

CITY OF MINNETONKA

PURGATORY PARK MASTER PLAN



Planning Our Parks
PURGATORY PARK





PURGATORY PARK MASTER PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PREPARED FOR:

City of Minnetonka
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Minnetonka, MN 55345

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

Minnetonka City Staff

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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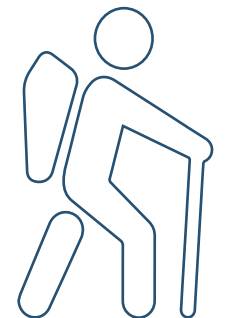
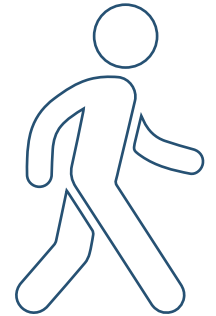
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01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Located in the southwest corner of Minnetonka near the intersection of Excelsior Blvd and County Road 101, Purgatory Park's 155 acres of native prairie, dense woodlands and extensive wetlands make it the largest of the city's five community parks. Expansive open spaces and over two miles of primary trails in the park offer scenic views of the park's various ecological areas and provide a much-needed respite from the hustle-and-bustle of the Twin Cities Metro Area. In addition to its primary trails, Purgatory Park's many informal footpaths and iconic site features (e.g., the Red Barn) provide an opportunity for visitors to explore and fully immerse themselves in nature without having to leave the metro area. For many years, the park has served as one of the primary social hubs of the surrounding area.

On any given day, no matter the weather, it is quite likely there will be a number of friendly park visitors with their loved ones or furry friends on the trails or in open spaces. However, Purgatory Park is considered a community preserve, which means that special emphasis is placed on protecting and restoring the park's natural features (e.g., native prairies, woodlands, etc.). The city's staff and volunteers work arduously to protect and preserve its natural features through various restoration efforts, including controlled burns, the removal of invasive plants, seeding and planting, and forestry mowing.



THE BIG PICTURE

Developing a master plan for Purgatory Park was identified as a priority in the comprehensive Minnetonka Parks, Open Space, and Trail Plan (POST Plan) completed in 2022. This master plan is conceived of as a tool for city staff and administrators to use in evaluating and standardizing park features, developing realistic budgets, and utilizing resources effectively to make improvements to the park that align with its nature preserve classification while catering to the needs of all park users.

Historically, Purgatory Park has not had a master plan in place to guide decision making and provide direction for park improvements and operations. Additionally, the city does not have a dedicated “parks department” to manage their facilities, track expenses and allocate resources specifically for the upkeep of the park system. These resources have been managed by public works staff with the budgeting and tracking

of park-related expenses combined with those of other public works projects and maintenance.

This plan is rooted in community input and considers both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of Purgatory Park. Extensive community outreach was undertaken to maximize stakeholder engagement in the process, providing citizens an opportunity to voice their needs, desires, and concerns around resource management and recreation in this well-loved, and well-used park. This robust engagement effort included a project website, community-wide online survey, a well-attended open house to kickoff the project, and a series of ‘pop-up’ events designed to intercept residents and park users around the community and within the park itself. Full documentation of community feedback received is included in the appendix of this document.

A handful of key topics are considered in this plan, both in documenting existing conditions and proposing recommendations for improvement. These include:

- Site Circulation and Access
- Dogs in the Park
- The Red Barn Site
- Natural Resource Management
- Programming and Facilities
- Partnerships

Another key theme addressed in the plan recommendations section is the idea of ‘sense of place’, or the intrinsic characteristics of Purgatory Park that make it unique and valued within the Minnetonka Park System. This plan strives to balance the varied concerns of all these topics to protect the integrity of this well-loved nature preserve park for generations to come.

02

INTRODUCTION

Situated in the heart of Minnetonka, Purgatory Park - with its natural beauty and open spaces - is an urban oasis in the community and the greater Twin Cities Metro Area. At 155 acres in size, Purgatory Park offers visitors and residents plenty of space to immerse themselves in nature, where local flora and fauna flourish. For many years, the park's wooded trails and landscapes have provided a tranquil escape from the busyness of city life; it's no surprise that the park now functions as one of the community's primary social hubs.

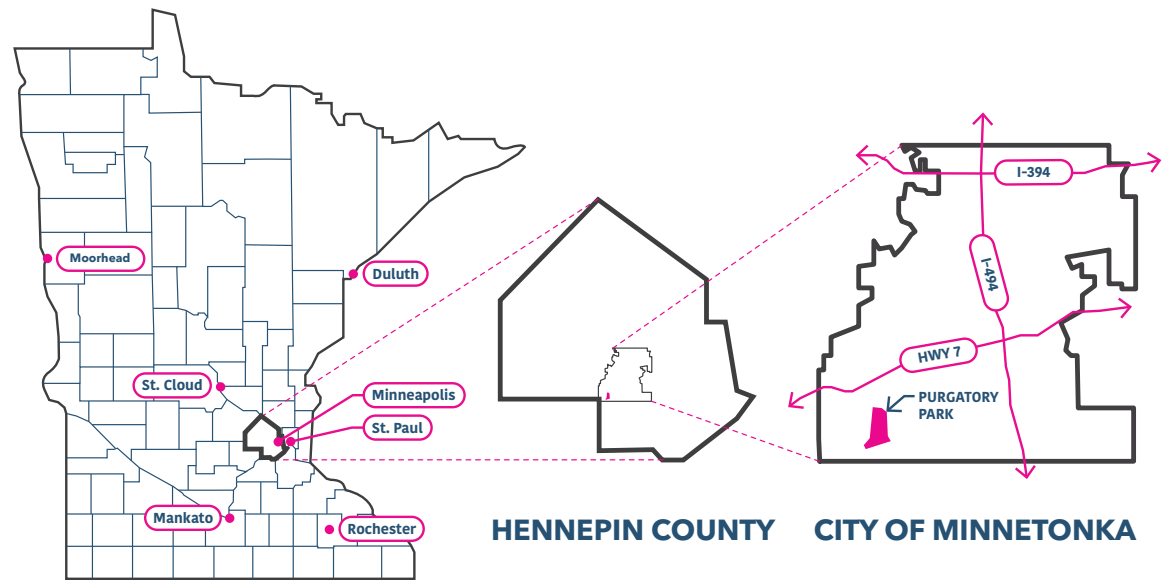
Although the park's name may raise some eyebrows, the experience it offers is far from purgatorial; many describe the park as a haven for contemplation and connection with nature and appreciate the work the city has done to conserve and protect it. Whether one is using the park's primary or informal trails, observing local wildlife in the woodlands, or looking for a quiet spot to reflect, Purgatory Park is the place to be.



PURGATORY PARK - IN CONTEXT

Purgatory Park is the largest of five community parks in the city of Minnetonka. Minnetonka is a western suburb of the Twin Cities with a population of 52,544 people (according to the most recent U.S. Census data). The city is located within Hennepin County and is home to many major corporate headquarters, including UnitedHealth Group, Carlson Companies and Cargill. Although Minnetonka is currently known for its thriving mix of diverse businesses, the land that makes up Minnetonka was once sacred land for the Dakota tribes, who used the area's dense woods, open prairies and many lakes for hunting and fishing. Today, more than 20% of Minnetonka's land area is made up of wetlands and lakes, and the city has over 50 parks, 100 miles of trails, and 1,000 acres of natural public open spaces that offer residents and visitors many active and passive recreation opportunities to take advantage of.

Since its creation and development, the city of Minnetonka has placed strong emphasis on protecting and preserving its natural resources, which have come to define the community's distinct character. However, over the years, extensive agricultural use and urbanization have greatly altered the city's natural resources by eliminating certain plant and animals species and degrading natural habitats for flora and fauna. Fortunately, city staff and volunteers have put an immense



amount of time and energy into stopping the degradation of the city's natural resources through various restoration efforts.

As mentioned, Purgatory Park, named after Purgatory Creek, is located within Minnetonka, just south of Hwy 7 and west of I-494. The park is surrounded on three sides by residential developments. Purgatory Park serves a special purpose in the community as a nature preserve, which is a protected area of importance for flora and fauna that is preserved and managed for conservation purposes. In Purgatory Park, visitors are allowed to use trails for walking, hiking and biking. They can also watch birds and wildlife, take photos and videos of the park's natural features, and go shoeshoeing. However,

similar to other city parks, visitors are not allowed to camp or create campfires, collect plants, animals, rocks or fossils, or host any organized athletic events. With its many acres of native prairie, dense woodlands and extensive wetlands, Purgatory Park is an important asset and regional destination in the community. The park falls within an area of wet prairie and oak savanna ecological communities and is therefore appropriately maintained by the city's staff, as well as local volunteers. As recommended in the city's Parks, Open Space and Trail (POST) System Plan, which supports and upholds the goals and objectives of the NRMP, conducting a master plan study for Purgatory Park (as well as other community parks) is an important next step for the city to take.

THE PURPOSE

This master plan has been developed for use by the city to evaluate potential improvements to Purgatory Park, develop planning-level cost estimates of probable design and construction costs for those potential improvements, and identify and align resources effectively to make improvements to the park that caters to the needs of the community. During the production of the city's POST System Plan, a number of priorities for the city's park system were established. The highest priority issues/themes outlined in the POST System Plan include:

- Rediscovering the creek (and other important bodies of water)
- Connecting to nature
- Gathering and community building
- High-quality natural areas
- Environmental sustainability and resiliency
- Connections to parks and trails

Another priority for the city that was outlined in the POST System Plan was the development of master plans for each of the city's community parks, including Purgatory Park. This plan seeks to take into consideration the key takeaways and recommendations from the POST System Plan, as well as the city's Natural Resources Master Plan and other past planning efforts, to inform design decisions. Similar to the

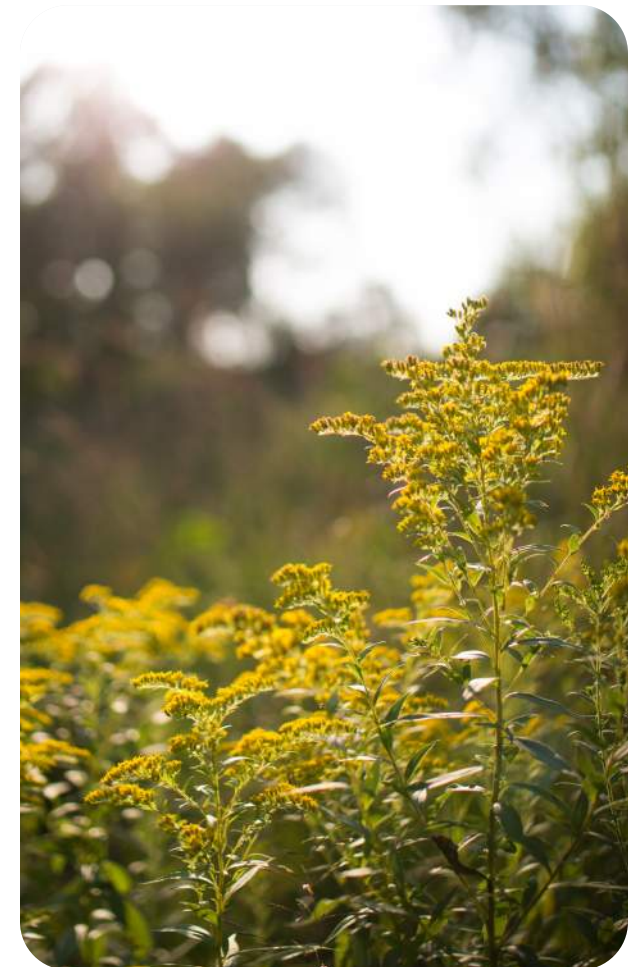
POST System Plan and Natural Resources Master Plan, the development of this plan is rooted in community input and considers both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the Minnetonka park system and the city's natural resources.

During the development of this plan, special attention and focus was placed on the following topics:

- Sense of Place
- Dogs in the Park
- Trails
- Park Access
- Natural Resources
- and the Red Barn Site

Each of the topics listed above plays an important role in the functionality and success of Purgatory Park. Using these topics/themes as a starting point, the ultimate goal of this plan is to identify and prioritize opportunities for improvement in Purgatory Park and to develop design standards for the park and future improvements. Taking into consideration the ever-evolving trends of park amenities and nature preserves, the recommendations and design standards included in this report will assist the city in making decisions pertaining to Purgatory Park's facilities' improvements. By adopting this plan, the city can proceed with progressing with initiatives that align with

the recommendations herein, whenever practical. Similarly, evaluating and tracking the progress toward implementation will allow the city to evaluate when it is time for an update and/or to revisit certain goals.



THE PROCESS

PHASE ONE: LAUNCH



- Includes tasks related to project kickoff, stakeholder analysis, existing conditions inventory and analysis

PHASE TWO: ENGAGE



- Includes tasks related to building consensus for the project vision, design guidelines, and implementation strategies

PHASE THREE: PLAN



- Includes production of the draft master plan documents, formal review, and finalizing deliverables

The city of Minnetonka administered a 12-month planning process that began with an in-depth inventory and analysis of the amenities and facilities within Purgatory Park. This visual analysis documented park amenities, site furnishings, and notable site features, in addition to the general condition of these items at each location. Accessibility was evaluated by means of noting missing sidewalks or trails, pedestrian ramps, general condition of the pavement and noting any obstacles or physical barriers present.

Discussions with city staff were facilitated by the consultant team to better understand the history of park improvements and evaluate the existing conditions of each park throughout the community. Several community engagement events, including pop-up events both in and outside of Purgatory Park, gave the planning team insight into how community members and visitors use the park, as well as relevant information about changes affecting the city and park's natural resources over the years.

Early in the planning process, community members were initially engaged through a community-wide input survey distributed online. Committee members circulated the survey over a 15 week period resulting in participation from over 600 community members. Input received through this

process was evaluated by the project team to establish a list of recommendation priorities for each topic/theme pertaining to the park.

In order to provide a technically sound, user-friendly, and sustainable planning document for Purgatory Park, the planning team, made up of landscape architects and community engagement specialists, had many discussions with city staff and in-house technical experts to find solutions to issues affecting the park's functionality, natural resources and aesthetic beauty.

The planning team's approach to this document is comprised of three overarching (and overlapping) phases, which are meant to provide a framework for a robust and resonant community engagement effort that is well integrated into the planning and design process. A summary of the key steps in the planning process are outlined to the right:

THE TIMELINE



RELATED PLANNING STUDIES

PLANNING EFFORTS

There are a handful of past planning efforts that were considered during the creation of this report. Key plans, reports and standards that helped guide the development of this report, including the city's **Natural Resources Master Plan; Parks, Open Space and Trail (POST) System Plan; Capital Improvement Plan; Purgatory Park Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Plan**, and the **Exterior Sign Design & Standards**.

For the past few years, the city's staff has engaged in a long restoration process within the park - turning farmland back into prairie, performing controlled burns and eliminating invasive species (like buckthorn) that continue to choke out the native oaks, maples and basswoods in the woodland areas. These restoration efforts have been guided by the Purgatory Park Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Plan, which identifies target ecological communities for restoration and outlines a plan for invasive species control, planting strategies with species lists, cost estimates, continued maintenance steps for each ecological community in the park, and a phasing strategy with recommendations for prioritizing areas. Additionally, the city just revised their park signage standards and will update existing signage accordingly.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM RELATED PLANNING STUDIES

- **Natural Resources Master Plan**
 - » Improve the quality of habitat in Minnetonka parks and open spaces
 - » Create more resilient and sustainable ecological systems while still providing benefits to the community
 - » Manage and improve the community forest ecosystem on both public and private lands, including natural woodlands and the altered ecosystem of the traditional managed landscape
 - » Engage the public to support ecological restoration and management on public property
 - » Protect, diversify and expand the existing high quality ecological communities
 - **Capital Improvement Program (2024-2028)**
 - » Promote community health and wellness by providing a diversity of quality facilities and parks, open spaces and trails
 - » Promote equity and inclusion by supporting all users, celebrating diversity and embracing inclusiveness
 - » Support excellence and innovation by providing a variety of innovative, new or improved active and passive park amenities and programs
 - **POST System Plan**
 - » Advance environmental sustainability and resiliency by supporting environmental stewardship and conservation
 - » Provide connections to parks, trails and programs by improving accessibility to park features and reducing physical and financial barriers to entry
- * Meeting legal mandates regarding public health and safety
 - * Maintaining and improving efficiency of existing systems by coordinating with related projects
 - * Expanding existing and new services, as well as community betterment
 - * Promoting sustainability and natural resources
- » Identifies \$140 million in potential capital improvements

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This master plan is organized into seven sections, which include:

- **01: Executive Summary**
- **02: Introduction**
- **03: Inventory + Analysis**
- **04: Community Engagement**
- **05: Plan Recommendations**
- **06: Design Standards**
- **07: Appendix**

The contents of this park master plan are meant to provide a 15 to 20-year road map for planning and implementing park improvements in Purgatory Park. It also includes park inventory data, community input summary, analysis of all collected data, and recommendations and implementation strategies for Purgatory Park's open spaces, natural resources and trails. Also included are descriptions of why the recommendations found herein are relevant to the growth of Purgatory Park's amenities and facilities.

Each section of this report is color-coded for easy navigation. The sections that follow cover community demographics and background information, an in-depth inventory and analysis process, community engagement information, improvement recommendations for future implementation, and a series of design standards for park managers to utilize in future park projects.

01: Executive Summary

- » Provides an overview of the plan's vision, guiding principles, goals, and objectives

02: Introduction

- » Dives into important background information about Minnetonka, Purgatory Park, and the planning process and outcomes

03: Inventory + Analysis

- » Provides an overview of the park's open spaces, natural resources and trails, as well as their current condition
- » Highlights issues with the park and trail system and discusses opportunities for improvement

04: Community Engagement

- » Highlights important information from in-person meetings, pop-up events, and the community survey

05: Plan Recommendations

- » Establishes improvement recommendations, goals, and initiatives to achieve the mission and vision of the master plan
- » Discusses implementation priorities and phasing strategies

06: Design Standards

- » Establishes the recommendations for standard materials, construction details and policy language to be used as a user manual for park managers to consult on

07: Appendix

- » Includes online community survey results

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03

INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

An inventory of Purgatory Park's existing facilities, and its natural resources was completed in April of 2023. This on-site review of the park's existing features aided in establishing an understanding of the park's amenities, the condition of its various facilities, and identifying deficiencies within the park. Throughout the planning process, the project team referenced this information to make informed decisions and recommendations about the future of Purgatory Park.

A thorough analysis of information gathered during the on-site view, was combined with feedback collected through a robust community engagement process and meetings with City staff, to identify issues and opportunities that should be considered as future park improvements are undertaken. For more information on the recommendations derived from this analysis, see Section 5.

OVERVIEW

The Purgatory Park master planning process began in March 2023. A critical step in this process was on site review and investigation of the park to better understand its existing conditions, issues and opportunities. Project team members conducted an on-site review with city staff on April 10, 2023. During this site visit, investigation focused on a variety of key topics related to the park, including **site circulation and park access**, **dogs in the park**, the iconic **Red Barn**, **natural resources and vegetative management**, **programming and facilities**, and **existing and potential future partnerships** in the community.

This section of the report documents on-site observations and discussions related to the existing condition of park features, as well as an analysis of the data gathered during the inventory.

1. SITE CIRCULATION + PARK ACCESS

There are many ways to access and move through Purgatory Park, whether it be by foot, by bike, or by car. In this section, we will discuss existing pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, park access points and connections, and parking in the park.

2. DOGS IN THE PARK

Purgatory Park has become a popular location for off-leash dog-walking over the years. However, issues with off-leash dogs in the park warrants further consideration of the topic. In this section, we will highlight the current policies and practices surrounding dogs and some of the existing issues and opportunities related to off-leash dogs in the park.

3. THE RED BARN

The Red Barn has always been an iconic landmark at the edge of Purgatory Park. With the city's recent acquisition of this property, new opportunities and uses for the Red Barn site will need to be investigated. This section will address the existing condition and structural issues with the building, as well as potential alternate uses for the Red Barn site.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES + VEGETATIVE MANAGEMENT

Over the last several years, the Minnetonka Natural Resources staff and park volunteers have worked hard to develop the Purgatory Park Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Plan, which provides a restoration vision for the park. In this section, we will touch on the existing ecology of the area, target plant communities and active restoration areas/zones, wildlife and habitat, and other projects (related to natural resources) to consider.

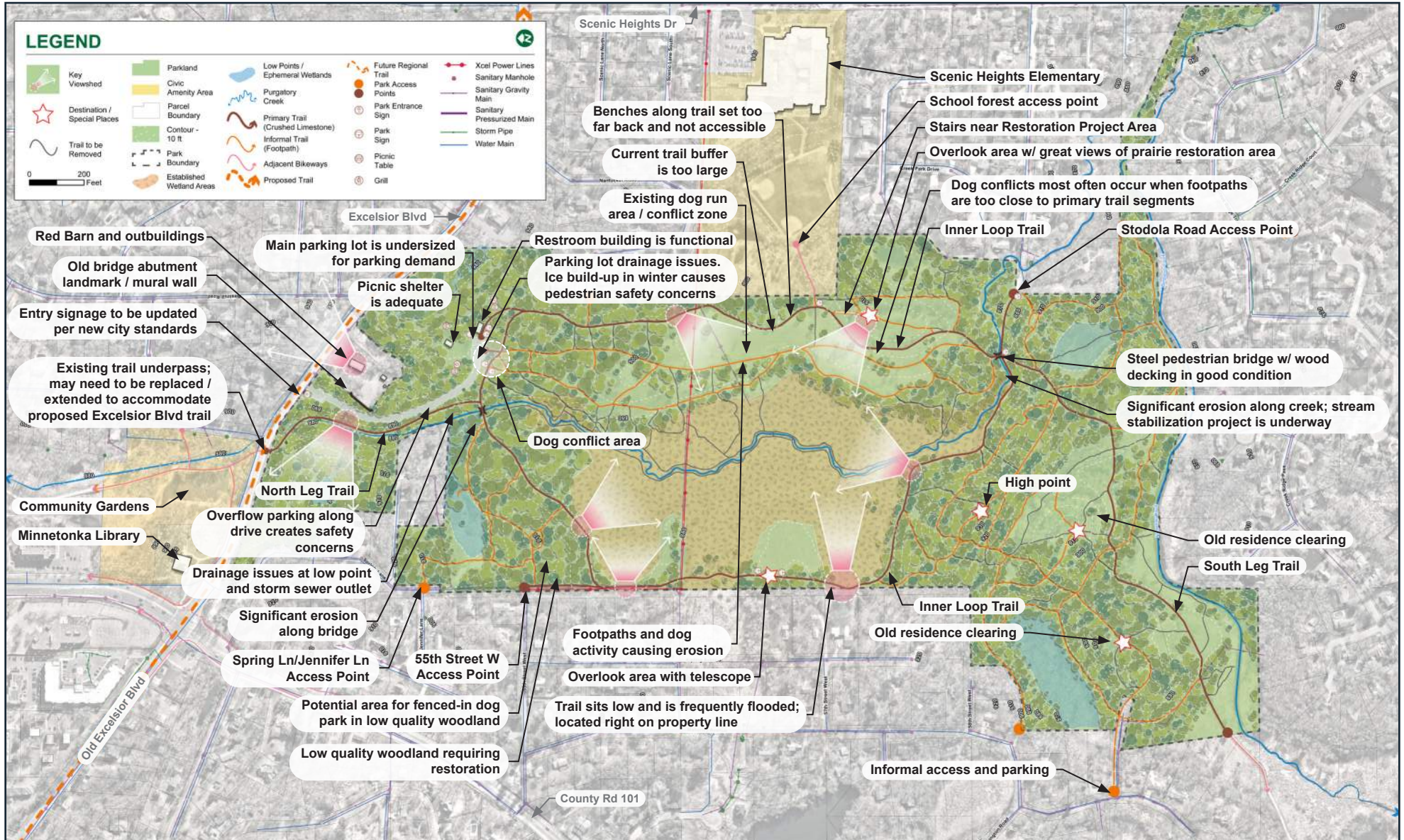
5. PROGRAMMING + FACILITIES

As Purgatory Park sees an uptick in usage, it will be important to consider establishing new programming and facilities in the park. This section will also highlight "special places" in Purgatory Park that make it particularly unique.

6. PARTNERSHIPS

In this section, we will discuss both existing and potential (future) partnerships between the city and other stakeholder groups for implementing and maintaining park improvements.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS MAP



1. SITE CIRCULATION + PARK ACCESS

SITE CIRCULATION

Purgatory Park offers two types of trails for visitors to use: primary trails and informal trails that make up an extensive and well used trail network that extends throughout the park. These trail types are summarized below, and on the table on the following page.

Primary trails within the park include approximately 2.2 total miles of trail, and are surfaced with crushed limestone or (in hilly/steep-sloped areas) asphalt pavement. The system is made up of an inner loop, with segments extending out from this loop on the north and south ends of the park. These trails are typically 10' wide with a mown buffer of around 4', though some variation exists, with some trails widening due to users migrating off trail, and maintenance practices. For the most part, the park's primary trails are well maintained and easy to navigate, although some segments are starting to show signs of wear and tear due to usage, erosion and off-leash dog walking. While on-site, observed uses on these trails included jogging/running, walking (both human and canine), and biking.

Informal trails within the park are typically unpaved footpaths of varying lengths and widths that extend out from the primary trail system. These trails have varying levels of difficulty throughout the park, and are

often located along steep slopes, in wetland areas or in densely wooded areas. The informal trail system is vast, and in many locations, somewhat redundant, with multiple routes leading to the same destinations. Maintenance on these trails is limited, focused on controlling erosion, and selective repairs to the trail surface. These trails tend to be popular with park visitors, and several people were encountered walking their dogs. Signage placed throughout the informal trail system indicates off-trail biking is prohibited. No cyclists were observed on the trails while on-site, but tire impressions were seen in various locations.

PARK ACCESS

There are several ways to access Purgatory Park, but most visitors choose to use the main entrance road (south/off of Excelsior Boulevard) or Stodola Road (just south of Scenic Heights Elementary School and west of Scenic Heights Drive) to find parking and enter the park. Other commonly used access points include:

- the cul-de-sac at the end of Nantucket Road, the school forest, and the primary trail southwest of the park
- as well as entry points just east of Bell Circle, at the end of 55th Street W, and at the intersection of Spring Lane and Jennifer Lane

The primary entrance includes two paved

off-street parking lots that are often at capacity, regardless of the time of day, with five parking stalls near the intersection of Excelsior Boulevard and the main entrance road, and 19 parking stalls (18 standard stalls, 1 handicap-accessible stall) in the main parking lot at the end of the main entrance road. Visitors to the park also use the cul-de-sac at the end of Stodola Road for parking, although it is not a formalized parking lot and is quite small. Many visitors park along side streets (especially Stodola Road) and the main entrance road, causing some congestion and safety concerns within the park and in surrounding residential neighborhoods.

In keeping with the nature preserve designation of Purgatory Park, site furnishings and other structures are kept to a minimum. A handful of interpretive and informational entry signs exist throughout Purgatory Park, highlighting the current off-leash dog ordinance and various restoration efforts. This signage will be updated in the future per newly adopted city parks signage standards.



Off-trail biking signage

GENERAL TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

Primary Trails



PRIMARY USES

- Hiking, cycling, walking, jogging, dog walking

TYPICAL TRAIL EXPERIENCE

- Trails traverse native prairie, mown lawn, and wetlands and are generally in proximity to park facilities

TREAD + TRAFFIC FLOW

- Wide and relatively smooth tread; width should accommodate two-lane travel; typically hardened

OBSTACLES (NOT PRESENT)

- Minimal grade change; vegetation must be cleared outside of trailway

Informal Trails



PRIMARY USES

- Hiking, dog walking

TYPICAL TRAIL EXPERIENCE

- Natural, unmodified surfacing; trails traverse through heavily wooded, prairie, and wetland areas

TREAD + TRAFFIC FLOW

- Narrow and rough tread; few or no allowances for passing native materials

OBSTACLES (PRESENT)

- Variety of grade change; vegetation may encroach into trailway

2. DOGS IN THE PARK

EXISTING REGULATIONS + ON-SITE OBSERVATIONS

Dogs are more than welcome in Purgatory Park, as long as their owners adhere to the city's ordinances and regulations about when it is appropriate for them to be on- and off-leash. According to the city of Minnetonka's current park regulations, dogs are allowed on improved trails; maintained turf areas other than athletic fields; unimproved and unmaintained areas; and parking lots. When on improved trails, maintained turf areas or in parking lots, dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet in length. Unless otherwise signed, dogs may be off-leash within areas of a park that are unimproved or unmaintained, provided the person responsible for the dog is within sight at all times, with a maximum of two unleashed dogs, and they can demonstrate that the dog will respond to the person's voice command on the first command given. No person will allow a dog to disturb, harass, or interfere with any park visitor, a park visitor's property or a park employee.

During our site visit, the planning team observed several signs in the park that reiterated the park's policies regarding

dogs. For the most part, these rules are followed, but there have been safety incidents with off-leash dogs that may warrant changes to the park's policies in the future. The planning team observed many off-leash dogs in the areas depicted on the next page (just south of the main parking lot, in wetland areas, and near the creek and pre-fabricated bridge in the southern portion of the park) while performing the site inventory. Although off-leash dogs are allowed in some of Purgatory Park's open spaces per city ordinance, there are concerns that dogs are too hard on the park's natural resources, including its wetland and creek areas, woodlands and grasslands, as well as some park amenities. Because of Purgatory Park's status as a nature preserve - and because it is the largest of the city's five community parks - its wetlands, creek, woodlands, and prairies must be protected and preserved so that future generations of visitors can enjoy the park's beauty and natural features.

Pet waste receptacles (Mutt Mitt dispensers) are available in several locations along the primary trail. City ordinance requires visitors with dogs to pick up after their pets in any natural and formal areas [City Ordinance 845.010.

Public Nuisances Affecting Peace, Safety, and General Welfare]. Currently, there are no fenced-in off-leash dog areas in Purgatory Park. There are, however, ecologically degraded areas of the park that are not currently serving an important ecological function. These areas, where buckthorn and other invasive plants have formed dense thickets, crowded out native plants, and displaced native shrubs and small trees, may have potential as future off-leash dog areas for park visitors to utilize.



High-use off-leash dog area

High use off-leash dog area

...to the wetland and prairie areas

from the main parking lot...



3. THE RED BARN



Existing Red Barn structure



Red Barn from Excelsior Blvd



Existing bridge abutment

THE HISTORY OF THE RED BARN SITE

The Red Barn has been a prominent landmark in the city of Minnetonka for quite some time. Located just east of the main entrance road to the park, the Red Barn site (a 1.23 acre property) functioned as part of the Westburg farm many years ago. In the early 2000s, the residents approved a \$15 million referendum to fund parks renewal and open space preservation. As a result, the Red Barn site was identified by the Open Space Preservation Task Force as a “property warranting preservation.”

Although the property was approved for acquisition by the City Council in January 2013, the property has not been utilized as a park amenity and is not open to the public. A recently-conducted structural analysis of the barn showed significant issues that may make it difficult to preserve or modify the existing structure. Based on that analysis and general interest from the community, new opportunities for the site should be considered.

On the western edge of the Red Barn site (just east of the main entrance road), there is a concrete bridge abutment that supported a bridge that carried the Minneapolis-to-Excelsior streetcar line over Purgatory Creek. The bridge abutment has been tagged with

graffiti over the years but is still considered an important landmark in the park.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Through the outreach process, concepts such as a ‘Climate and Nature Center’ have been identified and generally supported by survey results. A nature center would align with the park’s goals of educating visitors and showcase opportunities for smart landscaping and even climate-smart building strategies.

Adjacent to the Red Barn site and Purgatory Park, the City is currently working with consultants to study redesign of Excelsior Boulevard. Preliminary plans for the corridor identify a regional trail connection being constructed along Excelsior Blvd. To support this trail and provide additional amenities within Purgatory Park, there has been discussion of development of a potential trailhead facility on the site, as well as additional parking for trail and park users.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES + VEGETATIVE MANAGEMENT

NATURAL RESOURCES

In 2021, the city completed a Natural Resources Master Plan, which aimed to set community-wide direction and priorities for their Natural Resources Division. The plan not only touches on the benefits of improving and maintaining natural resources in Minnetonka, but also outlines goals and strategies that can be used to help protect those natural resources. The Natural Resources Master Plan was referenced by the planning team throughout the master planning process.

Documentation in the Natural Resources plan, and the Purgatory Park Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Plan (completed in 2022) shows the most prominent ecological communities in Purgatory Park include wet prairie and oak savanna. On-site observation confirmed this, and discussions with city staff provided insights on maintenance and restoration practices that are active and ongoing in the park, including forestry mowing to thin undergrowth and invasive species establishment in forested areas, and the prescribed burning of unwanted and invasive plant material in prairie areas.

A variety of wildlife were observed within the park, including birds, deer, small rodents and other critters. Bluebird houses have been placed throughout the park in strategic locations to offer nesting opportunities.

VEGETATIVE MANAGEMENT

One of the most significant challenges to natural resources in Purgatory Park is buckthorn. The city and volunteers continuously remove buckthorn within the park's woodland areas to allow for more sunlight and less competition for resources. This process benefits tough and deer-resistant native woodland species, among other things. The Natural Resources Master Plan notes that bare soils, re-sprouting buckthorn, and garlic mustard pose a threat to the park's natural resources if they're not regularly managed.

Several ongoing uses and projects have the potential to impact Purgatory Park's natural resources in coming years, including:

- off-leash dog traffic and in primary trails that can trample existing vegetation, and spread invasive species seeds

- Reconstruction of Excelsior Boulevard and its encroachment into the park
- the replacement of the Xcel utility poles and other utilities throughout the park
- the Purgatory Creek restoration project
- Future redevelopment of the Red Barn site

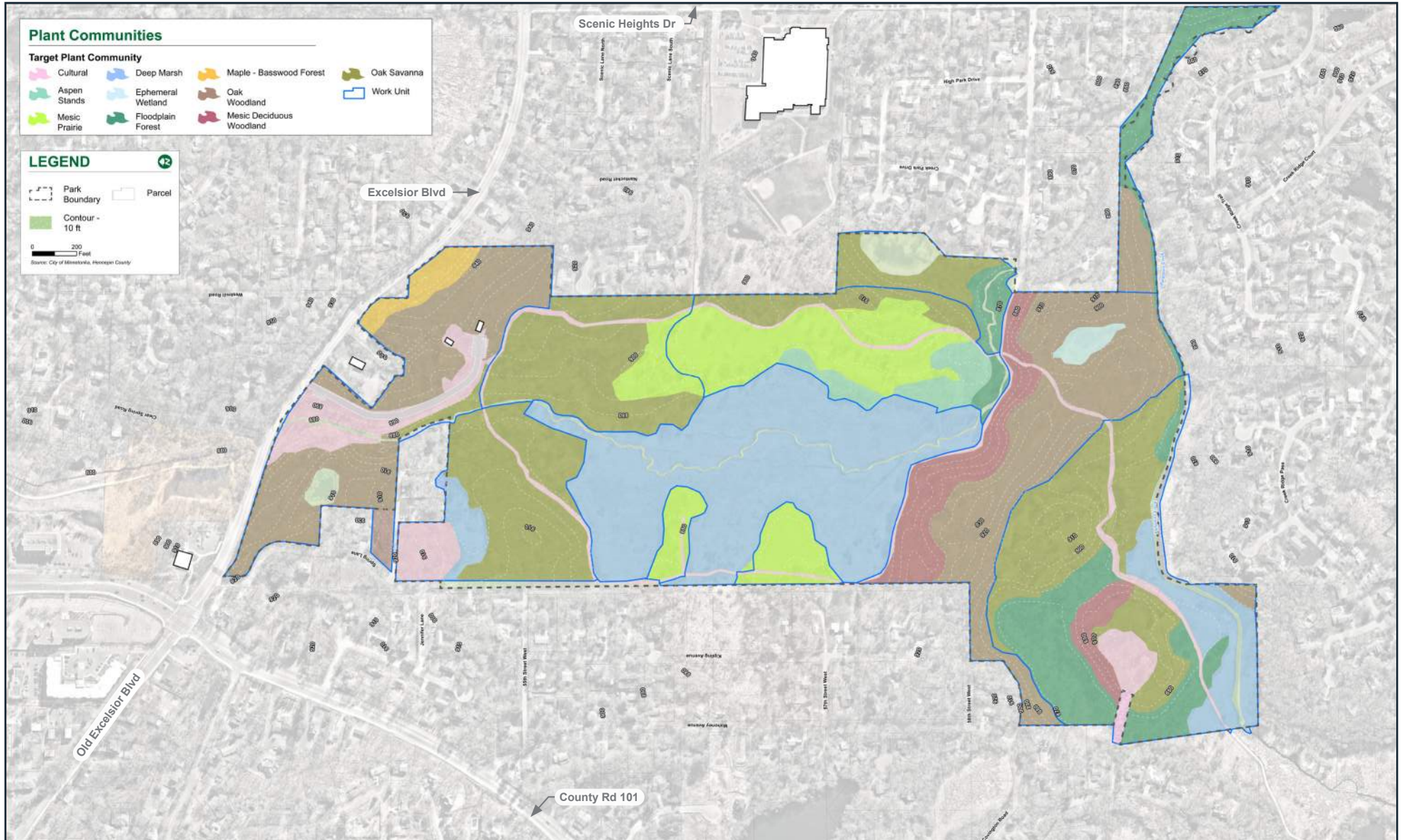


Forestry mowing



Prescribed burns

NATURAL RESOURCES MAP



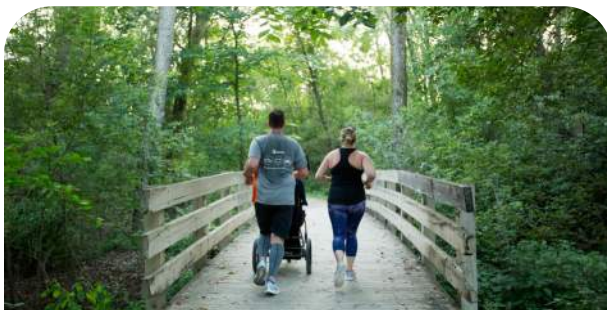
5. PROGRAMMING + FACILITIES



Park visitors walking on a primary trail



Informal trail in wooded area



Family running over timber bridge

PARK PROGRAMMING

The popularity of hiking, walking/jogging, and off-leash dog use in Purgatory Park has begun to take a toll on the park’s amenities and facilities. With this increased usage, the city must create a plan to protect the ecological integrity and natural beauty of the park while still allowing residents/visitors to use the park in the ways they’d like.

Most of the recreation available at Purgatory Park is relatively active but informal. Folks love to walk, jog, run, bike, and hike on the South Leg trail, North Leg trail, and Inner Loop trail. Because dogs are allowed off-leash (except when on primary trails and in parking lots), dog walking has also become a popular use in Purgatory Park. However, so many informal trails (or foot paths) have been created in the park over the last several years that programming in some spaces is not as clear as others.

The park also offers a variety of passive programming options. Some of the wooded areas within Purgatory Park are great for hammocking (e.g., woodland areas), while other portions of the park (e.g., open spaces) are perfect for picnicking, resting and quiet reflection. The diverse landscape features in Purgatory Park also offer opportunities for foraging and bird watching. Additionally, there are a few overlooks, high points, and other special places in the park that provide expansive vistas and viewsheds for park visitors to enjoy.

EXISTING PARK FACILITIES

Most of Purgatory Park’s existing facilities are in good working condition. The restroom building and picnic shelter near the main parking lot, for example, are well-used, require minimal maintenance, and are not in immediate need of replacement or repairs.

Besides the restroom and shelter building near the main parking lot, the park also includes both memorial benches and trees just off the primary trail. The memorial benches are often set back on disconnected concrete or gravel pads at a different grade than the adjacent trails, making them inaccessible to some users. Similarly, memorial trees are unmarked and often varieties that do not align with the ecological goals of the park. There were also several waste receptacles throughout the park, for both general and pet waste, although more may be needed to reduce littering.

There are a few facilities in Purgatory Park that could use updating. One such example is the wooden pedestrian bridge located closest to the main parking lot. During our site visit, we noticed significant erosion occurring along the sides of the bridge that may affect its longevity. Section 6 of this master plan includes proposed design standards for primary and informal trails, as well as other site features, that may be helpful for park managers to use in the future.

6. PARTNERSHIPS

EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

Over the years, Purgatory Park has gone through many transformations. Although the land was originally used for farming and grazing by settlers, Purgatory Park has since become an incredibly special asset to the city of Minnetonka and its residents. It wasn't until the 1960s that neighborhood developments began to fill in spaces surrounding the park. Not long after those spaces were filled, several partnerships began to form to protect and preserve this valued green space.

Since 1969, the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District (RPBCWD) has worked hard to protect, manage and restore local water resources on the watersheds of Riley, Purgatory, and Bluff Creeks. With Purgatory Creek flowing directly through Purgatory Park, the RPBCWD has played an important role in preserving the park's water resources.

The Friends of Purgatory Park "is a group of regular park visitors passionate about the natural beauty and diversity of wildlife found within the park boundaries." For years, the Friends of Purgatory Park have worked with the city to restore the prairie remnant and maintain the bluebird boxes

placed throughout the park. They are involved in many other initiatives and will continue to be a valuable partner to the park for years to come.

The Minnetonka Climate Initiative (MCI), a volunteer organization started by high school students who want to "take positive action to mitigate the worst effects of climate change" in their community, hopes to partner with the city to create plans for a "Climate Change Nature Center" on the Red Barn site, as mentioned previously in this section. Back in 2019, the MCI advocated for the creation of a climate action and adaptation plan (CAAP) in Minnetonka, which would lay the groundwork for how the community can decrease greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment, and prepare for future climate impacts. Partially because of the MCI's advocacy toward climate change, the city is finalizing a CAAP plan in 2024.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to local community groups, there are two elementary schools nearby that Purgatory Park could partner with more frequently. They include Scenic Heights Elementary School (just east of Purgatory Park) and Clear Springs

Elementary School (just west of Purgatory Park). Scenic Heights Elementary School has a unique "school forest" adjacent to the park with outdoor classrooms and informational signage and a trail that connects directly to Purgatory Park's Inner Loop trail. Additionally, the Minnetonka Library (just north of the park) could be a potential partner to engage with for programming in the park in the future.



Friends of Purgatory Park

04

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No one knows the community better than the members who live in it each day.

In order to gain knowledge of the area and better understand the issues facing Purgatory Park, and opportunities for enhancement, community engagement tools were a critical part of the Park Master Planning process. A two-fold engagement strategy was utilized by the team that included both online and in-person engagement opportunities in an attempt to maximize feedback. Tools used include formal open house meetings, pop-up events at various community gatherings, an online survey, and online community comment forum.

The feedback gathered from the community was vital to the recommendations made by the planning team. The following section will cover how the community was engaged and what feedback was collected throughout this process.

OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COORDINATION WITH CITY STAFF

With an invigorated interest in completing park master plan documents to help guide the future of their community parks, the city decided to prioritize the development of this plan in 2023. Throughout the master planning process, the planning team has worked closely with city staff in the overall development of the plan, as they have been able to provide local expertise on the park, highlight potential deficiencies, and guide outcomes of the project (in conjunction with input collected through public engagement).

There were several meetings with members of the city staff during the development of this master plan. These meetings focused on topics ranging from existing conditions in the parks to potential improvement recommendations for the park.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

During the development of the park system master plan, the planning team held a variety of in-person engagement events, including an open house, pop-up engagement events in the park, and pop-up engagement events around Minnetonka. In total the planning team held six in-person engagement events in the Minnetonka community.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The planning team launched the Purgatory Park Master Plan survey to the community of Minnetonka in July, 2023. The survey was live for approximately four months and was accessible online through a shareable web link. While the survey was live, city staff and the planning team spread the word throughout the city. Over six hundred participants provided input through the community survey.

In order to better understand the participants, the survey started by asking a series of introductory questions relating to participant demographics. A series of questions pertaining to dogs in the park, the red barn site, natural resources, trails, parking and park access, and special places within the park followed.

The following pages provide a summary of the community input received from the community survey and various in-person engagement events. A full report of results from both surveys can be found in the appendix of this plan.

ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE

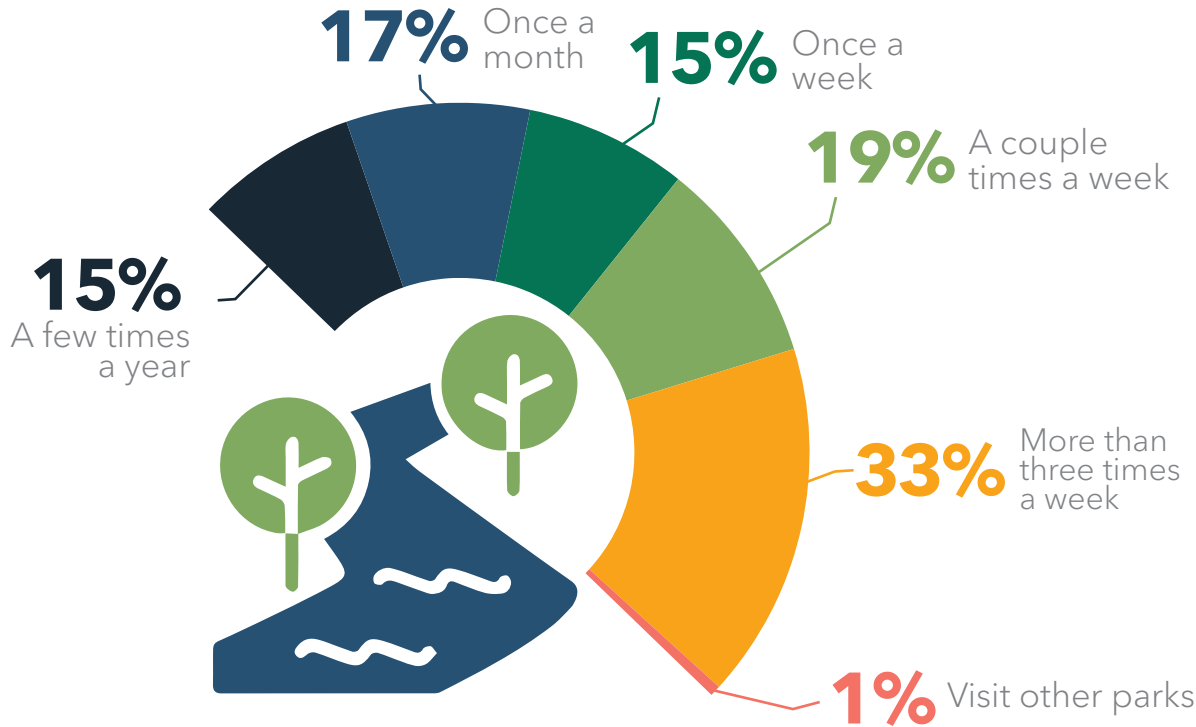
**JUNE - OCT.
2023**
ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

624
SURVEY RESPONSES

6
IN-PERSON
ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

1,000+
WRITTEN COMMENTS

HOW OFTEN PEOPLE VISIT PURGATORY PARK



MOST POPULAR REASONS FOR VISITING PURGATORY PARK



64%
Walking



55%
Dog Walking



24%
Hiking

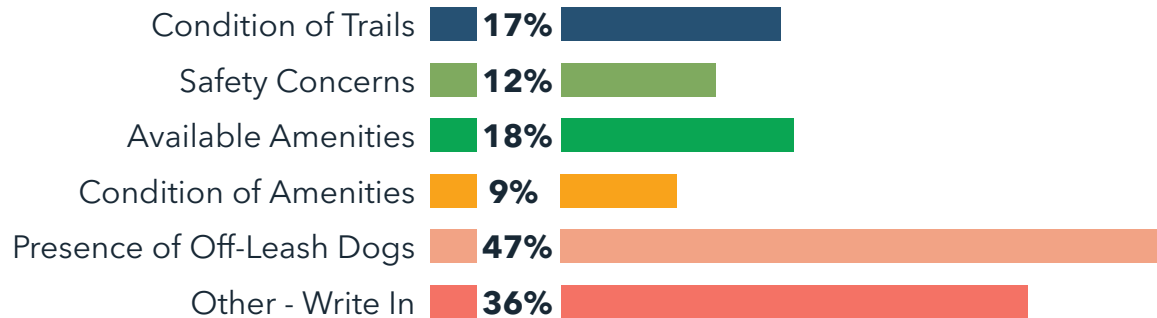


16%
Biking



15%
Bird Watching

FACTORS THAT DISCOURAGE PARK USAGE

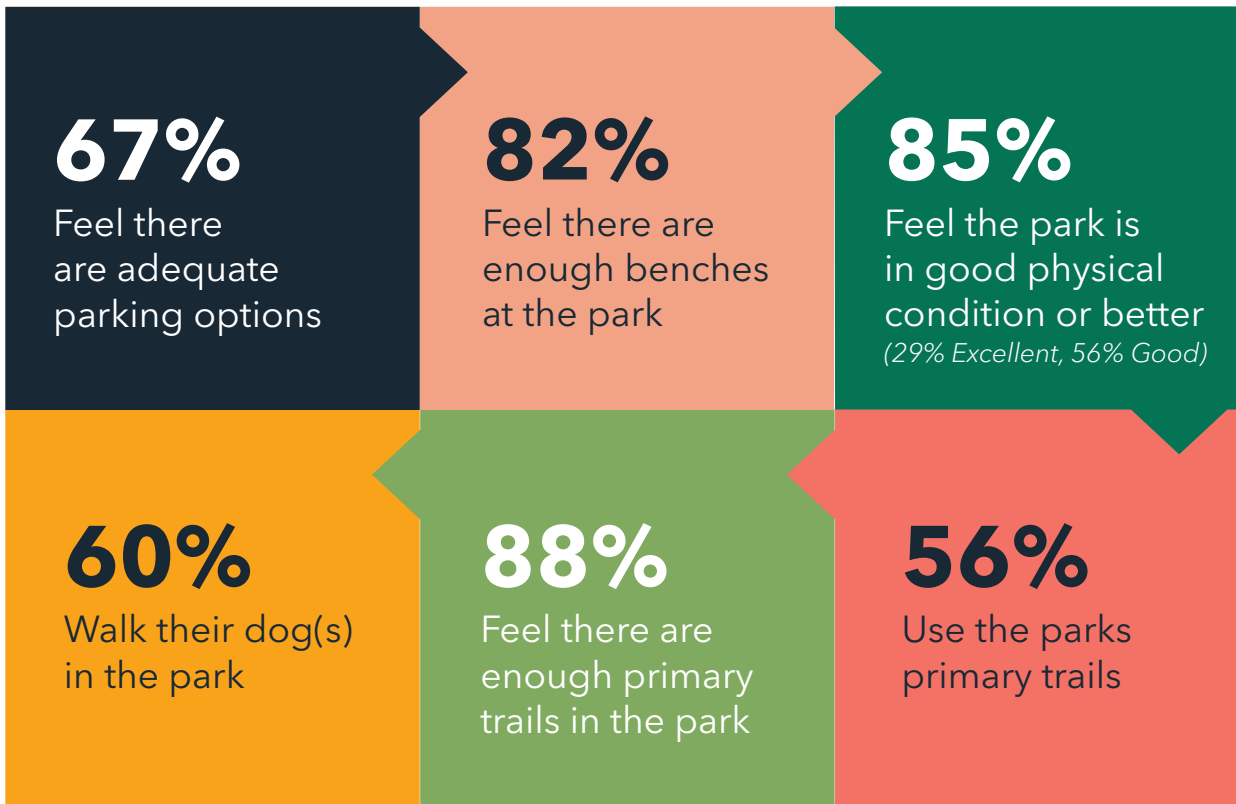
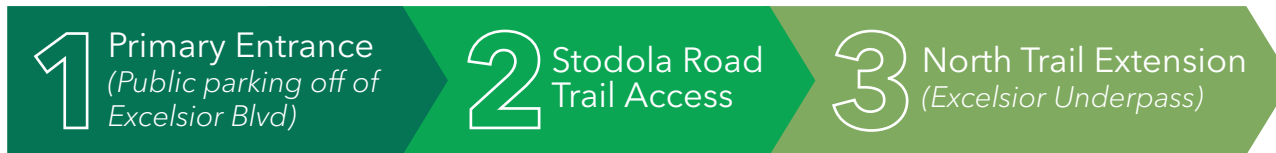


Most common write in reasons were:
Dog Waste • Cyclist Presence • Icy Conditions • Lack of Youth Activities

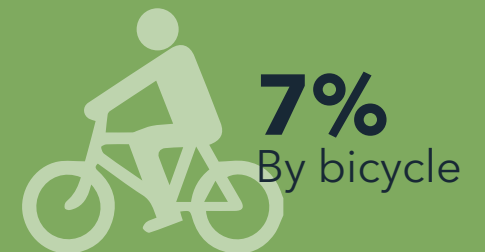
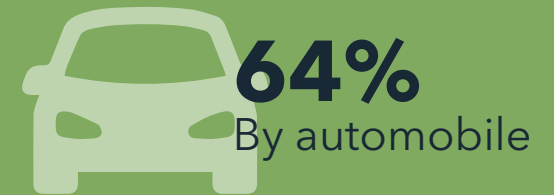
TYPICAL TRAVEL DISTANCES TO VISIT PARK



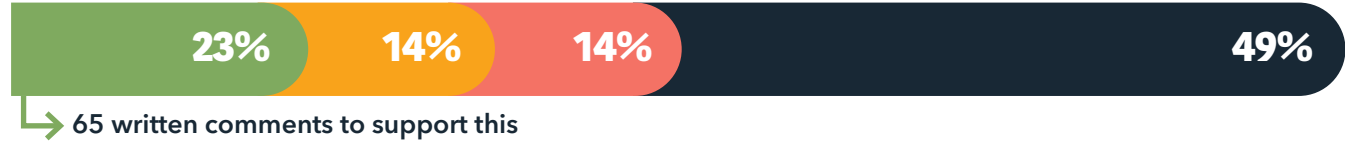
MOST FREQUENTLY USED PARK ACCESS POINTS



TYPICAL MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TO PURGATORY PARK



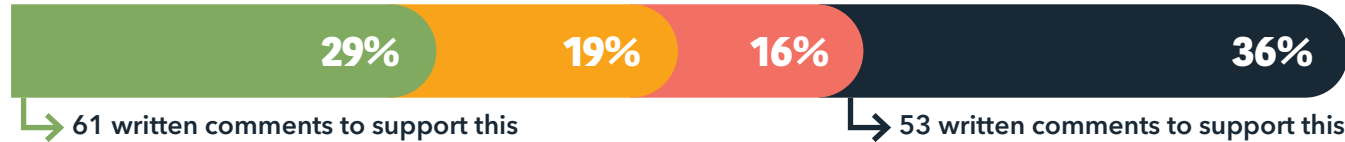
The City of Minnetonka's off-leash dog ordinance should be changed to not allow dogs to run off-leash in parks



The off-leash park rules are appropriate and should not be changed



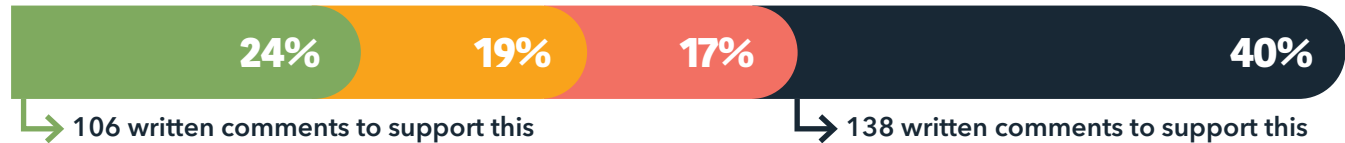
Purgatory Park should have a fenced in off-leash dog area



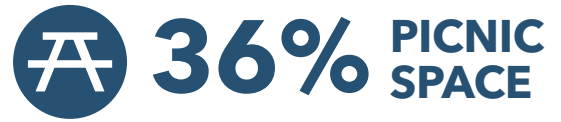
There are adequate dog waste receptacles in the park



Off-leash dogs are a safety concern in the park

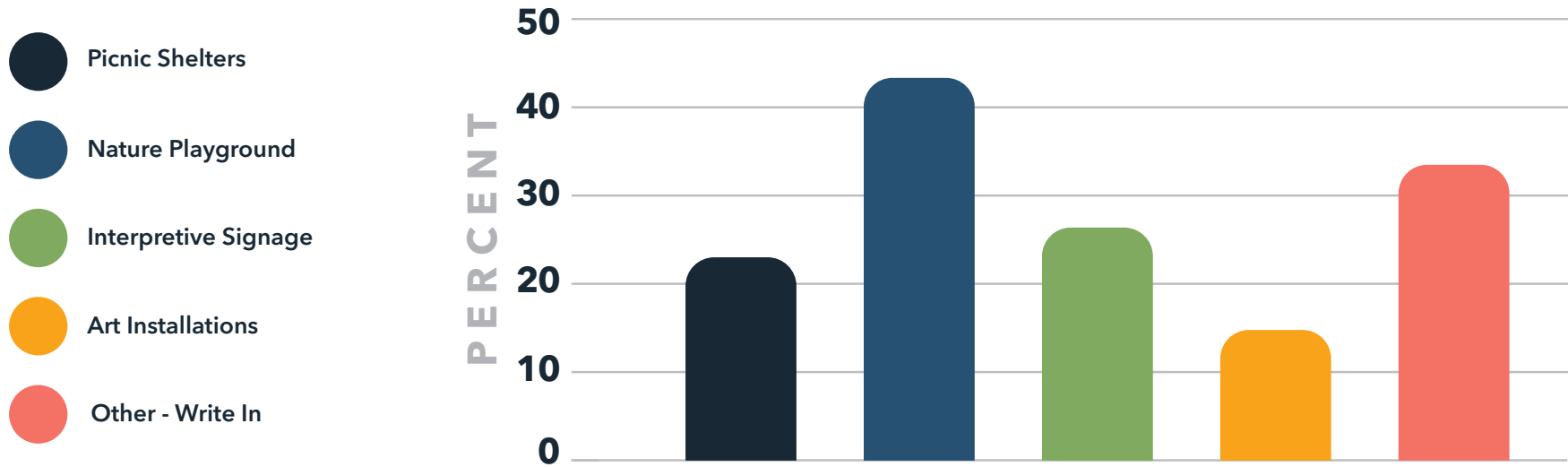


TOP USES FOR THE RED BARN SITE



* 32 written comments in support of use as a Public Facility (Environmental, Climate, or Nature Center)

WHAT SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE PARK THAT IS CURRENTLY MISSING



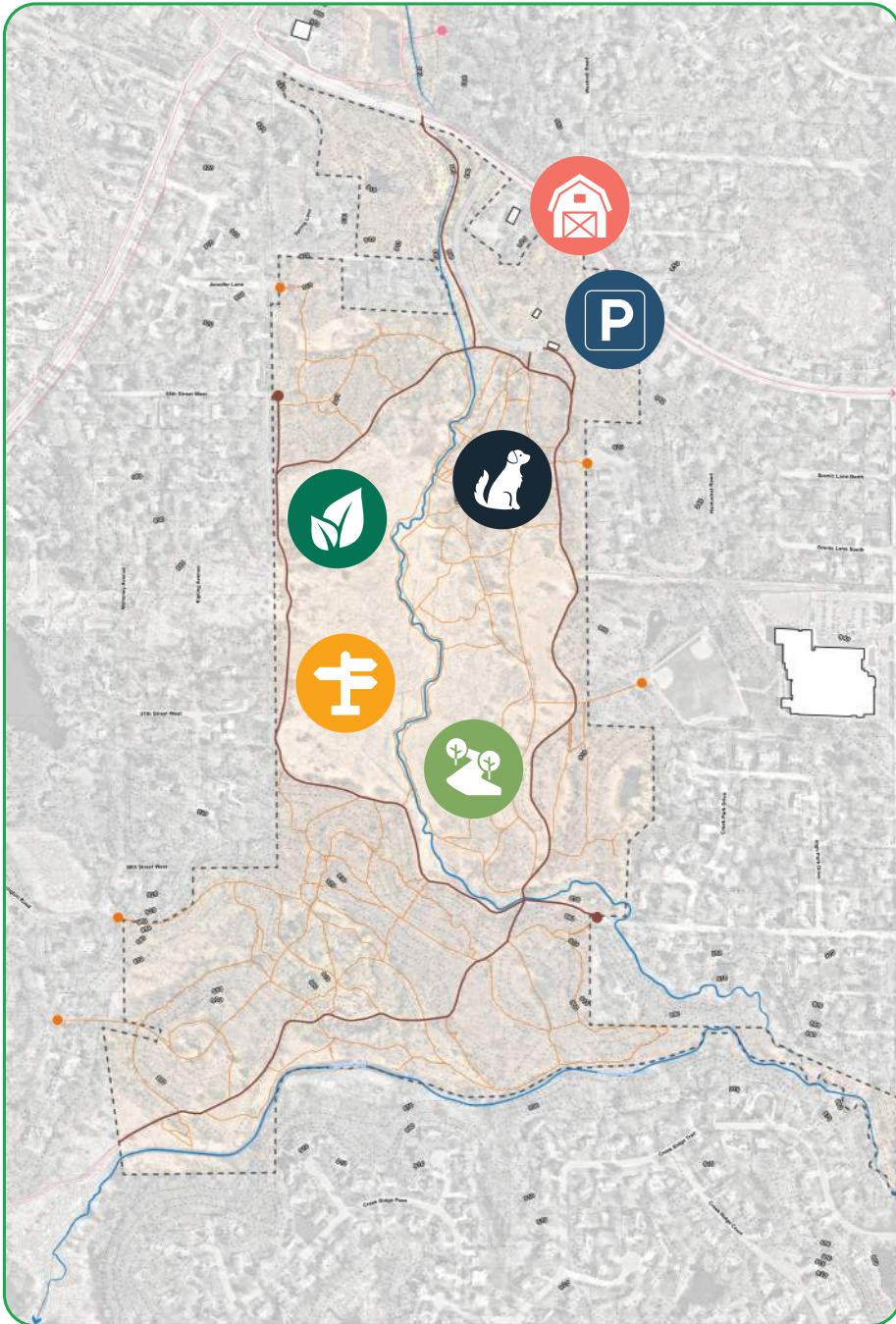
Most common write in answers were:

Nature Center • Dog Waste Receptacles/Trash Cans • Fenced Off-Leash Dog Area • Playground • Educational & Way-finding Signage

ENGAGEMENT EVENT TIMELINE



POPULAR AREAS OF COMMENT



Dogs in the Park

Approximately **460 comments** about dogs in the park were received



Parking & Park Access

Approximately **30 comments** about parking and park access were received



Natural Resources

Approximately **64 comments** about natural resources in the park were received



Trails

Approximately **129 comments** about trails in the park were received



Special Places

Approximately **66 comments** about special places and facilities in the park were received



Red Barn Site

Approximately **79 comments** about the red barn site were received

ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY



Pop-up event at Unmapped Brewery



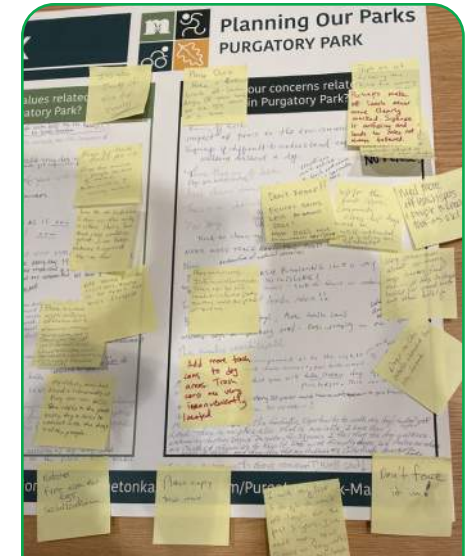
Pop-up event at Minnetonka's Farmer's Market



Community open house event



Roving in the park



Pop-up board post-it results

05

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommended improvement strategies for Purgatory Park were derived from community input, feedback from city staff and members of the Park Board, and an in-depth inventory and analysis of the park's natural resources and existing amenities. The recommended improvements outlined in this section are meant to provide a comprehensive approach to preserving, restoring, and enhancing Purgatory Park; additionally, they are meant to supplement and support the recommendations already established in the POST System Plan, Natural Resources Master Plan, the Capital Improvement Plan, the Purgatory Park Habitat Restoration and Maintenance Plan and the city's park signage standards. It is intended that the following improvements will be phased and prioritized, depending on available funding and partnership opportunities within the community. It should be noted that each recommended improvement/project will require additional exploration and design to refine project scoping and cost expectations.

PARK IMPROVEMENT TOPICS

Several key topic areas emerged through the master planning process and discussions with various stakeholder groups including city staff, the public, and park users. These topic areas include: **Sense of Place**, **Dogs in the Park**, **Park Circulation** and **Access (both vehicular and pedestrian)**, the **Red Barn Site**.

Throughout the planning process, the planning team used these categories to identify and prioritize recommended improvements to the park. These recommendations are organized into three categories including short-term (improvements slated to occur within 1-2 years), mid-term (improvements slated to occur within 3-5 years, and long-term (improvements slated to happen within 5+ years). Recommendations range in scale and magnitude from site specific interventions aimed at addressing on-site concerns and conditions, to the undertaking of more in depth study of planning and policy related items like off leash dog ordinances.

1. SENSE OF PLACE

Although Purgatory Park already has a well-established sense of place, it is important to continue to build upon it in order to preserve the park's cultural and historical significance and promote ecological integrity and resilience.

2. DOGS IN THE PARK

With the safety and wellbeing of both visitors and their furry friends in mind, recommendations for further discussion and studies on the topic will explore potential outcomes and outline a path forward for this important issue.

3. PARK ACCESS - PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

As Purgatory Park continues to evolve, park access points, trail conditions, park circulation and appropriate wayfinding signage must be taken into consideration. This section will include a series of recommendations aimed at improving the pedestrian experience on both primary and informal trails.

4. PARK ACCESS - VEHICULAR

With limited parking available on-site, the city will need to consider options for improving vehicular access to the park, whether that be through the study of currently popular informal parking areas or the expansion of the main parking facility.

5. THE RED BARN SITE

The future of the Red Barn site is still to be determined. In the near future, the city will need to decide if potential site uses including community-focused amenities should be pursued as the site is incorporated into the park's footprint.

1. SENSE OF PLACE

Throughout the community engagement phase, the planning team received feedback regarding the special places and experiences that define the unique character of Purgatory Park. The large scale of the park, along with its classification and protection as a nature preserve, provides a chance to fully immerse oneself in nature. A lack of built features in combination with densely wooded edges reinforce this feeling of remoteness. The dynamic terrain offers a variety of different zones or 'outdoor rooms', with low wetland expanses, high prairie vistas, and wooded

ridges. Visitors primarily experience Purgatory Park's varied landscape through a densely braided system of intimate hiking trails, with creek crossings and memorial benches offering a moment to pause and reflect on the place.

The preservation and enhancement of this unique character should be integral to all future park improvements. Potential impacts and opportunities should be considered alongside other recommendations of this master plan, such as visual impressions from parking expansion, or the locating of new

signage and memorial trees. A few specific 'special places' and key view sheds are identified on the Site Inventory and Analysis Map in Section 3. These locations should be protected as-is or potentially enhanced with standard park amenities or even site-specific installations, such as bird blinds or interpretive exhibits where appropriate.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



I love that the identity of the park is centered around its natural features, like Purgatory Creek and its lush wetlands!



The variety of terrain and plant communities in the park make it feel intimate, open and wild. I also love using the trails and bringing my dog(s) on my adventures within the park.

Purgatory Park feels removed from the city because of its expansive interior open spaces and the woodlands/residences that surround it.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- Protect and reinforce designation as a nature preserve
- Adopt design standards

MID-TERM

- Expand interpretive features throughout the park

LONG-TERM

- Recognize and enhance 'special places' and scenic views

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Protect and reinforce designation as a nature preserve**

All built features and amenities within Purgatory Park should conform to the requirements of the nature preserve classification. Visual and environmental impacts should be considered with any improvement project, to protect the distinct natural character of the park. Low impact design practices should be utilized for any infrastructure projects, including but not limited to parking expansion, stormwater management, new structures, and trail standards. For example, If formal play facilities are considered for the park, the theming and materials should be nature-based, offering experiences to interact with natural processes and materials, such as sticks and branches to build with, rather than commercial playground equipment.

- **Adopt design standards**

Section 6 of this master plan describes standards for materials, construction details, and unit costs for park facilities in Purgatory Park. These standards have been developed as best practices to align with the goals and recommendations of this plan, including the effort to protect and enhance the park's natural character and sense of place. These standards should be adopted and used to guide future construction, maintenance, and operations in the park.



Expansive view of native prairie



Native vegetation and primary trail

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand interpretive features throughout the park**

Additional signage and interpretive features should be expanded throughout the park to educate visitors about local ecology and history, such as ongoing restoration efforts, plant communities, hydrology, and the designation and expansion of the park over time. Typical interpretive signage may work well in certain locations, but other opportunities should be considered to integrate story telling into future park improvement projects, such as text and artwork embedded in pavement, bridge railings or other structures. Such artfully integrated features can enrich visitors' experiences without 'cluttering' the park with too much signage.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Recognize and enhance 'special places' and scenic views**

A handful of unique places in the park may warrant additional recognition and creative enhancements, such as utilizing the historic rail bridge abutment as a dedicated mural wall or adding low-impact amenities such as hammock supports in woodland clearings or near bridge crossings. Two high points offering expansive vistas occur in the park, one in the open prairie and one in the southern woodlands. More seating and bird blind structures should be considered to add destinations and moments of respite along the trail system. These site-specific installations could be created in collaboration with community service and school groups, or possibly as an expansion of the Scenic Heights school forest programming. When thoughtfully designed, these structure could enhance rather than detract from the park experience and natural context.



Dog walker on an informal trail

2. DOGS IN THE PARK

As noted in the inventory and analysis section of this report, feedback relative to dog activity (specifically off-leash dogs) in the park varies from strong support to strong opposition. Generally, those in favor indicate off-leash dog opportunities as an integral part of the park, its use, and experience - while those in opposition tend to express safety issues - and impacts on wildlife and ecological degradation as primary concerns. While the recommendations presented in this report do not resolve this conflict in its entirety, they do aim to work toward a viable solution for all park users.

Short-term recommendations associated with dogs in the park focus on policy-related review and low dollar interventions aimed at increasing usability and cleanliness of the park. Mid-term recommendations focus on site specific enhancements aimed at buffering dogs and dog-related uses from other patrons in the park. Long-term recommendations consider potential for a future off-leash dog facility in Purgatory Park.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



I believe we need to find solutions for the following issues regarding off-leash dogs: safety, ecological damage, and the enforcement and regulation of the off-leash dog ordinances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- Undertake a comprehensive review of current off-leash dog ordinance language
- Identify areas degraded/disturbed by dog activity and determine additional maintenance or repair that may be warranted
- Better define specific areas of the park where off-leash activity is allowable by current ordinance
- Expand signage related to off-leash dogs in the park to clarify current ordinance requirements in plain language
- Add additional pet waste stations and litter receptacles at strategic locations
- Install temporary fencing along the east side of area frequently used for off-leash dog activity to reduce conflicts with the primary trail

- Mitigate points of conflict between off-leash and on-leash dogs and other park users
- Formalize (pave) a connection between the parking lot and trail to the area frequently used for off-leash dog activity
 - » Also see trail system recommendations section

LONG-TERM

- If it is determined that a fenced-in dog park is warranted in the community, select a location for the facility
 - » If Purgatory Park is identified as the preferred location for an off-leash dog park, determine location and features to be implemented through coordination with stakeholders

NOTE: Communications regarding off-leash dog ordinances should be coordinated to ensure clear and consistent rules on the city's website, as well as other communication sources.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Undertake a comprehensive review of current off-leash dog ordinance language**

Throughout the master planning process feedback gathered from park users, city staff, and law enforcement indicated that current wording of the City's off-leash dog ordinance leaves room for interpretation, and thus, potential for conflict, specifically in parks and public gathering spaces. To better understand and address these concerns, a comprehensive review of the current ordinance should be undertaken with the intention of clarifying ordinance language and understanding of where leash laws would apply.

- **Identify areas degraded/disturbed by dog activity and determine additional maintenance or repair that may be warranted**

Purgatory Park is categorized as a nature preserve, with an emphasis on preservation and restoration of native plant communities. While recreation and dog walking are encouraged, dog activity may have unintended harmful consequences to the habitat actively being managed by the City and volunteers. To work harmoniously toward the interests of both dog uses and restoration efforts, a comprehensive analysis of degraded/disturbed areas frequented by off-leash dogs should be

conducted (e.g., identify areas with excessive erosion), and additional maintenance efforts identified. While this plan provides a general understanding of the primary areas used for these activities, we recommend a more thorough on-site review be conducted.

- **Better define specific areas of the park where off-leash activity is allowable by current ordinance**

An interim step in addressing off-leash dog conflicts in the park would be to more clearly specify through on-site signage the locations as shown on the Dogs in the Park Map (page 45) as acceptable places for off-leash activity to occur. Dogs would be required to be leashed on primary park trails, near the main and secondary parking lots and entry drive, and in other locations of the park (e.g., near both of the bridges, at all major access points and entrances to the park, etc.). Off-leash activity should be limited to a certain setback distance of 100' from the main and secondary parking lot and entry drive, and 50' from any primary trails, as well as the park boundary.

- **Expand signage related to off-leash dogs in the park to clarify current ordinance requirements in plain language**

While dog ordinance signage is present in several locations throughout the park, language on the sign can be hard to interpret, and signs are not necessarily present in areas most frequently used for off-leash dog activity. New signage should

be provided at major entry points and locations that experience the most volume of dog activity. Language associated with this signage should be coordinated with any changes to city-wide dog leash law policies, and maps should be incorporated to define off-leash dog use areas.

- **Add additional pet waste stations and litter receptacles at strategic locations**

Purgatory Park has a few pet waste stations and litter receptacles. They can be found near the main parking lot and the Stodola Road cul-de-sac access point, as well as other locations. Feedback from the community indicated need for additional pet waste stations and/or litter receptacles at the end of the pre-fabricated steel bridge near Stodola Road, near the existing high-use off-leash dog area south of the main parking lot, and at all major access points and entrances to the park.

- **Install temporary fencing along east side of area frequently used for off-leash dog activity to reduce conflicts with the primary trail**

As a temporary measure, until further study of leash ordinances and interest in an off-leash dog park can be undertaken, a temporary fence (approximately 1400 linear feet) could be placed along the east side of the area frequently used for off-leash dog activities. Any fence additions to the park should be designed with interested community member participation and review by the park board.

- **Mitigate points of conflict between off-leash and on-leash dogs or other park users**

Park users report that many confrontations between off-leash dogs/owners and other park users happen along the edges of the highest use off-leash area, along the primary trail, and at the parking lot. To reduce the frequency of these incompatible use conflicts, consolidate footpaths (informal trails) through the area frequently used for off-leash dog activity, and remove informal trails within 50' from the primary trail. Consider enhancing a vegetative buffer in these areas to create more separation along the primary trail.

- **Formalize (pave) connections between the parking lot and primary trail into the area frequently used for off-leash dog activity**
 - » Also see trail system recommendations section

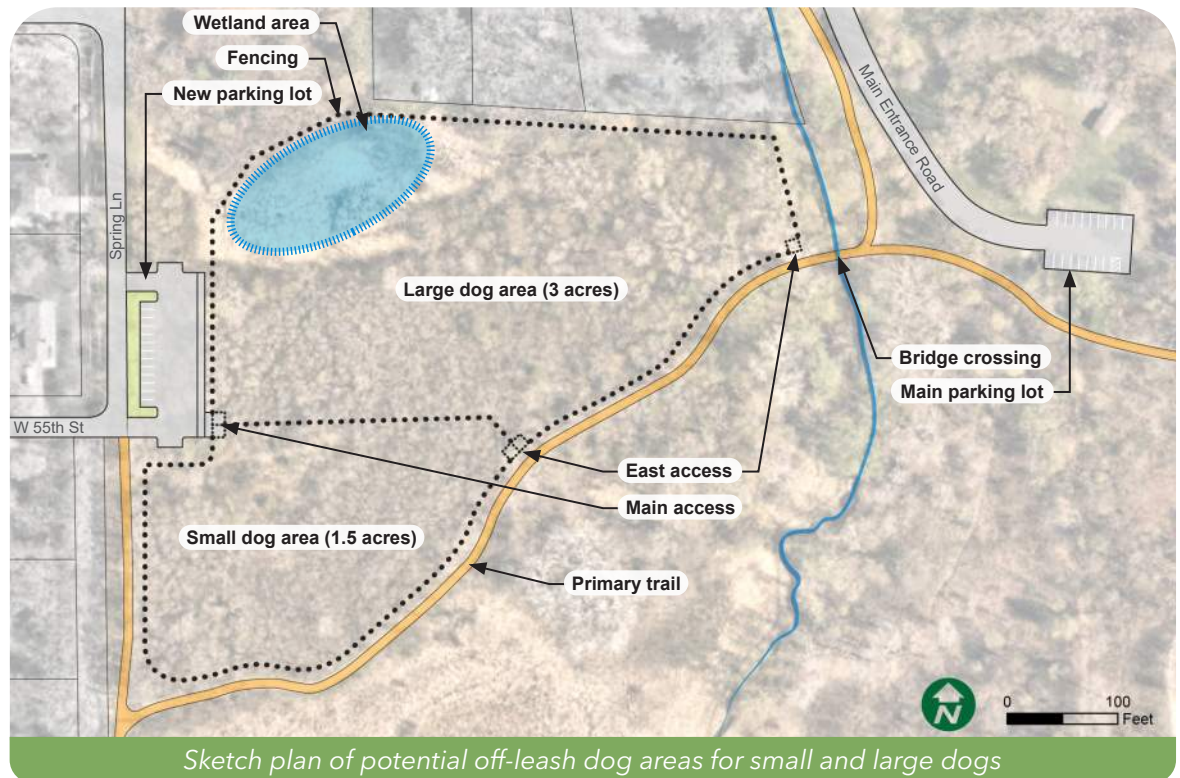
Currently, the area just south of the main parking lot, where the primary and informal trails meet up, is a conflict zone for dogs. Primary trails into the off-leash area will provide additional separation from other park users by identifying direct access points for off-leash dog owners, and reduce the ecological impact of redundant informal trails south of the parking lot.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **If it is determined that a fenced-in dog park is warranted in the community, select a location for the facility**
 - » If Purgatory Park is identified as the preferred location for an off-leash dog park, determine location and features to be implemented through coordination with stakeholders
 - * Concept to right shows potential in the NW corner of the park

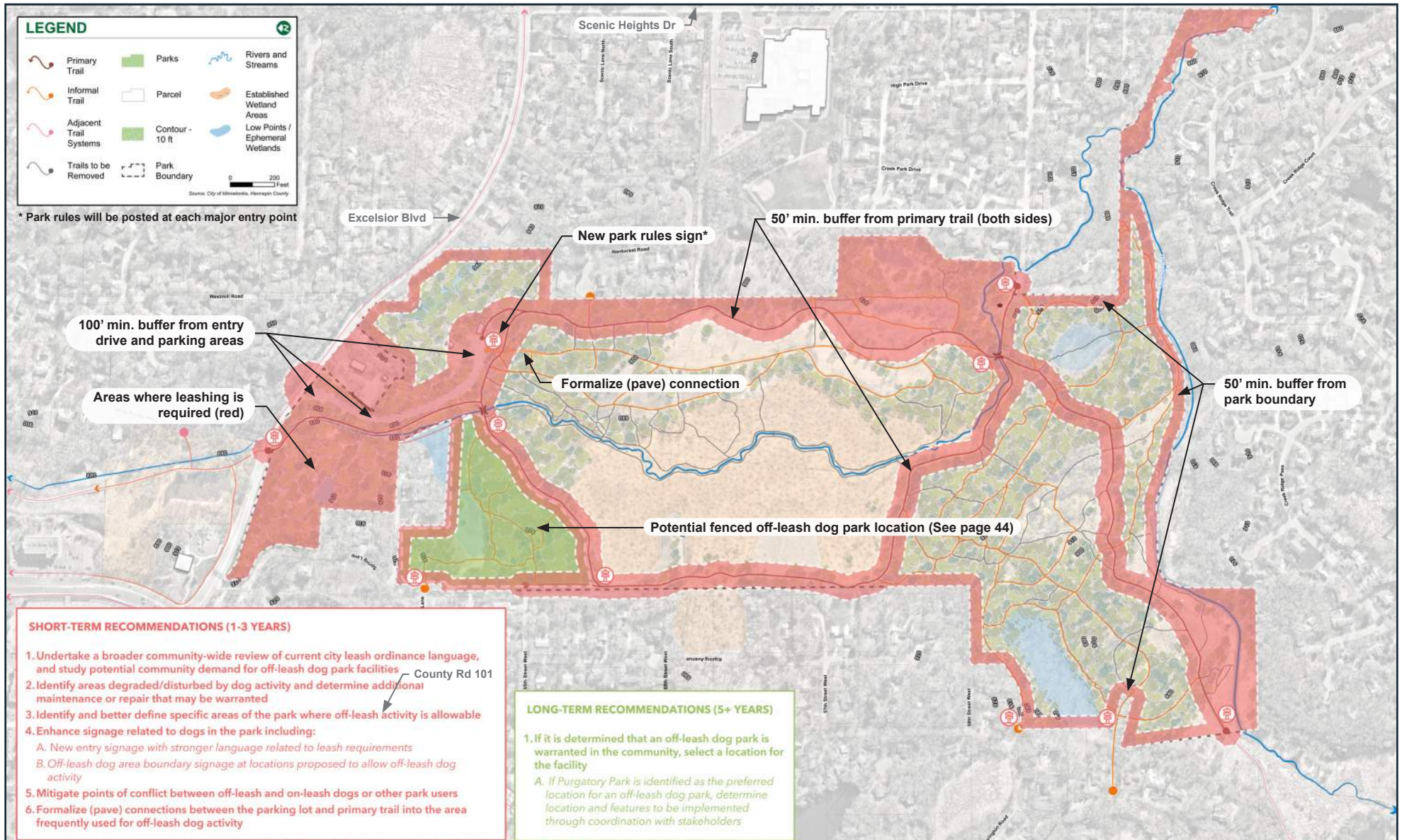
Pending outcomes of City review of leash ordinance language and need for a formal off-leash dog facility, consider whether Purgatory

Park is the preferred location for such a facility. Based on management and restoration plans, existing on-site conditions (low quality woodland), access, and topography considerations, an area in the northwest corner of the park could be an opportune location for a fenced dog park. The diagram below shows a layout option for a facility in this location that would include fenced areas for both large and small dogs, and a new park entrance and off-street parking lot to accommodate dog park users. The diagram below is very conceptual in nature, and it is anticipated the City would undertake a thorough, collaborative design process with stakeholders to determine a final location and design for any future dog park facility.



Sketch plan of potential off-leash dog areas for small and large dogs

DOGS IN THE PARK MAP



3. PARK ACCESS - PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

Purgatory Park’s trail system is one of the main draws for visitors to the park. Based on survey results, well over 60% of users who visit the park do so to walk/hike. As noted in the inventory and analysis section of this document, the parks trail system is comprised primarily of two types of trails: primary trails constructed with crushed limestone or asphalt surfacing, and informal hiking trails comprised of native earth surfacing. Design standards for the two types of trails have been developed as part of this planning process and are presented in Section 6 of this master plan document. These standards should be referenced and utilized to the extent possible when developing new trail segments or rehabilitating the existing trail network.

Feedback gathered during the planning process indicated that park users generally feel there are adequate trails in the park, and in some instances, too many informal trails. Recommendations related to the trail system are largely intended to enhance rather than expand on the existing system, providing a more enjoyable experience for users, and a more maintainable system for staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- Review informal trails and remove redundant/unnecessary/maintenance-intensive connections
- Modify maintenance practices related to mowing and maintenance of primary trail system based on proposed design standards
- Formalize connection between trail and main parking lot

MID-TERM

- Replace existing timber pedestrian bridge on the north end of the park

- Provide signage (e.g, park identification, wayfinding, monument entrance) at park access routes, including both vehicular and pedestrian accesses

LONG-TERM

- Use the trail design standards identified in this document for future trail system expansion projects
 - » Refer to Section 6 of this document for more information

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



I enjoy walking and running on the many primary and informal trails in Purgatory Park with my family, friends and dog!

I’m concerned with the erosion occurring along informal trails that may be negatively impacting the park’s natural resources.



SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Review informal trails and remove redundant/unnecessary maintenance intensive connections**

Purgatory Park's current trail system includes miles of informal trails, some of which provide visitors with access to unique locations in the park or provide shortcuts to areas otherwise unseen from the primary trail system. At the same time, there is often a level of redundancy in the informal trail network, with multiple routes leading to the same location. While some of these trails were purposefully created, others have appeared over time through repeated encroachment by park users. Ultimately, it falls on the city to maintain these trails, including rectifying erosion issues, clearing debris, and other practices.

In an effort to streamline this trail system, and allow for these redundancies to be restored to the desired plant communities, a number of trails have been identified for closure and removal.

- **Modify maintenance practices related to mowing and maintenance of primary trail system based on proposed design standards**

The primary trail system throughout the park generally consists of a trail surface (either bituminous, or crushed limestone) with a

width of approximately 10', and a mown buffer edge ranging between 2-4' in width per side. Over time, these buffers and in turn, the trail surface itself, tend to widen. Mown trail buffers are required in areas where encroaching woody vegetation may create safety concerns along the trails. In areas of restoration, less frequent mowing should be performed to reduce weed intrusion. Mowing should be performed to reduce vegetation cascading or reducing the usable width of the trail surface. Regular assessments should be performed to determine trail buffer mowing locations.

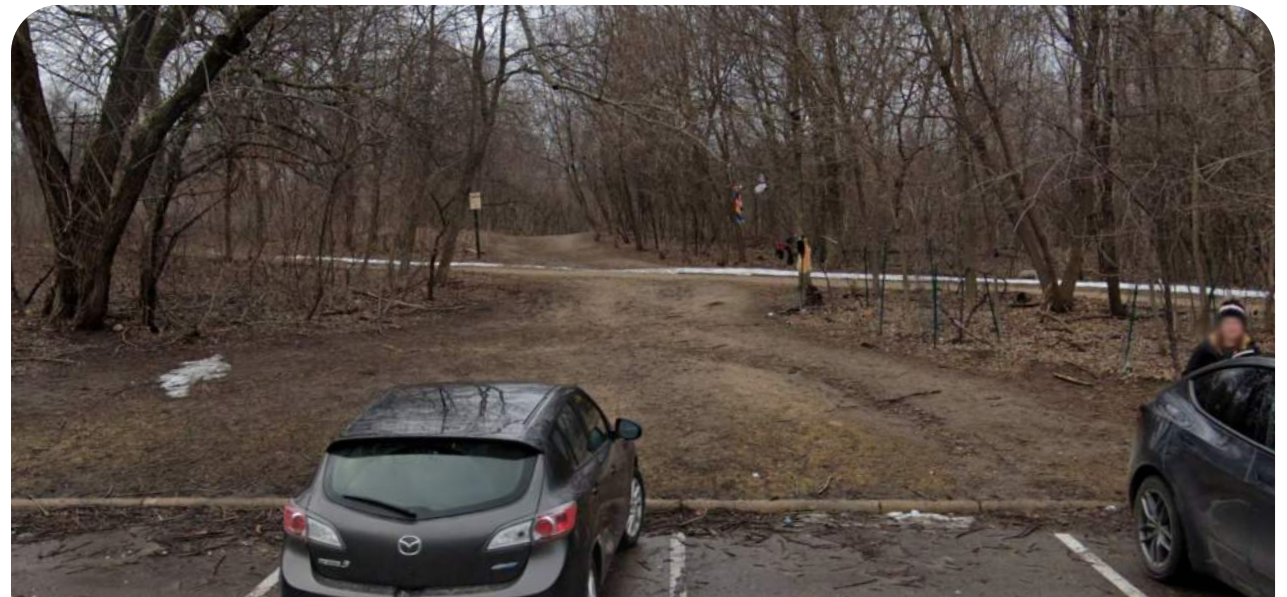
- **Formalize connection between trail and main parking lot**

Currently, visitors who access the park from the main parking lot traverse a dirt path to get from

the parking lot to the park's trail system. This foot traffic through the once established lawn has led to issues with erosion, degraded vegetation, and is not compliant with accessibility standards. To remedy the current conditions, a paved sidewalk connection should be implemented in this location.



Informal trail in the park



Existing informal connection to nearby primary trail located just south of the main parking lot area

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Replace existing timber pedestrian bridge on the north end of the park**

The current pedestrian bridge providing access across Purgatory Creek, constructed of timber framing and timber abutments, has experienced issues related to durability, and has been undermined due to erosion of the adjacent creek banks. This area has routinely seen issues related to stormwater release (both superficial and from piped water), use by dogs for recreation, and general bank erosion. When determined necessary, the existing timber bridge should be replaced with a weathered steel bridge that matches the bridge at the south end of the park near Stodola Road. Refer to the design standard section of this document for additional information.

- **Provide signage at park access points, including both vehicular and pedestrian accesses**

Appropriate signage is a key component of ensuring park users are able to safely navigate into and through Purgatory Park. Currently, signage available at the various park access points varies by location. Some locations include park identification signage, park rules, and wayfinding information, some locations lack any signage at all. Signage standards recently completed for the City's park system should be implemented in a consistent fashion, such that users from all access points are able to access the same information, and understand when they have

arrived at Purgatory Park.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Use the trail design standards identified in this document for future trail system expansion projects**

Consistency in trail design throughout the park is important from both a user and maintenance perspective. Consistency in design helps to establish a sense of place, and set the users expectations related to the park's trail facilities. Similarly, design consistency allows for simplified maintenance regimes for city staff. Design standards for the primary and informal trail systems in the park have been coordinated with City staff, and are included in Section 6 of this document. Any future trail expansion efforts should conform to these identified standards.

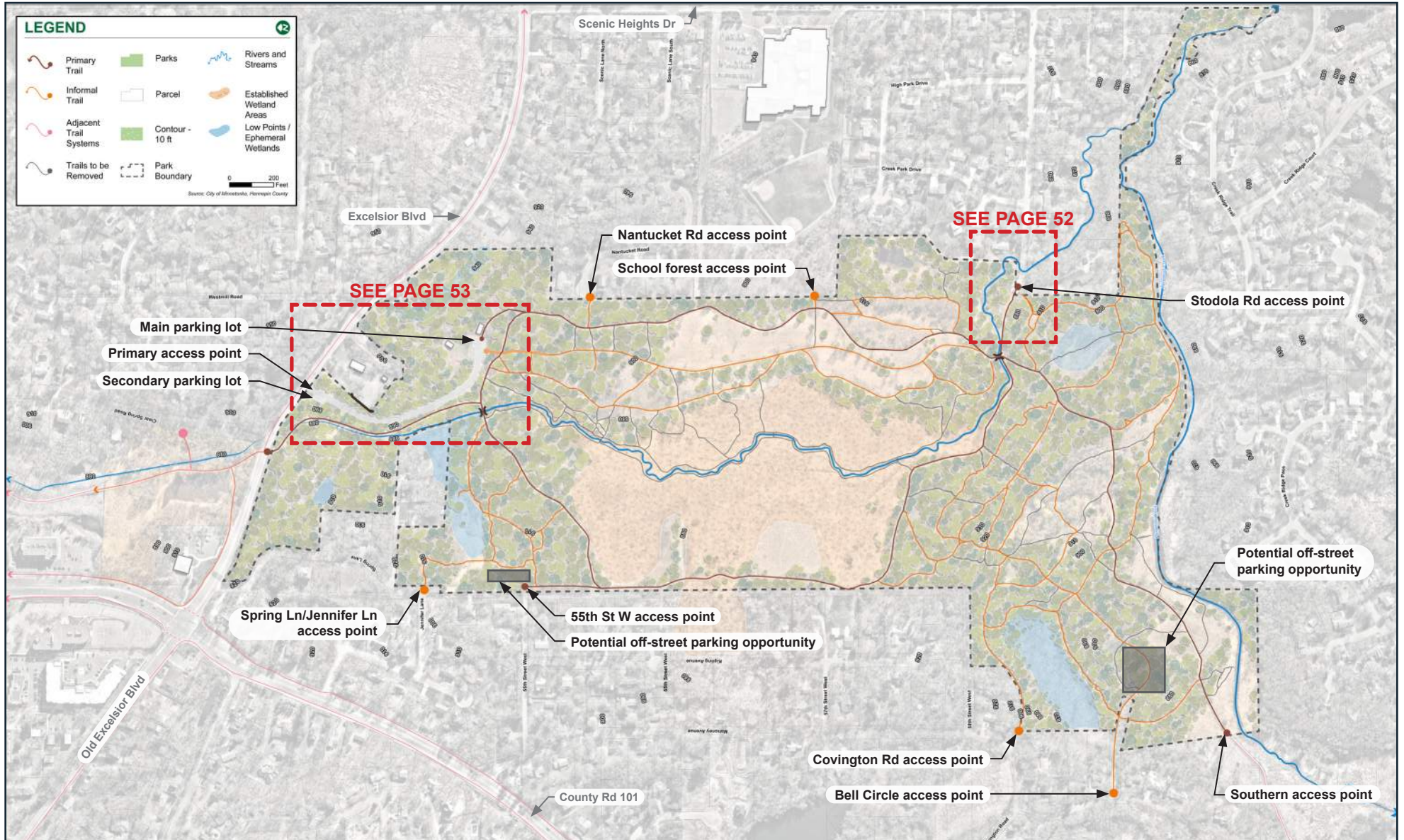


Timber pedestrian bridge near main parking lot



Frequently flooded trail on west side of park

PARK ACCESS + CIRCULATION MAP



4. PARK ACCESS - VEHICULAR

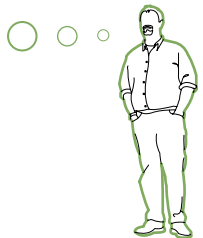
Feedback collected during the planning process was generally split when it came to vehicular access and parking demand at the park. During several site visits, the project team observed that the main parking lot was routinely full, with cars often parking along the extents of the entry drive, presenting challenges for vehicular circulation, and emergency access. Similarly, the cul-de-sac on Stodola Road was observed to be heavily used for parking as well. As such, several measures were identified to improve circulation, expand parking offerings, and mitigate safety concerns.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



I generally park along the entrance road or in the main parking lot. I feel there is adequate parking at Purgatory Park!

The informal parking area at the Stodola Road cul-de-sac should be made into a more formal parking lot for visitors to use.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- Undertake a formal study to consider safety and impacts of the Stodola Road cul-de-sac parking area

MID-TERM

- Enhancements to the park's main park access off Excelsior Boulevard

LONG-TERM

- Review and prioritize other park access points for potential parking expansion
- Expansion of parking at the Red Barn site
 - » See Red Barn site recommendations section



Stodola Road cul-de-sac parking area



Existing drainage issues along main entrance road adversely affecting nearby trails, vegetation and curbs

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Undertake a formal study to consider safety and impacts of the Stodola Road cul-de-sac parking area**

The terminus of Stodola Road on the east side of Purgatory Park, while not a formal park facility, routinely sees demand for parking for park visitors. The area, accessed through adjacent residential neighborhoods, is fairly confined by private property and driveway accesses, Purgatory Creek, wetlands within the park boundary, and adjacent slopes, leaving a relatively small footprint within to construct any formal parking areas. One concept for the area, as shown in the diagram on page 50, formalizes the cul-de-sac into a parking lot with a capacity of 11 vehicles. While purely conceptual, the City should further study demand and current impacts of parking in this area and initiate efforts to better understand options moving forward in coordination with local resident feedback and city-wide park use needs.

MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Enhancements to the park's main park access off Excelsior Boulevard**

A number of issues were discussed related to the existing park access road, parking lot, and surrounding context. Concerns include a narrow driveway, dead end parking lot that is routinely at capacity, emergency vehicle access, access to amenities from the parking area, and stormwater treatment of parking lot

runoff. The preliminary concept plan on page 51 shows a reconfigured main park access that includes the following attributes that aim to alleviating these concerns:

- **Parallel parking bump-out areas along the main park drive** to allow overflow parking but maintain clear access for emergency vehicles. These bump outs would be strategically placed in locations where adjacent grade would allow. While not increasing overall parking counts, this measure would increase safety.
- **Expansion of the main parking lot further toward the park access.** This would be accomplished by expanding the parking area into adjacent turf areas, where grade allows. We estimate this would add 22 additional parking stalls.
- **Addition of a vehicular turnaround at the end of the main parking lot.** Currently, cars that enter into the full lot have to back out, or use ADA stall access areas to turn around causing an unsafe environment for pedestrians. The Red Barn site could be a potential area to relocate restrooms. Should that occur, the location of the existing restroom facility could be modified to include a vehicular turnaround at the terminus of the main park drive and parking lot. Sizing for emergency vehicle turnaround should also be considered.
- **Implementation of best management practices adjacent to the main parking lot.** During site visits, stormwater runoff

was observed backing up into the entry drive, and also flowing directly into Purgatory Creek, causing safety and environmental concerns. Reconfiguration of the parking lot should also include stormwater BMP's such as bioretention basins to provide storage capacity, and treatment prior to water release into Purgatory Creek.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Review and prioritize other park access points for potential parking expansion**

While not currently a priority, additional demand from park users and shifting programming in the park, may warrant additional off-street parking opportunities. Several other park access points have been discussed for potential additional park access and parking facilities. These would allow easier vehicular access to more remote areas of the park, that are currently accessible on foot. These areas and initial considerations include:

55th Street West: More dedicated parking facilities could be provided here. Access to this location is convenient and in close proximity to County Road 101.

Bell Circle: Located on the southern end of Purgatory Park, the site under consideration is relatively flat, and once housed a residence that has been removed. This area, accessible from city owned access off Bell Circle, could

house a small secondary parking lot, providing more immediate access to the parks features on the south end. Vehicular access to this area is more removed, requiring users to navigate from County Road 101, to Covington Road, and down Bell Circle. Due to the nature of access to this area, the existing road network, and quiet character of the neighborhood, this would be the lowest priority for additional parking.

- **Expansion of parking at the Red Barn site**

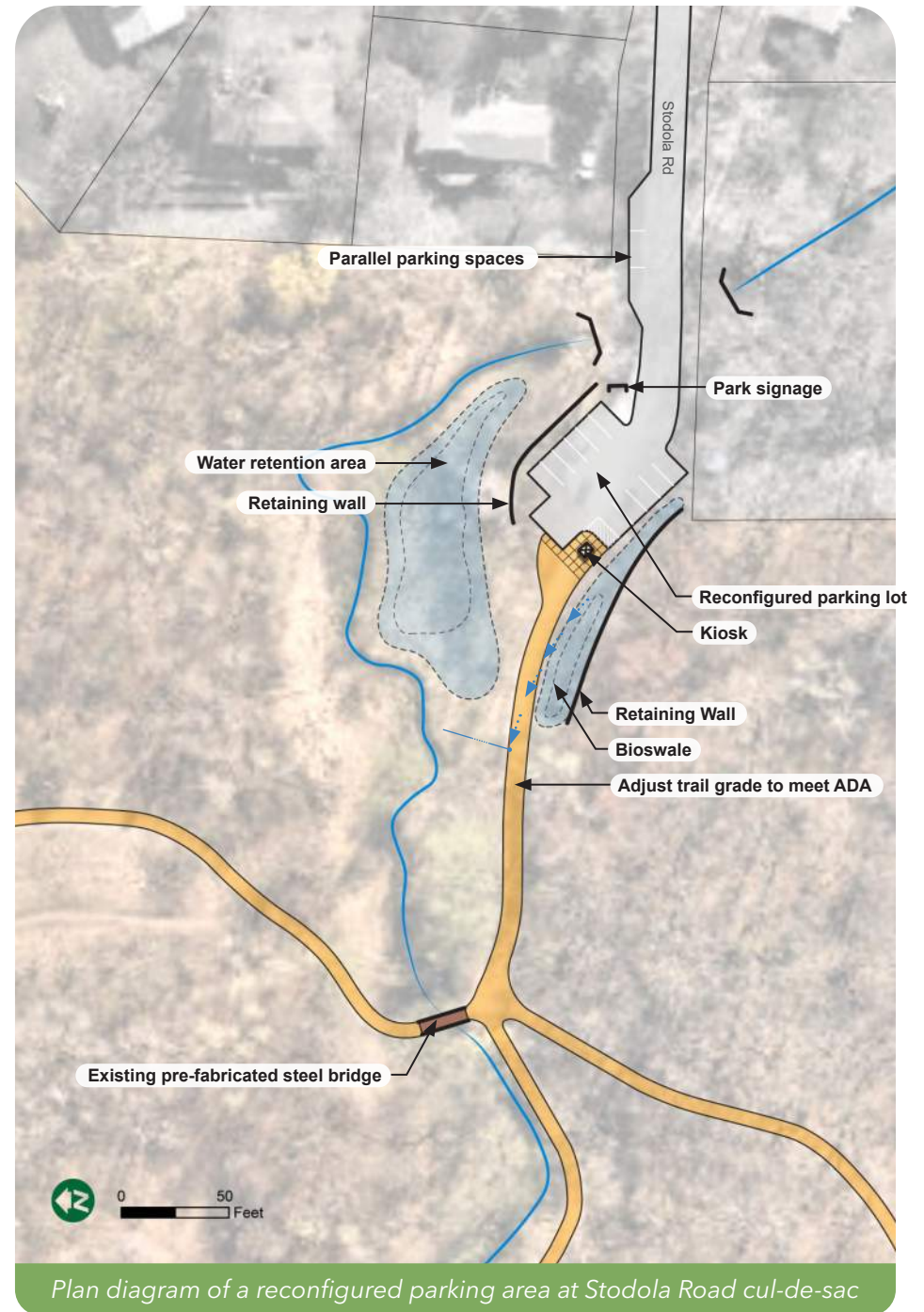
Additional parking at the Red Barn site is a viable option for parking expansion in Purgatory Park. This parking would likely be shared with users of the Excelsior Drive trail, and any other future facilities incorporated into the site.



Trail to Stodola Road cul-de-sac parking area

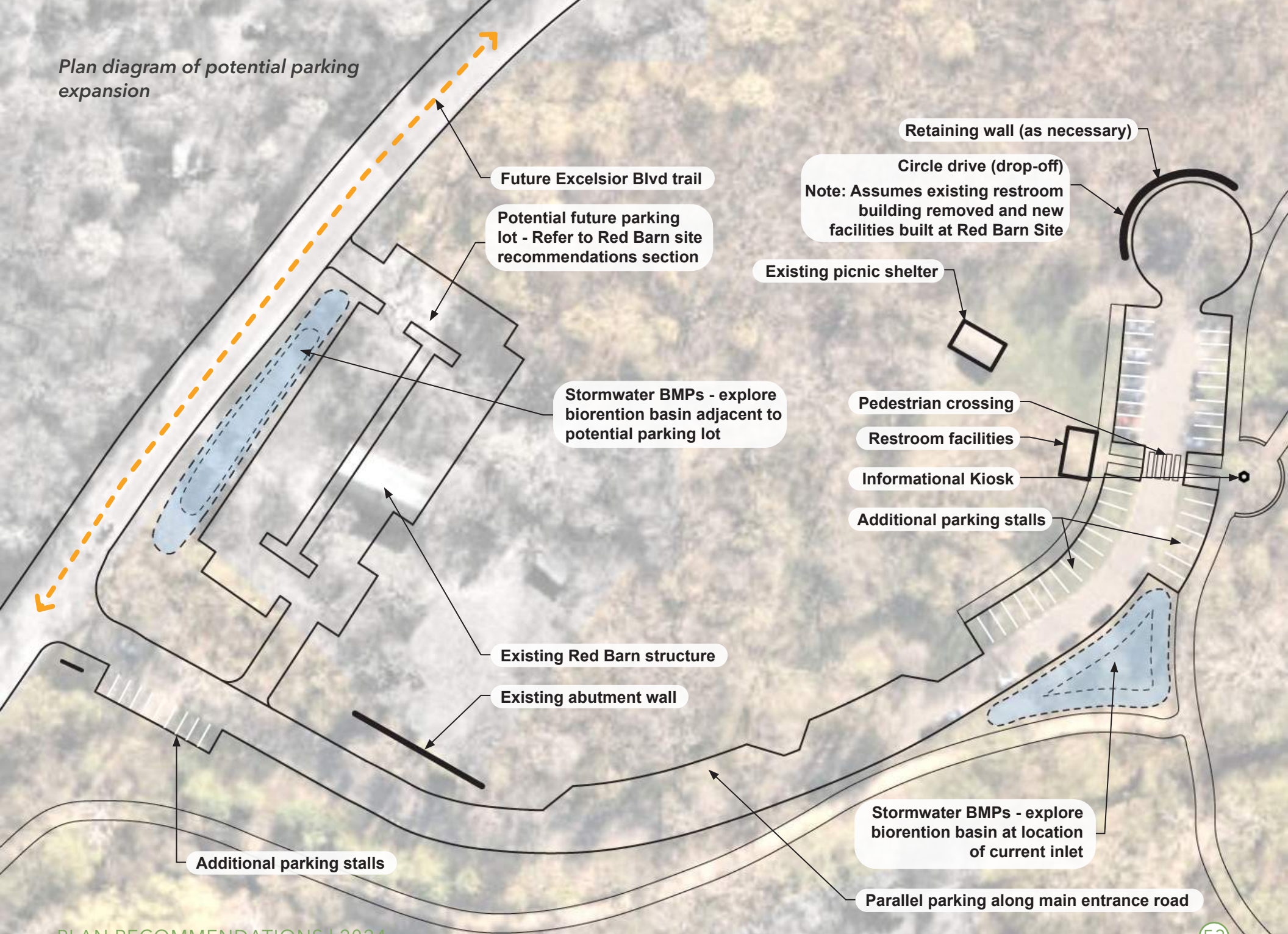


Informal parking at the Stodola Road cul-de-sac



Plan diagram of a reconfigured parking area at Stodola Road cul-de-sac

Plan diagram of potential parking expansion



Future Excelsior Blvd trail

Potential future parking lot - Refer to Red Barn site recommendations section

Stormwater BMPs - explore bioretention basin adjacent to potential parking lot

Existing Red Barn structure

Existing abutment wall

Additional parking stalls

Retaining wall (as necessary)

Circle drive (drop-off)
Note: Assumes existing restroom building removed and new facilities built at Red Barn Site

Existing picnic shelter

Pedestrian crossing

Restroom facilities

Informational Kiosk

Additional parking stalls

Stormwater BMPs - explore bioretention basin at location of current inlet

Parallel parking along main entrance road

5. THE RED BARN SITE

The Red Barn site encompasses approximately 1.23 acres of land directly adjacent to Excelsior Blvd, and the primary Purgatory Park entrance drive. The site is highly visible and well-recognized by the public due to its iconic Red Barn structure. As noted in the inventory and analysis section of this report, a previous study of the Red Barn indicated that in its current state, the structural integrity of the Red Barn would preclude its re-use as any type of public venue. A more comprehensive study of the structure, that includes potential

redevelopment opportunities and cost estimates should be undertaken.

A number of opportunities for redevelopment of the property came up during the project's public engagement process. Initial efforts related to the site should include formally incorporating the property into the Purgatory Park boundary, undertaking a comprehensive review of the Red Barn structure, and preparing the site for redevelopment. Long term, the site offers tremendous potential, with interests ranging from the development of a Climate Center facility to development as a trailhead, parking lot and additional usable park space for visitors of Purgatory Park.

Community Feedback



For many years the Red Barn has been a landmark in Purgatory Park. Can the barn be stabilized and repurposed in the future?



With Purgatory Park's status as a nature preserve, it would be beneficial to establish a nature center on the Red Barn site to educate visitors and provide additional volunteer opportunities.

Purgatory Park is in need of new parking opportunities. Because the Red Barn site is currently underutilized, a new parking lot in this area would be great!



RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM

- Formally incorporate the Red Barn property into the Purgatory Park boundary
- Undertake a comprehensive structural review of the Red Barn

MID-TERM

- Further study of the development of the Red Barn site as a Climate and Nature Center

LONG-TERM

- **Redevelopment of the site**
 - » **Redevelopment Scenario A:** Incorporation of Climate and Nature Center facility into Purgatory Park
 - » **Redevelopment Scenario B:** Develop property with additional park amenities including a trailhead, additional parking, and restroom/picnic facilities

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Formally incorporate the Red Barn site property into Purgatory Park**

The Red Barn property is owned and maintained by the City of Minnetonka but is not formally recognized as part of Purgatory Park. While there are several potential uses being considered, and interest from a number of community groups and residents, this initial step would ensure the property is managed to a similar level as the rest of the park.

- **Undertake a comprehensive structural review of the red barn**

Several years ago, the City hired a consultant to review the condition of the Red Barn structure. Results of this analysis indicated the barn had structural deficiencies that would preclude use of the barn in its current condition as a public facility. This analysis was high level in nature and did not detail potential for rehabilitation, potential re-use scenarios, or costs associated with renovation of the facility. It is anticipated that re-use of the structure would be cost prohibitive, but a more comprehensive review of the structure should be undertaken to confirm these assumptions and determine if there are components of the structure that could be salvaged and incorporated into future park improvements.

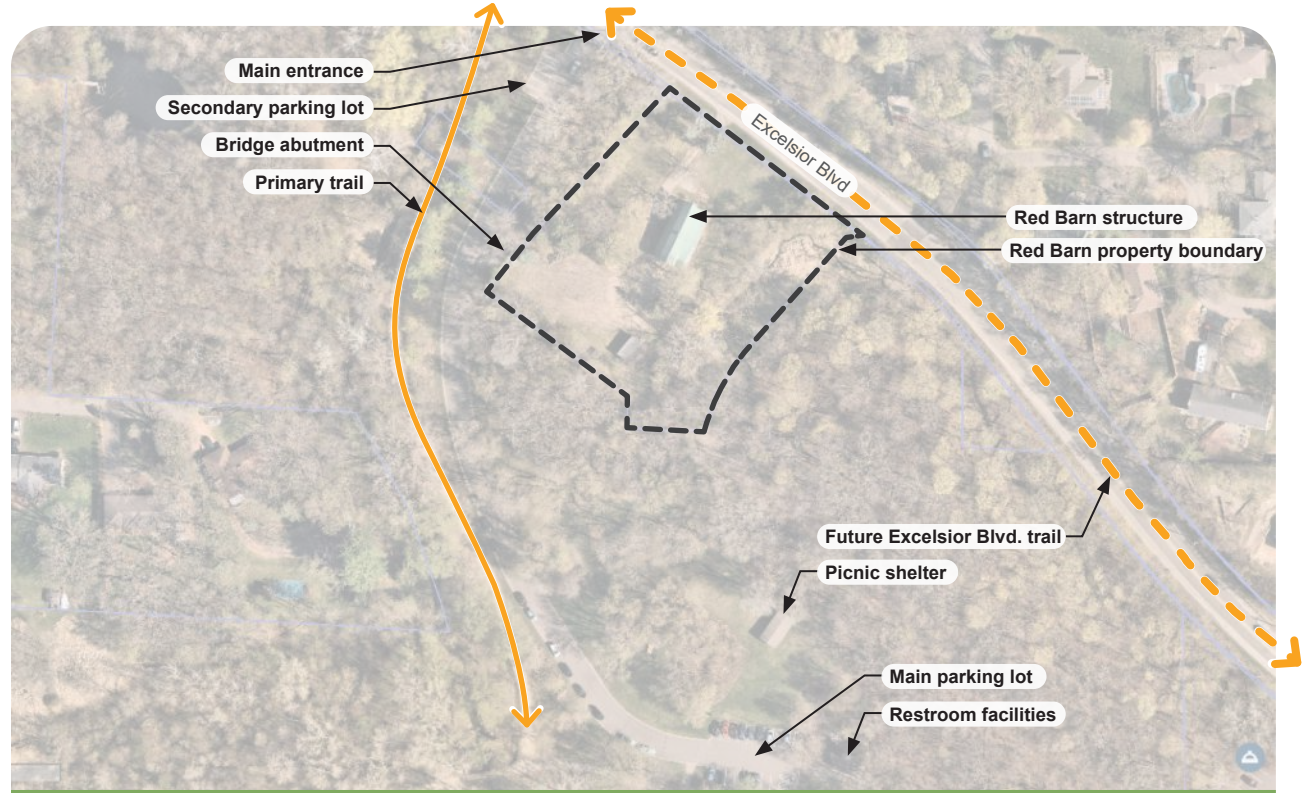
MID-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Further study of development of the Red Barn site as a Climate and Nature Center Facility**

Based on feedback collected during the engagement process, there is strong interest in exploring use of the Red Barn site to house a public use facility such as a nature center. Feedback on this use referenced the site's location adjacent to Purgatory Park. Because the park is classified as a nature preserve, this facility would offer opportunities for education and opportunities to showcase sustainable management practices.



The Red Barn



Context map of Red Barn site and nearby amenities

Before committing to such a facility, it is anticipated the City would undertake a more comprehensive study of their existing facilities, demand, revenue potential and construction, operations, and management costs associated with a new facility. If constructed, it is anticipated the center could include trailhead facilities, including publicly accessible restrooms and supporting parking facilities on-site. An example facility referenced during the engagement process is shown to the right (Westwood Hills Nature Center, St. Louis Park).

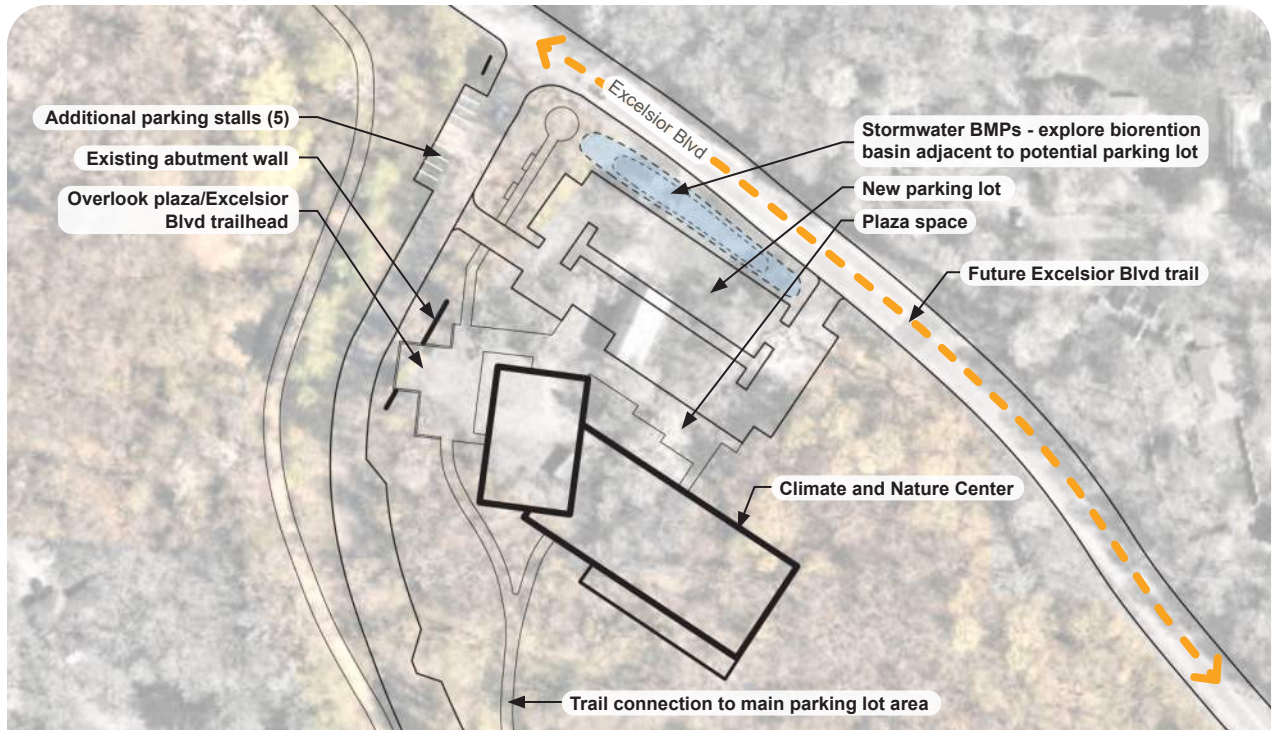


Westwood Hills Nature Center in St. Louis Park

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Redevelopment of the site**
 - » **Redevelopment Scenario A:** Incorporation of Climate and Nature Center facility into Purgatory Park
 - » **Redevelopment Scenario B:** Develop property with a trailhead, additional parking, and restroom and picnic facilities

Based on outcomes of a future Climate and Nature Center study, the Red Barn site should be redeveloped in support of Purgatory Park and Excelsior Blvd trail users. Anticipated redevelopment of the site could include two potential options: Scenario A would involve the redevelopment of the site as a Climate and Nature Center facility, whereas Scenario B would involve the redevelopment of the site as a trailhead facility with parking, signage, public restrooms and other supporting amenities. While conceptual in nature, two scenarios for redevelopment of the site were generated and are presented to the right and on the next page.



Redevelopment Scenario A: Red Barn site plan diagram with Climate + Nature Center incorporation

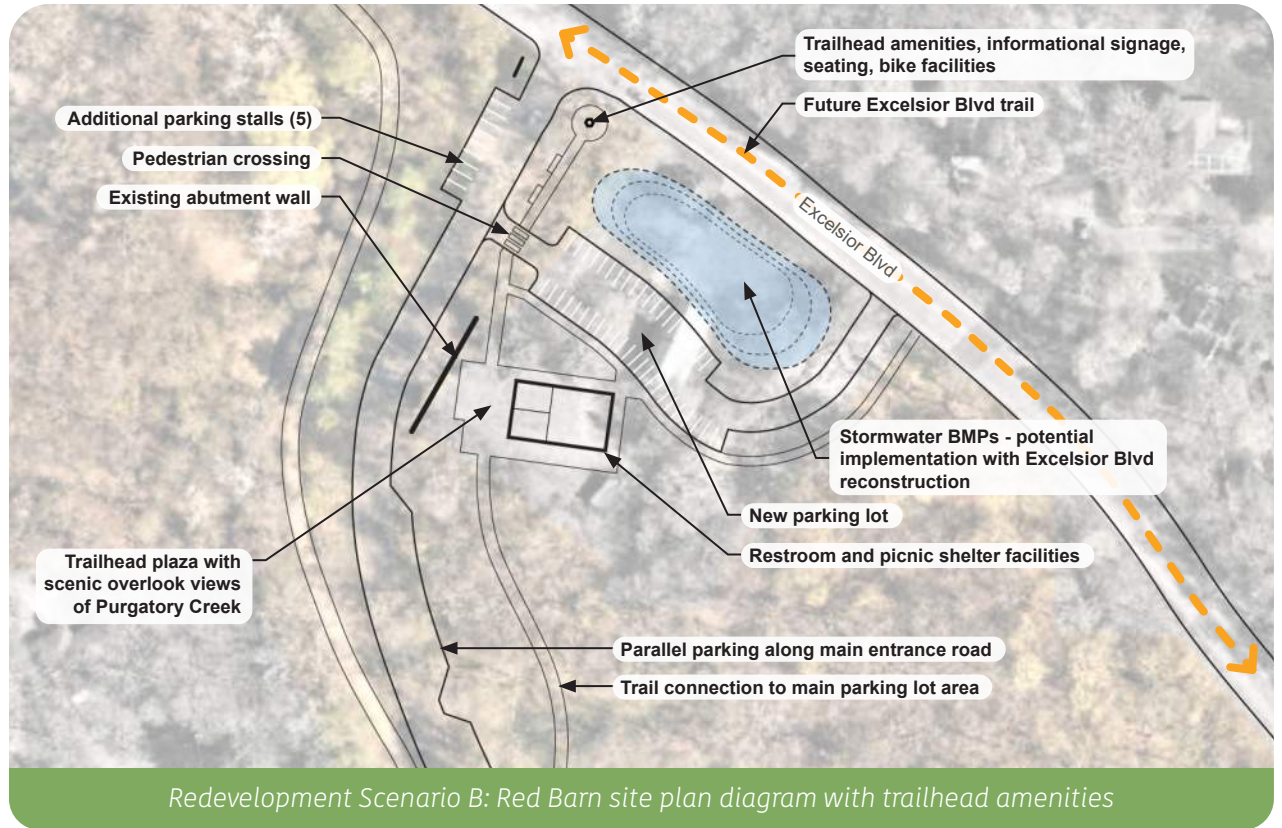
Redevelopment Scenario A:

Incorporation of a Climate and Nature Center Facility into Purgatory Park

Redevelopment Scenario A envisions the Red Barn site being redeveloped into a Climate and Nature facility. While highly conceptual in nature, the concept on the previous page shows a potential configuration for the center and its supporting amenities.

The concept shows a large, shared-use parking lot situated between Excelsior Blvd and the Climate and Nature Center building. Constructed with sustainability in mind, the parking lot would utilize stormwater management practices, including bioretention basins around the parking lot's perimeter and large landscape islands internal to the lot. The building itself would be nestled into the existing slope, where the Red Barn site drops off into the park's main parking lot and trailhead area. The southern exposure of the building would allow opportunities for solar energy capture and passive heating of the facility during the winter.

With the potential construction of a trail along Excelsior Blvd, the building could also provide public restrooms, water fountains and other amenities needed by cyclists and pedestrians. The concept envisions a shared plaza space on the west side of the building that would incorporate bike parking, wayfinding signage, bike racks, and other amenities. This shared plaza would also provide a connection through the site into Purgatory Park and the park's trail network. As a nature preserve, the park offers a great



opportunity to demonstrate sustainable infrastructure design and management practices, and highlight the native plant communities of the region.

Redevelopment Scenario B:

Develop property into a trailhead, additional parking, and restroom and picnic facilities

Preliminary plans for reconstruction of Excelsior Blvd indicate the potential for construction of a regional trail connection through the corridor, running directly adjacent to Purgatory Park and the Red Barn site. Development of a trailhead in

this location would provide additional amenities for trail and park users alike. Anticipated amenities at a trailhead include wayfinding signage, seating, bike racks, trash receptacles, and potentially public restroom facilities.

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06

DESIGN STANDARDS

Since its inception, Purgatory Park has been committed to providing an accessible, sustainable and pleasing environment for its many visitors to enjoy. In order to fulfill and enhance the mission, values and historical integrity of the park, a series of responsible landscape design standards must be defined. These design standards, which are meant to act as a guideline for any future site work, restoration projects or new construction, will ensure that Purgatory Park remains both functional and visually aesthetic for many years to come.

The following section of this report provides a set of parameters to follow as park managers/staff make design decisions regarding hardscape surfaces, softscape elements and various site furnishings within the park. Not only will these design standards inform the location, installation and maintenance of existing and proposed site facilities, they will also serve as a user manual for park managers/staff to consult on recommendations for standard materials, construction details and policy language.

OVERVIEW

To better protect and strengthen the legacies of environmental stewardship and low-impact recreation that make Purgatory Park such a unique asset to the Minnetonka community, design standards have been developed for the various site amenities present in the park. These include **primary and informal trails; boardwalks, bridges and timber stairs; parking; memorial trees and benches; and signage.**

Design standards are presented with a text summary, supporting graphics consisting of images, standard construction details or informational tables, anticipated unit costs for implementation, and estimated life cycles. This information is intended to help city staff maintain consistency of treatments throughout Purgatory Park, to budget and plan for improvement projects, and to provide a high quality park setting.

Implementation of these standards should be reviewed by appropriate agencies to ensure they conform to any regulatory requirements that may be present. These agencies include but are not limited to:

- City of Minnetonka
- Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources



Limestone trail and natural vegetation

1. PRIMARY AND INFORMAL TRAILS

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

As park managers develop future primary and informal trails in Purgatory Park, it will be important to first identify activities to be conducted during the life cycle of the trail. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CUVA) Sustainable Trail Guidelines (2012) document is a great resource that provides a series of planning steps and activities to follow during trail development. They include:

1. Identify Trail Design Team

- The trail design team's primary purpose is to serve as advisors and reviewers during the trail planning, design and construction process
- Generally consists of park landscape architects, park engineers, natural resource and restoration planners, and trail maintenance supervisors

2. Determine Intent of Trail

- Determine the trail development level and its intended use to guide its planning and design

3. Perform a General Site Assessment for Trail Alignment

- Conduct a site visit at the potential trail area to identify challenges and opportunities for its general alignment

- Identify sensitive areas and pertinent issues specific to the site that will need to be addressed during its design and construction
- Identify and administer compliance requirements

4. Develop Initial Site and Trail Plan

- Develop an initial site trail plan as a result of assessment of general conditions, field surveys and consultation with the Trail Design Team
- Develop final general layout site plan and general cost estimate

5. Flag the Trail Alignment Corridor

- Flag the proposed trail layout in the field
- Review the layout for cultural and ecological considerations

6. Finalize Construction Plan

- Finalize specifications, cost estimates, construction techniques and equipment guidance

7. Construct Trail

8. Formalize Management and Maintenance Plan

- Identify the schedule and staffing/volunteers needed for maintenance and monitoring

TRAIL PLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

According to the CUVA Sustainable Trail Guidelines (2012) document, it is important to avoid placing new and existing trails in the following areas/conditions:

- Sensitive areas where a rare and/or endangered plant or animal species may exist
- A habitat known for a rare or endangered species
- Seasonal nesting areas

If sensitive habitats exist within the trail planning area, the establishment of buffers based upon habitat sensitivity shall be developed where trails are excluded, where temporary seasonal closures would be required, and where limitations on seasonal construction exist.

When it comes to river and stream crossings, primary and informal trails will need to consider the wetland and creek buffer zones or setbacks during site planning and design. Trail locations should be established outside of the wetland and creek function buffer zone whenever feasible. In order to reduce negative impacts to rivers and streams, the number of trail crossings over them should be kept to a minimum or avoided whenever possible. When stream crossing is the only viable option, trails should be designed and

constructed on a gentle grade at no greater than 8%. Additionally, stream and river crossings should be located at riffle areas instead of pools or meanders, as riffles are relatively stable, have the coarsest substrate, and can best accommodate a crossing. Also, trails should not be located parallel to a stream/waterway for an extended distance; rather, the trail should move toward and away from the waterway at appropriate intervals. Any trail placement in designated wetland zones should be avoided whenever possible. If a trail is constructed within a wetland, a boardwalk system is recommended.

Another important consideration during trail development and placement is existing drainage patterns. If a trail is not placed in coordination with existing drainage patterns, it is likely that the trail will be damaged and widened over time as trail users attempt to avoid puddles and muddy conditions. Park managers should avoid placing trails on primary drainage paths and should instead utilize contour trail design when possible.

Additional considerations when developing new trails or improving existing trails include vegetation and disturbed/developed areas. New and existing trails should avoid areas under restoration or containing high quality ecosystems with high diversity and quality; the alignment of trails should reduce fragmentation of existing blocks of woodlands whenever possible. Where trails are proposed in disturbed or previously developed areas, there are a number of

Table 1: Design guidance for primary and informal trails

DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR PRIMARY AND INFORMAL TRAILS*			
TRAIL CLASS		Informal Trails	Primary Trails
TREAD WIDTH		12" - 18"	8'
TREAD SURFACE/MATERIAL		Native with limited or no grading	Crushed limestone, asphalt, or permeable stabilized materials where feasible. Stream crossings are typically structures to accommodate high trail volume including bicycles
TRAIL GRADE	Target Range (>90% of trail)	< 18%	< 4%; where greater than 4%, alternative materials to aggregate should be considered in design and maintenance
	Short Pitch Max. (up to 200' lengths)	25%	8%
	Max. Pitch Density	< 5% of trail	< 3% of trail
CROSS-SLOPE	Target Range	5% - 10%	3% - 5%
	Max.	Up to natural side-slope	
DESIGN CLEARING	Width	6 - 12" outside of tread edge	24" outside of trail edge
	Height	6'	8' - 9'
DESIGN TURNS	Radius	No minimum	8' - 12'
CONSTRUCTED FEATURES & TRAIL ELEMENTS (BRIDGES, WALLS, RAISED TRAIL, STEPS, ETC.)		Structures are minimal to non-existent; where they do exist, they are limited in size, scale and number. Structures where protection of trail infrastructure and resources are needed. Natural drainage and infiltration practices are utilized. Primitive foot crossing where applicable.	Structures are present and substantial. Trail infrastructure meets ADA requirements. Substantial trail bridges are used at water crossings. Drainage structures are present.
TRAIL AMENITIES		None/Limited/Infrequent for safety and resource protection purposes. Trailheads/Visitor Services limited.	Amenities exist for safety and resource protection and visitor services. Trailheads/Visitor Services are present with full amenities.
TRAIL SIGNAGE		Minimum for basic direction. Limited to resource protection. Limited interpretive signs.	Regulation, resource protection. Directional and park informational/interpretive signs
TRAIL MANAGEMENT		Low level use, trail challenging and typically for mid to highly skilled users. Limited accessible use.	High use, especially for users with minimal skill and experience. Easy travel with no/very limited challenges. Fully accessible.

* Derived from the Cuyahoga Valley Nation Park (CUVA) Sustainable Trail Guidelines, 2012

considerations to keep in mind, including:

- Presence of utilities
- Established right of ways
- Remaining structures
- Cultural or archaeological significance
- Presence of hazardous materials or contaminated conditions

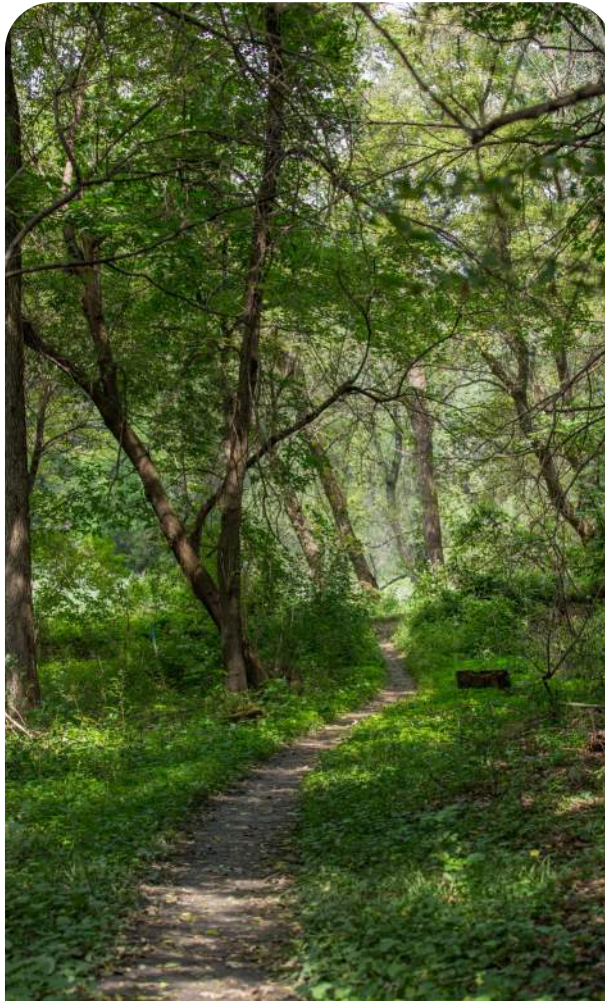
If a trail is to be closed or a section of it is to be relocated, the closed/old trail should be restored to a condition that is consistent with the site's natural resources. Included below are recommended steps to take when reverting a trail to a natural condition and avoiding the continued use of the trail:

- Tilling or scarifying the retired tread so that new plants can seed themselves (tilling at least 2" deep is recommended)
- Planting or transplanting from old route native species to avoid invasive plant issues
- Disguising and blocking the corridor with leaf litter or other natural material to eliminate the visual corridor and the risk of continual use on the closed section of trail.

The table on this and the previous page provides design guidance for the two main types of trails that exist in Purgatory Park, including informal and primary trails.

<p>TRAIL MAINTENANCE INDICATORS AND INTENSITY*</p>	<p>Routine annual maintenance. Maintenance in response to reports of unusual resource problems requiring repair/resource protection/trail safety</p>	<p>Routine annual maintenance. Condition improvement maintenance typically performed annually. Targeted high-level of accessibility. Trail prepared for earliest opportunity to use in-season. Maintenance in response to reports of unusual resource problems requiring repair/resource protection/trail safety.</p>
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* Continued from previous page



Informal Trail in Purgatory Park



Primary Trail in Purgatory Park

BITUMINOUS TRAIL (PRIMARY)



UNIT COST

\$40/square yard

ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

15 years

LIMESTONE/AGGREGATE TRAIL (PRIMARY)



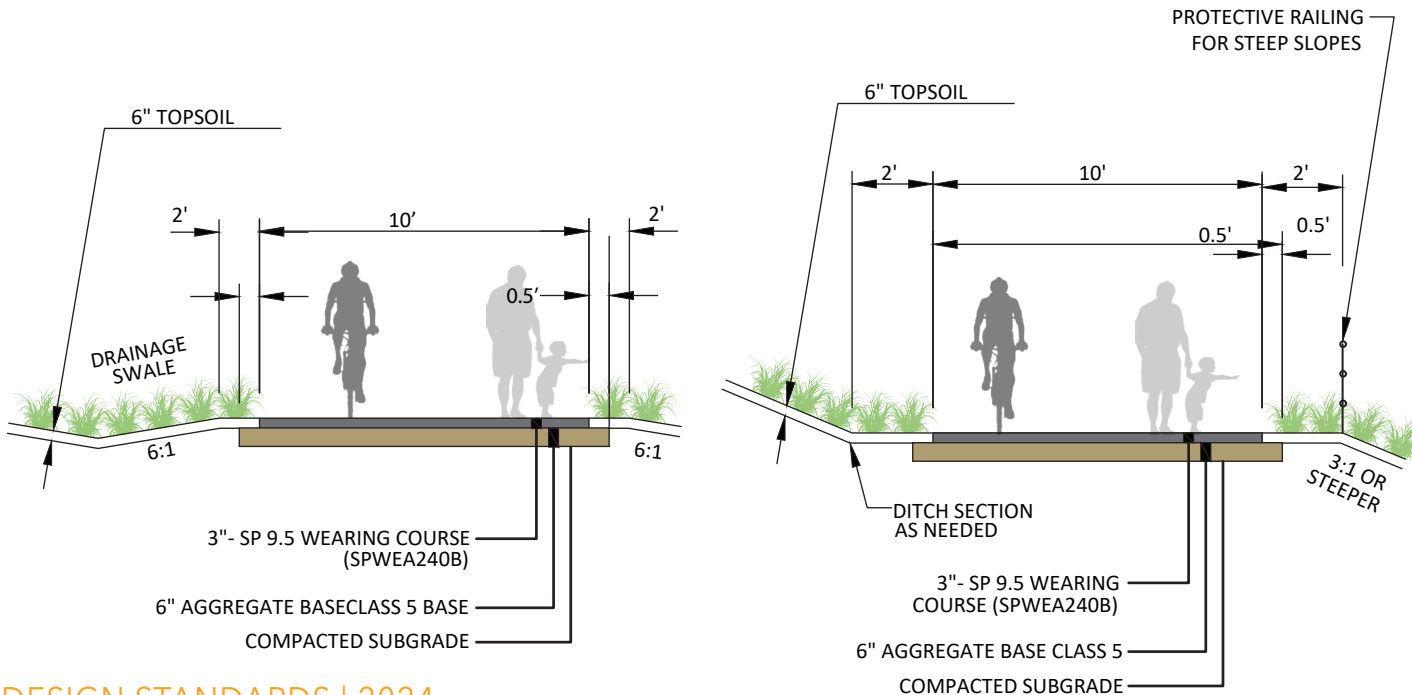
UNIT COST

\$175/cubic yard

ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

10 years

TYPICAL SECTIONS: TRAIL CONSTRUCTION IN FLAT AND SIDE SLOPE LOCATIONS



NOTES:

PROVIDE 2' CLEAR ZONE ADJACENT TO TRAIL FREE OF FIXED OBSTRUCTIONS.

IF CRUSHED LIMESTONE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION, PLACE 3" CRUSHED LIMESTONE IN PLACE OF BITUMINOUS, AND CLASS A AGGREGATE BASE IN PLACE OF CLASS 5.

CRUSHED LIMESTONE TO BE 3/8" LIMESTONE SCREENINGS, COMPACTED TO 95%.

2. BRIDGES, BOARDWALKS + STAIRS

BRIDGES

Bridges play a vital role in facilitating circulation through wet, muddy or marshy lands, as well as over streams, rivers and other waterways. Purgatory Park features two pedestrian bridge crossings over Purgatory Creek, both of which help visitors get from one area of the park to another. The first pedestrian bridge, located just west of the main parking lot and entrance road into the park, can be classified as a wooden bridge, whereas the second pedestrian bridge, located a few hundred feet west of the Stodola Road cul-de-sac parking area, can be classified as a pre-fabricated steel bridge. The pre-fabricated steel bridge was originally supplied by Continental, which has since been bought out by Contech Engineered Solutions.



Timber bridge near main parking lot

Table 2: Wetland evaluation for trails

WETLAND EVALUATION FOR TRAILS*		
WETLAND CATEGORY	DEFINITION**	RECOMMENDED ACTION
CATEGORY 1	Supports minimal wildlife habitat and minimal hydrological and recreational functions. Does not provide critical habitat for threatened, rare or endangered species and may have predominance of non-native species. Limited for restoration.	Use of boardwalk systems are required and designed with minimal impact to wetland.
CATEGORY 2	Supports moderate wildlife habitat and hydrological and recreational functions. Dominated by native species but typically do not support threatened, rare or endangered species.	Full restriction to trail installation is recommended. If the trail cannot support an alternative route and have high interpretive value, a trail within 25 feet of the wetland shall use a boardwalk system with minimal impact. Each Category 2 wetland should be evaluated on site by the park ecologist or wetland biologist to determine its impact and options for implementation.
CATEGORY 3	Supports high levels of diversity and high quality wildlife habitat, hydrological and recreational functions. Contains high levels of diversity, high proportion of native species and provides habitat for threatened or endangered species.	Full restriction to trail installation is recommended. If the trail cannot support an alternative route and has a high interpretive value, a trail within 75 feet of the wetland shall use a boardwalk system with minimal impact. Each Category 3 wetland should be evaluated on site by the park ecologist or wetland biologist to determine its impact and options for implementation.

* Derived from the Cuyahoga Valley Nation Park (CUVA) Sustainable Trail Guidelines, 2012

** Based on the Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3745-1-54 (C)(1)

BOARDWALKS

Purgatory Park does not currently feature any boardwalks, although the park does have a number of wetland areas in which a boardwalk could be constructed to facilitate movement throughout the park that may help reduce damage to existing natural resources. The CUVA Sustainable Trail Guidelines document splits wetlands into three categories, differentiated by the amount of wildlife habitat and hydrological and recreational functions they support. See [Table XX](#) for more information on each category.

If a trail is constructed within a wetland, a boardwalk system is recommended. The design for the boardwalk should provide a layout that minimizes the following:

- The width of the boardwalk tread
- The number and size of pilings needed for excavation
- The use of best practices that minimize the size of excavation

If a boardwalk is to be constructed over streams or rivers, the crossings should span the channel of the stream or river and any boardwalk posts or fill should be kept above the ordinary high water mark of the channels.

Additionally, trail or boardwalk construction in or near wetlands should consider the following practices to minimize impacts to aquatic resources:

- Construct during winter if feasible
- Minimize width of temporary access roads for construction access

Based on the CUVA Sustainable Trail Guidelines, further considerations for the construction and implementation of boardwalks and bridges include:

- The scale, width and materials for structures should be compatible with trail use, trail experience and minimizing resource impacts
- Span of bridges should aim not to install piers or footers into waterway
- Spans greater than 24 feet should examine alternate material from wood to maintain its long-term sustainability
- A minimum bridge width should match the width of the trail
- Railings, materials and styles should be considered for the level of use, ADA requirements, proximity and characteristics of trail
- Cultural landscape and historic characteristics of the area should be considered

TIMBER STAIRS

When site constraints prevent trail construction at or less than the maximum sustainable grade (assume 15%) by using curvilinear alignments or turns, steps can be an appropriate design solution. Additionally, steps may be a favorable design option when the existing ground material where trail construction is planned isn't stable enough to retain its form without containment, or where large obstacles such as tree roots and rocks must be built over, instead of through. Trail steps can be constructed in long continuous runs, or in shorter segments with standard

trail construction connections between.

Currently, an existing timber staircase is present in Purgatory Park near Stodola Road. This staircase, leading users from a primary trail at the base, to an informal trail network and lookout point at the top, uses timber construction, with aggregate treads. Concern has been expressed regarding this construction method, due to the aggregate material washing away or settling over time, leading to rutting and potential trip hazards. In lieu of this standard, a more comprehensive construction of timber risers and treads is proposed for the park.

While stairs are a viable solution to addressing grade issues on the park's trail system, it is recommended that trail alignment alternatives be explored that don't require this more intrusive and costly intervention. In addition to cost considerations, trail stairs are often seen as detracting from the natural environment that they are set in and intended to provide access to.



Timber stairs on east side of park

PRE-FABRICATED STEEL BRIDGE



UNIT COST

CONTECH CONTINENTAL PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE		
Options	40'x8' Span (Weathered Steel w/ Wood Decking)	\$50,000
	50'x8' Span (Weathered Steel w/ Wood Decking)	\$60,000
Abutments		\$20,000
Install		\$30,000

ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

Wood decking = 20-25 years
Overall structure = 50+ years

CONTACT INFORMATION

Jake Vogel - Senior Bridge Consultant
Contech Engineered Solutions
jake.vogel@conteches.com

GENERAL BRIDGE DESIGN NOTES

- 1) Bridge design is Connector Truss style bridge with underhung floor beam
- 2) Ends are modified from standard design to include an angled member

TIMBER STAIRS



Example of timber stairs with paver treads



Example of full timber construction

GENERAL STAIR DESIGN NOTES

- 1) Where soils and site conditions allow for excavation, utilize timber construction with paver treads.
- 2) Where poor soils, or obstacles such as roots, rocks or other prevent on-grade construction, use a raised construction method using full timber construction.

ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

Wood framing and decking = 20-25 years

BOARDWALK



MAC Nature Center Area in Crystal, MN

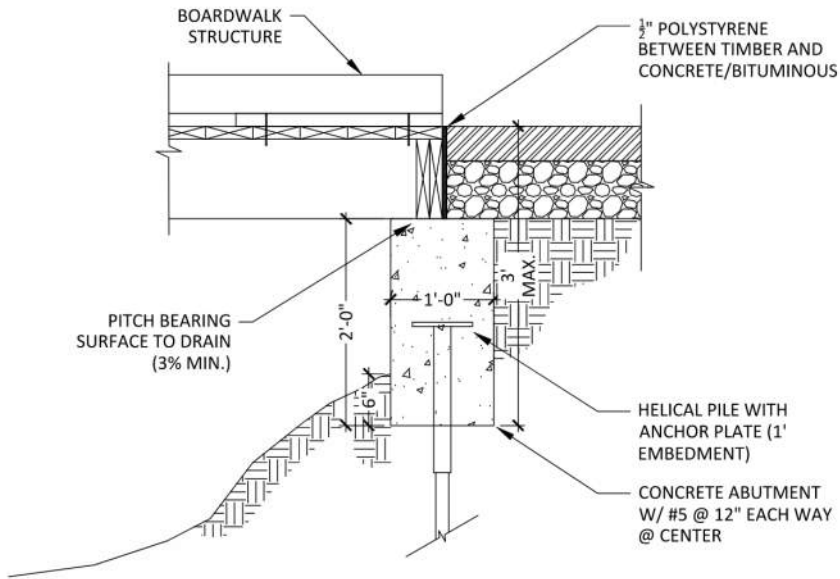
UNIT COST

Helical Pier	EACH	\$1,500	Assume 2 piers every 10' of length
Concrete Abutment	EACH	\$7,500	At start and end of boardwalk segment
Boardwalk	SQ. FT.	\$40	Timber frame and decking construction, rated for lightweight maintenance vehicles/snow removal

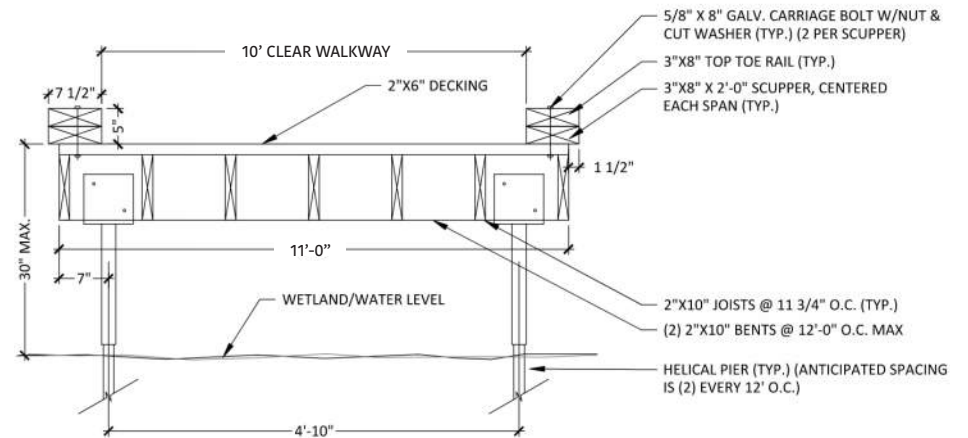
ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

30 years

TYPICAL SECTION: BOARDWALK ABUTMENT



TYPICAL SECTION: BOARDWALK STRUCTURE



NOTES:

BOARDWALK DESIGN SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY A STRUCTURAL ENGINEER PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION. DESIGN MAY VARY BASED ON FIELD CONDITIONS.

3. PARKING

Parking lots in Purgatory Park, including the large primary lot near the restroom building, and small auxiliary lot adjacent to Excelsior Blvd. are constructed of bituminous surfacing, with concrete curb and gutter edge treatment, which is a standard practice in many park applications. These parking lots account for a significant percentage of the impermeable ground cover within the park, and present opportunities to incorporate BMP's in the design that can aid in reducing runoff (increasing infiltration). These paving enhancements can also be coupled with additional stormwater BMP's adjacent to the lots to further enhance water quality and reduce runoff volume and velocity adjacent to Purgatory Creek. Any parking lot improvements should conform to City and other jurisdictional requirements.

STANDARD PARKING LOT W/ CURB + GUTTER AND BITUMINOUS SURFACING

UNIT COST

CONCRETE CURB + GUTTER	LINEAR FT.	\$30
BITUMINOUS PAVING (WITH AGGREGATE BASE)	SQ. FT.	\$15

ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

15-20 Years

PERMEABLE PAVER PARKING LOT

UNIT COST

PERMEABLE PAVER (WITH SUBBASE PREP, DRAINAGE ROCK)	SQ. FT.	\$30
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ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

15-20 Years



Bituminous surfacing with curb + gutter



Main parking lot at the end of the entry drive



Bituminous drive w/ permeable paver parking

4. MEMORIAL TREES + BENCHES

MEMORIAL TREES

Currently, there are several locations in Purgatory Park that feature memorial trees; however, the park does not follow any specific set of standards for their placement. In the absence of city-wide guidelines for the placement of memorial trees, the following standards and guidelines should be followed as new memorial trees are requested and implemented in Purgatory Park:

- Memorial trees can generally be planted throughout the extents of Purgatory Park, as long as the placement conforms to ongoing maintenance regimes and management plans for the selected location as identified in the
- City's Natural Resources Plan and Community Forest Management Plan documents.
 - » A City Forestry Technician will work with applicants on a case by case basis to identify an appropriate location for tree placement.
- Memorial tree species shall be selected from the approved tree planting list included in the City's Community Forest Management Plan (currently under development), and be reviewed by city forestry staff.

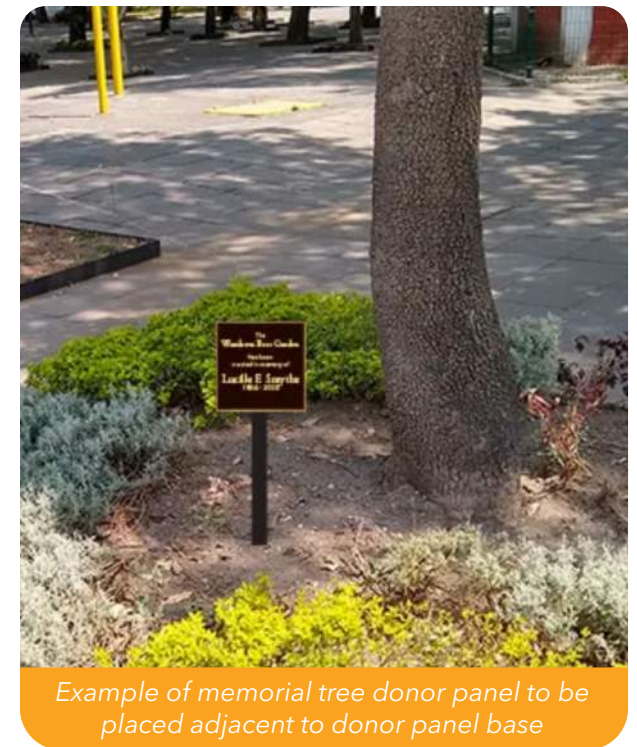
- Memorial tree size shall conform to city standards relative to new tree plantings, as described in the City's Community Forest Management Plan. Size standards are as follows:
 - » 2" caliper, balled & burlap for deciduous trees
 - » 6' height, balled & burlap for coniferous trees
- Memorial trees placed in mowed or maintained areas are eligible for

installation of a donor plaque at the base of the tree. At the time of purchase, applicants can include proposed plaque language for review by city staff

- Upon planting, memorial trees will be maintained by city staff for 10 years. After that period of time, the city reserves the right to change or remove any memorial tree.



Memorial tree (fully-grown) example



Example of memorial tree donor panel to be placed adjacent to donor panel base

MEMORIAL BENCHES

Similarly, memorial benches are scattered throughout Purgatory Park, including placement adjacent to primary trails and more remotely along the extensive informal trail system. The condition of existing benches varies, with some nearing the end of their lifecycle. Existing benches will be replaced on a case-by-case basis when determined necessary by city staff. As existing benches are replaced and new benches are installed, the following standards shall be adhered to, to the extent possible:

- Generally, memorial benches shall be placed 2' off the edge of the adjacent trail surface. Installations shall include a concrete pad, bench, and where necessary, modular block retaining wall on the perimeter to retain either the back slope or the bench pad itself
 - » When installed adjacent to bituminous trail, the bituminous edge shall be sawn to provide a clean edge for installation of the concrete pad.
 - » When installed adjacent to crushed limestone trail, replace displaced trail surfacing upon completion of bench pad installation. Ensure trail surfacing is compacted to trail design standards.
- Memorial benches shall consist of recycled plastic slats, powder-coated brown framing, with attached donor plaque centered on back-rest.

Benches shall be surface-mounted to concrete pad.

- City staff will work with applicants on a case-by-case basis to determine placement of future memorial benches within the park.
- Upon installation, city staff will maintain memorial benches for 10

years. After that period of time, the city reserves the right to change or remove any memorial bench.

- Prior to bench removal, attempt will be made to contact the applicant via the contact information on file with the application.



Example of memorial bench in the park

MEMORIAL BENCHES



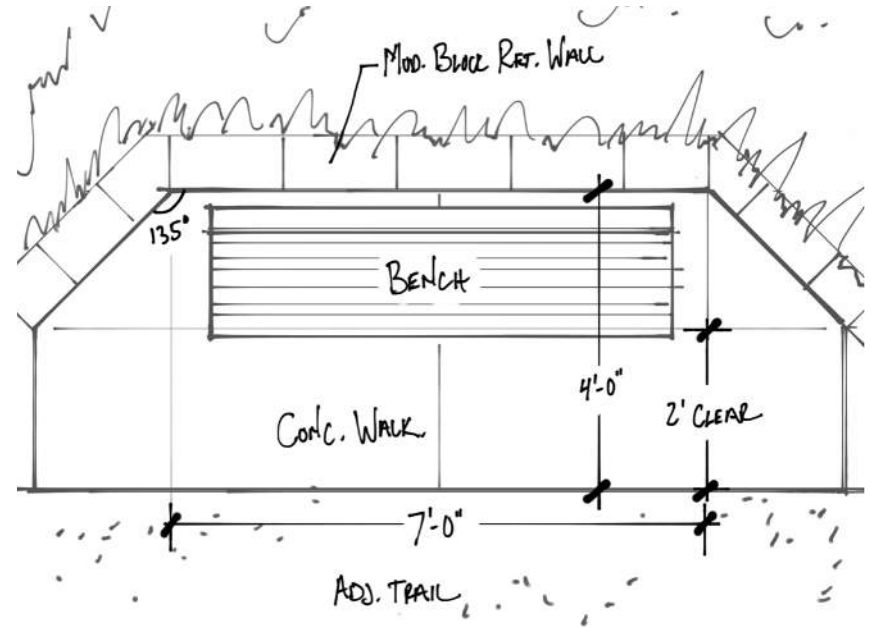
UNIT COST

BENCH	EACH	\$1,800
CONCRETE PAD	LUMP SUM	\$500
RETAINING WALL	SQ. FT.	\$125
3-COURSE WALL	LUMP SUM	\$3,000

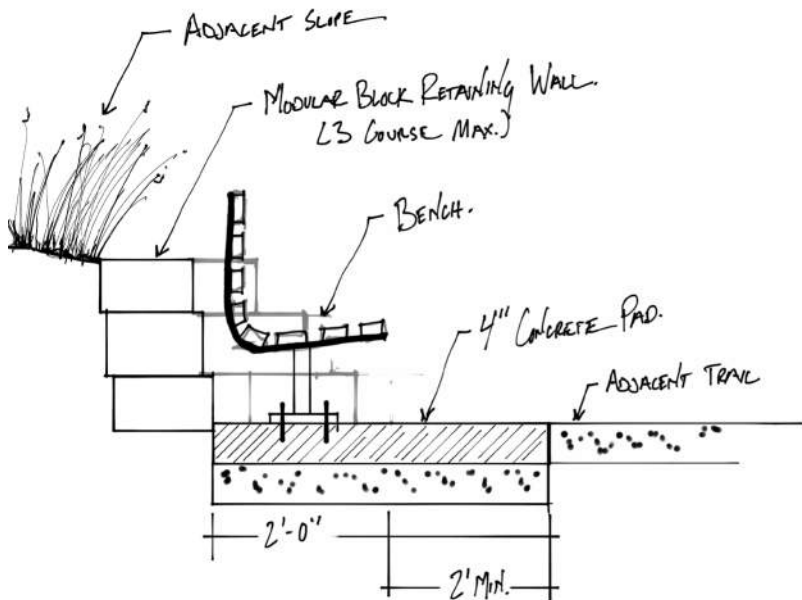
ANTICIPATED LIFE CYCLE

20 Years

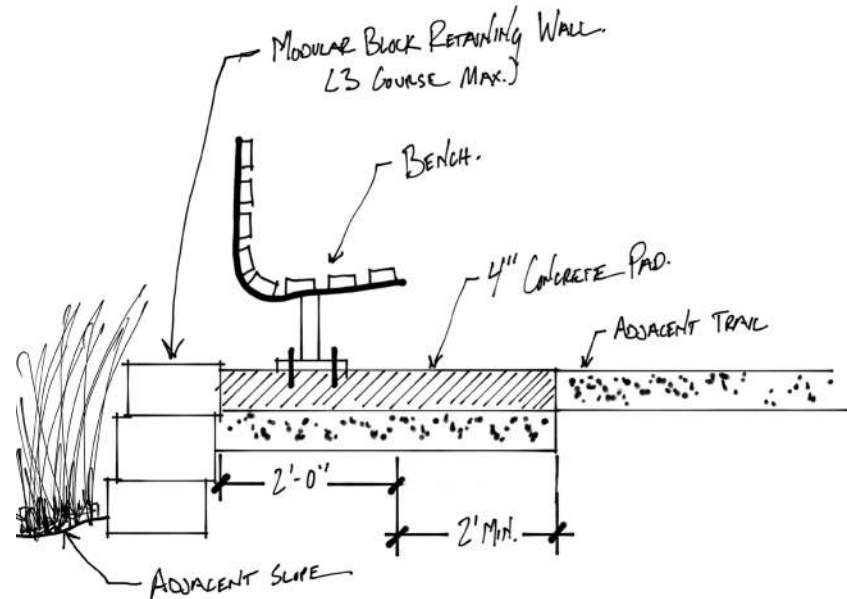
TYPICAL SECTION: BENCH PLAN



TYPICAL SECTION: BENCH ON PAD CUT INTO ADJACENT HILLSIDE



TYPICAL SECTION: BENCH ON PAD FILLING ADJACENT HILLSIDE



5. SIGNAGE

Signage is often an afterthought in the planning of parks but can play an integral part in the usability and identity of a park. An effective park signage system provides adequate information and direction for people to navigate around the park, encourages interaction and learning experiences, communicates park rules, and helps to establish a consistent brand and identity for the park system, and specific park locations. Park signage can encompass a hierarchy of sign types, for differing applications depending on context including monument/entry signage, interpretive signage, informational signage, wayfinding signage, and other types.

In 2023, The City developed a comprehensive exterior park signage package for implementation throughout its park system. This package includes a variety of signage, and provides clear direction on when and where each type of signage should be implemented. This section of the design standards includes a selection of signage from that package that has specific relevancy to Purgatory Park. These signs should be implemented on a case by case basis, but generally adhere to the guidance laid forth in the signage design standards documents.

PRIMARY ENTRANCE PARK MONUMENT - SIGN TYPE A1



"Primary entrance monument signs are intended to be used as major community parks entrance identification. Signs are placed at major entrance points along the roadways. In addition, primary entrance monuments can be placed at secondary or smaller parks where higher speed roadways require signage to be as large as possible in size for maximum visibility and readability due to high speed traffic or surrounding road clutter."

WALL MOUNT EXISTING SIGNAGE RETROFIT - SIGN TYPE B5

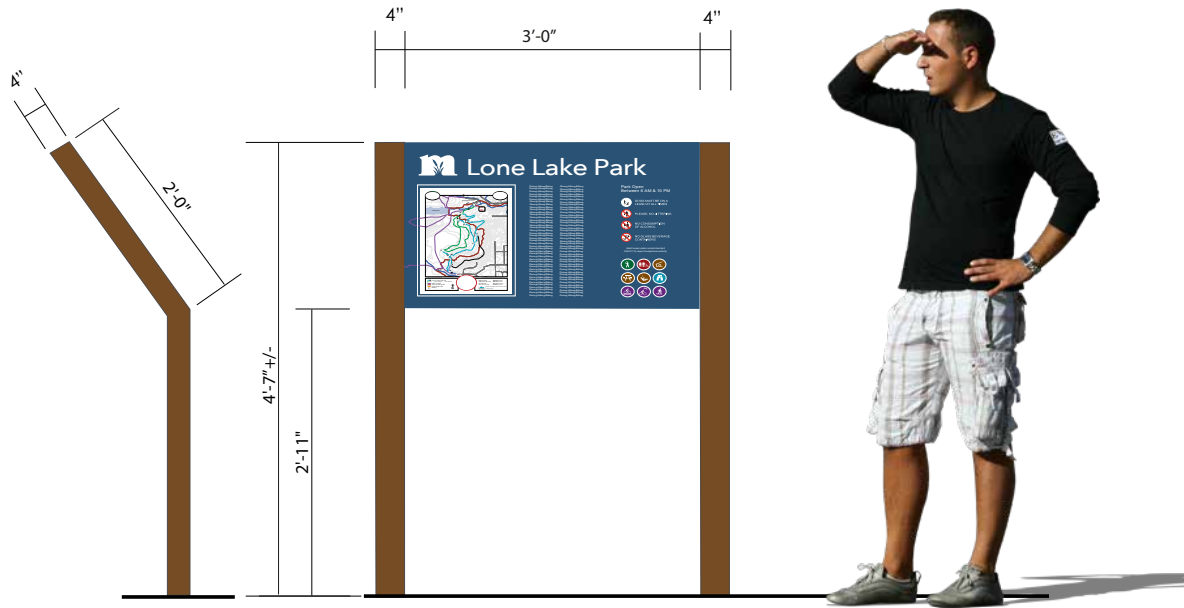
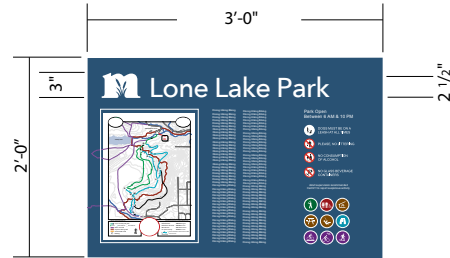


“Provides a map of the area, with key destinations, park rules, trail, and natural area information and photos. In addition, activity pictograms are included and current activities and notices can be posted. These are placed on existing recreation structures, they are designed to be larger than the existing framed inset areas on buildings to be surface-mounted covering the areas.”

EXISTING



PRIMARY TABLETOP - SIGN TYPE E1



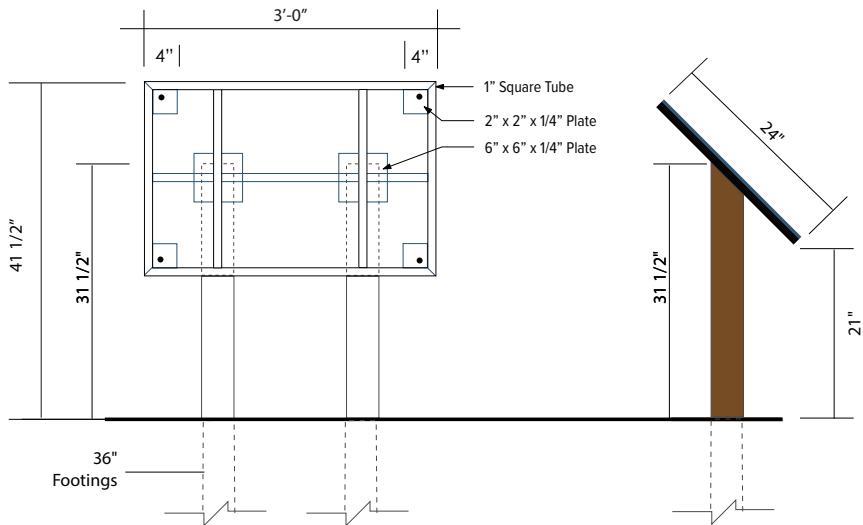
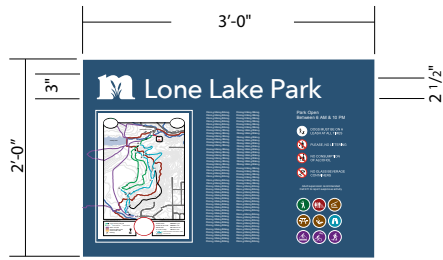
INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE

"Provide pertinent information regarding natural features or specialized information regarding a specific plants, habitat, wildlife, landscapes, gardens, and lakes or ponds. Informational signs should be located where information is to be highlighted. Pictograms and photography images can be digitally applied temporarily or long-term with vinyl."

PRIMARY TABLETOP

"Utilize for high visibility and readability without obscuring landscape vistas."

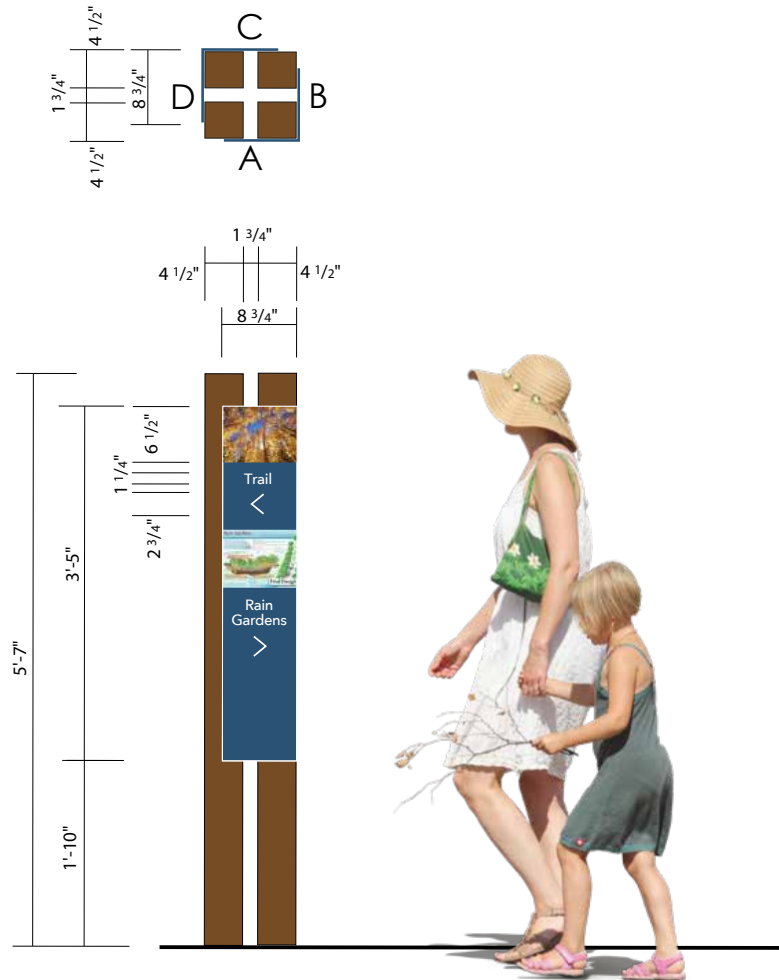
SECONDARY TABLETOP (LLP SIGNAGE/POST) - SIGN TYPE E1B



INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE

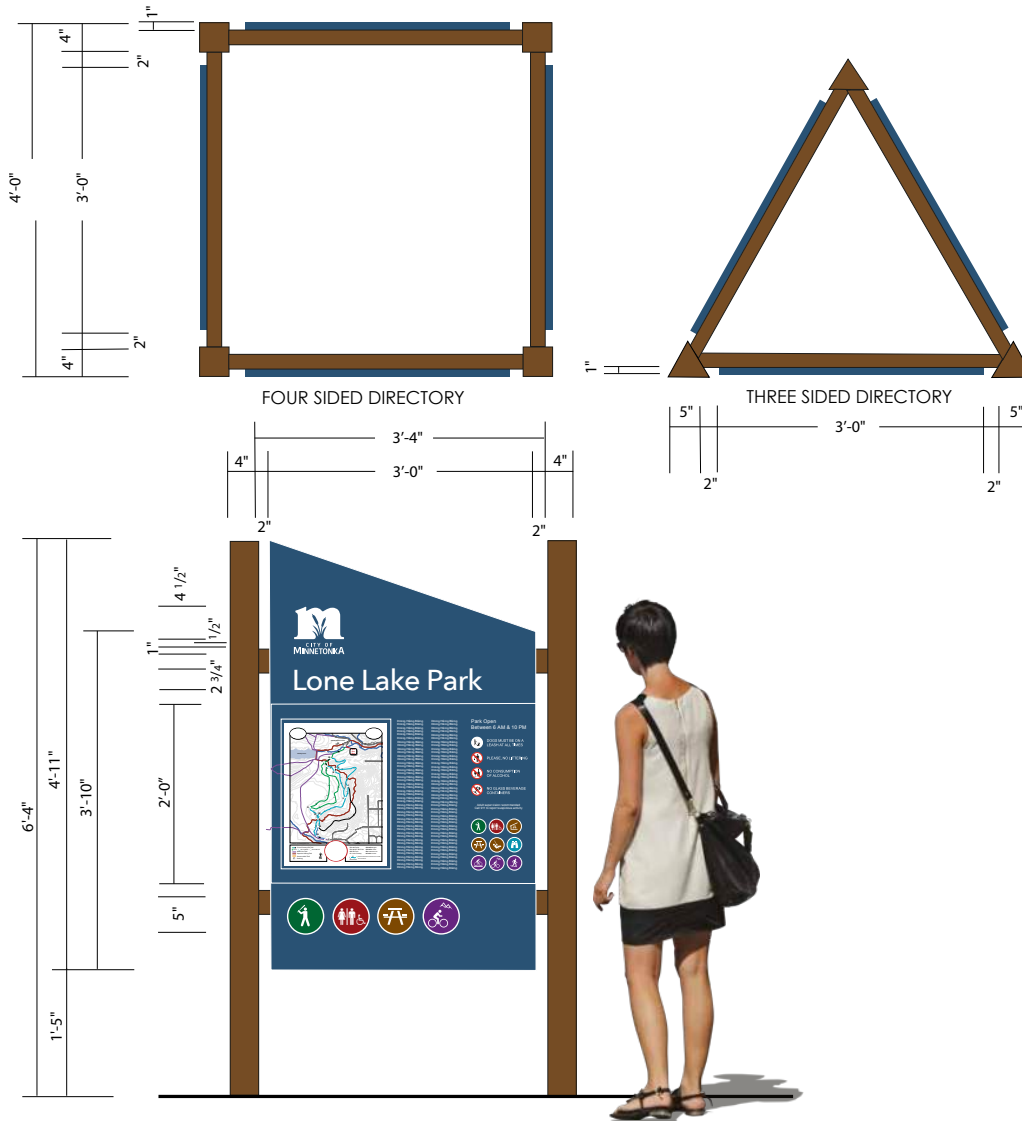
“Provide pertinent information regarding natural features or specialized information regarding a specific plants, habitat, wildlife, landscapes, gardens, and lakes or ponds. Informational signs should be located where information is to be highlighted. Pictograms and photography images can be digitally applied temporarily or long-term with vinyl.”

SECONDARY FLORA/TERRAIN MARKER - SIGN TYPE E2



"Provides a map of the area, with key destinations, park rules, trail, and natural area information and photos. In addition, activity pictograms are included and current activities and notices can be posted. These are placed on existing recreation structures, they are designed to be larger than the existing framed inset areas on buildings to be surface-mounted covering the areas."

THREE TO FOUR SIDED DIRECTORY - SIGN TYPE E3



INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE

“Provide pertinent information regarding natural features or specialized information regarding a specific plants, habitat, wildlife, landscapes, gardens, and lakes or ponds. Informational signs should be located where information is to be highlighted. Pictograms and photography images can be digitally applied temporarily or long-term with vinyl.”

THREE/FOUR SIDED INFORMATIVE DIRECTIONAL MARKERS

“Informative directional markers are designed to be viewed in the proper orientation by viewers from multiple directions. Each surface can include arrows depicting to featured nature areas, flower gardens, trails, park amenities, areas of natural interest, etc.”

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07

APPENDIX



Report for Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

Response Counts

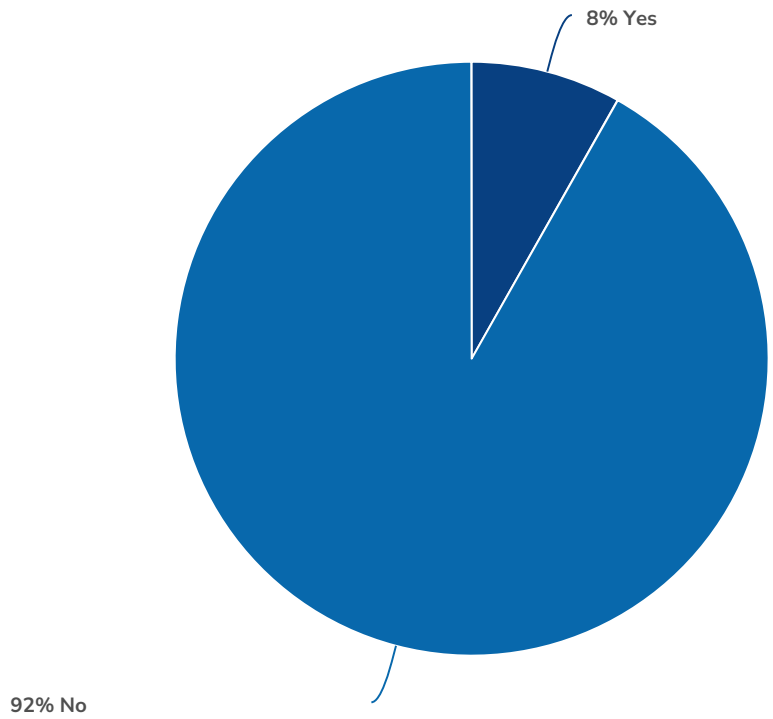
 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Totals: 624

1. Have you previously given feedback on the Purgatory Park Master Plan?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

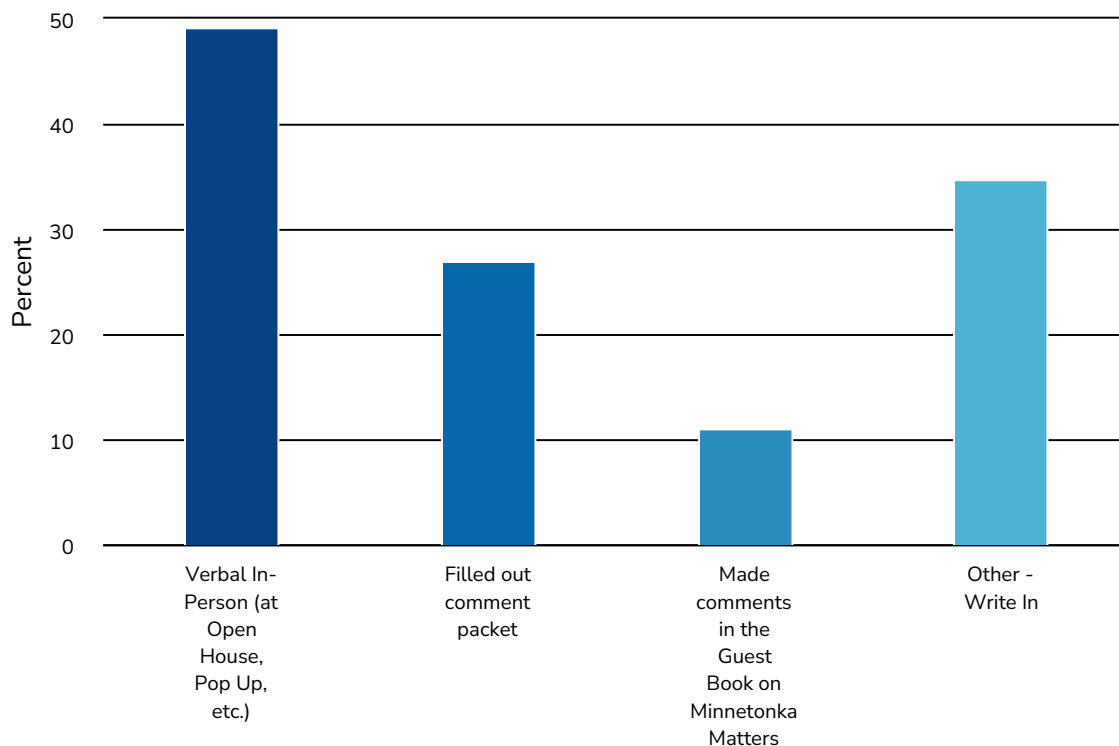



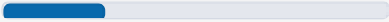
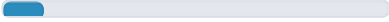
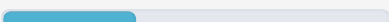
Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	8.2%	41
No	91.8%	461

Totals: 502

2. If yes, what type of feedback did you give?

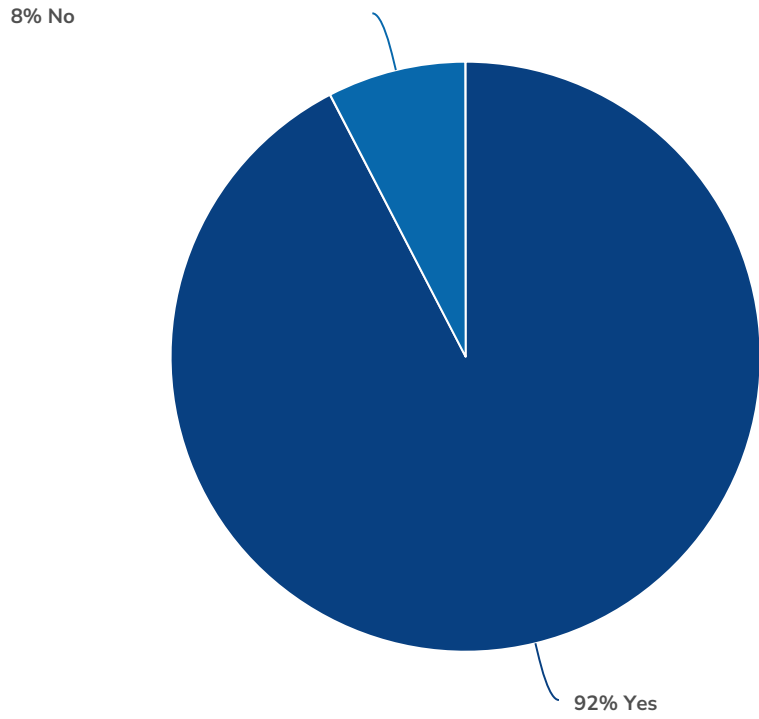
Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Verbal In-Person (at Open House, Pop Up, etc.)	49.2% 	31
Filled out comment packet	27.0% 	17
Made comments in the Guest Book on Minnetonka Matters	11.1% 	7
Other - Write In	34.9% 	22

3. Are you a Minnetonka resident?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

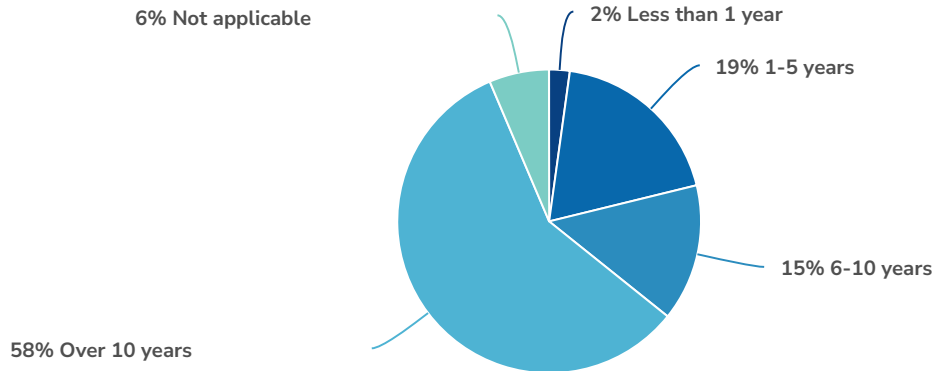


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	92.4%	463
No	7.6%	38

Totals: 501

4. How long have you lived in Minnetonka?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

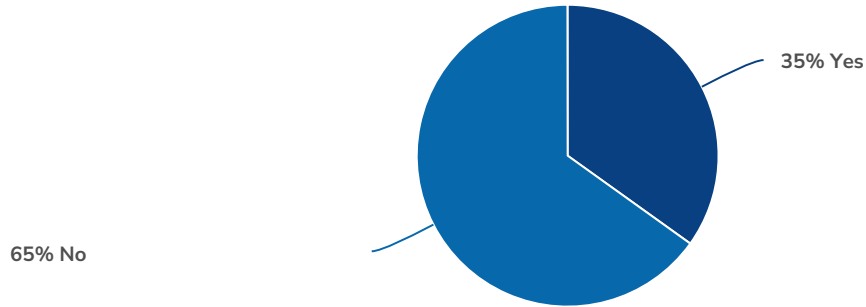


Value	Percent	Responses
Less than 1 year	2.2%	11
1-5 years	19.0%	95
6-10 years	14.6%	73
Over 10 years	57.9%	290
Not applicable	6.4%	32

Totals: 501

5. Do you work in the city limits of Minnetonka?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

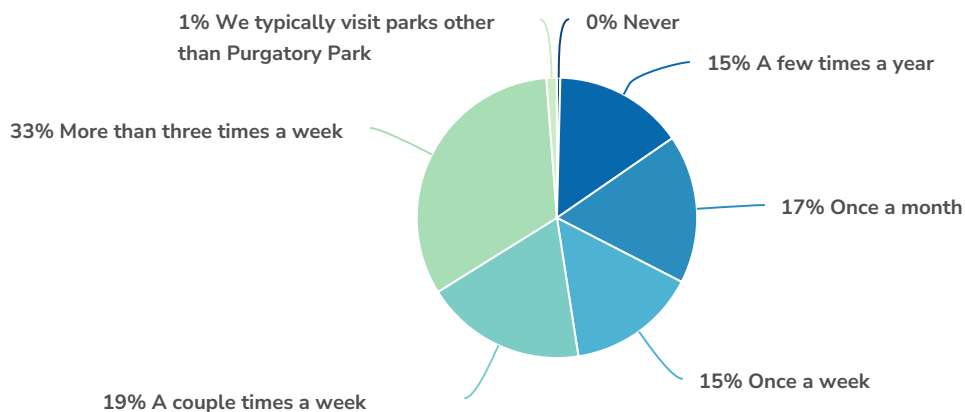


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	34.9%	175
No	65.1%	326

Totals: 501

6. How often do you or a member of your household typically visit Purgatory Park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

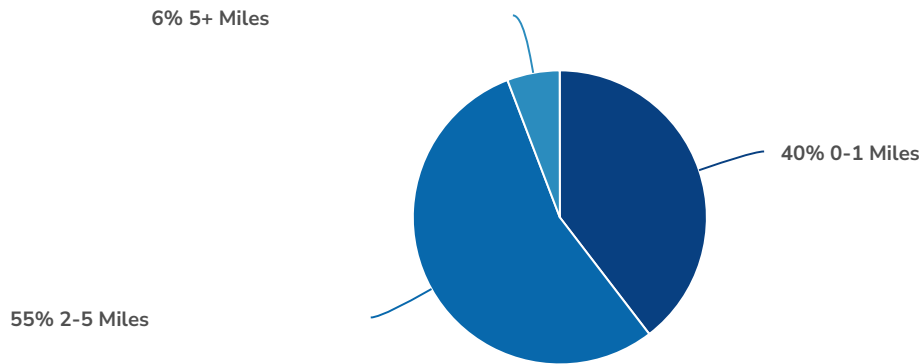


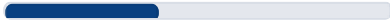
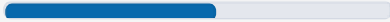
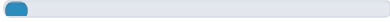
Value	Percent	Responses
Never	0.4%	2
A few times a year	15.0%	75
Once a month	17.2%	86
Once a week	15.0%	75
A couple times a week	18.6%	93
More than three times a week	32.7%	164
We typically visit parks other than Purgatory Park	1.2%	6

Totals: 501

7. How far do you typically travel to get to Purgatory Park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

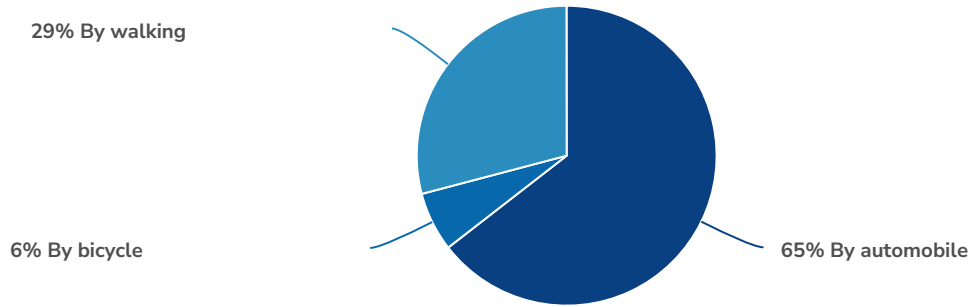


Value	Percent	Responses
0-1 Miles	39.6% 	199
2-5 Miles	54.6% 	274
5+ Miles	5.8% 	29

Totals: 502

8. How do you typically get to Purgatory Park?

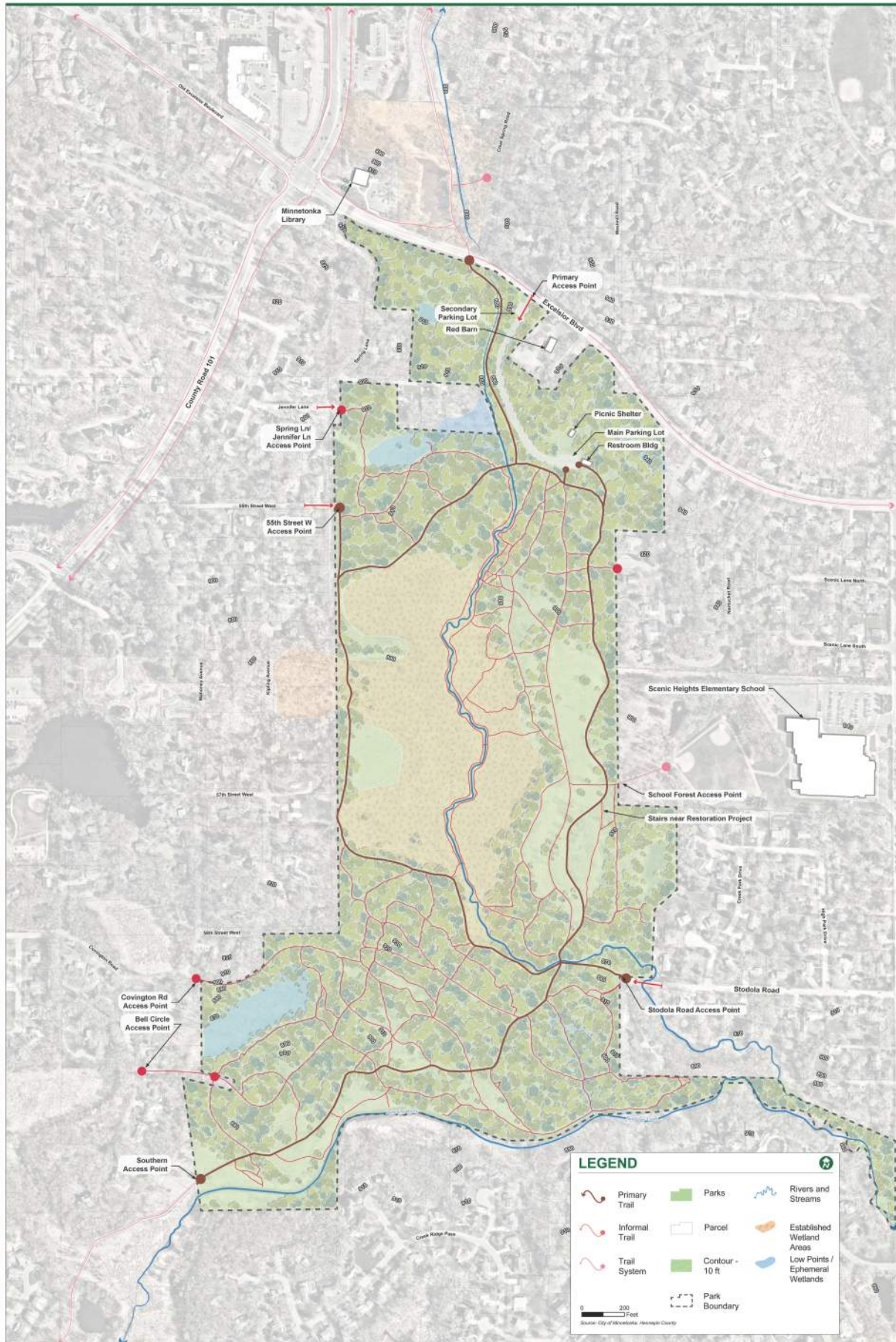
Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
By automobile	64.5% 	324
By bicycle	6.4% 	32
By walking	29.1% 	146

Totals: 502

9. If you are going to visit Purgatory Park, what access point do you typically use? (Please rank in order)

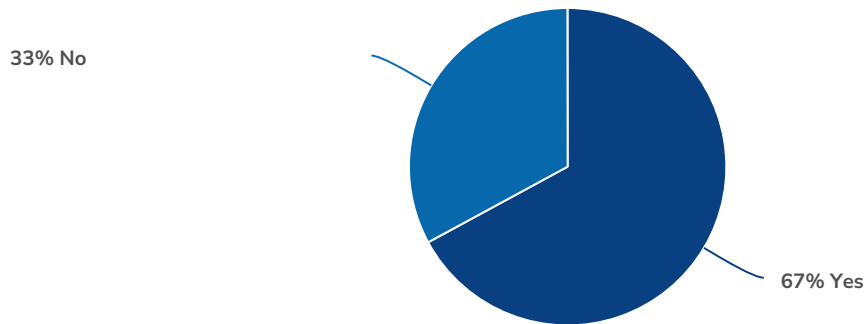


Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Primary Entrance (Public Parking off of Excelsior Blvd)	1		3,373	379
Stodola Road Trail Access	2		1,429	167
North Trail Extension (Excelsior Underpass)	3		571	81
South Trail Extension	4		452	70
Covington Road (Street Parking)	5		445	62
Adjacent Residential Property	6		415	69
Nantucket Road (Street Parking)	7		333	48
Spring Lane & 55th Street Trail Access	8		318	50
Bell Circle (Street Parking)	9		290	46
Spring Lane & Jennifer Lane Walk-In	10		237	44



10. Do you feel there is adequate parking at Purgatory Park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

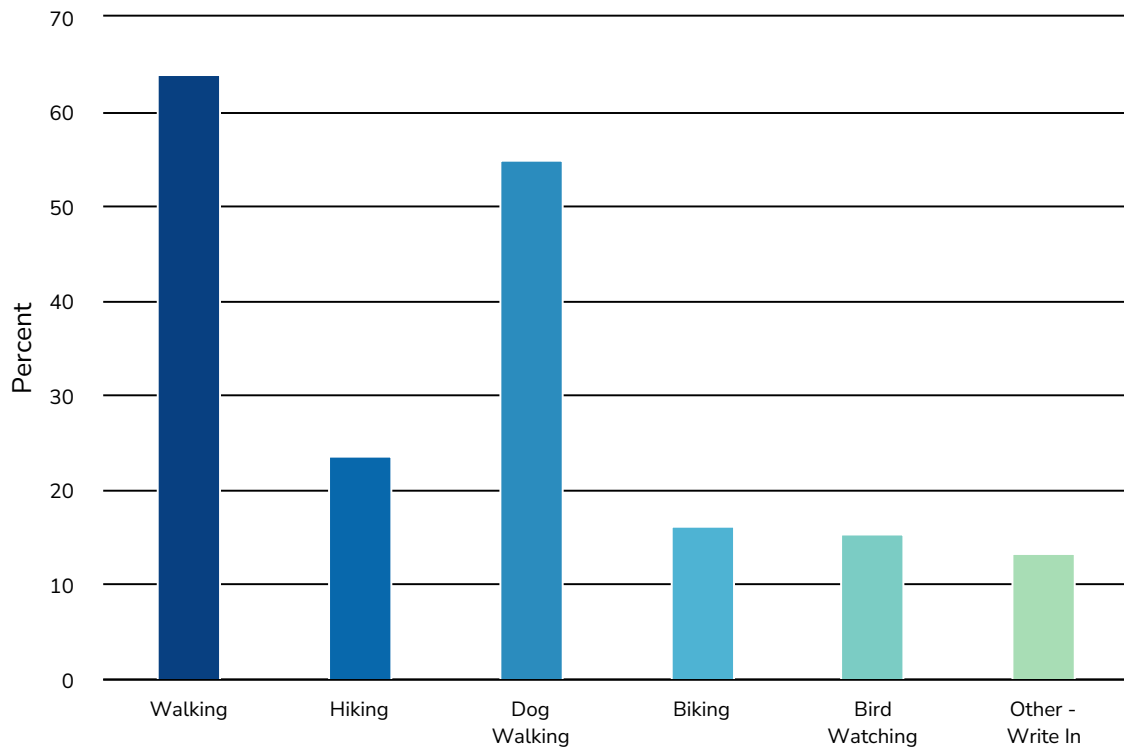


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	67.1%	335
No	32.9%	164

Totals: 499

11. Why do you typically go to Purgatory Park?

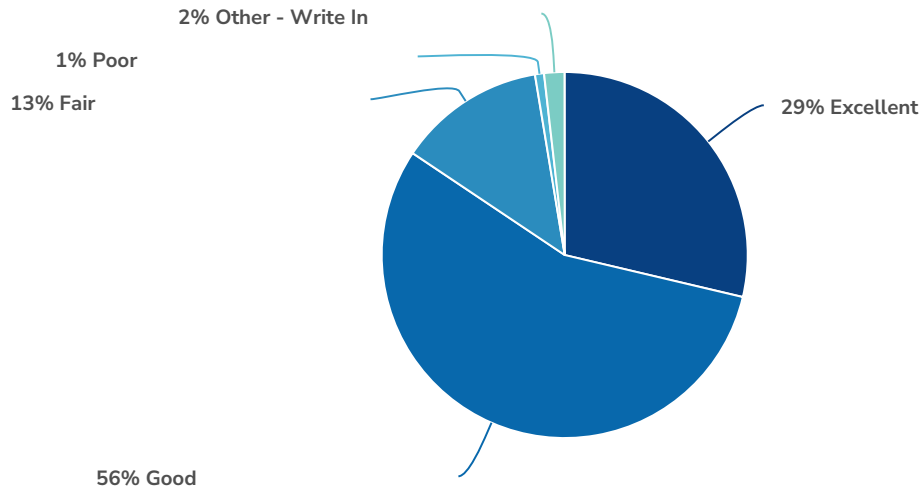
Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Walking	64.1% 	322
Hiking	23.7% 	119
Dog Walking	55.0% 	276
Biking	16.3% 	82
Bird Watching	15.5% 	78
Other - Write In	13.3% 	67

12. How would you rate the overall physical condition of the park and facilities?

 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

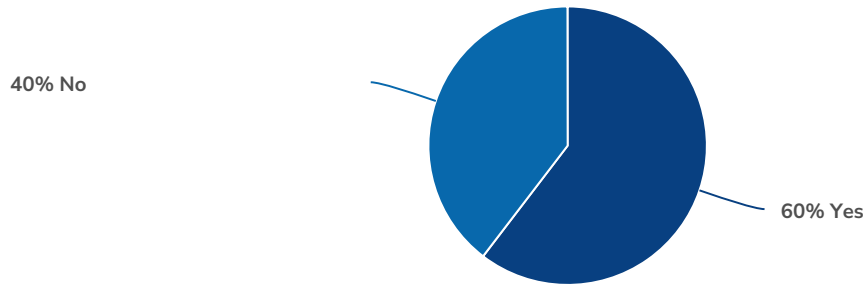


Value	Percent	Responses
Excellent	28.7%	143
Good	55.7%	278
Fair	13.0%	65
Poor	0.8%	4
Other - Write In	1.8%	9

Totals: 499

13. Do you walk your dog in the park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	60.4%	302
No	39.6%	198

Totals: 500

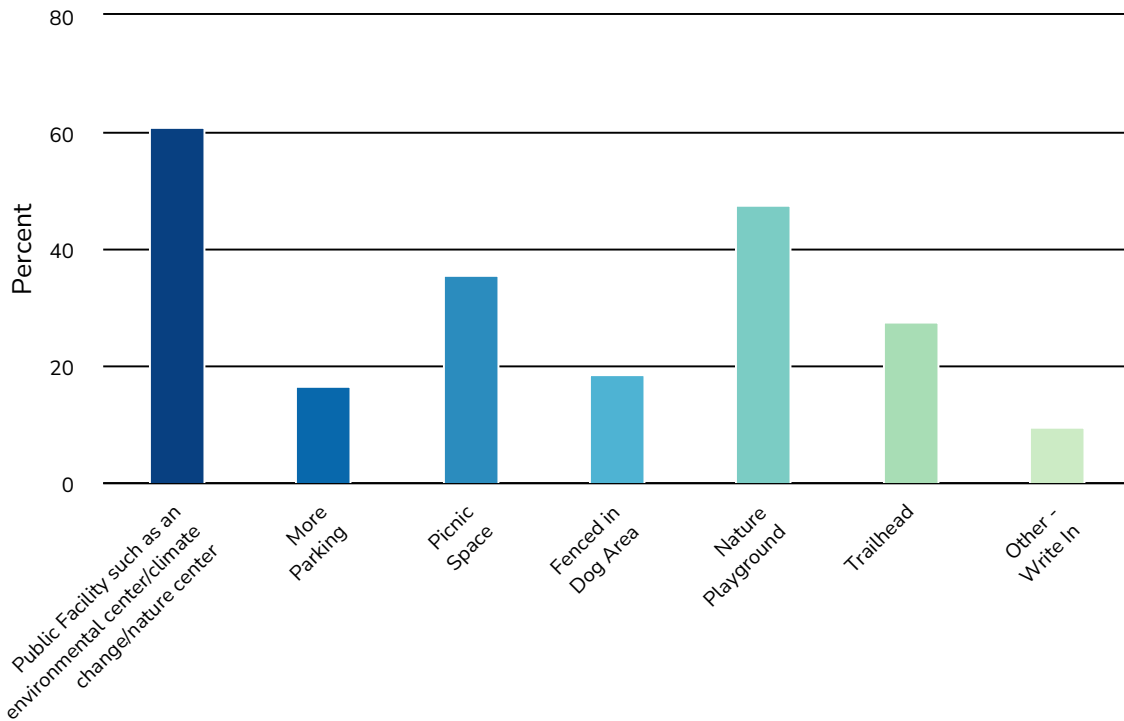
14. Please answer the following about dogs in the park:

 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Responses
The City of Minnetonka's off-leash dog ordinance should be changed to not allow dogs to run off-leash in parks Count Row %	109 22.0%	71 14.3%	71 14.3%	245 49.4%	496
The off-leash park rules are appropriate and should not be changed Count Row %	242 49.4%	81 16.5%	73 14.9%	94 19.2%	490
Purgatory Park should have a fenced in off-leash dog area Count Row %	139 28.5%	98 20.1%	78 16.0%	173 35.5%	488
There are adequate dog waste receptacles in the park Count Row %	87 18.1%	173 36.0%	159 33.1%	61 12.7%	480
Off-leash dogs are a safety concern in the park Count Row %	118 23.9%	95 19.3%	82 16.6%	198 40.2%	493
Totals Total Responses					496

15. What do you think is an appropriate use for the Red Barn Site? (Select three options)

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

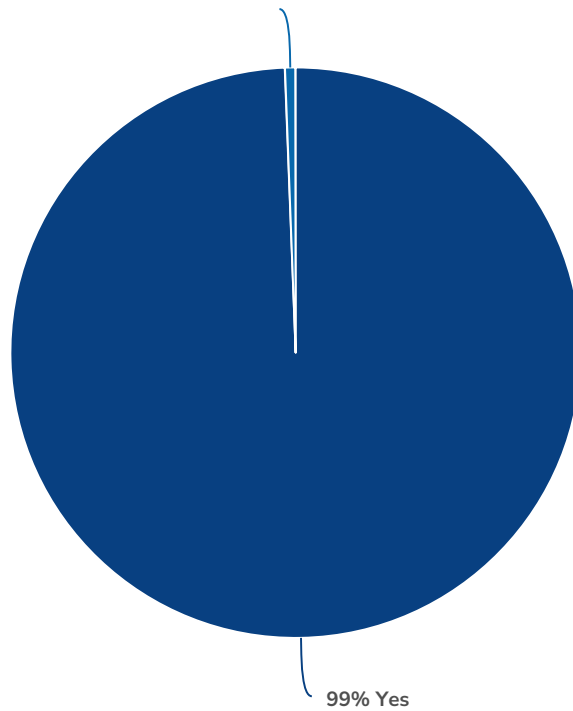


Value	Percent	Responses
Public Facility such as an environmental center/climate change/nature center	60.9%	293
More Parking	16.8%	81
Picnic Space	35.8%	172
Fenced in Dog Area	18.7%	90
Nature Playground	47.8%	230
Trailhead	27.7%	133
Other - Write In	9.8%	47

16. Do you use the trails at Purgatory Park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

1% No



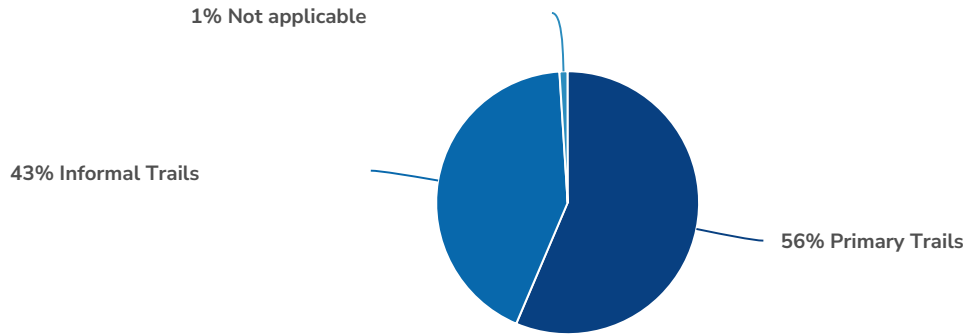
99% Yes

Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	99.4%	498
No	0.6%	3

Totals: 501

17. If yes, do you usually use the primary trails (paved and gravel) or the informal trails (dirt/'Cow Paths')?

 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

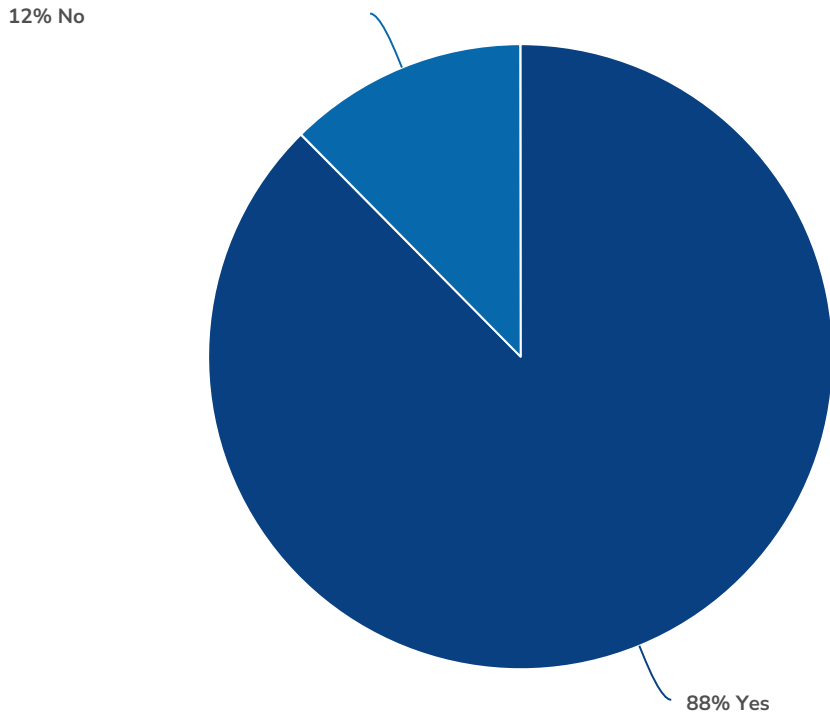


Value	Percent	Responses
Primary Trails	56.4%	283
Informal Trails	42.6%	214
Not applicable	1.0%	5

Totals: 502

18. Do you feel there are enough primary trails at Purgatory Park?

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Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	87.6%	437
No	12.4%	62

Totals: 499

19. Is there anywhere you would like to see primary trails added in the park?

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ResponseID Response

14 A prairie boardwalk would be cool

20 A primary trail from the Red Barn Site to the existing trails in Purgatory Park would be great.

24 No

26 No

30 No

32 No

33 More bike specific trails, better defined secondary trails that require leashes on dogs

37 No

38 No

40 Another loop trail in the southern section by 62 where there is currently only a primary trail

41 No

43 minimal mowed trails through the restored prairie and remediate/restore all the informal trails

46 Repair the bridges in The meadow

47 No. Keep the informal trails as is.

48 No

51 No

57 No, I love the off leach areas. Would love a garbage can for dog waste in the middle of the unplaced trail so people don't have to carry it throughout the center of the off leash area. Hopefully more would pick up after their pets that way.

58 No.

60 No

ResponseID Response

62 No.

69 Just about any of the secondary trails would be great.

71 The park hosts adequate primary trails. I would like to see more thought about how to make the trails more sustainable. There are a few sections that are paved due to location on fall lines and have erosion issues along the edges of the trails. I would also like to see how trail maintenance impacts the sustainability of the primary trails as that crushed gravel material continues to expand the trail width.

73 The thing that makes Purgatory park so great and different from from some other parks is the amount of different trails one can explore. And they all basically lead to or connect to the non-primary trails.

77 I think it might be helpful to have more small signs that say, which are the Off leash and on leash areas. I also think if the two trails, the on leash and off leash, never crossed, that might be helpful for the group that has issue with occasionally meeting a dog off leash.

79 I don't think it's necessary to create more paved/gravel trails just because that would eliminate more of the natural environment. Not everything needs to be "built up".

82 Around the wooded areas

83 No I enjoy the "hiking" feel of the oak ridges and creekside trails a lot.

86 No

87 No. Please don't change the trail system!

88 No, keep the off leash dog trails. Cover up the mucky mudd whole

94 No

100 No, I think there is appropriate amount. It is good to have the paved sections where there are steep grades.

102 We often enter the park through the gate on W 58th Street. The dirt path along the ridge top should be more formal, along with at least one route back to the lane connected to 58th, as well as down the ridge to the primary trail at bottom. Just as important as grading the trail somewhat would be buckthorn removal along the dirt paths that feature benches plus a connector to the main trail.

104 no

ResponseID Response

107	It would be wonderful to have the primary loop completely paved, no gravel. The dirt paths up the hill from the bridge by Stodola are fun just as they are. Fence in the center area of the main park for off leash dogs. They've already worn paths there. Maybe those could be fixed up a bit.
116	I would like to see more single track mtn bike trails
117	I'd prefer that there not be any more primary trails; I'd prefer that the more remote spots of the park remain focused more toward wildlife than foot traffic.
122	No
125	No
126	A way to cross the park inside the big loop. I also use the dirt paths for this, even without my dog, but it would be nice if a primary trail were established. I prefer the crushed limestone to asphalt sections. They seem to hold up better over time
127	NA
134	N/A
135	Along one side of creek in the central park area.
149	We use both formal and informal trails.
152	Through the middle of the park
154	Nope
155	No- like the paths available, and wouldn't take non primary away from people using those
158	No
159	There is a section of trails that us usually flooded. If that area can be improved I would use the trails more frequently.
160	Our city spends too much money making trails for bikers.
161	No
162	I don't know
174	Buckthorn irradiation

ResponseID Response

176 The current trails are beautiful but more primary trails would be great - not sure where you'd add them though.

179 No

182 No, purgatory is a beautiful & natural park that does not need any more urbanized pollution in the park. Leave it how it is.

190 I would like to see the primary trails paved completely, rather than a mix of paved and gravel. In the spring, when people want to get out, the gravel sections following snow-melt are a mess.

193 make the far western end a loop if possible.

197 South woods trails

201 No

203 No reduce the size and number.

204 Thru the center

211 No. Less should be the goal. Not more.

212 No Purgatory Park is a spot of heaven and should NOT be ruined by humans. I drive my dog Trixie from Brenwood to Purgatory every day for the joy of seeing her run free and maintaining good health. (for me too) Don't take that from us.

217 no

218 Crossing the mid section to access the swamp year round. Also more access points on the west side

219 No

222 No

223 Yes

231 No

242 No the formal trail is acquit.

243 More with a view of the creek

245 No

ResponseID Response

246 No. I just want dogs leashed so that I can hike on all the trails, even the smaller trails. It seems lots of dog owners do not know that keeping their dogs leashed like I do is expected here at Purgatory.

250 No

252 No. I love it just as it is.

253 No. I am not a dog owner and walk the park at least 5 times a week. It gives me great pleasure to watch the dogs play and see their joy. Don't change the leash laws!

255 None needed

257 All paved trails could be 2-3 feet wider. A paved or gravel trail from the bench at the top of the stairs on the east side back to the trail to the bridge would be good.

274 The single large loop is sufficient in my opinion - and puts enough distance for walkers (without dogs) and leashed dog walkers as to not incur potential conflicts

275 It would be great if the southern trail to the crosstown was made into a loop.

279 No

280 It would be nice to bike a bigger loop. Especially in the more southern part.

283 Unsure

284 I'm a runner and like to combine a main loop of the park (main gravel trail) with some of the cow paths/informal trails. I would love if there were a couple more main trails that crisscross the park. These are often more accessible especially in the winter when the cow paths get muddy/icy/snow covered.

286 No

287 Current availability is sufficient

294 Would love there to be more winter maintenance—it's always iced over in the winter and we have to go to Centennial or Minneapolis for our walks

297 no

303 No. Leave the natural areas as is. Do not ruin the park with more development.

305 No, addition would diminish natural area as the people not using primary trails now would just make new trails for their dogs

311 No

ResponseID Response

319	I don't have a good sense of what other areas exist since I stick to the primary trails so can't answer this. Definitely would like to see more children-focused space at Purgatory though.
320	No I think the park is a gem as is - the informal cow path trails that run throughout the park offer an escape to nature that is hard to achieve here in the city. I think the park is well utilized and great as is. A few additional dog waste receptacles throughout the park & perhaps some minor upgrades to the bathroom building - with improved access to water / drinking fountain-fill stations.
324	Closer to the schools so the xc teams can run them
329	Better signage and maps, I always get lost in the park.
330	Not sure, but I definitely prefer loops so I can keep walking and the current loops is very short
333	No
334	At this time, I realize there are unkept lesser worn trails that folks would prefer to hike and more so do some biking in the park. However, I do not have a full image of those specific trails so to identify where to expand them.
340	It would be great to add more trail options through the middle of the park, where the off leash dog area is
349	No
353	A secondary loop on the southern part of the park. It would also be nice to be able to mountain bike the cow paths :)
363	No
365	No
366	West side
374	N/a
378	I would like a better walking path/sidewalk from Westmill Rd to the primary entrance of Purgatory. The shoulder on Excelsior is a joke for people walking and biking. A designated crosswalk across Excelsior at Westmill Rd and lowering the speed limit on that road to 35 should also be considered.
380	No
383	I think the trail system is great the way it is.

ResponseID Response

385

No

392

I think that the park should be left as natural as possible with no more pavement.

394

Yes on the major creek tributaries that are not maintained.

402

I keep my dog on a leash for walk but I love absolutely love a fenced in off leash area for my dog!

403

I like that there is one main trail and many little trails. Adding more main trails might effect the wildlife that makes purgatory do great.

405

Not sure what definition of "primary" trail is. I think the informal trails (1-2 person wide) are a good thing, but they have wildly over populated in the past few years. Some should be "closed" and "formal" 1-2 person wide trails in the woods/ridge should be adopted. Better for the environment, reduced erosion, etc.

412

No

414

The trails are too wide - they could currently have turn lanes painted in the center.

417

No

423

Overall more paths that can be accessed with strollers! We love going but bring our kids and need a stroller

429

I think that there is a good mix of primary trails and secondary trails. Will run on the primary and walk the dog on the secondary trails

434

Don't think people should use the "informal" off leash trail along creek. Intrusive to neighboring houses. Trespass on private property. Leave dog poop and trash.

435

No- thats not needed- I go tto thispark every day- often 2x a day with my pets. I rarely se congestion or need for more paved trails.

437

No

442

No

444

No

448

No

449

No we have enough. The woodland area has enough primary trails.

452

I think the amount of trails are perfect.

ResponseID Response

454 I think it's great as is

461 Only gravel, not paved!

462 No.

464 No. I really like it as is.

466 No...more natural hiking trails are the best to hike with my dogs!! That's what I love about purgatory! Please keep it an open off-leash dog nature hiking park!!! We deserve to have a park for those of us who love to give our pups the freedom to enjoy hiking, running & playing together!!! Leave it more natural like it is... Please!!! ☐☐☐☐

469 No

472 No

474 No

475 None should be added. If anything there needs to be less. The beauty of this park is its calm nature away from the city. If you bring heavy machinery and more man made elements into it, it'll ruin the escape from life it provides.

476 Wherever new trails are added, please do not pave them with asphalt! Leave the limestone paths - safer for wildlife (snakes, amphibians), slows down bikers.

478 No

482 Primary trails are sufficient. Informal trail locations prone to erosion and winter icing could be improved with fortifications, natural steps, and/or ground retaining foliage.

484 I don't have enough experience with the park primary trails to answer confidently answer where.

486 Wider trails would be nice.

487 Possibly extend the southern primary trail so it creates a loop back to the north.

490 No

494 Our family really enjoys both the primary trails and the dirt/cow paths

497 Somewhere there is space for it.

504 No, we really love the informal trails in the southwest corner of the park.

505 I usually keep to the most informal of the informal trails with the dogs.

ResponseID Response

507	There could be some mileage walking signs and primary trails added in the areas closer to hwy 62 - there are some trail stubs being developed organically by walkers but it might be nice to make them a bit wider and "official" behind Scenic heights portion leading into the main park and loop system.
516	No - I love the amount of primary trails vs 'off-road' trails
521	Maybe from the Covington Rd access point, but I don't feel strongly about it
525	Paralleling the creek in the southeast,
530	First of all, I use the primary trails to avoid off leash dogs. Otherwise I would use other trails more. I would consider the addition of more "primary" trails, though perhaps not paved, along the ridge and towards the Bell Circle entrance, also in the meadow / prairie area and wooded area close to the ponds. I would like to see other trails limited in number to decrease the spread of invasive plants and allow more habitat for critters.
534	Close to the creek
537	I like to see more circles of the trails.
538	If new Red Barn area is attached a primary trail from primary trail main loop should be added. Sanding of icy areas, such as main parking area and main trail a distance in all directions from back bridge, especially slopes should be included. Impossible get to bathrooms in main parking area when conditions are icy. In icy conditions dog walker's account for almost all (probably close to 90 percent) the park use. People stay away because icy main trails and parking is so dangerous. Rest of year usage is also well over 50 usage by dog walkers. As a dog walker, I think waste pick up might be better enforced as well as leash usage on main trails and common areas. As an off leash dog walker we need to be considerate of non dog walkers rights and vice versa. But it's a privilege to be able to take my dog off leash. I'm on my third dog using this privilege. We don't really need to make that many changes if intent is to be a "natural area". Better understanding and enforcement of current r
542	Across Hwy 101 and continuing into to natural area on the other side
547	Perhaps add a half-circle of paved trail to the southern portion in order to make a second loop
550	No

ResponseID Response

551 NO!!!! I use both improved and unimproved and I think there are enough paths. You can walk for hours in this park and the best thing about the park that it is not overgroomed everywhere and it gives the visitor a feeling of being in nature up north . If people want to be entertained they should go to a different park. To me being in nature is Purgatory's biggest attraction for me. I go there to decompress and enjoy nature. More paths, more people less nature less enjoyment for the visitor. Nature and the wildlife should be the main event. All the animals have less and less habitat. Without the wildlife the park would not be the same retreat that is has been in the past. It was one of the perks of living in Minnetonka. and why I moved here in the first place. I feel there are less and less open spaces in the neighborhoods so the park is an ever more important green zone. PLEASE do not fix anything it is not broken. Maintain as is. Spend my tax dollar on something else!!!!

552 Not really. There's some informal trails that might be mapped more or something? There's more to the park than is immediately obvious. Maybe more of a signage issue.

556 In the middle where the off leash dog trails are located.

560 There are plenty of trails, and formalizing the informal trails may ruin their character. The biggest challenge is avoiding hitting dogs, and an off-leash area would make the trails clearer and safer.

561 No

563 Thru the center of the park. I know that one gets a lot of traffic and seems to have erosion issues. Stabilizing trails with erosion issues makes sense. I do really enjoy the singletrack type feel of the informal trails and don't want to lose that character throughout the park.

572 Maybe a cut through trail or some loops within the big loop.

574 Create a loop for the trail that leads to 62.

576 No

596 No

603 No, as little disruption to the unspoiled nature remaining in the park as we can muster is crucial.

611 Keep as is

620 No

624 No

627 No, I use the informal trails for dog walking and feel so grateful for the access.

ResponseID Response

629 More frequent emptying of trash cans. They are often overflowing. Community service presence on bikes for safety (haven't walked there alone since the attack in Big Willow Park this summer).

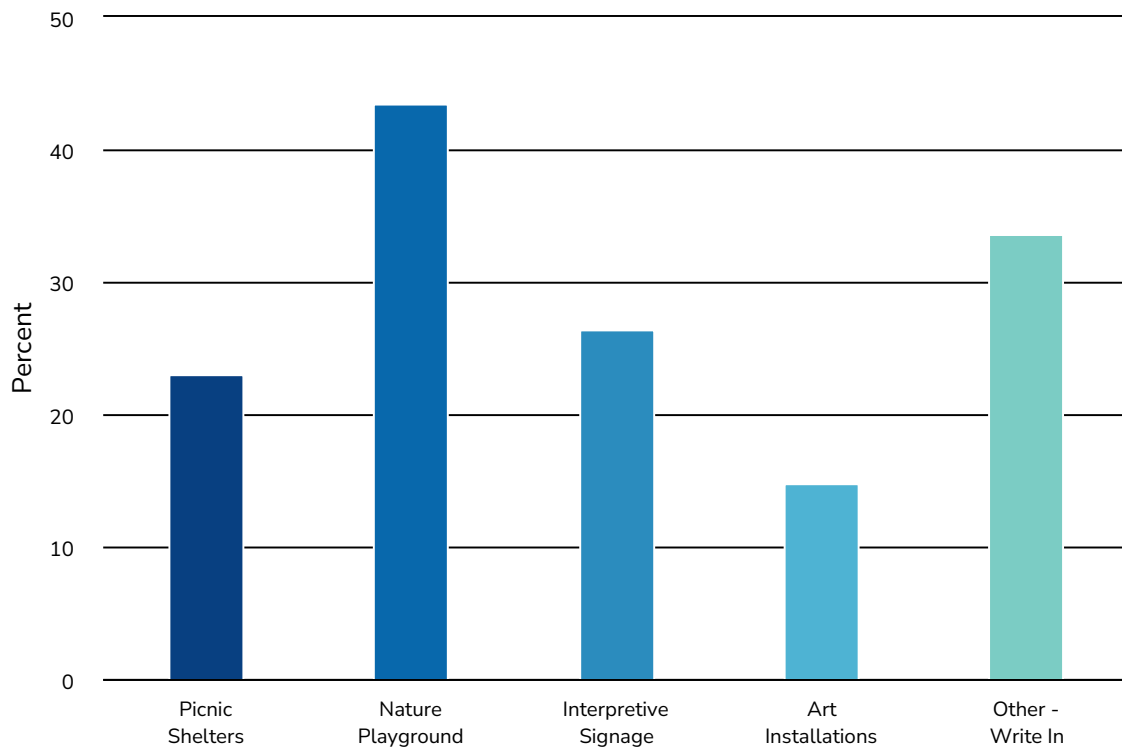
630 Do not pave over the park for walking convenience The dogs have destroyed enough already

633 Nowhere in particular. Not yet familiar enough with park but my young son uses a wheelchair and would love more places to explore via primary trail.

634 No. I love the very natural feel of the park, but ruts are getting deeper and wider now.

20. What things do you feel the park is missing that you would like to see added?

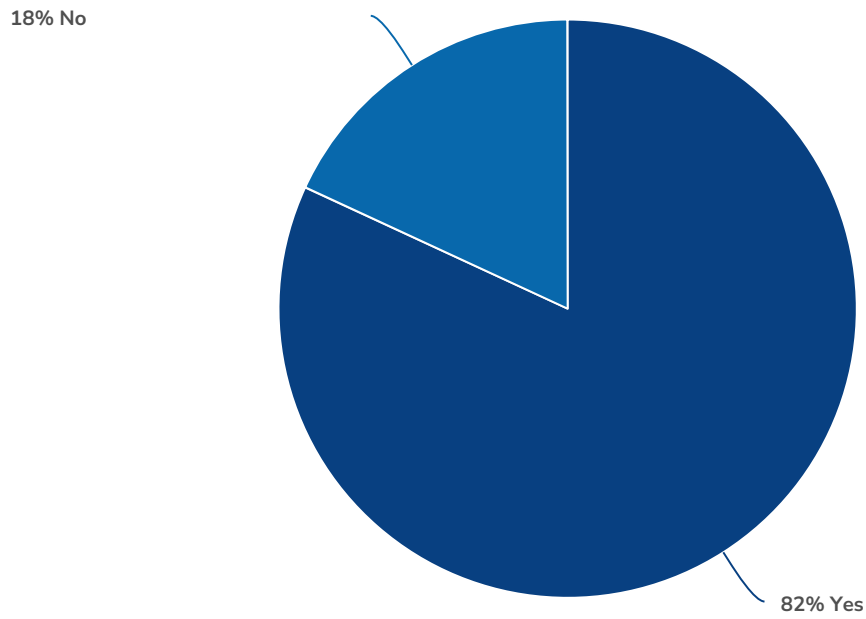
Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Picnic Shelters	23.1% 	87
Nature Playground	43.5% 	164
Interpretive Signage	26.5% 	100
Art Installations	14.9% 	56
Other - Write In	33.7% 	127

21. Do you feel there are enough benches in Purgatory Park?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

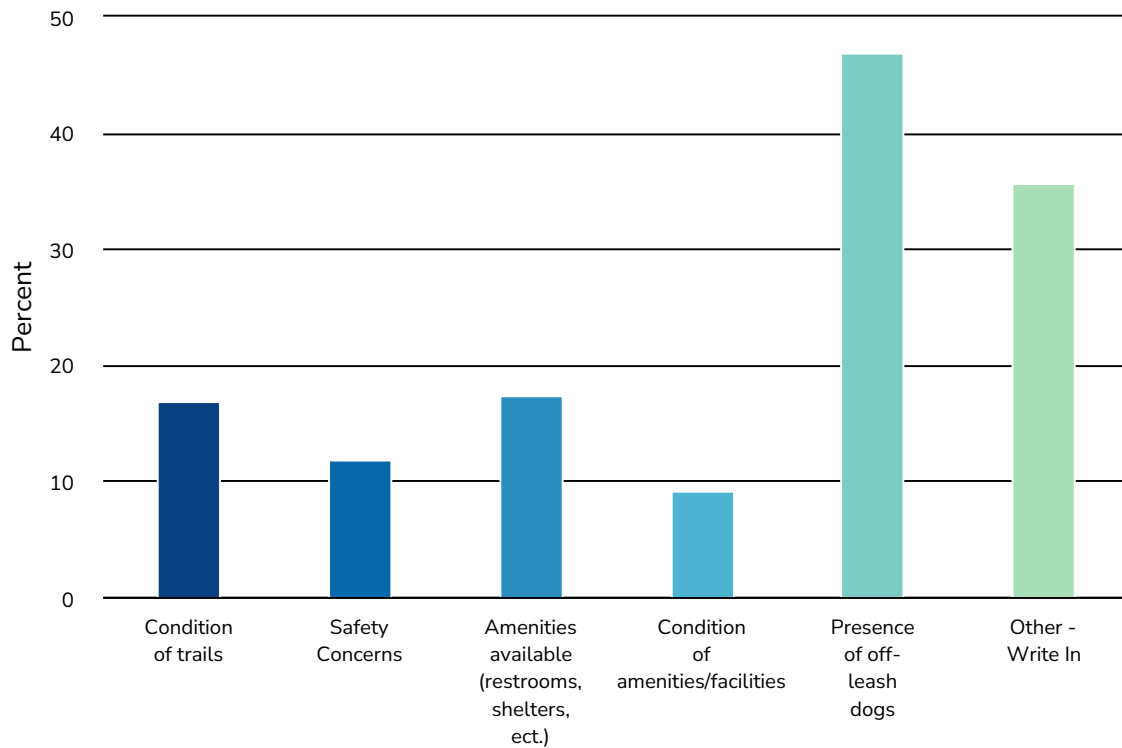


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	81.9%	407
No	18.1%	90

Totals: 497

22. Is there anything that discourages use within Purgatory Park?

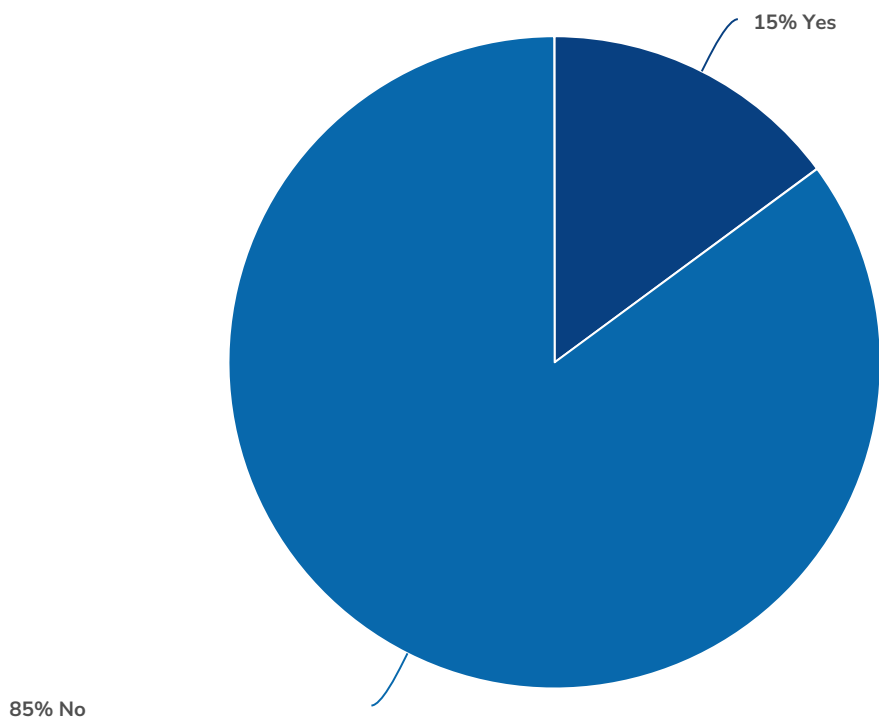
Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Condition of trails	16.9%	51
Safety Concerns	11.9%	36
Amenities available (restrooms, shelters, ect.)	17.5%	53
Condition of amenities/facilities	9.3%	28
Presence of off-leash dogs	47.0%	142
Other - Write In	35.8%	108

23. Have you volunteered in the park on restoration projects, Adopt a Trail, Adopt a Sign, wildlife monitoring, or any other park volunteer opportunities?

Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

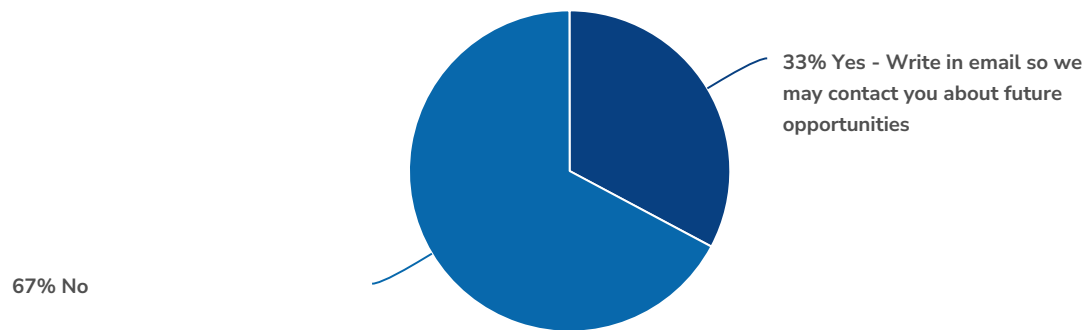


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	14.9%	74
No	85.1%	424

Totals: 498

24. Would you be interested in volunteering for any of these opportunities in the park?

 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes - Write in email so we may contact you about future opportunities	32.8%	152
No	67.2%	311

Totals: 463

25. Do you have any other comments or concerns about Purgatory Park?

 Purgatory Park Master Plan - Community Input Survey

ResponseID Response

12 We love this park. My dog and I refer to it as our "Happy Place" I have never had a bad experience with other dogs or people. All the critters (dogs and humans) are always smiling.

14 I highly value the off leash dog part of the park, and I would be very sad to see it go. One of my greatest joys is walking my dog around that park. I have never had a negative encounter with a dog in this park, and I go there weekly. It is a truly unique and amazing amenity to have in Minnetonka, and very few parks in the metro even come close. Please do not make any major changes to the layout and overall feel of the park. I wouldn't want it to lose its charm.

15 Please consider that any efforts to "improve" or develop trails within the park will have a detrimental impact on wildlife and the local ecosystem. Please also consider that the vast majority of dog-walkers have pets who are safe, socialized and on voice command. Don't let the very small number of people who have not followed posted rules with their dogs result in a complete overhaul of what is a highly functional system. The beauty of the park is it's wild spaces and the freedom it affords its visitors, people and furry friends alike!

17 Some property owners around the park appear to be using park property as their own

20 Purgatory Park has beautiful wild flowers and birds. I hope that future development preserves a place for them.

21 I love the park and think it is a great asset as is. I personally don't think it needs to have a lot of things added, but I do like the fenced in dog area concept.

24 Keep off leash. Don't fence it in. I purchased my home because of the off leash area and use it every day. I've never had a problem ever with the dogs and I'm there every single day and have been for the past three years

25 Too many benches. They seemed be installed by whim rather than via a rational process. Memorials are important but can be accomplished thru a remembrance that doesn't clutter the park. Encourage people to provide a financial gift for restoration, for example, and list their names on a plaque at the park office site.

26 I think Purgatory is a truly wonderful place and we are so blessed to have this nature escape so close to home. I would like more posting of the off-leash rules so both types of folks understand them better.

29 I love purgatory park, the main trails and the dirt trails. It's a very neighborhood feel and such a community staple! Please keep the community feel!

30 No

ResponseID Response

- 31 thank you for leading this initiative!
- 32 Use the off leash area daily. It is a great amenity in our city. Rarely have difficulty with other dogs.
- 33 Would love to see further removal of buckthorn and reintroduction of native plants
- 35 I am a huge fan of Purgatory Park. I find it to be a safe, fun, and beautiful park to walk my dog in all seasons. The only disappointing experience is when an older adult yelled at me aggressively about my dog that was off-leash in an off-leash area (not even remotely close to a paved path). It was disturbing, inappropriate, and ultimately ruined my day/moment. The condescending manner of this person was disrespectful. If my dog had barked at her I'm sure she would have reported me - why is she allowed to "bark" so rudely? thank you for listening.
- 37 I think some more doggy-doo bag dispensers might help to remind people to "pick up." Also more signage to remind people of their responsibility. I often pick up "extras" while picking up after my dog, especially in winter when people don't want to take their gloves off.
- 39 Ebike rules and dog off leash rules posted clearly and in more spots. Dogs are off leash everywhere and it's not clear to anyone where dogs can be off leash. It's been very dangerous and frustrating to see dog owners not care about the safety of other park guests and when approached, they are very disgruntled. Maybe more park patrol would help. The ice build up on the main trails is really scary in winter, even while wearing yack tracks.
- 40 I go to purgatory park every day. Please don't change anything. It seems from the questions that you want to change the off-leash area. As someone who goes to that area daily, there aren't concerns by users and dogs are well controlled. There are other trails (regional trails for example) for people who are are fearful of dogs. There are plenty of unused parks for kids all around minnetonka (I know, I used to go to those when my kids were young and we generally had them to ourselves). Don't add a kids area and wreck this space. Let it just stay as it is. Thank you
- 43 Too many benches and siting needs to be rectified so the bench location doesn't result in degradation of the park's ecology. Discontinue all trail side mowing to stop the spread of invasive plants and degradation of the park's prairies. Plow with a blower rather than a blade to limit damage to park. Return maintained trails to specified 6' width and change grading practices to stop trail width creep. Develop an 'official' trail system and map and restore and close unofficial trails.
- 44 Very nice trails, but I don't bring my young daughter to the park due to unleashed dogs (off and on trail).
- 46 We need more off leash parks not less. Fenced areas are not necessary, open spaces are better

ResponseID Response

47 Keep off leash area in the foot hills. In the winter, dog walkers are the only people on the informal trails.

49 Love this park to walk my dog

51 Love my nearly daily walk in "purgatory"!

52 Off leash dogs are a concern and myself and a friend have both been jumped on by dogs in the park.

55 I used to run there 3-4 times per week, but the efforts to turn the park into a prairie resulted in the removal of the trail shade trees making it a hot run and less desirable for running, biking, and walking.

57 Love the off leash area! More benches would be nice to see as well as one trash in the middle area where people often have dogs chase around.

59 Keep it as a quiet nature area

60 It's really important to do high quality restoration here. Using burns, removing invasive species, planting native trees and plants and protecting them are all key.

62 The fact that the whole park is off leash is great for dogs to explore and sociaccess. Many people/dogs benefit from having this off leash access.

64 It is a nice compromise to allow unleashed dogs in the middle and leashed dogs on the trail; most follow the rules. Unfortunately, there are some dog owners who do not (especially on Sunday mornings). Some refuse to leash their dogs on the main trail even when asked nicely. Additional signage regarding the dog rules was added last year and that seems to have helped a bit. THANKS for adding those signs!

65 I love visiting Purgatory Park because I can see so many different aspects of nature and terrain -- gentle rolling prairies and what good be a beautiful oak knoll. The variety of native plants blooming at different time of the year are fun to watch.

67 As touched on, my only negative observation is frequent bag(s) of dog poop left on the trail. They city does an excellent job of providing receptables and even bags. They cannot expect the city to pick up their dog poop and toss it, too. I like the idea of allowing dogs run un-leashed in the central pasture.

68 Off leash dog's are not a problem at this park. For many residents (and non residents) that is the main appeal to this park. The lack of development within the park may be its greatest asset. Converting the red barn into some sort of community/nature center would be nice. Add one more thing, for Gods sakes no pickle ball courts

69 Overall it is a wonderful park. Great things are in the works, and there is still a lot of potential for more. Purgatory is one of my favorite Minnetonka parks with connections to more parks and trails to the north and south.

ResponseID Response

- 70 Please keep the off-leash dog rules as they are. It's the only place nearby where us and our neighbors can reliably bring our dogs. It has become a neighborhood meeting place and I have gotten to know many neighbors due to the off-leash dog policies.
- 71 Purgatory Park is a gem and is a wonderful natural area that has become a favorite park for many Minnetonka residents. We need to take care that we continue to steward the reason that makes it special and not let unsanctioned activities ruin this beautiful park. Keep the focus on nature and nature based pursuits and do not add any recreation. Restore the park habitat, trails and creek to provide a little nature in our suburban city for our residents to enjoy. Provide a clear guideline for expected behaviors in a central location with wayfinding for sanctioned trails.
- 72 We love the trails and then off leash dog area so close to home!
- 73 This park is a gem. In my opinion, it "shines" best in the current state it's in. That doesn't mean perhaps some small improvements could be made. However, adding to many "things" and structures may detract from the natural sense of beauty this park provides. 98% of the dogs and DOG OWNERS that utilize this park are well trained and are courteous of the other dogs and people that they encounter. I agree with the rule of "dogs on leash on the main trails". I see that rule being broken most often. We, as rule abiding citizens of the park, always follow that rule and only let our dog off once off the primary path. The off leash areas and non primary trails are so beneficial to the dogs and humans that use them. I do know that if a "fenced in" dog area was created, that would immediately detract from the allure of this one a kind park. I would say that even if I didn't own a dog. This park is special and unique. I don't think it should be radically changed. Thanks for listening!
- 74 The off leash dog areas are fine as is, the problem is people don't leash their dogs on the paved trails as they're supposed to. Many people are dicks when you ask them to leash their dogs on the paved trails. Our leashed dog has felt threatened and my wife has been injured in these circumstances.
- 76 tricky balance-let's set a better example than the lone lake debacle.
- 79 It seems that this "Master Plan" is going in the direction of trying to eliminate dogs from being in the park. The only place so far where dogs have even been mentioned is in this survey. There should be more focus on the safety in the parking lots.
- 80 My husband and I no longer walk in Purgatory, although it is within walking distance from our home, due to irresponsible dog owners who let their dogs off-leash on the paved path & don't pick up their animals' poop. We don't want to have to bring bear spray to avoid being approached by an unfriendly dog.
- 81 The park is a treasure, and we think the city does a good job, especially on the main trails. We go there nearly every day in good weather.

ResponseID Response

82 Dogs will also be an issue. That being said, I appreciate that Purgatory Park is a place where owners can engage dogs in the environment instead of just being in a dangerous, closed, high-tension area. When I notice a tense dog, Purgatory Park allows space for me to walk elsewhere. I appreciate that without a fence, dogs MUST be under voice command. It typically enforces that dogs are trained and owners are more engaged than a regular closed-in park.

85 My only concern is that our off leash privleges get taken away, I do not want a smaller enclosed fenced in area for my dog to "exercise" in. Walking and socializing with dogs and people in purgatory is a huge part of my life.

87 Park is wonderful the way it is. Please do not change anything!

88 Love the off leash dog park!

90 None that I have not already commented on in the guestbook.

93 The South side of park trails are primarily used by off leash dog walkers with no problems. I use this daily with only positive interactions with community people. Please continue to allow off leash in these areas. There are ample trails for people to walk dogs on leashes or walk in these primary trails. This park is so special and over restrictions for dogs off leash will ruin the park. There are lots of parks around that can service people who are fearful of dogs or need to have dog on leashes. For example the Minnewasta fenced in dog park actually has more incidents and is crowded and small. People with dogs need free places to run their dogs versus fenced in with no exercise opportunities for the dog walkers. Please do not listen only to the loud complainers.

94 I love the park! Thank you for caring for it.

96 I appreciate the volunteer work in the park. I wish I had more time to help that effort.

99 Purgatory park is an amazing park, and offers fantastic opportunities for dog socializing and training that cannot be found at any other publicly available, free park. It would be a tragedy to lose the parts of purgatory that bring in the most amount of visitors, which would be the off-leash dog park. Additional enforcement/presence of park personnel may increase overall experience with all visitors. There are many individuals still riding bikes through the off leash dog area, despite the signage stating that the unmaintained trails are not authorized for bikes.

100 Please do not develop the interior of the park any more. To me this park is about being in nature. Any more development would decrease nature and the reason of the park. Leave No Trace. If an off leash dog park is created how will it be maintained? Will there grass restoration or will it become dirt/mud pit? Will a permit be needed? I am in favor of that to help defray the costs of maintaining the area which would include poop drop offs, fence maintenance, grounds maintenance (if the grounds get too high people stop picking up poop, ex is Columbia Park off leash area in NE Mpls). The presence of the cow paths are great for runners and hikers. Please ignore the requests to remove them.

ResponseID Response

- 101 The best part of Purgatory Park is the fact that you can walk your dogs through the woods off leash. I have been walking there for over 10 years and NEVER have had/seen any sort of issue with off-leash dogs. The fact that you would even consider taking this away is ridiculous and I feel this is what makes Purgatory special!
- 102 The drainage pipe protruding from the creek bank near the south bridge is a terrible eyesore, and meanwhile there is a lack of functional drainage along the path on the whole southwest part of the main loop. Something should be done to alleviate the water and mud on the primary trail after rain and snowmelt that still allows flow from the ridge into the creek wetlands. The dirt paths up the ridgeline between the main loop and the connection to 58th Street are under appreciated and utilized. While not worth the space to make the trails the same width and quality as the primary ones, some amount of gravel, paver base or wood chips would be worthwhile. In parallel, buckthorn removal should be performed regularly along those trails. A "buckthorn brigade" for volunteers to work on their own time but with online instructions, and a place to log efforts and get assigned areas would help—even better if there were dedicated pullers to check out from a park locker. Can Purgatory be a site fo
- 104 I have noticed an uptick in owners not picking up after dogs. They just leave the bags on the trail when there is a bin close by. Also lots of dogs off leash on the trail.
- 106 The personality of the park is so lovely. My adult autistic son and I walk there fairly frequently, and the park attracts the most respectful, dignity-granting, friendly people. I can't even put my finger on it exactly, but it is, for us, one of the very safest places in the metro area.
- 115 No
- 117 It's really not fair for me to criticize the facilities in the park, but for the 28 years I've been visiting it I've never used the ladies' because it creeps me out from the outside.
- 119 Dog poop! I don't have a solution but dog owners need to do a better job cleaning up.
- 122 Please continue to allow Offleash sections of the park.
- 123 I have a dog but won't take him walking there bc there are so many off leash dogs at this park
- 124 Ive lived here all my life and am close to retiring, I will be able to sign up to volunteer when this happens. Thank you ! Your doing a great job !
- 125 Change nothing at Purgatory Park — friendly folks and happy dogs.

ResponseID Response

- 126 My family is a close neighbor to the park. Please keep it as "natural" as possible. We have severe latex allergies and parks with rubber crumb flooring are NOT accessible to me and my kids. We appreciate the crushed limestone trails and think it adds to the character of the park. New areas of asphalt (which often contains latex/recycled tires) would also limit our access to the park. We LOVE nature playgrounds and frequently drive to them around the metro. It would be amazing to have one in our closest park
- 127 Please leave the deer / cow trails as they are
- 129 As a dog owner, there are very few places to let our dogs be dogs. Watching my golden run in the woods and through the fields is such a joy. We do not go to fenced in dog parks as my dog would rather run in the woods with me than play with an other dog. But an unfenced area requires a dog with some recall skills and a more involved owner. So perhaps an idea would be to have a fenced in area for those that want that experience and an area open/unfenced for those of us that value that experience.
- 130 Only safety with regards to theft. Dogs are not an issue unless the owner is ignoring the rules. Aggressive dogs should not be allowed off leash. I have never had an issue with aggressive dogs, but I know people who have.
- 134 I think the current leash rules should be enforced. I have gone nearly every day for the last 3 years with my dog and have only seen police or community service officers there once. And larger signage with rules and fines clearly stated.
- 135 You did not ask if I use both primary trails and natural/wooded trails. Both are great and both should be continued - much better birding on the small trails through the woods and often quieter. I probably use the natural trails more than the primary ones.
- 137 More parking
- 138 Please continue to allow "the middle" area to remain off leash for dogs. Please use community service volunteers to issue tickets to dogs that are on the circular trail. Make the tickets high value (\$50+) and enforceable. If a dog strays from "the middle" to the circular paved trail, issue tickets!
- 139 Great natural area. Keep it as "natural" as possible.
- 143 No enforcement of dog rules = no rules and how can you possibly try to enforce any of the rules. Over and over I get told it is an of leash area. No one can tell me any of the other regulations pertaining to of leash dogs because they don't know the rest of the rules There is a lot of erosion of the creek banks due to the dogs running in and out of the water. And the whole park is a dog waste receptacle. I pick up any that I see and there is a fair amount that is bagged but then left on the trail. The question about primary trails and informal trails. I use a lot of the primary tails to get to the many informal trails so I use a high percentage of both. Another park entrance I often use is through the Scenic Heights Elementary School Forest.

ResponseID Response

144 Absolutely love the idea of the Red Barn site becoming a nature center AND nature playground! What a neat idea—could be a future site for school field trips!

147 Purgatory is a wonderful natural space, and its beauty is just that. Enhancements to the park should honor the Big Woods history, and have minimal impact on the overall ecosystem. Lone Lake is a great example, the city has done a great job balancing natural spaces with recreation.

149 We take our dog off leash in the center and on leash on paths. We have had great experiences. Fenced dog parks make it harder to avoid poorly behaved dogs. Also dogs have to be recalled trained so I feel the dogs at purgatory are better behaved than fenced in dog park dogs.

152 It would be great to have cross country ski trails in the park

154 No

155 Trail conditions in winter can be horrendous and dangerous, not sure what can be done about that. Also, love that there's an off leash dog area but people don't always stick to that area with their dogs- have seen people frightened of these dogs, I myself have been extremely annoyed/frightened by these dogs following my dog/I, I have seen other dogs attacked, I get annoyed by people yelling at their dogs who aren't well enough behaved to be off-leash. I come across people looking for their dogs that took off, and notice deer are getting chased into neighborhoods/roads by these dogs. My dog stays on a leash because I'm realistic about what I can expect from him, others seem to be over-confident or don't care about how their dogs impact others.

156 Thank you for this gorgeous park. We use it twice everyday to walk and run our happy dog!

157 We love the park and how it operates now but do feel that it could use some rejuvenation.

158 Leave it as is!

159 It's a great park!

160 We are concerned that Minnetonka focuses so much on trails and fitness centers. We now pay taxes on 2 member only fitness clubs and \$9 a month on our utilities to pay for trail upkeep. The fitness centers should be open to all residents, especially for kids swimming since Minnetonka has no public pool. Create trail passes to pay for trail upkeep. We are VERY frustrated how Minnetonka continues to waste tax payer money on select demographic, makes it exclusive yet charging all. Our family has no family playground park within biking distance. When we do drive to visit a park in Minnetonka, Mini Tonka, it is often closed or find there is no place to park due to contractors using it as a pit stop.. We usually end up just driving to other cities parks since we need to drive to get to a park anyway and Minnetonka parks do not engage our kids.

ResponseID Response

161

No

164

I don't like sharing the primary trails with cyclists. They go too fast and are a danger to pedestrians, especially to those with small children, and dogs. The mountain bike cyclists are also ruining the informal trails; they disregard the signage about not using those trails, and several have been very rude to me when I've encountered them while walking with my dogs. I know it's a great park to cycle, but something needs to be done about the inherent dangers when pedestrians share the trail with cyclists as well as the destruction of the natural environment by mountain bikes.

169

Just off-leash dogs. Dogs on leashes make no difference, but off-leash dogs concern me when bringing my toddler to walk on the main trail. There is a cross section where we regularly run into issues with dogs, including seeing one escape his owner and chase/catch a rabbit in front of our 1.5 year old. Of course this is something she would learn in the future, but it scared her very badly to see a dog viciously kill a rabbit on the trail right ahead of us. We love dogs, but they are not people. They should be on leashes or fenced-in in a city park like this.

172

Current rules about dogs in parking lots and main trails need to be respected by dog owners and enforced. This is what gives dog owners mainly a bad name. Also revive the alternative methods of encouraging dog pickup of poop- kids art- public services ce messages and opportunities- even possible signs (I know this is not a thing the public likes) reminding people where to leash dogs and maybe some facts about dog waste contamination etc

174

This park saved my mental fitness during Covid. It is my sanctuary and I hope you don't take away the off leash dog Park piece.

175

For those making decisions about change, I hope that it isn't only the few "complainers" who are heard. Suggestions are fine, but need to be well and truly investigated before any action is taken that might ultimately make the park less appealing.

176

Love the beauty and natural feel of Purgatory Park - wouldn't want to see any major changes to the already gorgeous primary trail system.

182

That attitudes of non dog owners are a vocal minority of park goers. I go to the park every single day as a dog owner and always see more people using the park with their dogs than people using it without dogs. There's a beautiful community of dog owners there that is the life of the park. This has been the best experience I've had at any park with my dog and it would be a shame if I was told I was no longer allowed. If I had to guess, you would lose 80% of park goers if you change the rules to not allow off leash walks. Minnetonka does not have a good off leash dog park besides Purgatory. All other good dogs parks exist outside of city limits. Changing the rules would simply have more of your local population leaving the city to walk their dogs and I think that would be a shame.

185

I come for the off leash dog park. We love bringing our dog there and meeting all the friendly other dogs and owners there

ResponseID Response

195 We go to the off-leash dog walking areas nearly every day. We see the people using the park most often and on a regular basis being off-leash dog walkers. Please do not remove that environment. These areas are incredibly rare and vital. There are so many other walking paths and areas mentioned in this survey. I know some people have expressed being worried about off leash dogs but I have never experienced any concern or danger. I bring my young children there. Maintaining some separation between those individuals who feel uncomfortable is fine but please do not remove the off-leash open area because of a few anxious voices.

197 Great park. Maybe find a way to better identify uses for the water.

201 Please keep the off leash dog area off leash , it's the only place for humans and dogs to roam ... fenced dog park have too many dog fights and deaths... please let behaved dogs keep their freedom to be dogs

203 Study should include the adjacent Fire Station property/integration and consider removal of all barns and structures - they have no historical significance; including the corn crib which was purchased and move there by Penaz. Minnetonka Historical Society should be considered and consulted.

204 Would love to see more prairie grass and wildflower planting

205 Love this park

211 I was forced into Retirement/disability at age 47 when my ms got too bad. I have seen many people use the park to help them nurse themselves back to reasonable health. It really, truly is a very healing place. I also see a natural link between the park and the nearby high school. Specifically, I would inquire if the art department might want to use the whole bridge abutment canvases to a) keep current messaging somewhere, b) make other new messaging about art and it's use, and inquire with the archaeology teacher to see what else could be learned from the end of the tail-line and possibly locate the missing rail station or other learnings.

212 The above says it all !!!

214 The vast majority (99%) of dogs we have encountered over the past several years are well behaved and well mannered. The times when this is not the case on perfect weather days when the number of visitors are unusually high. For example, the first nice day in the spring. I would suggest that these are the days when community officer presence should be stepped up. I have encounter many more issues with leashed dogs lunging and jumping vs off lease dogs who much better behaved. Rather than making changes to the park, maybe to have a dog off lease in the park the dog should be able to have passed the Canine Good Citizen test. This is standardized test and the owner can get a certificate and is in line with the current ordinances. There are times when trash cans are overflowing and there are no dog pick up bags available for weeks at a time mostly in the winter months. This is when dog pickup compliance is low

215 other than keeping existing trails open (fallen trees, etc...) I would like to see no changes in Purgatory park!

ResponseID Response

217 main concern is off leash dogs on the trails.

218 As I've mentioned a few times already another access point or two on the west side would be great. We live on Vine Hill Road and accessing the park on foot or bike is a bit of a trek having to go a few miles north or south. An access on 57th or 58th street would be fantastic!

219 This park is one of the best parts of Minnetonka. Please take care in doing renovations, and don't change much

221 When I first moved to Minnetonka and discovered Purgatory I was thrilled. My Labrador and I walk it often in the back trails. I try and avoid the "hill" as the groups of dogs there are really playing together and having an older dog, she is not as interested in that, but rather walking in the wooded areas. I think both a fenced area, and non-fenced for walking with dogs in the woods would be a wonderful solution. It does get muddy in the spring it would be nice if the off-leash areas that get a lot of traffic had more gravel on them to help reduce that. Once you get into the woods it isn't usually that bad, I would think because there is less traffic. It would also be nice if there was a "swimming" are for the dogs. There are a couple spots in the early summer but when it's hot it would be nice to have something to cool them down in. Thanks for considering.

222 We've used the off leash trails for our dogs for 20+ years. We strongly disagree with fencing in the park. This off leash area has been a blessing to many dog owners for decades.

223 We use the trail often! Would hate to see a fenced dog area.

226 It is our family's favorite park because of the wild nature of it. My kids are in high school now and playing in/near the creek has been an essential part of their childhood, allowing them to develop a love of the outdoors in a way not as possible with more manicured parks. We go for the kids, but honestly what draws us most is a beautiful place to walk the dog. I love the ability to hike around a loop with a variety of scenery and not just stand in one spot. This is a draw in all seasons. We do use the paved trails but most of the time are off leash in the central part. There are a couple spots where the paved trails and off leash trail are too close and off leash dogs are tempted to approach leashed dogs on the paved path.

227 I visit purgatory park daily with my two dogs. There is a fantastic dog walking community. People who have been walking their dogs off leash here for decades. People even move house to live near this park for the amazing off leash dog area. We're extremely thankful for this space. The dogs in the dog park are all very well behaved. By not having the off leash area fenced in, you ensure only trained dogs enter as poorly trained dogs might run away. I understand some cyclists are upset with the dogs in the park.

228 NA

ResponseID Response

229 Do not restrict off leash dog area. Just put more signs up, for people that don't want off leash- walk around outside of park not in the middle.

230 Winter ice on steep hills.

231 I've been walking my dogs in the unleashes area for over 30 years. It is the best park for that service anywhere in the greater metro area. My dogs have always been voice command, never any uncontrolled incidents

235 We love walking our dog off leash at Purgatory. It has helped both my wife and I through very tough times. We love the community of off leash dog walkers we've met. It would be a shame to lose that aspect of the park and the joy it brings to so many people and families!

241 For the off leash area, more signage is needed to direct dog owners to leash their dogs when crossing over paved paths so as not to interfere or frighten walkers. Also, signage to tell dog owners their dog must be sociable with other dogs or they are not allowed to use the off leash area

242 I have been using Purgatory Park for over 25 years, I have not seen a problem with the dogs. Minor scuffle between dogs do happen that the dogs and owner work out quickly. Purgatory Park is Minnetonka's town square were citizen's meet. Without freedom for the dog most of the people that use Purgatory Park would not go to the park.

243 Love the atmosphere there. If there ends up being a fenced area it should include creek access for the dogs.

244 Is the park for dogs or people?

245 Crime, car break-ins, dog owners not controlling their dogs (even when on leash and certainly when off lease), dog owners not picking up dog's poop in middle area and even along groomed trails. We have enough benches. Refrain from adding more. Also, benches full of flowers as memorials are off-putting and cannot be used for the reason intended—to sit on. PLEASE put up signs warning visitors about crime and car break-ins. The policeman said it happens all the time but I had been coming here for 20 years and was not aware. Seeing multiple car break-ins on a sunny afternoon turned me off and I quit visiting Purgatory for many months. Bloomington posts signs warning visitors an out this and we should do the same here. Dog owners think they are responsible but walking with a friend (also a Minnetonka resident), she said she didn't need to pick up the poop in the middle "off-leash" area. I was appalled and quit walking in the center area because of this.

ResponseID Response

246 While on the trail running this Sunday morning I saw 3 dogs off leash and the owner scrolling on her phone and oblivious to my wanting them out of my way and to NOT have my crotch sniffed during an otherwise pleasant summer run. Safety concerns. I have heard from several neighbors who either had their cats broken into at this park or witnessed the aftermath of it. Parking lot (and along main trails) needs better upkeep. Trash lying around, cigarette butts, etc. I pick up what I can but it looks bad. The project years ago to add the large stones along creek was a waste of money. Please don't spend money on things that won't be maintained. Dog-owners (like me) should know to keep their dogs leashes and city trails AND know to bring their own poop bags when walking their dogs. Do not spend tax money on adding more of these, please. Thank you.

247 The off leash informal trails are fantastic. I take my dogs there almost everyday, rain, shine, or freezing cold. It's great exercise for me and my dog as I have met wonderful people and dogs in the years I've been going there. People without dogs and people with dogs on leash can go almost anywhere to walk/run. Purgatory Park is a special place for dog owners who want to allow their dogs off leash. We can't go to other dog parks and have the same experience as Purgatory. I have been to other dog parks and people are actually less hands on with their dogs. The majority of the people I have met at Purgatory are so incredibly grateful for the park, they are good people and have well mannered dogs. Please, please, please, keep Purgatory Park a safe haven for people and dogs to be off leash. Thank you!

250 Purgatory Park has been a highlight and a regular part of my life for over 22 years. Please don't disrupt the natural beauty of this park. It will survive and thrive longer than any of us.

251 I firmly believe that the off leash dog rules are fine as they stand and should not be altered in any way. Also as far as "Developing " the park into something different to please the desires of the few is a bad idea. This park is very unique and valuable to many long time visitors. A park historically includes woods , wildlife and nature. Why does the park need to be changed to suit the desires of people who don't value these things. As Mtka residents we are very fortunate to have a good number and variety of parks - recreational areas. It would be a great disservice to ourselves and the park , in my opinion to "change" the park. Just for the sake of "change" and to serve the desires of those who truly don't value and maybe don't even know what nature is or means ! This park is a unique and valuable treasure and should stand , as is , forever. Our forefathers made mtka unique in regard to our leash laws for a reason and i believe in the strongest possible terms that these guiding ideas

252 I use the park almost daily, and almost everyone I encounter has a dog with them off-leash. It has become a wonderful community gathering place where we can all bring our dogs to enjoy the outdoors. I understand that some people may not want to walk where dogs are off leash. Therefore, I think it would be a great idea to help us in force leashing in certain areas, so everyone can enjoy the park and feel safe.

253 Leave the leash laws alone. I do not own a dog but love watching them play and their joyfulness. In the 20 plus years I have walked regularly in the park have NEVER witnessed an incident. Let it be! I'm

ResponseID Response

254 this is the only off leash dog area we like to use as the dogs that go to non-fenced parks are better behaved and listen to recall commands. It is a wonderful community of the same people that use it daily. I have heard that people are complaining about it and don't understand why they simply stick to the leashed area and avoid the off leash area

255 Leave it as is, no need to spend city funds needlessly. Minnetonka has wonderful parks, trails for bikes, and hiking/walking opportunities for non pet owners and state wide too! Purgatory is a jewel to our family, we take our dogs here everyday!

257 Please don't over develop it. We need secluded green spaces. If you have to add trails, please put greenery like hedges or evergreens between them to break up the site lines.

260 We adore the opportunity to explore the park with and without our dog. However it is a really special place to let dogs play off leash and it draws a lot of people and families to the park. We feel really fortunate to have that in our community and would hate to see it change.

261 Off leash dog park is amazing, unique and a gift to our community. There are 100's of options for individuals not comfortable with it.

263 More trash cans please outside of the dog area. I used to be able to use the dog park area (LOVED it!), but my new dog I am worried about (100lb and not sure how he is with other dogs), so I socialize him at dog daycare, but walk him at Purgatory on leash and often hit the informal trails (less people/dogs), but I also would like more garbage cans (and on main trail is fine), so that I am not holding a dog bag for over a mile until I see one. I literally know where all of the trash cans are, and there are not many. Thanks - LOVE Purgatory and that I live in a great community with great parks!!!

269 I live in EP off 62 (I reside in the Minnetonka school District and my kids go to CSE). We walk in to the park via 62 access under the bridge almost daily. I walk the trails with our 4 year old lab and it's our favorite walk in the area. The ability to walk our dog off-leash and the inner trails is my favorite aspect of the park. Dog walkers are very respectful of each other and I've never experienced any issue. My kids often bike the trails to see friends. It's an easy, safe option to allow them a larger blue print to move around from our neighborhood.

270 Off-leash dogs on the main path has become an issue, I have neighbors that will not walk the paths anymore because of this. This morning there was a woman (on the paved path, not the "dog" path) with 4 dogs, all off-leash - and she was on her phone. I had to walk into the grasses to go by and a biker had to almost stop. Even enforcing leashes on main path so all can enjoy it would help.

272 love it as it is. if it ain't broke don't fix it

ResponseID Response

- 274 I am aware of people concerned with off leash dogs in the park. I would LOVE to see a way where off leash dogs and their humans can respect one another and share the space. In my 12 years as a resident Ive been enjoying Purgatory's off leash areas responsibly and have never seen any incidents of attacks or dangerous situations. On a few occasions I have witnessed individuals in the space designated as off leash being hostile to those with dogs playing. It would be a shame to loose this local off leash area.
- 275 I think it is perfectly reasonable to restrict off leash dogs to the present off leash area. Perhaps this could be more strictly enforced with fines.
- 276 It is such a good place for dogs to be able to be off-leash - I say this as someone who hikes 5 miles in there almost every day. I've never found that to be unsafe. I also believe the beauty of Purgatory is how natural it is and I am concerned with all of the installation/picnic plans - isn't there enough of this in our town already? Thanks!
- 277 We live on the road to Purgatory Park (Stodola) and it is one of the best features of our home/neighborhood. I would love to feel safer bringing my leashed dog, but have had many, many encounters with off-leash dogs and their uncaring owners that leads me to not bring my dog as often as I would if I felt safer. I have been injured (fallen when caught up in the leash my dog is attached to when off lash dogs approach, multiple times) and it's really frustrating. I love the opportunity for dogs and their owners to have a space for them to run, but hate that it's at the sacrifice of my dog's comfort and my safety. I know you have a lot of interests to balance, but if there is any way to create clear boundaries and enforce park rules, we would be ever grateful.
- 279 I enjoy the informal trails. Although I keep my dog on Leah's I haven't had issue with any offleash dogs.
- 280 Several areas of the paved trail between Clear Spring Road and the tunnel under Excelsior Blvd have become quite damaged and are in need to repaving.
- 281 I live on Creek Park Dr. and access the trail from the Stodola rd. entrance. Over the last few years, we have seen an increasing amount of traffic to the park. This traffic drives fast down Stodola Rd. and is a concern to all of the families that live in the neighborhood. I would suggest making this entrance walking entrance only to avoid the extra traffic and parking at the end of the cult-a-sack. Is it possible to put no parking signs at this entrance? If you are driving to the park you should park at the main entrance where the parking lot is. Another concern is when the traffic is leaving this area there is a blind approach as you come up the hill and is concerning that traffic will not see our kids while they are playing on bikes in our neighborhood that we live in.
- 282 It is one of the biggest reasons we continue to live in the East Purgatory neighborhood off of Stodola Road
- 283 A beautiful park adjacent to our neighborhood. Sadly, we've stopped walking the Purgatory Creek trails due to unleashed and aggressive dogs. I would not recommend walking with children on these paths. Owners allow dogs to run ahead; bends in the paths don't give ample time to protect yourself, your children, or grandchildren.

ResponseID Response

284 I think the worst thing that could be done is to "overdevelop" this natural space. I love how it feels like its nestled between neighborhoods and really a part of the community. This is a unique space because people/families can make the park a part of their regular routine and walk, bike, run from their homes. I think any future development/enhancement should be nature, education, or active-lifestyle focused and not on things like adding additional parking, or commercial spaces. #KeepPurgatoryWild

286 I enjoy the park as it is. It seems to be a natural area as opposed to a groomed park. Lots of wildlife to see and birds to hear. Nor is it overcrowded. The trail is great for walking and biking, no rollerblades or motorized vehicles.

287 Well done - the clearing out and planting of prairie grasses / wild flowers on the bluff area along the eastern portion of main acreage. More removal of invasive species etc.

293 Please, please don't change it to much. We love walking at this park and adding in art or paving a ton or other things will take away from the 'nature' feeling.

294 Overall love the park! I don't mean to be so harsh about off leash, but the issue is really owners walking their dog off leash in the areas that are only for on leash (primary trails).

296 Winter time it gets crazy icy even in the paved areas. We've had to move to other parks for walks when the heavier snows start.

297 Dogs should be allowed off-leash on all unpaved trails throughout the whole park and put on leash to cross paved trails.

298 I'm fortunate to live close-by. I appreciate the thought going into its future.

299 Bring in some more wildlife.. or goats..

300 There is too much traffic in our neighborhood. Stodola park entrance is 7 houses away from our home. There is a lot of traffic coming to park over here. We have a lot of new families with young children and it's best to keep all parking plans on the Excelsior Blvd side of the park where it belongs. We already have enough unnecessary traffic coming on our streets from Scenic Heights school, especially non residents of Minnetonka.

301 We love the park. We went every single week for a year during Covid and loved watching all the season change. I have a 4 year old who is afraid of dogs and they scare her on the trails. I personally love dogs but I have noticed how quickly they get in the face of little kids when left off leash. We like hiking the trails through the woods so we avoid as many dogs on the main trail.

303 Be more supportive of Boy Scout volunteer efforts and Eagle Scout projects.

305 Don't mess with the creek banks it only makes things worse when water rises. Enforcing dog leash and poop pickup w significant fines would be great. Saturday morning is terrible w people w multiple dogs off leash, coffee in hand and dogs out of site. No way do they pick up after their dogs

ResponseID Response

311 No

319 Would love to see more children-friendly spaces in Purgatory Park and in Minnetonka generally. This survey seems to prioritize dog owners (or dog haters) over parents and their kids. I don't have a dog but don't mind the people who bring theirs to the Park. But I'd really love to have a nature playground or nature center for my young family.

322 the off leash dogs present a safety concern for those of us who hike on the trails. Many are out of control and come running at us, with their owner nowhere in sight.

329 As a dog owner, I do not feel comfortable with the off leash dogs in the park. My dog is on leash and has had several off leash dogs charge at her and the owners are oblivious or tell me it's dogs just being dogs. It is not a safe situation and it prevents us from visiting the park more frequently.

331 We have been visiting the park for over 10 years. I have witnessed aggressive dogs attacking in the off-leash area and I had my small dog charged on one of the "cow paths" by a large dog that was off-leash and the owner had no control over. We do not go in the off-leash area because personally, I think it is too risky. Also, we have a bench in honor of our son at the park. I did speak with Darin at Public Works many years ago about the amount of trash that was being left on some of the memorial benches in the park. He was completely unkind, rude, and dismissive. My suggestion to the city is if you are going to continue the memorial bench donations, you put someone else in charge of the program who is better skilled at speaking compassionately to people who are donating benches. I spoke to the city of Minneapolis bench donation person and she was very kind and compassionate to my situation. She also told me that people are not allowed to leave garbage on their donated benches. That the

333 I have been a resident of Minnetonka for over 20 years . Throughout this time, I have had the opportunity to witness the evolution of our city parks.Over the years ,various groups have voiced their concerns about the parks, and it appears some of these voices have an agenda for change. In my opinion the city has done an outstanding job in considering the needs and desires of its residents while ensuring the parks remain an essential part of our citys core values.Our city parks have been a cherished gathering place for families and friends and have provided a place for community and belonging. In addition I would encourage the city to share the results of this survey and any relevant data as transparency is vital in community decision making.

334 Minnetonka kids deserve great natural parks and trails where they can slow down enjoy nature create memories with their families and friends. Purgatory trails are amazing for families because they are natures timeless opportunity for connecting, learning and conversation. Children should be able to trust that they are safe from known and unknown dangers in our cities natural areas.

ResponseID Response

- 336 I go to Purgatory Park nearly every day and so many people choose to ignore the leash rules on the paved trails. I have had many altercations with owners who do nothing to control their dog. I've run into dogs on the unmaintained trails that growl at me with no owner in sight. The dogs that play in the center of the park do not cause issues. There should be signs where the park boundaries are such as "You are now leaving Purgatory Park". People sometimes wonder into my yard from the park and it creeps me out.
- 337 Thanks for the survey
- 340 We don't have dogs, and have never had issues with off leash dogs. We love the park!
- 343 We were ecstatic to discover this beautiful park when we first moved to Mtka, and walked our gentle LEASHED dog there often, until it became clear we could not. I cannot count how many times we have been approached and scared by off-leash dogs in Purgatory, nor how many reports I have heard and read about off-leash dog attacks in this park. Now it is our least-enjoyed park because of the constant fear of off-leash dogs. I will not walk there alone any more. Fence part of it in--maybe the large grassy area in the middle--for those who are arrogant enough to insist on off-leash dogs, and make the penalties for infractions stiff. Let the rest of us taxpayers and our kids/dogs enjoy the park in safety and peace! ***A public park is no place to test a loose dog's willingness to attack or bite a person or another dog.*** All Mtka parks need new rules about this. Thank you.
- 344 Off leash dogs have ruined this park for our family. A fenced dog park would make the park experience safer for all. People are often inconsiderate and inconsistent in their belief that their off leash dog will mind them and heel.
- 346 I stopped using the informal paths bcz too many dogs -- and owners do not control their dogs
- 347 Invasive plants, buckthorn
- 348 Patrol the parking. People pull in, drive past the overflow and stop in the lane. There W spots available but they don't even attempt to fake like they are looking for an open spot. Off leash dogs running rampant on the secondary trails likes they own the land. Owners don't try to control the dogs.
- 349 I enjoy the community of the people walking their dogs at the park. People care about each other and care about the park. I would really miss my daily walks with my dog if this was changed.
- 353 Can't wait to see your master plan!
- 354 Provide more signs to help find other trails besides the main one
- 356 Purgatory Park should be left organic and green. Playgrounds are located at other parks for families to use and same with picnic tables (none needed here). Keep this park as is and just add 2 more dog waste stations.

ResponseID Response

365 Is there another park like Purgatory anywhere in Minnesota. This place is sanctuary for dog walkers everyday who comprise 90% + of the humans walking. Did you know that the average walk in a National Park is 1/4 mile out and then back. This is a park for people who walk. Don't think you can change it. Have any of you been to Carver Park in Waconia? It is a spectacular piece of land ruined by asphalt trails. It is vast and open. Yet when I ride there in my bike this park can be virtually empty. What makes Purgatory so unique is it's undeveloped feel. If you change this then it's gone forever and you might have an empty park.

366 Too many benches, some poorly sited too far off the main trail. People don't understand or follow the off-leash ordinance. I feel harassed by dogs because owners don't keep them away from me.

367 keep working on eliminating buckthorn and invasive plants!

369 Having the center of the Park be open to off leash dogs is a pure joy. Our family goes there daily with our dogs and has never had an issue. Yes, I have seen dogs off leash BEFORE entering the park. But it would be an incredible disservice to the community to make this space no longer open to off leash families. The majority of people that use the park are there with dogs, particularly in the winter. It would be a shame to make a small fenced in space elsewhere in the park. We would have no longer visit Purgatory. I encourage you to find a way to fence in the current area if you must, but please do not short change the main group of people that utilize this park and make that space no longer open to off leash dogs.

374 I love the off leash dog park- I wish more of it was dog friendly. The off leash dog park is a highlight to my day & my dogs

376 It would be a shame to lose the off leash areas for dogs and people to exercise. Our dogs desperately need this high energy outlet which they cannot experience through on leash human speed walks.

378 I understand how people are concerned about safety with off-leash dogs. Some owners are not vigilante with keeping their dogs under voice command. I think this is primarily an issue between the open field and primary trail on the east side of the park. Other than that area I've never encountered a dog approach me not on a leash except in the parking lot where the rules are already that dogs must be leashed.

380 I have been going to Purgatory Park for over 15 years and the dog park is absolutely amazing as is. I have never seen any issues. Please don't ruin the park with a fence! Please don't change the rules. Actually, I believe there's a covenant that runs with the land that allows the dogs to be off leash.

382 I live on Nantucket Pl. and occasionally loose off leash dogs run around my house and yard. I never see or hear their owners.

383 It would be nice to have a playground for the kids.

ResponseID Response

385 Do not change anything The park is perfect and unlike any other park

392 I am concerned that the city is developing spaces that can be left more natural. I do not have a problem with the off-leash use of the park even though I do not walk a dog there. I do not want to see another dog "park". Leave as much dirt trails as possible and stop paving the grounds.

394 I would like more monitoring so park rules are followed, especially related to dogs in the park.

395 We love purgatory and love to bring our dogs it is always the highlight of our day when we go! Please keep it dog friendly! Some more waste receptacles would be nice.

403 Keep it the way it is. It's perfect.

405 I've been a regular visitor to Purgatory for over 25 years. It's a great park, love the "primary" and informal trails in the woods. Also love the increased access to the wetlands area when the ground is frozen. However, the impact to the natural features of the park have deteriorated over the past several years due to overuse. In addition, off-leash dogs on the primary trails have become a real problem for users of the park, and surrounding homes. It is a callous behavior on the part of some dog owners that creates this conflict. I am a dog owner, and love walking with my dog on the trails and in the woods - but it has become a challenge at times due to unruly dogs offleash. I know of several people that have abandoned walking or biking through the park as a result.

407 I cannot understate the value I have found and continue to place in off-leash dog policies at Purgatory Park. No other park compares to this experience, and I know many people that travel to Minnetonka just to use the park in this way. I've made friends, traded advice for dogs or children, trained my therapy dog, learned about Minnetonka, gotten exercise, watched birds and more in this park. My wife, dog and I come to Purgatory nearly every day. Loss of this benefit would entirely change our experience living in this great city. Purgatory regulars genuinely care about this habitat. I fear that changing this ordinance would completely prevent dog owners from visiting the park as well as greatly decrease overall usage or appreciation of this space. A fenced in dog area defeats the purpose of enjoying a well-preserved natural habitat.

408 Bathrooms need a real refresh. More trash cans throughout the park that actually get the trash picked up. KEEP THE OFFLEASH DOG RULES!!! :) it's our dogs happy place

410 Absolutely LOVE purgatory for hiking, a bringing my dogs. Keeping it just the way it is, will make me continue to visit. If someone is cautious or cannot have a dog off leash, the choice of visiting should be at their own discretion - go somewhere else that's fenced in or does not allow dogs. This place brings so much joy to dog owners.

412 Not at this time.

ResponseID Response

415 My home is right next to the paved trail. We frequently (weekly at least) have off leash dogs chasing rabbits through our yard. Owners yelling for their dogs does not constitute "voice control." The majority of dog owners are friendly, but even though it is clearly indicated that dogs on the paved paths must be on leash, owners frequently do not have their dogs on leashes and when I say something about the dog needing to be on a leash they often say "oh yeah, but my dog is fine. Please, please, please find the resources to establish a dog park and return the park to its status as a park preserve.

417 Lack of leash rule enforcement on main trails.

420 it is a beautiful park and I love that we have that much open natural space close by

422 The gravel roads should be paved smooth so people can bike/rollerblade

427 We love the natural beauty of the park and especially appreciate the conservation, prairie restoration, and volunteer work done. Our dog was small and was always on a leash even on the informal trails. We worry about damage to the prairie and had several scary instances over the years with off-leash larger dogs running full speed at us and our dog. Fenced off-leash area seems like it would minimize those problems.

429 Try to keep it as close to nature as possible. No fences or buildings, etc.

434 Trails have become dangerous for walking with the uncontrolled off leash dogs and ebikes.

435 No- Thank you for taking a thoughtful approach to this master plan. I am surprised however that we have not been given any more info, as we signed up at the open house for updates. I would have thought a survey like this would be communicated to us, but i found out about it via word of mouth thru my Friends at the Park.

436 My young son doesn't want to go to Purgatory because of the number of off-leash dogs. He doesn't like energetic dogs jumping on him or licking him. The number of off-leash (and uncontrolled) dogs and the amount of dog poop on the trails is a strong deterrent for our family.

437 No

441 I LOVE LOVE LOVE the off leash dog area. What I don't love is when people are irresponsible with their dogs or not aware of their dogs not being able to behave themselves around other people or dogs. That was why I always answered "somewhat" in the off leash dog questions. I don't know how to fix it, but maybe signage to help people take time to think about their own dog and the decisions they make regarding the dog? Or some rules if there are offenses of dogs behaving poorly that those dogs not be allowed to return? Not sure how to "police" that either? Just spitting thoughts and ideas...

442 Please keep as natural as possible.

ResponseID Response

- 444 Potentially adding more signage about rules and expectations on dogs so that there is a decrease in dogs off leashing who are not friendly.
- 447 I love the size of the park and the informal paths get me right into nature. I miss the artist who used to paint on rocks and spread them around the park. They were such fun and joyful finds. If you do art installations it would be amazing to integrate that person - Purgatory's original artist presence
- 448 Love it how it currently is!!
- 449 You are doing a great job getting input on this initiative
- 450 I've lived in Minnetonka for nearly 30 years. For 12 of those years we had a dog and I was not really aware of Purgatory Park is such a great resource. I pay every year for a permit to go to Van Valkenburg in Edina. We have a new puppy and I'm not sure I'll renew the permit for Van Valkenburg next year now that I have Purgatory Park, which is much closer to home and far is superior to the small fenced in facility in Edina.
- 451 I drive nearly 10 miles to the park so I can walk in a natural area with my small dog off his leash. I always leash him on the maintained paths, and wait until we are well away from the parking area to let him off his leash. The park is big enough that we can stay away from the maintained trails and other people and dogs that may not want to interact. This is a rare resource in the metro area. Please maintain this valuable resource. Thank you.
- 452 BUCKTHORN! I live on Spring Lane and have buckthorn backed up to the property line between my lot and city lot. I have wondered if we could remove it, but it is on city property. We see a ton of wildlife every day: Bucks, does, fawns, owls, hawks, coyotes, ect., and could help with wildlife monitoring. My husband and I would be willing to help out at Purgatory Park. We have been coming here almost every day for the past 20 years
- 454 Off leash ability is great for dogs and owners
- 455 Purgatory is unique in all the amenities it offers. I'd hate to see any further restrictions on dogs. Imposing on leash only will force me to drive to another city to use their dog-friendly parks. I'd be interested to know the # of complaints or concerns related to dogs and safety and if there have been any unsafe incidents. The dog park is unique- the walking park is not.
- 456 There is adequate physical separation between the informal and primary trails allowing for both walkers and bikers as well as hikers with off-leash dogs to have adequate separation. The exception to this is a small section of trail where the two merge briefly before diverging. The one suggestion I might have would be to close off the informal trail allowing for a full and complete loop for those walking off leash dogs so that there may be a more complete separation of the two trails (with the potential for a small path to connect the two).

ResponseID Response

461 Please do NOT ban dogs from the park. There are so many dogs that play together off leash and if that gets taken away, that would be heartbreaking. They look forward to their time together.

462 I have noticed over the years a loss of the natural animals (i.e. squirrels, deer, rabbits, and snakes). I'm not a big fan of snakes, but the park's habitat is changing. This could be due to the number of dogs using the park.

463 Runners on secondary trails.

464 I really love the park the way it is. I typically take my walk starting with a paved trail and moving into the interior of the park so that my dog can get some time off leash. I'm so grateful that we have this beautiful park so close to our home.

466 I believe that the lady who left the land to our beautiful city was a dog lover & wanted it to be a more natural place for dogs & their owners to hike & have freedom!! I love Purgatory Park just as it is! Maybe a few more garbage cans & doggy bag receptacles would be helpful. Thanks!

468 The land was donated by a woman who intended it to be for dogs to be free and off leash. I would appreciate those who live on the park to get more say than people who don't live in property. Also those who live within walking distance should get more say as well. Serve the people whose park is their neighborhood park. I understand that it may be different than what I want to see the park as but at least it would serve the people who live there. Also those who have lived there for over 10-20 years should have more of a say.

470 I like to run and walk at the park. Very frequently I am confronted by off-leash dogs while on the main trails. I have been attacked by off-leash dogs in the past and do not like being approached by unfamiliar off-leash dogs. It is to the point where I don't feel safe using the park because of the off-leash dogs. I am open to there being an off-leash dog area at the park, but I would like it to be fenced off so I don't have to encounter off-leash dogs at the park when walking or running on the trails.

471 We walk pergatory park several times a week and are often approached by unleashed dogs. Our own dog does not always get along with other dogs and since there are so many unleashed dogs at Purgatory, we have never felt like it was ok to bring our dog on aleash to the park. I wish we could.

472 Glad to have the park there. Yes, dogs should be on leashes. Regarding volunteering, I work two jobs, so not a lot of spare time.

474 Great park. Please don't wreck it under the guise of progress.

475 Keep nature untouched. The essence of this park is beautiful nature.

ResponseID Response

- 476 Grateful the city listens to its citizens - wouldn't have Purgatory Park if they hadn't! Please continue your thoughtful consideration of the need for natural areas within our city, that benefit people first, dog owners....oh fourth or fifth.
- 477 The off trail hills on the north side of park feel too closed in. We have found evidence of a meeting place for sexual encounters - i.e. condoms on ground, a dirty hammock. It feels a bit unsafe sections. Also, there are remains of a few structures in different parts of the park. Not sure if they should be cleaned up more or excavated (depending on age of materials). Who were these landowners that donated to the park? Maybe mention them with signage?
- 478 I love dogs but worry about a confrontation between an off leash dog way ahead of its owner coming upon my dogs that are leashed. I'm also concerned that wildlife is being impacted when dogs are freely running through the grassy areas with coyotes, pheasants, turkeys, and other birds and animals that can be disturbed. I think the beauty of the park is in its nature state and don't want conflicts to occur. That brings me to my next point, garbage that is left behind on trails and in the parking area. I don't know why over the past few years people have been abusing natural areas like our national parks, BWCA, etc. but it is rampant even at city parks like Purgatory. So many do not understand the leave no trace principals, or just don't care. I worry too much development in the park, like playgrounds, would bring more degradation. There are so many other parks with such facilities. I believe Purgatory should focus on nature and programs around the nature found historically in Minnetonka
- 480 Minnetonka needs MORE areas for off leash dogs. PLEASE do not take this away.
- 482 I volunteer extensively at Lone Lake Park but I could participate at Purgatory as well.
- 484 Glad to see the city is stepping through this process and looking at ways to preserve and expand on this very special piece of land.
- 486 It's a wonderful asset.
- 487 about a proposed nature/interpretive center... I'm not opposed, really, but I wonder what the goal is. Given the city's competing priorities, I would rather see \$\$ expended on educating EVERYONE re: climate change through increased, devoted monthly space in the Mtka Memo, rather than relying on people to come to the park to learn things. Time to quit "gently" teaching about the realities of climate change.
- 489 I would love to see the red barn become a nature center and have programming for kids like the Westwood hills nature.
- 490 I enjoy the plant restoration and bluebird houses. Thank you
- 491 I have used and greatly enjoyed the park daily with my dog off-leash in the informal trails since 1995. Experienced only two incidents with unhappy visitors in all those years. The park is wonderfully full of great experienced dog owners.

ResponseID Response

492 While some people apparently have concerns about dogs in the park, during my years of rather frequent use I have never experienced nor seen a hazardous situation. They may occur, but seem to me to be infrequent. FWIW I am a former - but not current - dog owner and enjoy their presence. In contrast, I consider the long-lived and dangerous ice on the trails last winter a far greater hazard to me, even when using Yak Trax traction aids, and I ceased walking in the Park for many weeks due to that situation.

497 I don't want to lose the wonderful nature that is at Purgatory Park.

504 It's a wonderful place with great connection to the gardens to the north, nature playground/school, and informal playgrounds. Perhaps the Red Barn could expound/play into on these themes of nature connectivity, climate, and enviro/sustainability.

505 I love walking the dogs at Purgatory but I also recognize they may degrade the watershed and wonder if an enclosed area would be better for this precious resource and other visitors.

507 Bird watching education natural plants education other education or opportunities to partner with REI or other outdoor groups for "demo days" or education about outdoor activities of all sorts.

512 I would love to see a play structure added! It's hard to bring my kids here because they need a little something more than just walking around. A nature center, nature play area, or play spots along the trail would be amazing. Improved bathrooms would be great also. Thanks!

516 This park is a gem and we hope it can maintain how natural the majority of it is, with the addition of a few more things for kids (nature playground, sledding hill, etc) at the entrance/red barn site.

526 Dog owners not picking up and carrying dog waste to the receptacles. Always see filled dog waste bags lying around, as well as dog droppings not picked up.

528 Thank you for the work you do to keep Purgatory Park the beautiful place it is! I love it there and am so thankful for the City of Minnetonka staff!! I would love to see the park encourage more homeowners in the area to rewild their spaces and kill their lawns, and I think putting that kind of info in the park could be super beneficial :)

529 As a resident of Stodola Rd, the amount of traffic driving quickly past my house then parking in the cul de sac (especially in winter when it's key for plows to access this point) is discouraging. Most folks when approached don't seem to care that it's a residential street & state there's no more parking anywhere else & often let their unleashed dogs hop out & towards the creek/towards the deer often in the area (setting off my leashed dog walking from our home).

ResponseID Response

530 If we added art installations or a "Nature Playground" I would want the area to be defined and not throughout the park. Perhaps a nature playground in conjunction with a climate/nature center off of Excelsior. Perhaps art wherever the parking ends up. Also, I would like stop adding "Memorial" benches and signage. It starts feeling like a cemetery.

531 We love Purgatory Park. Our primary concern, over the three years we've lived nearby, is the off-leash dog rule. Many people DO abide by this rule and are in the appropriate area. However, almost every time we are walking, running or biking the primary path, we encounter dog(s) off leash. One of my children has an intense phobia of dogs, due to having been bitten by a neighbor dog when he was 2. So, each time he encounters an off-leash dog in Purgatory, he is re-traumatized, yells, and it's become a reason he does not enjoy going through this park. I know people love to walk their dogs and many of them are well-behaved. But my child does not know these dogs, nor do I, and we are not comfortable with dogs off-leash and able to run up to us. It is scary and, unfortunately, has let to some very anxiety-filled bike rides as a family because our child does not feel safe. We should be able to walk or ride bikes on a trail without having a dog run up to us off-leash while in the leash-require

534 I have small children that I would like to bring to the park more but it's hard to predict how the walk will go with the off leash dogs. I do wish there was a dedicated area for them to run free. My daughter has been frightened a few times with dogs running up to her from out of nowhere. I also think the area is so beautiful in the winter, I wish you could rent skis or snowshoes.

538 Some of the police and community service officers need to know park rules. Most have been great. But in over thirty years of frequent visits I've been told: nobody allowed in park after 10pm, no dogs allowed in park(even on leash), no off leash in any area of park, by police officers.

540 Leave the park the way it is

542 Lovely natural area for walking, I hope it stays that way!

544 Make sure everyone who uses the park has their input heard.

545 Encourage the rock couple to keep those beautiful painted rocks coming.

547 Thanks for all the work you are doing to maintain and improve this lovely natural setting! I appreciate your requesting our input.

548 There are lots of "offshoot trails" and I am not sure - since there is no signage - if we should be using them or not. I would be interested in working on a bird list for the park with other interested birders.

549 Thanks for all of the snow plowing!

ResponseID Response

551 It is perfect the way it is. It is a jewel and is a perfect mix of nature and public. Just keep it as is. This park is already very busy. It used to be an oasis. I think there are a lot of non Minnetonka users and I am not all that happy about how busy the park has become. We choose to live directly by the park and hope it will not become overcrowded. The wildlife needs some space too. There are so many bikes and they go fast. I have seen several almost accidents. I have a dog and therefore use wider section of the path, I get startled on a regular basis and have to jump over to the side. I appreciate the off leash rules in the unimproved paths in the park. I think fenced in dog areas are dangerous and spread disease for dogs. If dog owners are responsible there should be very little problem as is. The few bad apples should not ruin it for all dog owners and some enforcement with education of the rules would be appropriate That might also help with bikes which are the greatest danger

552 I love Purgatory Park but do think some of the infrastructure, especially the main parking restroom building, is in need of restoration. It seems there was painting which was good but it could use a facelift. I love the idea of a nature center at the red barn, maybe with a picnic option, or with small event rental in mind (birthday parties etc)

554 Would love a Splash Pad!

555 We moved near by specifically for the dog park. Please don't take it away.

556 I walk, bike or run in the park daily. It is a gem with natural beauty and secluded trails. I think the city should keep it as natural as possible without adding more building structures.

559 So glad to have this wonderful park near our house. We love it!!

560 As you consider the red barn area, I hope it's to preserve the barn and historic character of that site, and to make it more accessible/enjoyable to visit.

563 I think a fenced dog off leash area could be very helpful. There have been times that the bathroom area at the north entrance has felt unsafe, but that had seemed better in recent years. Overall the restoration efforts have been really nice. I work for Three Rivers Parks and know maintaining these restorations is an ongoing effort. I like the balance of formal and informal paths here. Really appreciate that it's a restored natural area first and balanced with public use, but not overdeveloped.

570 to many off trail paths are degrading the park. Dog poop is a problem!

572 Safety is a big concern on all trails in recent years with the high violent crimes and recent attacks on women. I no longer walk the trails alone :(I've encountered men sitting in or loitering in the woods along the trail, loitering on the trail so I end up turning around so as to not have to pass them. Not safe.

574 I love this park and it's natural feel. Would love to see more plant restoration. Do not want this to end up like a fully manicured park. Thank you so much in seeking public opinion. Please keep this park in its natural state.

ResponseID Response

576 My only concern is angry bikers. Would like to see more signage for the bikers to slow down around the dog areas. Obvious dog area signage would be nice.

578 Problem with off leash dogs is on the trails - some people walk their dogs off leash on the trails. If dogs are well trained & stay within the dog park would be ok.

583 Absolutely love the off leash dog park and have gone for many years without ever any problems. Such a special place to share with you, and your canine ♥♥♥

585 The ability to walk to the park from my home on Nantucket with my dogs during every season adds great value to my home and life in Minnetonka. When I lived in other Minnetonka locations, I would drive there to offer my dogs an off-leash experience and enjoy the beauty of the area during every season. Please allow for this recreational gem to enjoy the solitude of the prairie and wooded areas along the creek to remain accessible for dog lovers like myself and my family.

586 More waste receptacles (garbage) would be helpful to dispose of dog waste. Specifically in the center portion off main parking lot where many dogs play off leash.

590 No

593 I have enjoyed the park for many years. But I have noticed more dogs (and their waste) on the main trails. I don't use the other trails because I have been confronted by unleashed dogs and their inconsiderate owners. Dogs seem to have taken over this park and they don't pay taxes!

594 Ensuring prioritization of preserving, maintaining and expanding natural areas should be prioritized, in my view, while also including recreational opportunities as possible. A nature/environmental education center would be terrific as well, esp. if coordinated to complement (not replicate) what Wayzata and other area cities are doing in this regard

596 I think the off leash trail system is a big draw to the park and should not be changed. I hi there often and have never seen a problem, just many dog owners using this feature.

599 Our family loves to bring our dogs to Purgatory for long hikes through the woods. It would be a shame if dogs were no longer allowed to be off-leash when not on the primary trails.

603 I am filling this out because my neighbor told me you're asking about off-leash dogs in Purgatory. It would be such a relief if that could end. I love that park so dearly but it's such an issue.

607 Winter ice makes some of the steep hills impossible to hike. It would be nice if the ice was somehow minimized. Thanks!

ResponseID Response

608 It's a treasure and thanks for keeping it up so well! Minnetonka needs to create a dog park for the dog folks and it should not be in a natural area that supports birds and other wildlife. And, people just cannot seem to keep their dog on leash when in parking lot and some primary trails. They simply won't unless you direct them elsewhere altogether. Appreciate your asking the community about this!

609 The off leash dog area is an amazing benefit to dog owners, especially in the winter time when outdoor space to run is limited. The off leash area is much better than a fenced in dog park which results in too many dogs in close proximity. Please keep the wonder ability for dog owners and their dogs to enjoy the beautiful nature and exercise experience!

611 1. Add security cameras at park entrances. 2. Improve the condition of the restroom and keep it open through the winter. 3. When the primary trail turns to ice, and then it snows, don't plow the snow. Keep it for traction. 4. Discourage parking at neighborhood entrances such as Stodola road.

613 Love it exactly the way it is! It doesn't need a thing.

617 The off leash dog area has always felt safe and been a fantastic environment for humans and dogs alike. I travel from Minneapolis for this awesome opportunity to enjoy nature with my dog. All dogs and owners have been so nice.

619 The problem with the off leash dogs is that people refuse to follow the rules and allow their dogs to run loose on the maintained trails. Some of the people who oppose changing the off leash rules are the people breaking the rules. I would like to see a small dog fenced in area and a fenced in large dog area.

620 No, although happy to hear you are considering best accommodations for everyone.

624 Extraordinary place for our whole family to get out into nature. We have walked our dog there 2-3 times per week for 7+ years. The experience of exploring the trails with an off leash dog is really unique, something that can't be replicated anywhere else in the Metro. A respectful and responsible community of dog owners has ensured that these experiences have been positive for the dog and the kids.

627 I love purgatory. We bought a house near the park so we could continue to walk our dog in the park off leash. There is no park like it. We are so lucky. I hope the use of the off leash space remains. It is so valuable and gives our dogs such good exercise they can't get fenced in and on a leash.

629 Highly support a Climate and Nature Center to educate kids and community. Big Red Barn is perfect spot for this!

632 More off leash areas

634 It's the best! Thanks for taking care of it!