

**Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Oxbow Park Nature Center**  
**5731 County Rd 105 NW**  
**Byron, MN 55920**  
**Thursday, October 22, 2015**  
**9:30 am – 2:30 pm**

## **M I N U T E S**

### *Members Present:*

Tim Mitchell, Brook Maier, Brian Hubbard, Tom Stoa, Wayne Sames, Rick Anderson, Bob Bierscheid, Joel Stedman, Jenny Smith, Tony Yarusso, Asha Shoffner, Jannick Anderson, Pete Royer (via WebEx: Nancy Hanson, Kathy Bergen)

*Liaisons:* Emmett Mullin, Renee Mattson, Laura Preus (for Erika Rivers), Al Liefert

*Guests:* Tom Ryan, Carlon Zigler, (via WebEx: Mike Kimble)

*Staff:* Paul Purman, Tutu Fatukasi

### **1. Welcome**

Tom Ryan, Olmsted County Parks and former PTLAC committee member

Olmsted County's three parks of regional distinction includes Chester Woods Park, Root River Park, and Oxbow Park & Zollman Zoo, a 625 acre facility. Within the park, Zollman Zoo is comprised of animals native to Minnesota and serves as a major component of its environmental education curriculum. Additionally, a Nature Playscape, Path of Imagination, was developed and opened this year.

All members, liaisons, and staff were invited to a site visit at Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo after the PTLAC meeting.

Agenda approved with addition of statewide bicycle system plan presentation.

Minutes approved as is.

### **2. Coordinating with Partners Update**

#### *Status of UMN Survey work*

A work plan from UMN Center for Changing Landscapes was received for the legacy tracking system and user survey projects intended for a legislative grant. DNR, Met Council, and GMRPTC have reviewed the proposal and are working to provide feedback based on agency and PTLAC expectations.

### **Next Meeting-December 10<sup>th</sup>**

Met Council – location tbd

### **Committee Actions Required**

Governance subc will assemble/distribute information to the committee and public about solicitation of for seats to be vacated.

Communications subc has a standing meeting scheduled for Dec 7.

### **Staff and Liaison Actions Required**

*Paul will work with Brian, liaisons, and Benchmarks subc on next steps in Five Year Strategy Assessments.*

### *Integrated Website*

Discussions have taken place to determine the website structure with the goal to create a seamless experience where users can locate parks throughout the state and utilize agency websites for detailed park information. The Pedal Minnesota portal through Explore MN was mentioned as a model for the integrated website.

### **3. Member Terms**

Notices were sent to committee members indicating term expirations. Now at the end of the three year term process, all committee members will serve two year terms. Members who are eligible to serve will need to reapply per a forthcoming email from Brian/Governance subcommittee.

The Governance subcommittee clarified the solicitation and appointment process outlined in a draft document for the PTLAC. The Charter does not explicitly identify the solicitation process, but the charter indicates that liaisons appoint new members.

Committee members came to consensus about which terms were ending, and affirmed that the general 'Protocol for Adding New Members' document (attached) developed in 2013/4 had been formally adopted by the committee, though the minutes do not reflect it.

Jannick Anderson, At-large commission member with GMPRTC serving as now serving as an appointed committee member for GM.

Governance subc (with support from Paul) will move forward on the appointment/reappointment process and will communicate with the committee/liaisons about this.

### **4. Five Year Benchmark Evaluation Process**

Brian and Paul led the group through the process identified in 'The Path Forward' document (attached).

The Five year priority strategies supporting desired outcomes (p. 16 – 20 in 25 year Legacy Plan):

- Place a priority on near –home acquisition of natural resource lands for parks and trails in densely settled rapidly growing areas.
  - o Performance Measure, How well did we do?: 53% meet strategy, varied by agency
- Accelerate the acquisition of private in-holdings and add lands to existing parks to enhance resource protection and recreation opportunities
- Focus on acquiring priority trail segments according to established criteria.
  - o Performance Measure, How well did we do?: 100% of trail acquisitions meet one or more of established criteria

Context:

- Definition of corridors and regional centers: What does it mean? In greater Minnesota?

- The 25 year Legacy Plan defines a regional center as “a city with a population of 8,000 or more”, since a majority of the northwest region falls outside the micropolitan range (city with a population of 10,000) in census data.
- Definition for near home: 10 miles, or 30 minutes?
  - 10 miles derived from UMN Center for Changing Landscapes data

### *Target Markets and 2010 Census Data*

Utilizing ArcGIS and 2010 Census data, maps depict target market data in relation to regional centers and strategies outlined in Acquiring Land and Create Opportunities.

- Population density by county
- Percent of total households with children under 18
- Percent of total population under 18, Ages 20 -24, 25 – 44, over 65
- Percent of total population by race: Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino

### *Observations*

- Settlement locations dictate proximity
- May need multiple definitions and variables for 10 miles/30 minutes radius definition
- Young adult data may be skewed by locations of higher education institutions.
- Age range of 25 – 44 may be a proxy for people with small children.
- Worthington County shows up on multiple maps

### *Reporting discussion*

Committee members offered perspectives on challenges in how to classify 25 year strategies for funding projects:

- Classification should happen at beginning stages during grant application process and be aligned with strategies.
- Some projects with multiple funding sources may make reporting complicated, but the goal is to show any project with Legacy funding.
- What is the purpose of the conversation: to ensure legacy funds have an impact
- At first PTLAC named many strategy priorities, next 5 years could be a more focused, limited set
- Fiscal accountability/reporting required by LCC, but it's the LCC site where that resides, not within LAC (which is an advisory group).

### *Assessing progress toward the 25-Year Plan:*

Liaisons shared summary insights about progress toward the 25-year plan in order to prompt discussion among the Legacy Advisory Committee and liaisons. Focus was to “look back” and “look ahead”, sharing insights on future needs and priorities.

### Laura Preus, DNR

DNR will be celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MN state parks and trails and as a growing system adding land, funding has remained the same. With a future outlook, the system plan for DNR parks and trails focuses energy in legacy dollar investments.

Differences in priority strategies between agencies; for example - near home acquisition is likely to fit better into the systems of GM and Met Council than for a highly developed system like DNR, while park inholding acquisitions tend to be an opportunity for many DNR state parks.

Question of focus: How do we use Legacy funds on grand efforts, while also paying attention to how we distribute across pillars?

### Emmett Mullen, Met Council

The 10 implementing agencies of Met Council have allocated a majority of funds in two pillars; Acquire Land and Create Opportunities (62%) and Taking Care of What We Have (33 %).

Although all pillars are of focus, less has been allocated to Connect People and the Outdoors. Met Council is working to establish a minimum funding percentage with its' 10 agencies. There is some overlap between pillars: innovative campsites are in development which fall under Acquiring Land, but have a Connecting dimension.

Question of focus: How might we use Legacy funds so at the end of 25 years we can show something big was done? In the Seven County Metropolitan Area, Legacy funds are distributed through a legislatively defined formula that includes population and non-local visits.

### Renee Mattson, GMRPTC

Legacy funds are an opportunity to affect change for many people in MN and implementing agencies may consider planning as a group in order to tell a better story.

Question of focus: Looking at funding as a whole, how do we all fit together to connect people to the outdoors?

#### *Discussion:*

#### Opportunities and endeavors

- 'Celebrating 6 years of Legacy Parks & Trails success FY 2010 – 2015' outlines Legacy fund allocation for agencies, Illustrating an opportunity to do more to Connect People to the Outdoors pillar than has been done to date.
- Provokes wondering about a business plan approach, answering the questions:
  - o Do we have enough land and facilities? (acquire and develop)
  - o How do we manage our assets? (Taking Care, agency system plans)
  - o How do we 'sell' what we have? (Connecting)

- Are the priority strategies being used by/useful to agencies? Should the LAC reconsider having five year priority strategies at all?
- A limited and manageable for the LAC would be to clean up strategies in the 25 Year Plan in order to remove strategies that are not really strategies.
- What do agencies need from LAC? If agencies provide numeric data on what it would take to fully build out their systems, committee could provide recommendations on how to get there, including coordinating across agencies to achieve it. (Counterpoint: even if agencies provided this, full buildout is an enormous task that stretches far into the future – group can provide strategic advice without having all that information).
- Establish effective feedback mechanism between PTLAC and public/stakeholders (including implementing parks agencies).
- It would be valuable to have the LAC focus on overall/big picture pillar focus (in light e.g. of the data presented in the Six Year Update), with agencies coming back with their planned strategies for advancing the work under the pillars. This would provide recognition of the difference between agency priorities (between strategies).
- Establish accountability to 25 year plan by revising grants/projects reporting structure to identify how they are furthering pillars or strategies.
- Track/highlight projects that cross agency boundaries (as a way to highlight seamless system/working together).
- Remember who our customers are, and how to best serve them.

#### Challenges

- A method to focus Legacy dollars towards notable Legacy worthy projects in the overall context to ensure Legacy dollars achieve big things.
- Some members feel they have insufficient information from citizen and agency perspectives
- Lack of consumer consideration. Unprepared to have conversation on recommendations.
- Policy level role of PTLAC committee will be challenging with upcoming committee turnover .

#### Discussion Outcomes/To dos

- Group agreed that more overall emphasis on 'Connecting' was warranted.
- Group agreed that the agencies should work together across their systems to provide the most integrated recreational system possible in Minnesota.
- Brian and Paul will consider the rest of the discussion and coordinate with liaisons and benchmarks subcommittee on next steps.

### **5. Statewide Bicycle System Plan**

Tim Mitchell presented information on the [plan](#), developed by MNDOT's Bike/Ped unit. It outlines areas for investments. Public engagement received over 4500 responses as a result of stakeholder outreach. People value local opportunities and moving to invest in protected bike lanes. A future project incorporating this would be a shared use bridge from Red Wing to Wisconsin with a use of a median to

ease transition from trail setting to city environment. Additional projects include locations in MN River valley, and a St. Paul to North Shore route as part of US bicycle route network.

**Meeting Adjourned**