

Information Item

Community Development Committee



Meeting date: March 2, 2026

Topic

Outdoors for Everyone, Minnesota Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Update

District(s), member(s):	All
Policy/legal reference:	Minnesota Constitution, Article XI, Sec. 15. Minn. Stats. §§ 473.325, 473.315, and 85.53, subd. 3
Staff prepared/presented:	Emmett Mullin, Parks and Trails Manager, 651-602-1360
Division/department:	Community Development/Parks and Trails Department

Background

In 2008, Minnesotans voted to amend the State Constitution to add the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment and its 3/8% increase to the state sales tax. By law, these funds supplement, but do not supplant other existing funding for the protection and promotion of Minnesota's natural resources including clean water, outdoor recreation, and the arts.

The original Parks and Trails Legacy Plan set forth a big vision to, "connect everyone to the outdoors, inspiring a legacy of stewardship for the natural world, providing fun recreational opportunities that strengthen friendships, families, health, and spirit, now and into the future..." The 2025 Outdoors for Everyone Report highlights recent Parks and Trails Legacy projects implemented across the Metropolitan area and Minnesota. The report shares examples from the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails' System, the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails' System, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' State Parks and Trails System.

The emphasis of today's Community Development Committee meeting will be to highlight the Legacy fund's work across the Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails System.

To date, the Legacy fund has had an enormous impact increasing access to our regional system, with investments ranging from expanding outdoor opportunities and better connections for prioritized communities to constructing new visitor gathering centers.

The Metropolitan Council serves as the regional planning agency that supports the work of the ten regional park implementing agencies that operate our Metro system. This fund was authorized for 25-years, beginning in 2010 and sunsetting in 2034, if not reauthorized.

Our work together seeks to help ensure that all communities are enjoying the benefits of this critical fund. Our collective hope is that in 2035, Minnesotans will look back across the 25-year plan implementation and say that the Parks and Trails Legacy Amendment made a big difference in our state.