INDIAN MOUNDS REGIONAL PARK

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

ADOPTED AUGUST 10, 2011

RECEIVED
AUG 30 2011
PARKS AND RECREATION

Metropolitan Council

August 25, 2011

Jody Martinez, Planning Manager
City of St. Paul, Div. of Parks & Rec.
400 City Hall Annex
25 West Fourth Street
St. Paul, MN 55102

Re: **Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan Amendment, City of St. Paul (Referral Number 50010-1)**

Dear Jody:

On August 10, 2011 the Metropolitan Council approved the following motion:

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan Amendment (Referral No. 50010-1).

2. Request the City of St. Paul to submit plans for the following park improvements to Scott Denz at MCES for review: 1) the new paved loop trail located just north of Warner Road; and 2) the restroom/shelter facility at Carver's Cave overlook parking lot.

Enclosed for your files is a copy of the Council's action memorandum.

Please contact me at 651-602-1360 if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Arne Stefferud

Arne Stefferud
Planning Analyst-Parks

Enclosure: Community Development Committee Report Item 2011-208 Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan Amendment, City of St. Paul (Referral Number 50010-1)

Acknowledgments

The contributions and support of the following individuals and organizations were instrumental in the creation of this plan, and are gratefully acknowledged:

Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan Design Task Force:
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John Anfinson, National Park Service
Colleen Ashton, District 4 Resident
Ellen Biales, Aide to Council President Lantry, Ward 7
Ned Brooks, District 4 Resident
Jacob Dorer, District 4 Resident
Stephanie Harr, District 4 Resident
Irene Jones, Friends of the Mississippi River
Jim Jones, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
Anne Kolar, Cerenity Care Center
Brian Miller, Conservation Corps and District 4 Resident
Marjorie Pitz, District 4 Resident
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Adopted by Metropolitan Council
August 10 , 2011

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Introduction

The City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared this master plan amendment for Metropolitan Council review and approval.

The *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* describes the role of the master plan in the regional park system. The policy requires that any project proposed for funding in the Metropolitan Regional Parks Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) be consistent with a Metropolitan Council approved regional park master plan. The original master plan for the park was completed in 1974 as part of the *Regional Recreation Open Space in the City of Saint Paul Minnesota* plan (Figure A) and amended in the 1981 *Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan* (Figure B). This master plan update was prepared to reflect changing user needs, updated natural resource information and management techniques, and to meet future park user needs through proposed recreational facilities.

The updated master plan addresses the eleven content requirements for Regional Parks and Open Space Master Plans as outlined by the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* adopted December 2010. The master plan allows the City to be eligible to apply for funding to implement plans for the amenities identified.

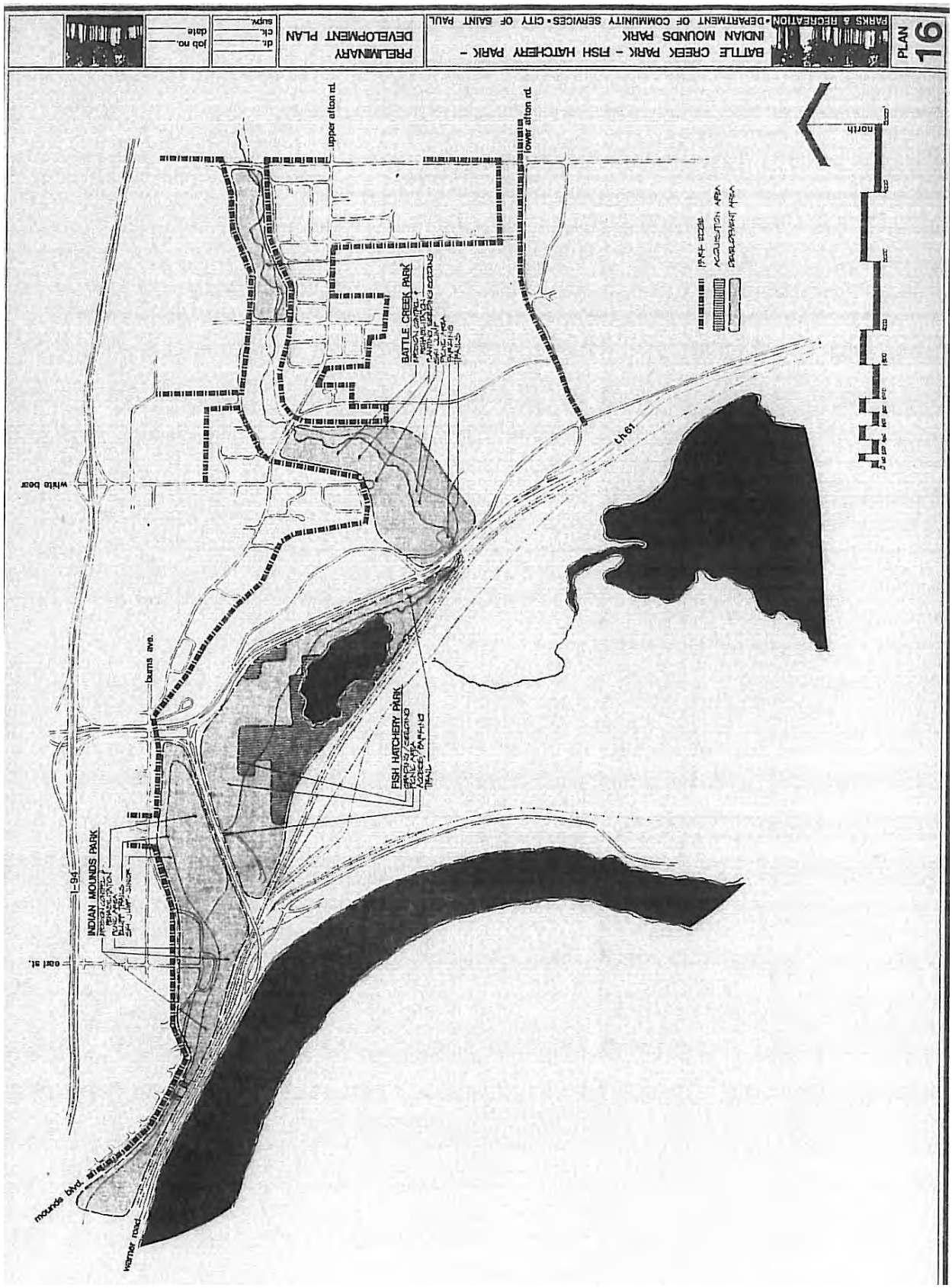


FIGURE A: 1974 Master Plan Graphic

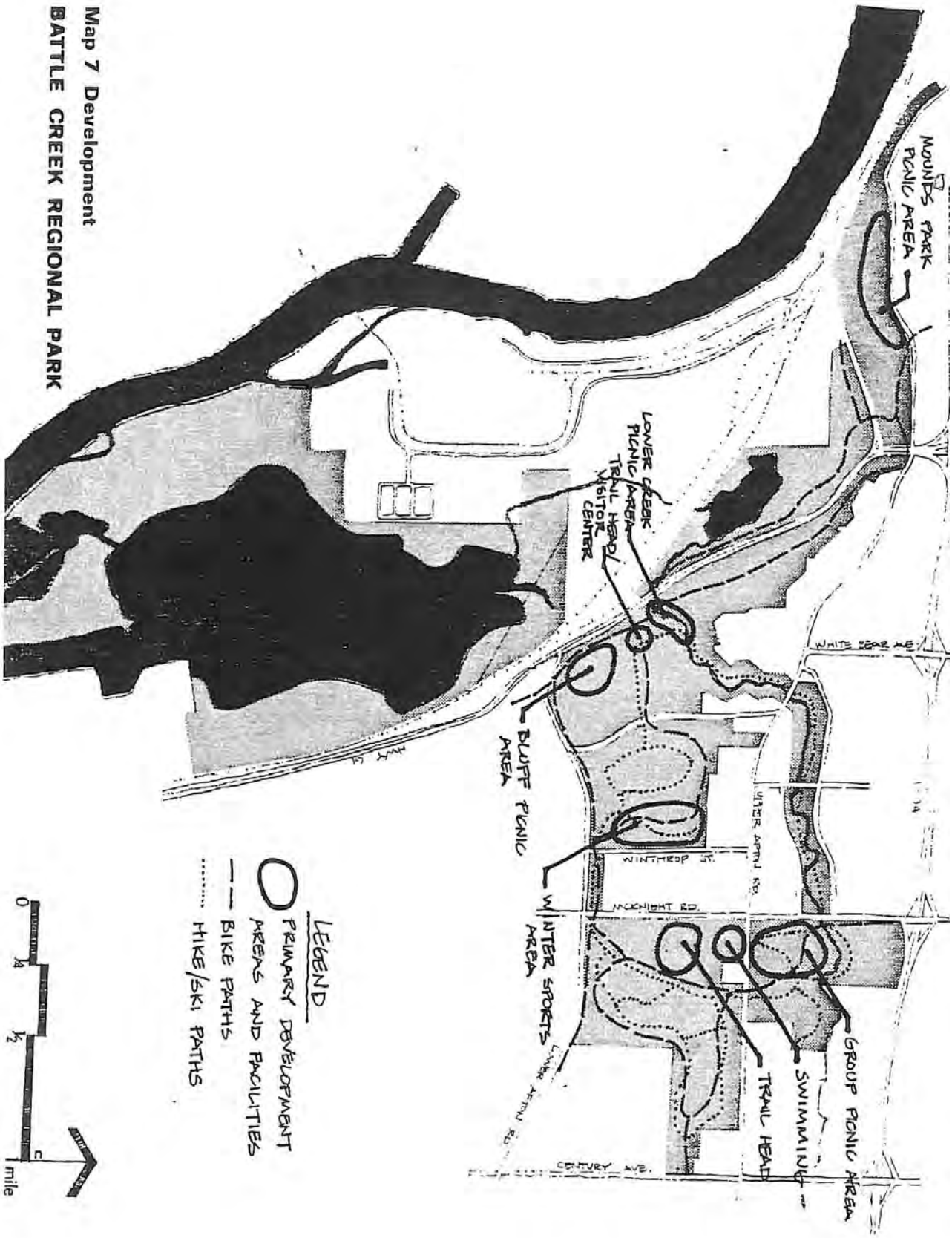


FIGURE B: 1981 Master Plan Graphic

Background

Located atop the bluffs of the Mississippi River on the eastern side of downtown St. Paul, this 111 acre park consists of river bluff, steep slopes, rolling hills, woodlands, and grasslands. It is rich in history and is the site of Indian burial mounds which date to the Hopewell Indian era of more than 2000 years ago. The location of these mounds is predominantly due to its location on the Mississippi River and the commanding views to and from the river valley. Indian Mounds was one of the first to be proposed as park space for the city after a speech given by H.W.S. Cleveland in 1888. Cleveland spoke to the importance of preserving land for the use by the general public for leisure activities, especially those lands along the Mississippi River. In 1892, acquisition of a 17 ½ acre parcel along the bluff just south of Earl Street was the beginning of numerous acquisitions and many improvements to the park to date. Due to its proximity to the State Willow Brook Fish Hatchery, now known as the DNR Fish Hatchery, additional lands were donated by the State to be used as a municipal forest.

"The unsurpassed magnificence of the prospect it commands, the picturesque features of the park itself, and the interest attached to the mounds themselves, the antique memorials of an Indian race which formerly held sway over this region, already attract a multitude of visitors".[1]

A *2008 Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails Survey* shows that the above statement still holds true today, with walking, hiking and leisure activities the primary uses of the park. A paved trail runs along the bluff top connecting the historical and cultural aspects of the park. Starting at the western boundary of the park, the trail winds up Commercial Street from the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and downtown Saint Paul. Here the trail passes by the Carver's Cave Overlook, then travels through the narrow space between the bluff and Mounds Boulevard passing the airway beacon, the remaining Indian Mounds, the pavilion, the "Echo" overlook, the historic site of the ski jump and then joins the Grand Rounds at Burns Avenue and Johnson Parkway. From Johnson Parkway the trail meanders through the woods alongside Burns Avenue, to Highway 61, then it turns south and runs down the slope to the pedestrian bridge over Warner Road. South of Warner Road the trail joins the Sam Morgan Regional Trail where the user can choose to follow the Mississippi River shoreline to downtown or turn at Fish Hatchery Road and follow the trail to Battle Creek Regional Park. In addition to the paved trail, multiple footpaths wind through the steep slopes and hilltops of the municipal forest area on the eastern end of the park. The park also consists of multiple picnic areas, picnic shelters, tennis courts, and a play area.

[1]City of Saint Paul, Board of Park Commissioners, 1897-1898 Annual Report, p. 11.

FIGURE C: Existing Conditions

1. Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

The park is bordered by Mounds Boulevard and Burns Avenue to the north, Highway 61 to the east, Warner Road, Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) railroad property to the south and Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary to the west.

The 15.8 acre MnDNR Fish Hatchery parcel north of Warner Road has been identified as a potential future acquisition if the MnDNR is ever in a position to dispose of the property. Acquisition of this parcel is estimated at $689,000.00.

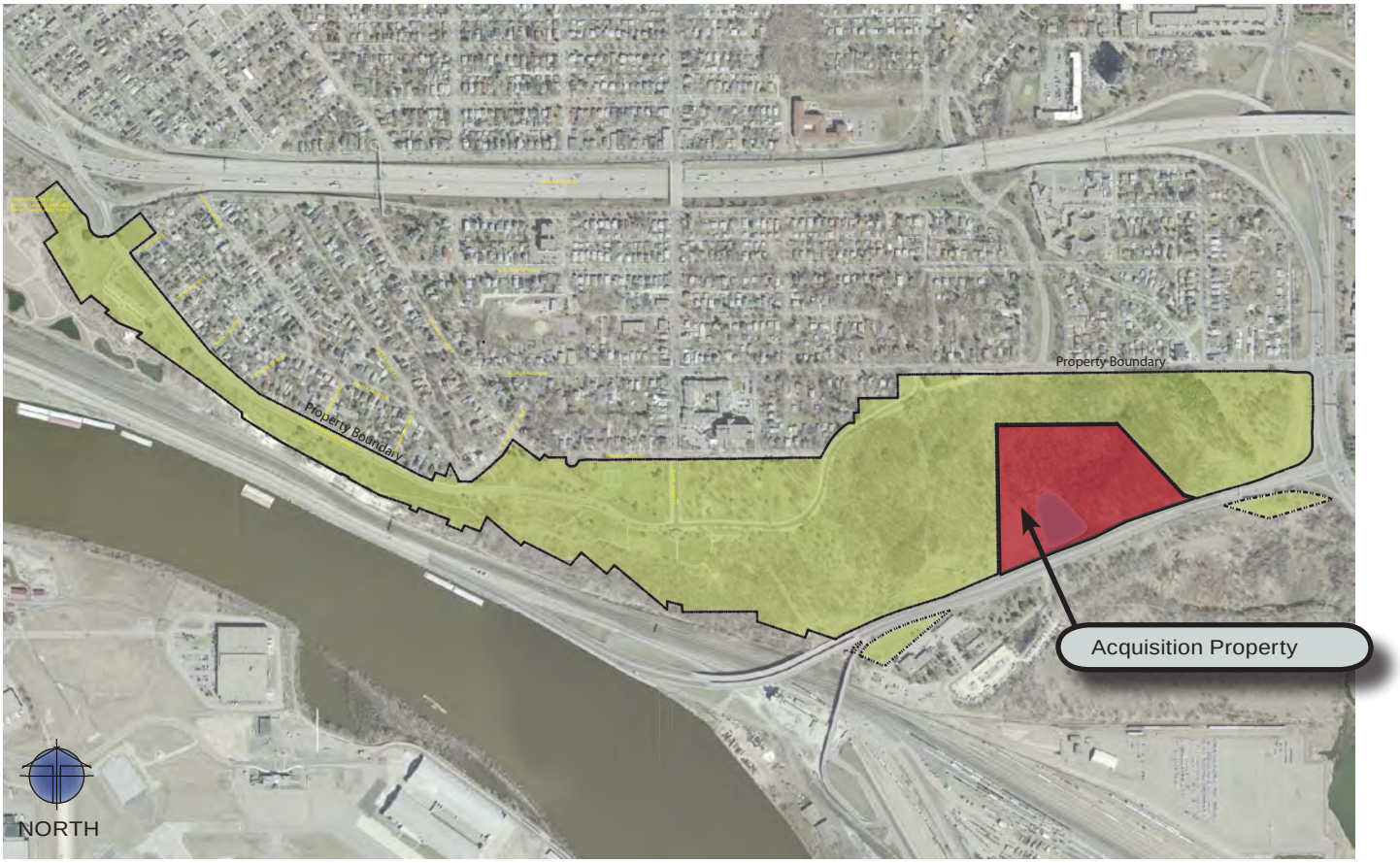


FIGURE 1.1: Boundary and Acquisition Delineation

2. Stewardship Plan

The City of Saint Paul currently owns and maintains all of the lands within the Indian Mounds Regional Park boundary. The City of Saint Paul has also been working jointly with the MnDNR on natural resource management of the 15.8 acre Fish Hatchery parcel north of Warner Road. Fees are collected from reservations of the picnic shelters.

3. Demand Forecast

Based on the Metropolitan Council Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Park System for 2009, Indian Mounds Regional Park received over 122,000 visits in that year.

The Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails Survey 2008 shows that walking, hiking, dog walking, and relaxing were rated the top activities for the park. A majority of the park users are here to learn about the Indian Mounds' significant history and to take in the commanding views along the bluff. Significant emphasis of future development for the park includes interpretive and identification signage, trail and view shed improvements, maintain existing open space for relaxing or non-programmed use, and a potential off-leash dog area.

The development concept increases area available for event/festival space by creating a "convertible street" of Earl Street between Thorn and Mounds Boulevard. This space may increase demand for special use programming within the park. Use will also increase with new interpretive features, picnic facilities and a signature play area

4. Development Concept

The guiding principle of the master plan development has been to recognize, celebrate, interpret and seek to preserve the historic, cultural and natural resources in a way that fosters stewardship while providing recreational amenities appropriate for a regional park.

Since the parks establishment, sightseeing has drawn many visitors to the high bluffs overlooking the river, downtown, and the airport. Today many people come to the park to learn about its rich cultural history and to enjoy the picnic grounds and expansive open space. The park's current amenities include two picnic shelters, two picnic areas, a play area, restroom facility, tennis court, two prominent overlooks with adjacent off-street parking, former "comfort station"/pavilion and trails. The following is a list of priorities, in order of importance for each area, for future development within the park.

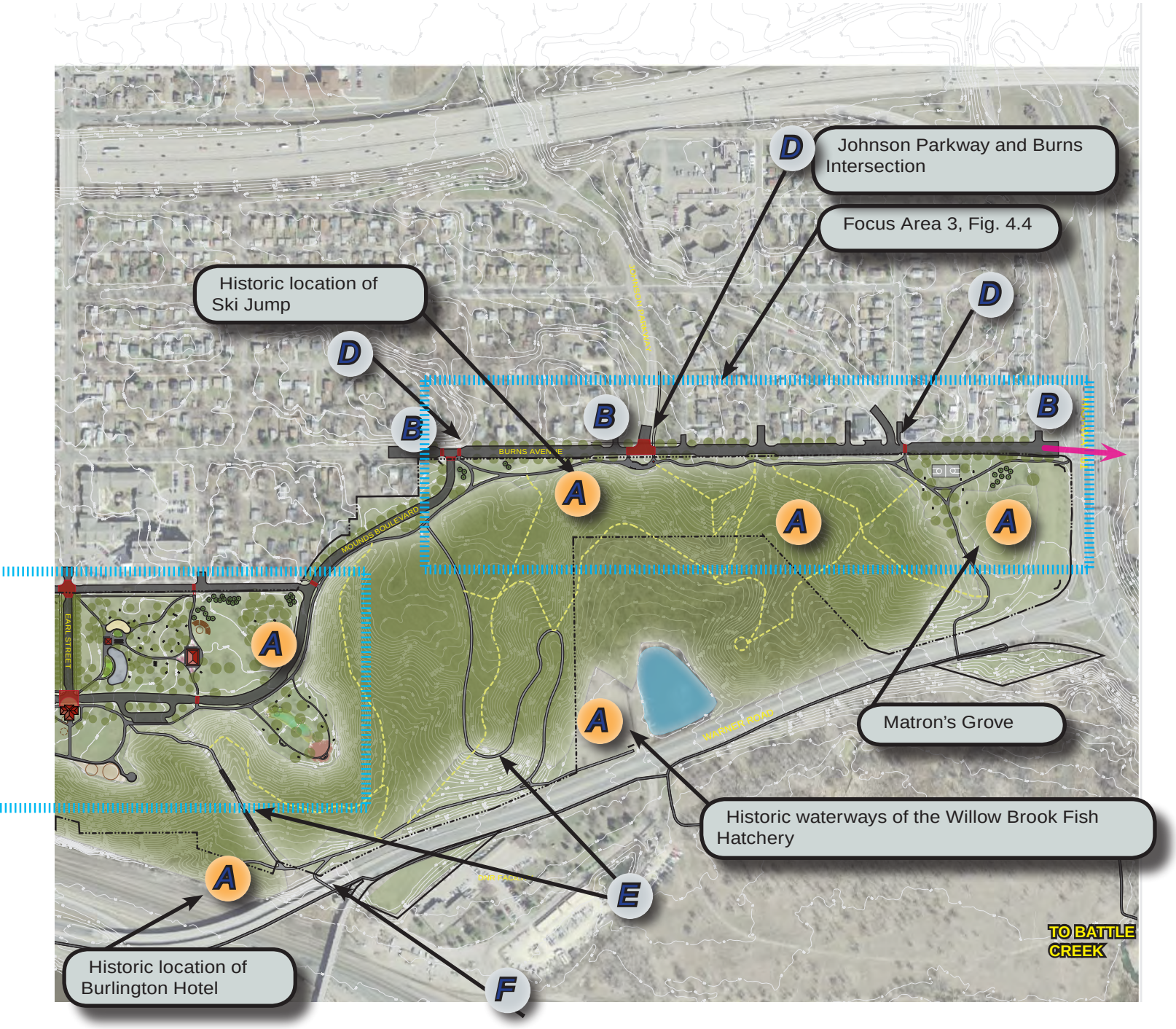
A **Cultural and Historical Interpretive Signage Plan and Implementation:** interpretive signage for all significant cultural and historical areas.
Estimated Cost: $220,000.00

B **Gateway Signage and Monumentation:** There will be major gateways at Commercial St. and Mounds Blvd.; Burns Ave. and Johnson Parkway; and Burns Ave. and Highway 61 entrances into the park. Minor gateways include Earl and Thorn; Burns Ave. and Mounds Blvd intersections. Gateways include entrance signage, walls, railings, or other artistic monumentation with materials that compliment the park and are historically relevant.
Estimated Cost: $500,000.00

C **Trail Improvements:** Renovate deteriorating trails. Realign trail between Plum Street and Earl Street to capture views, reduce 90 degree trail intersections and add viewing pull-offs.
Estimated Cost: $500,000.00

D **Traffic Calming Measures along Mounds Boulevard and Burns Avenue**: Bump-outs at intersections where appropriate; raised intersections at Plum Street and Mounds Boulevard, and Johnson Parkway and Burns Avenue; raised crosswalks where appropriate, especially where trails cross Mounds Boulevard without a street intersection.
Estimated Cost: $500,000.00

FIGURE 4.1: Master Site Plan



E **Loop Trail:** creation of a paved loop trail that traverses the steep slopes just north of Warner Road. Rehabilitation of existing concrete stairs, interpretive signage at the site of the Burlington Hotel, re-establish the historic road to Fish Hatchery.
Estimated Cost: $200,000.00

F **Trail connection to Sam Morgan Regional Trail:** use the Warner Road bridge reconstruction project to create a trail connection under the bridge. (Coordination needed with Ramsey County bridge replacement project)
Estimated Cost: $100,000.00

FIGURE 4.2: Focus Area 1

1a **Gateway Garden:** Transformation of two vacant lots recently acquired by the City on the eastern side of Mounds Blvd. at Plum St. into a gateway garden area that may include public art.
Estimated Cost: $250,000.00

1b **Restroom/Shelter facility at Carver's Cave Overlook parking lot**: Separated single stall male and female restroom building with an attached 1-2 picnic table shelter area, stone seat wall, kiosk and benches.
Estimated Cost: $350,000.00

1c **Dog Park in the "Quarry" Area:** if there is a need for an off leash dog area in the park, this area may be best suited. Add nature trail, fencing and amenities.
Estimated Cost: $35,000.00

1d **Stairway connection to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary:** with overlooks.
Estimated Cost: $780,000.00

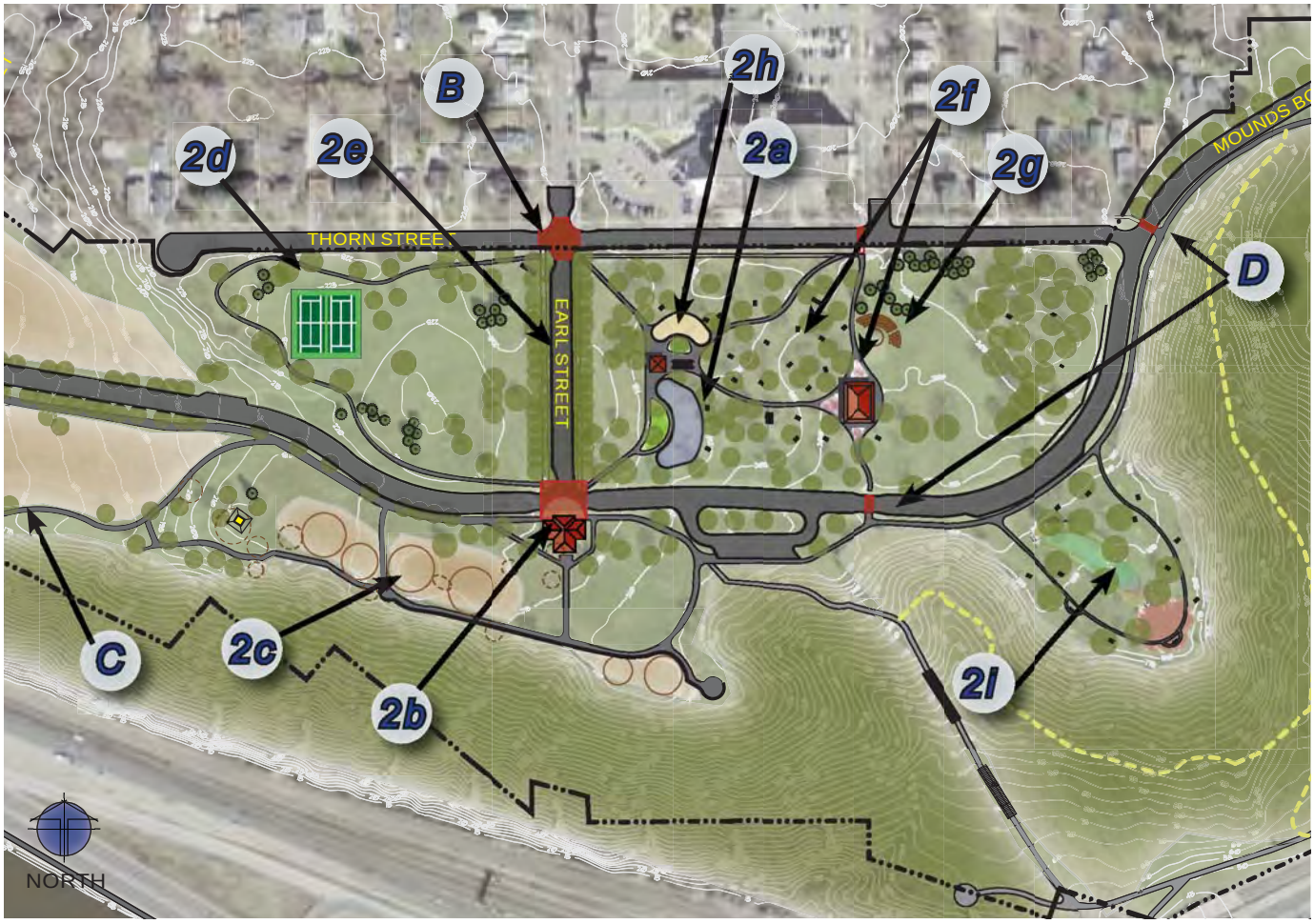
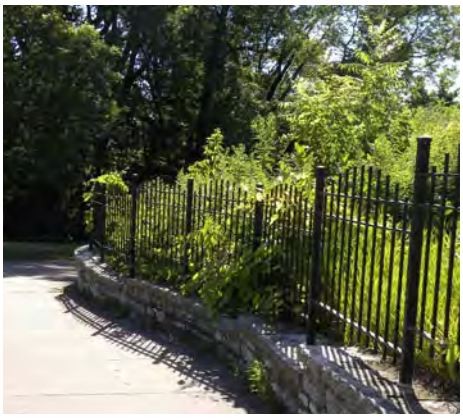


FIGURE 4.3: Focus Area 2

2a **Play Area Replacement:** the existing play equipment is in need of replacement to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines. A signature play area will be installed that includes more nature based play to reflect its surroundings. The project will meet current safety standards and incorporate new site amenities associated with the play area.
Estimated Cost: $500,000.00

2b **Pavilion Renovation and Surrounding Landscaping:** renovate the existing pavilion to include interpretive sign panels describing the cultural, historic, and natural resources of the park and surrounding area. Upgrades will be needed for the electrical utilities and better ADA accessibility. The building facade will need tuck-pointing and the surrounding hardscape and landscaping will be upgraded.
Estimated Cost: $450,000.00



2c **Plantings on Indian Mounds:** return to native grasses. Species will be selected for optimal growth for the given site conditions. Parks Environmental Resources will consult with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council for best management practices.
Estimated Cost: $80,000.00

2d **Trail on western side of Earl with exercise signage**
Estimated Cost: $42,000.00

2e **Earl Street as Convertible Street:** pavement pattern and/or removable barricades or bollards that could create a usable event space along Earl Street between Mounds Boulevard and Thorn Street. Raised intersections at Thorn and Mounds Boulevard to create focal points of the convertible street and event space.
Estimated Cost: $200,000.00

2f **Picnic Area Improvements:** The picnic area was originally installed in the late 1960's/ early 1970's. Renovation would include demolition of two (2) existing concrete shelters and restroom facility, installation of new picnic pavilion that holds 80-100 people and includes a kitchen and restrooms, installation of a new small shelter for 30-40 people, and new picnic tables, grills, trash cans, and benches including ADA accessible facilities.
Estimated Cost: $1,100,000.00

2g **Amphitheater:** Small 50-70 person amphitheater built into existing topography using natural materials.
Estimated Cost: $350,000.00

2h **Splash Pad:** small artistic, natural play area that can also be used during the colder months to climb on or as an interpretive art element.
Estimated Cost: $350,000.00

2i **Biofiltration Area:** return mown turf area in a former wetland area to a more natural biofiltration system for stormwater. New picnic amenities, trail, viewing nodes, and a small overlook garden area.
Estimated Cost: $75,000.00

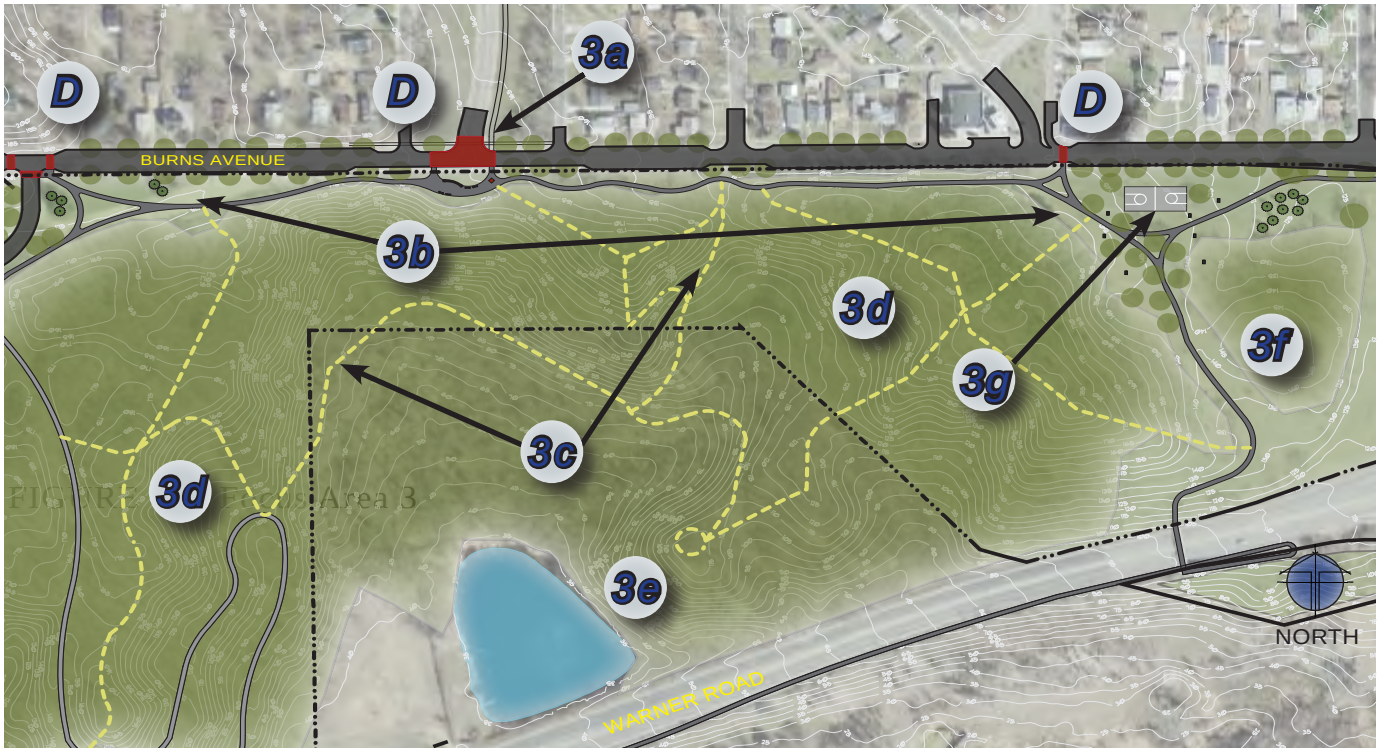


FIGURE 4.4: Focus Area 3

3a Johnson Parkway and Burns Avenue: with the addition of the Gateway element here, there will be a trail connection across Burns Avenue to Johnson Parkway and a kiosk as part of the Grand Rounds. Also proposed are benches, trash receptacle and drinking fountain.
Estimated Cost: $250,000.00

3b Trail Improvements: realign trail at Burns Avenue and Mounds Boulevard to reduce 90 degree trail intersection and take into consideration the loss of roadway through this area. Add access point to Burns Avenue and neighborhood at Clarence Street and to Grand Rounds at Johnson Parkway. Realign trail to eliminate 90 degree trail intersection.
Estimated Cost: $250,000.00

3c Nature Trail Improvements: cut back overgrowth, delineate trails with way finding signage, close highly erosive trails, design trails to reduce erosion, and add natural resource and/or cultural and historic interpretive signage where appropriate.
Estimated Cost: $65,000.00

3d Natural Resource Management: manage natural areas according to native plant communities designated in the Natural Resource Management Plan.
Estimated Cost: $120,000.00

3e **Fish Hatchery Acquisition Site:** Develop nature trails, signage, improve parking area, and provide possible access to the Fish Hatchery pond.
Estimated Cost: $350,000

3f **Disc Golf:** possible location of 9-hole course. Design/location will be respectful of any adverse effect on natural resources.
Estimated Cost: $45,000

3g **Basketball Court:** It has been recognized that there is a need for a basketball court within this service area. If the basketball court located at the Mounds Maintenance facility is removed, it may be possible to relocate it to Indian Mounds Regional Park given it is located in an area of the park that does not disrupt views, neighbors, or other historic, cultural, or natural resources within the park.
Estimated Cost: $75,000.00

5. Conflicts

Any future development will need to recognize and identify locations of cultural and historic significance and minimize any disturbance to those areas. There shall be no adverse effect on the historic locations of the Indian Mounds.

A stairway connection to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary will need to minimize any adverse effect on the viewshed to the bluffs and minimize tree removal, and erosion. There can be no adverse effects on historical or cultural resources.

A trail connection at the Warner Road bridge will need to be coordinated with Ramsey County and the bridge engineering. The conenction may be difficult due to the location of the lower bluff line to the north and the feasibility of creating an accessible connection to the Sam Morgan Regional Trail on the south side of the bridge.

Future development will also have to adhere to regulations from the Metropolitan Airport Commission due to the parks proximity to the St. Paul Airport and the potential Critical Area Regulations put forth by the DNR because of it's location along the Mississippi River.

6. Public Services

Utility services are currently provided to the park by the city of Saint Paul for sewer and water and Xcel Energy for electricity. Sewer and water utilities may need to be expanded into the park on the western end for a new restroom building. Rehabilitation of some existing utilities may also be required.

7. Operations

The City of Saint Paul operates and maintains Indian Mounds Regional Park. Patrolling of the facilities is provided by the Saint Paul Police department. Parks and Recreation Operations opens and closes the restroom facilities every day. Under city jurisdiction, existing city rules, regulations, and ordinances for its operation and maintenance apply. Estimated costs for operation and maintenance are as follows:

Proposed and Existing Amenities
Operations and Maintenance Costs - 2011 $

Pavilion	$5,344.20
2 picnic areas	$5,344.20
Play area	$3,111.16
2.52 miles of bituminous trail	$15,000.00
2 parking lots	$1,756.52
Tennis courts	$790.72
22.5 acres of mown turf	$40,046.28
Natural resource management of forested areas and prairie	$2,000.00
Pavilion building with kitchen and restroom (to replace large shelter and existing restroom)	$5,738.00
Splash pad	$4,000.00
Small restroom/shelter @ Carver's Cave Overlook parking lot	$5,344.12
1.24 miles of additional bituminous trails	$7,500.00
1.67 miles of Nature trails	$1,000.00
Gateway garden area (would need volunteer assistance)	$500.00
	$97,475.20

Measures are taken to provide energy conservation such as, timed lighting and thermostats and the use of sky lights in enclosed buildings. The current restroom facility is closed in the winter to conserve energy. All new park facilities will have to comply with either Minnesota Sustainable Building (B3) or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver guidelines for sustainable development.

The City of Saint Paul contracts solid waste removal. Receptacles are located at designated areas within the park system. Recycling receptacles will be placed in the park beginning in 2011.

8. Citizen Participation

A Design Advisory Task Force was assembled to help guide the development of the Master Site Plan for Indian Mounds Regional Park. The task force represented a diverse group of people including representation from the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the National Park Service, Friends of Mounds Park, Friends of the Mississippi River, Lower Phalen Creek Project, Cerenity Care Center, as well as residents of District 4. The Task Force met 7 times and provided input and direction to the City of Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. All Task Force meetings were open to the public. The City of Saint Paul's website was a primary means of communication and advertisement of meetings.

A Community Open House was held on January 29, 2011 at the Cerenity Care Center located directly adjacent to the park and had over 80 attendees. The Open House was advertised through the local East Side Review, e-mail lists, banners, flyers, District 4 offices, school groups, the City website, and was highlighted on MPR.

Comment cards were available to attendees and collected at the end of the evening. People were also encouraged to write comments on post-it notes and place them next to features on the presentation boards. Refer to Appendix B for the Executive Summary. The meeting consisted of presentation boards of historical information and proposed concepts. People were invited to look over the boards and ask questions of staff and task force members. A brief welcome and introduction was facilitated by Parks staff.

9. Public Awareness

The Friends of Mounds Park (FOMP) will work with various government agencies and residents to increase public awareness. The City will also expand the use of its website to advertise special events within the park. The City will cooperate with the Council's region wide awareness program.

10. Accessibility

All park facilities will be developed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Other local guidelines, such as the MnDNR's Trail Planning, Design and Development, will be used when developing bicycle and pedestrian trails

11. Natural Resources

Indian Mounds Park is uniquely positioned along the Mississippi River at a point where the river moves from the gorge and begins to fan out into a broader floodplain valley. Here the river bluffs are no longer adjacent to the river banks. The western end of the park is dominated by steep cliff faces of exposed bedrock that sits above the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, an area being restored to oak savanna and wetlands. The eastern end of the park was once dominated by oak savanna and grasslands on steep hilltops and south facing slopes. Today there are still some remnant areas of dry oak savanna and oak woodland-brushland on high hill tops; mature, red oak dominated mesic oak forests in sheltered ravines; and a black ash seepage swamp at the base of the area known as "the bowl". Other areas of the bluff slopes and ravines are covered with degraded native forest and woodland species.

The following information is taken from the Natural Resource Inventory and Management Plan for Indian Mounds Park:[2]

The Minnesota Land Cover Classification Survey (MLCCS), DNR's Ecological Pre-development Classification system, was used as a base map for existing vegetation communities located within the park. The MLCCS map was field checked and edited by Hannah Texler of the MnDNR in 2003 to assess the accuracy of the existing vegetation to the MLCCS plant communities in the park.

Preliminary examination of vegetation reveals a number of vegetative and erosion problems within the park. Past and present land use and invasions of exotic species have degraded the park. Large populations of exotic or invasive species are present that should be controlled. Areas of degraded native woods with a dense understory of invasive buckthorn also pose a problem to communities of native forest.

[2] Tix, D., Harris, F., Johnson, H., and Newhouse, T. 2007. Natural Resource Inventory and Management Plan for Indian Mounds Park. Great River Greening.

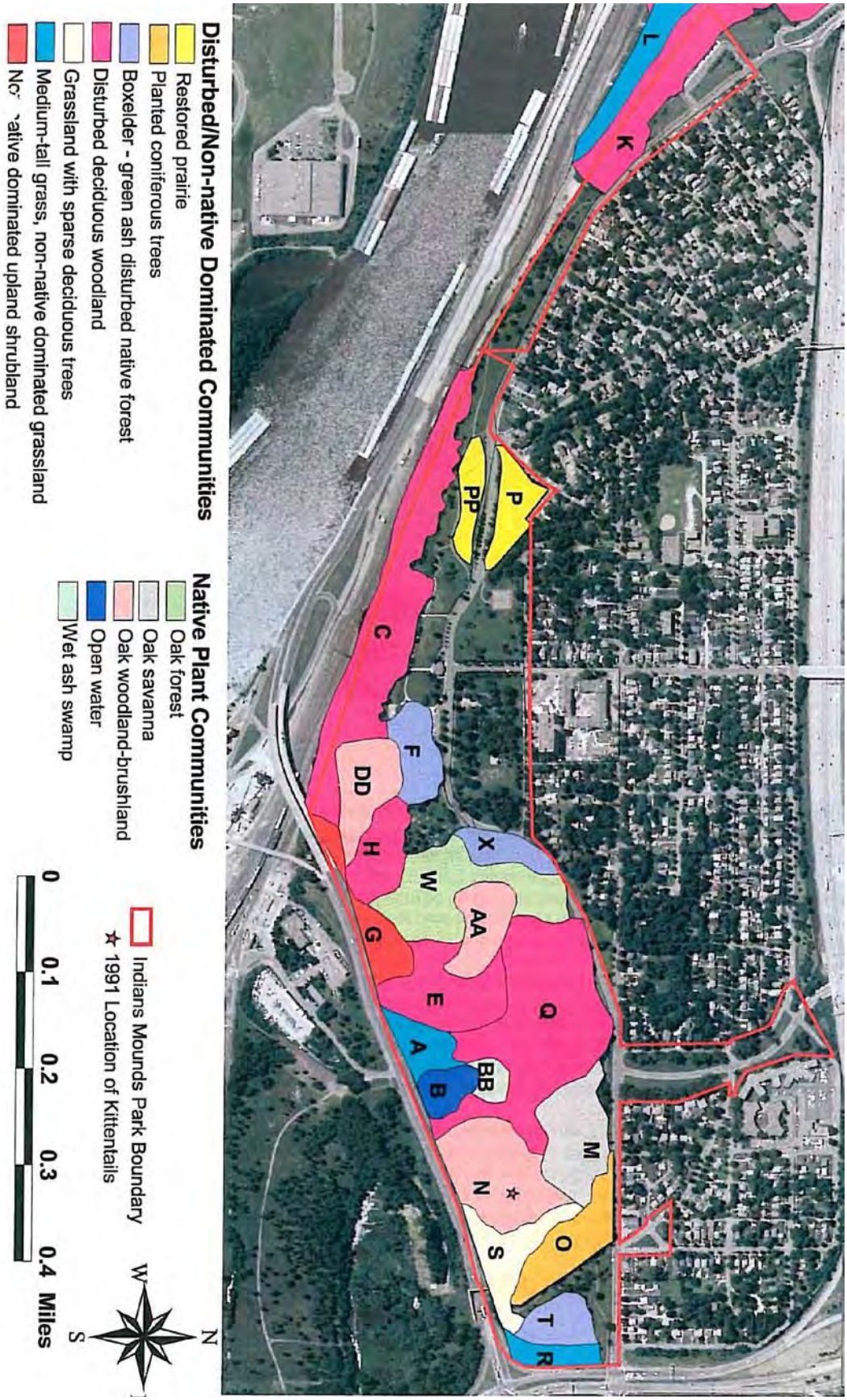


FIGURE 11.1: Natural Resource Inventory Map

The management recommendations call for the restoration of oak savanna in an area of a degraded remnant near the east end of the site. This open oak savanna should be expanded to include the location of a past record of Kitten tails (Bessya bullii), which lies in an overgrown savanna. Extensive brush clearing and prescribed burns should be used to clear these areas and open the savanna allowing grasses and other ground-layer savanna species to establish. Further west, the forest of the park should be managed to reduce common buckthorn and increase native plant diversity. The following are the key points provided in the management recommendations.

Restore Oak Savanna in east end of the site: $175,000.00
Goal: Clear shrubs in woodland area and return native savanna plants
1. Burn oak savanna hilltop (Unit M)
2. Clear brush on ridge near location of sited Kitten-tails
3. Control invasives and continue burning
4. Return native species under cut areas and bare soil
5. Continue burning and controlling brush

Forest Restoration: $400,000.00
Goal: Control invasive shrub species
1. Remove invasive shrub species
2. Return native species under cut areas and bare soil
3. Plant native trees that will eventually grow into the canopy
4. Monitor and control invasive species

Expand Oak Savanna $250,000.00
Goal: Restore native Oak Savanna in areas dominated by non-natives
1. Control invasive grassland species
2. Remove invasive shrubs and thin trees
3. Plant native savanna species in cut areas (harvest seed sources from local areas)
4. Control invasive species and mow newly planted areas
5. Controlled burns

Following these recommendations will lead to a site that is primarily oak savanna in the eastern one-quarter that grades into oak forest to the west. At the base of the hill in the western half of the site there is one black ash seepage swamp. Some invasive species control is recommended in the seepage swamp, but most of the management in the swamp will be exceedingly difficult due to the nature of the system. The western half of the park is primarily mown lawn with visitor facilities, including the burial mounds as well as the steep bluffs and rock outcrops.

Management of surface and ground water resources:
The majority of Indian Mounds Regional Park sits atop the bluff overlooking the river. As part of the development concept, we are planning to reintroduce the natural wetland that was located in what is now a picnic area. Currently the stormwater runs over mown turf to a storm sewer catchment on the southern end of the picnic area. The plan would create a biofiltration area to clean the water before it enters the storm sewer pipe where it drains directly to the Mississippi River.

Within the DNR parcel there is a Wet Ash Swamp community near the bottom of the bluff along the slope where groundwater comes to the surface into small streams and thick organic soils where it drains to the Fish Hatchery pond. The forest canopy of the black ash and green ash is sparse, many of the large trees are dead. The area has relatively good diversity of native plants, though invasive species are problematic including reed canary grass and water-cress. This area will be managed jointly with the MnDNR to remove invasive species and increase native plant species.

Appendix A:
Mounds Maintenance Facility

Analysis of Park Property
277 North Cypress Street

This analysis is based on the Department's mission, vision and goals of the Parks and Recreation's Vision Plan (2009) and System Plan (2011). With consideration of existing facilities at the Mounds Maintenance (277 N. Cypress Street) and nearby parks and open space.

The Mounds Park Neighborhood is well served by open space with ample access to Indian Mounds Regional Park and its amenities, most of which are nature based, culturally based and of a regional scale. The existing amenities at 277 Cypress which provide opportunities for active recreation include a play area, as well as tennis and basketball courts.

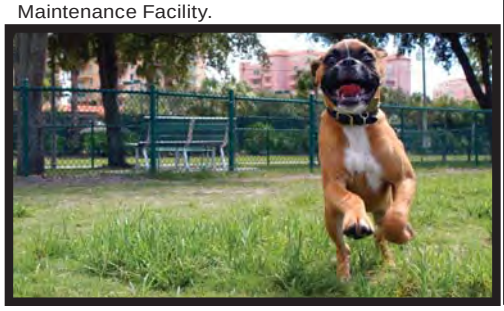
There are nearby parks (within activity use zones as defined inteh Vision Plan) of the Mounds Park Neighborhood with complementary activities. Those parks include: Dayton's Bluff Park; Burns Park; Harding; Margaret; and Parkway Little League. However access to those facilities is currently compromised.

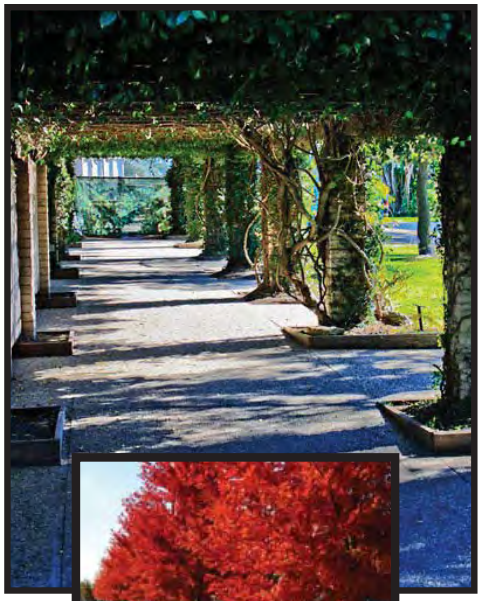
Interstate 94, Warner Road and Highway 61 and the Bluffs and the River all contribute to the insular nature of Mounds Park Neighborhood. These barriers make parks, ball fields and community centers outside of those bounds difficult to access despite being geographically proximate to many residences in the neighborhood.

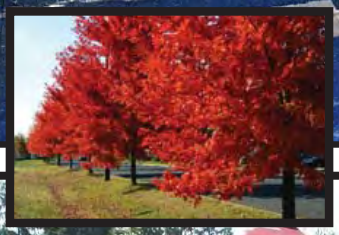
Recommendations

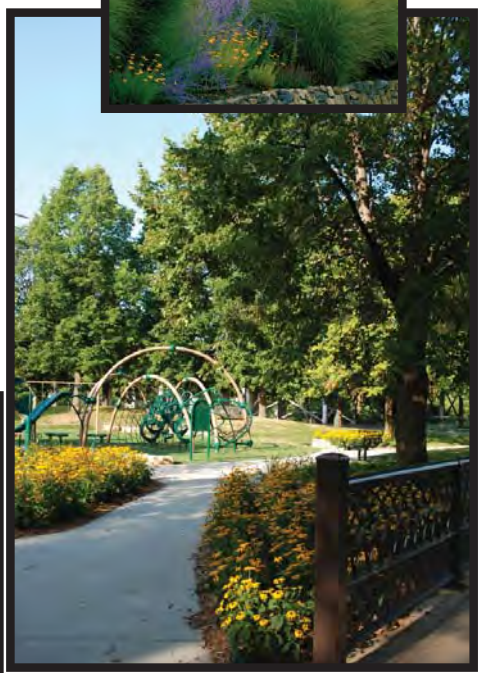
Enhanced pedestrian and non- vehicular connections across major barriers would facilitate access to nearby parks and fields. As future infrastructure construction and improvement projects are designed, considerations for cyclists and pedestrians should be included in the project scopes.

At this time, there presents a need to develop a park at Mounds Maintenance Facility with neighborhood scale amenities that fit within the extreme proximity of residences surrounding the park. This recommendation is the result of a series of meetings with the Indian Mounds Regional Park Community Task Force and a Public Open House in anticipation of the future relocation of the Mounds Maintenance Facility.









Improve Safety

- Connect Mounds Park to the Cypress Street
- Provide uses that are desired so that the park is activated.
- Mix amenities which are compatible with each other and which keep the park activated during key hours. A park that is well used and valued will feel safer and have community surveillance built into it.

Improve Visibility

- Create more visible entrances to the park
- Provide signage for the park
- Enhance plantings at the entrances as cues

Improve Access

- Connect Mounds Park to the street system by extending Cypress Street with the terminus being a small parking area.
- Design that parking so that it is undesirable to use the connection as a short cut.
- Enhance the sidewalks and foot paths to the park from McLean, Suburban and Burns.
- Coordinate with future public works projects, complete streets funds and other possible opportunities to enhance the connections to and from the Mounds Park Neighborhood and other parks, fields and community centers.

Create a neighborhood asset

- Provide uses that are currently difficult to access for residents
- Ensure that activities in the park are compatible with the uses that immediately surround the park.
- Eliminate uses which are not sited well given the proximity of residences to the park. The community task force does not consider basketball to be compatible with the setting by the community
- Create vegetative buffers to help minimize noise and disturbance to neighbors.

SAINT PAUL
The Most Livable City in America

N. Forest St.
Partially enclosed shelter for storage and shade
N. Cypress St.
Enhance Park entrances with use of signage and plantings
McLean St.
Opportunity for vertical gardening i.e. espalier fruit trees or grape vines
12-15 car parking lot with stormwater features
Off-leash Dog area
Suburban St.
Community Garden Plots
Pergola and perennial gardens at gathering area
Provide sense of place and additional security along path by providing landscaping and lighting
Shaded play area
Enhance park entrances with use of signage and plantings
Mounds St.
Burns Av.

Appendix B: Executive Summary of Open House Comments

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

400 City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
www.stpaul.gov/parks

Telephone: 651-266-6400
Facsimile: 651-292-7311

Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan
Open House, January 20, 2011
Comments

Indian Mounds Regional Park Comments

Overall Concept Board Comments:
Signage/ History:

- Incorporate the Dakota language into signage whenever possible
- Please respect the Great Dakota Nation mound of remains. Plaque posted to note spot not just an empty spot.
- The Indian Mounds are really down-played. I would really like to see more Indian and historical influence in plans, architecture building style and plant choice

Traffic Calming:

- Bumpouts – 1 red dot

General Comments:

- Consider assessing early childhood education and childcare facilities within walking distance to determine their needs and preferences with regards to free & nature play areas. Thanks! – I support this.
- Community garden space would be nice. Access to fresh, healthful food for this area is lacking, but important.

Focus Area 1Comments:
Gateway Garden:

- How about a community vegetable garden/flower garden here?
- Sure would love some community garden space
- Coffee shop with small play area. Great for community gatherings (referring to Gateway garden area)
- Lovely! A garden at the park entrance near the freeway would be so nice.
- Make gateway garden a community garden and move gateway garden to dog park. Dog park move to Short Street area.
- Yes- some sort of gateway
- 3 green dots

Dog Park:

- Great! As long as it is enclosed
- No dog park here! Maintenance area would be MUCH better location

- I don't think this is big enough for a dog park, but I like the idea. Have 3 dogs would love to run. Have lots of dogs here.
- Please consider water quality impacts of any dog parks. Thanks!
- Maintenance facility land a much better dog park site. + 1 agree
- Dog park not big enough, too steep to get down & too far away from residential area, will get little use.
- 5 red dots

Connection to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary:

- Consider putting kiosk closer to parking area
- Rebuild the old stairway instead of new location
- Stairway connection only if it would be very low impact.
- I think stairway is a great idea, let's connect these great parks!
- Put stairs to Bruce Vento at overlook
- No steps
- Use trail
- 1 red dot

Traffic Calming:

- Like raised crosswalks
- Like the street calming plans
- Raised crosswalks good
- Raised crosswalks bad
- Please slow traffic on Mounds Blvd.
- 4 green dots

Carver's Cave Overlook Area:

- Clean out the trees to improve view
- Clear trees to enhance overlook. Yes! Yes!
- This is terrific – the planning team has done marvelous work.
- Need secondary playground @ this location. Swing, sandbox.
- Please consider moving existing parking lot off the former Mounds in this area (referring to Plum St. parking lot)
- Please put sign indicating the former Mounds
- Small plaque noted mark Dakota mounds not just dirt. Dakotas are a great nation don't just build over scared spots, honor them.
- Restore viewsheds add seating nodes – 3 green dots
- Restroom: 1 green dot, 1 red dot

General Comments:

- No need for a new wall -is there? (referring to wall between Short and Urban Sts)
- Stone wall – 1 green dot

Focus Area 2 Comments:

- Wall good – keep repaved(?) (referring to WPA wall)

Circulation:

- Like the cross walk idea!
- If this sign is as badly maintained as the one at mounds and thorn , leave it out.
- Raised Intersections with bump-outs, good!

- No paved path needed on this side (along Thorn Street west from Earl)
- New trail with Exercise stations:
- 3 green dots
- 1 red dot

Security/Maintenance

- Night time park hours. Monitoring of late traffic, no parked cars overnight.
- Security needed. Concerned about night time activities.
- Enforce noise limits and park hours.
- Many water fountains. Many trash cans.

Splash Pad

- Need second playground area for older kids and teenagers
- Splash pad would be fun
- Will splash pad take too much maintenance
- Splashpad makes a family friendly environment
- Waterpark like this! Yes!
- I like splash pad o lost of kids
- 9 red dots
- 1 green dot

Play Area

- Good – enlarge
- New playground equipment
- Yes! My son broke his leg there due to the poor design.
- Please put slides and metal equipment in shade. They get very hot.
- We need a bigger "tot" play area separate from kids.
- Playground area too small.
- Need moiré shade for playground area after noon. All areas are hit with direct sun.
- Where is the baseball field? And Top field for Hmong?
- 1 green dot

Picnic Pavilion

- Love it! (the image of the structure with solar panels)
- 3 green dots

Amphitheater

- I like the opportunities for amphitheater in the park
- Amphitheater rocks.
- Like this! (photo of amphitheater in Blue Ridge mountains)
- 5 green dots

Tennis Courts Relocated to Mounds – Expand Prairie

- Don't relocate, just add two more here plenty of room
- Leave tennis courts
- Nothing to do over on thi s side. Keep tennis courts here.
- Gardens would be excellent here.
- Leave or increase tennis here.
- I enjoy playing tennis here. Would NOT play by maintenance area. Keep the tennis courts

- Give us back a lawn and get rid of the weeds.
- I like the prairie.
- Lose the prairie, it isn't working.
- Expand prairie – 9 red dots, 2 green dots

Interpretive Center:

- ? to the interpretive center, but do change ugly concrete handicap ramp.
- Expand interptetive area with emphasis of Native History.
- Earl as convertible street – Great~!
- 1 green dot

The Mounds:

- How are you making the mounds more significant to the park and bringing them to the "style" of the park?
- Acknowledge that the mounds are gone (with signs) and please try not build on them in this stretch (between streetcar station and airway beacon)
- With all respect, the mounds are the grave sites of our ancestors, the Dakota people. Think of your own sacred site, eg. Vets memorial cemetery when planning.
- Put prairie grass on the mounds.

Biofiltration/stormwater picnic area:

- Like this! (photo of biofiltration)
- Consider interpreting these stormwater features (satellite picnic area)
- Biofiltration sounds like weeds, mud, bugs, ick.
- Keep open. No biofiltration.
- Need restrooms in picnic area. Trim trees to enhance view.
- 2 green dots
- 1 red dot
- Overlook seating area and garden – 1 green dot

Other uses:

- Possible ice skating rink?
- Winter use options? Groom for xc ski – low impact to area but year round use of park

Focus Area 3 Comments:

Connections:

- Connection to Sam Morgan trail at Warner Rd. bridge – 3 green dots
- Natural resource management – 2 green dots

Nature Trails:

- I like this! Me, too! (referring to improvements to nature trails)
- Historical information should be put on signs along the way
- Good place for sustainable mountain bike trails (within area south of Johnson Parkway)
- Historic Fish Hatchery Road trail development – 3 green dots
- Natural surface mountain bike and snow shoe trail
- This is a great idea (referring to nature trails improvements)
- Yes – improve nature trails here!
- 4 green dots

Fish Hatchery:

- Yes- buy the land if possible or get state to donate it (referring to acquisition of 17 acre Fish Hatchery property)

Johnson Parkway Gateway:

- Benches good (at Johnson Parkway)
- Like traffic calming
- Yes, but signs get vandalized and are not maintained (referring to the kiosk)
- Wayfinding Signage – 1 green dot

Skate Parks/Disc Golf:

- Skate parks are good only if they are not by "your" house
- Skate park is good – keeps skaters off walk path
- I think skate parks are positive if properly handled. – Me too!
- Like skate park
- Better location than at the maintenance facility. (referring to skate park)
- Like the idea of skate park and disc golf. Me too!
- In favor of skate park, but this is a bad spot.
- Keep skate park in Mounds Maintenance area – do not site here. +1 agree
- Disc Golf is great! Please consider erosion and tree/shrub damages
- I like the disc golf course – not sure where else we have this.
- Don't develop the woodsy area – we need places that are not manicured.
- Skate park: 8 red dots, 1 green dot
- Disc Golf – 3 red dots, 5 green dots

Mounds Maintenance Comments:

General Comments:

- Any thoughts for making part of this 4-season use? We have a lot of winter or perhaps this could be done by the rec centers?
- Like Concept A plan better – more open
- Like intense (active) use being concentrated here – leaving Indian Mounds for less active, more passive, recreational activity. Like unstructural [sic] activity.
- Connect alley (Suburban Ave.) to parking area, consider a safety exit
- Could building turned into gym w/ basketball, etc. or volleyball courts
- Off road BMX bike track with hills and curves
- Consider assessing early childhood and childcare facilities within walking distance to determine their needs, preferences for outdoor play, nature-play areas
- Natural barriers to neighbors seems nice (Concept B)
- Water fountains and bike lock structures in various places

Play Area:

- Update the playground

Dog Park:

- Like Dog park
- No, we don't need another East side Dog Park
- Please consider water quality impacts of dog run/park areas. Thanks!
- Like the opportunity for dogs
- Will dog park push never end?

Tennis Courts:

- Keep, but improve tennis courts

- No need. Add 2 courts to Mounds Blvd.
- Soccer field or kickball field (instead of tennis courts)
- Tennis courts aren't needed, unless they are programmed for use
- To be useful tennis courts need to be maintained
- Not here (referring to the tennis courts)
- Sand volleyball instead (of tennis courts)

Skate Park:

- Don't like skate park here, by 61 is better idea
- I think a skate park could work but need to be more out in the open
- Good, this plan addresses a need for "skate park", teen-ager, activities and parking H.W.
- Good.

Community Gardens:

- Good, but enlarge
- Community garden is a great idea. Make it bigger or leave room to expand it.
- Yes, yes, yes to gardens!
- Like the comm. Gardens
- Community Gardens – Good.
- Like the opportunity for community gardens and to include children
- Garden good – make bigger
- Like the gardens!

Comment Cards:

1. We propose that mountain biking be included in the master plan as a possible future use. MORC (MN Off-Road Cyclists) has a 10+ year history of partnering with land managers (Battle Creek, Lebanon Hills, Burnsville, Bloomington, Minneapolis, Three Rivers, and Woodbury Parks to design, build, and maintain sustainable mountain bike trails. We have good success in the grant process for funding, and a large, active volunteer base that does most of the maintenance on MORC trails. I'd welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. Don Youngdahl, 651-633- 2029, dony@visi.com.

P.S. MORC has approximately 800-900 members, which I estimate is perhaps 10-15% of active mountain bikers in the metro area.

2. Don't forget to plant trees around the industry by the river (chem plant, treatment center, etc.) View was and could be spectacular! Steve Law

3. I live across Thorn Street from … I love the idea of an amphitheater if it's used for education as well as music. I worry about the expanded picnic building if it means more very loud stereos playing all summer. Just enforce noise rules and it'll be fine. Please build the splash pad and Frisbee golf course…let's make this park active. Making Earl a place for festivals and events is a great idea too. Please keep us up to date on the plans. Jeff Jones, 651-274-8313, jeff1863@aol.com.

4. We understand living next to a small airport will include some noise. The helicopter training (which circles our house for hours) is unacceptable - what can we do to move this training to another location? Seems unnecessary to have in densely populated, residential area. Melanie Buetow, 651-793-5934.

5. When we were young I remember praying at these mounds. My relative is Ames Owen from Prairie Island. We also prayed at Fort Snelling with the governor? at the time. MN was named after the Dakotas of this land so let's remind ourselves of that allegiance and respect the founders of the state of the MN borders. Lylis Siegel, 651-764-0848, side_step05@yahoo.com, Prairie Island Indian Community, Organizer of the Dakota Women's Society.

6. It would be nice to "re-mark" mounds if it was a old cemetery they would remark individual plots they were people at one time before settlements it could of been a good person chief of honor its not just a dirt spot. Respect old mounds, Dakota's are great people. Loren Siegel, Lakota/Dakota, 651-764-0848.

7. Please feel free to notify me if committee would need help with organizing Dakota Reps. Lylis Siegel, 651-764-0848.
RE: Information gathered for the interpretive peace in place at the Pavilion (or) (and) removing? All building upon the mounds.

8. -Is the committee considering other surveys other than 1862?
-What building can be used for the Dakota committee use for prayer and feasts? I see the DNR Building at Warner Road.
-This is a very important decision based on the United States is very new in comparison to the Historical timeline of the mounds.
-Committee will be responsible of the future use of the lands. Around the mounds itself I would advise "no buildings." I would have to go with the feeling of my uncle Amos Owens, Prairie Island Indian Community, that we respect our ancestors for future standard that remain unchanged that we honor our family that passed.
-The renovation of the interpretive center: will the committee consider advisement from the Dakota Community Representatives from the different tribes. I'm sure can meet with the committee. At tonight's event all Dakota communities have been represented. Very informative maps and information. Lylis Siegel, 651-764-0848, side_step05@yahoo.com, Prairie Island Indian Community. Thank you for your time and attention to this meeting. Lylis

9. Connectivity between mounds and neighborhoods to the North and on to Phalen. Let's connect all the surrounding areas for a feeling of prosperity and inclusion for all. ♥ dog park, skate park, skating-outdoors, coffee shop(!) Like DC mall, springy sidewalk area for seniors and maybe little bike trail.

10. I would like to have some more winter facilities in the park, like cross country trails or ice skating… I would also like opportunities for public art.

11. We should keep mounds Park as natural as possible. History, interpretive trails would be valuable. Recreational - skate parks, basketball, etc. might be OK but should be well away from natural areas. Indian history would be interesting.

12. Please consider giving the Indian land back! I am not Indian, but I really appreciate their loss, sacrifice, and contribution and believe they have the deepest commitment to the core and history of this space.

13. What is being done about the drug dealing in the west parking lot near the freeway? geralyn716@yahoo.com.

14. I am very opposed to any expansion of the so called - native grass area - this is nothing but a giant Weed Patch, an eyesore to the neighborhood and a haven for varments. Because of these plants we have more work maintaining our yards. We lost a real asset to the neighborhood when this was foisted on us. Larry Meuwisser?, judgelarry@comcast.net

Post-it stuck to #14 -
I like:
Park benches painted
snow shoveled walkways in Park-between Mounds and Thorn
pavilion fixed up

Via e-mail:
Hi Everyone-- My neighbor who attended last night's meeting called to share a new idea that she thought of afterwards. She recalls loving a ropes course she used, and thinks that a ropes course in St. Paul could be a money-maker. It could be staffed only when open for limited hours. Apparently there are indoor ropes courses as well that draw groups and individuals to use them. She was wondering if the old rec center at the small Mounds Park could be converted into an indoor ropes course. Or the tennis court area there which is already fenced? We also discussed a fee-entry nets course, where kids can climb high in a relatively small and enclosed space. She suggested creating levels of difficulty to appeal to many age groups, and to manage risk. Finally, I shared with her the idea that popped after the last Task Force Meeting, of putting in a zip line down the bluff--for a fee--at the former toboggan site. Maybe that could work at the small park as well?

Anyway, these 3 recreational ideas: ropes course; zip line; nets course; all would attract kids and adults of all ages, and would need a staff person for limited time periods.

In the Chicago area where I grew up, they had toboggan slides that would only open when the snow was right--years could go by without them being open--but when it worked, staff would be there to monitor the safety. Is there room for us to consider a part-time, limited hours facility in St. Paul? We must be one of the only regional parks with no staff on site?

The ropes course and nets course ideas would provide an attraction for teens--something we lack-- but be controllable and quiet.
Marjorie Pitz

January 31, 2011

RE: Indian Mounds Park

Dear Project Manager:

I did not attend the Open House meeting of January 20 because of illness and frigid temperatures, but I have read all of the posted comments, and as a non-neighborhood person, but lover of the park, I would like to make comments also.

To me Indian Mounds Park is a different kind of park than Como Park or even Cherokee Heights Park. Indian Mounds is unique because of its Hopewell heritage, Dakota history, and its incredible views, and would be the first park recommended by me to any Saint Paul visitor. The sights from the bluffs are incredible: the downtown skyline, the riverboat traffic, corporate planes alighting from Holman Field, the Smith High Bridge upriver, jets landing at MSP faraway in the distance . . . . It is not solely a place for picnicking, biking, skating, and running with

friends or family. I have had an eagle suddenly, unseen down the cliff, suddenly appear in flight, at the distance of a tree branch.

The mounds are now fenced-in. Probably wisely. However, when one goes to the Como Park Zoo and looks at the buffalo or giraffes, unless they are eating or walking around or romping, but instead are sleeping or inside, we move on. We want to see something "alive". The mounds are not "alive" enough to attract more than passing curiosity. The mounds actually looked more interesting in 1965 photos when people could walk on them.

Improve signage with more information and maps showing where the Hopewell Culture thrived and built similar mounds along American rivers, provide a map where all the mounds in Minnesota are recorded, and post a board showing different mound symbolic designs. Do something to engage more people in appreciating the mounds, and provide teachable moments for parents and children, and visitors to the city.

I oppose a skate park, disc golf, and a dog park. I support improving the two tennis courts, but not lighting them. I support improving the picnic area and bathroom facilities. I think the amphitheatre idea is worthy of thought, but for presentations, not music, I support improving, where safely and ecologically possible, the sightlines and views. I question providing a community garden. I advise better metro transit shelters and stops nearest the park. I think greater historic emphasis on the beacon tower requires better signage.

Thank you for allowing me to offer my feedback and suggestions also.

Gary Q. Wassam
2270 Silver Lane #301
New Brighton 55112
651-633-0227

Next Task Force Meeting will be Thursday, February 17th at the Cerenity Care Center 6:30 -8:30 p.m.
We will compile all comments from the Open House for discussion in order to make a final recommendation on a proposed Master Plan.

The
Lower Phalen Creek Project

925 Payne Avenue, Suite 201 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55130 • www.phalencreek.org

Steering Committee
Carol Carey, Chair
Christine Baeumler
Ned Brooks
Kristin Dawkins
Karin DuPaul
Chip Lindeke
Weiming Lu
Dan McGuiness
Paul Mohrbacher
Dennis Thompson
Leonard Wabasha

Staff
Sarah Clark
Amy Middleton

February 14, 2011

Kathleen W. Anglo, Landscape Architect
City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
25 West 4th Street, 400 CHA
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms. Anglo:

As you know, the Lower Phalen Creek Project has worked for more than a decade as a community voice for redeveloping the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and its adjacent park and trail system. Given the sanctuary's proximity to Indian Mounds Regional Park, and the very significant ecological and cultural resources in the area, we have a strong interest in your current planning process.

After attending your open house and reviewing initial concepts we have the following input:

- Respecting historic burial areas should be a top priority. Recognized Dakota tribes in Minnesota as well as recognized tribes with Minnesota ties — such as the Santee Sioux Nation — should be provided with the information they need to make specific recommendations and provide input.
- A stairway connection to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary should be pursued only if it can be accomplished in a way that does not compromise the ecological, cultural and scenic values of the bluff.
- We encourage you to consider the highest and best use of the distinctive bluffs in the park before deciding to concentrate public activity in areas that are currently in a natural state.
- Interpretation of the area is important and should take place with active involvement from recognized Dakota tribes.
- As appropriate, we encourage you to provide wayfinding signage that shows the direction and mileage to key destinations (Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, Swede Hollow Park, Lowertown, Union Depot, etc) to foster increased use of the trail through the park for commuting as well as recreational use.

Thank you for considering this input. If you have questions or would like additional information and please feel free to contact Sarah Clark of our staff (651-290-0002).

Sincerely yours,

Carol Carey, Chair
Lower Phalen Creek Project Steering Committee

Appendix C:
City of Saint Paul
Parks Commission Resolution

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission
400 City Hall Annex, 25 West 4th Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-6400

RESOLUTION #11-09
Mounds Park Master Plan

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission ("Commission") is an appointed body established to advise the Mayor and City Council on long-range and Citywide matters related to the Department of Parks and Recreation; and

WHEREAS, Indian Mounds Park is one of Saint Paul's first parks and was designated a major Regional Park in 1974; and

WHEREAS, a master plan for Indian Mounds Regional Park has not been completed since 1981; and

WHEREAS, this is a regional and Citywide community park which is in need of improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Parks and Recreation organized a design task force consisting of representatives from District 4, Lower Phalen Creek, the National Park Service (NPS), Friends of Mississippi River, and Friends of Parks and Trails to develop an updated park master plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed master plan is consistent with the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Systems Plan: and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission hereby endorses the amended Master Plan document for Indian Mounds Regional Park which will be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for approval.

Adopted by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission on May 11, 2011:

Approved: Yeas 7
Nays 0
Absent: 2

Resolution #11-09

Attested to by:

Diana Berchem
Staff to the Parks and Recreation Commission

Appendix D:
City of Saint Paul
City Council Resolution

City of Saint Paul

City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Phone: 651-266-8560

Signature Copy

Resolution: RES 11-933

File Number: RES 11-933

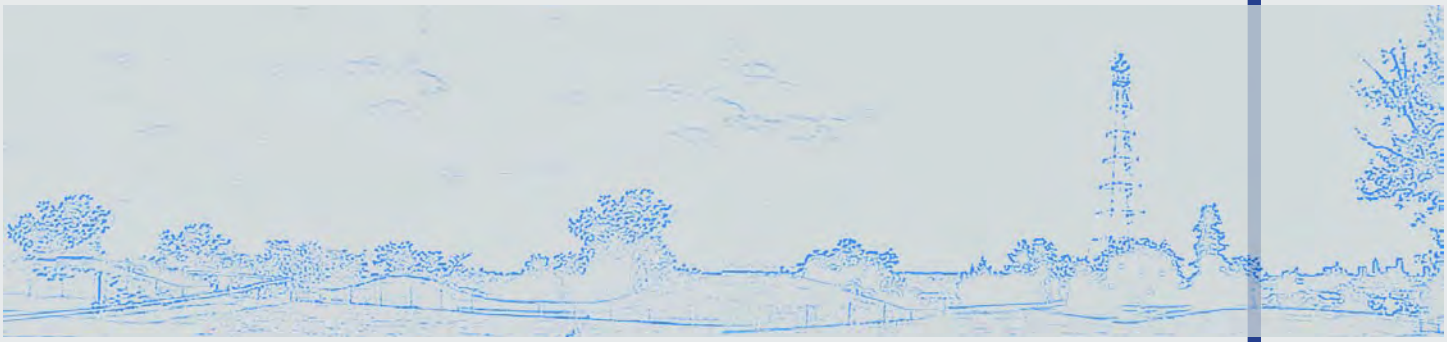
Amending the 1981 Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan.

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation has determined the need to update the Indian Mounds Regional Park portion of the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan that was created and approved by the City Council in 1981; and
WHEREAS, Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation organized a design task force consisting of representatives from Friends of Mounds Park, District 4, Friends of the Mississippi River, Friends of Parks and Trails, Lower Phalen Creek Group, and other interested community members, to assist the Design Team with the development of the amendment to the Metropolitan Council approved Master Plan; and
WHEREAS, the Indian Mounds Regional Park Design Task Force recommended approval of the Master Plan Amendment on March 24, 2011 with the understanding that there will be additional Design Task Force input opportunities as implementation of key elements are funded; and
WHEREAS, the District 4 Community Council approved the Master Plan Amendment on April 18, 2011; and
WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Parks Commission approved the Master Plan Amendment on May 11, 2011; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Saint Paul approves and adopts the Indian Mounds Regional Park Master Plan Amendment and is hereby authorized to submit said master plan amendment to the Metropolitan Council for review and approval.

At a meeting of the City Council on 5/25/2011, this Resolution was Adopted.

Yea: 7 Councilmember Bostrom, Councilmember Carter III, Councilmember Harris, Councilmember Helgen, City Council President Lantry, Councilmember Thune, and Councilmember Stark

Nay: 0

Vote Attested by Council Secretary Trudy Moloney **Date** _____

Approved by the Mayor Chris Coleman **Date** _____