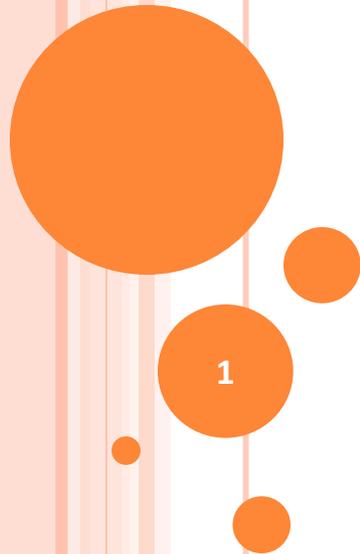


CHESTER PARK

MINI-MASTER PLAN

UPDATE



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Background

- Chester Park was one of the first Mini-Master Plans
- Started process in April 2012; delays occurred as a result of the 2012 Flood
- Current uses include a downhill ski program, summer day camps for youth, speed skating, soccer, cross country skiing, Music in the Park, Fall Fest, picnics, walking, and use of the playground
- All elements of the current draft Plan were requests from individuals or user groups; not all requests made it into final draft
- Two issues remain unresolved in Plan
- Goal this evening is to discuss issues, revise Plan and bring back to Parks Commission for approval on November 5th

Guiding Principles

This Mini-Master Plan integrates public feedback into its recommendations and works to propose enhancements that are compatible with the following guiding principles:

- Respect the Park
- Honor the History
- Keep the Character
- Conserve the Environment
- Consider all Ages and Abilities
- Upgrade Facilities
- Environmental and Historic Stewardship
- Improve Access and Connectivity
- Identify and Create Greatest Value at Acceptable Costs

Major Public Concerns

- Avoid overdevelopment
- Reduce user conflict
- Focus on enhancing or expanding what already exists versus adding new

Net Additions to Park Included in Draft Plan

- New walking trail (to reduce pedestrian/skier conflict) (*Net gain of .83 mile*)
- New sections of XC ski trail (*Net gain of .53 mile*)
- Duluth Traverse Trail around perimeter of Park
- Snowmaking/Lighting portion of XC ski trail
- Picnic Pavilion
- Forest Management Plan (5:1 tree planting)
- Other elements in Plan are improvements or modifications to what already exists

Two Unresolved Issues

- User conflict between pedestrians and XC skiers
- Addition of lighting and snowmaking

Unresolved Issue #1

User conflict between pedestrians and XC skiers at Chester

- New Pedestrian-Only Trail Proposed in Plan
- Preference for Shared-Use Trail Vocalized
- Assessing options (citizen and user-group input; trail assessment, etc.)

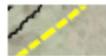
Goal: Reconcile Pedestrian/Skier Needs

Options to Resolve:

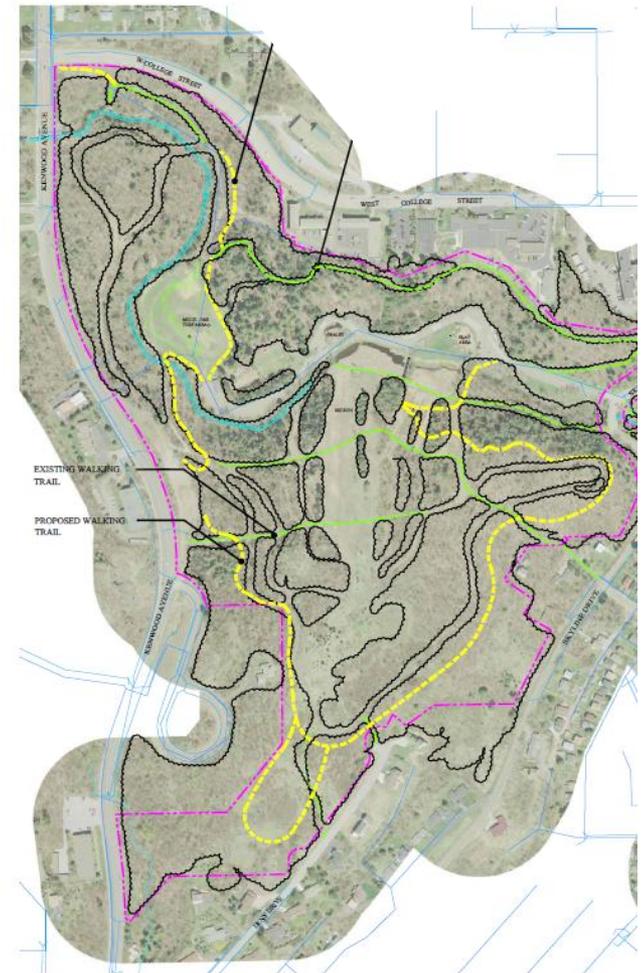
- a) No changes to trails in Park
- b) Approve new pedestrian trail as in current Plan
- c) Multi-faceted approach to improving for shared use



Existing Pedestrian Trails



Proposed Pedestrian Trails



Staff Recommendation: Option C¹

*Multi-faceted approach to improve trail for shared use*²

STAGE ONE

On a trial basis, pedestrians and skiers would share a trail that is:

- Widened to its original width (slightly more where safety concerns dictate);
- Re-designated and re-signed for shared use;
- Groomed for skating (not classic);
- Routed so that pedestrians and skiers would proceed in opposite directions to increase their visibility to each other.

STAGE TWO

If pedestrians and skiers are unable to coexist in Stage One, the city will select among Stage Two options that include:

- Building a separate parallel pedestrian trail as in the current plan;
- Limiting Nordic skiing in all or major parts of Chester.

¹ *Supported by XC Ski Club (action at 10.6.14 meeting)*

² *Shared use means the trail can be used by both pedestrians and XC skiers; no bikes*

Unresolved Issue #2

Addition of lighting & snowmaking on section of XC ski trail at Chester

Goal: Address need for XC ski facility with lighting and snowmaking in Duluth

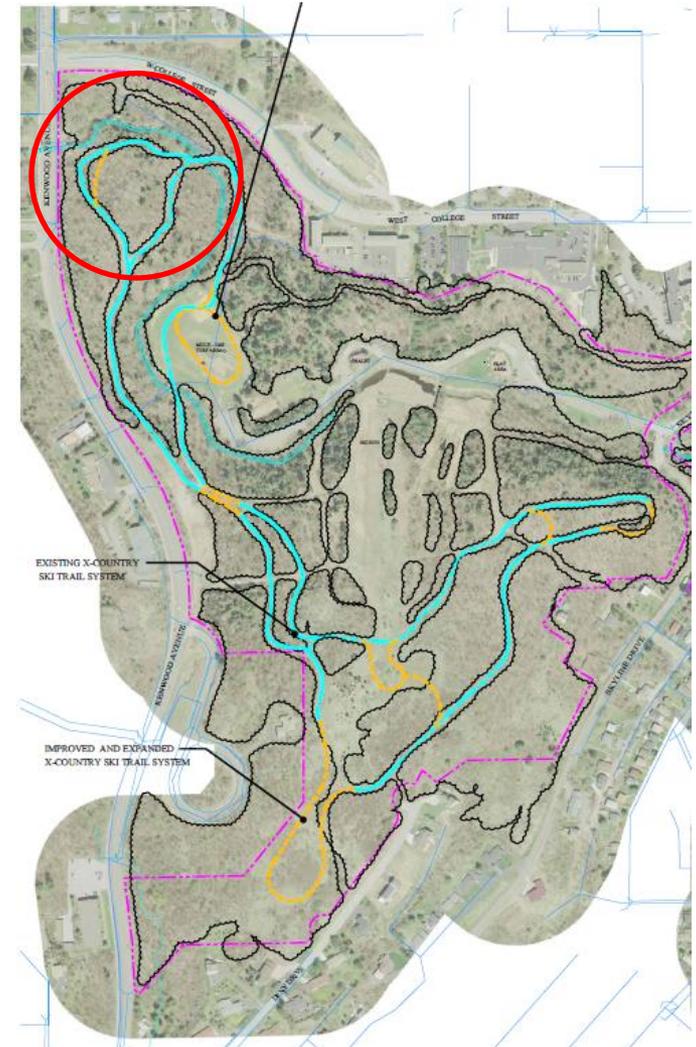
Considerations:

Chester Park “Pros”

- Centrally located
- Staging area
- Pre-existing parking area

Chester Park “Cons”

- Predominance of advanced terrain
- Viewed by some as “overdevelopment”



Staff Recommendation:

Retain lighting and snowmaking in Phase Six of the Chester Mini-Master Plan, but with the following considerations:

City will seek to identify a different area for locating a XC skiing facility with lighting and snowmaking.

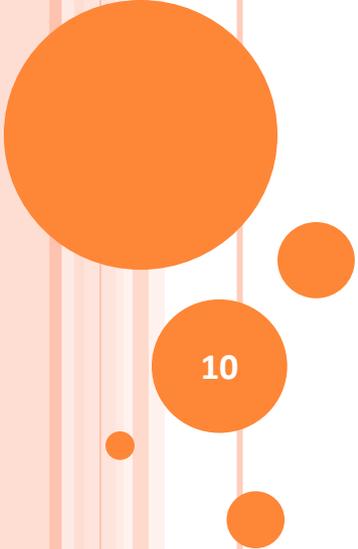
Should these efforts fail, lighting and snowmaking at Chester will be open for consideration.

Implementation of lighting and snowmaking contingent upon approval of Parks Commission.

Next Steps Anticipated Timeline:

- Update & Discussion: Parks Commission (October 8, 2014)
- Make additional adjustments, if needed
- Present to Parks Commission for Approval (November 5, 2014)
- Present to City Council (November 10, 2014)

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION



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