



Agenda

Minnetonka Park Board

Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 7 p.m.
Virtual Meeting on WebEx

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

_____ Elliot Berman

_____ Korey Beyersdorf

_____ James Durbin

_____ Chris Gabler

_____ David Ingraham

_____ Ben Jacobs

_____ Katie Semersky

_____ Chris Walick

3. Reports from Staff

4. Approval of Minutes

A) March 3, 2021

5. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

A) Friends of Minnetonka Parks Mission and Vision

6. Special Matters

A) Cullen Nature Preserve Update

7. Business Items

A) Skate Park Request

B) Natural Resources Master Plan Update

C) Natural Resources Education & Outreach Plan

8. Park Board Member Reports

9. Information Items

10. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

11. Adjournment

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.

Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, the park board's regular meeting place is not available. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021, park board members will participate in the meeting remotely via WebEx. Members of the public who desire to monitor the meeting remotely or to give input or testimony during the meeting can find instructions at <https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/government/virtual-meeting-information>.



**Minutes
Minnetonka Park Board
Wednesday, March 3, 2021**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Park Board Members Present: Elliot Berman, Korey Beyersdorf, James Durbin, Chris Gabler, David Ingraham, Katie Semersky and Chris Walick.

Ben Jacobs was excused.

Staff members in attendance: Darin Ellingson, Carol HejlStone, Kathy Kline, Kelly O'Dea, Sara Woeste and Leslie Yetka. Information technology staff: Jeff Dulac and Gary Wicks.

Gabler called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

3. Reports from Staff

Recreation Director, Kelly O'Dea had no reports.

4. Approval of Minutes

Walick moved, Ingraham seconded a motion to approve the meeting minutes of Feb. 3, 2021 as submitted. Durbin abstained. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

5. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

Heather and Brent Holm, Minnetonka residents gave a PowerPoint presentation on their neighborhood restoration project. The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the end of the minutes.

Gabler asked if they would come to an area in his neighborhood.

Brent Holm thought it was a template that could be replicated in other areas. It's not obvious in the beginning of all that needs to be done, but it is something they would be interested in fostering. They want to see the model spread.

Gabler added that it is a worthwhile community goal. He knows that area and noticed the work being done, but didn't know what was happening.

Walick thought everything about it was awesome. He asked why the Holm's suggested July for touring the site.

Heather Holm answered that the May park board tour is postponed so that is why she suggested July. It will look very pretty then, but they welcome them to come at any time during the growing season.

O'Dea commented that the May tour was postponed and is looking to be rescheduled in late June or early July. He said if the park board wanted to add that as a site for the tour, it could be added to the tour itinerary.

Walick would be interested in adding it to the tour.

Ingraham would also like it added. He thinks what they did was a fantastic effort. He drives by the site fairly frequently and it is definitely an incredible transformation.

Heather Holm said perhaps they can come by on their tour.

O'Dea commented that there might be a similar update at the next meeting for the Cullen Nature Preserve. There is a group of volunteers who would like to provide a similar update. He thanked Heather and Brent Holm for the update.

Heather said she serves on the Cullen Nature Preserve board so she may be involved at the next meeting.

Ingrid Berkholtz presented on behalf of the Friends of Minnetonka Parks. She wanted to introduce the park board to their volunteer association and to express their interest in being a ready, public resource for the upcoming Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP), Parks Open Spaces and Trails Plan (POST) and park signage updating. Friends of Minnetonka Parks is a volunteer association of residents advocating for the natural environment and landscapes that are the foundational amenity of Minnetonka's parks and trails system. Their current network of volunteers represents Big Willow, Jidana, Kinsel, Lake Rose, Lone Lake, Meadow, Purgatory, Victoria-Evergreen Parks as well as the Cullen Nature Preserve.

They all enjoy Minnetonka's parks and green spaces, in fact many of them moved here because of the green spaces and their priority in the city. We are park neighbors, visitors and volunteers who believe it is imperative that the city of Minnetonka protects, preserves and restores the unique biodiverse natural systems and features of the parks and trails. Friends of Minnetonka Parks formally banded as a volunteer association at the start of 2021. They are currently finalizing their vision and mission and values statement. They like a parks system that 1) honors and builds on our city's heritage of preserving and restoring 2) that respects our distinctive high-value natural species 3) that addresses current and emerging needs for both active and passive recreational opportunities. They would like to present their finalized Friends of Minnetonka Parks statement to the park board at an upcoming meeting.

Berkholtz also expressed their interest in working with the park board as a ready, public resource on the NRMP and the POST plan. This is to ensure that the quality of our high-valued species, park preserves, wetlands, meadows, and woodlands which provide ecological functions supporting a diverse array of species and play a role in treating storm water and improving air quality. Also, that resident's usage and enjoyment of these spaces remain harmonious with natural resource functions and values and that residents who appreciate these natural amenities have a voice in the process. The updating of the POST plan was communicated to residents via the March Minnetonka Memo. We ask that the NRMP update process includes multiple opportunities and methods for gathering interest as well. We value that our parks, preserves and trails are inclusive for all residents and that they all feel welcome and everyone is respectful of each park's biodiverse natural features.

Park communications use of signage, rules, education and interpretation is an existing practice. Friends of Minnetonka Parks recently conducted an informal survey asking park users and neighbors the following: why they visit the parks, what are their favorite things, what issues do they have, what concerns do they have. Responses common across multiple parks illuminated that park signage is not affecting patrons behaviors. It also identifies inconsistencies between signage and specific park and trail rules. Friends of Minnetonka Parks supports the educational signage if key to the sustainability to our parks, parks system and community. They would welcome the opportunity to participate in the park signage update project. Their association includes individuals with interpretive signage development and implementation experience. They have a commitment to Minnetonka's future and are willing and able to roll up their sleeves and contribute to these park planning processes. Once the plans take effect, they can contribute through their volunteer work in the parks. On behalf of the Friends of Minnetonka Parks she thanked staff for the opportunity to address the board. Friends of Minnetonka Parks can be reached via email at mtkaparks@gmail.com.

Ingraham commented that there are multiple friends groups. He asked if they consolidated all those friends groups.

Berkholtz responded that yes, this is a consolidation of all of those groups and also some groups that are just emerging or smaller. They are banding together as an overall organization.

Ingraham thinks the level of interest or involvement is terrific. It is great to come together specifically for city staff. Having a unified or somewhat unified friends group vs individual groups representing different parks is probably easier.

6. Business Items

A. Adoption of the 2021 Park Board Strategic Plan

O'Dea gave the report. He shared the draft of the Strategic Plan that displayed the changes they made.

Gabler asked if users of the parks such as baseball programs need to provide their safe to return to play or their guidelines to the city in order to use Big Willow Park. He was referring to the goal, "To provide quality athletic and recreational facilities and programs", objective 3, the last sentence that mentions continue to provide safe accommodations following Covid guidelines.

O'Dea replied that last year each organization provided kind of their Covid safe plan. He thinks organizations should look at those to make sure they still make sense. Some of the guidelines have probably changed a little bit but Covid is still here. He thinks it would be appropriate to have some guidelines in place for those organizations.

Gabler questioned that because he wondered if the city has a plan that user groups could mimic when creating their safety plan.

O'Dea replied that the city does and it follows the state guidelines. Certain organizations may have different changes such as baseball and softball have dugouts and a soccer's

bench is more open so they have different guidelines or regulations. The city does follow the state guidelines but each association might have some small differences.

Gabler said the other reason he brought that sentence up is because what happens if someone is participating at a park and something happens. Then they try and go back on the park saying they didn't see their guidelines. He thinks it is more on the user end rather than on the landlord end.

O'Dea thinks we would make sure that each association had our guidelines in their requirements.

Walick and Semersky think the revisions look good.

Walick moved, Semersky seconded a motion to approve the 2021 Strategic Plan. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

B. Park Signage

Natural Resources Manager, Leslie Yetka gave the report.

Public Works Operations Manager, Darin Ellingson reported that the other parts of signage they are going to work on are 1) park rules signage 2) wayfinding and 3) park monument signs. There are different things going on already with the new Ridgedale Park and there will be wayfinding there. Staff is in the early stages of wayfinding and trail development in Opus. As Yetka mentioned with this whole process, staff is going to come up with a way to unify what is going on at these newer parks and tie it into our existing parks. There will be a lot of signage opportunities and what this will do is give us a standard for how we want these to look like throughout our parks. Ellingson added that staff would look at new park monument signs. The existing ones are simple, they are two wooden boards on posts with the name of the park. Staff is looking at doing something more significant as far as a more visible and larger sign. Something like the new sign that was done at Shady Oak Beach or a smaller scale of the new city gateway sign on County Road 101 by the Gray's Bay Causeway. There is a new monument sign there entering the city which is much bigger than what we would be looking at for the parks signs but has a similar look. Once staff has a standard monument size, it would be put in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for future use as that is a much bigger project.

Ingraham thinks it is a great effort. He is a big proponent of the interpretive signs and appreciated when Yetka talked about the effort there and how it is being laid out. He likes the idea of having updated sign standards for branding and building perspective. Ingraham also encouraged history. He said that a lot of our interpretive signs have history on them today but there may be a chance to incorporate more elements of history. He is thinking of things such as the ruins with brick pillars at Big Willow Park. When you are at the park you wonder what those things are. There are some fun things that could be incorporated such as on the other side of Big Willow where it talks about mills. Ingraham shifted gears to talk about the park rules and regulations, in particular at Purgatory Park. It is a very popular park especially with dog owners and now with Covid there is more usage than ever. There seems to be a lot more conflict than usual recently between people that are using the exterior maintained paths and dogs that are running loose from the interior. There is a thread on NextDoor that has over 130 comments about issues. The park board received a letter from a local resident and he has spent a

lot of time over there himself with his wife and grandkids and their dog. He really feels strongly that there needs to be better education and more signs about what the rules are. Dogs are loose in the parking lots. Last year there was a gentleman who was knocked off his bike while biking on the maintained path and had to have surgery. Ingraham thinks we can't do it soon enough with spring coming based on the interaction going on the NextDoor thread. Relative to prior years, the theme on the NextDoor thread seems to be more about people using the maintained trails being extremely frustrated with dogs and dog owners from the interior off-leash. In the past, it was much more balanced about the beliefs of both. He would guess that over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the comments or more were people on the maintained trails experiencing situations not unlike the letter that was sent to the park board. He would strongly encourage staff to look hard and quickly at those issues.

Ellingson replied that staff is going to put up some more signs at each of the park entrances. Staff will put up the signs about the dog rules as soon as the snow is gone and the frost is out of the ground. This would be temporary but as the sign project is in progress staff will look at doing something more along the brand. This gets some signage up regarding the rules in the meantime.

Gabler commented that it sounds like it's not so much an issue of signage but either disrespect by people or how it gets enforced.

Ingraham responded that Community Service Officers used to drive the trail and obviously that hasn't been going on. Regarding the comments on the post, some of it is just pure disrespect but he thinks the biggest thing is to educate. Everybody thinks their dog is great off-leash and everyone believes their dog is under voice control and most of them have no idea what voice control is. He has been in that park for over 30 years with multiple dogs and until his recent dog, every dog was a great dog. Our dog is a great dog but his dog is not safe off-leash with other dogs. They've had a professional trainer and everything and it is clear that it was just the way it was bred. When you have your dog on a leash and someone else with their dog off-leash on the maintained trail says, "oh, don't worry my dog is friendly" that might be great but my dog might not be and his dog is under control. If Ingraham's dog is rushed by another dog it isn't going to be a pleasant thing. He thinks the big thing is education because people just don't understand. Our rules are clear that you have to have your dog leashed in the parking lot but people pull in, open the door and let their dog jump out and run into the center. The parking lots are clearly an area of issue. He thinks the other area of confusion is on the south end of the main open area when you go down to get to the main trail to go across the bridge. Experienced people know they should be leashing their dog there but a lot of people are thinking they are going to cross the bridge and go up into the woods so they don't. Even a sign right there where you exit what he calls the center, right before the bridge, it wouldn't be a bad idea to reinforce that your dog must be leashed at this point.

Durbin added that the park board has discussed this for years. He thanked Ingraham for bringing it up. It is a problem and there are much more dog owners now with Covid than there ever was before. He hopes there is a good solution for educating because many people are unaware. We have to give people the benefit of the doubt but maybe they just need a little bit of a nudge or peer pressure. The other thing regarding the signage for the monument signs, he thinks staff should hire the person who designs the state parks signs. They are way too big but each state park has a little picture of something that makes that state park really cool and helps remind you why you went there. He

knows they probably spent way too much money on that but he hopes to make them more Minnetonka than just the new symbol and two boards that says Minnetonka Parks and the name of the park. Try to make it more original and more like a cool destination. Every time he goes to the state parks and he sees those signs, they always get their picture taken in front of them because they are cool. Maybe there is some kind of affordable option that we can consider when we design these new generation signs and incorporate that throughout all of our parks.

Ellingson said that is definitely something we can mention as we get through the process. The one thing is that we have to stay in the boundaries. There is the Minnetonka sign ordinance and that is fairly restrictive so we don't have a lot of space to do a whole lot. We will do as much as we can with the space that we have.

Gabler hopes the signs will work especially with people with their dogs on and off leash.

O'Dea commented that Yetka and Ellingson were talking about future signage. Staff will address the concern dealing with dogs whether it is with signage, education and/or enforcement. Staff can also talk to the police department and address that sooner than the other park signage.

C. Bike Month Activities

Park and Trail Planner, Carol HejlStone gave the report.

Beyersdorf mentioned that in Florida they would do an annual slow-roll bike ride. It was called the Tweed Ride and everybody would get dressed up in tweed or vintage clothing. It could be fun if you were to do a slow-roll and do some sort of themed event around it. Maybe that would gather more interest. She asked if the city has ever thought about doing a bike share program or investing in something like that.

HejlStone replied that there are a couple of us that participate in a monthly bike share meeting that is hosted by Minneapolis and St. Paul. However, it is really meant to be a learning and inclusive group including suburban communities surrounding Minneapolis and St. Paul. Bike sharing is something that we are kind of looking into now. Staff is looking at partner cities or adjacent cities to see how they operate and look for any issues that come up for potential consideration in the future.

Beyersdorf asked if there has ever been any sort of bike rental company that has come in and worked with the city.

HejlStone replied that there hasn't been one while she has worked at the city of Minnetonka. That is something that we know may become more of a push with the implementation of the LRT. She liked Beyersdorf's idea of a themed slow-roll ride.

Semersky is thrilled that they city is getting behind bike month and planning to promote it and get people involved. Her understanding is that the bike industry is another one that is booming right now during Covid so the timing is fantastic. She is happy to volunteer whether it is for brainstorming, marketing help or if you just need hands to help.

Walick asked if staff has considered activities for kids such as helmet distribution. Or looking into ways where kids could do bike things since families are always looking for things to do and kids love riding bikes.

HejlStone responded there are some bike safety courses for children in the summer months. For bike month, looking at that slow-roll ride staff could choose a distance to be achievable for youth to participate. If the park board has other ideas to enhance youth participation, she would love to hear them.

Walick apologized if that was discussed already with the slow-roll ride, he wasn't sure what that was.

HejlStone explained that a slow-roll ride means that it is not a race and is not meant to be a quick trip. There is a leader or two at the front setting a leisurely pace as well as folks at the rear making sure nobody drops off and everyone is being safe.

Ingraham asked if in the past the Minnetonka Middle School had a bike to school day that was tied into bike month. He thinks Tony Wagner might have mentioned last year that Groveland Elementary was going to do that except Covid got in the way. Ingraham asked if that is something that might be coordinated with bike month, if kids are in school.

HejlStone answered that school wasn't in session last year during May so they were unable to participate. She will reach out to schools to see if there are any planned bike to school events that we can partner with as well.

Semersky asked if there is a grand opening being planned for the Lone Lake Park Mountain Biking Trail.

HejlStone doesn't think it is planned for May. We are planning on a grand opening event but the date is yet to be determined. That is still being planned and staff is really looking at when the trail would be in good condition and a time when youth would be practicing.

Ingraham is aware that the mountain bike course is closed now. It was open for fat tires snow but now with the change in condition it is closed again. Ingraham is curious where people can look to find an update on whether or not the trails are open versus closed so people don't drive a long way to get there to find it closed and then go around the gate.

HejlStone replied that there are trail conditions, and trail openings and closure updates through the MORC website. They city's Lone Lake Mountain Bike Trail webpage is linked to that page as well.

Beyersdorf asked if there has been any thought to somehow help individual neighborhoods within Minnetonka to create maybe a slow-roll bike ride for their neighborhood. In her area, there are a lot of kids and the families might not be able to attend a sponsored event in Minnetonka but maybe there are ways to help them start their own neighborhood slow-roll event during the month.

HejlStone said they can look into it and see if we are able to support that or help encourage it.

Gabler would be happy to volunteer when he can that month.

7. Park Board Member Reports

There were none.

8. Information Items

Natural Resources Annual Update – 2020 Activities

Yetka gave the report.

Walick questioned the cause of the tree shortage.

Yetka responded that when talking to our city forester, her understanding is that it is an increased demand and supply change issue. There are a lot of industries workers shortages due to Covid perhaps because of illnesses or restrictions. The horticultural industry for a while has been short on staff and technicians to be growing and producing the materials. She thinks there are a lot of different factors but the bottom line was that the nurseries couldn't guarantee us the stock. To avoid multiple distribution events, staff decided to move it to fall when we had a better chance of having all of the material at the same time.

Ingraham commented that this is a great update and there were an impressive amount of achievements last year. It is great to go through that all and see all the progress that has been made.

Glen Lake Cross Country Ski Trail

O'Dea gave the report.

9. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

O'Dea gave the report.

10. Adjournment

Walick moved, Ingraham seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kline

Kathy Kline
Recreation Administrative Coordinator

Oric Ave Outlot Restoration

A collaborative effort between city staff, residents, and the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District



Restore Land with Native Plants

Watershed Grant

Cost-share grant 75% matching up to \$25,000

25% obligation can be offset with in-kind (volunteer) contributions

100 volunteer hours committed so grant funds applied for ~ \$5700

Grant approved by the City (property owner)

Acquire Funding



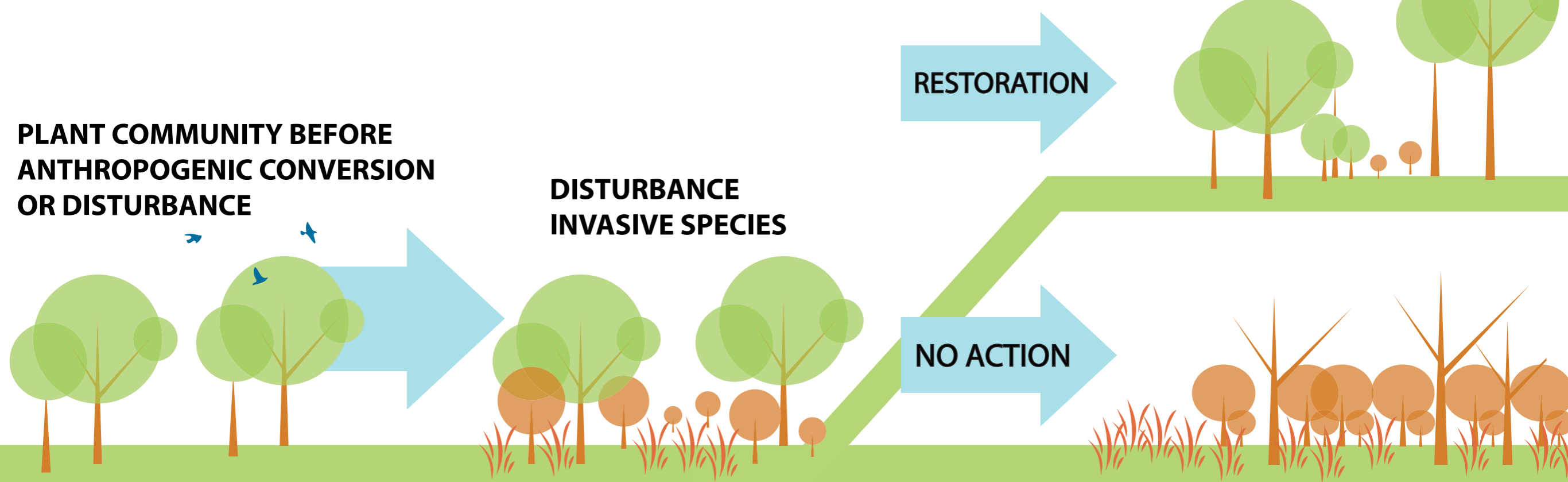
Gauge Volunteer Involvement | Notify Neighbors About Project



Restore Degraded Land with Native Plants

Remove invasive plants

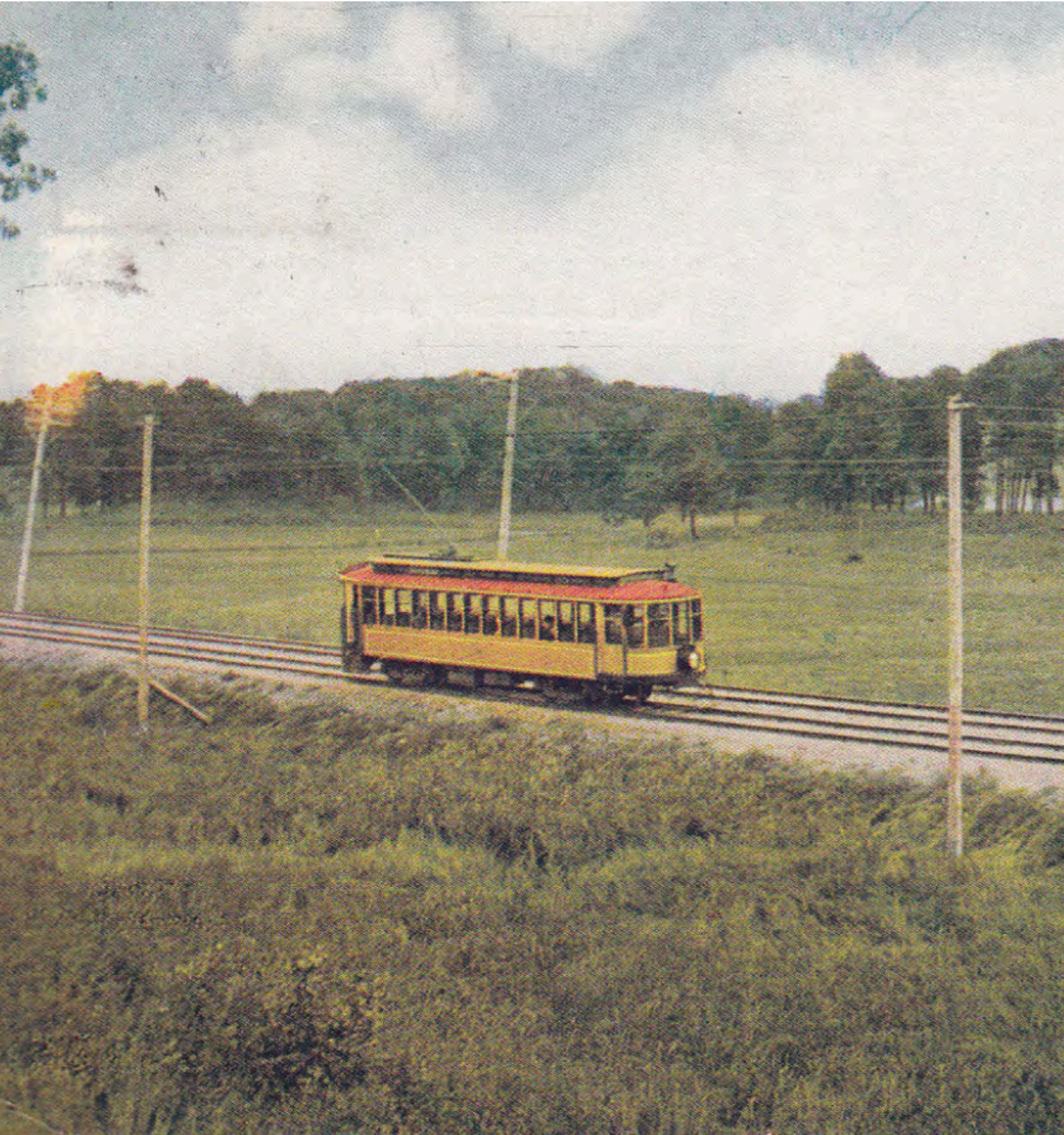
Reintroduce native plants, increase diversity, and improve ecosystem functionality



Outlot Location and Siting in the Watershed



History of the Site



**Trolley/Streetcar Tracks
Until 1940**

**Between rail abandonment
and power line installation,
used as a dumping site**

**State power utility
installed power lines on
rail footprint in 1960s**

**Power lines decommissioned
in 1990s (company no
longer did any clearing
under power line)**

**Deemed an unbuildable
lot by the municipality**



Unanticipated Challenges

Establishing Goals for Grant



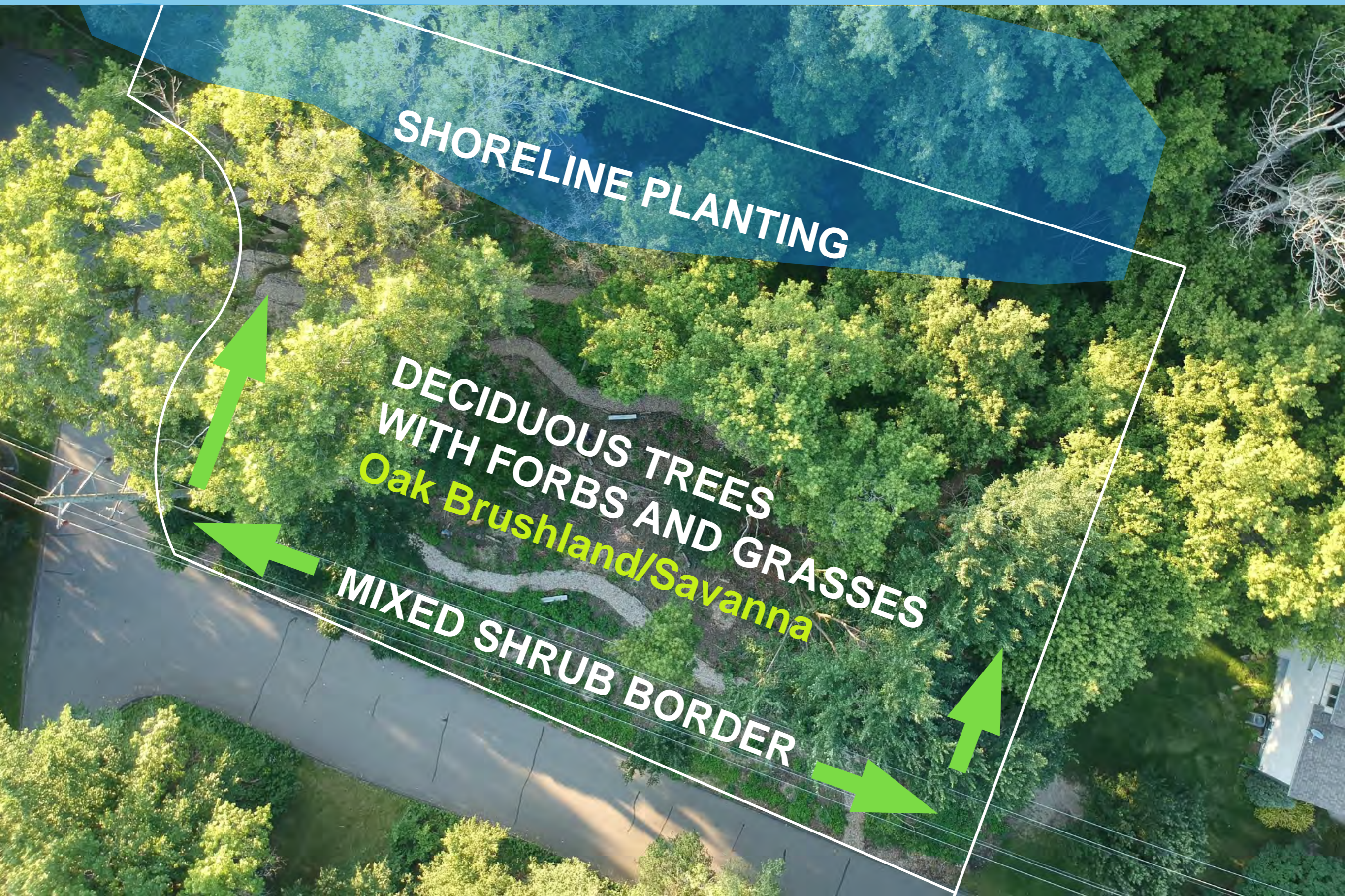
**Remove
Invasive
Species**

**Increase
Plant
Diversity**

**Provide
Habitat for
Pollinators
and Birds**

**Improve
Water
Quality**

Develop a Planting Plan Using Local Plant Community Models



SHORELINE PLANTING

DECIDUOUS TREES
WITH FORBS AND GRASSES
Oak Brushland/Savanna

MIXED SHRUB BORDER

Pre-restoration Plant Survey



5

***Native
Tree Species***

3

***Native
Shrub Species***

9

***Native Forb,
Grass, and Sedge
Species***

17

***Total
Native Species***

Remove Invasive Plants

Late Fall Ideal Time



**Volunteers removed buckthorn, honeysuckle
Tree contractor hired for large invasive trees
City hauled brush away**

Shoreline Planting

GOALS

Stabilize edge, filter pollutants from the water,
and prevent flow of nutrients into the water



Aquatic
emergents
sedges, rushes

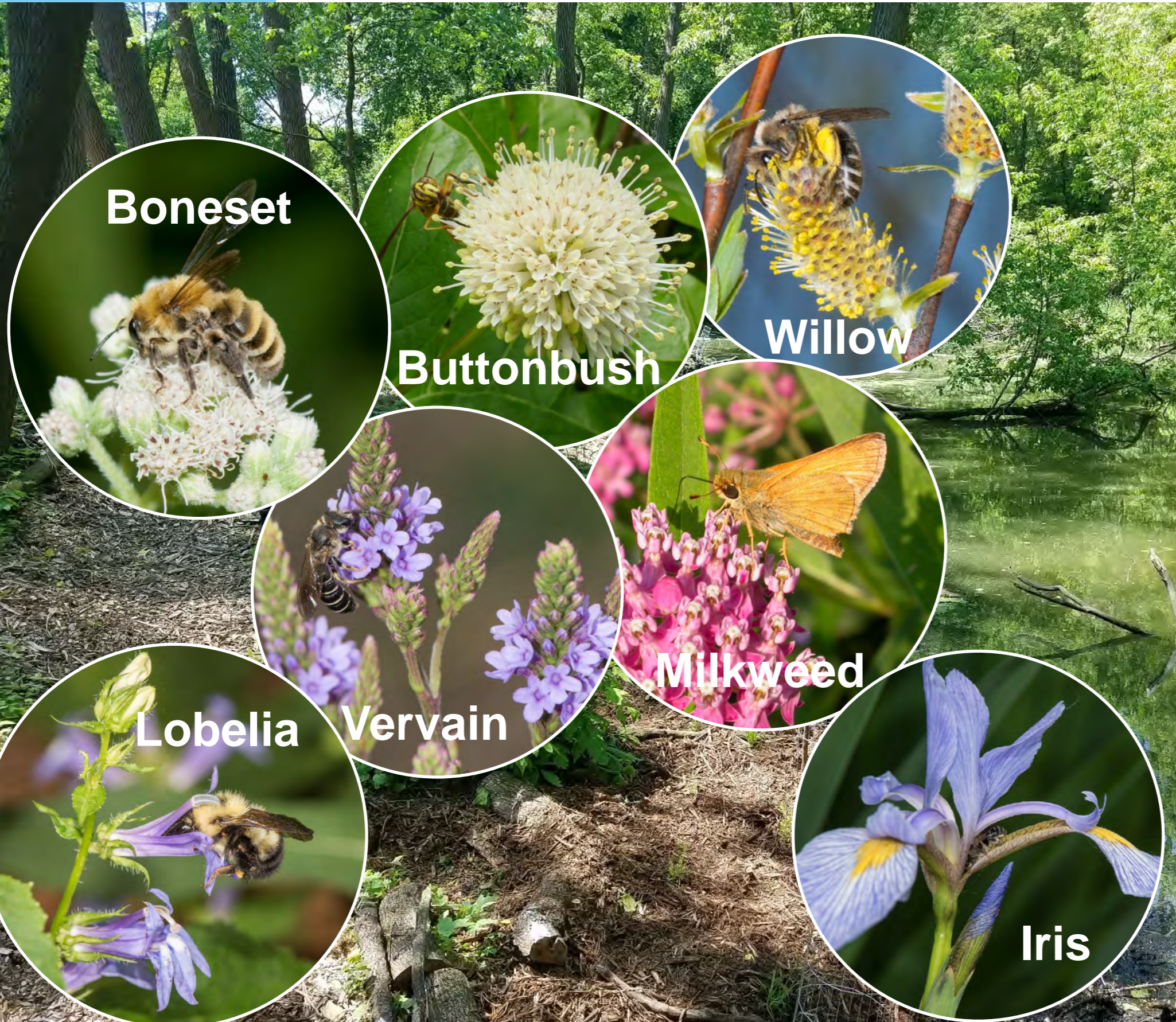
Pond edge
sedges,
flowering
perennials

Shrubs
willow
buttonbush
dogwood

Shoreline Planting

GOALS

Stabilize edge, filter pollutants from the water, and prevent flow of nutrients into the water



Boneset

Buttonbush

Willow

Milkweed

Vervain

Lobelia

Iris

Aquatic emergents
sedges, rushes

Pond edge
sedges,
flowering
perennials

Shrubs
willow
buttonbush
dogwood

Mixed Shrub Border

GOALS

Shrubs provide a sense of enclosure and remain below the power line above



- Prunus*
Plum/cherry
- Cornus*
Dogwood
- Corylus*
Hazelnut
- Ceanothus*
New Jersey Tea
- Sambucus*
Elderberry
- Viburnum*

Summer 2018





Quercus
Oak

Tilia
Basswood

Ostrya
Ironwood

Celtis
Hackberry

Acer
Maple

GOALS

Provide flowering perennials for pollinators and introduce more hardwood tree species



Oak



Red Maple



Ironwood



Basswood

Quercus
Oak

Tilia
Basswood

Ostrya
Ironwood

Celtis
Hackberry

Acer
Maple

Snow Seeding Native Forbs and Grasses

Open interior and edge



GOAL Provide pollinator habitat

Snow Seeding Native Forbs and Grasses

Winter 2017



Goldenrod



Blazingstar



Aster



Milkweed



Hyssop



Golden Alexanders



Bergamot

Rudbeckia
(Black-eyed Susan)

Verbena (Vervain)

Asclepias (Milkweed)

Solidago (Goldenrod)

Monarda (Bergamot)

Zizia
(Golden Alexanders)

Liatris (Blazingstar)

Agastache (Hyssop)

Symphotrichum
(Aster)



Summer 2020



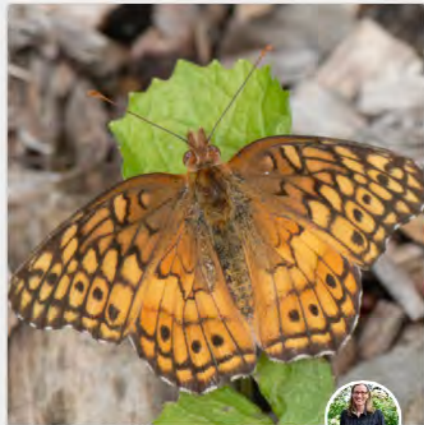


**Planted five
milkweed species
for monarchs**



Summer 2020

18 species of butterflies

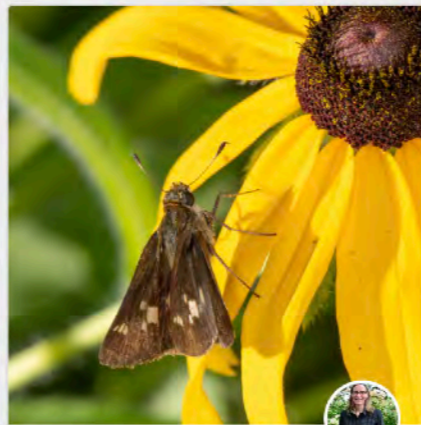


Variegated Fritillary

(*Euptoieta claudia*)

Research Grade 3

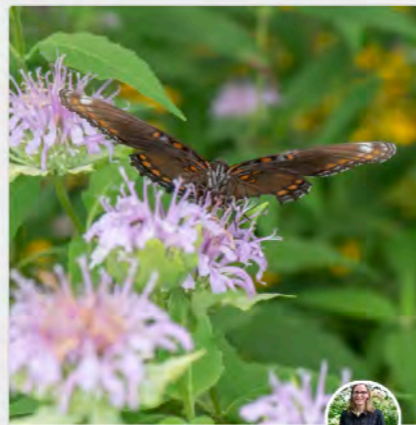
3y



Northern Broken-Dash

(*Wallengrenia egeremet*)

6mo

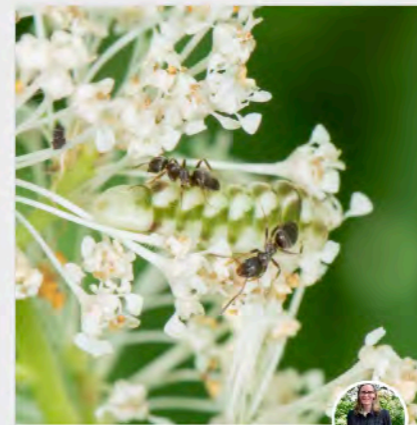


Red-spotted Admiral

(*Limenitis arthemis*)

Research Grade 1

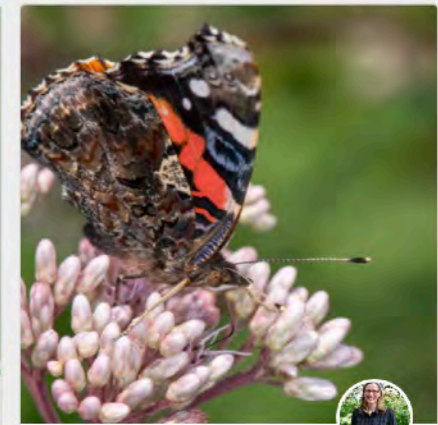
6mo



Summer Azure

(*Celastrina neglecta*)

6mo

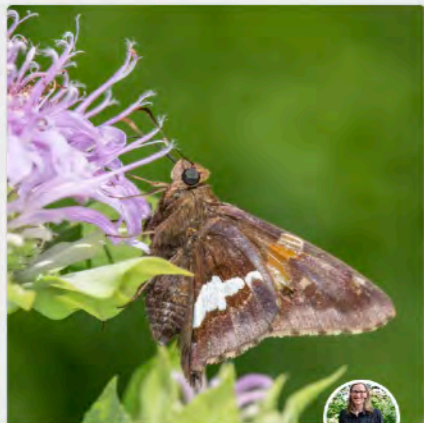


Red Admiral

(*Vanessa atalanta*)

Research Grade 1

2y

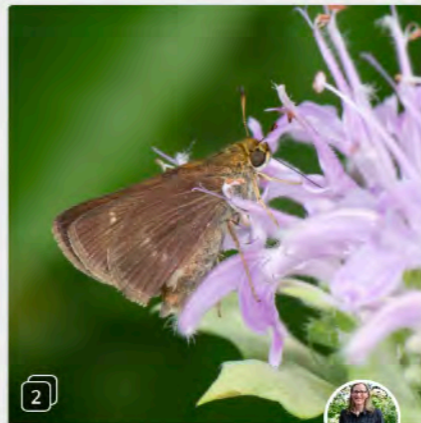


Silver-spotted Skipper

(*Epargyreus clarus*)

Research Grade 1

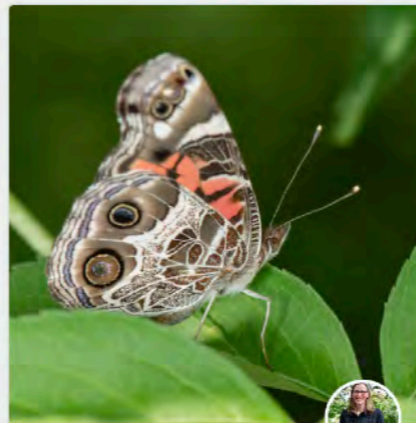
6mo



Dun Skipper

(*Euphyes vestris*)

6mo

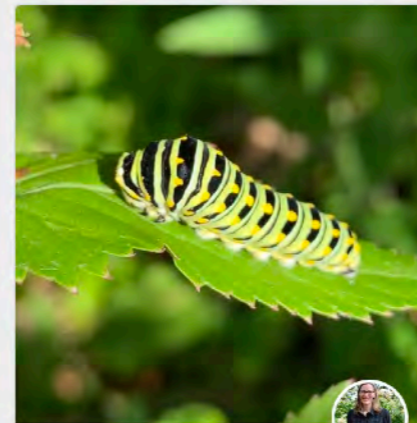


American Lady

(*Vanessa virginiensis*)

Research Grade 1

6mo

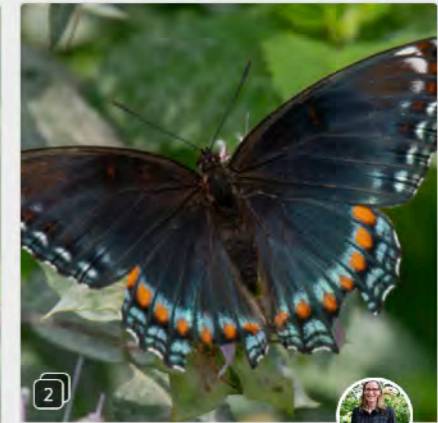


Black Swallowtail

(*Papilio polyxenes*)

Research Grade 2

7mo



Red-spotted Admiral

(*Limenitis arthemis*)

Research Grade 2

2y

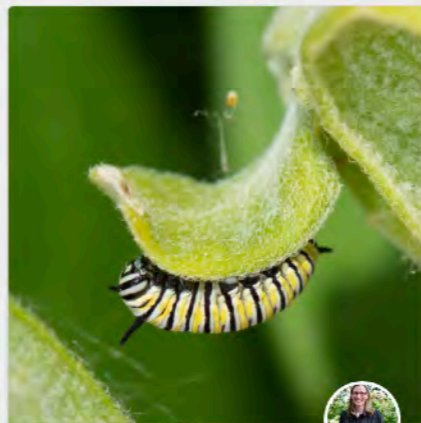


Mourning Cloak

(*Nymphalis antiopa*)

Research Grade 1

7mo

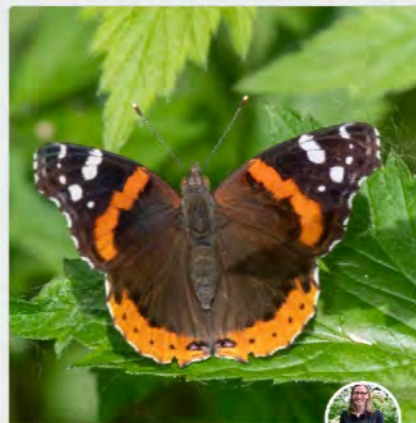


Monarch

(*Danaus plexippus*)

Research Grade 2

7mo

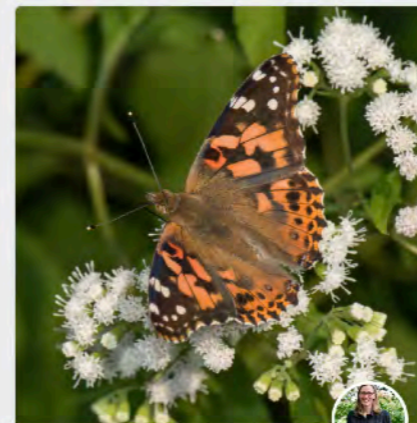


Red Admiral

(*Vanessa atalanta*)

Research Grade 2

2y

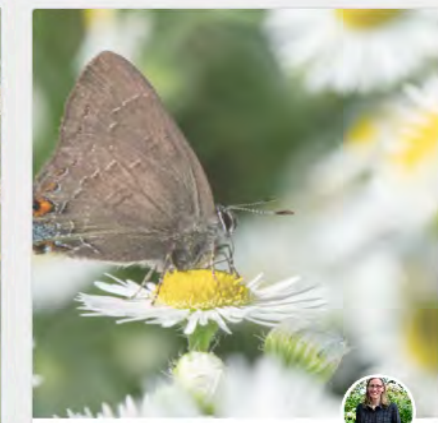


Painted Lady

(*Vanessa cardui*)

Research Grade 2

3y



Banded Hairstreak

(*Satyrium calanus*)

Research Grade 1

3y

Minnetonka is a “Monarch Champion!”

Post Date:

01/11/2021 10:17 a.m.



City of Minnetonka Reaches “Monarch Champion” Milestone

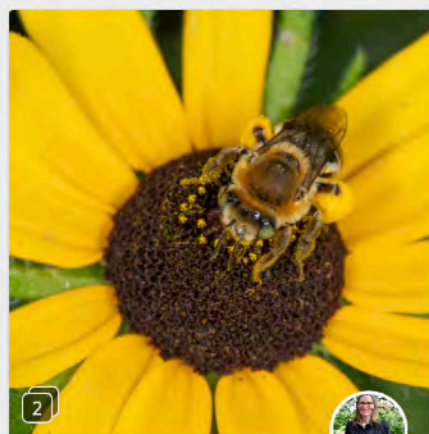
[The National Wildlife Federation](#) recently acknowledged the City of Minnetonka and Mayor Brad Wiersum for completing all 24 action steps in the [Mayors’ Monarch Pledge](#) (MMP). The MMP program’s diverse measures – including strategic planning and education – increase habitat and awareness of monarch butterflies, whose population has declined by more than 90 percent since the mid-1990s. Minnetonka has participated in the pledge since 2017, and now becomes only the ninth of approximately 600 MMP signatory cities in North America to achieve Monarch Champion status.

Oric Ave Outlot Restoration Project was one of 24 action steps completed for the city to attain **Monarch Champion** status



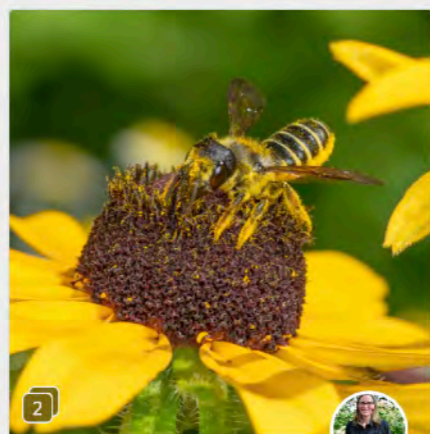
Summer 2018





2
Dark-veined Longhorn
(*Melissodes trinodis*)

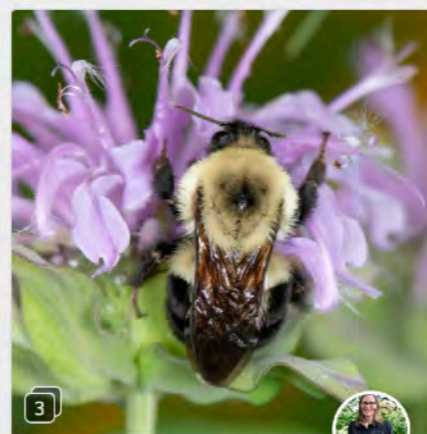
6mo



2
Megachile pugnata pug...

Research Grade 2

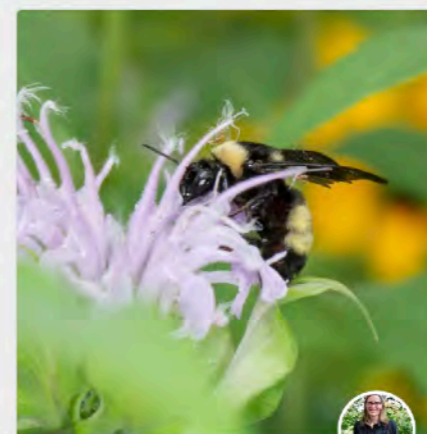
6mo



3
Two-spotted Bumble Bee
(*Bombus bimaculatus*)

Research Grade 1

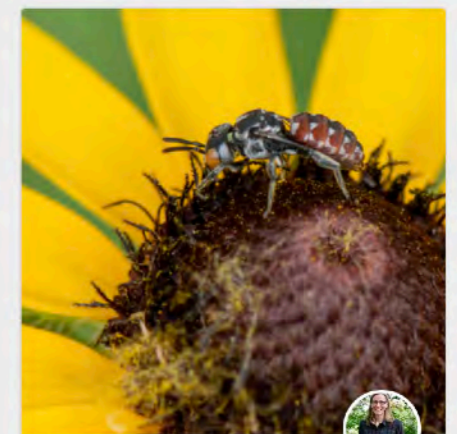
6mo



Black-and-gold Bumble ...
(*Bombus auricomus*)

Research Grade 1

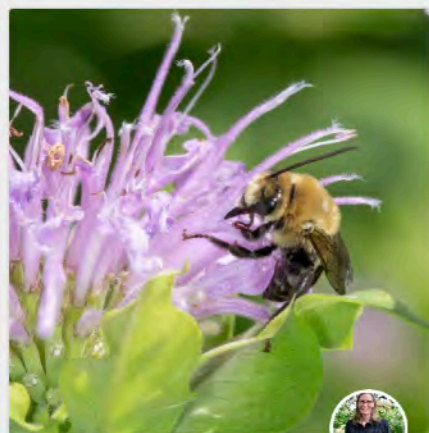
6mo



Calliopsis Cuckoo Nom...
(*Holcopasites calliopsidis*)

Research Grade 1

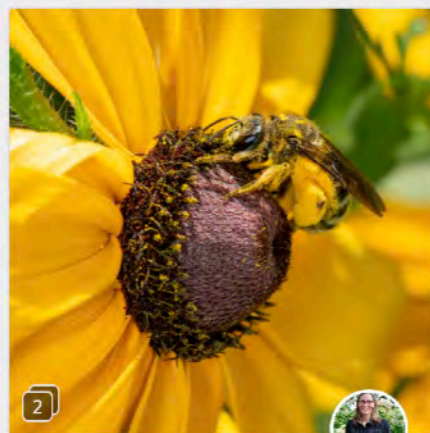
3y



Black-legged Longhorn
(*Svastrata atripes*)

★ 1

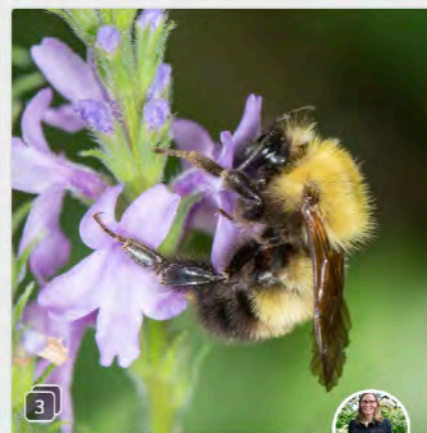
6mo



2
Coneflower Mining Bee
(*Andrena rudbeckiae*)

Research Grade 1

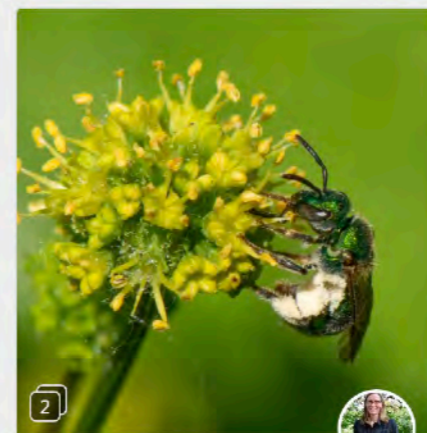
6mo



3
Perplexing Bumble Bee
(*Bombus perplexus*)

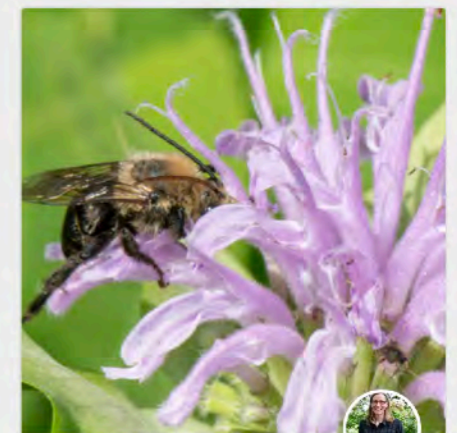
Research Grade 1

6mo



2
Genus *Augochlorella*

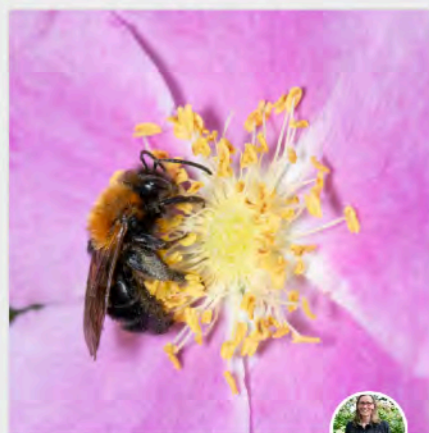
7mo



Thistle Long-horned Bee
(*Melissodes desponsus*)

Research Grade 1 ★ 1

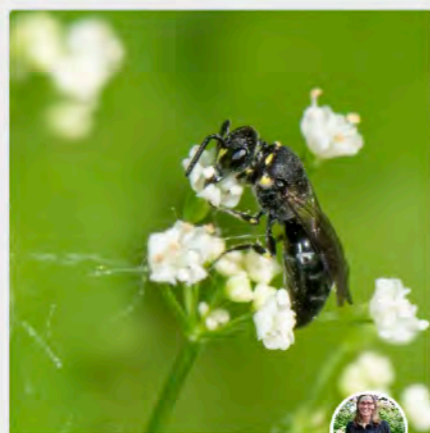
3y



Milwaukee Mining Bee
(*Andrena milwaukeeensis*)

Research Grade 1

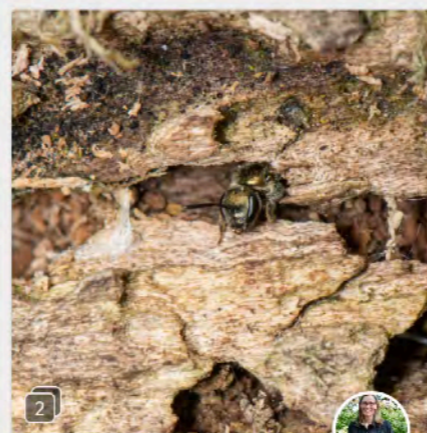
7mo



Modest Masked Bee
(*Hylaeus modestus*)

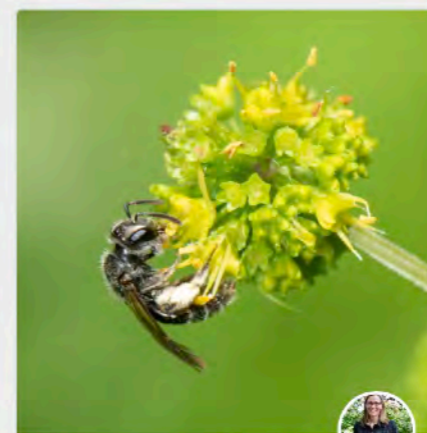
Research Grade 1

7mo



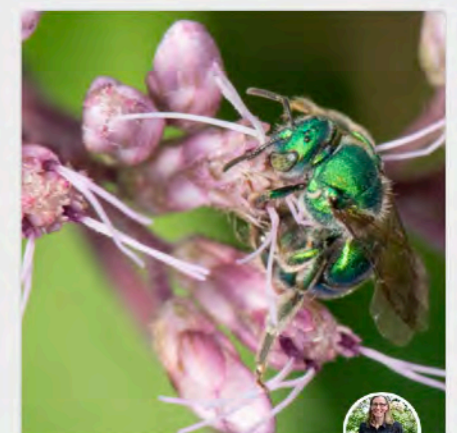
2
Western Green Sweat B...
(*Lasioglossum subviridatum*)

7mo



Golden-Alexanders Min...
(*Andrena ziziae*)

7mo



Metallic Epauletted-Sw...
(*Augochloropsis metallica*)

Research Grade 1

2y

Summer 2020

**River Otters
in the pond!!**



**Painted and Snapping
Turtles Laid Eggs in
the Outlot**

Change in Plant Diversity



5

**Pre-restoration
Native *Tree* Species**

19

**Post-restoration
Native *Tree* Species**

3

**Pre-restoration
Native *Shrub* Species**

22

**Post-restoration
Native *Shrub* Species**

9

**Pre-restoration Native
*Forb, Grass, Sedge***

75

**Post-restoration
Native *Forb,
Grass, Sedge* Species**

**Grant
Reporting**

Exceeded volunteer expectations (100 hours)

Total 313 Hours **October 2016 - June 2017**

32 Residents donated time or plants





Next Steps

Schedule a date in July for a Park Board tour of the site

Draft proposal to turn site into a **monarch butterfly mini-park** that would continue to be maintained by the neighborhood

445 Volunteer Hours

July 2017 - December 2020

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 5
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

Subject:	Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda
Park Board related goal:	N/A
Park Board related objective:	N/A
Brief Description:	Friends of Minnetonka Parks Mission and Vision

- Attached is a report from the Friends of Minnetonka Parks.

Friends of Minnetonka Parks: Vision, Mission and Values

VISION

We envision a park system that honors and builds on our city's heritage of preserving, restoring and managing our distinctive high-value natural spaces that enhance Minnetonka's quality of life and distinguish it from other cities.

MISSION

Our mission is to work with the City of Minnetonka to ensure that all park visitors can experience high quality, biodiverse places that provide a multitude of positive nature-based interactions, thereby improving the quality of life and the sustainability and ecological resiliency of our parks, park system and community.

We will accomplish this by:

- investing in the restoration of our parks and preserving the park system's ecologically-significant areas because natural landscapes in a suburban context require ongoing management to maintain their ecological quality,
- transforming degraded landscapes to high-quality, biodiverse ecological plant communities,
- conducting nature-based research to inform our positions and recommendations,
- educating park visitors that the investment in and restoration of our natural resources provides the community with a distinctive amenity,
- growing the size and involvement of friends groups to assist with research, education, restoration and preservation activities,
- helping to streamline communication with the city to coordinate and manage volunteer restoration activities, and
- celebrating the outcomes.

VALUES

We value a park system that:

- is inclusive for all residents,
- is sustainable both financially and environmentally,
- anticipates, funds, and plans for climate change effects,
- provides both active and passive recreational opportunities,
- facilitates a long-term investment in the restoration, management and preservation of our natural resources as a defining and distinctive characteristic of our city, and
- communicates, monitors and enforces clear expectations and rules for use so that everyone is respectful and feels safe and welcome.

We consider our natural landscapes to be an amenity that can be enjoyed and appreciated by everyone, and also needs to be protected from negligence, misuse, overuse, and overt or benign degradation. Each park and/or preserve in the city may have its own unique, natural, biodiverse features and should have its own unique restoration management plan and guidelines for use guided by a comprehensive, city-wide vision and plan for our park system.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 7A
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

Subject:	Skate Park Request
Park Board related goal:	To renew and maintain parks and trails
Park Board related objective:	Renew, expand and maintain a trail system to encourage outdoor recreation and improve the connectivity and walkability of the community
Brief Description:	Receive the skate park request and give staff direction

Background:

The City of Minnetonka owns and operates one skate park in the city, the Glen Lake Skate Park, located at 14350 Excelsior Boulevard. This 4,000 sf skate park was built in 2001. It is considered a tier II skate park and consists of modular features on an asphalt surface. The features were last replaced in 2012 and safety inspections of the facility are completed on an annual basis. Currently, the city does not have plans in the next 5 years for renovations to the skate park.

Although the city has only one skate park, other nearby skate parks include – Overpass in Hopkins (outdoor) 18,000 sf, 3rd Lair in Golden Valley (indoor) 15,000 sf & (outdoor) 4,200 sf, St. Louis Park (outdoor) 5,245 sf and Round Lake in Eden Prairie (outdoor) 10,460 sf.

Summary:

At its February 3, 2021 meeting, the Park Board received a number of calls and emails from residents, including many students, with the request for an updated or new skate park. Many of the comments identified the Glen Lake skate park as a dated facility compared to the newer types of skate parks in the metro area.

Paul Forsline, with [City of Skate](#), a coalition of Twin Cities skaters, parents, and allies whose mission is to design and develop world class skate parks and skate-spaces in the commons of our communities, will present the trends in skate parks along with the differences between the Glen Lake skate park and others.

Residents, along with the support of City of Skate, will attend the April 7, 2021 park board meeting to present their request to the park board for consideration.

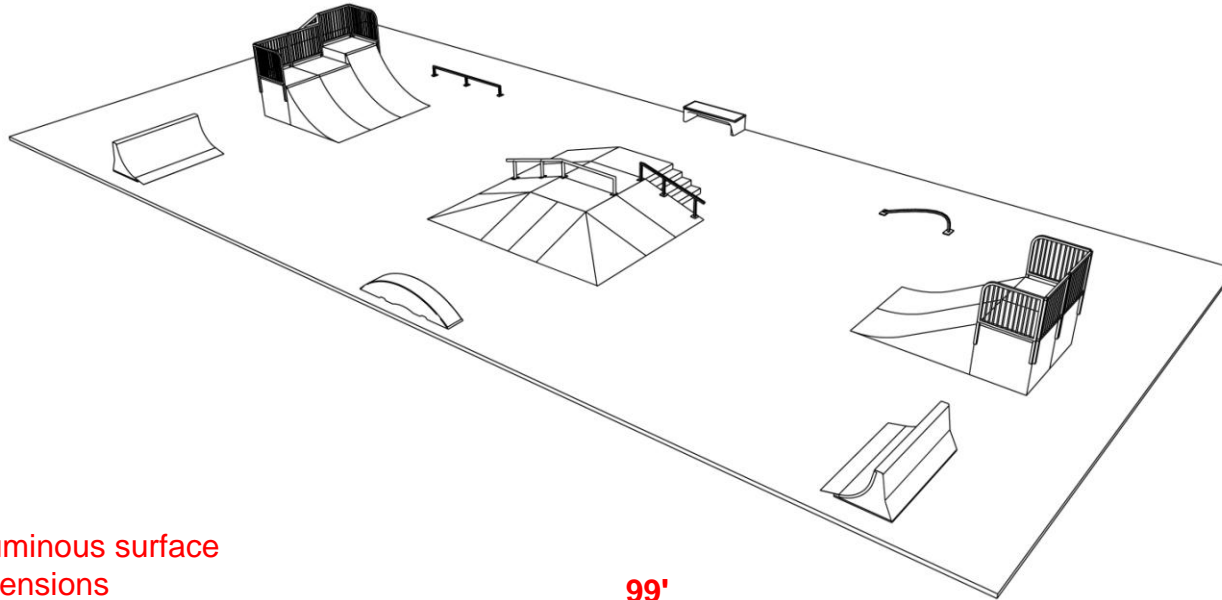
Discussion Questions:

- Does the Park Board agree that an upgrade and/or new skate park is needed in Minnetonka?
- If funds are available, is the Park Board supportive of a feasibility study in 2022?
- Does the Park Board want to include a skate park as an unfunded page in the 2022-2026 CIP?

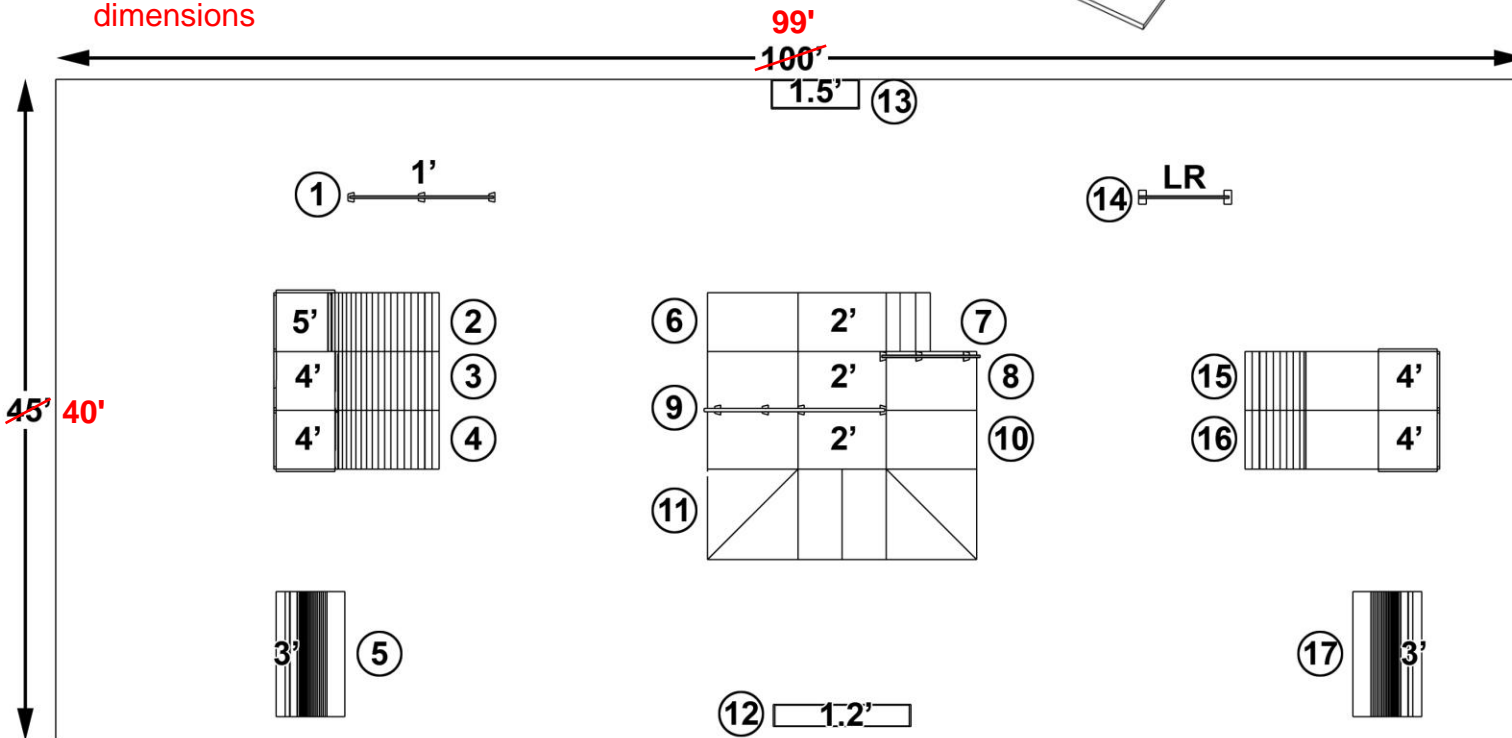
Recommended Park Board Action: Provide staff direction as it relates to the skate park request.

Attachments:

1. Skate Park Dimensions Sketch



Bituminous surface
dimensions



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW DESIGN VIDEOS](#)



601 McKinley
Joplin, MO 64801
Tel: (417) 206-6816
Toll Free: (800) 949-2024
Fax: (417) 206-6888
sales@americanrampcompany.com

DRAWN BY Todd Petillo

DATE 8/22/12

REP. AGENCY

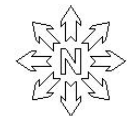
American Ramp Company

REP. NAME

Brandon Robinson

REP. PHONE

(417) 622-8156



CUSTOMER APPROVAL	DATE

PARK ENCLOSED? Yes

PRO SERIES ✓

X SERIES -

STEALTH SERIES -

STEALTH CLASSIC SERIES -

PROJECT NAME

Minnetonka Skate Park

DESIGN NO. 4937

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 7B
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

Subject:	Update on the Natural Resources Master Plan
Park Board related goal:	To protect natural resources and open space
Park Board related objective:	Continue to review and comment on the implementation of the natural resources stewardship plan
Brief Description:	Provide an update on the Natural Resources Master Plan

Background

In 1995, the City of Minnetonka commissioned a study of natural habitat in five major parks (Big Willow, Lone Lake, Purgatory, Meadow, Civic Center) and three creek corridors (Minnehaha, Nine Mile, Purgatory) to assess their environmental health and quality. The study indicated that all vegetation types throughout the city were deteriorating and in decline. Without human intervention, the overall trend would be toward continued degradation.

As a response, the city adopted a Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) in 1997 and Council Policy 11.11 in 1999 (updated in 2003) to help guide habitat restoration and open space preservation activities. A primary component of the plan and related policy includes the Natural Resources Stewardship Program, which focuses on an ecological system-based approach to restoration and management.

The 1997 Natural Resources Management Plan and the resulting stewardship program have generally provided the guidance needed for prioritizing restoration activities, resources and funds. In 2003, an effort was undertaken to re-assess habitat quality in the parks, however since that time no formal assessments or plan updates have occurred beyond yearly restoration planning by city staff.

Summary

In 2019, city staff began efforts to update the plan to help refocus our efforts for protecting and enhancing the biological and ecological integrity of the city's natural areas. The purpose is to align resources, identify strategies, and prioritize activities for natural resource protection on both public and privately owned land. Specific goals of the plan are to 1) improve the quality of habitat in Minnetonka parks and open spaces, striving for more resilient and sustainable ecological systems while providing multiple benefits to the community, and 2) engage the public to support ecological restoration and management of natural areas on public property and promote voluntary application of practices on private property. The updated plan will include:

- Specific goals and objectives related to natural resources enhancement and protection

- Assessment of habitat and current conditions of natural areas in Minnetonka parks and open spaces
 - Primary vegetative plant communities
 - Presence of rare or threatened plants or plant communities
 - Tree canopy assessment
 - Soils, topography, and water resource features
 - Climate and air quality
- Natural resource issues and stressors
 - Habitat fragmentation and human influence
 - Loss of native species diversity
 - Invasive plants and other pests
 - Climate change
- Natural resource protection strategies
 - Restoration plans and strategies for individual parks and other areas of significance, including prioritization for allocation of resources (staff time and funds)
 - Management of known stressors, including invasive pests and diseases, herbivory, and climate
 - Ordinances and policies to address natural resource protection on both public and private land
 - Public engagement, including education, outreach, volunteerism, technical support, and incentives
 - Periodic review and updates to achieve stated goals
- Appendices - GIS maps and data

Draft goals and strategies that will likely be included in the plan will be presented to the Park Board for comments and feedback, along with examples of data collection efforts. Staff will continue to solicit public comments and feedback on the draft plan over the next several months, including through the public engagement efforts of the Parks, Open Space, and Trail (POST) planning that is currently under way, before presenting to the City Council for final adoption.

Recommended Park Board Action: Hear presentation and provide feedback on Natural Resources Master Plan update.

Attachments: None

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 7C
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

Subject:	Natural Resources Division's Education and Outreach Plan
Park Board related goal:	To Protect Natural Resources and Open Spaces
Brief Description:	Review the Natural Resources Division's 2021 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 2021. 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 approximately 2,400 subscribers – an increase of at least 400 subscribers over the past year. The “open rate” of this publication is consistently high (more than 30 percent of recipients engaged). Social media is used to promote events and inform residents on seasonal themes. Highway billboards inform passing motorists about broad goals for natural resource protection.

In 2021, new interpretive signage will be developed to help park visitors identify and engage with natural resources in city parks (beginning with Lone Lake Park). Natural Resources will collaborate with Communications to develop a video series and/or podcast, and will offer multiple workshops in collaboration with external partners. Staff are also working on new youth outreach, including programs at Camp Jidana and with Hopkins Public School District.

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 2021
2. Natural Resource Outreach Examples



NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

Education and Outreach Plan, 2021

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

PUBLICATIONS

Print and electronic items cover themes such as community resilience, tree diversity, stormwater recapture and pollution prevention, water efficiency, habitat restoration, soil health, invasive species control and pollinator protection.

- **Minnetonka Memo**—monthly articles and event notices, with a 4-page thematic insert in April
- NR e-newsletter—mailed monthly to ~2,400 subscribers; occasional outreach via other city mailing lists (such as business, sustainability or recreation) as well
- Information sheets—one- to two-page fliers that provide detailed information on a topic
- Social media—promoting NR events, programs and seasonal themes



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, 901 tree units were sold to 499 households citywide.
- Emerald ash borer prevention—helping residents understand how they and the city can reduce the risk of this forest pest.
- MS4—education related to the state stormwater permit, including chlorides, pet waste, soil health, landscape chemical reduction and ecological pest management, soil health, yard waste, water recapture and reuse, etc.
- Mayors' Monarch Pledge—in January 2021, Minnetonka became the ninth city in North America to achieve Monarch Champion status, by completing all of the program's 24 action steps. Work continues!



New in 2021:

- Interpretive signage in city parks
- New video series and/or podcast to educate residents on Natural Resources principles
- More webinars and workshops, many in collaboration with partners
- Youth outreach through Recreation programs and Hopkins Public School District

GRANTS

- Metropolitan Council water efficiency grant—offering audits to home owners' associations and rebates to residential property owners for WaterSmart controllers and sprinkler heads.
- Exploring Hennepin County Green Partners grant for youth education.

PROGRAMS and EVENTS

Often in collaboration with other divisions or departments within the city

- Pollinator Field Day—native plant sales, crafts & activities, education
 - ◊ 2020 event was cancelled due to covid. In lieu of a field day in 2021:
 - Recreation and NR are collaborating to do a slow-roll bike ride celebrating the city's Monarch Champion status with Mayors' Monarch Pledge
 - NR will coordinate with Communications to promote various pollinator-themed messages and activities residents can do at home, school or work.
- State of the City—NR work covered by Leslie Yetka
- Buckthorn and garlic mustard workshops



New in 2021:

- Workshops on soil health, turf alternatives, planting for pollinators, monarchs, bats
- At Camp Jidana, forestry and/or water quality education for ~215 children (grades 2-5)
- Pet waste pick-up event with Nine Mile Creek Watershed District
- Slow-roll bike ride to celebrate the city's Monarch Champion designation

PARTNERSHIPS


The NR division also works with external partners to achieve shared goals.

Adopt-a-Drain in Minnetonka, 2020
Annual Report



- Adopt-a-Drain—Hamline University program invites people to adopt and clean storm drains
- Smart Salting training—chloride reduction strategies for contractors, businesses, HOAs, etc.; provided by watershed districts
- K-12 education—contractor provides stormwater education for six elementary schools (adapted as online programming in 2020)
- Workshops—conducted or promoted in collaboration with neighboring cities, watershed districts, GreenStep Cities, Metro Blooms, etc.



National Wildlife Federation  @NWF · 1/13/21

Minnetonka, MN is a 'Champion City'!

Located on the northern stretches of the Central Monarch Flyway, the city provides habitat for monarchs across city parks and facilities, community gardens, and schools to help ensure monarch butterflies survive. ow.ly/j9BM50D7tZg



**Support pollinators...
plant natives!**



CITY OF
MINNETONKA

minnetonkamn.gov





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?

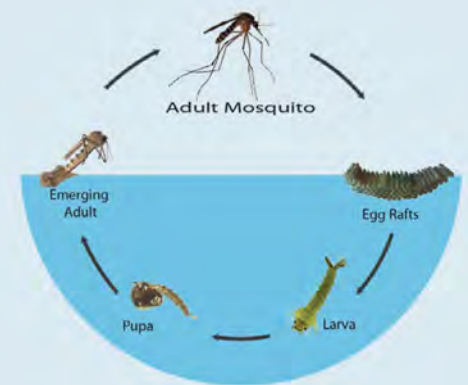
- Only female mosquitoes bite for blood.
- Male mosquitoes are pollinators. They specialize on plants in the aster, orchid and rose families.
- About 50 mosquito species occur in Minnesota, but only a few species carry diseases.

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.



Prevention

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.

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.



From: City of Minnetonka <CityofMinnetonka@public.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 8:32 AM
To: Christine Petersen
Subject: Feb. Natural Resources Newsletter: We all need clean water

City of Minnetonka

We All Need Clean Water

Earth's limited supply of fresh water moves continuously between the atmosphere and land. This cycle fuels living things, influences weather patterns and ensures a reserve of water is available on and below Earth's surface.

Human activities can easily pollute the water – but we can also take action to protect water quality.

Going with the flow

In natural or landscaped areas, up to 90 percent of rainfall and snowmelt are captured on leaves or filtered into the ground. By contrast, in urban and suburban areas, precipitation flows over rooftops and sidewalks, parking lots and roadways. This runoff is diverted to storm sewers, which lead to the nearest wetland, stream or lake. As a result, less than 15 percent of precipitation may be absorbed into the landscape.

Runoff water picks up anything in its path: road salt, pet waste, leaves and grass, motor oil, sediment, fertilizer, heavy metals and much more. Experts describe these substances as "illicit discharges" because they pollute the water.



Let it sink in

With a few changes, your property can capture more runoff and create fewer illicit discharges. Here are some suggestions:

- **Use road salt sparingly** – Winter safety is important, but excess road salt permanently pollutes fresh water. Shovel first to manage snow and ice, then apply deicers sparingly. On dry days, sweep up unmelted crystals for reuse.
- **Manage yard waste** – Yard waste decomposes in water, adding nutrients that cause algae to grow. You can bag up leaves and grass clipping for organics recycling, rake them onto planted areas, or use a mulching mower to spread them over the lawn.
- **Clean up after pets** – Nutrients in pet waste feed algae in the water. Pet waste also carries bacteria, viruses and parasites that sicken people, pets and wildlife. Always pick up after your pet, in the yard and public spaces.
- **Add native plantings** – Replace some turf in your yard with native perennials, grasses, shrubs or trees. These plants move water into the soil and may filter pollutants in runoff.
- **Prevent erosion** – Loose sediment blocks light in the water and alters the delicate chemical balance that supports aquatic plants and animals. Prevent erosion by planting over bare spots in your yard, especially on slopes.



Upcoming Natural Resources Events

Annual Tree Sale

Minnetonka's annual tree sale begins Monday, Feb. 8. at 8 a.m.

- [Check out the online preview](#) to explore available items and set up an account.

Grant Opportunities

Are you planning a project to reduce stormwater runoff? Your watershed district might be able to help with a cost-share grant! Visit these resources for more information:

- [Find your watershed.](#)
- **Nine Mile Creek Watershed District** – [Attend a virtual grant information session on Feb. 11.](#)
- [Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District grant details](#)

Raingarden photo courtesy of Nine Mile Creek Watershed District.



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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





Protecting our trees from emerald ash borer

Not too long ago, ash trees were among the most common trees growing east of the Rocky Mountains. They sprouted up in moist soil alongside streams, lakes and wetlands, and thrived in the patchy shade of low-lying woodlands. Many ash trees were planted in cities and towns, where their arching limbs cast shade over streets and buildings.



In just 20 years, emerald ash borer (EAB) has changed the landscape of many American cities and wooded areas - and it's rapidly infesting ash trees in Minnetonka.

EAB is native to Asia and probably reached the United States inside pallets and crates constructed from ash wood. This tiny beetle - barely a quarter of an inch long, lance-shaped and iridescent green - is named for its favorite food source: ash trees. The beetles found a huge food source in our native ash species and spread wherever people transported ash firewood.



Why ash trees matter

Before EAB, Minnesota was home to one billion ash trees - more than any other state. At least 100,000 of those ashes grew right here in Minnetonka.

There's a reason why ash is so common - it's an adaptable tree that offers a lot of environmental and habitat benefits:

- The dense, leafy ash canopy provides shelter, nest space and food for a wide range of animals - from native insects and pollinators to songbirds, raptors, game birds and mammals.
- Ash root systems hold soil in place, controlling erosion.
- And wherever they stand, ash trees steadily pull in water. This reduces the volume of polluted stormwater flowing into local waterways, and minimizes the risk of flooding.

A single mature ash tree provides these natural services and more, reducing your heating and cooling costs and increasing property values.



Battling the bug

To save valuable ash trees, when possible, and slow the spread of EAB, city staff have been preparing for its arrival in Minnetonka since 2010. Their work includes:

- Injecting large, healthy ash trees on city property to protect from EAB infestation
- Reducing the number of ashes on city property and in the roadside right-of-way (at no cost to property owners)
- Marking EAB-infested trees on private property for winter removal
- Replacing ash in parks and public spaces with diverse species
- Holding an annual tree sale for Minnetonka property owners.



What You Can Do

In Minnetonka, most ash trees are in private wooded areas and yards. Ninety-nine percent of those trees will die of EAB infestation unless injected. Dead ash are brittle and pose a serious risk to homes, yards and roads.

One of the most important steps in protecting our trees is to first recognize an EAB infestation. Emerald ash borers are tiny insects that spend most of their time high in the leafy tops of ash trees or beneath ash bark - so you're unlikely to see them up close. Instead, look for these common signs and symptoms of EAB infestation:



Leaves and branches die back, especially in the top of the tree's crown.



Pale patches on the bark are caused by woodpeckers hunting for EAB larvae.



Stressed trees may grow water sprouts near the ground.

Contact the city's forestry team at forestry@minnetonkamn.gov if you notice a declining ash tree on your property or anywhere in the city.

Then, work with a certified arborist to make an EAB management plan including all of these steps:

1. **INJECT** healthy ash trees 10 inches in diameter or larger.
 - Ash injection is quite affordable.
 - Contact Rainbow Treecare at 952-922-3810 to request Minnetonka's bulk discount, or ask your preferred tree contractor about pricing and services.
2. **REMOVE** unhealthy or small ash trees. Contact city staff before removing trees near wetlands, lakes and creeks, where construction is planned, or in a conservation easement.
3. **REPLANT** with diverse tree species.
4. **PREVENT** the spread of EAB!
 - Prune or remove ash trees only in winter, when EAB beetles are dormant.
 - Properly dispose of ash debris.
 - Don't move ash wood outside the metro region, and buy certified firewood when you travel.



Diversity is key

A diverse community forest - with many kinds of trees of different ages - is much more resistant to pests, diseases and climate change. Consider replacing ash with other species that thrive in similar conditions or offer similar benefits. Good alternatives include:

- Maple: red, silver or sugar
- Black walnut
- Hickory: shagbark or bitternut
- Oak: bur, white, swamp white, red or pin
- Black cherry
- Hackberry
- American basswood
- Kentucky coffeetree
- Honeylocust
- River birch
- Ohio buckeye
- Ironwood
- Boxelder

In the future, EAB-resistant varieties of ash may become available. New strains of native species are being bred to select genes that allow these beneficial trees to fight off EAB infestation.

For more information on emerald ash borer and what you can do to protect our community forest, visit minnetonkamn.gov/EAB.



**Minnetonka Park Board Item 9
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

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

Summer Program Registration Update

The summer recreation brochure was mailed to all Hopkins and Minnetonka residents the first week of March. On Tuesday March 16, the first day of registration for summer programs, recreation staff processed 3,400 program registrations, setting a record for opening day sign-ups. Popular programs include Jidana Day Camp, Park Adventures playground program, senior yoga and tennis, and swimming and skating lessons.

Outdoor Rinks Reports

The 2020/21 warming house season was met with some COVID challenges. State guidelines initially prevented warming houses from opening and later limited capacity to 2-3 people depending on the square footage of the building. As such, Hopkins and Minnetonka decided to forego opening the warming houses, but maintained the ice throughout the season. Public Works placed additional benches and picnic tables near the rinks to provide patrons a place to lace up their skates. Warming House Attendants were replaced with the hiring of Park Ambassadors. Park Ambassadors patrolled ice rinks during high use times, turned on rink lights and attended to any maintenance issues during their shift. A warmer December resulted in rinks not opening until December 31 in Hopkins and January 4 in Minnetonka. Park Ambassadors patrolled rinks 29 of 31 days in January and 15 of 21 days open in February. Rinks were closed for a period of time in February due to the prolonged cold snap. The rinks were also maintained a week longer than planned in February due to the cold weather and good ice conditions (rinks typically close on Presidents Day – Monday, February 14).

Winter Farmers Market Recap

In order to adjust to COVID restrictions, the winter farmers markets were held in the Community Center's parking lot this season, one Saturday per month, beginning in November. Customers experienced a drive-through market by staying in their cars, driving through the market and stopping at each booth they wanted to visit.

Staff recruited vendors with a focus on winter foods, with 11-15 vendors at each market. Most vendors offered a pre-order option through our market web store or their own websites. Vendors included many summer market favorites, and several new vendors. They offered a variety of meats, fish, eggs, preserved & fresh produce, baked goods, salsa, hot sauce, chocolate, kombucha, spices, elderberry products, hot cocoa bombs, fresh squeezed juices, hot Thai food and empanadas, natural self-care, & handcrafted gifts.

The markets were well attended, with approximately 100 vehicles at each market, and 1-4 people in each vehicle. The final February market was rescheduled due to cold weather, and the makeup date was held on Saturday, March 13th. Vehicle count per market: Nov - 93, Dec - 147, Jan - 124, Mar - 122. Total vehicles for the season (cars and bicycles) - 486.

Off-leash dog update

At the March 7, 2021 park board meeting, some concern was noted regarding dogs being off-leash in our parks. Since then staff has reached out to other departments regarding this issue:

- Police – confirmed that Community Services Officers are patrolling parks, including Purgatory
- Public Works – will add additional signage in problem areas
- Communications – will create an article for the May Minnetonka Memo and have updated information on the website

Ridgedale Area Park Improvements Update

Bids were opened for the Ridgedale Area Park Improvements project on March 1, 2021. Although over 20 contractors requested copies of the bid packages, only two bids were received, and both were significantly over budget. Upon reaching out to plan holders, staff determined that project complexity and scope, high material costs associated with the pandemic, and online-bidding were factors in the results. City staff recommended, and city council voted, to reject the bids at their March 22 meeting. Staff are evaluating moving the project forward using a construction manager-contractor process. In conjunction with city staff and the architect, a construction manager can assist in reviewing the project plans for potential cost saving methods and oversee the work of the contractor(s) throughout construction, providing additional resources for city staff. Staff feels that by utilizing a construction manager, simplifying the bidding process, revising the scope of the project, material selection, and schedule, it will allow a reduction in project costs to the city. Staff aim to rebid the project for construction later this summer, with the completion date adjusted to summer 2022.

Excelsior Boulevard Trail – Phase 2

At the March 8 regular city council meeting, council awarded a contract to construct phase two of the excelsior boulevard trail. Phase two is along the south side of Excelsior Boulevard between Kinsel Road and the I-494 bridge. The low bid for the project was around \$250,000 under estimated costs. Construction for the trail will begin in May and be complete by the fall of 2021. To prepare for construction, Xcel Energy is burying power lines and removing existing poles along the corridor. Excelsior Boulevard and access to all properties will remain open, but lane shifts and delays are possible. People can check the project website or sign up to receive email or text updates.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 10
Meeting of April 7, 2021**

Upcoming 6-Month Meeting Schedule				
Day	Date	Meeting Type	Agenda Business Items	Special Notes
Wed	5/12/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting 	Tour to be rescheduled
Wed	6/2/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Plan 	
Wed	7/7/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No meeting 	Holiday
Wed	8/4/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Wed	9/1/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	
Wed	10/6/21	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

Other meetings and activities to note:

Day	Date	Description	Special Notes
Sat	4/3/2021	Drive Thru Egg Hunt	Civic Center Campus
Wed	6/23/2021	Park Board Tour	Tentative
Sat	6/26/2021	Summer Festival	

Items to be scheduled: