Hiawatha Golf Course Area Master Plan

An Amendment to the 2015 Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park Master Plan

PUBLIC HEARING – 6:30pm, February 17, 2021
Presentation Objective

• What's a Master Plan?
• Why Are We Planning?
• Planning Responsible Outcomes
• How Did We Get Here?
• Community Engagement
• The Plan
• What Does the Plan Accomplish?
• Balancing Ecology, Golf, and History
• Costs Overview
• Public Comment Period and Process for Tabulating Comments
• Comment Themes
• Modifications to the Plan Based on Low Impact Feedback
• High Impact Themes to Note
• Public Hearing
What’s a Master Plan?

The Master Plan Document is a **Conceptual Roadmap**

- It sets the vision to guide long-term development and improvements to the park.
- It guides stewardship.
- It helps ensure park features, functions, and amenities reflect the needs of the community served.
- It strives for long-term financial and ecological sustainability.
- It is a funding tool.

We can’t design a solution without first having a goal.
Why Are We Planning?

Obligation to Ecology

State Climatology Office Presentation Jan 6, 2021

• “unprecedented wetness and warmth already observed, along with more damaging rains.”

• “Despite increased precipitation, normal variations (“ups and downs”) will continue; drought will remain part of our climate.”

• The increase in precipitation is “not an even ramp.” “There will be variations along the way.”

• Drought possible by mid-century, 30 years from now.
Why Are We Planning?

Obligation to Ecology

The plan pushes toward a balance of golf and other activities set in a landscape guided by water management.

It necessarily bends toward ecology in its aspirations.

It recognizing that restoration of natural processes—which were significantly altered by Wirth’s dredging of Rice Lake—are a goal greater than those supporting human activities on the site.

Choices favor preservation, conservation, and restoration.

The restoration of sustainable water patterns and recreation, balanced in a new ecologically-driven landscape, form the higher-order goals inherent in the plan.
Planning Responsible Outcomes

Social Responsibility

• Honoring Black history at our golf courses by:
  • Partnering with local BIPOC golfers and organizations to keep golf successful at Lake Hiawatha.
  • Creating a space for learning the game and introducing it to new golfers.
  • Creating a welcoming space where everyone feels at home.
  • Exploring opportunities for employing more people of color at the golf courses.

• Reversing urban encroachment of natural areas:
  • Introducing a new natural area to South Minneapolis.
  • Honoring water.
  • Working with local Indigenous communities to help reverse a portion of the MPRB’s past destruction of nature.
  • Creating nature-first areas.

• There is much work to be done. The Master Plan is only a starting point.
Planning Responsible Outcomes

Financial Responsibility

• Introduce new revenue sources compatible with the regional park, neighborhood, and golf course.
• Create a flood resilient golf course that can bounce back in days or weeks and not months.
• Tap into dense urban population surrounding the park and seek out new park users and golfers to support the park and golf course.
How Did We Get Here?

- Site floods in 2014, front nine open in fall, back nine opens the following spring.
- We’ve been master planning and studying the site since 2015.
- Planning was interrupted in September 2015 when we learned the course was being dewatered – No permit to dewater, only to irrigate.
- The initial study concluded pumps were dewatering (removing groundwater) a large basin within the golf course at a rate of 263 MGY, over 400 MGY in 2019, and over 333 MGY in 2020.
- These pumps were designed to transfer stormwater to the lake, no permit required.
- Several water management alternatives were developed from no pumping, to reduced pumping to continuing pumping at current rates.
- Water Management Alternative B was approved in August 2017 and clarified in October 2017.
- Master planning resumed in March 2018, following the Board’s guidelines.
- Board re-affirms the direction of master planning guidelines in Resolution 2018-230 on July 2018.
- Three concepts were created in March 2019.
- Preferred Alternative created April 2020.
- Draft Master Plan assembled and released for public comment July 2020.
- Comment period closes in September 2020 and comments tabulated and final changes to the Draft Plan are made.
- Final Master Plan to Board for consideration.
Water Management Study 2014 to 2018

- June 2014 – 11.36 inches of rain
- June 19, 2014 – Golf course closes
- July 2, 2014 – Floodwater starts to recede
- September 2014 – Federal disaster declared
- September 2014 – Preliminary Storm Damage Assessment
- Fall 2014 – Front nine holes are open for play
- January 13, 2015 – First of nine initial public meetings begins
- February 2, 2015 – Public meeting, reimbursement workshop for restoration
- September 11, 2015 – New groundwater pumping at Golf Course
- September 15, 2015 – Public meeting, new groundwater data
- Spring 2016 – Back nine holes are open
- June 13, 2016 – Neighbor-specific update regarding groundwater pumping and basements
- June 14, 2016 – Public meeting for groundwater pumping update
- November 2, 2016 – Staff update to the Board of Commissioners
- November 29, 2016 – Public meeting for groundwater management alternatives
- March 30, 2017 – Public meeting for groundwater management alternatives (conclusion), phase two water pumping
- April 20, 2017 – Public meeting for phase two use workshop
- May 18, 2017 – Public meeting for phase two final presentation
- June 21, 2017 – Public survey released
- July 30, 2017 – Board of Commissioners approves reduced course for 2017
- August 4, 2017 – Board of Commissioners further clarifies the implementation begin.
Master Planning 2018 to Present

- March 20, 2018 – CAC meeting #1 kicks off the master planning process
- April 30, 2018 – CAC meeting #2 discusses the groundwater management alternatives
- July 25, 2018 – Board adopts Resolution 2018-230, stating the importance of planning for changes to the water, sewer, road, and stormwater systems
- October 10, 2018 – CAC meeting #3 introduces the design team and starts the visioning process
- November 4, 2018 – CAC meeting #4 presents design trends and elements of the master plan
- December 4, 2018 – CAC meeting #5 presents the three concept alternatives
- March 7, 2019 – CAC meeting #6 presents the three concept design alternatives
- March 9, 2019 – Focus session open house
- March 22, 2019 – CAC meeting #6b continues discussion of preferred design alternative
- July 22, 2019 – CAC meeting #6 presents the three concept design alternatives
- July 30, 2019 – Focus session open house
- October 1, 2019 – Focus session open house
- November 4, 2019 – CAC meeting #7 presents the three concept design alternatives
- December 4, 2019 – CAC meeting #7b continues discussion of preferred design alternative
- January 9, 2020 – Focus session open house
- March 10, 2020 – CAC meeting #8 together with the City of Minneapolis approves the final master plan
- July 2020 – Draft master plan released for public review and comment
- September 1, 2020 – Draft Master plan presented to Board of Commissioners
- February/March 2021 – Master plan to Board of Commissioners for approval
Community Engagement

• 9 public meetings from 2015 to start of master planning restart in 2018

• 1 neighbor-specific meeting regarding basements, plus measuring of several basements

• Dozens of email updates between 2014 and 2020

• 7 CAC meetings

• 10 focus session open houses

• 4 surveys and a general comment form, hundreds of handwritten and emailed comments, and several in-person meetings

• A video presentation of the plan that was viewed by more than 2,700 people

• 345 surveys collected during the 45-day comment period producing 1181 comments and 468 comment themes
Vision

The Hiawatha Golf Course Area is:

“A unique destination providing a welcoming and equitable park experience for both the surrounding community and regional park users that is ecologically responsible, addresses water management needs, and respectful of the site’s natural and cultural history. Park development will have a long-term focus for year-round passive and active recreation, where golf and other recreation will interface with ecology and art to provide for a flood-resilient design that is accessible, connected, and celebrates the spirit of Minneapolis.”

Categories:
- Natural Resources
- Community & Equity
- Recreation
- Connectivity & Circulation
Vision:

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Guiding Principles: Natural Resources

• **HONOR WATER** and realize its significance at the site, in our lives, and our cultures.
• **PROVIDE A FLOOD RESILIENT DESIGN** within the park area.
• **PROTECT NEARBY HOMES** from groundwater intrusion to the same degree they are protected today.
• **REDUCE FLOOD IMPACTS** in the neighborhood to the north and west of the site.
• **REDUCE THE VOLUME OF TRASH** entering Lake Hiawatha.
• **ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS** on the site, including consideration of existing habitat and creation of more varied habitat to support wildlife.
• **IMPROVE WATER QUALITY** including treatment of runoff to improve Lake Hiawatha.
• **REUSE PUMPED GROUNDWATER** for the betterment of the site and environment.

**Categories:**
- Natural Resources
- Community & Equity
- Recreation
- Connectivity & Circulation
Guiding Principles: Community and Equity

• CREATE EQUITABLE EXPERIENCES and SPACES that promotes community with multi-generational, family-friendly, fun opportunities that are interactive and respectful for all park users.

• CELEBRATE HISTORY in a meaningful way on the site.

• SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY in all aspects of the site, including environmentally, culturally, and economically.

• REDUCE BARRIERS AND ENCOURAGE ACCESS to a broader set of park users

• MINIMIZE NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO THE ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOOD, including consideration of impacts to traffic, parking, and noise
Guiding Principles: Recreation

• ENVISION GOLF AS A CENTRAL ACTIVITY of the site, ensuring safety as a priority when looking at integration with other uses.

• PROVIDE GOLF AND GOLF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES equitably to youth and other underrepresented community members.

• DIVERSIFY RECREATION and CREATE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES on the site to meet the goals of the MPRB park system, including year-round activities.

• ENHANCE GATHERING SPACES on the site to be welcoming and fun for all community member and be fiscally and environmentally responsible.

Categories:
• Natural Resources
• Community & Equity
• Recreation
• Connectivity & Circulation
Guiding Principles: Connectivity and Circulation

• CREATE CONNECTIONS between the site and the community, the regional park and trails, and the lake and creek.
• CREATE COHESIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY SOLUTIONS for site issues and design ideas.
• REDUCE BARRIERS AND ENCOURAGE ACCESS to a broader set of park users
26 CAC Prioritized Elements

Top priority: Protect homes from groundwater intrusion, including engineering analysis

1. Provide pollution mitigation coordinated by the City of Minneapolis and MPRB, including trash, sediment, and dissolved pollutant removal
2. Maintain First Tee program
3. Ensure more purposeful interpretation and presence of African American and Indigenous history, art, and culture
4. Include stormwater best management practices
5. Balance natural and recreational spaces with appropriate plantings (vegetation that reduces maintenance needs while optimizing land use experience, water management, and wildlife)
6. Enhance winter activities on the property
7. Keep costs low (capital and maintenance)
8. Explain why the MPRB wants to reduce pumping
9. Revise/Improve clubhouse with winter activity hub, a pet-friendly patio, and local business oriented
10. Provide a plan to retain the 18-hole golf course with alternate ways to reduce pumping
11. Protect existing wildlife habitat
12. Enhance communal golf practice facilities
13. Provide a plan for memorials to people
14. Support wildlife connectivity
15. Provide a safe walking path around the lake, not necessarily directly adjacent to lake
16. Remove fence strategically to increase accessibility to park and water
17. Reuse existing infrastructure
18. New parking and traffic analysis
19. Push Audubon Certification levels further
20. Create public art opportunities
21. Maintain and expand, where appropriate, biking path locations
22. Provide opportunities for non-golf interaction on property
23. Create passive and active areas
24. Create an event venue
25. Explore what each park facility building does and how its use could be expanded, i.e., event facility at southwest maintenance building
CAC Priorities

All CAC Priorities met except for one:

10. Provide a plan to retain the 18-hole golf course with alternate ways to reduce pumping

• A flood resilient and ecologically driven 18-hole golf course cannot fit within the site. It contradicts the Board’s Direction outlined in 2018-230.

• Elevating 18-holes above the elevation of the lake will reduce floodplain volumes and push floodwaters to the next lowest areas, the neighborhoods.
Key Components of the Plan

• Built-in flood resiliency and quicker to recover
• Ecologically driven
• 9 holes of golf
• Golf learning center
• Community building
• Clubhouse
• Lake house
• Connectivity within the park and to the neighborhood
• Ecologically and environmentally responsive design
• Strives to restore the ecologic function of Rice Lake while balancing recreation activities, including golf, and the history of golfers at Hiawatha Golf Course
• Nine experiences throughout the property
What Does the Plan Accomplish?

Balance!
- Ecology – Recreation – Golf – History
- Balance of golf and other activities is set in a landscape guided by water management

Ecological Sustainability
- Phosphorus reduction
- Added biodiversity
- Trash removal
- Balance people-centric spaces with nature-centric spaces

Financial Sustainability
- Flood resiliency
- Added revenue sources
- Costs and benefits are shared
- Re-uses pumped water

Minimizes Risk
- Golf course revenues cannot keep up with losses, or threats or major losses due to flooding
- FEMA might not fund restoration a second time
- New plan specifically pumps to protect nearby homes from groundwater intrusion to the same degree they are protected today; currently, the pumping is not designed to protect homes
Balancing Ecology

• The original design of the site dominated nature. Theodore Wirth dredged Rice Lake placing 1.25 million cubic yards of dredged material over a wetland and created “new land” where he situated a golf course.

• Nature has been reclaiming the site as fill material subsides and wet weather continues.
Balancing Golf

• Redesigning the course for 9 holes and learning facilities.
• Introduce new players to the sport. Meaning growth, not even or declining trends in participation.
• Introduces golfers to a balanced park experience; significant areas are reshaped for nature and habitat.
• Nine holes recognizes the more limited amount of time people have to play golf. The golf industry is adjusting to these trends “The game takes too long, the game is too hard and it’s too expensive.” J. Nicklaus
Balancing Histories

• Hiawatha’s history of supporting people of color is significant. It brought the game of golf and its comradery to many people unwelcome in so many other spaces.

• The area is a part of Dakota history. It is Bdote. Treaties were erased and Dakota were violently pushed from their homeland. But they are still here.
Costs, Revenue, Funding

Six Budget Categories Managed in Two Funds:

**Regional Water Management**
- Park Features
- Golf Course Enterprise
- Restaurant Enterprise
- Winter Activity Enterprise
- Other Enterprise

**General Fund**
- State and Local Bonding
- Grants
- Non-MPRB Funding
- Philanthropy

**Enterprise Fund**
- MPRB Enterprise Revenue
- Partnerships
- Philanthropy
## Capital Costs

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<th>Budget Category</th>
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<th>Mobilization</th>
<th>Contingency</th>
<th>Design/Permit/Etc</th>
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### O+M Costs, Revenue, and Profit

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<th>Annual Revenue</th>
<th>Net</th>
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</table>
Costs, Revenue, and Funding

Key Takeaways:

• Master planning is a tool to get funds, improvement dollars are almost never in hand at time of master planning.

• There are many ways to pay for these improvements. Regional parks receive regional funding.

• Budget categories in the Enterprise Fund are run like a business; net revenues are put back into the fund or reinvested in the operation.

• This plan is a starting point.

• Implementation will be incremental.

• Partnerships are essential!
Review of Public Comment Period

• 345 individual surveys
• 26 emails from the public
• Email from partners
Process for Tabulating Public Comment

1. Staff read each commenter’s survey response
2. Various comments in each response are separated and put into a spreadsheet
3. Comments are grouped into themes
4. Themes assigned categories based on impact to the master plan
   - Low
   - Moderate
   - High
   - None

This is not an opinion of what’s good or bad.
Process for Tabulating Public Comment

- Commenter Response 1
- Comment Y
- Commenter Response 2
- Comment Z
- Comment W
- Comment X
- Comment X
- Comment Y

THEME
- impact & response
- impact & response
- impact & response
- impact & response
Process for Tabulating Public Comment

Commenter Response 1

Commenter Response 2

THEME impact & response
Comment W

THEME impact & response
Comment X

THEME impact & response
Comment Y

THEME impact & response
Comment Z
Theme Impact on Plan

• **No Impact:** Supports the plan, refers to something too detailed for a master plan, or is outside plan scope

• **Low Impact:** Minor changes or clarifications of the draft plan that can be made without diverging from CAC priorities recommendation

• **High Impact:** Would fundamentally change the underpinnings of the plan, go against Resolution 2018-230, and likely requiring additional community engagement.

• **Moderate Impact:** Would require CAC recommendation change, *Plan amendments provided to the Board in Attachment E*
Theme Statistics

- **372** responses making **1181** comments
- **463** total comment themes
  - **336** of the themes were **No Impact** themes
  - **70** of the themes were **Low Impact**, and led to minor plan modifications/clarifications
  - **46** of the themes were **High Impact** themes
  - **11** of the themes were **Moderate Impact** themes
- **127** Comments were supportive of some plan aspect
Plan Modifications Based on Low Impact Feedback

- Clarification of how and where snowmaking will happen.
- Additional groundwater pumping info for 2020 (333 MGY)
- Clarification and enlargement of the Backyard Neighborhood Area in the northwest corner of the property
- Clarification of funding/revenue sources
- Additional 2021 golf outlook regarding pandemic impacts
- Expansion of golf rounds sold at MPRB courses to include 2019 and 2020 totals.
- Inclusion of areas of potential city-wide high groundwater concern.
High Impact Themes to Note

• Keep 18 Holes of Golf
• Remove Golf Altogether
High Impact Themes to Note

Both items are “High Impact” themes because they contradict the Board’s direction stated in Resolution 2018-230.

• Keep 18 Holes of Golf
  • 18-holes of golf will not physically fit into the site while following Resolution 2018-230’s requirement: Pursue a reduced-pumping scenario as conceptualized in [Water Management] Alternative B.

• Remove Golf Altogether
  • Removal of the golf course altogether contradicts Resolution 2018-230’s requirement: At a minimum, providing a flood-resilient and ecologically driven 9-hole configuration for a golf course.
Thank You

Public Hearing