

City of Grand Rapids
IRA Civic Center / Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Regular Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, January 8th – 5:30 p.m.
IRA Civic Center

- I. Call to order
- II. Financial reports (only if end of quarter)
- III. Approve October Minutes
- IV. Setting of regular agenda
- V. Old business
 - a. Review final draft of Parks & Trails Plan
- VI. New business
 - a. Discuss locker room project
- VII. Staff Reports
 - a. Programs and events update
- VIII. Correspondence
- IX. Visitors
- X. Adjournment

Grand Rapids Parks and Trails Master Plan Update Comments on Draft Plan with Possible Responses

1. Snowmobile trails: reference to winter trail policy pages 21-22: Barriers created through snowplowing – removing snow from crossings/routes, and, creation of mounds – need to work to keep trails as usable as possible later in the season

Response: Add to the winter trail policy language along the lines of “Designated through-town snowmobile trails will be maintained with adequate snow cover and trail profile to ensure safe travel at a desired level of quality.”

2. Motorized recreational vehicle routes:

- Snowmobiles: Routes connecting to regional trails to east and west are needed
- Snowmobiles: need to make through town routes permanent so they are not lost through new development, etc.; better define the system
- ATV trails: need better access to regional trails; need regional trail access to amenities/services in the city; need access south of city past Pokegama Lake

Response: Add an action under trails to prepare a comprehensive motorized recreational vehicle trail plan intended to provide adequate permanent connections to regional trail systems from and into Grand Rapids, and, access by users to key service amenities within the city.

3. Trail signage: need signs at entry points into town on regional trails such as Taconite / Mesabi Trail – welcoming, services available and providing basic directional guidance

Response: Add to bullet list at bottom of page 18: “Provide signs at regional trail entry points into the city that welcome users to Grand Rapids, generally describe amenities available within the city, and directions regarding any through town trail and access to amenities.”

4. Riverfront Park: include as new park; add improvements/projects (e.g., amphitheater, plaza, sculpture park)

Response:

- a. Include Riverfront Park in list of existing community parks.
- b. Pages 12-13: Identify improvements and projects to complete RiverFront Park (e.g., amphitheater, plaza, etc.). Delete splash pad reference in Blandin Beach and add it to the RiverFront Plaza component.
- c. Include image of portion of RiverFront Park in document and include reference to the 2009 update document.

5. Water feature (e.g., splash pad, reflecting pool) at a site south of river;

Response: See response 4b.

6. RiverPlace play structure replacement – desired; provides multi-generational exercise and recreation in one place; also acts as regional draw; possible locations – community park, new Isleview Park, grounds of Grand Itasca Hospital

Response: Add text box on page 13: RiverPlace Replacement – planning process to identify exact need, type of structure and associated amenities, evaluation of possible locations, identification of partners to assist with development and maintenance.

7. Dog park: concept is acceptable; include community garden on the site; water supply for dogs could also be used by gardeners who currently have to haul water to site; new industrial park cross country ski trail is in works – include this in site plan and consider summer use as walking trail

Response: Expand title to include community garden; add community garden and loop trail to park amenity list; note that water would be made available for dogs and gardens; suggest that local garden club be used to organize/manage community gardens; include action to seek trail sponsorship including maintenance by companies in industrial park.

8. Pervious surface parking: good general idea for all parks; especially appropriate for dog/community garden park

Response: Include new policy on pages 21-22 to establish this as desired standard for all parks where paved parking would be considered.

9. PUC Park: consider temporary designation

Response: Add this area as a temporary park designated for open play.

10. Natural areas – retain / expand amount of undeveloped dedicated parkland; ecological value; unstructured play and exploration areas; reference goals and policies of comp plan

Response: Note that Murhunt and Hillside parks are listed in plan as undeveloped natural areas. Add to pages 21-22 specific language noting that park design and maintenance will adhere to pertinent goals and objectives of the Natural Infrastructure section of the city's comprehensive plan specifically to (goal 2) integrate the natural infrastructure within the urban core of the city by creating or protecting buffers along the riverfront and lakes areas; supporting and enhancing the urban forest; defining the natural system infrastructure within future development and re-development areas; supporting re-forestation and other native ecosystem restoration in the context of climate change.

11. ATV park: build one on city-owned land south of the airport

Response: Consider city supporting exploration of this concept within Itasca County.

12. No campground policy – general approval of this; good facility at fairgrounds; also at Corps of Engineer's Pokegama Dam site; private providers in area meet need

Response: No change to plan needed.

13. Hale Lake Landing is a gem – lots of use as small boat landing and informal park.

Response: No change to plan needed.

14. Consider a short trail connection (bike/walk) from Soldiers Lane and Co Rd A to the Mesabi Trail so that a nice walking loop can be made back to the Fairgrounds and around of a couple miles with little effort.

Response: This recommendation is in the plan. Language on page 18 can be revised to better indicate that only a short connection is required to make this loop.

15. New Park Names

Add footnote that with the exception of Riverfront Park all new park names used in report are temporary placeholders; actual names to be determined when parks are formally designated and developed.

Implementation Program

Works in Progress

- a) Update McGowan Park play equipment.

Priority New Actions

- a) Accept property for Remer/Deschepper Park, prepare site design, and develop as per plan.
- b) Purchase property for Isleview Park and then proceed with site design and development.
- c) Design and develop dog park / community garden facility.
- d) Continue development of Riverfront Park.
- e) Prepare new site plan for Blandin Beach and develop as per plan.