



## Chapter 4

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## OVERALL PROCESS

Community engagement for this planning process began in the Spring of 2018 and continued throughout the approvals process and plan completion. The overall engagement goal for this project was determined early on by MPRB to be collaborative with as many stakeholder groups as possible. This means that the design team and MPRB staff worked directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that perspectives were consistently understood, considered and reflected in project decisions. MPRB's commitment throughout the project process was (and continues to be) to work with stakeholders for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate recommendations to the maximum extent possible.

In order to achieve these goals, the project process involved a variety of means of gathering community input from a wide variety of events and methods. During the Discovery and Analysis phase of the project, community engagement activities involved asking a lot of open-ended questions to the public, gathering ideas, and cataloging concerns. This information set the foundation for determining a set of issues and opportunities to address. Throughout the master planning process, community engagement was focused on sharing design concepts either in-person or through the project website, collecting public feedback, revising the concepts and re-presenting for further feedback.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL

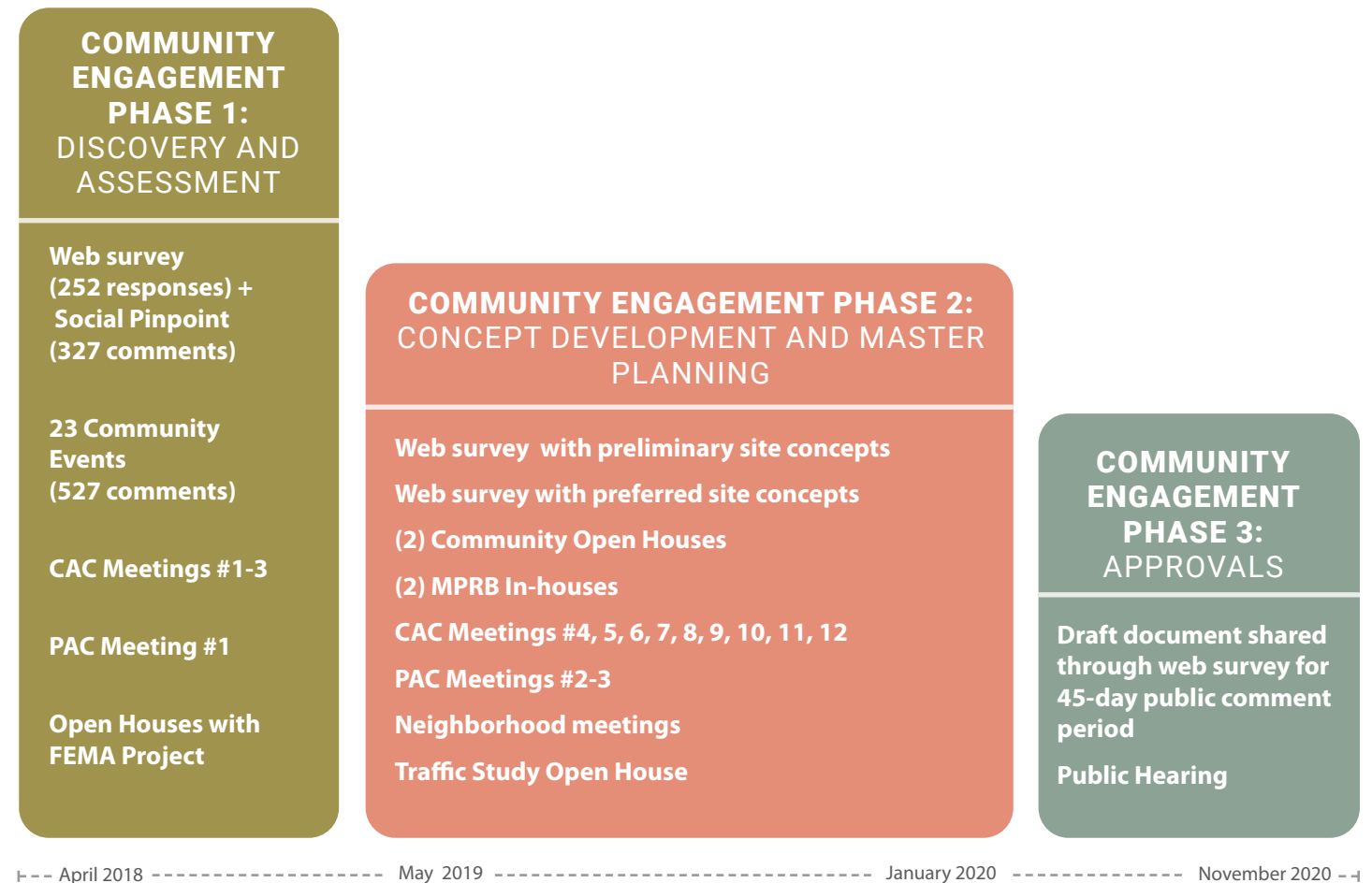


Figure 4.1 Community Engagement Process

# EQUITY ANALYSIS

An equity analysis is an evaluation tool embedded in MPRB's Community Engagement plans and required by the Metropolitan Council for Regional Park and Trail Master Planning. This analysis focuses on understanding the process and outcomes for the six Met Council-determined equity lenses (race, ethnicity, national origin, age, ability and income), with emphasis on identifying underserved stakeholder groups.

## PROJECT DATA

The following local and regional stakeholders were identified early on and confirmed throughout the planning process through demographic information gathered through surveys and in-person engagement events. These stakeholders represent the primary user stakeholders for the regional park. There is significant overlap between these stakeholders, as the high number of regional park users and potential users encompasses a wide and broad demographic. In the case of Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail, the most underserved stakeholders are likely the stakeholders that are not frequent or nearby residents to the park and trail.\*

## LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

### RESIDENTS IN ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS ALONG MINNEHAHA CREEK CORRIDOR (LOCAL) WITHIN A 2-MILE DISTANCE TO MINNEHAHA CREEK.

- » The majority of residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods are aged 40-64 years old. Census block data shows that approximately 35-45% of residents within 2 miles of the Creek Corridor fall within this age range.
- » Residents in immediately adjacent neighborhoods to the Creek Corridor report lower percentages of disabilities than other areas of the city of Minneapolis.
- » Adjacent neighborhoods to the Creek Corridor show some of the lowest levels of racial or ethnic diversity in the city, with the majority (70-95%) reporting as White/Caucasian.

\*Unless noted otherwise, data noted above is sourced from the Metropolitan Council/2010 Census Data and 2016 American Community Survey: <https://metrotransitmshinyapps.io/regional-parks-acs/>

### YOUTH THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS WHO LIVE IN POWDERHORN, PHILLIPS, NORTH MINNEAPOLIS AND NORTHEAST MINNEAPOLIS WHO DO NOT LIVE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE TO A NATURAL WATERWAY OR HAVE ACCESS TO A NATURAL-RESOURCE BASED PARK

- » While the population immediately adjacent to Minnehaha Creek is primarily older residents, the number of youths (under 18 years old) who live just further (3-4 miles) from the Creek is far higher (30-40%)
- » Youth in the above-mentioned neighborhoods tend to live in lower-income households (0-20th percentile income levels), versus residents immediately adjacent to the Creek (80-100th percentile).
- » The above-mentioned neighborhoods are far more diverse than other parts of the city, with the highest concentration of all other races other than white. A significant (42-46%) number of Hispanic residents live in the Phillips neighborhood and a significant number of black residents live in Near North/North Minneapolis (39-67%).
- » Through the Mapping Prejudice project, we know that the areas surrounding Minnehaha Creek experienced some of the highest levels of racial covenants, when compared to other parts of the city. The area around the Creek benefitted from the practice of redlining, as most of this area was rated as 'best' (see chapter 2). Contrasting diversity in other areas of the city, such as in Powderhorn and the Phillips neighborhood, are reflective of how these covenants have influenced generations of potential inequities over time throughout the City.

## REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

### NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION AND RECREATIONAL TRAIL USERS

- » Just outside of the 2-mile service area, there are increased numbers of residents who report disabilities (20-24%), which appears to correspond to a higher number of senior housing developments. People who experience disabilities tend to rely more on public transportation and non-motorized modes for transportation and recreation.
- » Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail has some of the highest bike and pedestrian user counts in the entire city, with an estimated daily bicycle traffic of 1,090 riders and an estimated daily pedestrian traffic of 650 pedestrians (2016, City of Minneapolis).
- » Within the 3-4 mile area surrounding Minnehaha Creek, the income levels of residents tend to be much lower than the neighborhoods along the creek. People with less money tend to rely more heavily on public transportation and non-motorized modes (biking, walking).

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Of the primary stakeholder groups identified, two of the three could be categorized as underserved: Youth in other parts of the City and Non-motorized Transportation and Recreational Trail Users. Engagement for Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan was conducted at a number of scales and with a broad and targeted approach to understand ideas, feedback, and concerns of all interested stakeholders. The full scope of engagement activities are outlined throughout this chapter. To understand how to address historical inequities related to park and trail use, the following questions served as guidance for discussion:

### YOUTH

- » What activities, amenities, or environments along Minnehaha Creek could improve the experience for underserved youth throughout the community to feel welcome, invited, and take ownership of the park, creek, or trail?

### NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL USERS

- » What is the role of personal vehicles within a regional park?
- » What is the role of non-motorized users?
- » Of the many modes represented throughout the Parkway, who should have the highest priority?

### YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The main method for engaging with youth who live in other parts of the city was conducted through the Creek Tours with middle and high school age youth during the summer of 2019. Over the course of two weeks, youth participating in programming at MPRB recreation centers in under-served neighborhoods were invited to participate in a partial day tour of the creek. Participants were able to document their experiences in a number of ways, through drawing, photography, verbal discussion and written feedback. General topics surrounding inclusivity, access, stewardship, and outdoor recreation were discussed, and in-progress site concepts were shared with the youth with feedback collected. Other forms of engagement that involved this stakeholder group were less targeted and more broad in scope (online social pinpoint and web survey, open houses, pop-up events along the trail) and did not yield as much response or participation from youth, especially youth who live outside of the immediate neighborhoods adjacent to Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail.

According to the Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2), the role that this stakeholder group played in the development of the master plan ranged from **Consult to Involve**.

This chapter provides more detail on themes and ideas expressed throughout all of the engagement activities. Some of the higher-level themes that emerged from stakeholder engagement with youth who live in other parts of the city are as follows:

- » In general, youths expressed an experience of calm, quietness, and serenity while touring Minnehaha Creek
- » A general unfamiliarity with some of the terrain, and outdoor environment presented a new experience for many youths, with responses ranging from discomfort to enthusiasm and curiosity.
- » In general, youths expressed a frustration that there aren't very many amenities or features that are relatable to them within the park.
- » Some youths expressed discomfort in the park, not feeling that it was designed or meant for their use or presence.

### NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL USER ENGAGEMENT

There were a variety of methods for gathering input from non-motorized trail users, as this stakeholder group is more spread out throughout the region and represents a wider variety of ages, abilities, and preferences. The Community Advisory Committee was comprised of people who would likely describe themselves as non-motorized trail users (bicyclists or pedestrians) as their preferred method for experiencing the park. There were also a few members of the CAC that were outspoken advocates for youth and adult bicycling, as well as a number of advocates for older adults and for people with disabilities. A few members of the bicycling community in Minneapolis (business owner of local bike shop) and other advocates were in contact with the project management team throughout the process and their feedback was considered and weighed during the concept development phase. Pop-up events and Experience Your Creek Events were geared towards gathering in-person feedback and ideas from non-motorized trail users.

According to the Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2), the role that this stakeholder group played in the development of the master plan ranged from **Consult to Collaborate**.

The higher-level themes expressed by the stakeholder group of non-motorized trail users are as follows:

- » General desire for separated trails for slower (pedestrians) trail users and faster (bicyclists) trail users.
- » A number of high-conflict intersections were quickly identified in the planning process by this group, which influenced much of the scope of the master plan and subsequent recommendations.
- » Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail serves as heavily used corridor for non-motorized trail users for both transportation and recreational purposes. This use should continue into the future, with more attention paid to sustainable trail design and location outside of areas that are frequently flooded.
- » A variety of facility types and experiences are desired, such as skills courses for young bicyclists, single-track mountain biking, natural surface hiking trails.

## EVALUATION SUMMARY

The impact of public participation throughout the master planning process was the single-most important driver for the plan and process trajectory and outcomes. In order to accommodate public participation and ensure that as many voices were heard, documented, and considered, the project schedule was stretched over a longer period of time to include additional studies, events, and Community Advisory Committee meetings that were requested of by the public. The developed master plan is truly the result of a robust public participation process that occurred at a variety of scales over the course of two years within the formal project and longer if earlier engagement activities initiated by neighborhood groups is included in the inventory.



Creek Tour with youth from south and north Minneapolis neighborhoods, 7/31/2019

The most prominent results of equitable engagement in the master plan focus primarily on accessibility and race/ethnicity. With regard to accessibility, one key feature is the system of accessible canoe/kayak launches at three locations in the corridor. These launches will allow trips of various lengths for those who paddle, regardless of ability. The launches are connected to the paved trail network and are adjacent to what is proposed to be designated accessible parking. Another accessibility enhancement is the extension of trails farther west in the corridor. In the master plan, a key recreation area—the Morgan-Penn-Newton area—will be connected to the paved trail system. This benefits all users who need regular surfaces for linear recreation, be that because of physical ability or age.

Specific desires for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) community members were harder to come to understand in the project. Participation was generally low, in part, we believe, because of the general location of the corridor, and also because of the series of relatively high-energy and contentious meetings that took place during the summer of 2019. Despite the best efforts of the CAC, staff, and consultants, these meetings were not welcoming places for anyone not interested in talking about the roadway itself. The complexion of these meetings was overwhelmingly dominated by those that live along or very close to the corridor, an area that is not demographically or economically diverse. Staff's work with city-wide youth at this time was a counterpoint to those meetings. The direct outcome of this engagement responds to the mostly BIPOC youth's frustration about a lack of relatable amenities in the park. The new recreational facilities in the Nicollet Focus Area specifically address this concern. This location has good transit access to more diverse neighborhoods along Nicollet Avenue. It could become a gateway to the rest of the park for residents unaware of Minnehaha Creek—as nearly 75% of these youth were. The vision for improved wayfinding and multi-lingual signs reinforces that connectivity. The new activity area at Nicollet was also opposed by nearby residents during several meetings, but in this case the CAC, staff, and consultants were successful in communicating the importance of the feature.

Ongoing implementation of the master plan will require continued engagement. MPRB intends to reach beyond the corridor itself when engaging around detailed design projects. Minnehaha Creek, even though a part of the Grand Rounds, is located in an isolated and secluded part of the city, is relatively unknown by residents in nearby, more diverse neighborhoods, such as Whittier, Morris Park, and Powderhorn. This was clear during the planning process, which was rather dominated by very residents who live adjacent to (or very near) Minnehaha Creek. It is important for MRB to both recognize and push back against this dynamic as projects are implemented.

# ON-GOING PROJECT COMMUNICATION

The following means of communication occurred throughout the entire planning process.

## PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website, administered by MPRB, serves as the main point of information for the project. The web survey, community events, Social Pinpoint website, and CAC meeting minutes and agendas can all be found at the project website. A postcard handout, as well as business cards, were distributed throughout Phase 1 to direct people to the project website.

Link to Project Website: <https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/minnehahacreek>



**MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL MASTER PLAN**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is developing a master plan for Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail, which includes parkland along both sides of Minnehaha Creek between Minnehaha Regional Park and the western city limit. This master plan will set a vision and priorities for future park improvements in the area for the next 20-30 years.

Please share your ideas through an online survey and through an interactive map, both available at the project website: <https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/minnehahacreek>

Or scan the QR code to go directly to the project website



Outreach materials like the postcard above were widely distributed at public events, nearby recreation centers, and at MPRB headquarters to inform people about how to find out more information about the project.

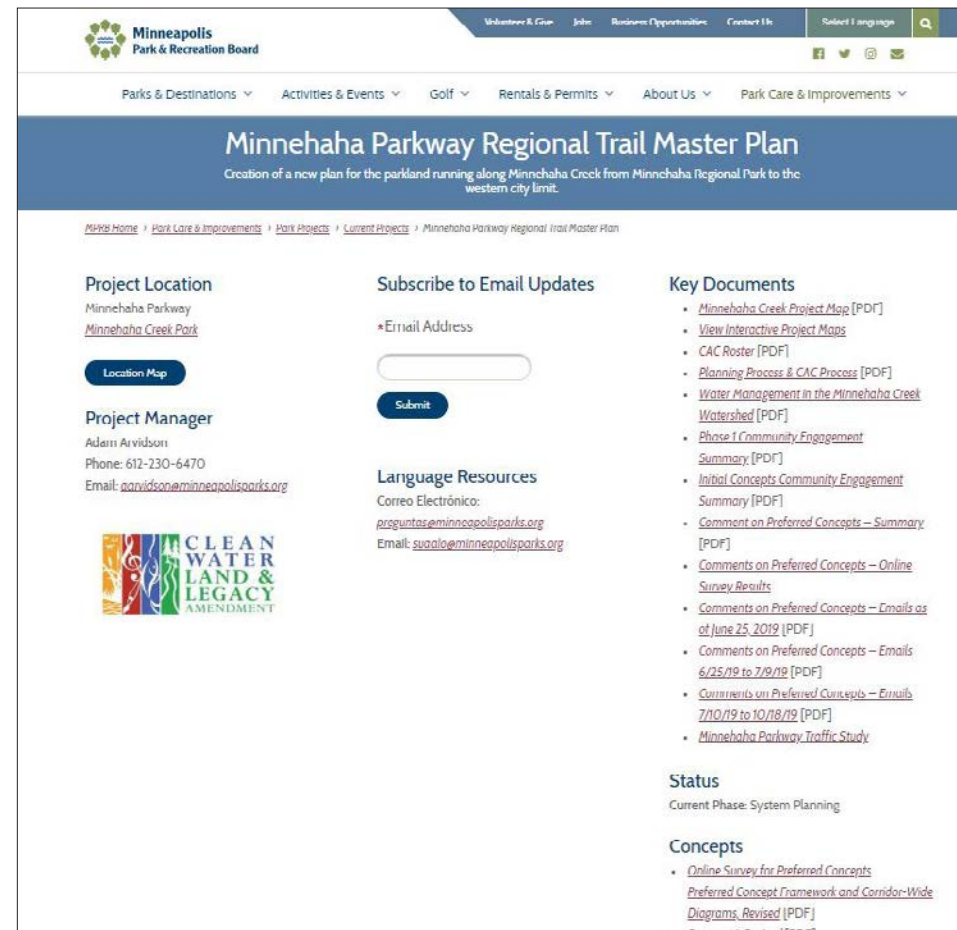
The project website (right) served as a resource for all project materials, meeting minutes, announcements, and contact information.

## EMAIL (.GOV) NOTICES

All meetings and events were advertised through MPRB .gov delivery e-mail.

## DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH MPRB STAFF

All project communication provided phone and e-mail contact information for Adam Arvidson, Project Manager at MPRB. Over the course of the project, Adam received over hundreds of e-mails from community members expressing ideas, concerns and suggestions for the master plan. These e-mails have been archived with MPRB.



**Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board**

Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan  
Creation of a new plan for the parkland running along Minnehaha Creek from Minnehaha Regional Park to the western city limit.

**Project Location**  
Minnehaha Parkway  
[Minnehaha Creek Park](#)

**Project Manager**  
Adam Arvidson  
Phone: 612-230-6470  
Email: [aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org)

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**Language Resources**  
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[proyectos@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:proyectos@minneapolisparcs.org)  
Email: [suaal@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:suaal@minneapolisparcs.org)

**Key Documents**

- [Minnehaha Creek Project Map](#) [PDF]
- [View Interactive Project Maps](#)
- [CAC Roster](#) [PDF]
- [Planning Process & CAC Process](#) [PDF]
- [Water Management in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed](#) [PDF]
- [Phase I Community Engagement Summary](#) [PDF]
- [Initial Concepts Community Engagement Summary](#) [PDF]
- [Comment on Preferred Concepts – Summary](#) [PDF]
- [Comments on Preferred Concepts – Online Survey Results](#)
- [Comments on Preferred Concepts – Emails as of June 25, 2019](#) [PDF]
- [Comments on Preferred Concepts – Emails 6/25/19 to 7/9/19](#) [PDF]
- [Comments on Preferred Concepts – Emails 7/10/19 to 10/18/19](#) [PDF]
- [Minnehaha Parkway Traffic Study](#)

**Status**  
Current Phase: System Planning

**Concepts**

- [Online Survey for Preferred Concepts](#)
- [Preferred Concept Framework and Corridor-Wide Diagrams, Revised](#) [PDF]
- [Segment 1, Revised](#) [PDF]

# PLAN COLLABORATORS

## COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The CAC, or the Community Advisory Committee, is comprised of 19 community members committed to providing guidance and support for the Master Plan. Committee members are appointed by MPRB Commissioners, City Council members, and neighborhood groups. For this master plan, MCWD was also requested to appoint a CAC member. The CAC members are intended to represent a mix of viewpoints (residents, park users, stakeholder groups).

The CAC was charged with:

- » Becoming knowledgeable about the project and its scope, in the capacity to advise MPRB Staff and consultants throughout the planning process.
- » Contribute to broad community engagement by acting as primary contact for the CAC's represented communities, enhancing the project's interaction with a wide range of stakeholders and stakeholder groups.
- » Assist with ongoing communication of technical plan elements to the general public.
- » Report back to appointers or appointing bodies, as requested, on the plan process, information presented, and possible recommendations.
- » Make recommendations to MPRB Commissioners on service area-wide vision, goals, and principles.

CAC meetings were open to the public with time allotted for public comment. All meeting minutes are located on the project website.

## PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) is composed of essential MPRB staff who met four times during the project process to review project ideas and provide direction to the project design team. The PAC included MPRB staff from the following departments: asset management, communications and marketing, community outreach and access, customer service, environmental management, forestry, recreation centers and programs, and park police.

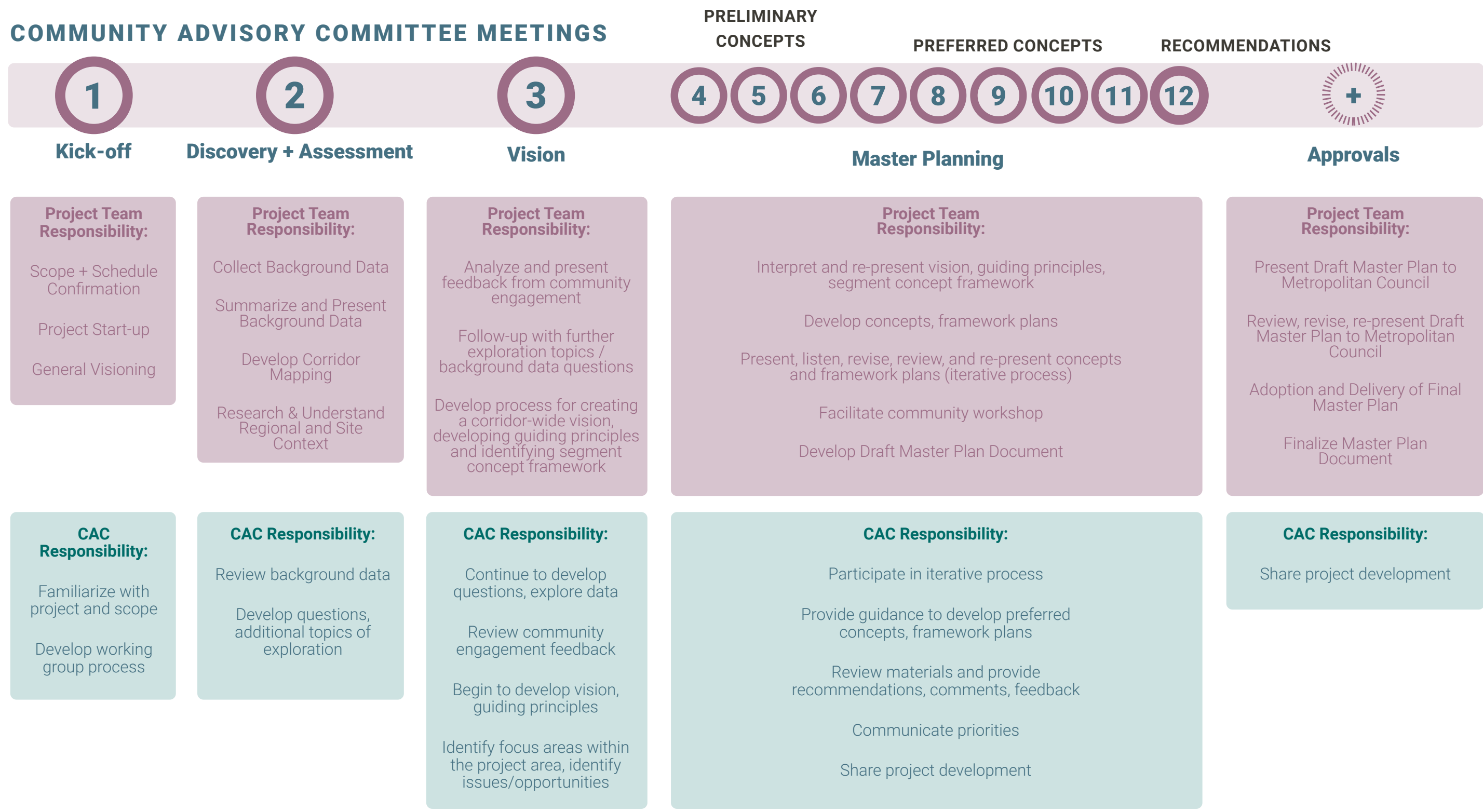


Figure 4.2 Community Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule and Meeting Purposes

# PHASE 1: DISCOVERY AND ASSESSMENT

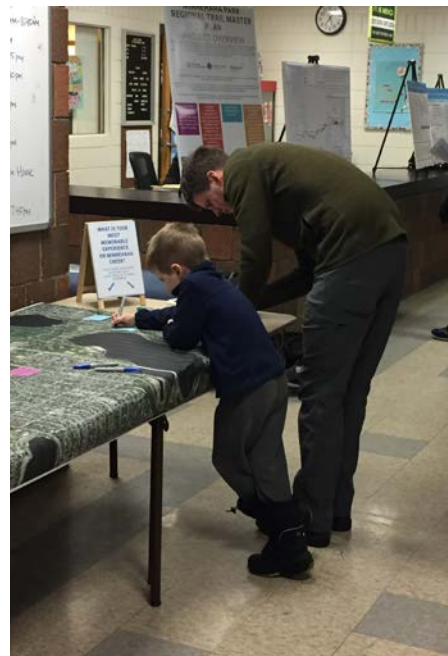
During Phase 1 of community engagement, there were a number of methods employed in order to gather community input on issues and opportunities that exist along the trail and creek today. The following is a summary of the events and methods for gathering community input, as well as summaries of the feedback gathered.

## KICK-OFF OPEN HOUSES

A series of Project Kick-Off Open Houses were hosted in Spring and early Summer of 2018. These events were scheduled in coordination with a few other concurrent projects, including MCWD's Minnehaha Creek FEMA Repair Project, City of Minneapolis' SW Harriet Flood Study, and MRPB's Southwest Service Area Master Plan. Participants were invited to provide feedback on large-scale aerial maps of the project area on things that they currently like, concerns they have, and ideas for the future. There were also presentation boards that explained the project area boundaries in relation to other related or overlapping projects.



Kick-Off Open Houses



## SUMMER OF ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Over the spring, summer and fall of 2018, MPRB engaged with community members at a variety of community events. Maps of Minnehaha Creek were displayed by project area segment, and people were encouraged to mark places where a) things are working, b) where they have concerns, and c) where they have ideas. MPRB staff also answered questions about the project and informed people about upcoming events. Some of the events attended were in coordination with other concurrent projects, such as the Southwest Service Area Master Plan. Efforts were made to range farther afield of the Creek itself, to ensure participation by those not in close proximity. This also brought more racially and ethnically diverse voices into the process, because some of these neighborhoods differ demographically from those along the creek. Those events are noted with a \*.

The following are all of the events and dates where community input was collected:

- » 4/12 Collaborative Open House (Nokomis Recreation Center) with MCWD and City of Minneapolis
- » 4/17 Collaborative Open House (Lynnhurst Recreation Center) with MCWD and City of Minneapolis
- » 6/10 Open Streets (Lyndale Ave)
- » 6/21 Kenny Neighborhood Ice Cream Social
- » 6/30 Field, Regina, Northrop Neighborhood Gathering Annual Celebration
- » 7/4 Tangletown 4th of July Celebration
- » 7/10 Ice Cream Social at Pershing Park
- » 7/18 Morris and Keewaydin Summer Festival\*
- » 7/23 Ice Cream Social at Windom South\*
- » 7/26 Picnic in the Park (Pearl Park)
- » 8/1 Lynnhurst Festival
- » 8/16 MIA Design Night\*
- » 8/23 Open Streets (Nicollet Ave)\*
- » 9/8 Fulton Fall Festival
- » 9/9 Nokomis Block Party
- » 9/12 Pop-Up Bike Park (34th Ave)
- » 9/18 Pop-Up Bike Park (Nokomis)
- » 9/23 Open Streets (50th & France)
- » 9/26 Pop-Up Bike Park (Lynnhurst Park)
- » 9/29 Morris Fall Festival\*
- » 10/14 Experience the Creek (Minnehaha Creek)
- » 10/26 Armitage Fall Festival

## SUMMER OF ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In total, hundreds of comments were collected over the course of 23 events. All of the comments have been recorded on the Social Pinpoint web map, and tagged with the name and date of the event where the comment was collected. The following is a summary of common general comments gathered during Community Events:

### WHAT WORKS WELL TODAY?

- » Winter plowing of trails
- » Trail experience where bikes and peds are separated
- » New intersection design at Lake Harriet
- » Paths that run under bridges (allowing for uninterrupted trail experience)
- » Trail experiences that are naturalistic (winding trail in Segment 2, for example) and separated from the roadway
- » Existing natural surface trails

### WHAT CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE?

- » Speed of traffic along parkway
- » Erosion, flooding, and related trail damage along the creek
- » Pavement quality, maintenance along trails
- » Tennis court maintenance
- » Intersection at 50th Street
- » Crosswalk safety
- » Fallen trees along the creek and trails
- » Lack of drinking fountains and restrooms
- » Intersection at Cedar Avenue
- » Sight lines at intersections (i.e. Bloomington Ave)
- » Trail width, tight radii, steep grade and combination of bicyclists and pedestrians in certain areas
- » Intersection at 28th Avenue
- » Invasive species (buckthorn)
- » Excessive mowing/lawn chemical use by property owners along the creek

### WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE?

- » Add more benches, places to sit along the trails
- » Widen curb cuts at intersection crossings
- » Add more access points from the surrounding neighborhoods to the trail
- » Add canoe racks, paddle share
- » Add bike pumps/fix-it stations along the trail
- » Add more unpaved (natural surface) trails
- » Better wayfinding, mileage markers along the trail
- » Identify native plants
- » On-road/off-road bike parks
- » Add tot-lot in Segment 2 or 3



MPRB staff and CAC members gathering for a tour of the study area

## EXPERIENCE THE CREEK EVENT

MPRB hosted a fall hike and tour of Minnehaha Creek, which served to introduce some of the 'woodsier' portions of the Creek to a wider audience through a family-friendly event. Participants were invited to partake in a guided nature hike, as well as to make artwork using materials found within the Creek corridor. Bikes were provided for use during the event, as well as refreshments. MPRB staff gathered input from participants on ideas, thoughts, and concerns related to future master planning of the park.

## WEB SURVEY

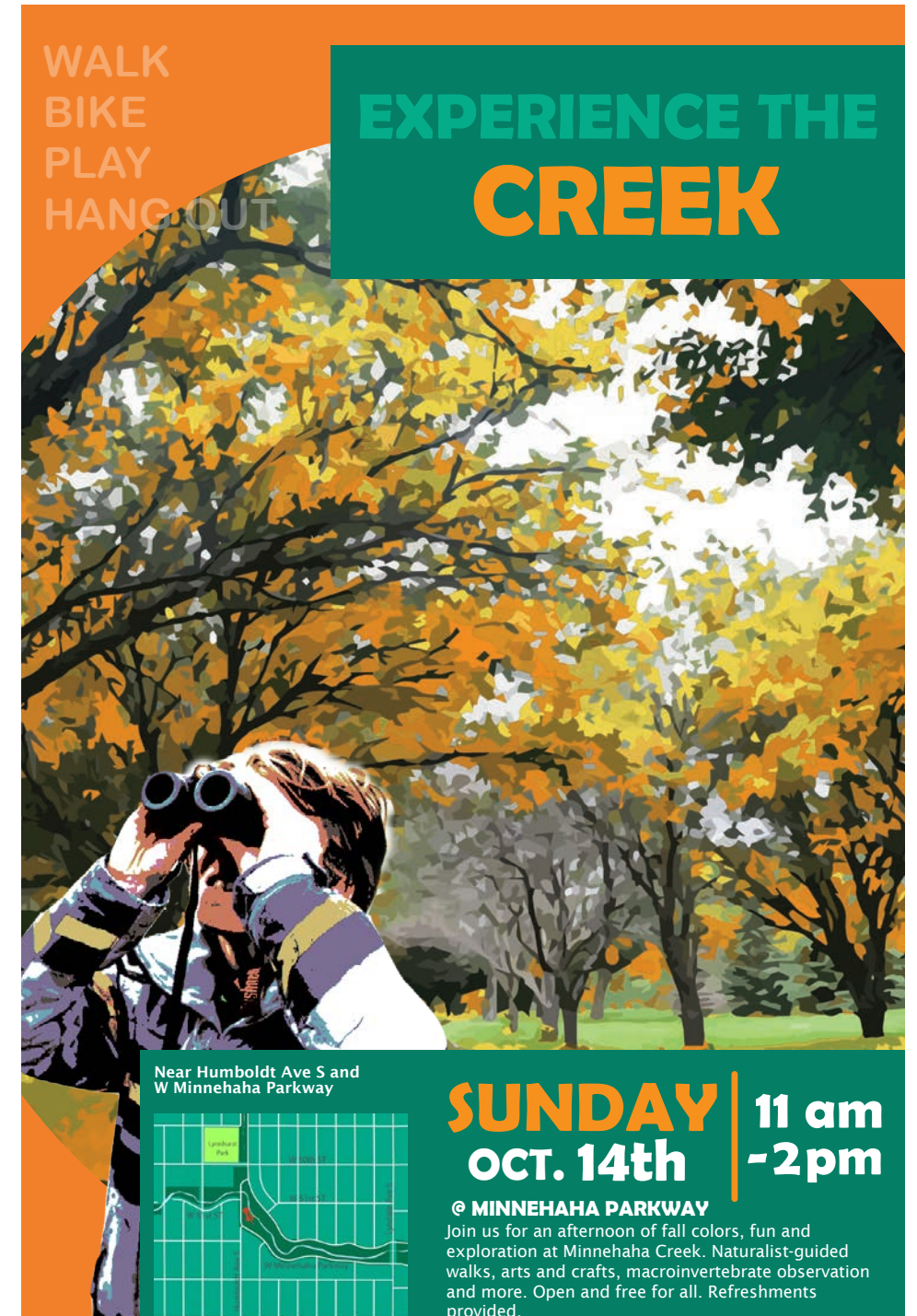
A web survey was launched during the spring of 2018 and remained open until November 1st, 2018. During the survey period, 252 people participated. The intention of this survey was to gather broad community feedback on ideas, concerns, and missing activities and programs along Minnehaha Creek. The survey was linked on the project website and advertised through a postcard mailer.

## WEB SURVEY SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The following is a summary of responses to questions asked in the web survey. Popular or frequent comments or ideas have been highlighted in **bold text**.

### WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE FOR MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL?

- » **Separate trails for bikes and pedestrians**
- » **Add single track trails**
- » **Add bike park or bike skills park**
- » **Add mountain bike trails or natural surface bike trails**
- » Increase width for walking/biking trails
- » Provide ADA access, bituminous trails (not concrete)
- » Create trail loops
- » Improve intersection treatments for safe crossings (bump outs, signage, signals)
- » Add signals for bicyclists at intersections
- » Add art along the trail
- » Add more water fountains



Flyer for an Experience The Creek Event, October 2018

### WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE FOR MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL? (CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

- » Keep natural features
- » Add pickleball courts
- » Add wayfinding/interpretation along the trail
- » Address erosion/flooding along the trail
- » Add more benches/seating
- » Add nature play areas
- » Replace turf with native plants
- » Improve tennis courts
- » Add off-leash dog parks
- » Add kayak/canoe launches at major intersections
- » Add more access points from the surrounding neighborhoods to the trail
- » Add bike pumps/fix-it stations along the trail
- » Add more unpaved (natural surface) trails
- » Identify native plants
- » On-road/off-road bike parks
- » Add tot-lot or more play areas
- » Continue trails in Segment 1 to Edina
- » Cross-country ski trails
- » Add more music, art along the trail
- » Add more programming for seniors in the park
- » Establish clear trail etiquette for shared trails

### WHAT CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL?

- » Need more lighting along the trail
- » Safety for bikes/peds at intersections
- » Erosion (especially of natural trails)
- » Invasive species (buckthorn, ragweed)
- » Signage for kayak launches, wayfinding to other nearby parks/destinations
- » Separation for modes (bikes/peds/other)
- » Water quality/chemical use on nearby lawns
- » Loss of natural features
- » Access/entrance points to trail (need more)
- » Diversity of park/trail users is low (mostly white users)
- » Trail surface maintenance
- » Flooding along the trail
- » Traffic (calming)
- » Informal trails that aren't maintained today (and should be?)
- » Need for more mountain bike trails
- » Privacy for nearby residents from trail users
- » Need for water fountains, hand pumps along the trail
- » Tennis court maintenance
- » Crosswalk safety
- » Fallen trees along the creek and trails
- » Lack of drinking fountains and rest rooms
- » Intersections: Cedar Ave, 28th Avenue, Bloomington Avenue, 50th Street
- » Sight lines at intersections (i.e. Bloomington Ave)
- » Trail width, tight radii, steep grade and combination of bicyclists and pedestrians in certain areas
- » Excessive mowing/lawn chemical use by property owners along the creek

### WHAT ACTIVITIES OR PROGRAMS ARE MISSING FROM MINNEHAHA PARKWAY REGIONAL TRAIL?

- » Separate bikers and walkers
- » Natural surface biking/mountain biking
- » Bike parks
- » Canoe/kayak launches
- » Better maintenance of downed trees in the creek (for kayak/ canoeing)
- » Paddle-share program
- » Pickleball and fitness areas
- » Seating/benches
- » Education/interpretation/history
- » Art
- » Cross-country ski trails / snowshoeing
- » Native plants/pollinator gardens
- » Connections to public transportation
- » Signage/wayfinding/education re: directions and yielding, distance markers
- » Picnic areas
- » Lawn games / shuffleboard
- » Nature play areas
- » Dog parks
- » Fishing piers

### WHAT WORKS WELL TODAY?

- » Winter plowing of trails
- » Trail experience where bikes and peds are separated
- » New intersection design at Lake Harriet
- » Paths that run under bridges (allowing for uninterrupted trail experience)
- » Trail experiences that are naturalistic (winding trail in Segment 2, for example) and separated from the roadway
- » Existing natural surface trails

## WEB SURVEY PARTICIPATION

**252**

People participated in the web survey

**30-49**

years old is the age of the majority of survey participants

**60%**

of survey participants identify as male

**87%**

of survey participants own their own home

## SOCIAL PINPOINT PARTICIPATION

**327**  
comments were collected over

**593** unique users.

On average, participants spent a little over

**22** minutes per visit to the website

## SOCIAL PINPOINT

Social Pinpoint is a web-based map platform. Participants can visit the website and drag icons onto a map to mark places that fall under six categories. After dragging a marker onto the map, participants are asked to provide a comment to elaborate further. Participants can also attach an image that demonstrates their idea. The comments provided are cumulative, and users can see what others have already commented, and indicate if they 'like' or 'dislike' previous comments.

While the Social Pinpoint website closed on November 1st, 2018, the website is still available to view all of the comments.

Link to Social Pinpoint: [bit.ly/MinnehahaCreekMap](https://bit.ly/MinnehahaCreekMap)

## SOCIAL PINPOINT SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Social Pinpoint website was open from May 17th until November 1st, 2018. Over this period of time, a total of 327 comments were received via the website, which was advertised through a post card handout and through the MPRB project web page. There were 593 unique users who visited the web page (users could return to the page as often as they liked). On average, participants spent a little over 22 minutes per visit, leaving and reviewing comments. The Social Pinpoint website is closed for comment, but the website is still available for anyone to review the comments that have been posted.

In addition to the 375 comments received directly through the Social Pinpoint website, the project team entered all comments received through community engagement events, open houses, and experience your creek events to the Social Pinpoint map. These comments are noted with the date and the name of the event. This allowed the project team the ability to view all comments received in a single map, and provided an opportunity to analyze and synthesize the comments and date better.

The comments have been categorized based on four common themes that were present:

- » Trail Quality
- » Roadways
- » Natural Resources
- » Programs/Facilities

The maps on the following pages summarize the biggest ideas that were gathered through Phase 1 of community engagement.

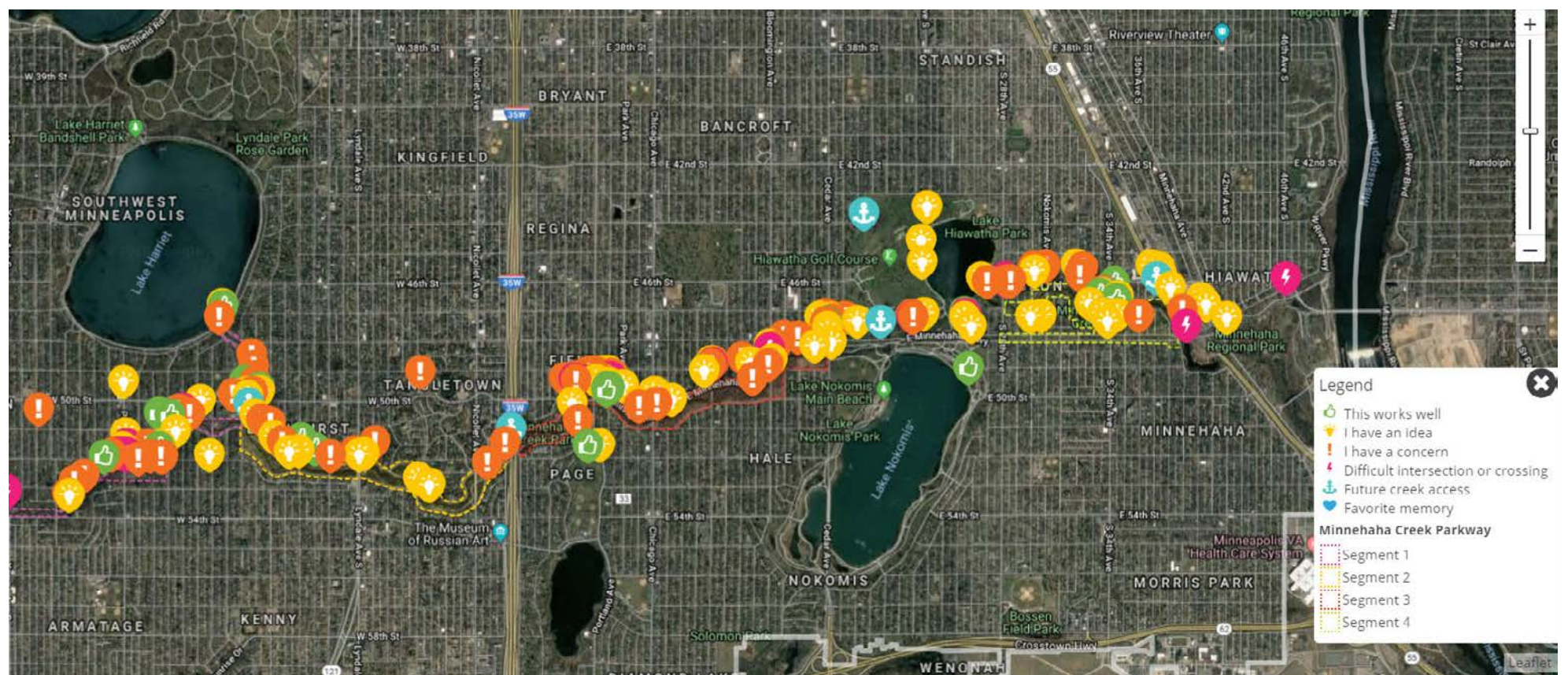


Figure 4.3 Social Pinpoint webpage

### TRAIL QUALITY FEEDBACK (FROM SOCIAL PINPOINT)

- » Separate trails for bikes and pedestrians throughout
- » Clarity needed to determine who has the right-of-way at intersections (bikes, cars, pedestrians)
- » More trail underpasses are suggested, as well as allowing bikes to use existing trail underpasses
- » Trail surface, maintenance, slope and width are all concerns noted throughout.

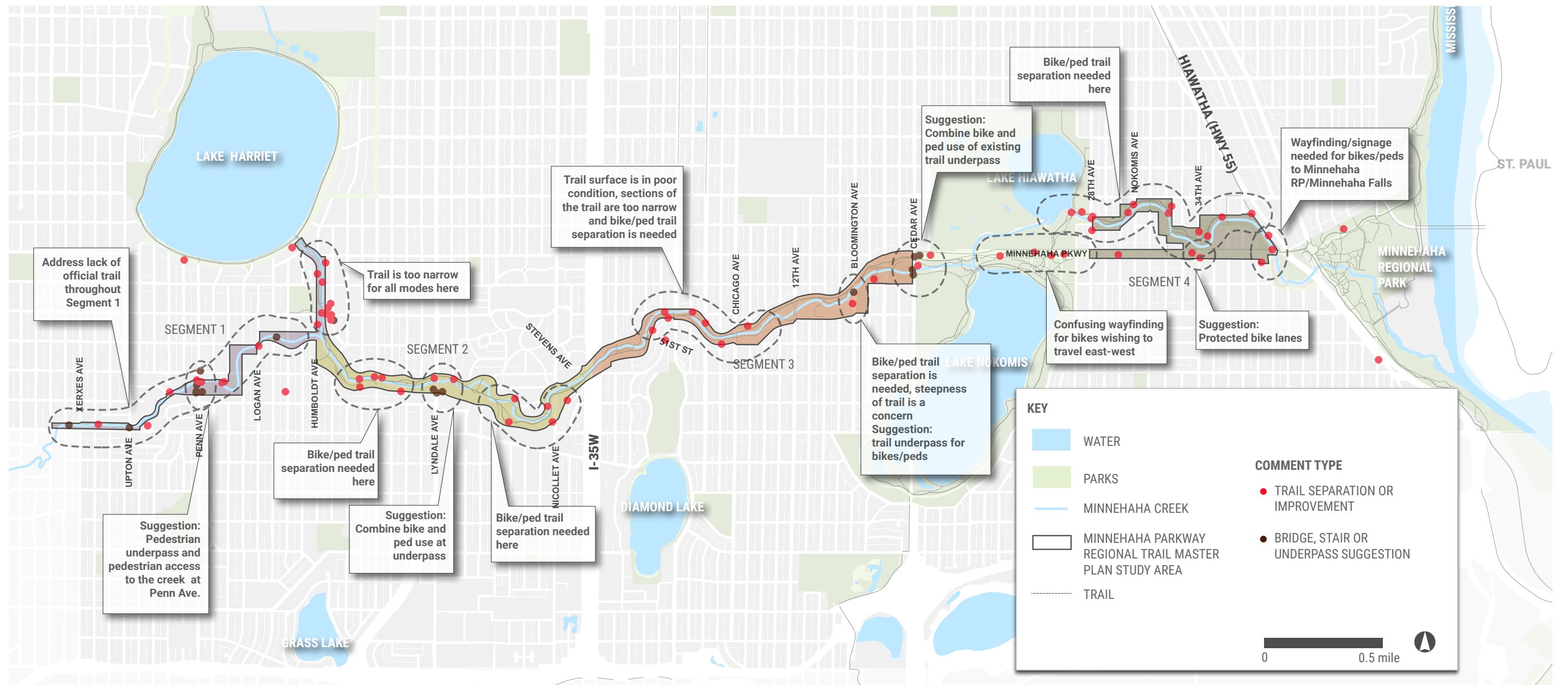


Figure 4.4 Trail quality feedback

### ROADWAY FEEDBACK (FROM SOCIAL PINPOINT)

- » Bump-outs, leading pedestrian intervals, separate crossing signals for bikes and pedestrians are all common suggestions at nearly every intersection
- » Right-of-way at intersections is an issue
- » Larger curb ramps and waiting areas for bicyclists and pedestrians are needed at key intersection crossings
- » Improving lines of sight, for both trail users and for vehicle drivers, is very important

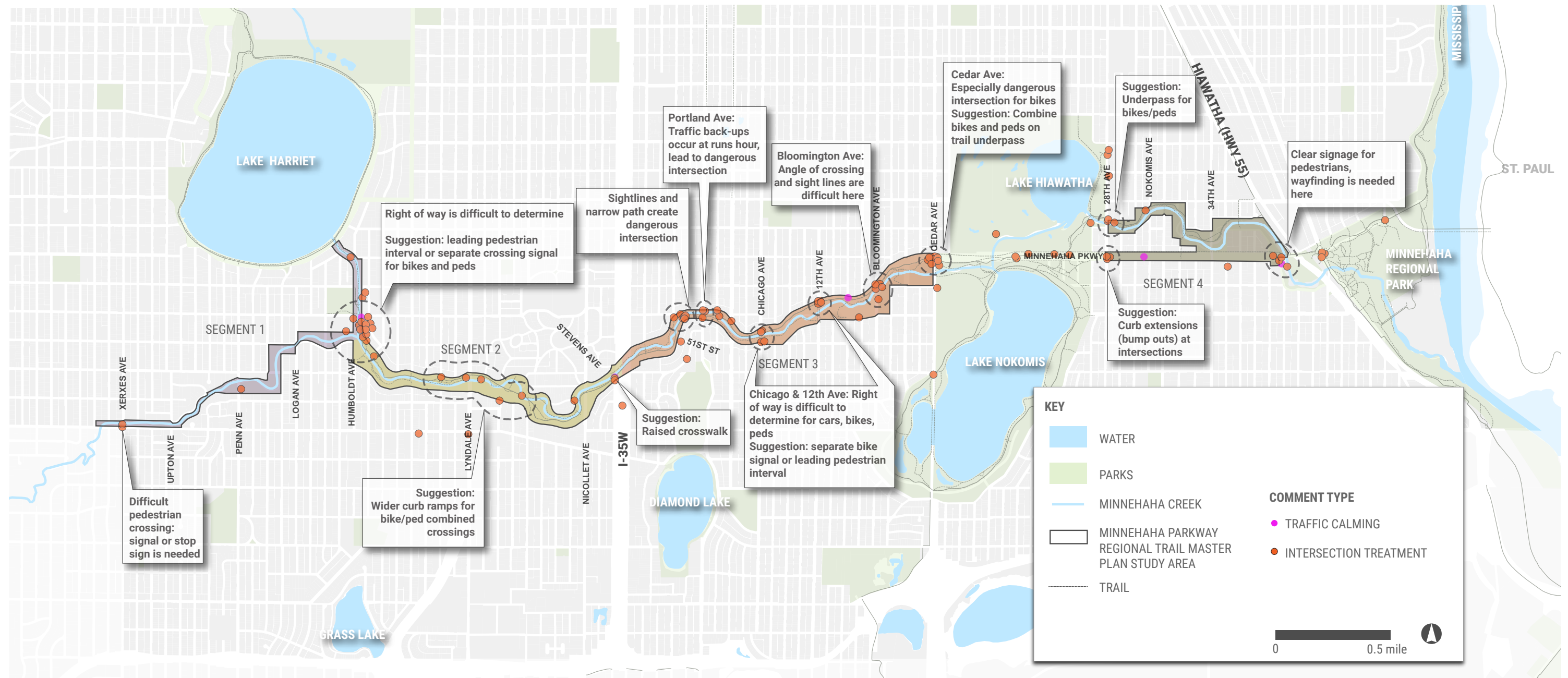


Figure 4.5 Roadway quality feedback

### NATURAL RESOURCES FEEDBACK (FROM SOCIAL PINPOINT)

- » Concern about invasive species, especially buckthorn, along the Creek
- » Concern about water pollution, especially from nearby lawn chemicals and runoff
- » Flooding and areas of erosion are observed along the creek; people seem most concerned about how this affects trail use
- » Many suggestions for native, pollinator plants in open areas, along the creek edges
- » More trail underpasses are suggested, as well as allowing bikes to use existing trail underpasses
- » Trail surface, maintenance, slope and width are all concerns noted throughout.

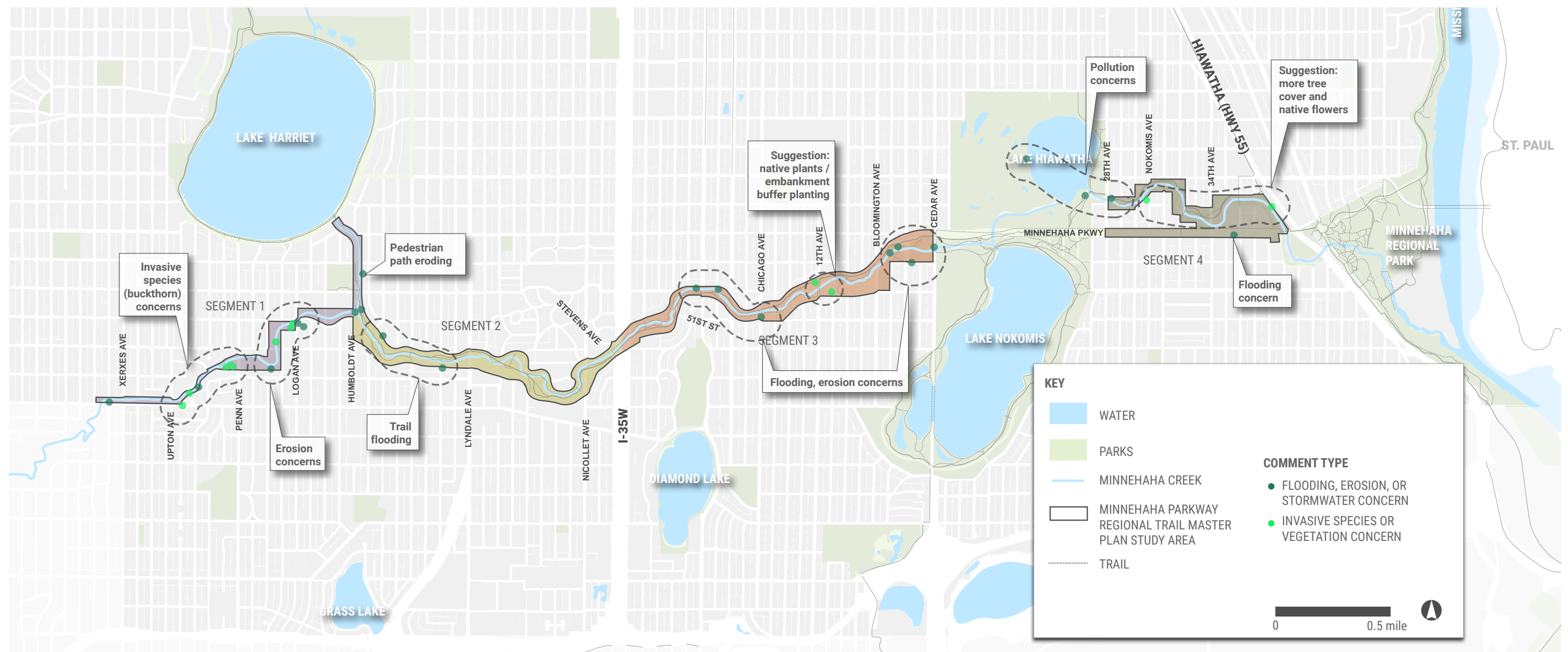


Figure 4.6 Natural resource quality feedback

**RECREATION, PROGRAMS, FACILITIES FEEDBACK (FROM SOCIAL PINPOINT)**

- » Improved path lighting throughout the trail is frequently suggested
- » Drinking fountains are requested throughout the Creek, especially near the Bunny (half-way point along the trail)
- » Many requests for more programs / facilities for young park users (tot-lots in Segment 2 and 3, bike parks/bike skills parks)
- » Natural surface trails are suggested throughout, especially in Segment 1
- » ADA accessibility is a concern throughout

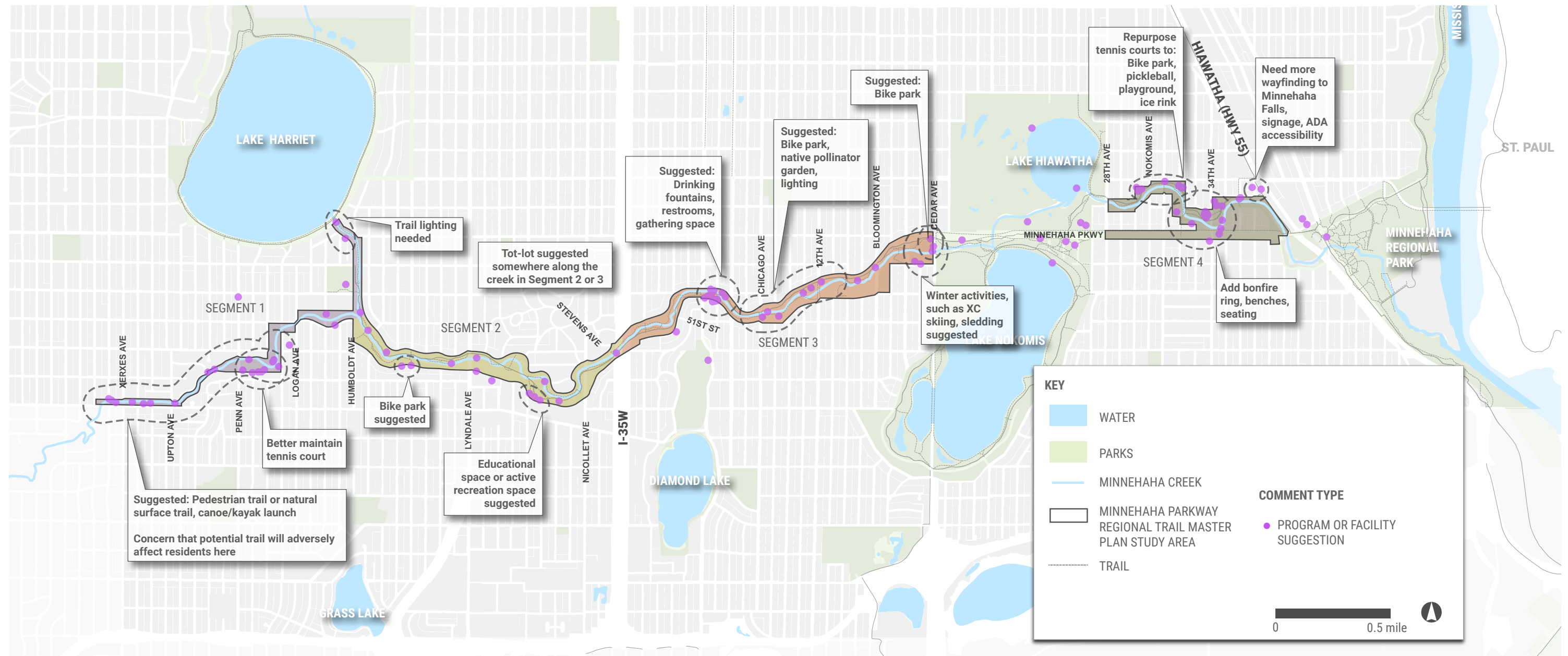


Figure 4.7 Recreation, programs, and facilities quality feedback

# CAC MEETINGS - PHASE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## CAC MEETING #1 - KICK-OFF

The purpose of CAC Meeting #1 (June 30, 2018) was to introduce the project team with CAC Members, and to have CAC members share viewpoints. A project overview was shared, with background given on related and concurrent planning projects, the City of Minneapolis' Southwest Harriet Flood Study, and MCWD's FEMA Flood Repairs. MPRB staff presented "MPRB 101", an overview of the agency, and "Racial Equity 101," a primer on thinking and talking openly about race in the master planning dialog.

A discussion was facilitated to get a better understanding of how best to engage community members around the Creek. Finally, another discussion was facilitated to understand ideas that CAC members have about issues and opportunities for the plan and the Creek Corridor.

A summary of this meeting is located in the appendix.

## CAC MEETING #2 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

CAC Meeting #2 (August 30, 2018) was primarily focused on presenting all of the existing conditions data and histories that project team had gathered to-date. The purpose of sharing all of this information was to provide a foundation of shared knowledge with the CAC and the general public, from which concept development and vision could be launched in subsequent meetings and events. It was the intention of the project team for this meeting, as well as throughout the duration of the planning process, to share as much data and information as possible. Much of the content for this meeting is outlined in Chapter 2: History, Background and Evolution of the Creek Corridor and Chapter 3: Existing Conditions. Topics covered included:

- » Historic and Cultural Resources
- » History of the Creek
- » Natural Resources
- » Infrastructure
- » Connectivity
- » Recreation

A summary of this meeting is located in the appendix.

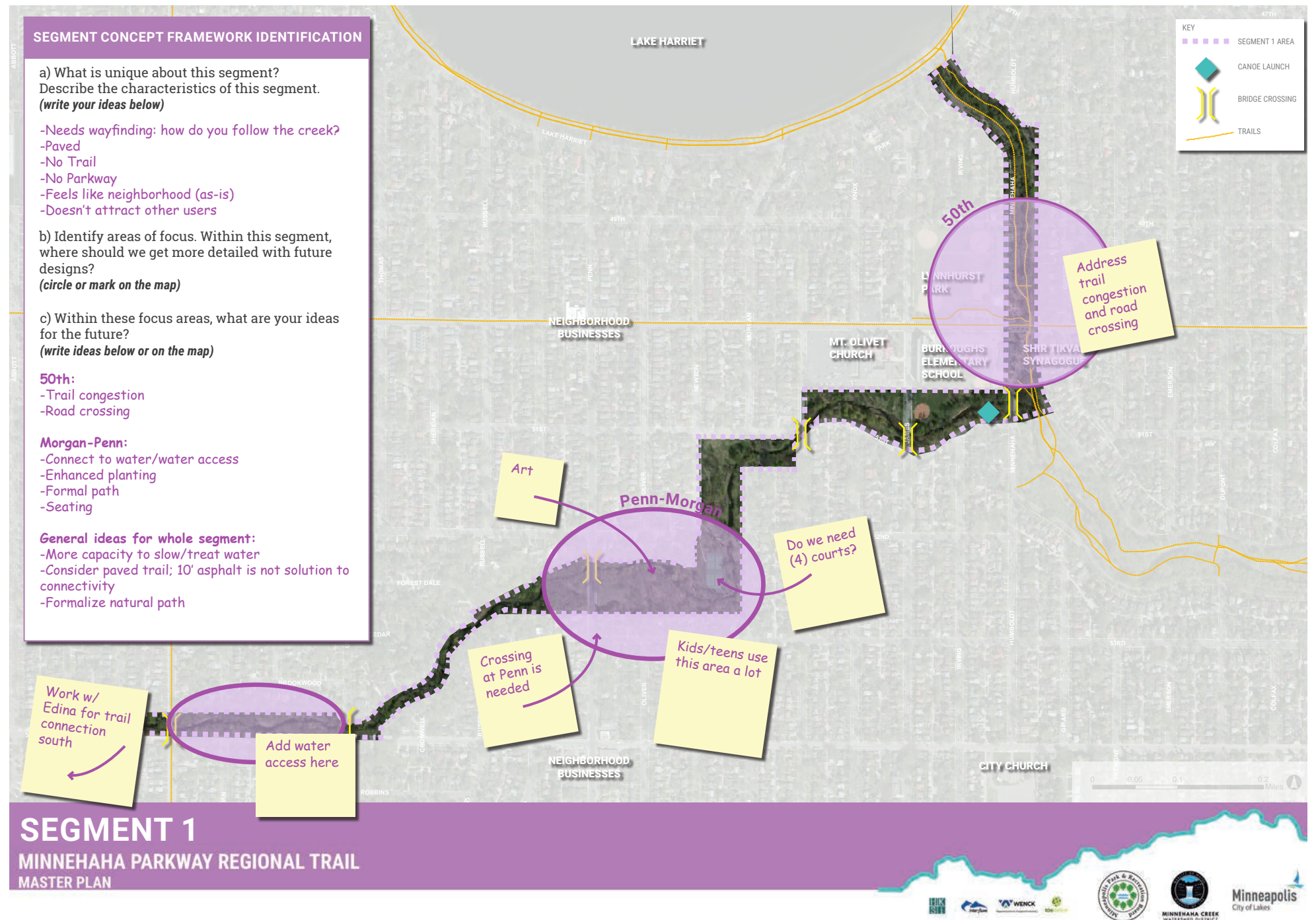


Figure 4.8 CAC Meeting #3 Workshop: Segment 1 Summary

# PHASE 2: CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT AND MASTER PLANNING

## PURPOSE/PROCESS

Phase 2 of community engagement focused on building off of the feedback gathered through Phase 1 to develop concepts and the draft master plan. This phase included a number of workshop-style meetings, as well as open houses and listening sessions geared towards refining concepts as they progressed. This phase began in the early winter of 2018 and continued to February 2020 when the draft concepts were approved by the CAC. The following sections outline the events and results from community engagement activities during Phase 2.

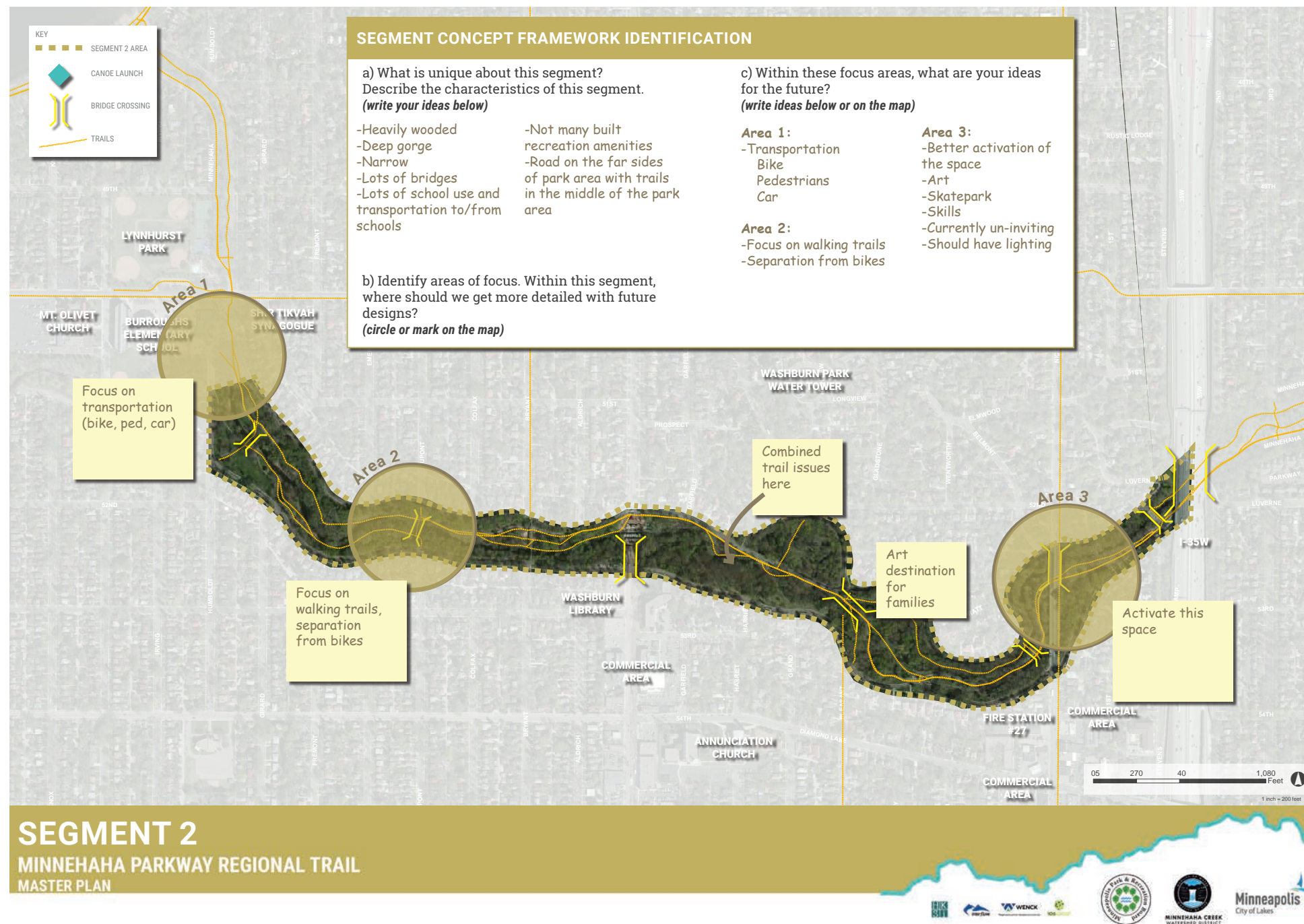
## CAC MEETING #3 VISION EXERCISE

During CAC Meeting #3 (October 4, 2018) an exercise was facilitated to gather input from the CAC to identify areas of focus for further design study.

The CAC was asked specifically to:

- Identify unique characteristics about each segment of the study area
- Identify areas of focus for more detailed design, and
- Provide ideas for design concepts within each focus area.

The following are summary diagrams transcribed from the exercise.



CAC Meeting #3 Workshop

Figure 4.9 CAC Meeting #3 Workshop: Segment 2 Summary

## CORRIDOR-WIDE VISION

The CAC was also asked to provide guidance to develop a corridor-wide vision for the plan during CAC Meeting #3. CAC members worked in small groups to discuss the following questions:

- » What has stood out for you?
- » What are the implications of the data presented so far?
- » What has been working well?
- » What are the big opportunities?

Next, CAC members were asked to identify words, phrases, or statements that could guide corridor-wide planning. The results were shared and CAC members voted on which statements seemed most important to them. The most popular ideas/phrases were as follow:

- » Safety - particularly ped/bike separation and ped/bike/vehicle separation
- » Recognition that this is a regional destination, not only a local corridor
- » Engagement should occur beyond the park/trail boundary
- » Conservation (habitat, water quality, erosion, invasive species management, native planting, tree canopy) are very important
- » Environmental sustainability is important (erosion, turf/native balance, "natural look")
- » Improve water quality
- » Acknowledge history (indigenous lands, racial covenants, etc.)
- » Plan for future growth in the corridor
- » Improve facilities (restrooms, water fountains, benches)
- » Biking (both natural surface and paved options)
- » Integrate public art into the corridor

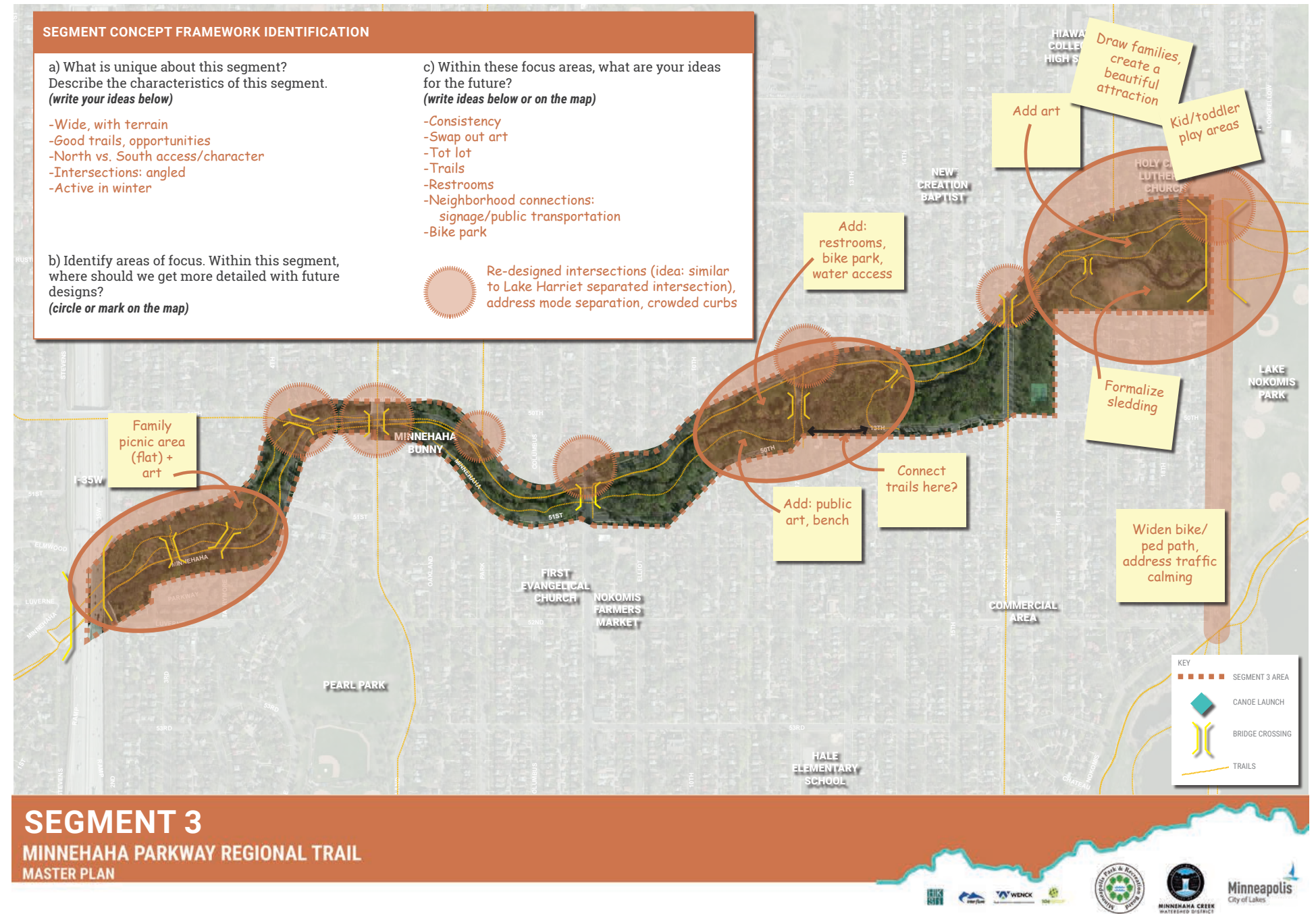
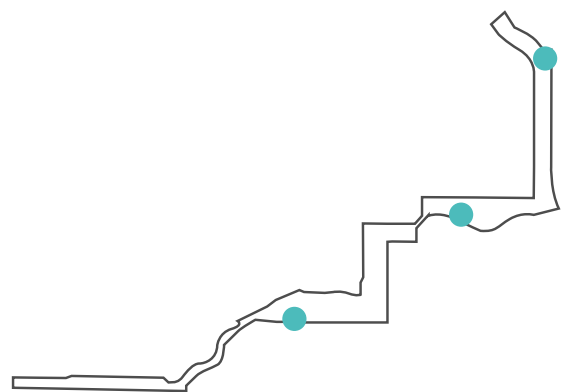


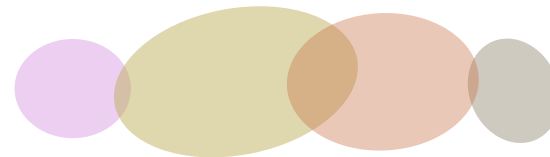
Figure 4.10 CAC Meeting #3 Workshop: Segment 3 Summary





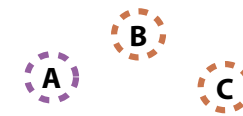
**Segment-wide diagram(s) (200 scale, 1+ for each segment):**

- Future creek access points
- Future creek re-meander (if any), stormwater BMPs
- Reduced mowing areas, restoration areas, buffer areas
- Future trail alignment
- Any future activity/recreation/athletic elements
- May 'stitch' together these diagrams to create creek-wide diagrams
- "Dot on a map" or "line on a map" level of detail



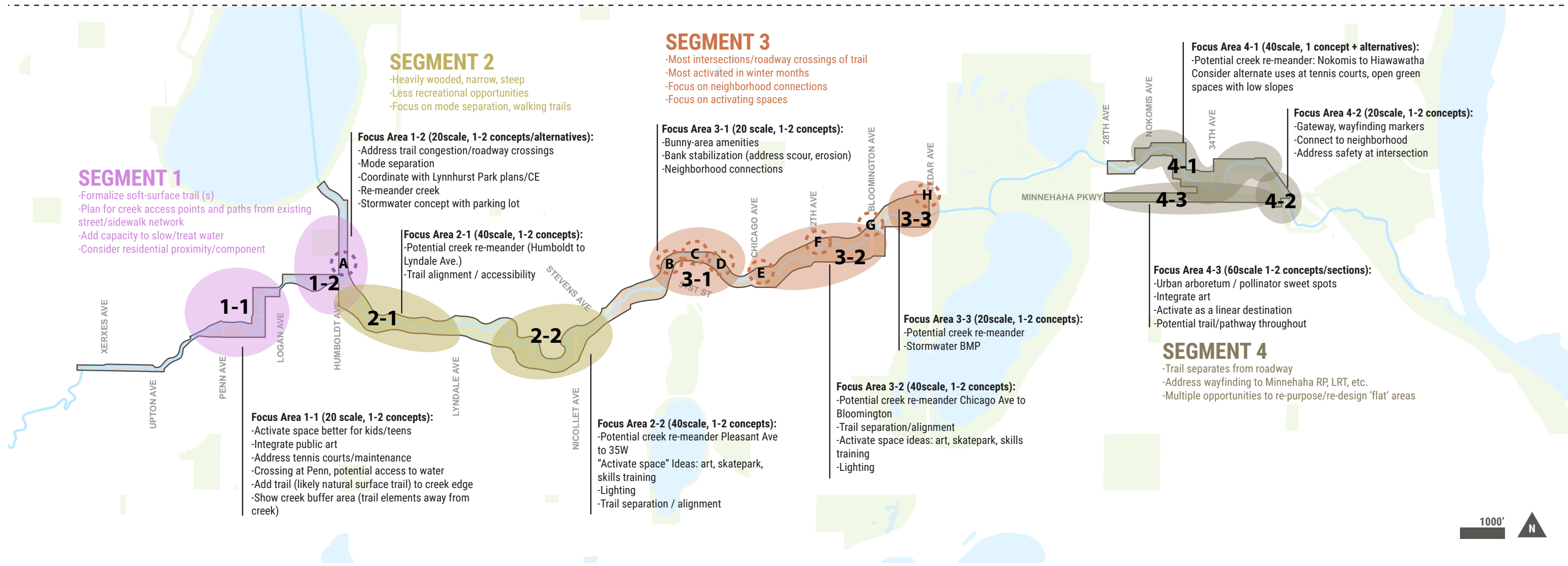
**Focus Area Concept Site Design (20-60scale, 10 Focus Areas Total):**

- Concepts for trail + creek re-alignments
- BMP/stormwater infrastructure
- Creek access paths
- Lighting, benches, kiosks, amenities
- Surface treatments, plant community/selection, pollinator "sweet spot" areas
- Conceptual/illustrative site plan design level of detail; sections to help illustrate as needed



**Intersection Studies (10-scale, 7 Study Areas, 1-2 concepts for each study area)**

- Address mode separation at crossing
- Address safety, sight lines, crosswalk design, curb ramps, waiting areas, signals



**SEGMENT 1**

- Formalize soft-surface trail (s)
- Plan for creek access points and paths from existing street/sidewalk network
- Add capacity to slow/treat water
- Consider residential proximity/component

**SEGMENT 2**

- Heavily wooded, narrow, steep
- Less recreational opportunities
- Focus on mode separation, walking trails

**SEGMENT 3**

- Most intersections/roadway crossings of trail
- Most activated in winter months
- Focus on neighborhood connections
- Focus on activating spaces

**Focus Area 4-1 (40scale, 1 concept + alternatives):**

- Potential creek re-meander: Nokomis to Hiawawatha
- Consider alternate uses at tennis courts, open green spaces with low slopes

**Focus Area 4-2 (20scale, 1-2 concepts):**

- Gateway, wayfinding markers
- Connect to neighborhood
- Address safety at intersection

**Focus Area 4-3 (60scale 1-2 concepts/sections):**

- Urban arboretum / pollinator sweet spots
- Integrate art
- Activate as a linear destination
- Potential trail/pathway throughout

**SEGMENT 4**

- Trail separates from roadway
- Address wayfinding to Minnehaha RP, LRT, etc.
- Multiple opportunities to re-purpose/re-design 'flat' areas



Figure 4.12 Concept Development Framework Diagram

## PROJECT TEAM DESIGN CHARRETTE

The project / design team (consultant team along with MPRB staff, City of Minneapolis staff and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff) gathered in November of 2018 for a two-day workshop to review all engagement and existing conditions analysis and work together to sketch concepts for each of the segment and focus areas identified. These initial sketches were refined over the next few months to create the first round of preliminary concepts that were shared with the CAC and the public.

Figure 4.12 synthesizes the focus areas identified through the CAC Meeting #3 Segment Exercise. This diagram served as a framework to guide site concept and planning work that was developed over the next few months (December 2018/January 2019).



Images from project team design charrette, November 2018

## PRELIMINARY DRAFT CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

A full summary of all feedback collected in response to the preliminary draft concepts from January to April 2019 is located in the appendix. This includes feedback gathered at open houses, MPRB in-houses, the web survey, CAC Meeting #4, Community Meeting on Segment 3 / The Bunny Area and e-mailed responses collected during this time.

### OPEN HOUSES + MPRB IN-HOUSES

The preliminary draft concepts were shared with the public and with the Community Advisory Committee during a series of open houses that were held at Nokomis and Lynnhurst Rec Centers in January and February of 2018. Participants were able to view and comment on draft segment and focus area concepts, which were displayed with precedent images to further explain design intent. Information was also shared relating to stormwater BMPs and pipesheds relative to the study area. Comment cards were also provided and collected at these open houses.

In addition to the community open houses, two MPRB 'in-houses' were hosted. These are essentially open houses that are held during workday hours. MPRB staff are invited and encouraged to attend and provide feedback from their unique point of view as stewards, planners, and administrators of the park.

### PRELIMINARY DRAFT CONCEPT WEB SURVEY

A web survey was launched in coordination with the preliminary concept release. This web survey allowed participants to view the preliminary concepts and provide feedback.

### CAC MEETING #4: COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

With the large response to the preliminary concept design launch, it was determined that CAC Meeting #4 should be structured as a community workshop to allow the CAC and the public to view and comment on the draft preliminary concepts in small groups, with facilitated discussion. This workshop-style meeting was held February 21, 2019.

### COMMUNITY MEETING ON SEGMENT 3 / THE BUNNY AREA

In response to significant concern voiced in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Portland Avenue intersection near the Bunny, a separate public meeting/workshop was held in March 2019 to focus on gathering specific community feedback around the preliminary design concepts in this area.



Open House, Lynnhurst Rec Center, January 31, 2019



MPRB In-House, South Service Operations Center, February 7, 2019



CAC Meeting #4, February 21, 2019

## CAC #5: BIG QUESTIONS

CAC Meeting #5 (April 24, 2019), was intended to gather the CAC to discuss the 'big questions' of the project, and to gather initial CAC feedback on the preliminary design concepts. The outcome of the big questions discussion, along with the exercise completed in CAC Meeting #3 served as the foundation for creating the project vision and guiding principles.

CAC members weighed in and discussed the following topics:

- » What is the Corridor-Wide Vision?
  - Review of what was heard at CAC Meeting #3 during the Vision Exercise
- » What should be the approach for water access?
  - For what type of activities are we providing water access?
  - What is the appropriate amount of spacing for water access?
  - What are the safety expectations if water access is increased?
- » How much activity should be included in the Creek corridor?
  - Do we need more recreation-focused activities?
  - What kinds of facilities are needed?
  - Do any of the facilities seem inappropriate?
  - Where are facilities most appropriate?
- » How 'wild' should the corridor be?
  - Is the natural resource value of the corridor optimized today?
  - How do we balance wildlife habitat and human uses in the Creek?
- » What should the role of the Parkway be in the Corridor?
  - What is the purpose of Minnehaha Parkway within the corridor (the physical road)?
  - How should the various transportation modes (auto, bike, walk) be prioritized?
  - Should there be a continuous automobile connection?
  - Should this be a commuter corridor?
  - How should regional visitor needs be served?

Responses and a full summary of this discussion is located in the appendix of this document.

## LYNNHURST PARK COORDINATION

Lynnhurst Park, a neighborhood park within the Southwest Service Area, is immediately adjacent to the boundary of Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail. With the concurrent planning effort of the Southwest Service Area Master Plan, it was determined during CAC Meeting #5 that a joint CAC subcommittee would be formed with members from both the Southwest Service Area and Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail CACs. This joint subcommittee met twice separately to provide direction on this focus area. The subcommittee approved a draft concept, with a few provisions, in June of 2019.

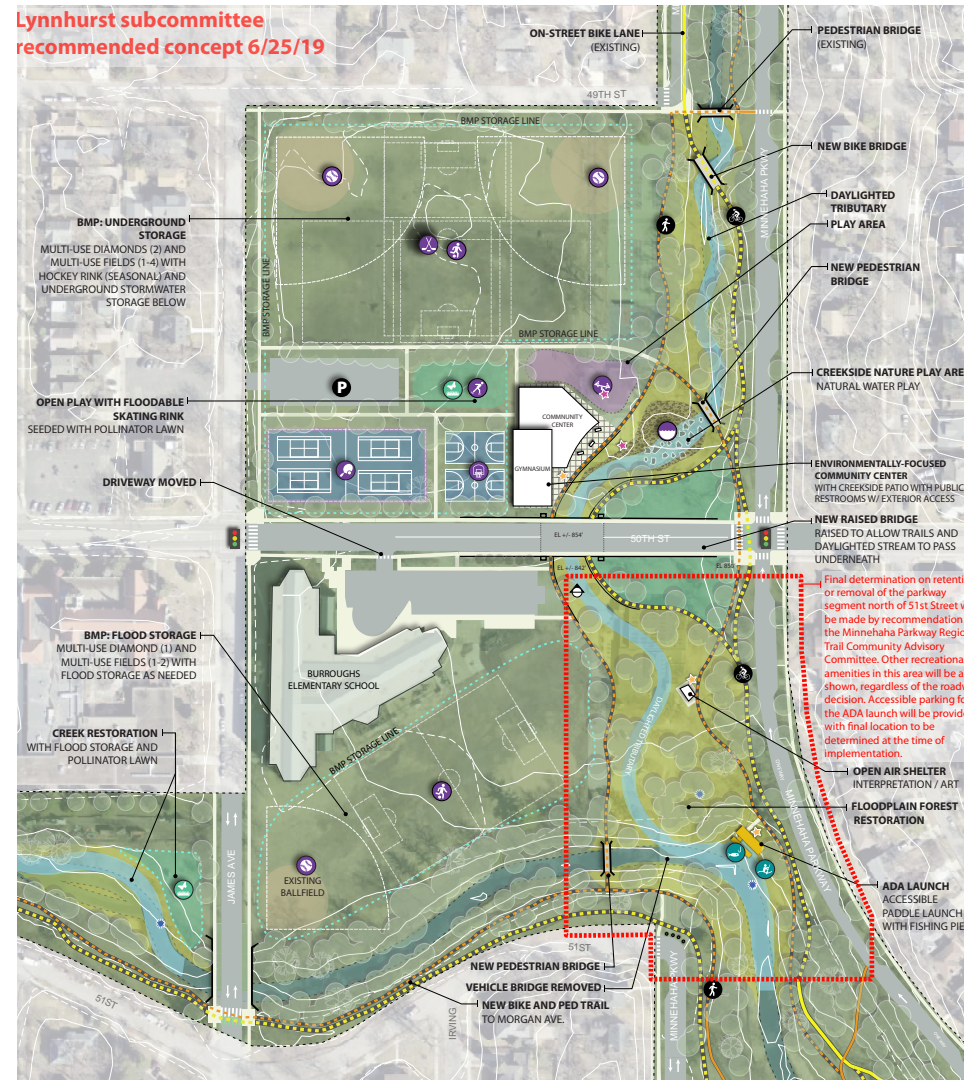


Figure 4.13 Lynnhurst Focus Area Concept, Approved by the Lynnhurst Joint Subcommittee on June 25, 2019

## PREFERRED CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

### CAC MEETINGS #6-8

In May of 2019, a set of reviewed focus area and segment area site concepts were launched to the public. The concept drawings were shared first via the project website and announced through e-mail (.gov listserv). The concepts and subsequent revisions were shared at CAC Meetings. With the growth in interest surrounding this project, the format of CAC Meeting #6 and thereafter shifted to accommodate larger numbers of people from the general public, with presentation boards set up around larger venue spaces (gymnasiums) for people to view and comment on site concepts as they evolved.

The purposes of CAC Meetings #6 - 8 included:

- » Solicit input from the CAC and the general public on the general direction of the corridor plan and concepts
- » Identify which areas have consensus and which areas need additional design work or discussion

Dates for these meetings were:

- » CAC Meeting #6: June 13, 2019
- » CAC Meeting #7: June 27, 2019
- » CAC Meeting #8: July 9, 2019

Summaries of meeting discussions and minutes are located in the appendix.



CAC Meeting #8, July 9, 2019

## PREFERRED CONCEPT WEB SURVEY

Another web survey was launched in May of 2019, which allowed people to comment on specific site concepts during the evolution of the concept development. This survey was left open for the remainder of the master planning process. Over the course of 9 months, 2,093 surveys were completed. All of the comments gathered during this survey were reviewed and documented by the project team to inform concept revisions.

## ON-SITE MEETINGS

Responding further to the need for more communication and wider venues to gather community input, the MPRB hosted a number of on-site neighborhood meetings in the summer of 2019. MPRB staff and the project team convened at Lynnhurst Park, the Bunny Area, and Nicollet Hollow to discuss further ideas presented in the concepts and listen to concerns and ideas presented by nearby residents and park users. These meetings were held on a weekend hours (weekends, evenings) to accommodate more input from the community.



Neighborhood site meeting near Nicollet Avenue Bridge, June 22, 2019

## CREEK TOURS WITH YOUTH

An under served stakeholder group was identified early on in the planning process: youth who live just outside of the immediate service area of Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail (Powderhorn, Phillips, North and Northeast Minneapolis), and who do not live within walking designs to a natural waterway or a natural resource-based park. Evaluation of the demographic information collected in the web survey and the growing attendance at community meetings of residents from very near the corridor showed that there was a need to do further outreach to youth during the concept development phase, in order to help balance the conversation among all park users, not just those living along the corridor.

In the summer of 2019, MPRB staff organized (5) day-long events with youth involved in programming at parks throughout Minneapolis. Young people came to Minnehaha Creek to tour the parkway and experience outdoor recreation through hiking and biking the Creek. MPRB staff facilitated conversations and presented plan concepts to get a better idea of the ideas and priorities expressed by younger people.

Youth participants were provided iPads and notecards, and encouraged to capture their thoughts and experiences through photography and drawing. Comment cards were also collected and documented, asking participants what they like and what would bring them back to Minnehaha Creek.

A summary of comments received is located in the appendix.



Creek Tour with teens from the Phillips neighborhood, August 14, 2019

## TRAFFIC STUDY

At the conclusion of CAC Meeting #8, it was determined that concept development should take a pause, in order for the project team to gather more information surrounding the issues of traffic circulation throughout Minnehaha Parkway. The site concepts that were developed over the spring and summer of 2019 proposed a number of locations where vehicle traffic would be diverted from Minnehaha Parkway using medians at key intersections, to decrease vehicular traffic and discourage through-traffic.

Through community input, it was clear that these ideas were not popular, especially for residents who live along certain portions of the Parkway. In response, the project team hired a traffic consultant to study the current traffic volumes as key intersections, and to model various scenarios to give a better understanding of potential outcomes of proposed designs. This study was initiated in August of 2019 and was completed in October of 2019.

## CAC MEETING #9 + OPEN HOUSE

CAC Meeting #9 (November 19, 2019) was dedicated primarily to sharing the outcomes of the traffic study with the CAC and with the public, and discussing potential design considerations and preferences. This meeting was paired with an open house two days later, which provided another venue to explain the findings from the traffic study and gather more feedback on specific intersection improvements and concerns. During the open house, boards were set up into stations around a gymnasium, arranged by location, with MPRB staff and project team members, including the traffic engineer, available to answer questions and listen to community member's concerns. Copies of the full traffic study were made available during this time and both meetings were heavily attended.

A summary of feedback from the open house and meeting minutes from CAC #9 are located in the appendix.

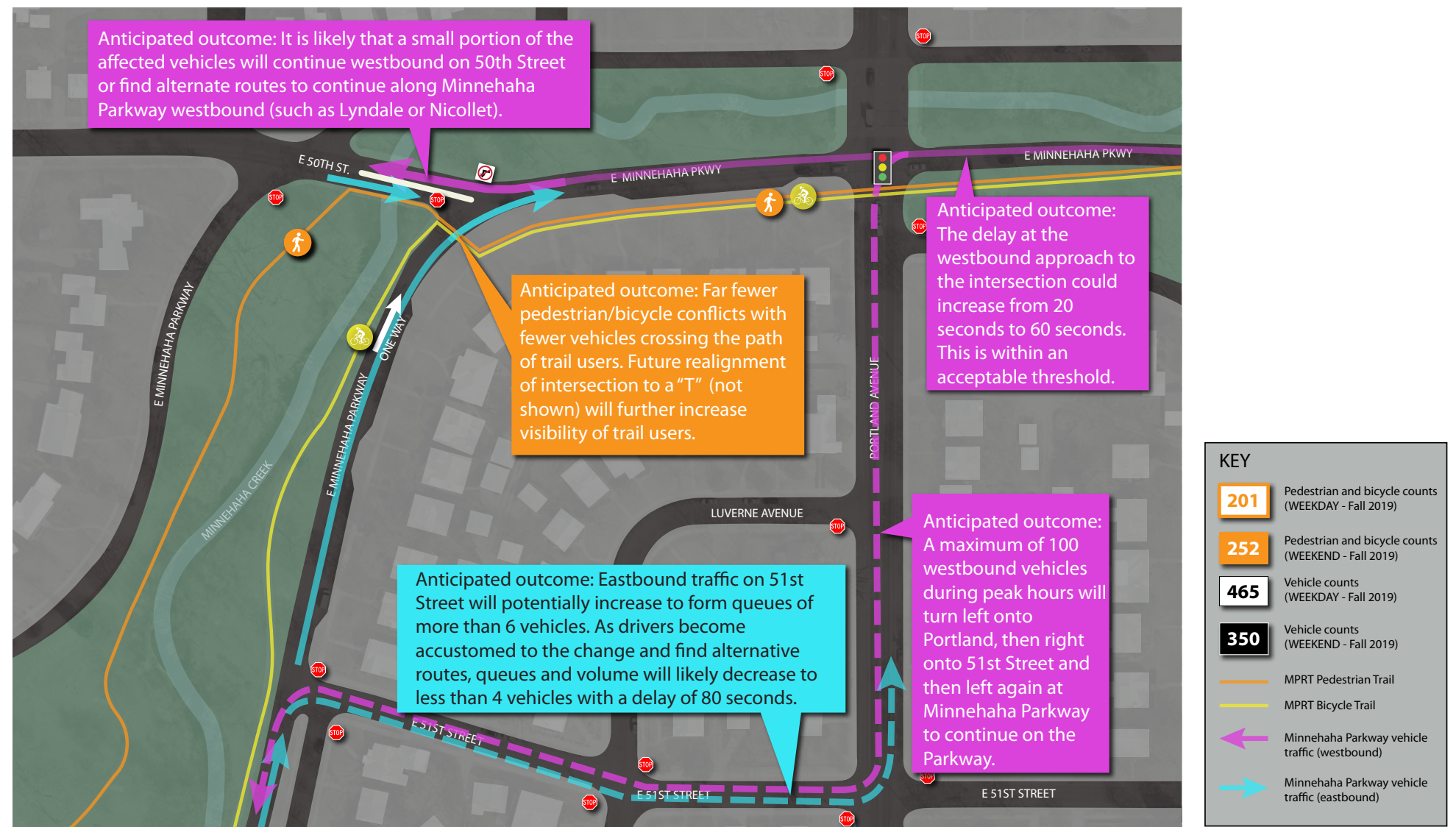


Diagram of potential outcomes for the proposed concept, which involved eliminating westbound through-traffic on to the Parkway at 50th Street.

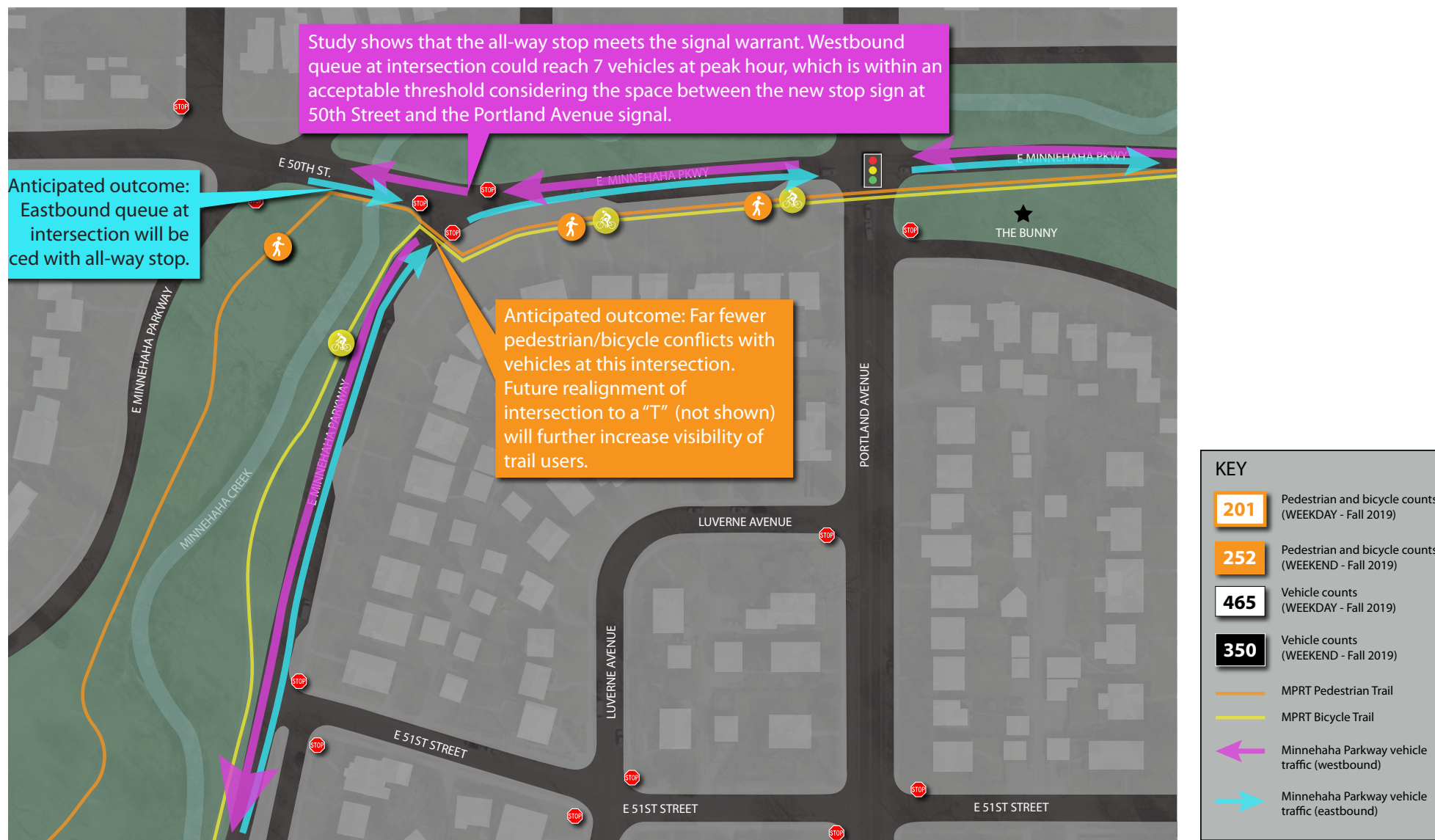


Diagram of potential outcomes of an alternative scenario for this intersection, which includes a 3-way stop at Minnehaha Parkway and 50th Street. This idea was strongly preferred by the public and integrated into the final concept.

## CAC MEETINGS #10 - 12

CAC Meeting #10 (December 17, 2019), #11 (January 28, 2020) and #12 (February 10, 2020) were facilitated to continue reviewing site concepts and gather feedback from the CAC and from the general public. CAC Meeting #10 focused on segments 1, 2, and 3, and re-visited larger corridor concepts related to stormwater management, flood mitigation, trails and recreation facilities. A final discussion about issues surrounding Minnehaha Parkway and roadway improvements was saved for CAC Meeting #11, as well as continued review of segment and focus area concepts.

In preparation for CAC Meeting #12, CAC members were asked to complete an online survey to gauge which projects or areas are of highest priority for near-term and long-term implementation. Results from this survey were shared at CAC Meeting #12. During this meeting, all segment and focus area concepts were voted on and approved by the CAC for the master plan, with some revisions indicated.

Summaries of feedback and meeting minutes for CAC Meetings 10-12 are located in the appendix.

## PHASE 3: APPROVALS

### PURPOSE/PROCESS

With focus area and segment-level concepts approved by the CAC, the project team proceeded to create a draft plan document, which is made available for public review.

### 45-DAY COMMENT PERIOD

The 45-day comment period began on June 19, 2020, and concluded on August 17, 2020. At the close of the public comment period, MPRB staff compiled and reviewed all comments. Recommendations for modifications to the document were reviewed by the project team as warranted, and revisions were completed. A public hearing was conducted and the final plan was presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval on November 18th, 2020.

