaw ua si yam siv cov tswv yim thiab lub zej zog li zeem muag, hom phiaj. Peb lub hom phiaj yog siv cov kev cai kom haum thiab cov khoom siv kom haum cov nroj tsuag, cov tuam tsev, kev ua si thiab cov kev pab kom muaj chaw zoo rau lub zej zog siv thiab kom muaj kev lom zem zoo.

KEV TXHIM KHO LUB HOM PHIAJ



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Mus nug tswv yim los ntawm cov pej xeem uas nyob ib ncig ntawm Beaver Lake County Park tshwj xeeb yog nug tswv yim ntawm cov tib neeg uas daim nqaij tawv yog lwm xim uas tsis yog meskas dawb.



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Scott Yonke, PLA | Tus Thawj ntawm txoj kev Npaj thiab Txhim Kho scott.yonke@ramseycounty.us





Lub zej zog Ramsey County yuav npaj rov qab txhim kho lub Beaver Lake County Park thiab peb xav tau tswv yim los ntawm nej! Cov koob tsheej thiab cov kev sab laj nyog lub zej zog yuav sab laj hauv computer thiab nyob rau hauv cheeb tsam ntawm chaw ua si. Koj lub tswv yim yuav pab txiav txim seb yuav kho lub tuam tsev li cas thiab yuav muaj kev ua si tshiab.

Thov mus saib peb lub vas sab uas muaj neeg nrog nej sib txuas lus thiab pab tawm tswv yim seb koj xav pom dab tsi rau lub neej yav pem suab ntawm Beaver Lake County Park.



ramseycounty.us/designbeaverlake

COV SIJ HAWM

LUB 7 HLI HNUB TIM 16 4-6 PM: SAB LAJ TOM BEAVER LAKE PARK LUB 7 HLI HNUB TIM 21: TSO YEEB YAJ KIAB NTHUAV TXOG TXOJ KEV TXHIM KHO

LUB 7 HLI HNUB TIM 25 9-11 AM: SAB LAJ TOM BEAVER LAKE PEJ XEEM COV TSWV YIM KAW THAUM LUB LUB 8 HLI HNUB TIM 7, XYOO

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El condado de Ramsey está creando un nuevo plan de reurbanización del parque del condado basado en los objetivos del proyecto y la visión y misión del condado. Nuestro objetivo es aplicar normas y servicios uniformes para las mejoras de recursos naturales, infraestructura, recreación y programación con el fin de garantizar espacios y experiencias de alta calidad para la comunidad.

OBJETIVOS DEL PROYECTO



Planificar y facilitar un proceso de participación pública significativa.



Obtener comentarios de las personas que viven en el vecindario que rodea el Beaver Lake County Park con énfasis en obtener comentarios de personas de color.



Proporcionar instalaciones recreativas y servicios que representen las necesidades y los deseos de la comunidad del vecindario.



Proporcionar espacios comunitarios de alta calidad que promuevan una cultura enriquecida para todas las personas, edades y habilidades.



Proporcionar instalaciones recreativas y servicios que complementen la base de recursos naturales.



Incorporar sostenibilidad e infraestructura verde para la resiliencia a largo plazo.



Scott Yonke, PLA | Director de Planificación y Desarrollo scott.yonke@ramseycounty.us





¡El condado de Ramsey está preparando un nuevo plan de reurbanización para el Beaver Lake County Park y queremos conocer su opinión! Los eventos emergentes y las reuniones comunitarias se llevarán a cabo virtualmente y dentro del parque. Sus comentarios ayudarán a determinar las mejoras en la infraestructura del parque y nuevas oportunidades recreativas.

Visite nuestro sitio web interactivo y denos su opinión sobre lo que le gustaría ver en el futuro en el Beaver Lake County Park.



ramseycounty.us/designbeaverlake

CRONOGRAMA

16 DE JULIO 4-6 PM: EVENTO EMERGENTE EN BEAVER LAKE PARK

21 DE JULIO: PRESENTACIÓN EN VIDEO DEL

25 DE JULIO EVENTO EMERGENTE EN

COMENTARIOS DE LA COMUNIDAD, SE AGOSTO DE

FASE UNA: JULIO - PRINCIPIOS DE AGOSTO

FASE DOS: AGOSTO



Visite el sitio web para obtener más información e inscribirse para recibir actualizaciones: ramseycounty.us/designbeaverlake

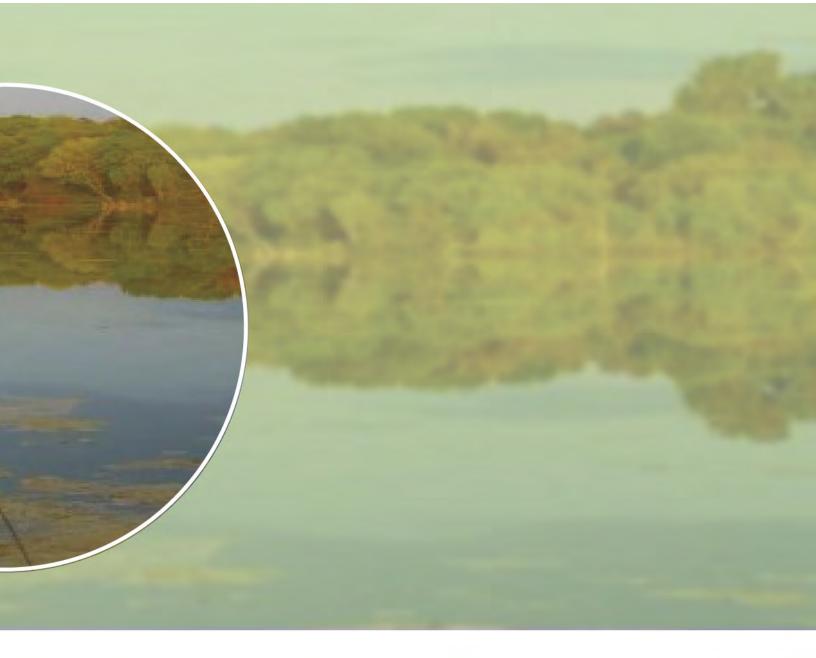
AGOSTO: SE LOS PLANES CONCEPTUALE PÚBLICO

DE AGOSTO: AYUNTA-MIENTO

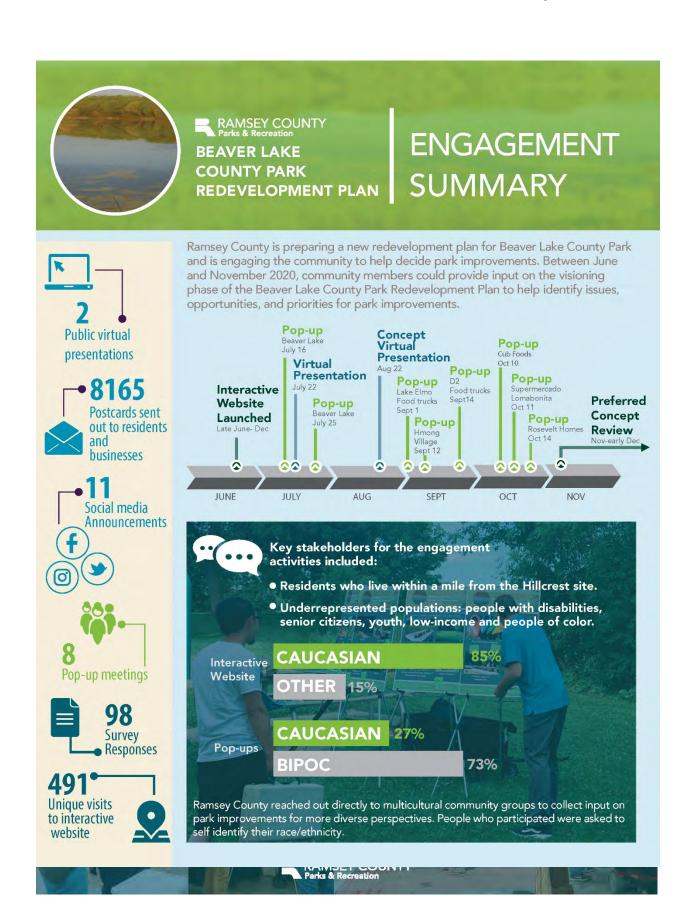


Apprendix B: Lawn Sign





Apprendix C: Infographic





Apprendix D: Pop Up Boards



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Obtain feedback from people living in the neighborhood surrounding Beaver Lake County Park with an emphasis on obtaining feedback from people of color.



Provide recreational facilities and amenities that represent the needs and wants of the neighborhood community.



Provide high quality community spaces that promote an enriched culture for all people, ages and abilities.



Provide recreational facilities and amenities that complement the natural resource base.



Incorporate sustainability and green infrastructure for long-term resiliency.



















Playground



Field games



Walking/biking trails around Beaver Lake

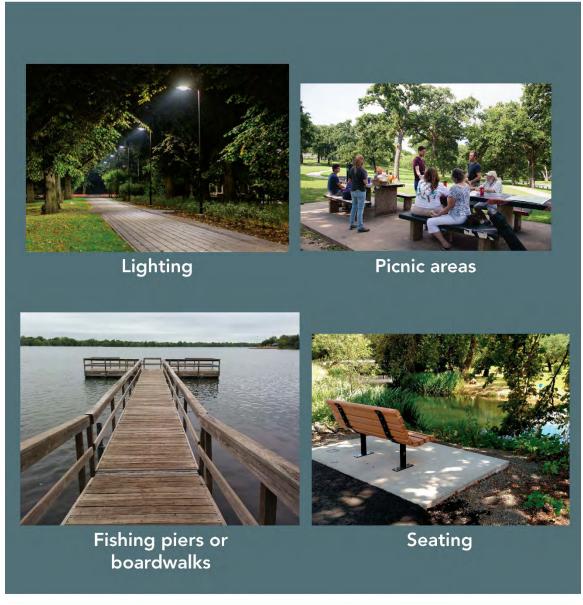


Plantings, trees, or native vegetation













What features would you like to see ADDED at Beaver Lake County Park? (Choose three)



Tuj Lub Court



Field space



Nature-based learning stations throughout the park

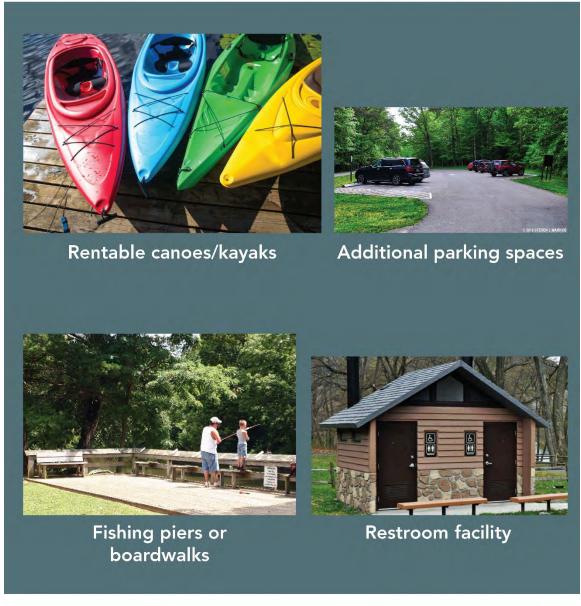


Fitness stations



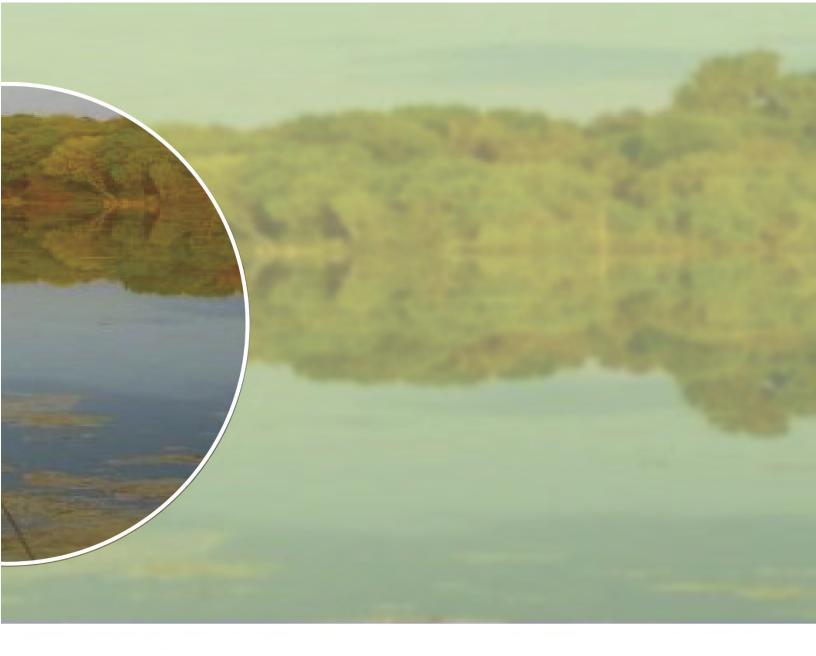












Apprendix E: Postcard

