

# Agenda Minnetonka Parks & Recreation Board

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

7 p.m.

Virtual Meeting on WebEx

## **P**arks & Recreation

### **Board Vision**

A city with outstanding parks and recreational opportunities within a valued natural environment.

### **Board Mission**

The mission of the Minnetonka Parks & Recreation Board is to proactively advise the City Council, in ways that will:

- » **Protect & enhance Minnetonka's natural environment**
- » **Promote quality recreation opportunities and facilities**
- » **Provide a forum for citizens interested in our parks, trails, athletic fields and open space**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
  - \_\_\_ Elliot Berman
  - \_\_\_ James Durbin
  - \_\_\_ Chair Nelson Evenrud
  - \_\_\_ Chris Gabler
  - \_\_\_ Elena Imaretska
  - \_\_\_ David Ingraham
  - \_\_\_ Ben Jacobs
  - \_\_\_ Chris Walick
3. **Reports from Staff**
4. **Approval of Minutes**
  - A) March 4, 2020
5. **Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda**
6. **Business Items**
  - A) Bryant Lake Regional Trail masterplan (Three River's Park District)
  - B) Park Ordinance Amendment related to the Mayors Monarch Pledge
  - C) Natural Resources Division's Education and Outreach Plan
7. **Park Board Member Reports**
8. **Information Items**
9. **Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**
10. **Adjournment**



## **Minutes of the Minnetonka Park Board Meeting of March 4, 2020**

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### **1. Call to Order**

### **2. Roll Call**

Park Board members in attendance included Elliot Berman, James Durbin, Nelson Evenrud, Chris Gabler, Elena Imaretska, David Ingraham, Ben Jacobs and Christopher Walick. Staff members in attendance included Darin Ellingson, Mike Funk, Carol HejlStone, Kathy Kline, Kelly O'Dea, Sara Woeste and Leslie Yetka.

Chair Evenrud called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

### **2. Reports from Staff**

There were no reports from staff.

### **3. Approval of Minutes**

Walick moved, Jacobs seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of February 5, 2020 as submitted. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

### **4. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda**

None

### **5. Business Items**

#### **A. Adoption of the 2020 Park Board Strategic Plan**

Recreation Services Director, Kelly O'Dea reported on the edits and asked for feedback on the Park Board Strategic Plan.

Gabler moved, Ingraham seconded a motion to approve the Strategic Plan as written. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

#### **B. Review of the 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program**

O'Dea gave the background of the report.

Ingraham asked what the distinction is between the Parks and Trail Investment Plan and the Trail Improvement Plan.

Park and Trail Planner, Carol HejlStone replied that the Park Investment Fund is to make sure parks and trails are maintained and in good working order. The Trail Improvement Plan focuses on expanding that system.

O'Dea asked if anyone had any specific pages they want to look at or any specific questions about projects.

Imaretska liked the planning that was done for the placemaking for Opus and Ridgedale and hopes to see similar planning for existing spaces and parks. A lot of them are so old and there are new ways of thinking about the community as well as new priorities and efforts around sustainability. Imaretska added that a really important element to think about is looking at existing items as they need maintenance or equipment replaced.

Ingraham asked if the informational signs at Lone Lake will be updated. They are looking run down and he would like them to look nice for the new trail coming in.

Ellingson responded that they have been working with natural resources the past few years to update the information on the signs. There are six or seven signs that need to be updated and they will be covered under the operating budget.

Imaretska commented that recycling is lacking around the parks and trails. She thinks it is an important piece to think about and budget for.

Ellingson replied that recycling in the parks has been researched. The challenge is the care that people take putting the right things in the recycling especially in an unmonitored area. If a garbage can is full, people tend to put the garbage in the recycling bin. Nationally the recycling markets are suppressed because two years ago China changed what items they would accept. Recycling companies are really struggling because of the amount of trash that is getting into the recycling facilities where they sort and process everything.

Durbin added that it has to be done right and in a limited scope or there will be contamination. Durbin proposes that a couple of items such as aluminum cans or soda bottles go into the recycling streams to be processed. He recommends talking to Waste Wise for advice since the City of Minnetonka does not have a full time recycling staff member. He would rather not have any trash cans in the parks if they cannot be paired with recycling. Our mission statement includes protecting natural resources but we should also work on environmental sustainability. Durbin says there are simple things that can be done to show we care and are trying.

Imaretska suggested having recycling available when programming is taking place in the parks. Imaretska requested organics containers at Williston Fitness Center. She is trying to think of supervised places that programs take place in. She thinks it is important for us to provide those opportunities and it is a way to educate.

O'Dea asked for input.

Imaretska said she didn't see anything mentioned about the Glen Lake Activity Center.

O'Dea explained that there is not a specific page on the Glen Lake Activity Center in the Park and Trails section. It is a recreational facility, which is funded by different sources that don't typically go through the park board.

Ingraham questioned what the \$900,000 is for on project number Park-2106.

O'Dea replied that around 2001, staff looked at properties and listed a number of them that they would be interested in purchasing if they became available. There are dollars

in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) if they want to use certain funding and the properties become available.

Imaretska questioned why the two segments with the highest priority are not moving forward on the trail expansion plan.

HejlStone responded that staff has been strategically waiting for the Baker Road segment. Three Rivers Park District has been conducting the West Metro Regional Trails study so the thinking was to wait to see what the outcomes of that study were. They are looking for ways to provide a north-south connection largely through the city of Minnetonka. Staff is now aware that the outcome of that study has the Baker Road segment as a portion of that preferred alignment. Having Three Rivers lead a master planning effort around that will help us advance that project and be eligible for a little bit more robust sources of funding to really get at what would be a really challenging segment.

Jacobs moved, Walick seconded a motion to approve the 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Program as shown. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

### C. Bike Month

HejlStone gave the report.

Jacobs likes these ideas. He asked who is taking the lead. Would the Minnetonka bike community take the lead on the pit stops or who would be running the point?

HejlStone replied that she would be the lead along with other city staff. Staff has reached out to Hennepin County staff to gage their level of interest in participating. Following feedback received this evening, staff would continue to work around building community support. We have broached the topic to Mayor Wiersum but have not heard a response.

Jacobs likes the idea and volunteered to help in some way. He thinks biking to places and giving discounts to bikers is a great idea. Some of the breweries already do that due to some of their parking issues. Another idea Jacobs recommended was having sensors on bike tires and when they biked through they get entered into a drawing. The University of Minnesota does this to encourage people to bike to campus. If their name gets drawn, they could get a gift certificate to a local business.

Evenrud opened the floor for public comment.

Luke Van Santen, 2148 Sheridan Hills Rd., Minnetonka. In the last seven years he has become a year-round bicycle commuter and wanted to jump at the opportunity to show his strong support for this.

Van Santen commented on each of the bulleted points in HejlStone's presentation.

- **Profiles of local cyclists in the Minnetonka Memo and on social media** – is a great way to show that bicyclists aren't just roadies. Bicyclists are moms with kids trying to get to school or dads stopping at the grocery store picking up that

one last thing they need for supper. He thinks it would be a good idea to continue to show that to more people. The woman that spoke at the Minnetonka trail segment public meeting about the crossings would be a great example of that.

- **Encourage local businesses to offer promotions to customers who ride to their establishments** – Unmapped offers a promotion, Van Santen thinks it is one dollar off your first drink. There is a larger entity out there called Bicycle Benefits. If you have a membership and go to a participating business they may have a special that you can take part in. The city could help by being the local vendor to sell stickers for bike helmets. The stickers on the bike helmets indicates they are a member and they are able to receive the discount. Van Santen has talked with various Minnetonka vendors in the past but they did not want to incur that effort. It would put more of a burden on their staff to maintain that system.
- **A Bike month or week proclamation** – Van Santen supports this but doesn't want it to end there. Maybe adding a bike day later in the summer or incorporating it into the Summer Festival would be some ideas. It doesn't have to be all summer but finding ways to incorporate it and really kind of leverage and expand it seems like it would be a really great idea.
- **A group ride with city officials along the new Plymouth Road trail** - Van Santen would be happy to participate in this. He thinks it would be a great idea to stop down at Station Pizza afterwards to show that support for local businesses.
- **A pit stop/energizer Station on Bike to work day (May 15) at the trail adjacent to civic center campus** – Van Santen would volunteer to be a participant in the pit stop on bike to work day. He has previously participated in St. Louis Park's and they have had a really nice set up and believes if Minnetonka can have something like that it would be a great thing. He suggested doing something like that for Bike to School Day. He is not sure how that would work logistically but an example is having something on the trail exit for Minnetonka Middle School East. If continuing to push it out beyond the bike to work, bike to school, bike to groceries, etc...he thinks it would be a great thing.

Jacobs asked Van Santen what the name of the discount program is that he mentioned.

Van Santen responded that it was [bicyclebenefits.org](http://bicyclebenefits.org) and there is a local chapter.

Jacobs likes his ideas thinking long-term. If this kick-start is really successful, then maybe continue to Summer Fest. Parking at Summer Fest is crazy so having a bike area and receiving a discount would be beneficial.

Van Santen added that even if the roads are shut off, people can bike all the way in. There is a very large stream of people walking a long distance.

Evenrud said from the commuting end he has gone full circle. When he grew up, biking was not always looked at as a positive thing. As he has gotten older, he has realized that bikers have been doing everyone a favor. He supports it and people should do anything for them such as slowing down. There also should be more educating around biking.

Gabler suggested adding a bullet point on education awareness. Motor vehicles biggest frustration is bikers who don't understand the rules of the road. He thinks it should be started with the kids and teaching them the rules of the road and what cars have to do. Gabler doesn't think motorists really know that and how much room they are supposed to give. He recommends a bullet regarding education and maybe an education event that would garner quite an attendance.

Walick asked if staff has talked with neighboring cities about what they are doing.

HejlStone answered that some of our neighboring communities participate in bike month activities. As far as what they are planning this year, that would be something coming in the near term; to really get better at that coordination to see how we can partner or work together in some way.

Imaretska knows that Groveland is planning a bike to school day so she wants to support and coordinate with them. She loves all of the ideas listed and would be happy to participate and volunteer. She thinks it will be important to put this on social media and through communications. It will be a great opportunity to garner more interest from people especially if we are highlighting local people and businesses.

Berman requested outreach to schools but not only for a bike to school day but to also help them out. It is hard for students to come with their backpacks along with everything they need for after school activities. He suggested encouraging each principal and superintendent to work out a system where students that usually take a bus or car can have extra time to get to school. Also, to give those students a little shout out or benefit.

Durbin asked if this is new. He mentioned that Groveland is doing the bike to school on May 6 and he bets they will have high participation. He wonders if the other schools in Minnetonka and Hopkins are planning something. He could see closing down a road someday and just seeing a bunch of grade-schoolers and middle-schoolers taking over and demonstrating that biking is cool. The trails aren't meant for the capacity of kids from these two school districts to get on them at one time. That is a lot of traffic congestion. If this goes well, maybe the police and fire can participate and open up one of the larger arteries and give the kids the opportunity to bike down a street.

Evenrud said there must be some challenges of kids arriving at the same time with buses. Also, he pointed out that trails don't all access schools in the same way. Evenrud thinks they should focus on what the city's role should be during this month verses what the school's role is. Also, they should think about what can be done to encourage it as well as coordinating it so our trails can be highlighted.

Imaretska suggested that the city could highlight bike friendly routes to get to places. Taking into account the different trails and roads that are not as busy could be a great way to do that. Maybe some signage could be put up if it is a special bike day. Imaretska thinks that some people don't ride bikes places is because of lack of

confidence. Either they have never done it or they don't know where to go. If there are ways to help people gain that confidence that might be really helpful. Imaretska suggested connecting with the Senior Advisory Board because there are lot of seniors in Minnetonka and seeing what they could also do.

Berman commented that as a student council member they are always looking to put on events for students to make everything more inclusive and make a greater community. He thought something the park board could do is reach out to the student council members in the Minnetonka, Hopkins and Wayzata school districts and say they would like to work with the students and the administration.

Evenrud thought student council was a good idea.

Gabler asked if maybe the playground program could include a bike rodeo for one of the days. Instead of being at the playgrounds, maybe they can figure out how to get to the Civic Center on their bikes.

Assistant Recreation Director, Sara Woeste responded that she used to manage the playground program, which is now the park adventures program. The program used to offer a bike safety or bike rodeo with the police department. She thinks police officers still come out to each playground program and talk about bike safety. The Hopkins police go to the Hopkins parks and the Minnetonka police go to the Minnetonka parks.

Imaretska said the Farmers Market could provide another benefit if you bike there. She would love to see an open street type of event someday. Even if it is smaller scale or somehow linked to another event such as Summer Fest or a Farmers Market. If a small portion could be blocked off it would still give it that open street feel and would be great.

Evenrud asked if there is currently any plans for open streets in Minnetonka.

O'Dea is not aware of any.

Evenrud asked what cities have open street events.

HejlStone replied that she believes St. Louis Park has hosted an open street style event. This is a newer idea to the suburban community. Events like this take a substantial amount of planning time so that would be a future event.

Evenrud said these are awesome but they take on a life of their own with the businesses and the business districts.

O'Dea thanked everyone for their feedback.

#### **D. Ridgedale Area Parks Design Update**

HejlStone reported.

Jacobs said they have done a lot of great work and is excited.

Walick said it looks amazing. He likes the idea of having that office/meeting space. He likes the glass but wonders where that falls with the sunrise/sunset because they can heat up.

HejlStone said that is something they are looking at. It has an addition of a shade or pergola screen in front of that glass element but the sun angles and how far out those need to be will still need to be looked at. Those are elements that staff and the consultants are looking at during the detail design.

Durbin likes the Crane Lake back to nature concept and how it is different than Opus and Ridgedale. One of the big things he talked about when this project started, was that this has to be a reason for people to come to Ridgedale. Ridgedale Center is struggling and he wants people to come and enjoy Ridgedale Park and Crane Lake Preserve. What is missing is the potential to do outdoor concerts. Durbin would like this to have similar outdoor summer concert programming as the Civic Center. He hopes there is a plan to put that and have the infrastructure that would support it like the electrical. Maybe a stage is put together when it is needed and then taken down. He doesn't want it to be forgotten because he thinks it would draw a lot of people.

HejlStone said she has been thinking about that and identified some areas within the plaza area for a flat stage that has a little different paving pattern so it is somewhere for a musical act or other performer to be. There is also the opportunity of erecting a larger stage as events need. Some of the elements that are being looked at in detail design is where power is needed, how often power is needed and where are those key locations to really allow for successful programming.

Durbin complimented the water feature. On a hot summer day at the Minnesota Zoo the water feature is the most important thing there. To have that and to be able to have it nice and well maintained would be a cool draw. That is a unique feature being added to Minnetonka and it will draw a lot of kids. He asked where the food trucks would park.

HejlStone said as part of the concept design and into detail design what we are looking at is having this larger entrance way be vehicle grade pavement. This will allow trucks to pull in and pull right up around the exterior and to have the accessibility to those plugins for electricity so the loud generators won't be part of the food truck experience.

Durbin added that this will be a place where people will go and hang out and it will be an area people can go to for any type of entertainment. He appreciates the thoughtfulness in this design.

Imaretska agrees it is amazing. As a mom of a young child, she suggested having a space for some snack vending machines and thinks it would be very popular for families with small children. She recommended using a healthier vending company called Farmers Fridge. They provide fresh and more vegetable items for vending machines. Imaretska also reminded staff as they are thinking about the art and those structures there to make sure we are supporting local artists. She also recommended finding a way to honor American tribes that have lived here before us.

Ingraham said he thinks it looks terrific and it is truly transformative of that whole space. The splash pad is outstanding not only for the kids but for parents and grandparents. Ingraham asked about the logistics of the splash pad. Given the proximity of the splash

pad to where the cars traverse around the exterior, there is some sort of impediment for small kids to escape fast to a driving area.

HejlStone replied that staff is looking at ways to ensure the perimeters of the park are safe. Staff is really conscience that there is an interior mall ring round around three quarters of the park space as well as a public street around the remainder. So safety is an utmost priority.

Ingraham asked if two toilets are adequate for an ice rink or events.

HejlStone responded that there is always a give and take of how much real estate of a 2 acre park do you want to devote to bathrooms. There are existing areas for people to use the restroom such as Ridgedale Center or Ridgedale Library. For larger events staff anticipates bringing in temporary facilities. For day to day activities staff feels like two stalls would be adequate.

Berman was very happy watching the presentation. One of the concerns he had was how easy it would be to put events on there. He can think of 30 events people or organizations would want to put on the lawn, such as yoga. Berman also noted that almost every teenager has a hammock and the biggest thing is looking for a place to put it. If there were metal bars with clips on it that are the right distance apart for hanging a hammock, people would use them. People go down to the city lakes and do that but to have it local would be outstanding.

Evenrud asked if that was something in the plans or thoughts.

HejlStone responded that we originally showed the idea of the whimsical seating, the hammocks and staff recognized that the city providing hammocks is not achievable. Bring your own hammocks is being discussed. The idea of the city providing them is not feasible.

Evenrud requested the hammocks to be in the shade. Evenrud asked about people being able to rent spaces and if that has been planned.

HejlStone said that is still being discussed but they see a lot of desire for it.

Evenrud added that staff will have to discuss if it is first-come-first-serve or reserved and what the policies are because he is sure it will be popular. Evenrud mentioned that there was an Eagle Scout that did a lot of work at Crane Lake where he restored an area that was particularly bad. Evenrud wondered if there is anything in the plans regarding that area.

HejlStone said she was not aware of that work and can look into where that was.

Berman asked if there is concern with noise from the road nearby and the mall impacting the new park.

HejlStone replied that staff would keep noise and traffic volumes at the forefront of our thinking when we are doing event programming. Something like movie or music in the park may not work during rush hour. It is a factor really of a lot of different spaces and there are ways to work around that.

Ingraham liked the Crane Lake design but isn't quite sure of the commentary on why the water level affects the ability to have canoe or kayak access.

HejlStone responded that the way you get from the upland area to the water is very long and very shallow. There is a very lengthy expanse of cattails which initially we thought we could cut those down and provide a channel access out to open water. Since the lake levels remain steady at what they are it would be a very lengthy dock and management area.

Evenrud said on a past tour he was told that Crane Lake is a different kind of lake because it is just grown to be a drainage kind of lake and not a traditional lake with borders and boundaries. It just expanded and was a holding pond and is now a lake.

HejlStone said the University of Minnesota has the historical imagery and it didn't exist until Ridgedale Center. It is not a natural waterbody.

Imaretska likes the design of the Crane Lake shelter. She was wondering if this could have been designed in a way that it could create another meeting space since we are short of programming space. Imaretska asked what the thinking around that was or why it is designed the way it is.

HejlStone said looking at the locations of the new park as compared to Crane Lake Preserve, there is just less around there currently. Less eyes on the streets, more opportunities, more surfaces you have and more enclosures you have. It is a little more difficult to watch and maintain safety as well as the idea of this is a preserve rather than a park space. So really again having that more nature feel to the space is important. It would be useable and protected from a majority of elements but not winter winds.

## **6. Park Board Member Reports**

Durbin said the Father/Daughter Dance was awesome. He thinks it is done right every time. The vendors are at all the events and they are friendly. The city consistently does this well and he thanked the city for providing those events and coming up with new opportunities.

Ingraham and his wife attended the indoor farmers market and Kid's Fest with their daughter and grandsons. It was terrific, especially the Kids' Fest and he gave kudos to the people who cleared the streets that day.

## **7. Information Items**

### **Kids' Fest Recap**

Woeste reported.

### **Winter Farmers Market Recap**

Woeste reported.

### **Natural Resources Annual Update – 2019 Activities**

Leslie Yetka, Natural Resources Manager reported.

### **Habitat Restoration Activities**

Yetka reported.

Ingraham said he hasn't heard of Adopt-A-Drain and asked where it was advertised. It seems like a good time to create awareness.

Yetka said it was in the Memo last year. It should be in the April Memo insert under natural resources. There is more information on website. Also, it is a metro-wide program so you can google it for more details.

Evenrud appreciates the city reaching out to people about their salt use, especially during this time of year with all the melting and freezing. Evenrud suggested giving churches salt use ideas or teach them to sweep up after because they have the challenge to get everyone in and out safely.

Imaretska congratulated Yetka and added that she loves that there is an ordinance around pollinator habitats now. People in the city should know about that and she thinks that it should be advertised or that information should be shared. Last year when natural resources talked there was an idea of doing more video content, Imaretska is wondering if that is still happening or where that is at. She thinks there is a huge opportunity there in just helping people. Volunteers could show the different species and how to recognize those on their property. Other topics could be how to get rid of buckthorn or garlic mustard.

Yetka responded that videos have not been done yet but there is talk about it. There are a lot of opportunities there. Finding time to prioritize that is a challenge because staff does a lot of activities. She does agree it is a way to reach people.

### **8. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

O'Dea reported. He asked for suggestions for stops on the park board tour.

Durbin requested Ridgedale and Crane Lake.

The Spring Eggstravaganza date should be Saturday, April 11.

### **9. Adjournment**

Gabler motioned to adjourn, seconded by Walick. Evenrud adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 6A  
Meeting of June 3, 2020**

<b>Subject:</b>	Regional park search area and regional trail master plan
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	Enhance long term park board development
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	Identify areas of the city that are deficient of adequate park or trail amenities
<b>Brief Description:</b>	Three Rivers Park District regional park search area and regional trail master planning project

**Background**

Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) was established as an independent, special park district in 1957 by the Minnesota State Legislature. Their charge is to acquire, develop and maintain large park reserves and regional parks and trails for the citizens of suburban Hennepin County, the metro area, and the State.

Three Rivers did extensive analysis during its 2040 System Plan process and believes Minnetonka residents could be better served with additional regional recreation offerings and opportunities to connect with nature. The Park District is committed to working closely with city leadership, staff and the community to determine how best to achieve this. The proposed park search area is centered in Minnetonka and extends along the Minnehaha Creek corridor in Hopkins and beyond.

Acquisition and development of a new regional park is a multi-step process that typically takes several years, inclusion in multiple plans as well as close coordination between the City, Three Rivers, Metropolitan Council and the public.

Additionally, city staff have been collaborating with TRPD staff for several years around the West Metro Regional Trails Study, which was a TRPD led effort to provide initial guidance (including preferred alignments, probable costs, and implementation priorities) to address important gaps in the regional trails network while improving access to local and regional trails, parks and activity centers.

One outcome of the study identifies The Eagle Lake / Bryant Lake Regional Trail extending from French Regional Park in Plymouth to Bryant Lake Regional Park in Eden Prairie. This north-south alignment will directly link to the Medicine Lake, Luce Line, Lake Minnetonka, and MN River Bluffs LRT Regional Trails, providing a more comprehensive trail network for the western metro. Portions of the trail in Minnetonka will include the new trails along Ridgedale Drive and Plymouth Road as well as new trail along Baker Road, which are #1 and #2 priority segments identified in the Minnetonka Trail Improvement Plan.

The type of trail facility under consideration for the future Eagle Lake/Bryant Lake Regional Trail is a shared-use trail, generally consisting of a 10 foot bituminous path, with

a buffer distance providing separation between trail users and adjacent trailside objects or adjacent roadways and motor vehicles.

Staff from Three Rivers Park District will provide a brief presentation outlining background, current status and next steps for each effort. A similar presentation will be provided for Minnetonka City Council and a future meeting.

**Discussion Questions:**

- ***Does the park board have any feedback or preferences specific to Three Rivers Park District about the upcoming regional park search area effort or regional trail master planning project?***
- ***Does the park board have any feedback or preferences specific to city council or city staff about the upcoming regional park search area effort or regional trail master planning project?***

**Recommended Action:**

The park board is requested to review and provide feedback about Three Rivers Park District's future regional park search area effort and regional trail master planning project.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 6B  
Meeting of June 3, 2020**

<b>Subject:</b>	Park Ordinance Amendment related to the Mayors Monarch Pledge
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	To protect natural resources and open space
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	Review and comment on the proposed amendments
<b>Brief Description:</b>	Amendment of park regulations to provide broader protection of plants and animals in parks

## **Background**

Minnetonka’s park regulations (city code section 1135) are intended to “ensure the quiet, orderly, and responsible use and enjoyment of the city’s public park facilities. The rules apply in all areas owned or operated by the city as park facilities.”

The expectation of “responsible use” limits behaviors that could damage natural areas, such as leaving pet waste or rubbish, operating motorized vehicles, or building fires outside designated sites. It also regulates the treatment or use of wild animals and plants, but currently does not refer to pollinators or their habitat.

About 85 percent of all flowering plants on Earth require the assistance of animal pollinators in order to produce fruit and seeds. Unfortunately, all groups of pollinators are declining globally. This could have serious impacts on our natural environment and food supply.

Since 2017, when park regulations were last revised, staff have been approached by residents who are concerned about pollinators and their habitat. Later that same year, city council adopted a resolution authorizing participation in the National Wildlife Federation’s Mayors’ Monarch Pledge. This program recognizes that city governments can model (and sometimes regulate) practices that benefit pollinators. It includes 24 action steps to benefit pollinators. The city of Minnetonka has completed 22 of these steps and is actively working toward the remaining two. Based on the information noted below, staff recommends several changes to update the regulations to include pollinator protections.

## **Summary**

Every year, city staff are contacted by residents who want to raise monarch caterpillars and release the adult butterflies, hoping to increase this species’ plummeting population. This practice requires significant amounts of milkweed (the monarch caterpillar’s only food source), which people may collect from roadsides and open spaces. Other residents express concern that hand-rearing monarchs removes milkweed from the landscape, impacting the diverse community of pollinators and other beneficial invertebrate animals supported by this plant.

Minor amendments to the park regulations would give status to pollinators (and other invertebrate animals that are often overlooked or considered pests) and prevent their collection, protect host and food plants from collection, and preserve other natural resources in parklands by prohibiting the collection of any animal or plant. These items include:

1. 1135.010 6: Broaden the definition of “plant parts”

2. 1135.010 7: Add “wildlife” to list of definitions, including pollinators and other invertebrates alongside native and non-domesticated animals
3. 1135.020 2: Change “wild animals” to “wildlife”
4. 1135.020 3: Change “wild animals” to “wildlife”; prohibit collection of wildlife (distinguishing this activity from killing, trapping and others)
5. 1135.020 4: Prohibit collection of vegetation
6. 1135.020 6: Change “animal” to “domestic animal or wildlife”

**Recommended Park Board Action:** Receive public comment; provide direction to staff and recommend the ordinance amendments be approved by the city council.

**Attachments:**

1. Draft amendments to park regulations
2. Mayors’ Monarch Pledge action items

**Ordinance No. 2020-**

**An ordinance amending Minnetonka City Code Sections 1135.010 and 1135.020  
relating to park regulations**

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The City of Minnetonka Ordains:

Section 1135.010 of the Minnetonka City Code is amended to read as follows:

**1135.010. Definitions.**

For the purpose of this section, the following terms have the meanings given below.

1. "Director" means the department director to whom the specific duties have been assigned by the city manager.
2. "Domestic animal" means any animal that would be allowed by this code to reside in a residential dwelling of the city.
3. "Park facility" means any area owned or operated by the city of Minnetonka as a public park, beach, recreational trail, athletic field, skating rink, or other outdoor recreational facility.
4. "Picnic shelter area" means that portion of a park facility containing a picnic shelter and picnic tables and all area within 50 feet of the shelter and tables.
5. "Public swimming beach" means any public land adjoining public waters, which has been or may be used in connection with swimming in the adjacent water.
6. "Vegetation" means all plants and plant parts, such as leaves, stems, roots, flowers, and fruit.
- ~~7~~6. "Watercraft" means any device designed or used to transport a person on water, whether motorized or not. It does not include a device which is designed to have a portion of the person in the water at all times during use.
8. "Wildlife" means any native or non-domesticated animal, including insects and other invertebrates.

Section 1135.020 of the Minnetonka City Code is amended to read as follows:

**1135.020. General Rules.**

The following rules apply in and on all park facilities.

**Animals**

1. Except as allowed in this subdivision, a person may not transport any animal to or be accompanied by any animal at any park.

---

The ~~stricken~~ language is deleted; the underlined language is inserted.

a. Domestic animals are allowed in the following areas only, subject to the restrictions in this subdivision:

- (1) improved trails;
- (2) maintained turf areas other than athletic fields;
- (3) unimproved and unmaintained areas; and
- (4) parking lots as necessary to transport the animal to and from the park areas specified above.

b. At all times while present in the park, a domestic animal must be accompanied by a competent person in the immediate vicinity of the animal, who is responsible for the animal.

c. When on improved trails, maintained turf areas other than athletic fields, or parking lots, domestic animals must be either kept in a secure container from which the animal cannot escape or must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet in length. Tethering animals is not permitted.

d. Unless otherwise signed, dogs may be off-leash within areas of a park that are unimproved and unmaintained, provided the following conditions are met:

- (1) the person responsible for the dog must maintain sight of the dog at all times;
- (2) the maximum number of dogs that any person may accompany off-leash at any time is two;
- (3) the person must be able to demonstrate that the dog will respond to the person's voice command on the first command given.

e. No person may allow a domestic animal under his or her responsibility to disturb, harass, or interfere with any park visitor, a park visitor's property or a park employee.

f. A person may not have custody or control of any domestic animal in a park without possessing an appropriate device for cleaning up the animal's feces and disposing of the feces in a sanitary manner.

g. Paragraphs a. and b. above do not apply to service animals as defined by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, or to law enforcement animals.

2. Wild~~life animals~~ including birds may not be fed, except pursuant to a city sponsored program.

3. Wild~~life animals~~ may not be killed, trapped, pursued, caught, ~~or~~ removed, or collected except when necessary to protect the immediate safety of a person or domestic animal. This prohibition does not apply to a law enforcement officer, or other person authorized by the director, who is performing official duties.

#### **Damage to Park Property**

4. A person must not plant, cut, burn, damage, disturb, ~~or~~ remove, or collect any vegetation, except as permitted by the city.

5. A person must not start or maintain a fire, except in grills, fire slabs, or fire rings provided as part of the park facility. A person responsible for a fire must safely and completely extinguish the fire before leaving. The smoking of cigarettes, cigars and pipes is regulated elsewhere in this section.

6. A person must not deposit or discard upon land or water any bottles, glass, cans, paper, ashes, garbage, trash, rubbish, litter, snow or other substance that would mar the appearance, create a stench or a nuisance, adversely affect the cleanliness or safety of the land, or be likely to injure any person, property, ~~domestic animal or wildlife~~ animal. A person must not discard large items and items unrelated to use of the park facilities into dumpsters or other garbage containers located at the park facilities.

7. A person must not distribute leaflets or other written or printed materials without first notifying the director of the proposed activity and depositing an amount determined by the director to be sufficient to reimburse the city for any cleanup costs resulting from the activity.

### Vehicles

8. Only motorized vehicles that are currently licensed to travel on public streets may be in or on a park facility, and those are allowed only on parking lots and roadways that provide access to the park facilities. The following vehicles are excepted from the provisions of this subdivision:

- a. authorized maintenance and public safety vehicles;
- b. electric-assisted bicycles as defined by state law; and
- c. wheelchairs and "other power driven mobility devices" as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and associated regulations, to the extent necessary to accommodate reasonable and safe use of trails by persons with disabilities dependent on motorized transport.

6. A person must not operate a snowmobile, all-terrain vehicle, or motorized trail bike anywhere within a park.

7. A person must park motorized vehicles only within designated parking stalls in parking lots. If parking is allowed by permit only, the city permit must be conspicuously displayed on the vehicle at all times while it is parked.

8. A person must not operate a motorized vehicle at a speed in excess of 15 miles per hour or other posted speed limit.

9. Non-motorized bicycles are allowed only on parking lots, roadways, and trails established and maintained by the city and in areas designated and signed for bicycle use. A person must not ride a bicycle in other areas of a park.

### Specific Activities

13. A person must not use recreational equipment, including but not limited to flying discs, snowboards or skateboards, on parking lots and driveways. Skateboards may be used only on improved trails and designated skateboard areas.

14. A person must not use a golf club to hit, drive, or otherwise propel a golf ball or other object.
15. A person must not camp in or erect a tent or other structure, except as part of a city-sponsored program or as authorized by a permit issued by the director.
16. A person must not use a sled, toboggan, or other means of sliding on snow and ice in areas where this activity is prohibited by signs.
17. A person must not sell or offer for sale any item or service, except as authorized by the director.
18. Use of tobacco-related products, as defined at section 625.005 of this code, is prohibited within 50 feet of park areas designated for use by youth, including playgrounds, youth athletic fields, skating rinks, tennis courts, basketball courts, multipurpose courts and informal ball fields.
19. A person must not have any glass container in a park facility.

**Noise**

20. A person must not use or operate a radio, musical instrument, or other device used for reproduction of sound, in a manner to disturb the peace or comfort of others in its vicinity. Prima facie evidence of a violation of this provision exists when the device is operated so that it is plainly audible 50 feet away in any direction.
21. A person must not use loudspeakers or other amplifying systems without obtaining and being in compliance with a permit from the city, as provided below in section 1135.030.

**Permit Required**

22. A person must not possess, consume, or serve any alcoholic beverage without obtaining and being in compliance with a permit from the city, as provided below in section 1135.030.
23. A group of 25 people or more must not gather for any reason without obtaining and being in compliance with a permit from the city, as provided below in section 1135.030.

Adopted by the city council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota, on

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Wiersum, Mayor

Attest:

---

Becky Koosman, City Clerk

**Action on this Ordinance:**

Date of introduction:

Date of adoption:

Motion for adoption:

Seconded by:

Voted in favor of:

Voted against:

Abstained:

Absent:

Ordinance adopted.

Date of publication:

I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of an ordinance adopted by the city council of the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota, at a meeting held on

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Becky Koosman, City Clerk

## Mayors' Monarch Pledge Action Items – City of Minnetonka

<b>MMP Action Step</b>		<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Communications &amp; Convening</b>	<b>1</b>	Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat	Done Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month proclamation was signed by mayor on June 26, 2017; renewed in 2018 and 2019
	<b>2</b>	Launch a public communication effort to encourage citizens to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods	Ongoing Natural Resources has an enduring commitment to educating residents about pollinators. We use newsletters (print and email), the website, social media, and employee intranet; interpretive signage; events (Open House, State of the City, Night for Neighbors, Pollinator Field Day); and partner with other organizations (e.g., promoting BWSR's Lawns to Legumes grant program and possibly becoming an endorsing organization for MN Arboretum's Pollinator Summit)
	<b>3</b>	Communicate with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants	Ongoing Presented to seniors' Garden Club in 2017 and 2019
	<b>4</b>	Convene city park and public works department staff and identify opportunities for revised mowing and milkweed/native nectar plant planting programs	Ongoing Collaborating with Parks & Trails and Facilities staff to inform volunteers about opportunities to incorporate pollinator-friendly plants into ornamental and seasonal park plantings
	<b>5</b>	Convene a meeting with gardening leaders in the community to discuss partnerships to support monarch butterfly conservation	Done Presented at Freshwater Society's pollinator workshop (a continuing education event for Master Water Stewards that was open to the public) in 2017

<b>MMP Action Step</b>		<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Program &amp; Demonstration Gardens</b>	<b>6</b>	Host or support a native plant sale or milkweed seed giveaway event	Ongoing NR has hosted some sort of native plant sale since 2010. That sale is now part of a city event called Pollinator Field Day. In 2019, a native plant vendor was also at the first farmers' market.
	<b>7</b>	Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort	Ongoing NR's restoration specialist collects seeds every fall in city parks, and uses them in park restoration areas. There is a milkweed seed ball-making activity at Pollinator Field Day; visitors plant the seeds at home or in a city park.
	<b>8</b>	Plant a monarch-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or other prominent location	Ongoing Demonstration garden planted in Nov 2016 along the path leading to the west portion of Civic Center Park; interpretive signage added in 2017. Hillside at Community Center area also left unmowed to allow milkweed growth (and monarch eggs are often found there)
	<b>9</b>	Convert abandoned lots to monarch habitat	Ongoing Oric Ave outlot restoration includes invasive species removal and native prairie plantings
	<b>10</b>	Plant milkweed and native nectar plants in medians and public rights-of-way	Ongoing Native perennials and grasses are often added to median and right-of-way plantings after road reconstruction; medians and endcaps at city hall are also incorporates natives
	<b>11</b>	Launch a program to plant native milkweeds and nectar plants in school gardens by engaging students, teachers, and the community	Ongoing An ambitious community garden project is being installed Scenic Heights Elementary School, led by Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed District and Barr Engineering with consultation from city staff
	<b>12</b>	Earn recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by expanding your action plan to include other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts through a program like the NWF Community Wildlife Habitat program	Ongoing Minnetonka has been a Tree City USA since 1994, and in 2015 received the Arbor Day Foundations Growth Award for innovative, sustainable community forestry practices
	<b>13</b>	Create a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods	Done In 2017, the Polli☺Neighbor Challenge was distributed at Night for Neighbors (went to ~250 neighborhood

## Mayors' Monarch Pledge Action Items – City of Minnetonka

	and homeowners' associations within the city to create habitat for the monarch butterfly		captains); this challenge was updated in 2019 and used for Pollinator Field Day and Night for Neighbors
14	Initiate or support citizen-science efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health	Ongoing	Pollinator Field Day includes citizen science demonstrations
15	Add milkweed and nectar producing plants in community gardens	Ongoing	NR and Recreation are collaborating to educate community gardeners at Kelly Park about annual plants that benefit pollinators and vegetable gardens
16	Expand invasive species removal programs to make it possible to re-establish native milkweed and nectar plants to the landscape	Ongoing	Since the 1990s, NR staff have worked to remove invasive species so that native prairie, woodland and shoreland species can reestablish in city parks
17	Host or support a city monarch butterfly festival	Ongoing	Pollinator Field Day includes crafts, games, and educational events to celebrate monarchs, pollinators and their habitat. Attendance increased from ~175 at the first event in 2017 to ~300 in 2019.

	MMP Action Step	Status	Notes
<b>Systems Change</b>	18	Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed/landscaping ordinances (if applicable)	Done Minnetonka follows the state list, which does not list milkweed as noxious
	19	Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats	Done Ordinance has long been in place that allows Minnetonkans to plant native meadow vegetation
	20	Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage the use of milkweed where appropriate	Done In July 2019, city council unanimously passed amendments to the landscaping ordinance, requiring all new developments and redevelopments to include at least 25 percent native plants and native cultivars in their landscaping plans. Plant lists were created as guidance for developers.
	21	Direct city property managers to consider the use of native milkweed and nectar plants at city properties where appropriate	Ongoing NR collaborates with Parks, Streets, Recreation, Facilities, and Community Development to maintain ongoing conversations about native plantings
	22	Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans	Done Native habitat is addressed in the Resource Management chapter of the city's 2030 Comprehensive Guide Plan, and NR staff suggested language for the 2040 plan
	23	Change landscape ordinances to support integrated pest management and reduced use of pesticides and insecticides	In process In 2020, NR staff will develop outreach to help developers and property owners reduce chemical use through IPM and planting choices. Lawn maintenance amendments have also been proposed related to bee lawns and meadow vegetation.
	24	Adopt pesticide practices that are not harmful to pollinators	Upcoming NR will continue to work with other divisions and departments to develop a sustainable IPM plan and formalize parameters for chemical use on city properties.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 6C  
Meeting of June 3, 2020**

<b>Subject:</b>	Natural Resources Division's Education and Outreach Plan
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	To Protect Natural Resources and Open Spaces
<b>Brief Description:</b>	Review the Natural Resources Division's 2020 education and outreach work plan

## **Background**

The Minnetonka Park Board has adopted goals and objectives that pertain to natural resources. These include creating awareness of our natural environment and supporting educational strategies.

The Park Board reviews topics and approves projects related to natural resources. These include the stewardship plan and restoration activities undertaken in the park system, updates on volunteer activities, emerald ash borer preparedness and reforestation of public land, water resource monitoring and protection initiatives on public land and review of outreach and education programs relating to natural resources.

## **Summary**

Attached is the natural resources outreach plan for 2020. It describes ongoing and new education and outreach efforts, including publications, programs and campaigns (many conducted with partner organizations), grant-based efforts, and events.

Staff continue to use the *Minnetonka Memo* and electronic newsletter system as primary outreach tools. The e-newsletter currently reaches more than 2,000 subscribers – an increase of approximately 300 subscribers over the past year. The “open rate” of this publication is consistently high (more than 30 percent of recipients engage with the material, compared to an average open rate of 21 percent in mass communications).

Social media is primarily used to promote natural resources or partner events, and to inform residents on seasonal themes. In 2020, the *Ripple Effect* (formerly an employee newsletter) was redesigned as a series of informational handouts that can be shared electronically to many audiences or made available at events. A collection of new interpretive signage (the Tree Trek) will be completed this year, allowing park visitors to identify and learn the unique benefits of native trees. Staff also worked with Recreation to integrate natural resources education for summer camps and Farmers Market; those programs have been tabled until 2021.

## **Recommended Park Board Action**

Provide feedback to staff regarding the programmed items included in this report.

## **Attachments:**

1. Natural Resource Education and Outreach Plan for 2020
2. Natural Resource Outreach Examples



# NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

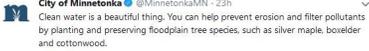
## Education and Outreach Plan, 2020

The natural resources division conducts education and outreach to inform residents and other stakeholders about key environmental issues, engage their connection to the natural world, and empower them to take action.

### PUBLICATIONS

*Print and electronic items cover NR themes such as tree health, stormwater reduction, habitat restoration, invasive species control, and pollinator protection. In 2020, the unifying theme is community resilience.*

- *Minnetonka Memo*—monthly articles and event notices, with a 4-page thematic insert in April
- Eblast—mailed monthly to ~2,000 subscribers, with high engagement (average 31%)
- Information sheets—one- to two-page fliers that provide detailed information on a topic
- Social media—promoting events and programs
- Clear Channel highway billboards—15 per year, changed seasonally

 City of Minnetonka @MinnetonkaMN · 23h  
Clean water is a beautiful thing. You can help prevent erosion and filter pollutants by planting and preserving floodplain tree species, such as silver maple, boxelder and cottonwood.

#Minnetonka #NaturalResources #TheMoreYouKnow #CleanWater



4 11



New in 2020:

- Outreach to businesses regarding emerald ash borer prevention and water conservation

### ONGOING PROGRAMS/CAMPAIGNS

*These are long-term components of the division's education and outreach work.*

- Annual tree sale—provides information on tree diversity and benefits. This year, 816 tree units were sold to 459 households.
- MS4—education related to the state stormwater permit, including chlorides, pet waste, soil health, chemical reduction, yard waste, capture and use, etc.
- Mayors' Monarch Pledge—Minnetonka is a national leader in this program, having completed 22 of 24 major action steps to protect pollinators and their habitat. The remaining steps are in progress.

New in 2020:

- Tree Trek—self-guided interpretive signage in parks, providing information on the benefits of trees, characteristics of particular species, and planting/maintenance tips
- Yard signs available to property owners adding meadow vegetation, bee lawns and low-input turf.
- Engaging with Master Water Steward volunteers to address water conservation best practices

### GRANTS

- Hennepin County Healthy Canopy grant—outreach to residents and businesses for EAB awareness and prevention
- Metropolitan Council water efficiency grant—targeting businesses, residents and high-volume users (who will be eligible for audits and smart controllers).

## EVENTS

- Pollinator Field Day—native plant sales, crafts & activities, education
  - ◊ Attendance in 2019 increased significantly, to ~300.
  - ◊ Currently scheduled for September 15, 2020; will include more partner organizations and new activities (such as the Tree Trek and bee lawn demonstrations).
- Night for Neighbors—topics as requested (if program is offered in 2020)
- Home Remodelers Fair—diverse NR info at large winter event, where staff had in-depth conversations with about 15 people
- City events
  - ◊ State of the City—NR booth offered information on EAB management and tree protection
  - ◊ Open House—pending (direct engagement at the NR booth is typically robust)
  - ◊ Buckthorn and garlic mustard workshops



### New in 2020:

- Health Rewards—proposed new option for employee health program, giving employees credit in the Social/Community area for actions that protect the environment. In Sept 2020, NR staff will present on the topic of “Reducing Your Water Footprint”

### Planned for 2020 (but delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions):

- Summer camps
  - ◊ Camp Jidana—forestry (and possibly water quality) education for ~215 children (grades 2-5)
  - ◊ Summer Park Adventures—pollinator education at 10 Hopkins-Minnetonka parks
- Farmers Market—monthly NR booth:
 

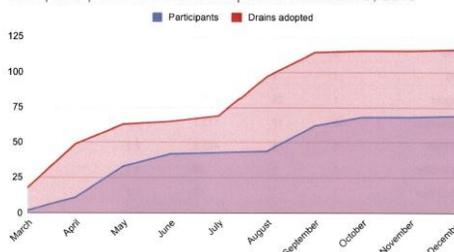
June—EAB preparedness and tree health	July—water efficiency
August—pollinators and year-round habitat	September—stormwater, water quality

## PARTNERSHIPS

*The NR division works with other city departments and organizational partners to achieve shared goals.*

- Smart Salting training—chloride reduction strategies for contractors, businesses, HOAs, etc., provided by watershed districts
- School education—contractor provides stormwater education for six elementary schools (adapted as online programming in 2020)
- Kidsfest—activities teaching about watershed and stormwater, provided by watershed districts
- Adopt-a-Drain—Hamline University program invites people to adopt and clean storm drains

New participants and drains adopted in Minnetonka, 2019



69  
new participants  
in 2019

115  
drains adopted  
in 2019

**From:** City of Minnetonka <CityofMinnetonka@public.govdelivery.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 2, 2020 9:35 AM  
**To:** Christine Petersen  
**Subject:** January Natural Resources Highlights: Pollinator Habitat, Tree Sale Preview, More!

# City of Minnetonka

## Low-Input Landscaping

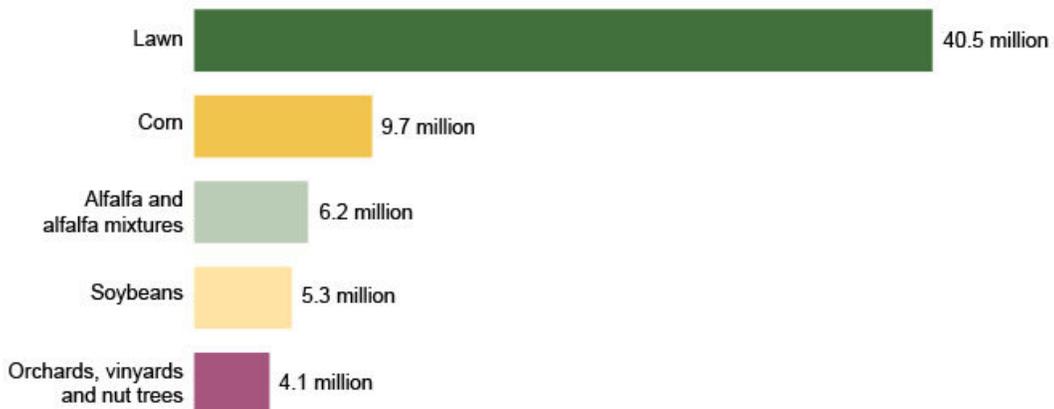
Landscaping offers terrific benefits in the urban environment. Plants help control soil erosion, reduce the glare of sunlight, absorb heat, capture carbon dioxide gas (the most common contributor to climate change) and more.



Grass – by far the most common landscaping plant – provides space for recreation, and many people like its tidy aesthetic. On the downside, lawn maintenance is time-consuming and can impact the natural environment. **Read on to learn about low-maintenance alternatives.**

## Lots of Lawn

Acres of irrigated land



Turfgrass covers about two percent of land area in the continental United States. That's more than the top eight food crops combined, which makes the study of grass vital to the health of our natural environment.

One key finding by research scientists shows that conventional turfgrass varieties, such as Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass, require more maintenance than what are called fescue grasses.

Fescue grasses:

- Perform well in sun or shade
- Are more tolerant of salt than common varieties
- Don't require fertilizer
- Need only occasional mowing
- Have deeper root systems that hold more water and reduce erosion.

[Visit the University of Minnesota's Turfgrass Science page](#) for helpful tips on choosing the right grass seed.

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## Planting for Pollinators

Perennial legumes, like Dutch white clover, are also a highly beneficial alternative to conventional turfgrass. Legumes convert nitrogen gas in the atmosphere to soil nutrients, improving plant growth and reducing the need for fertilizer.

Even more exciting, legumes and other small herbs – such as self-heal (in the mint family) and wild violet – can be planted with turf to create "bee lawns" that provide pollen and nectar for foraging native bees.

Some property owners are even choosing to replace turf with meadow vegetation, which is similar to the prairie that grew in this region before settlement.



- Interested in converting part of your conventional lawn to pollinator habitat?
  - [Check out Minnesota's new Lawns to Legumes program!](#)
- Lawns to Legumes offers grants, workshops, coaching and resources to bring your bee lawn to life. **Apply for a grant by Feb. 28, 2020.**

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## Upcoming Natural Resources Events



### **Right-of-Way Pruning and Pizza**

Jan. 15 | 5-7 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center, Minnetonka Mills Room

- Dine and chat with city forestry staff about the annual right-of-way pruning program. **Advance registration is required.** Call 952-988-8400 or register online at [minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup](http://minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup).

### **Tree Sale Preview Event**

Jan. 28 | 6:30-8 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center

- Learn about each species offered, determine which would work best in your yard, and receive expert tips from the city forester. **Advance registration is required.** Call 952-988-8400 or register online at [minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup](http://minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup).

### **Tree Sale Online Preview**

Jan. 29 | [Goes live on the city's website](#) at 8 a.m.

- Preview the sale website to learn about available species and pricing, and set up or check your online account.

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*Photo credits: Nipuna Madhaushan, Wikimedia Commons; University of California – Santa Barbara; Wayne National Forest, Wikimedia Commons; Christine Petersen*



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This email was sent to cpetersen@minnetonkamn.gov using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: City of Minnetonka  
·14600 Minnetonka Blvd. · Minnetonka, MN 55345



# The Restorative Power of Trees

All of Minnetonka's trees, on both public and private land, form a community forest that enhances the city's beauty and character. They also increase our collective resilience - the capacity to prepare for, recover from and thrive in the face of challenges, such as Minnesota's changing climate.

We are already seeing evidence of climate change in trends that include:

- More frequent and intense storms that increase flooding, erosion and water pollution
- Warming winters with less snow and ice cover
- Longer summers with more hot days
- Periods of drought and heat that impact natural habitats, agriculture and water resources

But here's the good news: **Trees are part of the solution. So are people.** The choices we make today can reduce the rate of climate change and the severity of its impacts.

**"Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people."**

*-Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1935*



# Nature's Multitaskers

Trees increase property values, provide food and materials, and offer health benefits to stressed-out humans. Really! Just spending time around trees reduces anxiety and blood pressure and boosts immunity. Yep, it's been proven.

The other benefits of our forests are less obvious, but essential to the resilience of natural systems and human communities:

A tree's leafy crown blocks wind and provides shade, reducing energy costs.

Trees use carbon dioxide, reducing the amount of this heat-trapping gas in the atmosphere.

Leaves release oxygen, improving air quality.

Mature trees capture and retain a significant amount of rain and snow on their leaves and bark.

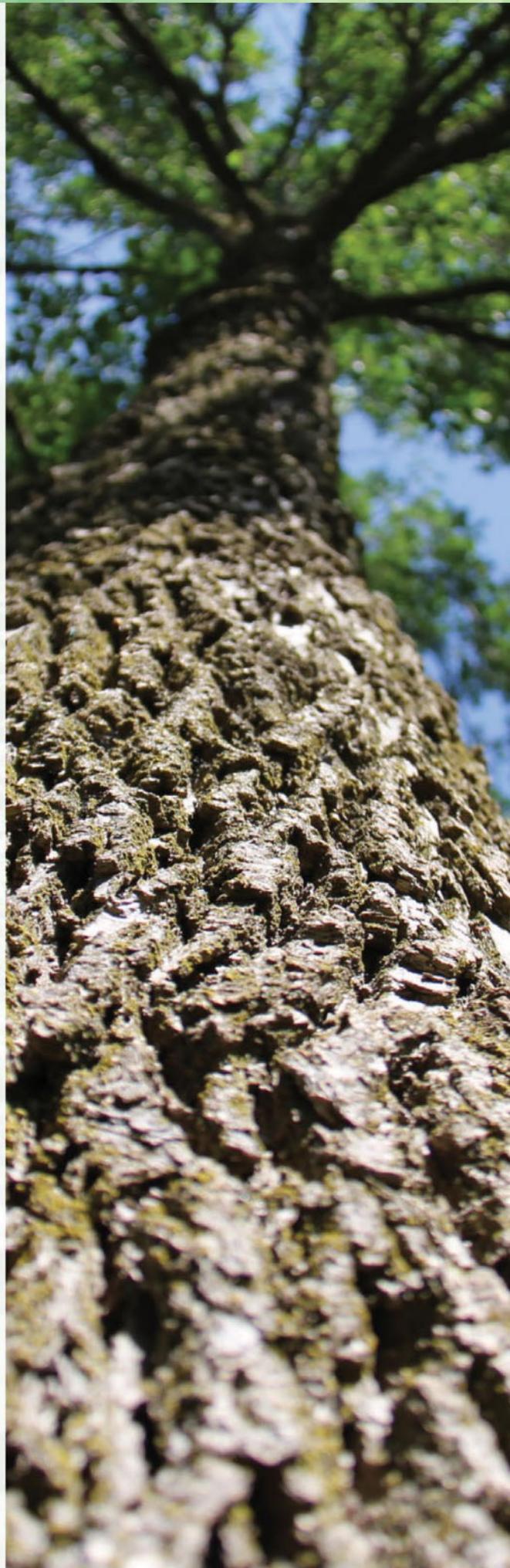
Roots create tiny air spaces in the soil, allowing more water to soak into the ground, thereby reducing runoff pollution and flooding.

Erosion is slower where roots hold the soil in place.

Fallen tree leaves are decomposed by insects, bacteria and fungi, returning vital nutrients to the soil.

## Homebodies

- Hundreds of butterfly and moth species lay their eggs on trees. The growing caterpillars feed on leaves and are themselves a vital food source for birds.
- Honeybees collect the sap from cottonwood trees and use it to line their hives. The sap has antimicrobial properties that kill harmful bacteria and fungi. Bees are amazing and smart like that.
- Oak, boxelder, maple and basswood trees often form cavities after losing a branch. These spaces provide shelter for wildlife, from chickadees and owls to flying squirrels and bats.





## Saving Our Forest From Emerald Ash Borer

Majestic ash trees are a familiar sight along Minnetonka's urban boulevards. Street trees reduce noise and increase privacy. They also offset the impacts of climate change by providing cooling shade and absorbing harmful carbon dioxide produced by vehicles and industries.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) threatens to change the landscape completely. EAB is a nonnative beetle that kills ash species. Dead ash trees are extremely brittle and pose a risk to property and roads.

Here are six steps you can take to reduce the effects of EAB:

**INVENTORY** trees on your property.

Hire a certified arborist to **INJECT** healthy, large ash trees. (Soil drench is not advised.)

Gradually **REMOVE** unhealthy or small ash trees. (Contact city staff at 952-988-8422 before removing trees near wetlands, lakes or creeks).

**REPLANT** diverse tree species.

**PREVENT** the spread of EAB by pruning or removing ash trees **only in winter** - when EAB beetles are dormant - properly disposing of ash debris, and **not moving** ash wood outside the metro region.

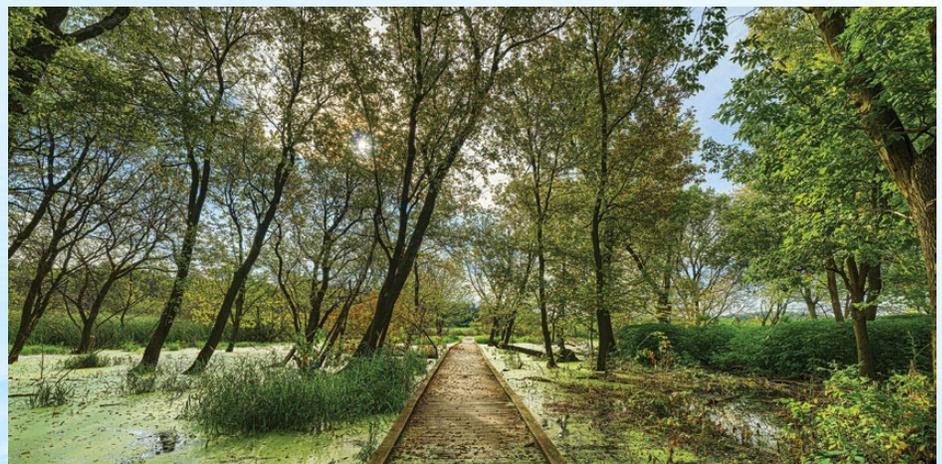
Contact city staff at 952-988-8441 to **REPORT** ash trees showing signs of EAB.

Visit [minnetonkamn.gov/eab](http://minnetonkamn.gov/eab) for more information.

## Leaning On Trees to Protect Our Water

A dense urban tree canopy ensures that more water goes into the soil. This reduces the need to irrigate and recharges the deep groundwater supplies we depend on for drinking water. An added bonus: when less stormwater and snowmelt flows over the landscape, fewer harmful pollutants are deposited in surface waters.

To preserve these benefits on your property, plant and preserve diverse species like these along lakeshores, streambanks and wetlands.



### Good for areas with frequent or sustained flooding

- Silver maple
- Eastern cottonwood
- Black willow
- Green ash (if injected to prevent EAB)

### Suitable where flooding is less frequent but soils are often wet

- Hackberry
- Bur oak
- Swamp white oak
- American elm (DED-resistant varieties)
- River birch
- Boxelder



# Working Together Toward Community Resilience

The trees can't do it alone!  
Fortunately, there are many ways we can partner up with them to increase climate change resilience in Minnetonka.

## Preserve and create habitat

- Volunteer with the city's habitat restoration program. Email Restoration Specialist Janet Van Sloun at [jvansloun@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:jvansloun@minnetonkamn.gov).
- Help assess the health of Minnetonka's wetlands and identify nearby tree species. Email Christine Petersen at [cpetersen@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:cpetersen@minnetonkamn.gov).
- Contact Natural Resources Specialist Aaron Schwartz at [aschwartz@minnetonkamn.gov](mailto:aschwartz@minnetonkamn.gov) before removing trees near wetlands, lakes or creeks.

## Reduce waste

- Drop off organic waste at the city's Public Works recycling facility, or arrange organics collection through Randy's Environmental Services (763-972-3335) or Ark Disposal (763-989-5226).

## Adopt a Drain

By becoming an Adopt-a-Drain volunteer, you'll keep neighborhood storm drains clear of debris. And our streams, lakes and wetlands will thank you. Visit [adopt-a-drain.org](http://adopt-a-drain.org).

## Learn more

- Sign up for the monthly natural resources e-newsletter at [minnetonkamn.gov/natural-resources](http://minnetonkamn.gov/natural-resources).
- Register for natural resources events and workshops at [minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup](http://minnetonkamn.gov/NRsignup).
- April 22 marks the 50th Earth Day! Visit [earthday.org](http://earthday.org) and get inspired.

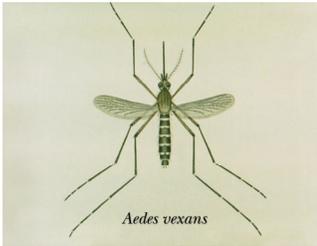




# Managing mosquitoes

People love to hate the mosquito, a common flying insect that swarms in warm, humid weather and leaves an itchy, persistent sore after biting.

Effective **mosquito control** requires a balance between treatment, prevention and tolerance.



Mosquitoes can carry diseases that impact humans, pets and wildlife. But eradicating all mosquitoes isn't the best way to manage mosquito-borne disease. Hundreds of animal species—from songbirds and bats to frogs, fish and dragonflies—include mosquitoes in their diet. Mosquito-control measures can preserve this important natural food web while reducing harm to human health and the environment.

## Did you know?

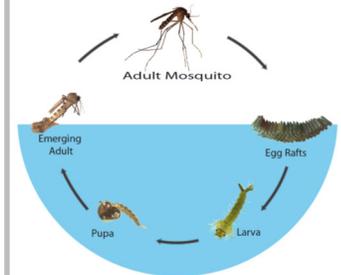
- Only female mosquitoes bite for blood.
- Males mosquitoes are pollinators. They specialize on plants in the aster, orchid and rose families.
- About 50 mosquito species occur in Minnesota, but only a few species carry diseases.

## TREATMENT

The [Metropolitan Mosquito Control District](#) takes a two-step approach to manage mosquito populations on public land in the Twin Cities.

1. Identify problem breeding areas and treat larvae by hand or by helicopter. This is done with Bti (a naturally occurring type of bacteria) or methoprene (a hormone that keeps larvae from maturing).
2. Sample water where hatches are likely or people gather. As needed, spray pyrethroids (similar to chemicals produced by chrysanthemums) on dense vegetation where mosquitoes rest by day.

This strategy limits the use of potentially harmful chemicals and, on average, reduces mosquito populations by 75 percent.



Mosquito control products are sold in stores and applied by professionals. But rather than applying chemicals in your yard, try these natural solutions to reduce mosquito populations:

- ☼ Mosquitoes need very little water to breed. Identify spots that trap rainwater—such as plant saucers, wheelbarrows, tires, rain gutters and low spots in the lawn—and remove or regularly clean them. If no standing water is available, mosquitoes will go elsewhere to breed.
- ☼ Replace water in pet bowls and birdbaths daily.
- ☼ Add herbs such as basil, rosemary and mint around your outdoor spaces. These plants produce essential oils that deter mosquitoes.
- ☼ Create and protect natural habitat to support mosquito predators.

## PREVENTION

## TOLERANCE

Minnesotans love to be outdoors, which means finding a way to live with mosquitoes. Reduce your risk by staying indoors at dawn and dusk, when these insects are most active. When you go out, wear light-colored clothing that loosely covers your skin.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 8  
Meeting of June 3, 2020**

<b>Subject:</b>	Information Items
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	N/A
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	N/A
<b>Brief Description:</b>	The following are informational items and developments that have occurred since the last park board meeting.

**COVID 19 Update**

**Summer recreation and event updates**

This year, to ensure the health and safety of our community, we've made the difficult decision to cancel several of our signature events, as well as a number of recreation programs.

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Canceled

- Shady Oak Beach closed for the season: June 5 – Aug. 23
- Theater in the Park: June 18-19
- Summer Fest: June 27
- Music in the Park series

Still On/Staying Open

- Minnetonka Farmers Market: Tuesdays, June 9 – Sept. 29.
  - Guidelines to be announced soon.
- Gray's Bay Marina: Opening mid-May
- Picnic shelters: Opening late-May
- Movies in the Park season: Aug. 28; Sept. 3 & 11

Recreation Programs

Most programming set to start in May or June has either been canceled or postponed. We will make a decision on July/August programs approximately mid June.

All city facilities remain closed until further notice.

Stay tuned to [minnetonkamn.gov/coronavirus](https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/coronavirus) for the latest updates on the city's response to COVID-19.

**Lone Lake Park Multi-Use Mountain Bike Trail Update**

Work continues in preparation for construction of the Lone Lake Park multi-use mountain bike trail. Staff completed GPS field siting of the trail in April. The field sited map and permit exhibits are currently being prepared.

Volunteer efforts are scheduled to begin in June to continue restoration efforts, transplant native plants and clear the trail corridor. Construction, which was initially scheduled to begin in July, is now scheduled to begin in September due to new guidance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Recommended trail usage, rules and metrics will be presented to the Park Board at the August 5, 2020 meeting. These items will be available online for public review and feedback in July. A project page update and email will provide detailed information on how and when to provide feedback.

### **Tennis Court Reconstruction**

The courts at Oberlin and Gro Tonka parks are scheduled for reconstruction in 2020. Public Works crews started work at Oberlin Park on May 20. The pavement on the tennis courts and basketball courts has been removed and the subgrade prepared for paving. On June 1 pavement removal will begin at Gro Tonka Park and the first lift of asphalt will be paved at Oberlin. Final paving for both parks is scheduled for the week of June 8. The pavement will then cure for 30 days before color coatings can be applied. The coatings contractor has the courts on their schedule for the week of July 13. The nets will be installed and the courts opened for play the day after the coatings are completed.

### **Robinwood Park Update**

Robinwood Park is scheduled for construction in 2020. A neighborhood meeting was held on December 10, 2019 to review the proposed park and get feedback from residents regarding play features, amenities, landscaping, and any other concerns. A second neighborhood meeting was planned for March to present the final design of the park and review proposed amenities and play equipment, but has been delayed due to COVID-19. Staff will be developing a way to present the information to the neighborhood and receive feedback on the final design either through an online meeting, distribution of a survey, or if restrictions on gatherings are changed in the month of June then possibly a meeting in person may be held. Upon gathering of final comments, staff will obtain quotes for purchase and install of playground equipment and obtain permits for construction. Public Works staff will perform construction of the park while the equipment is being manufactured. It is anticipated that the playground will be open for use in September.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 9  
Meeting of June 3, 2020**

<b>Upcoming 6-Month Meeting Schedule</b>				
<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Agenda Business Items</b>	<b>Special Notes</b>
<b>Wed</b>	7/1/20	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No meeting</li> </ul>	Holiday
<b>Wed</b>	8/5/20	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mountain Bike usage, rules and metrics</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	9/2/20	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	10/7/20	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 Strategic Plan Check-In</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	11/4/20	Joint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint meeting w/city council</li> </ul>	5:30 pm start time
<b>Wed</b>	12/2/20	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of 2020 Farmer's Market Operations and recommendations for 2021</li> </ul>	

**Other meetings and activities to note:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Special Notes</b>

**Items to be scheduled:**