



SECTION 1. PLAN OVERVIEW

Parks System Plan 101

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Think of a great park.

It offers a refreshing breath of fresh air, the joy of the outdoors, the sweet sound of birds chirping, and the warmth of sunlight. It honors the unique history of the community while paving the way for its future. Valued by many, it hosts celebrations and provides a peaceful spot for personal reflection. It serves as a gathering place for friends, family, and teammates, fostering new connections.

When parks and public spaces are thoughtfully designed, effectively programmed, well-maintained, and supported by the community, they can significantly enhance both physical and mental health, stimulate economic growth, improve public safety, foster a sense of identity, and protect our natural environment.

In essence, outstanding parks contribute to thriving communities.



ROLE OF THE SYSTEM PLAN

WHAT IS A PARKS SYSTEM PLAN?

The Parks and Recreation System Plan serves as West St. Paul's comprehensive guide for delivering exceptional parks, recreational programs, facilities, open spaces, community events, and gatherings. This document provides direction for upcoming park enhancement projects, planning, policies, and operational strategies. Its purpose is to foster the growth of the city's park system by harmonizing visionary concepts with practical solutions.

WHY DO WE NEED A PARKS SYSTEM PLAN?

- The previous parks system plan was outdated
- The community, its priorities, and the way we interact with parks have changed and evolved
- Take advantage of new opportunities and community assets
- Address challenges of today - and tomorrow
- Align with other plans and strategic initiatives
- Align our values to how we build and operate the parks

WHAT WILL THE PLAN DO?

1

Involve the community in the future of the parks and recreation system

2

Evaluate existing parks and recreation features, amenities, services, and operations

3

Identify community needs, concerns, and best practices

4

Outline a vision for future park projects, programs, and partnerships

5

Provide guidance how to achieve the vision, when to tackle projects, and how to pay for improvements

6

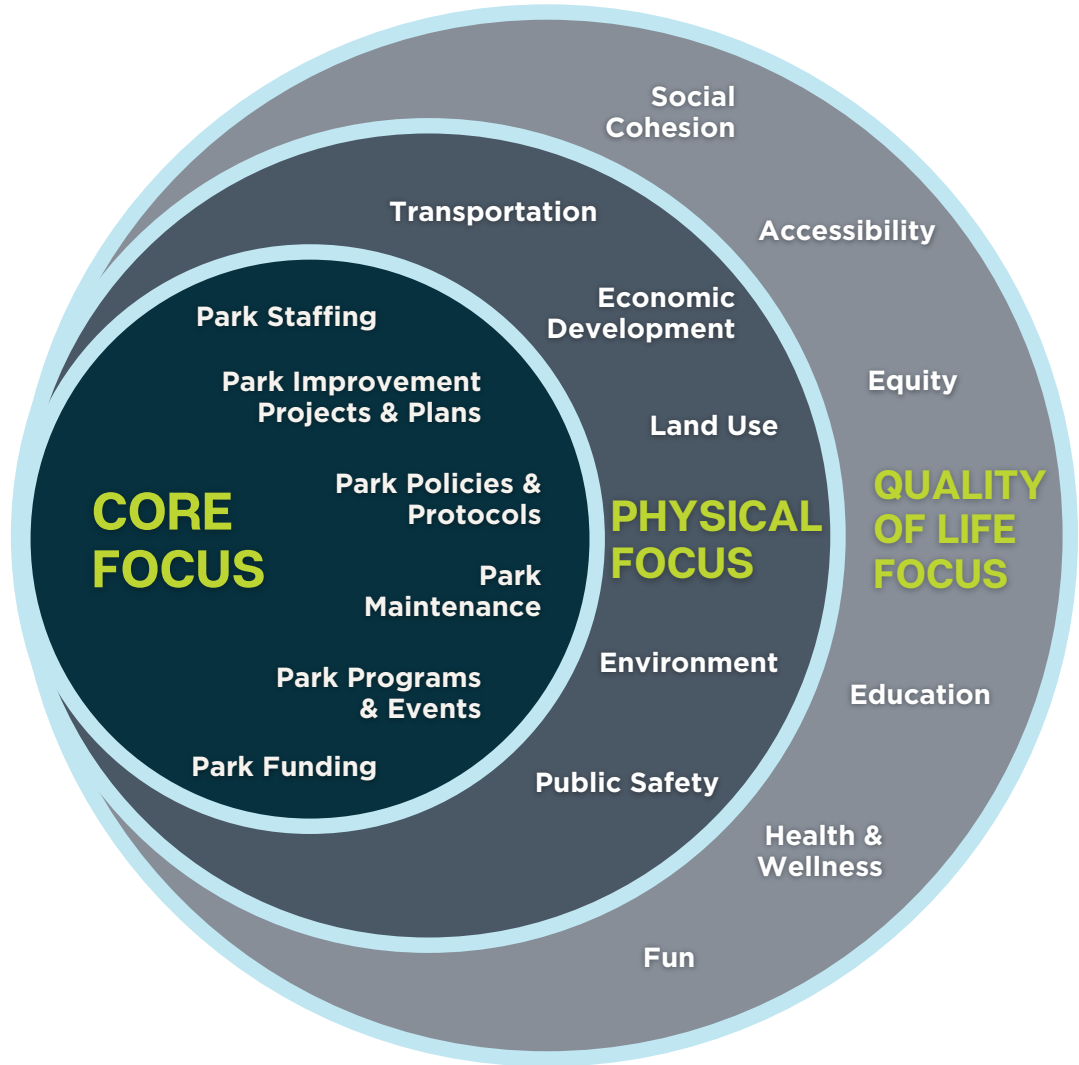
Spark conversations and inspire change

WHAT THE PLAN DOES NOT DO

- Implement itself - there's still a lot of work to do!
- Confirm, finalize, or make final design decisions, set budgets, or allocate resources
- Remain static - the plan can and should be updated as necessary

PLAN FOCUS

Parks are vital community spaces that require ongoing maintenance, investment, and programming to thrive. They are interconnected with various systems, such as transportation and public safety, and contribute to economic growth and quality of life. An effective parks system plan must recognize these interconnections and implement strategies that address them.



HOW THE PLAN IS ORGANIZED



The City of West St. Paul developed this plan through collaboration, involving data collection, public feedback, and discussions. Community members and city leaders played a key role in shaping the plan and its vision.

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The City of West St. Paul and its partners followed an iterative process of data collection, public input, assessment, and dialogue to develop this plan. The community and city leaders were deeply involved in the plan's development and contributed significantly to the vision set forth.



STEP 01 UNDERSTAND

The project team assessed the existing parks and recreation system, studied the existing conditions, and gathered information about the community's needs, assets, and concerns from community leaders and the city.

STEP 02 ENVISION

Through in-person and online engagements, the community shared their vision and priorities for the future of the park system. Building upon the information gathered in Step 1, the project team began assembling a set of themes, guiding principles, and a vision to drive change and improvement.

STEP 03 PLAN

During this phase of the project, we developed a plan that outlines how, when, where, and with whom steps can be taken to implement the community's vision.

STEP 04 CONFIRM

The draft vision and plan were shared with the community. As needed, refinements and changes were made to drive consensus-building and shared agreement.



WHAT THE PLAN OFFERS

WE SET OUT TO REIMAGINE A NEW FUTURE FOR THE CITY'S PARKS SYSTEM...

- Improve satisfaction
- Increase participation
- Expand access
- Improve safety
- Think outside the box
- Develop a parks system for the 21st Century

THEN DEVELOPED THE ROADMAP TO MAKE THAT FUTURE A REALITY.

