

Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

April 27, 2023

MINUTES PROVIDE A RECORD OF MINNESOTA'S PARKS AND TRAILS LEGACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED AND WERE REVIEWED ON JUNE 22, 2023.



04/27/2023

Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 27, 2023

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

In person at the Wirth Chalet, Theodore Wirth Regional Park, Minneapolis

And virtual via WebEx

Updates and Announcements:

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 22, 2023

Meeting Host: Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Meeting Location: Olmsted County Oxbow Park and Zollman Zoo, Byron

Action Items:

- DNR Staff will post the approved meeting minutes on the LCC Website.

Meeting Minutes:

Members: Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Steve Dubbs, Janice Erickson, Gina Hugo, Matthew Lindaman, Dolf Moon, Jon Oyanagi, Jim Shoberg, Heather Stirratt (Absent), Dan Trudeau,

Liaisons: Emmett Mullin (Met Council), Renee Mattson (GMRPTC), Ann Pierce (DNR), Laura Preus (DNR)

Staff: Lars Erdahl (DNR), Kaci Warneke (DNR)

PTLAC approved meeting agenda, reviewed the conflict of interest statement, and member expectations/roles.

Approved February 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Jon Oyanagi opened the meeting and led ice breaker.

Streetlight Research Project Presentation

(Raven McKnight)

Raven began by giving an overview of the Streetlight project.

It is a two-year Legacy funded joint research project.

Goal: explore location-based services data for park and trail research.

- Provide all units in our systems with the same data
 - Develop universal methods
 - Unit-level estimates
- Help guide future work

Streetlight Data, Inc is a data vendor that uses LBS data

- Data is gathered through smartphones with opt-in GPS.
- Data is aggregated and anonymized.
- It cannot identify individuals, only look at patterns of travel.
- Continuous data collection (no in-field work required).
- Spatial and temporal granularity.

LBS measures estimated weekly counts of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians entering parks.

- Estimates monthly miles of use on trails.
- Infers visitor home locations and demographics.

This quantitative data does not replace qualitative data, need both to tell an accurate story.

Collected data between January 2019 – April 2022

- Collected from 200+ parks and 3600+ miles of trails

Parks and trail use trended upward from 2019-2021

- Most Visitors arrive around noon in state parks, and 5pm in regional parks.
- Trails busy at 9am and 5pm, which could show how integral trails are to both recreation and transportation.
 - Trails had a larger “Covid effect” than parks, bikers make up the majority of trail users.

Demographics are based on where the phone spends the night.

- 10% of park and trail visitors came from out of state
- Visitors are not representative of Minnesota’s population
- White visitors over-represented
 - State Population: 76% white, Park Visitors: Metro-65%, DNR-78%, Greater MN-80% white. (Could mean a barrier access at play, and also highlights the difference between the three systems. Potentially help us to address these issues, and potential for outreach)

Discussion:

- Can Streetlight look into historical data? Or is it a contract moving forward?
 - Data is pulled as far back as January 2019. There is data from 2017 and ‘18 but it is not high quality so we don’t recommend using it.
- How is resident defined?
 - There is a lot of comparing. This project divides its estimate with overall Minnesota population.
- Can you differentiate between cross-country skiers and pedestrians?
 - It is based on how fast the GPS is moving through space, more based on speed. We determine the activity based on the speed of the person, so it is a guess to what these people are doing. Someone could be riding a bike slowly but be counted as a walker, and vice versa. It doesn’t classify snowmobilers or horseback riders, but if they are going

at a reasonable speed range, it is going to be classified as such (biker, pedestrian, etc) Can't say for sure how much these are being captured in the data.

- Conflicts on trails: what are the ethics on using this data to solve these conflicts?
 - This question is better answered by park staff, it could be a case by case scenario. This data can help detect hotspots in trails, high use portions.
- What are all the demographics? What is the 'other' category with the other 'race' category?
 - All the categories are based off of what the census has as categories. The 'other' category could be for people that are Hawaiian natives, as well as anyone who self-identify.
 - It's important to have the qualitative data along with the quantitative when showing demographics.
 - Recommend using this data as a guide.
 - For cross comparison, the data was validated against the Met Council's visitor survey. There is also a problem of data being biased towards white people, so take this info with a grain of salt. Again, that's why the qualitative component is so important. This data can be used to supplement and guide how we go about things.
 - DNR is also making adjustments to their data from the visitor survey to make it less biased.

Project Website to be launched at the end of May.

- Includes key findings for parks, trails, and visitors.
- Additional resources (FAQ, data download, etc)
- Content peer review.
- Website documentation, and code.

Hosting a Final Webinar Series in May 22nd-25th from 9:30am-11am that will include key findings.

[Janice preforms a blessing inviting everyone in the room to join.](#)

[Partnering with Tribal Communities](#)

(Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails)

Representatives from Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board, Dakota County, City of Saint Paul, and Three Rivers Park District to highlight the partnerships with Tribal Communities and Building Relationships with parks and trails.

MPRB

- Wrapped up a comprehensive planning process, Parks For All. Expressed how the board finds Indigenous knowledge and going beyond land acknowledgments are important and something that they are trying to focus on, and decide what actions to take.
- Recently the board passed funding to hire an Indigenous person to help write a reconciliation plan. Includes guidance for staff and policies, high-level understanding of sites of significance, what's methods of reclaiming and renaming parks, interpretation opportunities, ways to steward the land.
- Cedar Isles Regional parks Plan, partnered with Tribal leaders, engagement with community and leadership used the feedback in this plan. Learning from this process; how to do engagement,

how to do design, and learned tips for staff and everybody on how to move through this process.

Dakota County

- Legacy supported some non-capital work, going to hire an Indigenous Liaison, and interpretive projects to help shape the right narrative. Trying to amend the public's trust in the government, and fix the lack of understanding within its own organization.
- Compensated advisory roles, they have worked with many consultants, tribal members (elders and leaders) on advise on how to accurately tell their story in interpretation.
- Spring Lake Park, reintroduced bison. Highlighted Indigenous connection to Bison, doing this through advisory groups. Including interpretative spaces where they can within the park.

City of Saint Paul

- Partnership with Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi, to restore Wakan Tipi. Involve tribal elders, leaders, and any other Indigenous organizations to help make this happen. In the process of changing the name, currently Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. It is a sacred space for Dakota people. Working with an Indigenous Liaison to push forward with this project.

Three Rivers Park District

- Understand Native Minnesota campaign to develop new Native American education programming Lowry Nature Center. Located in Carver Park Reserve in Victoria, MN. It will host over 500 school groups and field trips annually. The district will work with Dakota Advisory Group comprised of Elders, cultural advisors, and other knowledge keepers to develop interpretive self-guided trail highlighting Dakota perspectives and interaction with the land on the natural scape, including plant names and uses.

Discussion

- Hiring local Dakota artists to create signs, including a bus wrap that says "We are on Dakota Land".
- Legacy should be used for connecting, reconnecting, and healing relationships to the outdoors. Use these funds in a non-capital way to build better park systems that benefit many communities. There is a lot of work that needs to get done within our own systems, there are still many staff who misunderstand Tribal rights. As advisory members we should be mindful of what our goals are, and what we should take away and build upon 'what's next' from this conversation.
- Need advice to make a system change, and community engagement.
- There is a lot of work that still needs to be done, especially in our education system. Many people think that there are no more Indigenous people alive today.
- We are all trying to do better, seek engagement, and learn. But it takes an emotional toll on the people who share their stories to educate us. We are all struggling with how to effectively balance this while being respectful. How are we bringing people forward respectfully and authentically? We should share ways to break through the bureaucracy with each other so we can more easily move our projects forward and create change.

- Legacy funds don't have to be used just for projects, they can be used as a way to create system change. Meaningful high level goals within an organization.
- When these funds were first created, they were used for capital projects but that is now changing we are producing more connectedness, etc.

Break for Lunch

Loppet Foundation – Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board – Theodore Wirth Regional Park Partnership

(Claire Wilson, DeAnna Perkins, Adam Arvidson)

Advisory members and participants walked over to the Loppet Foundation Trailhead building.

An overview of the building and the Loppet Foundation was given. Claire and DeAnna shared what their work is like, and the Foundation's relationship with Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

Discussion:

- How many annual participants?
 - There are many programs that the Loppet hosts, difficult to estimate the number of participants, might be around 50,000.
- How do people find information on programming and conditions?
 - Through social media. Staff who work on location and partnerships with other organizations and nonprofits and schools help spread the word. Open to ideas on other methods.
- What is the goal radius of visitor attraction?
 - Starting with attempting to attract people in a 5 mile radius then they'll grow that outreach.
- How does the Loppet Foundation balance the sense of community with recreational activities like hiking and skiing? (The Loppet organization)
 - Have to give as much attention to every area, everything they do is donated to the park board, which is just an organization of people.
- It is that people connection with nature, who introduced you to the outdoors is what we think of when we think of nature.
- Any new programs that worked well? Are popular?
 - Any that programs launched for children, participation skyrockets. Anything with a seasonal naturalist too.
 - Interested in piloting a snowboarding program.
- What is the Loppet Cup?
 - Theodore Wirth is hosting a World Cup Cross Country Skiing event next year, 2024, where international athletes will attend.

Updates

GMRPTC

- Mountain Bike Trail Design guidelines will be released soon.
- Any suggestions or ideas, please connect with Lars Erdahl or Legacy Liaisons.
- **Next Meeting:** June 22, 2023, at Oxbow Park & Zollman Zoo, Bryon.

Adjourn