

# Information Item

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting Date: April 2, 2026

## Topic

Trail System Coordination Agency-Council Workgroup Update

<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	All
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	Minn. Stats. §§ 473.145 and 473.147
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	Zoey Mauck, Senior Planner (651-602-1398)
<b>Division/Department:</b>	Community Development / Regional Parks and Trails

### Proposed Action

Information item; no action is proposed at this time.

### Background

The Trail System Coordination Workgroup was formed during the development of the Imagine 2050 Regional Development Guide, as Council staff considered updates to the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan and sought to create tangible connections between regional goals and parks and trails policies. The workgroup is made up of Regional Park Implementing Agency staff, DNR staff, MnDOT staff, and MPOSC Commissioner Anthony Taylor, and is facilitated by Met Council staff. Although the workgroup was “sunset” as Imagine 2050 was finalized and Council staff responded to public comments in late 2024, the workgroup was reconvened as part of the implementation of the regional development guide in 2025.

During the April 2, 2026 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting, Council staff will share an update on the Trail System Coordination Workgroup, focusing specifically on the group’s work on an E-Bike Regulation Best Practices guide, a planned effort to establish a name and brand for the regional trail system, and a peek into future topics for exploration at this group’s meetings. Council staff seek the Commission’s feedback and advice on 2026 workgroup priorities. The following information is intended to provide the Commission with background on the workgroup and its basis in the regional development guide and the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan.

Imagine 2050 includes five regional goals. While all five regional goals connect to the Regional Parks and Trails System and the policies that govern it, three of the regional goals are particularly well-aligned with the system’s regional trail system: “Our region is equitable and inclusive”, “Our communities are healthy and safe”, and “Our region is dynamic and resilient”.

Council staff crafted five objectives for the Regional Parks and Trails System during the development of Imagine 2050. These objectives connect the broader, cross-cutting regional goals to the Regional Parks and Trails System. Three of these objectives are “connect people with nature, community, and cultural landscapes to better support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being”, “reinvest in existing regional parks and trails to maintain and enhance visitor experiences”, and “meet the growing demand for regional parks and trails through strategic and timely land acquisition and development”.

The Trail System Coordination workgroup is intended to help the region achieve these regional

goals and meet these objectives by implementing policies and actions in the Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan. The Planning and Recreation, Facilities, and Programming policies and their associated actions are the mechanisms for this implementation.

The Planning policy, Action 2 states “The Met Council will promote enhanced multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit system.” This policy encompasses many actions, including “using GIS data to provide the public with information about trail connections”, “exploring additional funding opportunities to help with regional connectivity”, and “collaborating with agencies on developing minimum requirements for signage that will make the regional parks and trails system more accessible to all transportation modes. These are topics of active discussion in the Trail System Coordination Workgroup.

The Recreation, Facilities, and Programming policy, Action 5: Trail system coordination, states: “Bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be coordinated between the Regional Parks and Trails System and the transportation system.” The Trail System Coordination workgroup is a direct outcome of this action. This action will continue to evolve in the next update to the Policy Plan as a broader section of the plan.

The 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan includes multiple work plan items that relate to the Trail System Coordination Workgroup, including:

11. Continue to convene a trail coordination workgroup, supporting the development of a more coordinated, integrated, and connected regional trails system and Regional Bicycle Transportation Network.
12. Create regional guidelines for e-bike use on regional trails
13. Explore systemwide wayfinding and signage minimum requirements.

Council staff look forward to discussing Trail System Coordination-related topics with the Commission at its meeting on April 2, 2026.

