

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Parks for All 2021 Comprehensive Plan
Virtual Park Summit—Values Office Hours

5/27/2020

12:00-1:00pm

MPRB Staff Present: Carrie Christensen, Adam Arvidson, Madeline Hudek, Alyssa Gilmore, Linden Wieswerda

CAC Present: Mary McKelvey, Lolita Davis Carter

Public Present: About 3 members of the public present

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, GROUND RULES, AGENDA

The meeting started around noon, with MPRB Staff passing the mic over to Mary McKelvey to introduce the topic of the afternoon's office hour: Values. Mary went on to explain that when prompted to start thinking about policy ideas, she started by looking at the current 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, and the five current listed values got her thinking about some additional questions and context. Staff thanked Mary for stepping forward and inviting this conversation into the virtual room, and asked MPRB staff to go through an introduction.

Adam started off by acknowledging this was the first of the office hours planned for the Park Summit and explained some of the other ways people can get involved in the Summit, including the website, Survey, and Comment Board. Staff also took time to acknowledge the racially charged incidents that occurred over Memorial Day weekend both in New York (in Central Park) and in Minneapolis; expressing condolences.

Staff Note: The Virtual Park Summit was postponed two days after this meeting took place in order to allow community to come together in whatever ways they needed following the death of George Floyd. This is the statement that was on the Virtual Park Summit Site: The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has postponed the Parks for All Virtual Park Summit. We hope you are safe, with your loved ones, and able to show up for community in whatever way feels right to you. We are outraged and grief-stricken about the death of George Floyd. We also know that racism and violence are systemic issues that we need to address, now and into the future. When the time is right, in coming weeks, we will reconvene the Park Summit to continue planning for the future of our park system. We will hold onto the realities of this past week, and the past several months, as we set the course of our policy direction for the next decade. We will keep the Park Summit website live for now and send an update with a revised Park Summit schedule.

The Summit was scheduled to begin again the week of June 15th.

Staff then covered the Ground Rules and Agenda for the meeting. He explained that the presentation and notes will be available following the meeting, but there wouldn't be a full recording of the meeting. Adam talked about the goals of the Park Summit; to identify the connections, differences, significance and questions there are about the policy ideas that are starting to become developed. Staff went over the next stages of the process, highlighting that the Park Summit is the midpoint of the process where

are switching gears from hearing more general ideas to turning those ideas into draft policy statements. After the Park Summit, staff will design and write the DRAFT Comprehensive Plan which will go out for public comment period, then will be revised by staff in response to the feedback received, then the Comprehensive Plan will be adopted by the Board of Commissioners by the end of the year. In order to keep the meeting organized and running smoothly, MPRB staff explained how the chatbox would be utilized throughout the meeting, where we were asking people to write their name and whether they had a question or comment in the chatbox. It was asked that the one conversation rule also apply to the chatbox, allowing the conversation to take place in the main meeting rather than a side conversation in a chatbox. Staff would be monitoring the chatbox the whole time, and the chat log was saved at the end of the meeting.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD ABOUT VALUES

MPRB Staff then started presenting about the current 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan values. The values are listed here with definitions as they currently stand:

- Sustainability: Meet current park and recreation needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by balancing environmental, economic, and equity concerns
 - o Environment: Sustain and enhance parklands, waters and urban forests
 - o Economic: Develop short-term and long-term financial stability of the park system
 - o Equity: Provide residents with the opportunity to improve their quality of life and well-being through outstanding parks and recreation services that are suited to their respective needs
- Visionary Leadership: Respect the vision and leadership that built the park and recreation system and recognize the need for ongoing leadership in achieving excellence
- Safety: Work safely to support a thriving work environment and an outstanding park experience for visitors
- Responsiveness and Innovation: Anticipate and thoughtfully respond to the diverse needs of the city's communities, continually seeking ways to better deliver park and recreation services
- Independence and Focus: Independence allows the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to focus on providing and obtaining the resources necessary to accomplish its mission and form effective, responsible partnerships.

Staff explained that these values influence how we do our work and show up as a local government agency. These values were included as criteria for setting policy when workgroups, the CAC, YDT, etc. were going through the policy idea development exercise. While reviewing the current 2007-2020 Comprehensive plan, one thing that Parks for All Project Staff are hoping to do is to bring the values into measurement and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan so that the plan is actionable.

Part of the assessment we've done on the values are engage the community and staff about the current Comprehensive Plan values, asking them what they think about the values and asking for additional values that we should be upholding. Based on the survey results (as of 5.16.2020), the values are ranked as follows:

- Environmental Sustainability
- Safety
- Equity

- Economic Sustainability
- Responsiveness and Innovation
- Visionary Leadership
- Independence and Focus

Staff Note: More information about what we've heard about values from the Survey can be found in our [project process storymap](#).

Staff emphasized how it's important that we continue to refine the definitions of the values based on the current social, political and environmental climates. Staff asked if there were any thoughts on how we define the values; participants of the meeting looked at examples of survey responses to the priority values.

VALUES DISCUSSION:

(CAC Member) Looking at the innovative values that emerged from feedback this year, it seems like some of these ideas could fit as subsets to some of the current values.

(Project Staff) We could do an exercise to see what could be more of a strategy and what is nestled within existing values.

(CAC Member) Resonating with seeing transparency, cultural competency, historic and cultural considerations in the mix of values; have appreciated Carly bringing it to the front of CAC Member's minds at the beginning of meetings.

(Public) In the 2021 Comprehensive Plan will the mission change? Is the mission meant to be carried forward and just the values are changing?

(Project Staff) The mission could change slightly; there won't be any subtractions. This is not a given, this is a possibility depending on where engagement and leadership go.

(CAC Member; *in chat*) Shared her questions related to values and the Comprehensive Plan for everyone to weigh in on

- **Of the guiding values in the 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which are a priority to you?**
- **Do the definitions seem complete? There have been changes in our city since the 2007-2020 plan was written and adopted. Given these changes is there a need to define the values differently?**
- **Are there other values not included you'd like to see defined?**

Of the guiding values in the 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which are a priority to you?

Staff Note: This was answered in part by the public feedback (prioritization of values list)

Do the definitions seem complete? There have been changes in our city since the 2007-2020 plan was written and adopted. Given these changes is there a need to define the values differently?

Big changes identified in meeting: NPP20 (providing more consistent funding to parks); COVID-19 (changes how we use the parks in the near future); Built infrastructure that will need renovations within this cycle.

(Project Staff) One of the things that was kept in mind during the development of these policy ideas were several emerging futures, what we think we should anticipate.

(Public; *in chat*) Consider the threat of the next pandemic

(Project Staff) We have been thinking about this reality and we are thinking about bringing out a 9th future around Public Health Crisis

(MPRB Staff) Comment on the definition of the Sustainability value; based on the survey feedback it seems like there are at least two important distinctions. Access to nature (exposure to natural areas, equity) and environmental impact in the larger world. We should explore this as two different areas when it comes to values (maybe one is a value and the other is a policy idea)

(Public) Echoing what was said about Sustainability and there are several ideas that are combined. In terms of nature and ecology versus sustainability we need to be careful with the definition.

(Project Staff) The definition of sustainability has evolved a lot since 2007, would love to hear thinking around the definition of sustainability; how does it differ from how it's written in the 2007-2020 plan; how can we explore the nuances?

(MPRB Staff) Have to start by recognizing that resilience is not the same thing as sustainability. You can be more resilient in a way that is less sustainable (Ex. Adding A/C at recreation centers that don't currently have it provides more resilience on hot days, but is less sustainable because of the energy requirements). The two terms 'resilience' and 'sustainability' need to be separate. 'Resilience' is about transformation and adaptation to change; 'sustainability' is about resources (protection of, using and consuming less, ensuring resources exist in the future). Resilience is not always positive either. Racism is resilient, it doesn't go away easily; when we talk about being resilient, we need to think about what resilience we want to bring in, and what could potentially be resilient in a bad way.

(Public) How do you see ecological function fitting in? I think there is a missing component of ecological function when we talk about sustainability. We know some things we are doing are unsustainable (loss of habitat connectivity, overuse of natural areas, etc.) How can the idea of ecological functioning be elevated to have a clearly defined meaning? People are ignorant of ecological function and don't recognize the indicators of ecosystem collapse worldwide.

(Project Staff) Another value to more clearly define: Transparency (related to engagement), what does it mean for us to be transparent and to be an agency that centers our decisions around community engagement?

(MPRB Staff) When you look at the list of values without their definitions, they all read as being internally focused, but there are ways to define the values to make them more external facing. This goes back to the community building role of the park system. Community building is broader than just engagement, it needs to be broader than that; community building can be accomplished through better access. If we are only focused on the internal role of our values then we lose transparency.

(Project Staff) Internal and external; these are patterns to set within the agency, but also within our work and more. External piece needs to be more raised up in the values definitions.

(CAC Member) Transparency and engagement are buzz words right now. We need to be more TRUTHFUL with the community, there are some things that as an organization the MPRB cannot

be transparent about (some things must remain internal). Need to tell people what will remain internal and what can actually be brought to the community. We need to increase trust through outlining what can and can't be done, otherwise it feels like decisions are already made and the engagement isn't transparency.

(Project Staff) For transparency and engagement, we do need to bring truth, honesty, etc. into the definitions, this is a good distinction to make.

(CAC Member) In the decision making process it is really important to let people know what can and can't be done, and WHY. How do we do this at the front end? How do we continue the trust in the park system? Think about additional communications (ex. putting out signage when big projects are taking place)

Are there other values not included you'd like to see defined?

(Public; *in chat*) Other values that come to mind include: responsible stewardship and maintenance of existing assets and community building (community cross pollination)

(Public) Maybe these ideas have to be captured with more specificity instead of at a high level; thinking about NPP20 (investing in existing infrastructure; gets at the stewardship value). When we talk about visions and values and aspirations we can overlook the assets that we currently have, don't want to neglect what we currently have. Need to take care of existing assets (implementation, stewardship, maintenance). Community building; in light of all the social justice issues we are currently facing, the MPRB has an opportunity to help bring people together in ways they don't normally come together now, which could help bring understanding and solutions.

(Public; *in chat*) Community empowerment (transparency, responsiveness, accountability; equity for all species (parks for all living beings))

(Public) Equity will certainly find its way into the new draft—so much of the work that's being done as staff now is related to equity—equity doesn't just mean parks for all people, but for all beings. Would like to honor the value of other beings we are fortunate to have in an urban environment.

(Project Staff) Appreciate the ongoing broadening of the definition of equity

(Public; *in chat*) Would like to see this included in the mission statement

(CAC Member) Appreciate the advocacy for wildlife. Looking at the current mission statement; the first paragraph ends in current and future generations; perhaps this could be expanded so that it is not just human generations but people and wildlife?

Staff Note: in the chatbox there were a few comments that were supportive of this idea

(Public; *in chat*) Explore the therapeutic role of parks

(Public; *in chat*) Question about whether or not a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) analysis had been done before.

(Public) Question that arose in response to someone else's comment; do the values match up with the SWOT analysis, does this set the stage for MPRB to be as successful as possible?

(Project Staff) Haven't used this kind of analysis tool specifically for our values; however a SWOT analysis is similar to the processes we've been using for the Comprehensive Plan. The Park

Summit operates similarly to a SWOT analysis overall, the questions that are framed out are related closely to strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and threats. Dream park cards helped us identify strengths (what people like about the park system), weaknesses (dreams and visions for the park system) and these comments about public perceived strengths and weaknesses are the underpinnings of initial policy ideas as they've gone through workgroups. The eight futures that were outlined are a mix of opportunities and threats for the organization, city and system.

THANKS AND NEXT STEPS

MPRB Staff thanked everyone for attending the virtual meeting and reiterated the next steps for the Comprehensive Plan as well as the different ways to get involved in the Park Summit.