Criteria Based System for MPRB Capital and Rehabilitation Project Scheduling
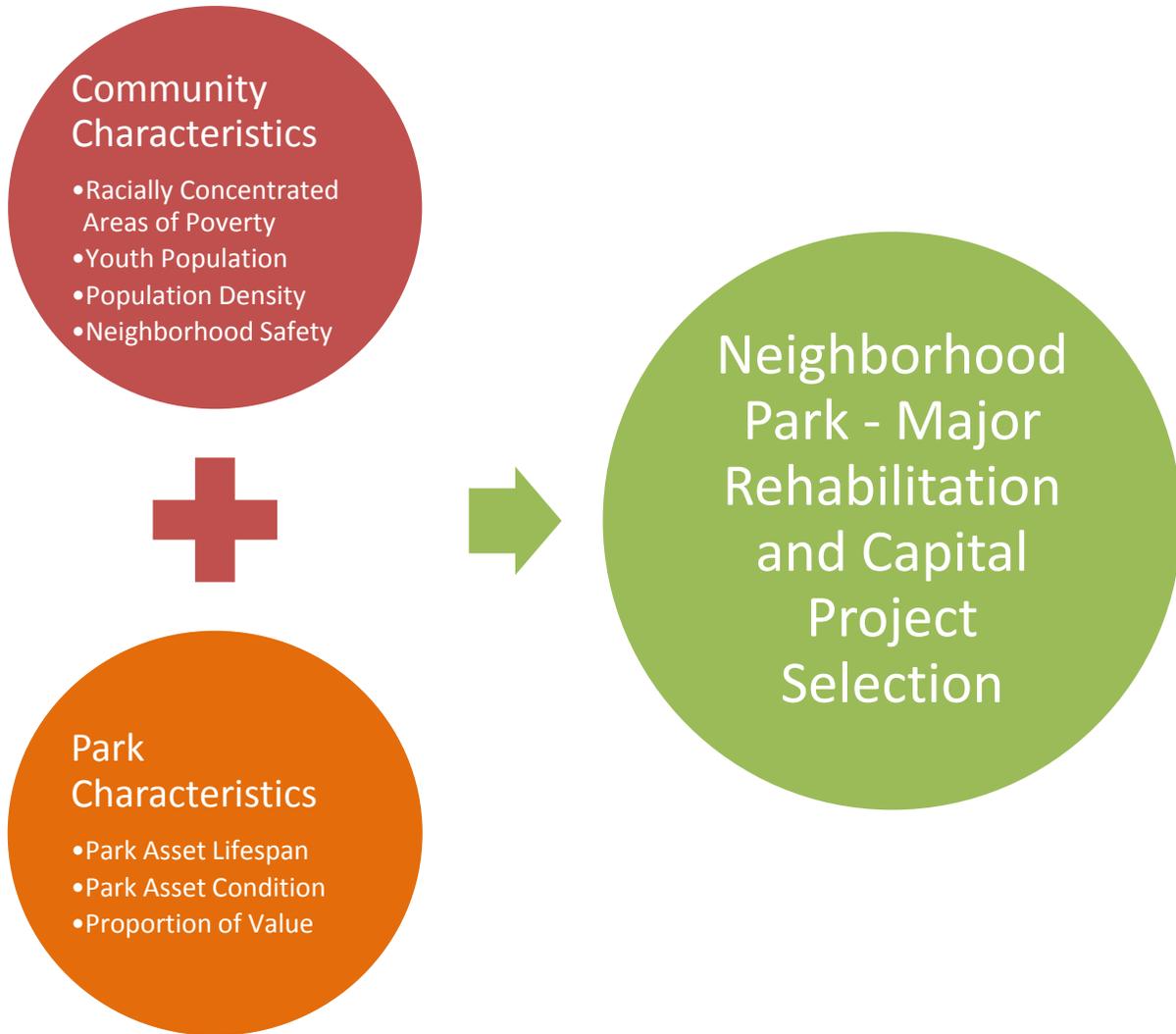
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

May 4, 2016

Background

In recent years, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has followed the direction of the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan in choosing to develop and implement a capital improvement program that addresses gaps throughout the system. Largely, due to historic funding limitations, the capital improvement program has primarily focused on investment in two major capital park assets - playgrounds and wading pools with a particular focus on parks in low-income and diverse neighborhoods over the past 6-7 years.

In selecting projects to be funded by the 20 Year Neighborhood Parks Funding Plan, the MPRB has developed a set of equity-based criteria for prioritizing capital investment and large rehabilitation projects. This effort is meant to quantifiably evaluate neighborhood parks, and ensure that investments are equitably targeted and support the MPRB's Comprehensive Plan with particular focus on the Comprehensive Plan's Theme 3: *Dynamic Parks That Shape City Character and Meet Diverse Community Needs*. The criteria are a combination of community and park asset characteristics using multiple data sources. Neighborhood parks that rank high according to the criteria are prioritized for investment.

Building equity into park investments:

The investment of large amounts of funding for capital and major rehabilitation projects into public amenities and infrastructure is something that should be done with clear guidelines for how projects are selected and prioritized over other, also important projects. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, in allocating public money for rehabilitation and replacement of park amenities and facilities has selected the following criteria to guide the rehabilitation and capital improvement program of neighborhood parks across Minneapolis. For more information, please visit https://www.minneapolisparks.org/park_care__improvements/park_projects/current_projects/closing_the_gap_-_investing_in_our_neighborhood_parks/

How This Works:

Each park was given an objective score for each of the following Community and Park Characteristics criteria. Community Characteristic values were determined at the neighborhood scale and each neighborhood park that was within that neighborhood received that score. Park Characteristic values were determined based on the specific assets within each individual neighborhood park. For example, Willard Park and Farwell Park are both located in the Willard-Hay Neighborhood and receive the same scores under the Community Characteristics since those numbers are calculated for the neighborhood as a whole, but they receive different scores for Park Characteristics which are based on the assets that are physically located within each park.

Criteria Categories		Maximum Possible Points
Community Characteristics		[12 of 23 Total]
	Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty	5
	Neighborhood Population Density	3
	Youth Population of Neighborhood	2
	Neighborhood Crime Statistics	2
Park Characteristics		[11 of 23 Total]
	Park Asset Condition	5
	Age of Park Assets	3
	Proportion of Value	3

Community Characteristics:

These criteria are selected to help ensure that MPRB prioritizes parks with a focus on racial and economic equity.

1.   Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty [5 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: Areas of concentrated poverty are census tracts where more than 40% of the population has a family income below 185% of the federal poverty threshold. Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty (RCAPs) are defined as Areas of Concentrated Poverty where more than 50% of the residents are people of color. This measure is identical to the Metropolitan Council's "Areas of Concentrated Poverty where 50% or more of residents are people of color (ACP50)."

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2009-2013. For more information, visit:
http://www.metrocouncil.org/METC/files/35/35358ee4-7976-42e6-999d-9e54790d45fe.pdf

Why this is important: Individuals who live in poverty are less likely to have access to private transportation which can result in less access to parks and recreation opportunities beyond their neighborhood parks. Residents who live in poverty often have less access to open space and recreation options and are more likely to experience a variety of chronic health problems, some of which are impacted by their physical environment, such having access to public parks and open space. In addition, communities of color and areas of poverty often experience a lack of public and private investment relative to other areas. In building a more equitable park system, it is important for the MPRB to target investment of public funds into parks in areas with concentrations of people of color and low-income households. As a result, this criteria is allocated the highest possible score of 5 points to make sure that future investments are targeted to areas that have historically been underserved by public investment. Parks that are in Areas of Concentrated Poverty but not Racially Concentrated Areas receive 3 points.

RCAP	1. WEIGHT
Racially Concentrated Area of Poverty	5
Area of Concentrated Poverty	3
Neither	0

2.   Population Density [3 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: Population density is calculated at a neighborhood scale with parks in higher density neighborhoods receiving higher point values. Higher density areas have more people living per square mile.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2009-2013.

Why this is important: Neighborhood parks play a critical role in enhancing quality of life of all Minneapolis residents. Areas with more people can mean many local park users and may also indicate fewer acres of open space for recreation or leisure, either public or private. High population density is

likely correlated with high park use which can result in shorter asset lifespans than areas with lower population density. Higher density neighborhoods generally have the lowest amount of open space, either private or public. Parks in these areas are often the primary accessible options for open space for residents who live in apartments or have no private backyards. This means that parks play an even more important role in providing access to nature, fresh air, and outdoor recreation. This measure was given a moderate priority of 3 possible points with neighborhoods that ranked above the average citywide density of 6,750 people per square mile receiving more points, and neighborhoods over 10,000 people per square mile getting the highest level of points.

POPULATION DENSITY (per square mile)	2. WEIGHT
Over 10000	3
6750-9999	2
0-6749	1

3.   Youth Population by Neighborhood [2 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]
About the measure: The percentage of a neighborhood's population that is under the age of 18 is used, with neighborhoods having larger youth populations receiving the greater number of points. To create this measure, neighborhoods are ranked by the percentage of the population that is under the age of 18 and divided into thirds along the following natural breaks: fewer than 16% of the population is under the age of 18, between 16% and 24% of the population is under the age of 18, and more than 24% of the population is under the age of 18.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate for 2009-2013, and Minnesota Compass http://www.mncompass.org/profiles/neighborhoods/minneapolis-saint-paul#!areas

Why this is important: Parks and their physical assets provide opportunities for an active lifestyle for households with children. Amenities for youth, such as playgrounds, can impact health outcomes such as childhood obesity and promote positive developmental aspects of play and socialization. The MPRB strives to serve the youth of Minneapolis through both facilities and programming by ensuring that neighborhoods with large populations of children have well-funded recreation options nearby. As the location of parks is only indirectly related to the concentration of youth living in a given area, this criteria section is given 2 possible points with areas of the highest concentrations of youth receiving the highest possible points.

% Population below Age of 18	3. WEIGHT
> 24%	2
16% - 24%	1
< 16%	0

4. **Neighborhood Safety** [2 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: 2015 Minneapolis Police Department reports crimes against persons data, which includes the offenses of Criminal Homicide, Forcible Rape, and Aggravated Assault. Data is reported at the neighborhood level.

Data source: Minneapolis Police Department – Uniform Crime Reporting Program data

Why this is important: Keeping parks and park and recreation facilities safe is a key to community wellness and well-designed and maintained parks create safer places for people to gather and provide a sense of community. Developing and maintaining a vibrant neighborhood park that promotes community safety, both real and perceived, is important to building and sustaining strong neighborhoods. Park safety also has a strong relationship with park usage, as broken down and underused parks lose their value to the community if they are not, real or perceived, safe for potential park visitors. Since neighborhood parks can be safe places for people to gather and provide a sense of community, it is important to include this measure. This measure is awarded 2 points to reflect the indirect relationship that parks have on crime in the larger community.

Crimes against persons/1000 people	4. WEIGHT
>10.0 / 1000	2
4.1-9.99 / 1000	1
< 4.0 / 1000	0

Neighborhood Park Asset Characteristics:

For this group of characteristics the MPRB analyzed neighborhood park assets within a park (such as pools, playgrounds, courts, fields, and recreation centers) to identify the highest priority parks for investment. Average scores or percentages per park property are used so that parks with a history of more investment dollars spent on them are not be overrepresented relative to areas of underinvestment.

5. **Asset Condition** [5 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: Park assets receive condition assessments to identify individual assets with high use and maintenance needs, and determine likelihood of repeated failure. MPRB staff or consultants perform asset condition assessments and data compiled is used in design and construction projects to determine final material selection and the asset's maintenance program. For scoring here, multiple staff from each maintenance service area and citywide trades shops were surveyed in early 2016 and ratings for each asset and each park were averaged to get the final ratings.

Data source: MPRB staff assessments and Service Area master plan asset inventory and condition

Why this is important: Park assets that receive high public use are commonly submitted for repair orders and experience the highest likelihood of failure, causing a facility or amenity to be out of service for public use. Assets need regular inspection and preventative maintenance to identify elements that are unsafe or have now become noncompliant according to changing federal or state code requirements. The condition of individual park amenities is a critical factor in determining whether capital funds are necessary for that location. Assets or facilities that need to close for repair work can displace programs and interrupt service to the community. In addition, assets that require repeated repairs to keep them safe and functioning can be quite costly and should be considered for replacement. Condition determines if that asset is safe for all to use or even if it is unusable or about to become unusable by the public. Older equipment should generally be replaced sooner, but sometimes assets wear out or breakdown much faster than expected and those need to be addressed. This category is thus given the maximum of 5 possible points.

ASSET CONDITIONS	5. WEIGHT
Could present a safety concern or be taken out of service due to deficiencies	5
Functions as a result of numerous and ongoing repairs	4
Functional, but could benefit from rehabbing or replacement	3
Functional and Reliable	2
New or Like New	1

6.   Asset Lifespan [3 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: Individual park elements are categorized according to their projected lifespan from the year they were constructed or last had a major renovation. Priority is given to elements that are more than 5 years beyond their lifespan.

Data source: MPRB comprehensive plan inventory and as-built plans per Neighborhood Park

Why this is important: Individual park amenities have a projected lifespan from the time they are first built. Once they exceed their lifespan, cost for maintenance and repair increases and chances of breakage, injury, or closure of the amenity are much higher. Park amenities later in their lifespan need more attention and increased investment to ensure they remain available to the public. Since this as taken as an average of the lifespan of all key assets, parks with an average before 2010 are prioritized because that indicates that a significant majority of the park's combined assets are out-of-date and in need of replacement and received 3 points. Parks with a score between 2011 and 2020 likely have had some key assets replaced in the recent past and are a slightly lower priority and receive fewer points, while parks with a much younger average age of equipment are not considered a high priority in this measure.

LONGEVITY	6. WEIGHT
Expired before 2010	3
Expires between 2011 and 2020	1
Still in Lifespan in 2020	0

7. **Proportionality of Investment** [3 Possible Points out of Possible 23 Total Points]

About the measure: This measure is calculated as the amount of capital invested since 2000 relative to the total cost to replace all existing park assets. The ratio, shown as a percentage, helps by identifying parks where little or no capital investment has been made since 2000 and controls for the size and range of amenities in different size neighborhood parks. In other words, we need to identify parks where the least ongoing capital investment has been made over the last 15 years and prioritize those parks for new investment.

Data Source: MPRB Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and projected asset values.

Why this is important: Measuring previous investments in existing park assets is an important way to identify parks that have historically received lower levels of investment. Parks where a small proportion of the asset value was reinvested since 2000 are much more likely to be due for significant reinvestment. The proportionality criteria captures MPRB's history of investment on a park by park basis and is a good approximation of where additional investment is needed by highlighting parks that have received lower levels of investment between 2000 and 2015. This category is given a moderate priority of 3 possible points, with parks that have received lower historic proportionate investment receiving higher points.

% Reinvested	7. WEIGHT
0%	3
0.1%-9.9%	2
10.0%-24.9%	1
>25.0%	0