



Anoka County
PARKS DEPARTMENT

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Maintenance
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Park Services
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Bunker Beach
Water Park
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Chomonix
Golf Course
763-324-3434

Wargo
Nature Center
763-324-3350

May 16, 2023

Emmett Mullin, Regional Parks and Natural Resources Manager
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan

Dear Emmett:

As you are aware, the Metropolitan Council approved Coon Lake County Park to become a regional park in 2021. Since then, Anoka County has been working on creating a long-range plan for the park. The proposed Coon Lake Regional Park is in the northeast corner of the City of Columbus, very near the Cities of Linwood and East Bethel and Ham Lake. The Park consists of 110 acres of upland, wetlands and approximately 2000' of lake shore on Coon Lake, the largest lake in the County.

After conducting a various methods of community engagement, the County developed a long-range plan that includes the overall redevelopment of the park with the addition of a new amenities based off comments received during the engagement process. The proposed projects will enhance the County's ability to serve the metropolitan regional area. The Cities of East Bethel, Columbus and Linwood Township have passed resolutions of support for the plan as has the Anoka County Board of Commissioners.

Enclosed with this letter is the proposed plan for Coon Lake Regional Park. The County respectfully requests the plan be reviewed and presented to the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Commission for recommendation to the Metropolitan Council for approval and adoption.

I look forward to working with you on this project and the implementation of these projects. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 763-324-3412 or via e-mail at karen.blaska@co.anoka.mn.us.

Thank you and regards,

Karen Blaska
Park Planner

cc: Jeff Perry, Parks Director

The logo for Anoka County Parks is located in the top left corner. It consists of a white, rounded rectangular shape with a thin blue border. Inside, the words "ANOKA COUNTY" are written in a bold, green, sans-serif font, and "PARKS" is written below it in a smaller, grey, spaced-out sans-serif font.

**ANOKA
COUNTY**
P A R K S

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a frozen lake at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm orange glow across the sky and reflecting on the ice. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds. In the distance, a line of dark trees and a few houses are visible against the horizon.

**COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK
LONG RANGE PLAN
2023**

Image Credit: Zack Heuring



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Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Metropolitan Council approved changes to the Regional Parks Policy Plan, which included additions to the regional parks system. One of the additions was Coon Lake County Park. Coon Lake County Park is owned and operated by Anoka County. It sits on the east end of Coon Lake in the City of Columbus and consists of approximately 110 acres. The Park offers a pleasant retreat from the city with its natural setting and sense of solitude. Coon Lake is known for its fishing and as such the public boat launch to Coon Lake provides anglers with an opportunity to catch a wide assortment of fish. The lake is known for its northern pike and walleye, but the shallow emergent vegetation provides great habitat for bass fishing as well. The park also offers picnicking facilities, a beach, natural surface trails and a Veteran’s Memorial. In addition, there is a shared Maintenance Facility used by the Parks and Transportation Division.

A large portion of land surrounding the park is designated as State Wildlife Management Area or Scientific Natural Area which have no park-like amenities. With Coon Lake becoming a regional park, it will fill a regional park gap in the overall system. Therefore, this long-range plan provides the future vision for the Coon Lake Regional Park.



2. BOUNDARIES/ACQUISITION COSTS

The proposed administrative boundary for Coon Lake Regional Park is shown in Figure 1. The existing park boundary consists of four parcels totaling 111 acres, which is currently owned and managed by Anoka County. The County is proposing to add three parcels totaling 41 acres to the park boundary, which, once acquired, would bring the total acreage for the park to 152 acres.

The parcels for potential acquisition are identified in the table below. A fair market value appraisal has not yet been conducted on these parcels, but one will be completed prior to any acquisition of land. For purposes of this Plan, the County used the assessed value for 2022. The assessed values are as follows:

Table 1

PID:	Acres	2022 Assessed Value
30-33-22-11-0001	17.76	\$ 350,300
30-33-22-14-0001	23.15	\$ 192,000
30-22-22-14-0002	0.17	\$ 500
Total Assessed Value:		\$ 542,800

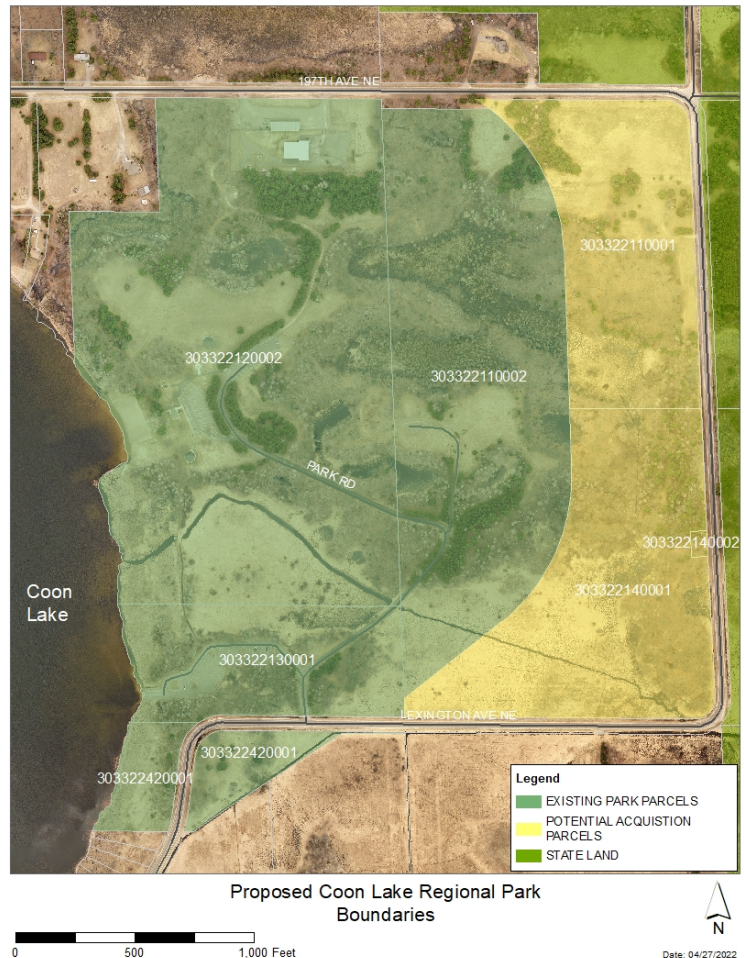


Figure 1: Proposed Coon Lake Regional Park Boundaries

The natural resources of uplands and lowlands that make up these parcels, include freshwater emergent wetlands, aspen forest, oak forest, oak woodlands-brushlands, and medium/tall altered/non-native grasslands. The acquisition of these additional parcels would create additional protections and allow the County to restore the acquired areas back to native species. The parcels are quite suitable for parkland and open space.

There are no special assessments or MPCA monitored sites that impact the parcels for acquisition.

Coon Lake Regional Park

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Unfortunately, ownership of the parcels recently changed hands, therefore there is no schedule for acquisition at this time, but the County will continue to express interest in the parcels. When acquired, the land would be owned and operated by Anoka County as regional parkland.

3. STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Coon Lake Regional Park has been a highly used facility in Anoka County and as such, the County will continue to manage it as regional recreational open space. With 110 acres, the park provides numerous outdoor activities and amenities for visitors. Visitors can utilize picnicking facilities to gather with family and friends, use the natural surface trails for exercise or enjoyment of nature, allow children to release some energy at playground, enjoy the sun and water at the beach, launch a boat for fishing, or just relax and enjoy the scenery. In the winter months, visitors can access the lake for ice fishing.

Expenses generated from the park are related to the maintenance and operations of the park and amenities. Park expenses are partially offset through revenues generated through pavilion rental fees and special use permit fees in the parks general operating budget. Other funds used to offset operations and maintenance will be provided by the Metropolitan Council's O&M grant program and the Lottery in Lieu of program.



Figure 2: Canoe/Kayak Day Camp Program

There are no non-recreational related services within the park boundary, although the Parks Department does share a Maintenance Facility with the Transportation Division within the park boundary.

Anoka County believes the stewardship plan for the park to be sustainable with assistance from the Metropolitan Council as required by state statute.

4. DEMAND FORECAST

The Metropolitan Council's Thrive 2040 regional forecast estimates that the Twin Cities metropolitan area will become more racially and ethnically diverse over the next 30 years and that by 2050 the region's population of color will be about 44% of the total population. In addition, one in five people in the metropolitan region will be age 65 or older. These shifting demographics require changes to the way the County operates and manages the park system and its amenities.

Population growth in the County and the region is expected to increase demand as well, with a forecasted increase in population in the County from 363,887 in 2020 to 443,500 in 2040, and 39 percent of the population will be people of color, compared to 24 percent in 2010¹. The demand



Figure 3: Biker at Rice Creek Trailhead

will increase as the share of people of color increases among younger age groups, with a forecasted 53 percent of regional residents younger than age 18 being people of color by 2040², making it more important than ever to connect youth to the outdoors to increase equitable access and provide for the future stewardship of the regional parks and trail systems.

According to the Metropolitan Council's, 2016 Regional Parks System Visitor Study Report, Black, Indigenous, and people of color are significantly more likely to participate in fishing, special events and picnicking activities than white people. Coon

¹ 2020-2050 Metropolitan Council Regional Forecast 2021

² *Adventure Close to Home - Youth in Parks Report 2021*, Metropolitan Council

Coon Lake Regional Park

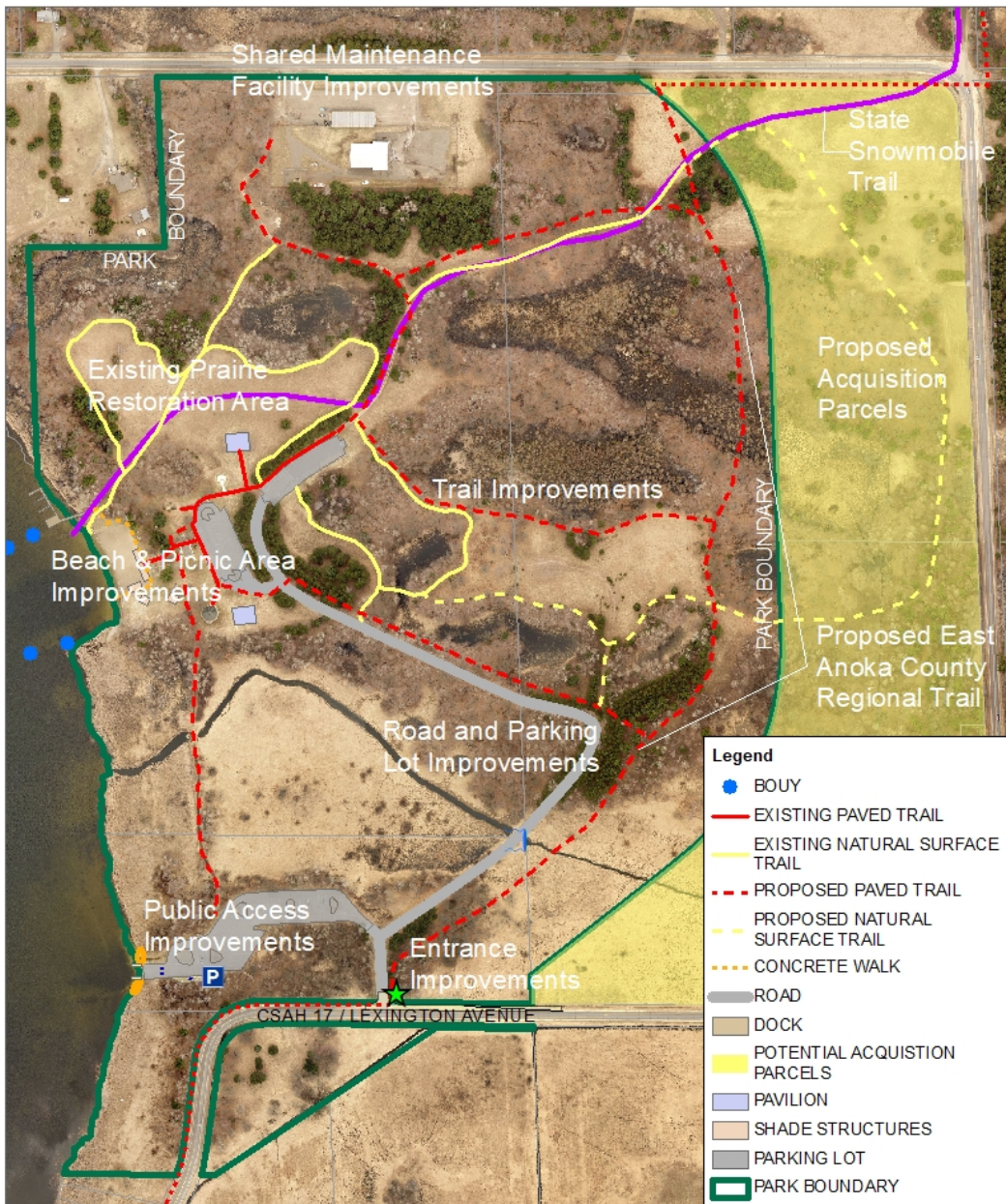
Long Range Plan

Lake offers such activities. New amenities, enhancements, or improvements to existing facilities in the park would likely increase use and demand as well. In addition, the Metropolitan Council's 2014 Regional Park Use Among Select Communities of Color Report, showed that Asian Immigrant/Asian American focus groups identified their top three preferred activities as walking, fishing and rest or relaxation; African Immigrant groups identified playground use, walking and being with family; African American groups identified barbecuing, biking, and basketball; Latinx groups identified picnicking, celebration events, and being with family.

In addition, according to the Met Council's 2021 Visitor Study, the top activities for all demographic groups were hiking and/or walking. The second and third top activities include relaxing or doing nothing, biking, dog walking, family and/or friend meet ups and observing nature. Coon Lake offers all those types of activities and amenities and as the population and diversity grow, recreational demand will increase as well.

5. DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The development plan calls for many improvements throughout the park and the concept is divided into topic areas. Figure 4 provides a key to the topic areas.



Coon Lake Park
General Development Concept

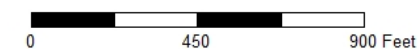


Figure 4: General Development Concept



Date: 12/16/2022

Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

Entrance Improvements

The park entrance is located on Lexington Avenue/CSAH 17, and consists of a two-lane road without shoulders, in the City of Columbus. The road also contains a sharp curve that reduces visibility of the park entrance. Once the boat launch parking lot is full, many boaters will park vehicles with trailers along Lexington Avenue, making entering and exiting the park hazardous. After discussions with the County Highway Department, they are proposing to realign the sharp curve, add a right turn lane and have installed a no parking zone within 400' of the entrance on the north side of the road. It is anticipated that this will increase visibility and safety. Softening the curve is expected to decrease the impacts to the park by .23 acres. No Metropolitan Council funding is anticipated to be needed for the Lexington Avenue

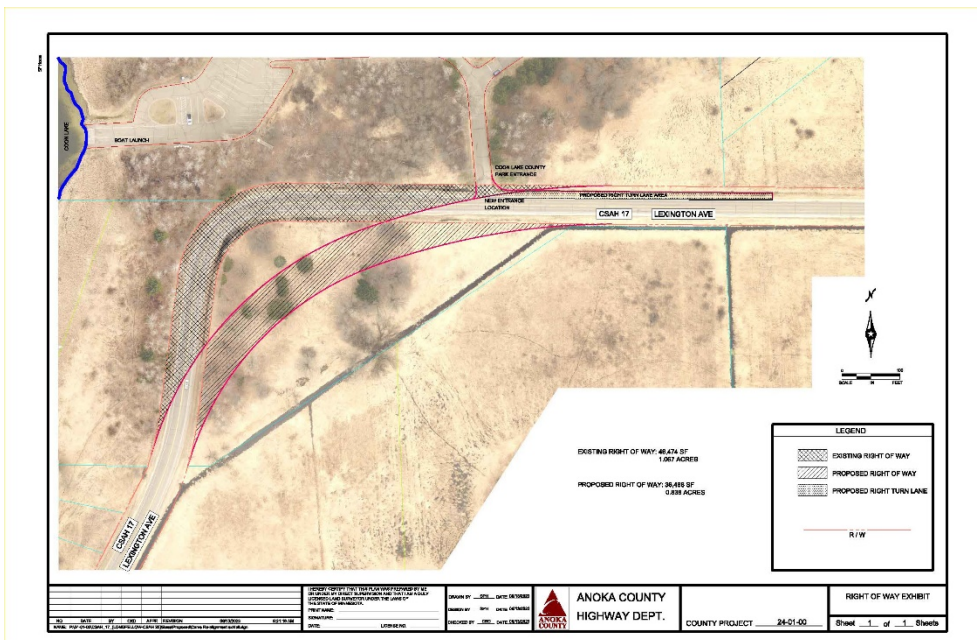


Figure 5: Proposed Entrance Improvements

.23 acres. No Metropolitan Council funding is anticipated to be needed for the Lexington Avenue

improvements. It is being included within the Long Range Plan because it addresses safety while accessing the park.

The existing entrance will remain as a two-lane roadway; however, the County proposes to increase the road width from 24' to 28' at the entrance to the boat launch parking lot



Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

intersection. Allowing for a 14' paved lane width will improve maneuverability for cars, trucks, and trailers.



Figure 6: Entrance Sign Concept

Along with the road improvements, there is a new electronic monument identification sign proposed for the park entrance. Not only will this sign include the park name and address, but it will also include an electronic sign that will be linked to a stall sensor at the boat launch parking lot to provide real-time data on available stalls for all vehicles and trailers. If the launch is at capacity, the sign will show the lot is full and allow drivers to proceed to the other DNR Public Access on the lake. The County anticipates this will help reduce driving conflicts entering and exiting the park.

Public Access Improvements

The public water access at Coon Lake was redeveloped approximately 20 years ago and like the road is starting to degrade. The County proposes to redevelop the parking lot and boat launch in the next 5-10 years. The County will reconstruct the parking lot, and the number of vehicle and trailer stalls will remain at 44. The County will also reconstruct the boat launch with larger concrete planks and implement aquatic invasive species best management practices, which includes a pull off area for boaters to inspect, clean, drain and dry their boats. Vehicle parking for an AIS inspector will be included. The County will also add additional security lighting and ensure accessibility for the launch. Previous plans called for a fishing pier in the area, but due to

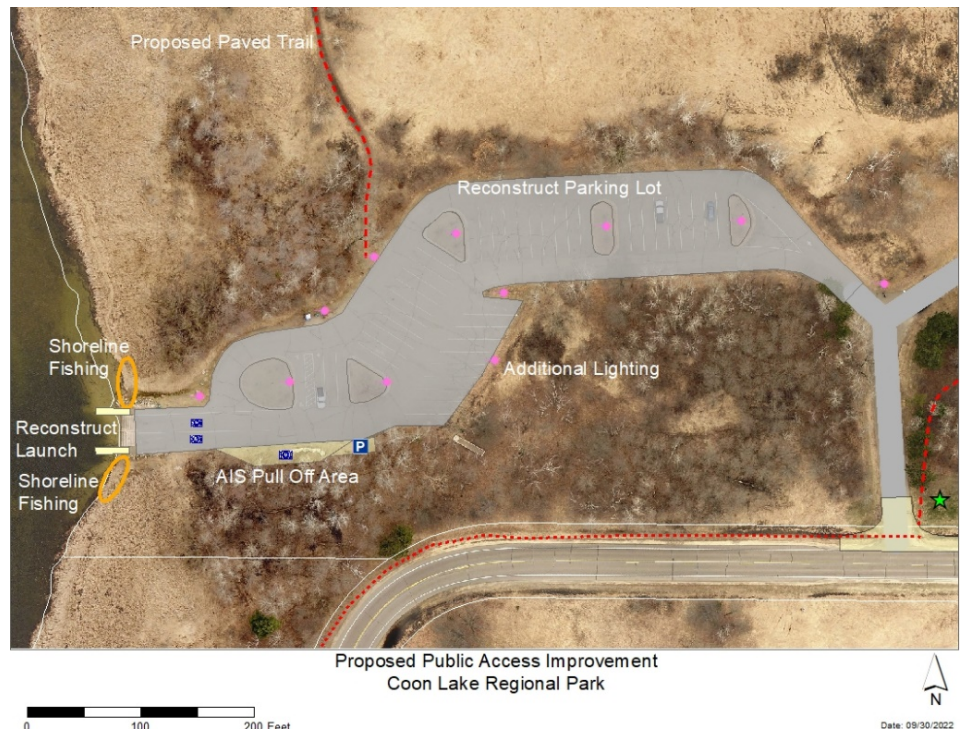


Figure 7: Proposed Public Access Improvements

Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

shallow lake depths, a fishing pier is not feasible. Even so, various shoreline fishing opportunities will be created.

Park Road and Parking Lot Improvements

The park road and parking lots were redeveloped approximately 20 years ago and need redevelopment. The current roadway width is 22' which is 2' narrower than the County's current standard. As a result, the County proposes to increase the road width to 24' with 12' drive lanes. In addition, the project would extend two culverts under the road at Ditch 12. The County plans to soften the 90° curve to provide a more aesthetically pleasing and easier drive while adding lighting to enhance public safety. The County recently increased the size of one of the existing parking lots and now currently has two parking lots that includes 110 stalls to service the beach and picnic area. At this time, the County feels that the carrying capacity of the beach and picnic areas are sufficient with the current amount of parking and that further expansion of the parking lots and increase in visitors would ultimately be detrimental to the overall visitor experience. Long range plans propose to provide additional parking when the recreational demand and carrying capacity will allow it.



Coon Lake Park
Roads and Parking Lot
Improvements

0 265 530 Feet

CSAH 17 / LEXINGTON AVENUE

North Arrow

Date: 09/30/2022

The entrance, road, and parking lot improvements are expected to occur in the next 5-10 years as funding allows.

Figure 8: Proposed Road and Parking Lot Improvements

Coon Lake Regional Park

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Trail Improvements

East Anoka County Regional Trail is proposed to run through the park. This plan proposes to align the trail adjacent to the road in the south portion of the park and extend north to Lexington Avenue on the east side of the park. Other proposed paved trails include from the boat launch parking lot north to the beach area, which connects to the existing paved trails and a natural surface trail continuing north from the north parking lot to the shared Highway/Parks Maintenance Facility parking lot. As suggested by the public, additional parking spots will be available for public use at the maintenance facility. In addition, there are three other connector trails proposed to run between the new paved trails creating multiple trail loops.

There is an existing natural surface trail to access the DNR's outlet structure for Ditch 12. The County proposes to construct a trail in this corridor from the boat launch to the beach. Since the trail will traverse wetland areas, the required wetland and floodplain mitigation is proposed to occur within the park boundary to reduce impacts downstream. If the impacts will be too large for proper mitigation, a boardwalk may be required. The County has had discussions with the Minnesota DNR on the approval of this proposed trail. Other low areas may be filled to allow construction of the trail, with mitigation occurring within the park to accommodate the new fill. The other paved trails are proposed to be routed around the wetlands to reduce impacts.

The public values the natural surface trails and they are proposed to be repaired, improved, and reconfigured to connect to the new and existing trails. All paved trails will be 10' wide when redeveloped or constructed. Trails are anticipated to be installed in the next 5-10 years.



Figure 9: Natural Surface Trail

Other trail requests from the public included a trail around the lake and trail connections to and from the park. While the East Anoka County Regional Trail will provide access to and from the park, those connections are not anticipated to be made for 15-20 years. Any other trail connections will

Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

be outside of the County's jurisdiction and responsibility would fall on the local community, but the County is willing to assist and participate in discussions.

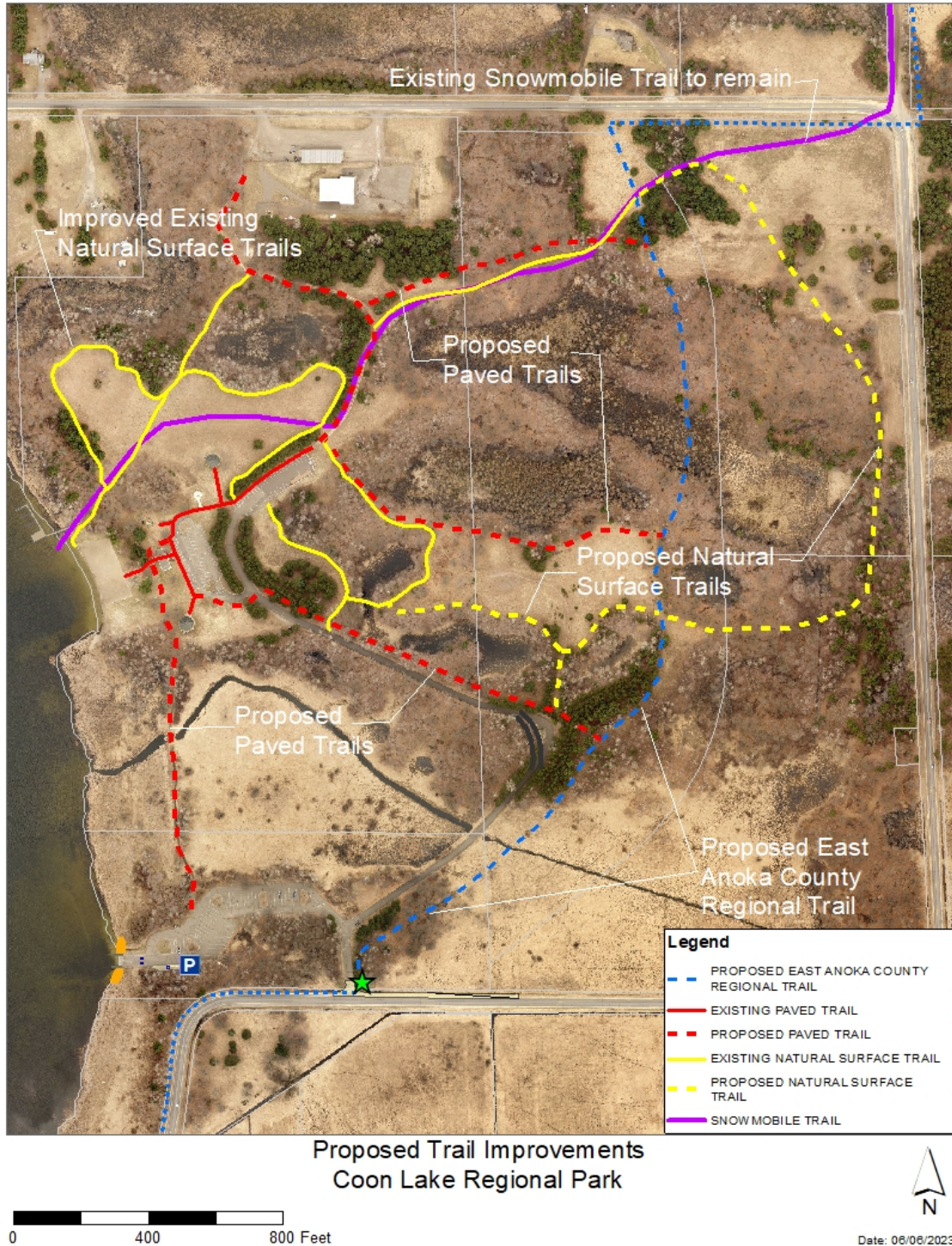


Figure 10: Proposed Trail Improvements

Coon Lake Regional Park

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During the winter, the County is proposing to pack a winter walking trail for recreational use or to provide plowed walking loops depending on public use and feedback. It should be noted that there is a State Snowmobile Trail through the park as noted on Figure 10. Since this is a state sponsored trail, it is operated and maintained by the local snowmobile. Costs related to operations and maintenance of the trail are provided through the State's grant-in-aid program which is passed through the County to the local clubs. There will be no changes to this route with the proposed park improvements. During the winter months, the proposed walking trails near the snowmobile trail will have separate corridors for use and during the summer months the corridor can be used as a natural surface trail.



Figure 11: Proposed Winter Trails

Maintenance Facility Improvements

The maintenance located on the north side of the park is shared between with the County Transportation Division and the Parks Department. The current facility is at the end of its useful life and is proposed to be reconstructed in 2024. While most of the new space is proposed to be used by Transportation, the facility will provide office space, a breakroom, restrooms, and other facilities for parkkeepers and seasonal employees that support Coon Lake Park and Martin Island Linwood Lake Regional Park. The facility will also provide storage space for parks equipment and supplies. This project will be 100% County funded and the Transportation Division has no other role within the park boundary other than the shared maintenance facility.



Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

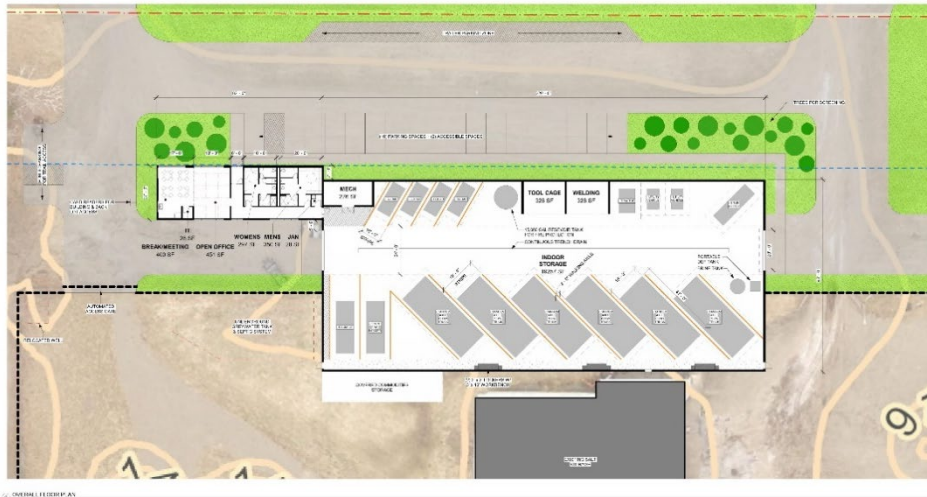


Figure 12: Proposed Maintenance Shop

Beach Improvements

The size of the beach is not proposed to increase; however, the Plan does propose to increase the amount of shade at the beach. In addition to planting various species of trees, the County is proposing to construct several shade structures. These shelters would have a cantilever with frost depth footings and posts to provide additional shade opportunities. Also proposed are additional picnic tables and grills with an 8' wide accessible path leading into the water for easy access.



Figure 13: Example of shade structure



Figure 15: Example of dock facility

There is a need for docking facilities near the beach to provide boaters access to the park from the lake while ensuring swimmer safety. To help alleviate any conflicts between activities, the County is proposing to install a 4-5 boat capacity dock system north of the beach, which will allow boaters access to the park, but provide separation from the swimmers.



Figure 14: Example of self-serve station

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The County is also proposing a self-serve canoe/kayak station at the park. This would be like the Mississippi River Paddle Share program, where guests could rent a canoe or kayak with a cellular phone, receive an access code to unlock equipment, paddle the lake, and then return the equipment when done. The proposed dock will also have an accessible launch for canoes and kayaks.



Figure 16: Example of ADA canoe/kayak launch

The proposed beach improvements such as additional picnic tables/grills, can be implemented within the next 5 years; however, the shade structures, dock, and self-serve kayak station, etc. is anticipated to be completed over the next 5-10 years.

Pavilion Improvements

The County is proposing to replace the two 50-person capacity picnic pavilions at the park as they are nearing the end of their life cycle. Pavilion 1, located closest to the beach, is proposed to be moved further east and expanded to increase capacity to 75 people. Pavilion 2 overlooks the prairie and is in slightly better condition than Pavilion 1, but both should be replaced with in the next 5-10 years.



Figure 17: Example of new pavilion

Restroom Improvements

The restrooms were reconstructed in 2017 and are functioning appropriately for their use. The restroom building is anticipated to need upgrades in 10-15 years, depending on use. The County is also proposing to repurpose the changing room building and convert that to 2 or 3 additional restrooms to mimic the existing restroom building. These changes are anticipated to occur in 10-15 years.

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Playground Improvements

The existing playground is nearing the end of its life cycle and will need to be replaced within the next 5 years. The County is proposing to expand the existing area to include play/sensory equipment for kids with special needs, strength/speed challenge equipment for teens and nature play elements for everyone. The play structure is proposed to mimic nature and provide shade for those using it.



Figure 19: Kids having fun in nature



Figure 18: Kids having fun on playground

Programming

While program staffing is an issue at times, the County is proposing to expand the program offerings at Coon Lake to include hiking programs, fishing programs and canoe/kayak programs once the self-serve canoe/kayak station is implemented. The County would also like to expand the programming for underserved populations, by working with specific groups to gain an understanding of their interests and desires and develop programs that address those interests and desires.

Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan



Proposed Beach/Picnic Area Improvements
Coon Lake Regional Park

0 100 200 Feet



Date: 09/30/2022

Figure 20: Beach/Picnic Area Development Concept

Coon Lake Regional Park

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Wayfinding

The wayfinding signage plan for the trail will provide the public with orientation and location information to access amenities and services within the park. A sign plan can be found in the Appendix, but generally, wayfinding typically includes the following:

Trailhead Signs

These types of signs are provided at trailhead locations where parking lots and restrooms are provided. These signs give park patrons a view of the overall park, amenities, and trails that can be accessed from the location. These signs also include the standard hours, rules, and etiquette reminders.



Figure 22: Intersection/Directional sign example

Intersection/Directional Signs

These types of signs are located at intersections where a decision is to be made. They provide much of the same information as the Trailhead signs, but in a smaller format and on a single post. These signs also contain a location marker for easy map orientation and directional arrows for quick reference. Vehicular directional signs are also included along the roadway for drivers to navigate through the park.



Figure 21: Trailhead sign example

Since Coon Lake Park was an established park before gaining regional status, conflicts between recreational and natural-resource management will be minimal as separate areas for recreation use and natural resource restoration have already been established. Any new proposed development will be purposefully aligned to reduce natural resources fragmentation and impacts. For more information on the natural resources in the park, refer to Section 14.

The total estimated costs for the development concepts addressed in this Plan are \$5,505,000.

Coon Lake Regional Park

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Coon Lake Development Concept Timeline and Cost Estimate	Sub-Total
Entrance Improvements	\$465,000
Parks Roads/Parking Lots	\$1,650,000
Public Access	\$850,000
Trails	\$1,175,000
Maintenance Facility (County Funded)	0
Beach Improvements	\$1,295,000
Natural Resource Restoration/Landscape Improvements	\$50,000
Sign Plan	\$20,000
Total Development Concept	\$5,505,000

See the Timeline and Cost Estimate in the Appendix for more information.

6. CONFLICTS

Conflicts related to the park development will be kept to a minimum through the proper planning and community engagement. See additional information regarding engagement in the Public Engagement and Participation section of this document.

There are no conflicts anticipated with any of the existing surrounding land uses, which are mostly large lot rural residential and recreational state land. Planned land use proposes rural residential or rural residential/agriculture for non-state land. The proposed development plans will not conflict with the surrounding proposed land use. Refer to the Appendix for the planned land uses in the area.

The biggest conflicts raised during the public engagement process were threefold; 1. concerns about boating behavior on the lake, which falls outside of the Parks Department's jurisdiction; 2. boat and swimmer conflicts near the beach outside the swim buoys; and 3. vehicle and trailer parking along Lexington Avenue. To address 1 and 2, the Parks Department will monitor social media, analyze on-line communications, evaluate complaints, educate park visitors, and provide education and enforcement through the Anoka County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officers if needed.

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The Parks Department had discussions with the Highway Department regarding the safety issue related to Lexington Avenue. The County has posted no parking signs within several hundred feet of the park entrance to keep adequate visibility for entering and exiting the park. The County is proposing adding a right turn lane into the park and softening the sharp curve as an additional safety measure. Refer to the “Entrance Improvements” within the Development Concept for more information.



Figure 23: Boating on Coon Lake. Photo courtesy of CLIA

Conflicts between pedestrians and vehicular traffic will be kept to a minimum by ensuring safe crossings at road intersections. Treatments for these areas may include signing, striping and other safety Improvements. In addition, signs within the park will advise visitors of potential conflict areas, such as pedestrian cross-traffic.

7. PUBLIC SERVICES

There is no need for additional non-recreational public services within the park. Water use for these facilities comes from an existing well that provides potable water to the shelters, restrooms, drinking fountains, and shower tower. The mechanical pump and variable frequency drive may need to be replaced in the future, but as of now, they are in relatively good condition. A new well may be needed in the future, but it is not anticipated to be needed for 20 years. A new septic system was installed in 2017 and is anticipated to be replaced in 20-30 years, depending upon use.

There is a right turn lane proposed to be constructed on CSAH 17/Lexington Avenue to help address some of the safety issues, but this would be done outside the park boundary and within the road right of way. This work would be funded by the County. No Metropolitan Council dollars would be requested for reimbursement.

8. OPERATIONS

Anoka County Ordinance dated January 30, 2018, regulates the parks and trails under the jurisdiction of Anoka County. The County will continue to encourage safe and enjoyable user experiences through education, monitoring and collaboration between the Parks Services Unit, the County Sheriff's Office, local law enforcement (cities), and the Department of Natural Resources.

Estimated annual operating costs for the park are approximately \$50,000. Due to the reduced state funding for operations and maintenance, Anoka County supports the regional parks system with visitor fees, such as daily and annual park pass sales, pavilion rental fees and programming fees, as well as the parks operating budget. While permits are not required for the park now, the County may consider installing up to two pay stations for this purpose in the future. This will help to supplement the County's budget and fill the funding gap from the state.

Anoka County currently employs a remote building automation system that saves the department \$5,000-10,000 annually compared to traditional energy systems by realizing energy reductions in heating, cooling, lighting, and domestic water during unoccupied and off-peak periods. The program enables staff to monitor, adjust, and troubleshoot building mechanical systems at all the widespread park facilities from a single location, aiding in prompt management and repair. The County has undertaken a project to convert lighting in key facilities to LED technology to reduce energy demands. The Maintenance and Parks Services Units utility vehicle fleets include a growing number of electric powered vehicles. Turf irrigation systems employ "rain sensor" technology to avoid using valuable water during periods of precipitation. The County has encouraged employees to go "digital" to reduce the amount of paper in the workplace, by utilizing smaller more portable laptop computers and tablets. The county also recently consolidated its contract filing system to reduce the amount of paper files, as well as digital files.

The County, through the Recycle & Resource Solutions Department employs a refuse and recycling program that requires recycling of paper, plastics, etc. Refuse that cannot be reused or recycled is collected and disposed of consistent with applicable laws.



Figure 24: Park Services visiting with guest

9. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

The County hoped to gain input from the local cities, watershed management organizations and Indigenous tribes that could help guide the plan development; therefore, partner engagement included scheduled meetings with the local cities before and after plan development. The County met with the Cities of Columbus, East Bethel, and Linwood and all three provided initial input and comments on the project. Most of the comments related to three main items: trails, safety, and amenities, which echoed closely what the County heard from the public. The majority of the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization related to partnership opportunities for stormwater management within the park. The County was not successful in engaging the Indigenous populations and need to do much more work to build and maintain relationships with those that may have interest in the site.



Trails

Most of the cities all agreed that additional paved trails/loops for accessibility within the park would be beneficial. There is a general need for more trails in the park and in particular, trails that connect to and from the park and the surrounding area.

Safety

There are different safety aspects that need to be addressed. First, Lexington Avenue is a two-lane road with no shoulders and has a 90-degree corner about 400 feet from the park entrance. While there are No Parking signs posted a few hundred feet before and after the park entrance, boat launch users are still parking beyond the No Parking limits on Lexington Avenue on the east and west bound sides of the park entrance on busy weekends. There has been debate on whether the boat launch parking lot should be expanded. The public appears split evenly on the topic, but due to the carry capacity of the lake and the natural resource, as well as impacts an expansion would entail, the County is not proposing to expand the lot in the short term but would consider for the long term.

Other road improvements were suggested that are outside the scope of the park long-range plan. A few of these were adding turn lanes and straightening the 90-degree curves before and after the park entrance. In discussions with the Transportation Division, it appears a right turn lane would be the most feasible and easiest to construct without any permanent parkland impacts. The Parks

Department will work closely with the Transportation Division to coordinate any future road improvements.

Amenities

Like responses from the public, year-round amenities, and activities, such as winter walking trails and other winter recreation uses, were requested from the partner cities. The County will include winter walking trails and some winter programs, such as snowshoeing or kick-sledging.

The long-range plan for the park was shared with Sunrise Watershed Management Organization SWMO, and the MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for review and comment. Neither provided substantive comments. The SWMO commented on the potential to partner on certain projects in the future that could benefit both the watershed and the park and the DNR provided comments related to the outlet structure for Ditch 12 but didn't offer any other comments.

10. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

The County's public participation and engagement plan proposed to engage local cities, community groups and organizations as well as the public in an inclusive and accessible manner to develop this long-range plan. The goals of the public engagement plan were threefold; first, to build positive relationships with local communities and residents; next, to build community ownership and understanding of the County's planning process; and third, not only to receive community input on the plan but make it easy for the public to participate.

Build Relationships

Work closely with local jurisdictions, groups, and community members to build relationships. Listening and valuing differing opinions creates trust which allows for meaningful input and feedback for everyone's mutual benefit.

Use a Variety of Engagement Methods

Use a variety of engagement methods to make it easy for the community to participate. Community members can choose how, when, and where they participate.

Go to the People

Go to local community events and provide opportunities to engage people that might not know about or typically participate in engagement activities.

Overall, the County's public engagement process reached more than 25,000 people and had interactions with 4,500. The engagement process occurred in four steps. First, the County listened

Coon Lake Regional Park

Long Range Plan

to what the public had to say about the park. Second, the County shared with the public what staff heard. Third, the County developed a draft concept plan for the park based on the feedback received and shared with the public. Lastly, the draft long-range plan was developed, and a public comment period occurred to make sure the County was on track with all the feedback we received. Upon close of the comment period, the County finalized the long-range plan.

During the engagement process, the County has conducted in-person meetings, virtual meetings, and surveys. The County has provided information on the Plan Your Parks webpage and issued social media posts to receive feedback. The County is continuing to build and strengthen relationships with the local cities, the Coon Lake Improvement District, Outdoor Latino, Outdoor Afro and the Kiwi Snowmobile Club, a local Veteran's Group, as well as the public.

Using the different strategies for engagement, the County hopes to be able to increase the number of people engaged and increase the diversity of those engaged to receive meaningful input on the plan. Findings from this public engagement process will be used to inform and amplify future engagement strategies.

The following summary of comments from the engagement process and how they are addressed in the plan are discussed below:

Safety

Much like the partner summary of comments, safety was a big theme in the public's comments as well. First, again, the safety of Lexington Avenue and the amount of parking on either side of the road beyond 400 feet from the park entrance that occurs on the weekend. In response to that input, the plan proposes a right turn lane on the north side to help visibility and safety. Debate regarding the size of the boat launch parking lot was also brought up. While the public appears split evenly on the topic, the County is not proposing to expand the lot for this plan, due to the carry capacity of the lake and the natural resource, as well as impacts an expansion would entail. Other safety issues include boater and park user behavior. To help address this, the County will continue to work with MN Department of Natural Resources, County Sheriff's Office and Parks Services Department on education and enforcement.

Trails

A lot of input received stressed the importance of additional paved trails and natural surface trail loops within the park and trails that connect to and from the surrounding area. Winter walking trails were also stressed by the public. With this input, additional paved and natural surface trails have been added to the plan and winter walking trails will be established.

Amenities

Like responses from the partners, year-round amenities and activities, the County will include winter walking trails and winter programs, such as snowshoeing or kick-sledding. Other amenities requested through the engagement process and incorporated in the plan include a self-serve rental equipment station, nature play area, more adaptive/sensory play equipment and more climbing structures for the playground. Additionally, more shade at the beach and picnic areas were requested as well. In response, the County has already planted additional shade trees and has included the installation of shade structures in the plan.

11. EQUITY ANALYSIS

1. Project Data:

a. Scope:

In looking at the demographics using the Metropolitan Council's Regional Parks and Trail Equity Mapping Tool, a 3-mile service area for the park, shows that teenagers and young adults make up only 3-15% of the population and people 65+ make up only 7-17%. This the lowest age populations amounts in the area. People with disabilities make up only 2-6% of the population and ethnic Hispanics, Blacks and Asians make up only 0-16% of the population. 4-19% of the population is below the 185% poverty level. These numbers are like the county wide data from MN Compass. Data from MN Compass shows that People of Color make up only 16% of the population for Anoka County. People with disabilities comprise 10% of the county population, while those 65+ years of age and older make up about 13% of the population. Due to the relatively small numbers for these population groups, it is extremely important to receive input and have dialogues with these groups to gain a better understanding of their needs and wants for parks, trails, and recreation.

b. Context:

Stakeholders in the area include the very active Coon Lake Improvement District and area residents who have a vested interest in what is proposed for the park and who have contributed funds to past projects in the park and on the lake.

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Regionally, the black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) population in the metro area is 28%, according to the 2020-2050 Metropolitan Council regional forecast (2021), which is significantly higher than Anoka County at about 16%. The forecasted growth in racial and ethnic diversity is expected to increase to 39% in 2040 and 44% in 2050 for the metro region. Anoka County should anticipate similar increases in diversity over the next few decades, which makes engagement of BIPOC and other underserved populations so important.

To ensure the legacy and stewardship of parks, trails, and open space, it is important to provide memorable experiences for the younger population that they can carry forward throughout their lives. Other stakeholders and underserved populations may not feel welcome in the parks, or they may not know what to do in the parks. Reaching out to and engaging with the underserved populations and seeking a dialogue with them regarding parks, trails and recreation can provide an introduction the Regional Park System and promote the activities and opportunities that the system offers. This also allows for changes and improvements to those parks, trails and recreation activities that would make them more welcoming and inviting to underserved populations. This makes it more important for Coon Lake Regional Park to be welcoming and inclusive to provide access for all to enjoy the lake and its recreational and natural resources.

2. Public Engagement and Participation:

a. Participants:

Besides the partners shared above, the County has relationships with the Coon Lake Improvement Association, Outdoor Latino and Outdoor Afro, the Kiwi Snowmobile Club, and a group for parents of kids with disabilities. While the County didn't receive much feedback from Outdoor Latino or Outdoor Afro, the Lake Association and parents group provided an abundance of input for the plan.

Being unfamiliar and unaware of the park were some of the reasons for the lack of input from the Latino and African American groups, illustrating the County's need to work harder at making more authentic connections with those population groups. Ultimately, we want all populations to be familiar with the park system, feel welcome and know that their input and opinions are valued and can make a difference.

Coon Lake Regional Park

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b. Engagement:

The County's public participation engagement goals, per the International Association of Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation, were to inform the public about the planning process and consult with the public to listen and gather their input on the project and share back with the public what was heard and how it affected the plan.

When we couldn't meet in person with the groups, virtual meetings were coordinated and targeted advertising through social media was used to advertise a survey and the Plan Your Park webpage for the public. Community groups were asked to share the information out to their networks as well.

c. Public Participation:

The Parks Department learned it has much more work to do to create authentic connections with BIPOC groups in the community due to the lack of response and input from those groups.

Much like the city partners input, more trails, and road and water safety were the top priorities for the Lake Association. The Lake Improvement District would like to serve as a partner with the park to help ensure a high-quality experience while using the lake. Since the lake is shallow in the park area and a fishing pier is not feasible, they requested that some shoreline fishing spots be created. There were requests for more trail loops and community connections to and from the park, which have been included in the plan. Unruly behavior is an issue at times, so the Parks Department will continue to work with the DNR, County Sheriff's Office, and local law enforcement to ensure safe behavior and memorable experiences for everyone.

The parents group gave the Department great advice for more nature and sensory play amenities that would appeal to their kids and requested expansion of our programs to include Coon Lake Park, including winter activities as well.

Some members of the public believe the County should charge a daily vehicle entrance fee for access to the boat launch and/or the beach area, but after discussion on the matter, the County prefers not to restrict access with the use of a fee at this time but may consider the option in the future.

For a summary of comments by topic, please refer to the Appendix.

3. Evaluation Summary:

a. Transparency:

Upon gathering public input on the plan, the County shared a summary of the findings to ensure the findings were accurate. Many of the amenities and improvements outlined in the plan are a direct result of the engagement process and are noted in the development concept. For example, the plan proposes to include more natural surface and paved trails in the park, which was advice given from multiple partners, groups, and the public, as was more lighting at boat launch parking lot, shade at the beach, the canoe/kayak/sup self-serve station, the dock system and playground improvements. These were all a direct result from the public engagement.

b. Accountability:

The long-range plan for the park, once approved, will be shared with the public and specifically identified groups. The engagement process allowed the public to learn how the County plans its parks and that everyone's input matters. The planning process should create better outcomes for those groups engaged since most of the proposed improvements are a direct result of that engagement. For example, for the Lake Association, the County heard their request for a fishing pier, but because the lake is too shallow for an effective pier, the County worked with the Association and is proposing several shore fishing areas and a courtesy dock instead. This collaborative solution doesn't require use of boat and is more accessible for the public creating better outcomes for both parties.

The parents of kids with disabilities group provided great information on playgrounds and pushed for rubberized surfacing, ramps, and adaptive/sensory equipment. The rubberized surface and ramps provide ease of access for everyone, and the adaptive/sensory equipment helps increase cognitive and physical skills in kids with disabilities.

The County will continue to work with the public and groups as resources become available and implementation of the improvements occur. The intent is that by seeing the improvements as they are implemented, the public can feel a sense of ownership of those improvements and realize that the County listens and responds to public input.

12. PUBLIC AWARENESS

Public awareness is an important component of the regional parks and trails system. The County will continue to work with the Metropolitan Council’s regional parks and trails system program to create awareness about the regional system, through public information maps, websites, social media, publications, and brochures. The County will continue community engagement activities throughout the year to not only receive feedback on long-range plans, but also to provide information on the parks and trails system and to promote park amenities and recreational opportunities throughout the County. Where transit is available to parks and trails, transit routes are noted on the Anoka County Parks’ webpage.

13. ACCESSIBILITY

Anoka County continually strives to provide equal access to all residents of Anoka County and the region. While there is a nominal parking fee in some of the regional parks, there is not currently a fee for Coon Lake Park.

There is no transit service near the park and the nearest park and ride is over 5 miles away. Due to the lack of connecting trails, most visitors are required to drive to the park.



Figure 25: Transit Link Vehicle

While transit access to the park is limited, the Anoka County Traveler Transit Link, as shown in Figure 25 and Metro Mobility dial-a-ride services provide transportation for a minimal fee. Transit Link will pick up and drop off passengers anywhere there is an address or cross street, or anywhere along the regional trail if the vehicle does not have to back up. Currently all the vehicles are equipped with bike racks so passengers wishing to bike at the park could use

Transit Link to preschedule a trip to and from their home is needed.

The County is currently undertaking an update to the Parks ADA Transition Plan, with the intent that any new development at the park will eliminate existing barriers and ensure that the park and any facilities and amenities will conform to or surpass the standards mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act. In this plan, the boat launch and beach area have both been called out for improvements. Currently, the two ADA parking stalls, the pedestrian access route from the stalls to

the launch, and the launch dock are not ADA compliant. Reconstruction will ensure better access to the facility. For the beach, the pedestrian access routes will need to be reconstructed as well, as they are non-compliant due to cracks, slopes, and vertical grades. The ADA parking stalls will be updated with current signage and striping, and additional accessible picnic tables will be added to the pavilions and picnic areas. In addition, a new ADA access route will be constructed along the beach to the dock and ADA canoe/kayak launch as well as down into the water.

14. NATURAL RESOURCES

As part of the long-range planning process, the existing natural resources within the park are examined. Anoka County has maintained a strong commitment to preserving and restoring natural resources within its park, trails, and open space system. The expansive 11,000-acre park system contains a diverse system of wildlife species and natural areas including upland forests, deciduous woodlands, upland prairies, forested wetlands, shrub wetlands and open wetlands. The existing land cover, consistent with the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, can be found in the Appendix of this document. There are no sites of significant biological diversity or any listed species within the park's boundary. To manage the natural resources and maintain the parks and trail's identity, Anoka County will provide for:

- The protection, restoration, and enhancement of native plant and animal habitats throughout the park.
- Protection and improvement of water and soil resources.
- Increase public awareness regarding the diverse natural resources in the area.
- Implement sustainable practices related to park development, operations, and maintenance.



Figure 26: Prairie in park

General natural resources management strategies include identifying and assessing remnant plant and animal communities, monitoring rare species, controlling invasive species, ecologically restoring native plant and animal habitat, controlling detrimental insects and disease, wildlife management, enhancing water quality, erosion control and cooperative land stewardship.

A sustainable development framework is utilized in all new park and trail development and

Coon Lake Regional Park

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redevelopment to ensure ecologically sound land stewardship with an emphasis on maintaining the longevity of the facilities for public benefit.

The following natural resource management components are an integral part of Anoka County's planning efforts associated with the development and redevelopment of Coon Lake Regional Park:

Anoka County's Natural Resources Unit will be directly involved with the design, construction, and monitoring of the proposed park projects. A concerted emphasis will be placed on avoiding and minimizing any adverse impacts to the plant and animal habitat, as well as to the lakes and wetlands. In addition, Anoka County will focus on incorporating local native seed and plant material that will complement the ecology and function of the surrounding native plant communities.

Protection of wetlands and surface water resources will be a top priority for these projects as Coon Lake is impaired for aquatic consumption (mercury in fish tissue). Anoka County will work very closely with the Lake Improvement District, the City of Columbus, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Metropolitan Council to ensure that the standards and requirements for resource protection are met as these projects proceed.



Figure 27: Coon Lake is an important water resource

Storm-water management within the park is typically managed on site through vegetated swales and infiltration basins. The County utilizes MPCA's best management practice recommendations in the design and incorporation of storm water pollutant and runoff flow reduction measures constructed in conjunction with park improvements.

The MPCA best management practices guidance documents can be found at: [Guidance for construction stormwater | Minnesota Pollution Control Agency \(state.mn.us\)](https://www.mn.gov/guidance-for-construction-stormwater)

The County also has been working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on an annual basis through a Delegation Agreement to provide aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention through inspections of water-related equipment. The County currently has 41 public access points that it monitors through this program. The program provides funds to staff launches on a random basis to ensure boat owners are complying with the state laws and regulations as related to AIS.

The overall vegetation management goal for Anoka County is to identify restoration needs and to define and implement adaptive management strategies that will sustain the biological diversity,

Coon Lake Regional Park

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production, and function of native plant communities. Vegetation management within the park will focus on preserving native plants, introducing local native plants, eradicating invasive species, maintaining water quality within the watershed, and providing for plant and wildlife corridor connections.

Considering that ecosystems are dynamic and continually changing over time and space, an adaptive management approach and framework fits very well with the County's practice of ecological restoration and stewardship. In the context of ecological restoration, the following adaptive management principles will guide the stewardship plan for Coon Lake Regional Park:

Problem Assessment:

Define the scope of degradation to the site, synthesize the existing knowledge about it, and explore the potential outcomes of alternative restoration actions.

Design:

Design a restoration plan and monitoring program that will provide reliable feedback and information about the effectiveness of restoration methods.

Implementation:

Effective restoration is usually a multi-step process, requiring not only installation, but many years of maintenance and monitoring.

Monitoring:

Biological indicators are monitored to determine how effective the restoration methods are in meeting the project objectives.

Evaluation:

The actual outcomes are compared to the anticipated outcomes. In addition, the reasons for the underlying differences are interpreted.

Adjustment:

Practices, objectives, and models used during the restoration process may lead to assessment of the problem, new questions, and new options to try in a continual cycle of improvement for a given project.

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Figure 28: Seed Collection

Management and stewardship practices for natural resources maintenance in the park will include periodic mowing, prescriptive fire management, invasive species surveys, hazard tree assessments, seed collection and propagation, invasive species removal, turf management, brush and tree maintenance, erosion control, forest health assessments and maintenance, wildlife surveys and management as needed, and interpretive signage.

Maintenance and stewardship practices also include regular pruning of trees and vegetation along roadways, trail corridors, park facilities and structures.

Priority projects for natural resources within the park will focus on the following native community restorations:

1. Mesic Prairie
2. Colonial Water Bird Nesting Habitat
3. Higher Quality Wetland Complexes
4. Higher Quality Woodlands

These projects will be conducted in an on-going basis with an average annual cost of \$25,000.

APPENDIX

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Anoka County, Minnesota

DATE: May 9, 2023

RESOLUTION #2023-49

OFFERED BY COMMISSIONER: Reinert

**RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF THE
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the county; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the Metropolitan Council, local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city of Columbus; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated Coon Lake a regional park; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which includes reconstruction and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires an updated long range plan for this regional park be approved by the county and the Metropolitan Council prior to its adoption; and,

WHEREAS, the local city representatives, the general public, area residents and local businesses were given the opportunity to review and comment on the plan:

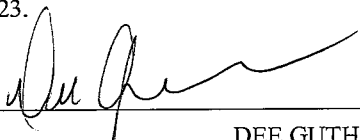
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Anoka County, by and through its Board of Commissioners, does hereby adopt the Coon Lake Regional Park Long Range Plan, which is dated May 2023, a copy of which is on file in the Anoka County Parks Department, Bunker Hills Activities Center, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd., NW, Andover, MN 55304, and authorizes its submission to the Metropolitan Council for its approval so that park development will be eligible for future Metropolitan Council grant funding.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution and long-range plan be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council, Anoka County Parks Department, and the cities of Columbus, East Bethel, and Linwood Township.

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF ANOKA) ss**

I, Dee Guthman, Deputy County Administrator, Anoka County, Minnesota, hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the resolution of the county board of said county with the original record thereof on file in the Administration Office, Anoka County, Minnesota, as stated in the minutes of the proceedings of said board at a meeting duly held on May 9, 2023, and that the same is a true and correct copy of said original record and of the whole thereof, and that said resolution was duly passed by said board at said meeting.

Witness my hand and seal this 9th day of May 2023.



DEE GUTHMAN
DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
DISTRICT #1 – LOOK	X	_____
DISTRICT #2 – BRAASTAD	X	_____
DISTRICT #3 – REINERT	X	_____
DISTRICT #4 – SCHULTE	X	_____
DISTRICT #5 – GAMACHE	X	_____
DISTRICT #6 – JEPSON	X	_____
DISTRICT #7 – MEISNER	X	_____

**CITY OF EAST BETHEL
EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-30

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK
LONG RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,

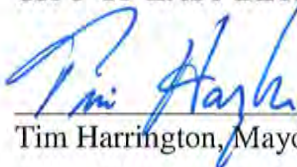
WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and,

WHEREAS, the City of East Bethel representatives have reviewed and gave input on the plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF EAST BETHEL, MINNESOTA THAT: the City of East Bethel hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

Adopted this 24th day of April, 2023 by the City Council of the City of East Bethel.

CITY OF EAST BETHEL



Tim Harrington, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jack Davis, City Administrator



**TOWN OF LINWOOD
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-14

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary, and in the public interest for the County of Anoka, to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the county; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and

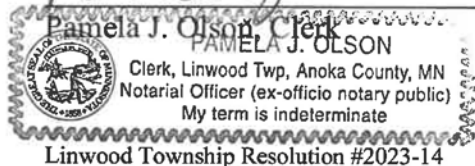
WHEREAS, the Linwood Township Board of Supervisors have reviewed and given input on the plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Linwood Township hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LINWOOD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
ON THE 9th DAY OF MAY, 2023.

ATTEST:





LINWOOD TOWNSHIP


Robert Millerbernd, Chairman

RESOLUTION 23-05

**CITY OF COLUMBUS
COUNTY OF ANOKA
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR ANOKA COUNTY'S
COON LAKE REGIONAL PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN**

WHEREAS, it is necessary and in the public interest for the County of Anoka to provide open space recreational facilities within the County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has worked with the local cities and other regulating agencies in a cooperative effort to develop a regional park in the city; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka and the Metropolitan Council have designated the park as a regional park; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Anoka has developed a long-range program for development at Coon Lake Regional Park, which is to include reconstruct and improvement of existing facilities and construction of new facilities and amenities; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council requires a long-range plan for this regional park be approved by the Metropolitan Council; and,

WHEREAS, City of Columbus representatives have reviewed and gave input on the plan.

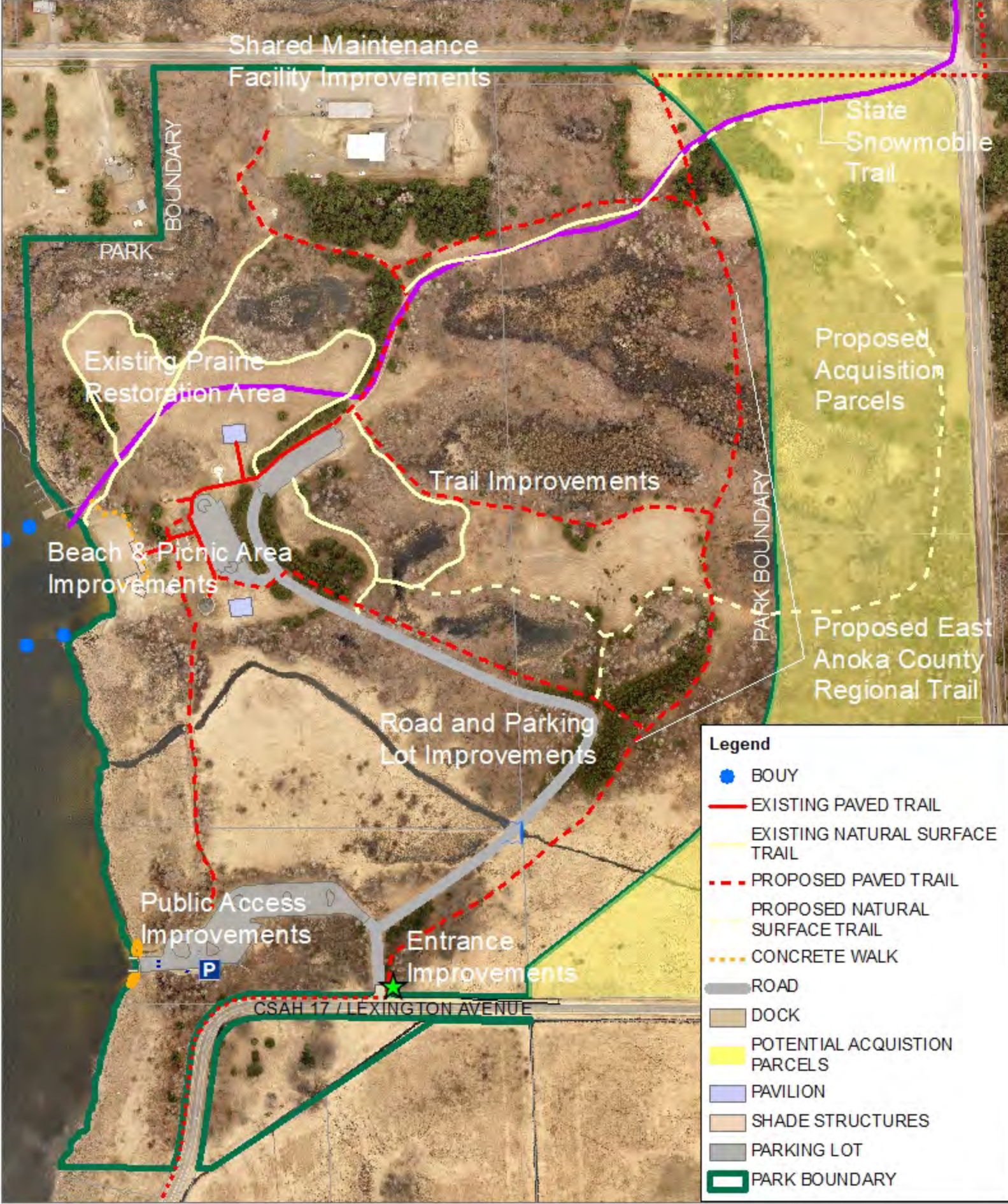
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Columbus hereby offers support to Anoka County for the Coon Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan and its effort to redevelop the park.

Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Columbus, Minnesota, this 26th day of April 2023.

By: 
Jesse H. Preiner
Its: Mayor

ATTEST:


Elizabeth Mursko, City Administrator



Shared Maintenance Facility Improvements

State Snowmobile Trail

PARK BOUNDARY

Existing Prairie Restoration Area

Trail Improvements

Beach & Picnic Area Improvements

Proposed Acquisition Parcels

PARK BOUNDARY

Road and Parking Lot Improvements

Proposed East Anoka County Regional Trail

Public Access Improvements

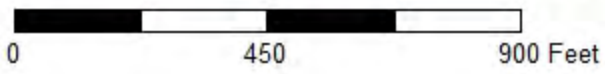
Entrance Improvements

CSAH 17 / LEXINGTON AVENUE

Legend

- BOUY
- EXISTING PAVED TRAIL
- EXISTING NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
- - - PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
- - - PROPOSED NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
- - - CONCRETE WALK
- ROAD
- DOCK
- POTENTIAL ACQUISITION PARCELS
- PAVILION
- SHADE STRUCTURES
- PARKING LOT
- PARK BOUNDARY

**Coon Lake Park
General Development Concept**

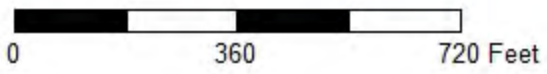




Legend

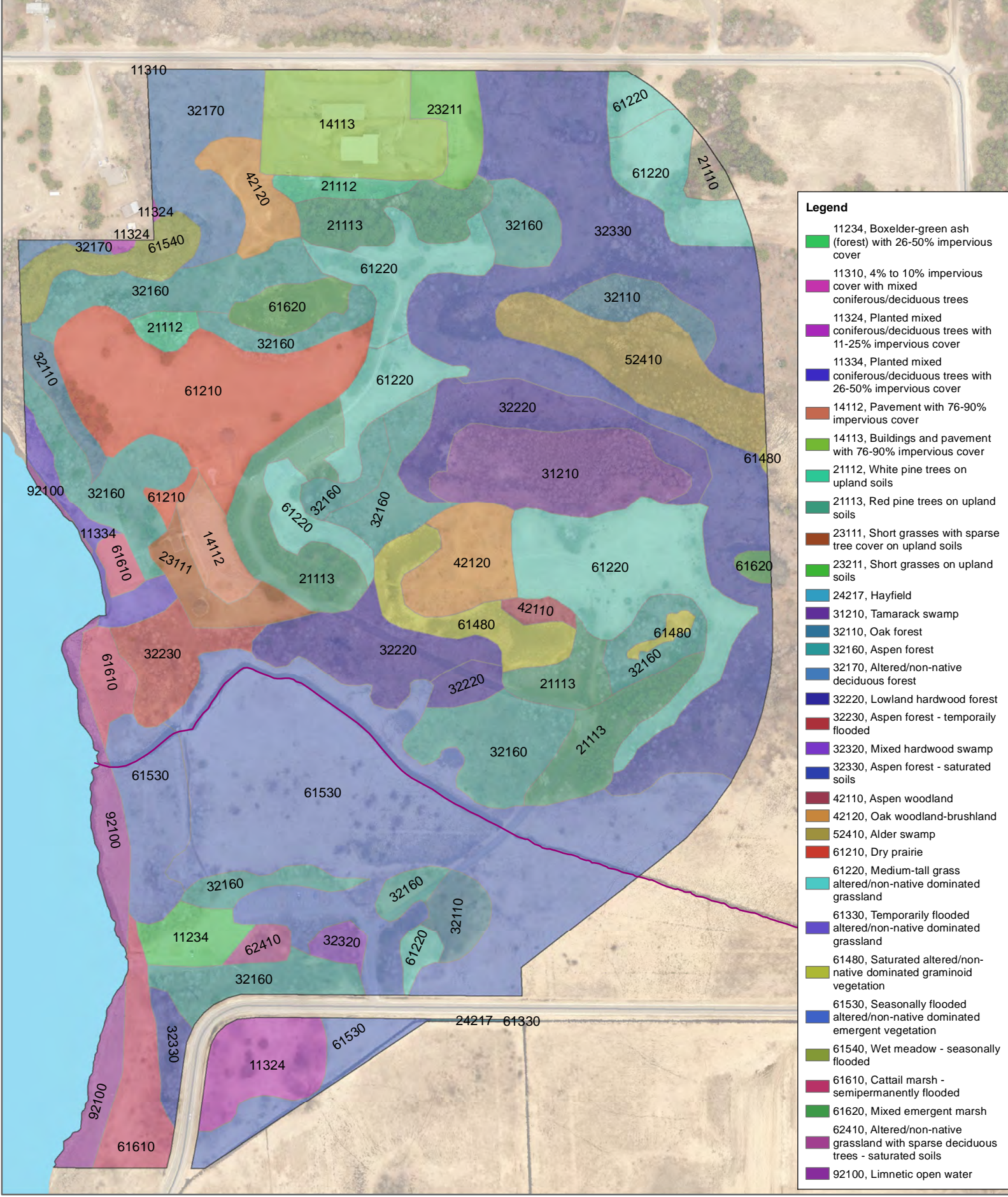
-  ENTRANCE MONUMENT SIGN
-  INTERPRETIVE
-  INTERSECTION
-  TRAILHEAD
-  VEHICLE DIRECTIONAL
-  EXISTING PAVED TRAIL
-  PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
-  EXISTING NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
-  PROPOSED NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
-  SNOWMOBILE TRAIL

**Proposed Sign Plan
Coon Lake Regional Park**



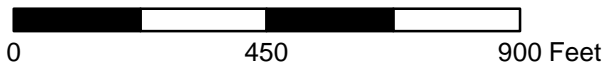

Date: 11/03/2022

Coon Lake Development Concept Timeline and Cost Estimate	<i>3-5 Years</i>	<i>5-10 years</i>	<i>10-20 years</i>	<i>Sub-Total</i>
Entrance Improvements				\$ 465,000
Proposed right turn lane		\$ 250,000		
Road Widening			\$ 150,000	
Entrance Sign - Digital Monument		\$ 50,000		
Pay Station(s)			\$ 15,000	
Parks Roads/Parking Lots				\$ 1,650,000
Reconstruction of roads/parking lots			\$ 1,250,000	
parking expansion			\$ 400,000	
Public Access				\$ 850,000
Reconstruct parking lot			\$ 500,000	
reconstruct launch		\$ 150,000		
AIS BMP's		\$ 75,000		
Additional lighting		\$ 75,000		
Shorefishing opp's		\$ 50,000		
Trails				\$ 1,175,000
Paved Trails				
East Anoka County RT		\$ 400,000		
Boat Launch to Beach link		\$ 275,000		
Beach to Maint. Shop link		\$ 150,000		
Connector trails		\$ 150,000		
Natural Surface Trail				
Existing trail improvements		\$ 75,000		
New trails		\$ 125,000		
Maintenance Facility (County Funded)				
Shop Reconstruction (100% County Funded)				
Beach Improvements				\$ 1,295,000
Shade structures		\$ 50,000		
Concrete walk for ADA		\$ 15,000		
Docking Facilities		\$ 25,000		
Canoe/Kayak self serve station		\$ 40,000		
ADA canoe/kayak launch		\$ 15,000		
Pavilion Improvements	\$ 100,000			
Restroom Recon/Changing Room conversion to RR			\$ 400,000	
Playground Reconstruction		\$ 450,000		
Well/Septic Replacement			\$ 200,000	
Natural Resource Restoration/Landscape Improvments				\$ 50,000
Natural Resource Restoration		\$ 50,000		
Sign Plan				\$ 20,000
Directional Signs		\$ 10,000		
Informational Signs		\$ 5,000		
Interpretive Signs		\$ 5,000		
Sub-total By Timeframe	\$ 100,000	\$ 2,490,000	\$ 2,915,000	
Total Development Concept			\$ 5,505,000	\$ 5,505,000



- Legend**
- 11234, Boxelder-green ash (forest) with 26-50% impervious cover
 - 11310, 4% to 10% impervious cover with mixed coniferous/deciduous trees
 - 11324, Planted mixed coniferous/deciduous trees with 11-25% impervious cover
 - 11334, Planted mixed coniferous/deciduous trees with 26-50% impervious cover
 - 14112, Pavement with 76-90% impervious cover
 - 14113, Buildings and pavement with 76-90% impervious cover
 - 21112, White pine trees on upland soils
 - 21113, Red pine trees on upland soils
 - 23111, Short grasses with sparse tree cover on upland soils
 - 23211, Short grasses on upland soils
 - 24217, Hayfield
 - 31210, Tamarack swamp
 - 32110, Oak forest
 - 32160, Aspen forest
 - 32170, Altered/non-native deciduous forest
 - 32220, Lowland hardwood forest
 - 32230, Aspen forest - temporarily flooded
 - 32320, Mixed hardwood swamp
 - 32330, Aspen forest - saturated soils
 - 42110, Aspen woodland
 - 42120, Oak woodland-brushland
 - 52410, Alder swamp
 - 61210, Dry prairie
 - 61220, Medium-tall grass altered/non-native dominated grassland
 - 61330, Temporarily flooded altered/non-native dominated grassland
 - 61480, Saturated altered/non-native dominated graminoid vegetation
 - 61530, Seasonally flooded altered/non-native dominated emergent vegetation
 - 61540, Wet meadow - seasonally flooded
 - 61610, Cattail marsh - semipermanently flooded
 - 61620, Mixed emergent marsh
 - 62410, Altered/non-native grassland with sparse deciduous trees - saturated soils
 - 92100, Limnetic open water

Coon Lake Land Cover



Comments Summarized by Topic:		Group	Response
Lexington Avenue			
	Lexington needs to be improved for safety.	Coon Lake Improvement Association (CLIA), Columbus, Public, East Bethel (EB)	While this is technically outside the scope of the park, after discussions with the County Transportation Division, proposed improvements include a right turn lane on Lexington and limiting street parking within 400' of entrance.
	Turn lanes into the park were suggested.	CLIA	See above response.
	No parking signs on Lexington for ½ mile each direction and on 22.	CLIA	See above response.
	No street parking for public safety and overcrowding.	CLIA, Public	See above response.
Boat Launch			
	Multiple comments about allowing overflow parking and the dangers of it on Lexington Avenue and lake capacity.	CLIA	It is the County's position not to inhibit users access to the lake.
	Limit number of spaces available. Once lot full, turn away.	CLIA	It is the County's position not to inhibit users access to the lake.
	No more spaces for parking; its overcrowded	CLIA	It is the County's position that an increase in parking will deter from an enjoyable experience at the park.
	More parking in the park for vehicles and boat trailers	CLIA, Public	It is the County's position that an increase in parking for boats and the park will deter from an enjoyable experience at the park and will not be adding parking.
	Could proof of residency be asked for prior to launching boats?	CLIA	No. Restriction by residency to public waters is not allowed.
	Could a fee be charged to launch boats at Park?	CLIA	No. DNR requires that public launches be free for easy access to public waters.
	Add fishing line disposal station	CLIA	There is debate on how effective a fishing line disposal station is vs. a trash container. The County provides trash containers at all launches for this purpose.
	Boat Launch gets shallow, can it be dredged?	CLIA	It is possible but would have to be approved through the MnDNR and possibly the US Army Corps of Engineers and other local regulatory agencies. The best option would be to wait until reconstruction of the launch and include into the overall project.
	Charge a daily entrance fee to support the boat launch and inspections. Enforcement through ticketing.	Public	Entrance fees are not proposed for this plan, but could be considered in the future.
Lake			
	Create "no wake zone" in swim area, where boats/jet-ski's land. Could use buoys as a visual clue.	CLIA	The proposed plan addresses this issue through the use of a docking system that will separate uses.
	Additional Water safety enforcement	CLIA, EB	Enforcement on the lake is outside the County's jurisdiction, but the request has been conveyed to the DNR.

	Would a place to fuel up be an option?	CLIA	Boaters should fuel up ahead of time or bring fuel with them.
	Limit Boats on the lake.	CLIA	The DNR has jurisdiction of the lake and does not limit access on lakes.
	Can we partner to build fish habitat in the lake?	CLIA	The County is always open to partnering on projects that create and conserve habitat, but will require partnering with the MnDNR as well.
	Add Shore fishing and or dock	EB	The proposed plan addresses this.
	Slip type dock near beach for access to park from water	EB, Public	The proposed plan addresses this.
Park Capacity			
	Charge fees like other regional parks	CLIA	Entrance fees will not be implemented with this plan, but County can consider it in the future.
	Need additional enforcement in the park and on water, especially holidays.	CLIA	The Parks Department will continue to work with the County Sheriff on enforcement at the park.
	There were several comments about increasing the size of the park	Public	The expansion of the park is included within the master plan, but the County only purchases from willing sellers and the property recently changed hands.
Park Improvements			
	Add fishing pier	CLIA	Discussed with CLIA that lake is too shallow to allow a pier. Plan proposes shore fishing and courtesy dock for fishing opportunities.
	Should there be lifeguards at the beach?	CLIA	The County does not provide lifeguards, swimmers swim at their own risk.
	Ice Rink with warming area (users pay for heat)	CLIA	This is not something the County feels is feasible in this plan.
	Sliding Hill	CLIA, EB	The hill would need to be constructed as the parkland is relatively flat and this is not a risk the County is willing to take on at this time.
	Dog Park	CLIA, EB, Public	Input for and against was close to evenly split. At this time, the County does not feel it can take on the added maintenance a dog park requires.
	Splash Pad	EB	This is not something the County feels is feasible in this plan.
	More Shelters	EB	Additional shelters require additional parking and more users. It is the Departments position at this time that an increase in users will deter from an enjoyable experience at the park.
	Can we partner on herbicide treatments along shore-line for invasives?	CLIA	The County is always willing to partner on projects within it's shoreline. Outside County jurisdiction would require MnDNR partnership.
	Playgrounds that are accessible/adaptive in nature. Easy climbing structures, poured in place surfacing, sensory elements	Public	The plan proposes when the playground is redeveloped that it have PIP surfacing and have a majority of elements be accessible/adaptive.
	Nature Play area	Public	The plan proposes when the playground is redeveloped that it have nature play elements.
	Need more winter activities in the parks.	Columbus	The plan proposes more winter walking trails and programs for the park.
	Would camping be considered?	Columbus, Public	No input was received regarding camping at the park and with current park capacities, the Plan does not propose adding camping.

	Year-round activities building	EB	A year round facility is no feasible and not proposed within the plan.
	Boat/Canoe/Kayak/SUP rental/launch	Public	A canoe/kayak/sup station is proposed within the plan.
	Swim Lessons	EB	The County doesn't have the capacity to offer swim lessons.
	Disc Golf	Public	The County feels a course at Coon Lake will impact the local courses in the area and will not be installing one.
	Zip Line	Public	The County doesn't feel a zip line at this location is feasible within this plan.
	Expand Park to include nature area for bird watching. Expand prairie restoration areas. Work with city to incorporation green/open spaces that connect to the regional park. Would increase size of park and benefit community and wildlife.	Public	The County is aware of the east parcels that were recently sold. The County is interested in adding these parcels to the park boundary, but only purchase from willing sellers. Acquisition at this time is not feasible.
	Mountain bike training area and trails	Public	With current use of the park, adding mountain biking trails would only further fragment the habitat. The plan does not include single track trails.
	Wheelchair ramp to water at beach.	Public	The plan proposes an accessible ramp to the water at the beach.
	Keep the trees	Public	The County has undertaken to plan more trees in the parks. Any trees removed are typically part of forest health management plan for the park.
	Move volleyball off beach	Public	
Trails			
	Safe trails for access to and from nearby neighborhoods and destinations.	CLIA, EB, Linwood, Public	While this this is outside the scope of the park plan, the County will support the local cities on any additional trail connections made outside the regional system.
	Add cross country ski trails	CLIA	With current use of the park, adding ski trails would further fragment the habitat. The plan does not include cross country ski trails.
	Add Snowshoeing	CLIA	Snowshoeing doesn't require trails and is allowed within the park.
	Packed Walking Trails	CLIA	The plan proposes to add packed trails for walking in the winter.
	Can we work with Carlos Avery to connect to the Park?	CLIA	Carlos Avery is a wildlife management area and run by the MnDNR. The DNR does not allow development with the WMA.
	Snowmobile Trail is important to keep intact.	KIWI	The importance of the snowmobile trail is acknowledged and will not be impacted by the plan.
	Add Paved Trails	Columbus	The plan proposes additional paved trails within the park.
	Unpaved/Natural surface walking trails	Public	The plan proposes additional natural surface trails within the park.
	ATV Trails	Public	ATV trails are not an allowable use in the regional system and is therefore not allowed.

	Horse Trails	Public	With current use of the park, adding horse trails would further fragment the habitat. The plan does not include developing horse trails.
Miscellaneous			
	Concerns about the amount of improvements proposed vs. the relatively small budget amount for operations and maintenance. This plan needs a way to generate enough revenue to support it. The O&M budget needs to be increased.	Public	The County reviews O&M practices annually and will adjust mid-season as needs dictate.