



**Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board**  
**Parks for All 2021 Comprehensive Plan**  
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #4

5/12/2020 5:00-7:00pm  
Zoom Online Video Call

**CAC Members Present:** Carly Bad Heart Bull (CAC Chair), Alyssa Olson, Dan Miller, Daniel Cheng, David Hartwell, David Motzenbecker, Eleanor Skarbalus, Mary McKelvey, Mira Klein, Saed Haji, Lolita Davis Carter, Hilary Lovelace

**CAC Members Absent:** Lynne Crockett, Gerrod Williams, Jake Virden, Shree Varuna

**MPRB Staff Present:** Carrie Christensen (Project Manager), Adam Arvidson, Radious Guess, Colleen O'Dell, Siciid Ali, Madeline Hudek, and Alyssa Gilmore, Zoe Hollomon (Youth Design Team Instructor), and 4 members of the Youth Design Team

**Public Attendance:** Around 10 members of the general public joined the Zoom call

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Parks for All Community Advisory Committee Meeting #4 (CAC #4) was called to order around 5:00pm by Carrie Christensen who gave the floor to Carly Bad Heart Bull (CAC Chair) for welcome and introduction. Carly started by thanking everyone for joining the virtual meeting, and recapping what was discussed at the last meeting. Carly outlined CAC #4, letting CAC members know that the focus of the meeting is to develop policy ideas. Carly went over the agenda, role call, and the ground rules for the meeting.

**PUBLIC OPEN TIME**

Siciid Ali led open time, sharing his screen to display a 2 minute timer for participants, and asked folks to refrain from writing comments in the chat box during open time.

(Public) Hopes that Parks for All is inclusive of the environment. Emphasized the importance of the Mississippi Flyway and Chain of Lakes for birds, with over 300 species of birds that travel through the flyway twice a year, amounting to millions of individual birds. They wanted to ensure that planning by the Park Board takes serious priority to ensure there is broad space for birds and other migratory beings to find shelter, food, and clean water so that they can continue their journey to nest and then return in the fall. Seems critical to consider wildlife health especially when doing waterfront projects. Concerns about light pollution, synthetic pesticide use. Acknowledge the importance of these areas and do what can be done to protect birds.

(Public) Focus on nature based recreation, want to see more in the plan the supports nature based recreation (included in plans and budgets), rather than being left out in favor of other

kinds of recreation/park use. Support the drive for equity, providing green space for all. Outreach and education about the importance of nature based recreation for human health and environmental health. Kids in an urban setting should have access to experiences with nature.

(Public) Parks shouldn't be just for people, parks should also be for animals and plants. As the city becomes denser, the park system should think about counter balancing that, making sure to keep the same ratio of park space to people, or improving the amount of green space in a densifying city. Another consideration should be the aging population, there should be a committee related to what older people want to do in parks because they are proportionally becoming a larger and larger user group.

(Public) Hope that the policy ideas that are created tonight will be policies that make the parks for all living beings (not just humans). Would like to see policies that acknowledge the Mississippi Flyway and the Chain of Lakes Bird Area, policies that ensure bird safety when designing projects (prevent light pollution, use bird safe glass). Would like to see remnant plant communities protected and enhanced, identify other important habitat areas, focus on ecological functions. There is a responsibility to protect nature for the sake of human and environmental health. *Staff note: this commenter shared a [link](#) in chat that was added to project resources*

(Public) Environmental concerns, concerns about migratory bird routes and what can be done to protect those species. Need to think about light pollution and the kind of lighting we are installing. In order for lighting to have an impact on public safety the lights need to shine down; strongly support designing lighting to be focused downward where people are, not up where it will affect migratory birds.

(Public) Habitat loss is the number one cause of dramatic decline in bird populations. Since 1970 have lost 3 billion birds, need to protect habitat to make sure we don't lose more birds. Don't fragment habitat, design with wildlife corridors in mind that allow species to move without being intercepted by built infrastructure. Protect habitat, ability to nest, ability to migrate.

### **POLICY IDEAS BREAKOUT GROUPS**

Siciid Ali passed back to Carrie Christensen who thanked everyone for their comments, and invited members of the public to participate in the break out rooms activity too, to plug into the policy idea conversation with the CAC.

Have been referring to this process as the policy machine. We are currently in the drafting stage of policy ideas, then will be sharing out those draft recommendations in a couple weeks at the

Park Summit. After the Park Summit, MPRB staff will draft the Comprehensive Plan, which will then go out this summer for Public Comment. Following the Public Comment Period, staff will review and make changes to the draft plan based on the public feedback, then it will be taken to the Board of Commissioners for adoption by the end of the year.

Over the past couple of meetings there was a list of topics developed by the CAC, YDT, and public present that they thought MPRB should prioritize over the next decade. Looked at plan precedents, other park systems, community and staff engagement data, etc. to generate the first list; since then it has been refined based on conversations in CAC #3. The CAC received a video ahead of time as their homework, but even without watching the video folks were invited to jump in. Everyone was asked to pick two topics (from the list or not), for those who did develop ideas as homework, asked them to bring those topics to the breakout rooms. Asked people to share their topics in chat, trying not to duplicate topics so that we can touch on a wide variety of recommendations. Staff provided information on the worksheet for the small groups. Folks were then split into groups and spent an hour in conversation about policy ideas.

## **SHARE OUT**

After working in small groups for an hour, the CAC, YDT, public and MPRB staff came back together to do a group share out. Staff ran through the overall timeline and process again; reiterating that the policy ideas will be fine tuned by staff following the CAC meeting, then sent back out to the CAC for additions before the Park Summit. Staff reminded folks that if they were interested in sharing additional thoughts they could send them via email, she also reminded folks that there would be more opportunities to provide feedback following the meeting. Staff shared that approximately 100 people have been involved in writing policy ideas in this policy machine format (including MPRB staff, agency partners, technical experts, community partners, etc.)

*Staff Note: the policy ideas that were covered in this group share out were refined and then shared out at the Park Summit. The refined list is below and can be reviewed on the [Virtual Park Summit Story Map](#).*

## **CAC Policy Ideas:**

C1: Encourage non-motorized use of parkway system through inclusion of dedicated bicycle facilities

C2: Prioritize implementation of projects that close trail gaps in the Grand Rounds system

C3: Establish parkways, the Grand Rounds, and city greenways as connections to and between parks, through collaborative programming, wayfinding, and information availability across agencies

C4: Repair, maintain, and design trails with an eye toward both accessibility and environmental sustainability including considerations of materials and alignment.

C5: Ensure partnership agreements include clear roles and responsibilities and are shared with the public.



- C6: Integrate customized health and wellness options into recreation centers.
- C7: Improve linkages between traditional healthcare organizations and parks and recreation.
- C8: Collaborate with peer park agencies on sharing best practices in parks and recreation.
- C9: Create and offer evidence-based physical activity programs.
- C10: Improve the health and wellbeing of older adults through parks and recreation including chronic disease prevention, food security access, and opportunities to establish social connections.
- C11: Dedicate staff to housing, homelessness, and displacement issues including coordination of housing policy with partners and community engagement around housing.
- C12: Evaluate all MPRB land holdings with housing stock for transition to use as affordable housing.
- C13: Repurpose MPRB parcels for affordable housing if they lack necessary recreational potential and purpose.
- C14: Place a moratorium on encampment sweeps on MPRB property.
- C15: Create and amplify youth environmental education including climate change at recreation centers.
- C16: Identify and close gaps in environmental education programming opportunities across the city
- C17: Build a public art program that that showcases and employs community, including youth, to increase public art offerings in our parks.
- C18: Identify key partners to share resources and best practices around public art installation and maintenance processes.
- C19: Expand maintenance budget and partnerships to include the care and keeping of public art pieces.
- C20: Prioritize outreach and programming, to communities with limited access to greenspace and community gardening spaces.
- C21: Increase access to and participation in volunteer work and seasonal staff employment by BIPOC individuals.
- C22: Incentivize and reduce barriers for minority owned businesses to provide services to MPRB.
- C23: Support community organizations as stewards of neighborhood parks, for maintenance, management, and programming.
- C24: Make funding decisions based on historic investment gaps
- C25: Prioritize local hiring surrounding parks, including youth, community organizations, and small businesses.
- C26: Utilize only native plants in all areas except cultivated gardens.
- C27: Transition plantings to native species upon replacement.
- C28: Require wildlife friendly design and construction practices for all park improvements.



- C29: Partner with other government agencies to maintain and improve water quality by managing stormwater runoff.
- C30: Transition away from an auto-centric model of park visitation.
- C31: Expand opportunities to access and enjoy parks at pedestrian scale
- C32: Leverage current parkway modifications to continue providing enhanced space for pedestrians and cyclists.
- C33: Fill gaps and complete links in bike and pedestrian infrastructure in and around parks.
- C34: Continually convene conversations between those with different priorities for the parks.
- C35: Create, interpret, and program natural experiences across the city, so that all park users recognize the value and benefits of nature
- C36: Increase data gathering and knowledge around age group-specific programming, so that all ages and developmental levels are served, including young parents
- C37: Seek feedback from community leaders representing underserved communities on how they want to enjoy the parks.
- C38: Leverage MPRB's existing community engagement networks and practices to advocate for tenant rights
- C39: Create and disseminate resources to improve access to and understanding of ecosystems, nature, and varied recreation spaces
- C40: Position parks as a trusted information source on health and wellness
- C41: Encourage different forms of human engagement with parks.
- C42: Partner with educational providers to create experiential nature-based programs
- C43: Create and provide ways for people to cool down in parks during summer heat waves.
- C44: Incorporate indigenous language systems across park system in multiple ways including programming, place names, technology, plant and medicine names.
- C45: Partner with people in our area who are already using indigenous languages to tell stories.
- C46: Support and provide education opportunities to teach and learn indigenous languages, histories and, stories from an Indigenous perspective.
- C47: Continually evolve community engagement processes to be more inclusive and representative of the diverse populations that we all live within.
- C48: Preserve and protect animal and plant species, including resident and migratory birds
- C49: Increase MPRB ecologists and natural resource personnel to manage habitat areas throughout the system



- C50: Prioritize protection and enhancement of ecological function through strong requirements
- C51: Partner with other agencies to monitor and protect wildlife
- C52: Protect the tree canopy
- C53: Foster habitat connectivity and reduce fragmentation.
- C54: Expand and prioritize nature-based recreation
- C55: Designate and protect habitat areas reserved for wildlife that humans can observe and enjoy from a distance
- C56: Amplify senior voice as part of park project processes.
- C57: Support density of urban development and housing near parks in order to maximize greenspace potential in the urban core.
- C58: Maintain a regional perspective in preserving and stewarding habitat integrity and connections.
- C59: Maximize trail use, connections, maintenance, and infrastructure to support transportation and commuter needs through the seasons.
- C60: Capitalize on regional transportation connections to improve parks
- C61: Collect system-wide park user data to make data-informed political, design, operational, programmatic, and managerial decisions.
- C62: Re-envision golf courses and golf course buildings as welcoming multi-use recreational facilities

### **THANKS, EVALUATION, NEXT STEPS**

The next time that the CAC will meet will be informally over the course of the Park Summit. The focus of the Virtual Park Summit is to share out the ideas developed by the workgroups, CAC, and YDT over the past several meetings. The Virtual Park Summit will be a week long event with multiple opportunities to provide feedback. There will be a survey, wiki, office hours held daily (some in different languages), and will cumulate with a listening session on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Carrie thanked everyone for helping to spread the word about the project and for their amazing recommendations.

Carly closed out the meeting, expressing gratitude for the CAC, reminding them to share additional ideas via email, and to fill out the SurveyMonkey evaluation of Meeting #4.

**ADJOURN: 7:04pm**