Parks and Natural Resources Commission Meeting
Agenda
February 8, 2022 | 7 p.m.
Ash North/South Conference Rooms
City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road

Please note: Due to COVID-19, the February 8, Parks and Natural Resources Commission Meeting is taking place virtually and at City Hall in the Ash North and South Conference Rooms. Members of the public may attend the meeting, but will be required to comply with social distancing parameters as determined by the City. Members of the public may also join the meeting using a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device.

Public comments will be accepted during the meeting by using the link to the virtual meeting to join the meeting and then submit your questions via the online Q&A feature within the meeting.

* Please note that all agenda times are estimates.

7:00* 1. Call to Order
7:05 2. Open Forum
7:10 3. Approval of the Minutes – January 18, 2022
7:45 5. Final Concept Approval Bridlewood Park – Memorandum No. 22 - 04
8:00 6. Final Concept Approval Arbor Ridge Park – Memorandum No. 22 - 05
8:15 7. Final Concept Approval Hasenbank Woods and Fish Lake Vegetation Management and Restoration Project - Memorandum No. 22 - 06
8:30 8. Community Gardens – Memorandum No. 22 - 07
8:40 9. Monthly Update – Memorandum No. 22 - 08
8:45 10. Council Report – Councilmember Santini
8:50 11. Announcements/Miscellaneous
9:00 12. Adjourn

If a Commission member cannot attend this meeting, please contact Belinda Reed at 651-714-3584 by Monday, Feb. 7, 2022. Thank you.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities. The City is committed to full implementation of the Act to our services, programs, and activities. Information regarding the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the City Administrator’s office at 651-714-3500. Auxiliary aids for disabled persons are available upon request at least 72 hours in advance of an event. Please call the ADA Coordinator, at 651-714-3500 (TDD 651-714-3568) to make arrangements.
Minutes of
Parks and Natural Resources Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2022

Commission Members Present: Arin Kurttila (Co-chair), Deborah Musser, Bruce Montgomery, Wallace Wadd, Brandon Mersch, Emerson Siefken

Commission Member(s) Absent: Chair Greta Bjerkness and Commissioner Timothy Brewington, II

Commission Member Virtual: Commissioner Rachel Nelson

Councilmember Virtual: Councilmember Jennifer Santini

Staff Present: Josh Kinney, Parks Planner

Staff Virtual: Michelle Okada, Parks and Recreation Director
Jodi Sauro, Parks and Recreation Coordinator
Reed Smidt, Recreation Manager

Call to Order

Co-chair Kurttila called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
(Due to technical difficulties, meeting beginning and ending time may not be accurately reflected.)

Open Forum

Special Order of Business

A. Councilmember Santini administered the Oath of Office to new Commission members: Wallace Wadd and Student Commissioners Brandon Mersch and Emerson Siefken.

Action Items

A. December 7, 2021, Parks and Natural Resources Commission Meeting Minutes

Co-chair Kurttila asked for the approval of the Minutes of the December 7, 2021, meeting of the Parks and Natural Resources Commission.

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Montgomery, seconded by Commissioner Musser, to approve the December 7, 2021, Parks and Natural Resources Commission Minutes.

Vote: In favor All in-person
Against None
Absent Chair Bjerkness and Commissioner Brewington
B. Review Bridlewood Park Concept Plan - Memorandum No. 22 - 01

Mr. Kinney referred to the 2022 Park Project Locations Map, which had been provided to the Commissioners, noting that the map can be a helpful reference for locating projects which will be reviewed by the Commission throughout the coming year. The Commissioners were encouraged to visit the various park sites that will be reviewed.

Mr. Kinney reviewed the site plan with preliminary scope of work considerations, including the playground concept for the yet to be named park in the Bridlewood Development. The park plan includes seating, trees for screening and shade, picnicking, open play field and the playground, which was described as a typical playground with swinging, sliding, climbing and also some sensory areas.

Mr. Kinney described the overall park area as a standard residential lot size set aside as park dedication when the development was being planned. The park is .24 acres, and described as more passive and a quiet spot to stop at while on a walk, noting there are more active amenities located in a park area nearby. The low hedge, as shown on the plan, creates a natural fence along the park edge, while providing view-sheds into the park. The roadway is raised up as it slopes down toward the park area. The trail connections are away from the roadway and roundabout and lead to the main park component; the playground. The low hedge design resulted from feedback, which was provided by the public at the neighborhood meeting along with PNRC input. Mr. Kinney also noted that the trees placed close to the playground create a shaded area for respite from the environment.

Mr. Kinney noted that positive feedback was received at the in-person neighborhood meeting and staff received one email comment concerning noise abatement.

Mr. Kinney asked the PNRC for their feedback on the current concept plan and noted the next step in the design process, will be to incorporate their comments and bring the plan back for final approval on February 8, with bidding and construction to follow.

It was also noted that the park site/location has been denoted on the development plans so that neighbors, that purchased lots adjacent to the park, are familiar as to where the play structure would be placed.

The Commission discussion included concerns with the adjacent roadway and roundabout. A discussion took place about the playground being tucked into the space close to the interior property boundaries and other parks adjacent to roadways. It was noted that staff will review safety standards with the city traffic engineers before the final concept plan is scheduled to return for review and approval at the February 8, PNRC meeting.

C. Review Arbor Ridge Development Park Concept Plan – Memorandum No. 22-02

Mr. Kinney reviewed the site plan with preliminary scope of work considerations, including the playground concept, for the yet to be named park in the Arbor Ridge Development.

The park is similar to the park that is being planned in the Bridlewood Development, just in a different location: Arbor Ridge Development. The park elements include seating, trees for screening and shade, picnicking, open play field and playground. The woodland was noted as a special piece of property which was part of the park dedication, with the trails connecting through the park and throughout the neighborhood. Mr. Kinney referred to the scale and magnitude of the existing oak trees noting that the diseased ash trees had been removed and that the floor of the
forest consists of healthy maple and basswood with an overstory that can’t be matched. It was noted that the development will include 127 residential units with 23 units currently built.

The Commissioners were pleased that the woodland was incorporated into the park plan.

It was noted that Hargis Parkway is situated to the south of the play structure and park and is very similar to the Bridlewood Development Park location which is close to a roadway.

**Council Report – Councilmember Santini**

Councilmember Santini noted Council workshop Wednesday, Jan. 19, will include a look at the city’s environment stewardship work that has been done over the past 20 years. At the Council retreat in June, 2022, the Council will consider council initiatives for the next two years.

**Announcements/Miscellaneous**

None.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

*(Due to technical difficulties, meeting beginning and ending time may not be accurately reflected.)*

Respectfully submitted,

__________________________
Belinda Reed
Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Parks and Natural Resources Commission on February 8, 2022.
Parks and Natural Resources Commission Members:

Subject: Environmental Stewardship, 2001-2021

The Environmental Stewardship, 2001 – 2021 Report tells the story of Woodbury’s commitment to Environmental Stewardship over the past 20 years. The story contains four chapters:

1. Natural Environment
2. Sustainability
3. Drinking Water
4. Surface Water

This report also briefly addresses the current environmental context and next steps in maintaining the status quo.

In 2021, City Council requested this information as a precursor to their June 2022 Strategic Planning Retreat, in which Councilmembers will reflect on emerging issues in the community and identify one, two, or three highest priorities.

Staff presents this history to the Parks and Natural Resources Commission to create a shared understanding of past progress, provoke curiosity and insight for future steps, and to provide information to support the Commission if future tasks are delegated on this topic by City Council.

As Commissioners digest the attached report and timeline, consider the following questions:

1. What items or narrative elements need clarification?
2. What jumps out to you from the historical narrative or present context?
3. What further information would you like to consider on this topic in the future?

Respectfully submitted,

/ s /

Sarah Alig
Senior Management Analyst

Attachment(s):

Environmental Stewardship Report
Environmental Stewardship Timeline
Hello
My name is Megan.
Table of Contents

I. Introduction to Timeline

II. Chapter 1: Natural Environment

III. Chapter 2: Sustainability

IV. Chapter 3: Potable Water

V. Chapter 4: Surface Water

VI. Next Chapters

VII. Environmental Stewardship Context

VIII. Attachments
    a. Environmental Stewardship 2001 – 2021 Timeline
    b. GreenStep Cities Report Card
    c. Stormwater BMP Maintenance Plan Infographic
In 2021, Woodbury city staff convened to evaluate the past twenty years of environmental stewardship. Together, we created an inventory of key accomplishments, events, projects, activities, programs, and policies, and placed these on a timeline along with significant milestones elsewhere in Minnesota and the United States. The work fell into seven categories, plus a miscellaneous catch-all:

Within these categories, staff highlighted regional, business, and community partnerships; awards; and grants. Influential events that prompted significant city response are indicated with diamond and circle tags. [See Environmental Stewardship Timeline attachment for details.]

Based on this annotated timeline, staff identified key turning points and defined the chapters between them.

Chapter 1: Open Space and Natural Resources, 1997 - 2006

During the early years of active development, the City completed a Natural Resources Inventory Report that provided a detailed description of the remaining major natural areas within Woodbury. This report is still used by the City in identifying higher quality natural areas for preservation when development occurs.

In 1997, the City established “Natural Environment” as one of seven factors critical to the success of Woodbury.

Woodbury is firmly committed to the preservation, responsible use and enhancement of its environment, and recognizes that environmental health, economics and human well-being are interconnected and interdependent. To preserve our environment for future generations, the City will foster environmental stewardship through focused conservation, social responsibility and best management practices. As our local environment faces new challenges, the City will make appropriate investments in preservation, adaptation, mitigation and maintenance.

2040 Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principle:
Practice Environmental Stewardship

Critical Success Factor: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
The water quality of city lakes is maintained or improved. Contaminants are prevented from reaching the ground water. Natural areas are preserved in order to retain important plant communities, especially wetlands and tree stands, and to provide wildlife habitat. The city sets an example, not only through its policies and regulatory practices, but also through the conduct of its own operations.
In this early chapter, the primary focus of the city’s efforts toward environmental stewardship were to acquire open space, preserve it for community access, and be good stewards of the land.

The success of the $9 million Open Space Referendum in 2005 confirmed the popular support for this approach, and resulted in $6 million worth of open space acquisition and athletic field expansion at then-Bielenberg Sports Center.

During this chapter, flooding and detection of PFAS (formerly known as PFCs) in the east metro prompted alarm and led, in part, to the next chapter in the City’s Environmental Stewardship story. In October 2005, Woodbury received several inches of rain in a short period of time – an event equivalent to what we now consider an Atlas 14 100-year storm. While the city’s storm drainage system performed well, certain areas did flood, damaging some homes and infrastructure. Following the 2005 flood and sinkhole, flood risk reduction and stormwater management became a consistent and significant public policy focus for a span of years. Much of the city’s open space includes land dedicated to stormwater management, with the additional benefit of wildlife habitat.

Chapter 2: Sustainability, 2006 - 2017

In 2006, Council appointed a temporary Energy Conservation Task Force, which later became the three-year Sustainability Committee, a sub-committee of the Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC). This group recommended replacing the “Natural Environment” Critical Success Factor with “Sustainability,” thus expanding the city’s focus to include a broader variety of environmental goals. Over this period, largely due to the leadership of these advisory committees, as well as our emergence from a budget-friendly planning focus during the recession, the list of accomplishments varied across many focus areas, in particular public education, green building, and energy.

Based on the advisory group’s recommendations, the city also hired a part-time sustainability specialist, adopted a formal resolution endorsing the U.S. Council of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and became a GreenStep City, with an annual progress report delivered to Council. The group researched topics and recommended best practices for Woodbury. They shared information with others at booths at the Community Expo and Woodbury Days, hosted

GREENSTEP CITIES

In 2010, the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC), State of Minnesota, and several partner organizations launched the Greenstep Cities Challenge.

This program offers a menu of 29 best practices, with approximately 175 associated action steps, focused on cost savings and energy use reduction.

The best practices address five topics:
- Buildings and lighting
- Land use
- Transportation
- Environmental Management
- Resilient economic and community development

In 2013, Woodbury became a Minnesota Green Step City. Today, the city is at Step 5, having achieved 86 actions, reported performance metrics, and demonstrated improvement over time.

Woodbury is one of 144 cities participating in this program in Minnesota.

See website or GreenStep Cities Progress Report attachment for more details:
www.greenstep.pca.state.mn.us
sustainability, solar and landscape workshops, and sold rain barrels and compost bins, and hosted native plant sales at City Hall.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2012, for the first time included the guiding principle “make Woodbury sustainable,” with a corresponding implementation action item to “develop a climate action plan to serve as a guide as the city moves forward with its goal of reducing carbon emissions related to climate change.”

The “Sustainability Chapter” was characterized by a high level of public engagement, with significant city investment in resident education and high volunteer involvement at community events.

Chapter 3: Potable Water

Of all municipal services, provision of potable water is one of the most vital. People depend on water for drinking, cooking, washing, carrying away wastes, and other domestic needs. Water supply systems must also meet requirements for public, commercial, and industrial activities. In all cases, the water must fulfill both quality and quantity requirements. Since Woodbury’s beginnings, building-out and maintaining a water supply system; infrastructure for the collection, transmission, treatment, storage, and distribution of water for homes, commercial establishments, industry, and irrigation, as well as for such public needs such as firefighting and street flushing has been a vital concern and activity.

More recently, in 2014, Council recognized that in order to keep up with Woodbury’s growth and align with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policies, our community needed to reduce the amount of water used per person. Council established “Sustainable Water Future” as the number one strategic priority, and established a goal of “flat total annual water usage by 2030.” To help advance that Initiative, the city prioritized irrigation efficiency, which is the greatest single factor in per capita water use.

When Strategic Initiative No. 1 began in 2015, the work focused primarily on water quantity. The goal was to show a concerted effort to reduce consumption, despite population growth. In 2017, Council renewed its commitment to the continuation of the Strategic Initiative, directing staff to expand their focus to quality and surface water. That same year, the first well was shut down due to concerns about PFAS contamination.

The emergence of PFAS in the aquifer and Woodbury’s municipal water supply is the number one priority focus area at present. Staff continues to work diligently towards the 2019 Strategic Initiative to “ensure long term drinking water sustainability” and participate in statewide efforts to allocate settlement money to clean up drinking water contamination.
Chapter 4: Surface Water

A key part of our environmental stewardship efforts are focused on the management of stormwater runoff rates, volume control, and pollutant removals. Our efforts are a combination of mandated protections through Federal and State legislation, such as the Clean Water Act of 1972, which created the EPA’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the State’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permitting, and Watershed District rules and regulations.

Most of these federal, state, and watershed rules and regulations are directed towards downstream flood control, erosion control, and pollutant reduction loading. The City has furthered strengthened these goals with City Code, policies and studies with an increased focus on protecting groundwater and improving native landscapes and open spaces.

To meet our mandated obligations and community surface water environmental goals, Woodbury currently collects approximately $2.4 million annually from a stormwater drainage utility to fund best management practices (BMP’s) for pollution prevention and annual maintenance to infrastructure.

In 2013, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) updated estimates of size and frequency of storm events, known as Atlas 14. This update concluded that a “100-year event,” which is a storm that has a 1% chance of occurring in any year, would inflict 7.4 inches of rain within a 24-hour time span. This is consistent with Woodbury’s experience of larger rain events on a more frequent basis. Accordingly, a second Flood Risk Reduction Grant Program was created by the Woodbury City Council to assist residential property owners and reduce the probability of damage to flood prone structures within the community.

Over the past eight years, the city has worked hard to reduce a substantial amount contaminants from reaching our lakes and water bodies and further the resilience of the stormwater infrastructure system to handle extreme weather events. ¹

¹ See attached infographic for more information about best management practices to improve water quality.
Next Chapters

At this point, the next chapters in Woodbury’s Environmental Stewardship story have yet to be written. Although it is listed as an implementation item in the 2040 Comp Plan, the City does not currently have a Council-approved vision nor documented Plan to address environmental stewardship, resilience, climate adaptation and mitigation, or energy.

If we look ahead in the seven categories from our timeline, here is what we know lies ahead:

**Public Engagement**
Public engagement was a core function of the EAC. When the EAC merged with the PNRC in 2014, staff took over some events. Since then, public outreach has been led by staff through the Green Times Newsletter, social media, and workshops on energy conservation and renewable energy, as well as through partnerships with other agencies like the watershed districts and Washington County Conservation District. The city is not staffed to carry out significant public engagement in this area.

In the spring of 2022, Council will receive results from the 2021 Community Survey, which includes a question on sustainable activities. Council has considered highlighting environmental stewardship in a listening session with residents in the spring of 2022.

**Transportation and Development**
Staff has identified new development as a high priority area for conservation endeavors. One particular concern is lawn and land management of new properties. Development areas need more natural landscapes and efficient irrigation.

Progress on the METRO Gold Line and a Bike and Pedestrian Plan promise some improved alternatives to single-passenger car commuting. Transportation contributes 28% of all greenhouse gas emissions, and personal vehicles make up more than half of that category. The key to reducing emissions through these trends is to ensure that all residents have access to a variety of attractive, affordable low carbon mobility options.

**Municipal Fleet**
The city is participating in Xcel energy’s Fleet Electrification Advisory Program, which will evaluate when vehicles in the fleet are good candidates for electrification. 8 vehicles are PHEV. Woodbury’s efforts to reduce emissions and fossil fuel dependence in the municipal fleet demonstrate regional leadership and economic efficiency.
Reducing energy use and emissions, particular from buildings, is a key BMP for Woodbury to explore. If the city does prioritize Environmental Stewardship in future chapters, the city may find opportunities in areas such as setting clear decarbonization goals, aggregating demand for renewables, promoting energy efficiency, and shifting more energy consumption to electricity (especially in transportation and heating).

As noted in the timeline, city facilities have been designed with energy efficient innovations such as solar panels and geothermal heating/cooling. Cities may not require stricter codes than the State.

The state will not fund all sustainable upgrades; these may be worth city investment in this critical infrastructure.

The changing environment is a great risk to the city’s green infrastructure and open spaces. Maintaining vegetation buffers around stormwater ponds and responding to EAB will continue to be significant bodies of work. Future threats of invasive terrestrial pest will increase this workload while potentially decreasing the quality of city open spaces.

An update to the 2011 Urban Forestry Plan will be completed in 2022. Preliminary results show that the overall urban canopy has grown across the city, but considerable impacts of Ash tree removal (past and future) will greatly impact the city’s ability to meet goals unless additional resources are dedicated to planting, preservation, and maintenance.

The city continues to experiment with native and prairie landscapes, improving the environment for pollinator sand reducing irrigation.

A clean, sustainable supply of drinking water continues to be the city’s top priority. Staff and public representatives from Woodbury will continue to lead and engage in efforts to ensure this prime concern is achieved.

Water efficiency will also continue to be a function of this effort, as less water used will result in less energy and operation costs incurred by the settlement dollars and greenhouse gas emissions.

As large storm events continue to grow more frequent, improving the resilience of surface water management infrastructure will be a key body of work to directly help protect structures. While in depth analysis has been completed with the information available to date, continued investment and reinvestment are needed. Future analysis will need to be completed based on information released on a regional scale.
Environmental Stewardship Context

In our efforts to consider the question of Environmental Stewardship next steps, it is important to consider related local, national and international information as context.

Suburban Context

In the United States, suburbs account for ½ of all household greenhouse gas emissions, even though they house less than half the population. Households in suburbs produce up to twice the average carbon footprint per household. This variation is largely due to the difference in average household income, vehicle ownership, and home size. Utilities, housing, and private transport are among the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in cities.

The University of Berkeley calculates the household carbon footprint in Woodbury’s 55125 zip code at 63.8 metric tons CO2e/year. The typical US household produces 48 metric tons.

As Woodbury continues to grow and develop, the City may want to explore identifying best practices to understand the current reality. If so, it would be recommended to engage sustainability professionals to utilize toolkits, assessments, and best practices to develop a plan that best fits our community.
Planning Context

The 2040 Woodbury Comprehensive Plan notes that “in the last decade, Minnesota State climatologists have found significant evidence of the following trends occurring in our state:

- Changes in temperatures (winters are becoming warmer with higher minimum temperatures)
- Changes in precipitation events (rainfall coming from more frequent and larger rain events)

Current strategies to address changing climate include the strategies of mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.”

By 2050, Woodbury’s average low temperature will shift up 6.7°F and high temperatures will rise by 5.7°F. Temperatures in Woodbury will be warmer every month of the year; as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) notes, this is the difference between a white winter and a wet, icy winter.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies more frequent, more intense, and longer lasting heat waves as the top climate change risk in Washington County. According to the Sixth Assessment Report from the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), intense heatwaves will become significantly hotter and more frequent; in a worst case scenario, formerly “once per 50 year” deadly heatwaves will become an annual event. June 2021 was the hottest June on record across the U.S.; July was the hottest worldwide. Heat waves are the most deadly severe weather event in the United States.

The Minnesota DNR predicts a 13% increase in the size of the heaviest rainfall each year. Nationally, floods are the third-most frequent billion-dollar extreme weather event. Across the Midwest, states of experienced increased number of flood events in 2021 as a result of heavy rainfall over short periods of time that overwhelmed the local stormwater infrastructure.

Overall, there will be more and more extreme weather events. Even in the hyper-local, short-range timeline pieced together by staff for this report, the pendulum has swung back and forth from drought to flood.

Fiscal Context

Over the past twenty years, Woodbury has invested substantial time and resources responding to emerging issues such as Emerald Ash Borer, water contamination, drought, and changing weather patterns that stress our infrastructure. Severe storms, which are increasing in intensity and frequency, also have the potential to cause widespread and costly damage. In the past three years alone, Woodbury has spent more than $1/2 million on flood risk reduction.
These expenses represent the cost of responding to crisis. However, Woodbury has also invested proactively. For example, the city has focused on adding renewable energy wherever possible. These efforts have become more affordable through market pressures and government programs and incentives. As of 2018, the City had subscribed to 7,194,770 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity from a Community Solar Garden (CSG), approved a CSG development within the city, and installed solar panels on Public Safety and a solar thermal system on HealthEast Sports Center. The city estimates $3.5 million saved over the 25 year contract period. The city has invested in geothermal energy systems at its Public Safety Building, HealthEast Sports Center, and City Hall. Woodbury’s community partnerships and investment in solar panels have positioned the city to benefit from one of the cheapest sources of energy in the world.

The city also leads the way in fleet electrification. Woodbury purchased its first hybrid fleet vehicle in 2004 and now has 8 plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). City leaders and staff are working around the clock to harness innovative technologies to ensure clean drinking water now and into the future.

Social Context

The social consequences of environmental instability are felt more intensely by marginalized groups. Extreme weather events – from floods to heatwaves to droughts - impact already-vulnerable communities disproporionately worse. Low income residents and people of color tend to have less ability to recover from the impacts of damaging storms, and experience more severe health outcomes from inhospitable temperatures, power outages, and smoke from wildfires.

In Woodbury’s “Environmental Stewardship” Critical Success Factor, the link between this topic and human well-being was intentional.
Conclusion

In the 2030 and 2040 Comprehensive Plans, produced through a combination of professional expertise, leadership values, and robust community engagement process, and through the 2018 Critical Success Factor statement adoption, Woodbury declared a firm commitment to environmental stewardship. The city recognized that environmental health, economics, and human well-being are interconnected and interdependent. These documents established a goal to complete a new plan to guide preservation, adaptation, mitigation and maintenance.

Over the past twenty years, even in the absence of a singular environmental strategy, the city has made remarkable progress to preserve and enhance the natural environment in this community. However, as we grow, change and urbanize, there are a lot of competing issues for the City of Woodbury’s time, attention and finances. The upcoming council retreat is a great opportunity where the City Council can consider your priorities and vision for the next chapter of environmental stewardship in the context of other competing areas of interest.

Without a clear new direction, environmental stewardship will:

- Continue to compete for resources and attention
- Miss opportunities to act efficiently, effectively, and to the community’s usual high standards for service
- Other cities may surpass our leadership and out-compete us for resources such as grants and awards;
- Extreme weather events and other environmental hazards will divert resources, causing the city to spend more on reactive response than proactive action.

Hopefully this compendium of information will help the City Council and public see much of our history related to Environmental Stewardship and facilitate a robust discussion on the direction of the City Council going forward.
City Of Woodbury
Parks and Recreation Department

Parks and Natural Resources Commission Memorandum 22 - 04 February 8, 2022

Parks and Natural Resources Commission Members:

Subject: Final Concept Approval Bridlewood Park Project

Summary

As outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, the city is committed to following guiding principles, which highlight community values regarding parks, trails, and open spaces in the city. When deciding on the location for new park amenities, the city considers the broader system makeup creating a comprehensive approach to the entire city park system. The goal is to provide high-quality services while promoting recreational facilities, neighborhood and community parks, a city-wide network of trails, and preservation of and access to natural resources.

The project design and playground concept build on the preliminary feedback received early in 2021. At that time, the city received resounding support for the project and many ideas to be considered. Below is a summary of input received:

- Keep the grass play field open ensuring proper visibility from Bailey Lake Road
- Include trees for shade at the playground and screening for nearby homes
- Include amenities like benches, picnic tables, and a dog sanitation station
- Include playground opportunities for children ages 2-5, 5 -12, and older, ropes for climbing, swinging for all ages and abilities (tots/ADA/belt), sliding, monkey bars/pull up bars, elevated platform/hang out/tree fort, and tunnel play
- Consider playground and open space areas and their relationship to Bailey Lake Road

Public engagement for the project included a resident letter delivered to the 181 current households in the neighborhood and a Community Open House held January 13, 2022. During the meeting there was resounding support for the project.

Additionally, the project concept was discussed at the January 18, Parks and Natural Resources Commission regular meeting where the Commission asked staff to further consider the relationship of the proposed park features to Bailey Lake Road. Staff research determined that “nearby accessible hazards such as road with traffic, lakes, ponds, streams, drop-offs/cliffs,” could be mitigated by “providing a method to contain children within the playground using, for example, a dense hedge or fence that would allow for observation by supervisors.”


Recommendation

Staff recommends the Parks and Natural Resources Commission approve the concept plan for the Bridlewood Park Project as presented.
Public Process

Key Milestone Project Dates

June 2017  Bridlewood Farms Plat and PUD Approval
March 2018  Concept plan development and initial public engagement
August 2021  Project update to PNRC
October 2021  Site visits by PNRC members
January 2022  Open house and PNRC concept review
February 2022  Seek PNRC approval of concept

Timeline and Next Steps

Winter 2022   Construction documents and project bidding
Fall 2022   Playground installation
Fall 2022   Anticipated project completion

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Josh Kinney
Parks Planner

Attachment(s):  Site Plan with scope of work considerations
Site Plan with Scope of Work Considerations
Parks and Natural Resources Commission Members:

Subject: Final Concept Approval Arbor Ridge Park Project

As outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, the city is committed to following guiding principles, which highlight community values regarding parks, trails and open spaces in the city. When deciding on the location for new park amenities, the city considers the broader system makeup creating a comprehensive approach to the entire city park system. The goal is to provide high-quality services while promoting recreational facilities, neighborhood and community parks, a city-wide network of trails, and preservation of and access to natural resources.

The Arbor Ridge project will provide improvements based on community makeup and consideration of other nearby amenities. Items identified as project priorities include:

- Adding features to complement the existing pedestrian trail connection
- Provide access to existing natural resources present at the Park site
- Provide a playground, picnicking, benches, and trees for shade
- Enhanced storm water quality

The project web site including the anticipated schedule, plans, and playground concept can be found at: [www.woodburymn.gov/parkprojects](http://www.woodburymn.gov/parkprojects).

Public engagement for the project included a resident letter delivered to the 21 current households in the neighborhood and a Community Open House held January 13, 2022. During the meeting there was resounding support for the project.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Parks and Natural Resources Commission approve the concept plan for the Arbor Ridge Park Project as presented.

**Public Process**

Key Milestone Project Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 2020</td>
<td>Arbor Ridge Plat and PUD Approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2021</td>
<td>Concept plan development</td>
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<td>August 2021</td>
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Timeline and Next Steps

Winter 2022  Construction documents and project bidding
Fall 2022    Construction
Fall 2022    Anticipated project completion

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Josh Kinney
Parks Planner

Attachment(s): Site Plan with scope of work considerations
Site Plan with Preliminary Scope of Work Considerations
Parks and Natural Resources Commission Members:

Subject: Final Concept Approval Hassenbank Woods and Fish Lake Vegetation Management and Restoration Project

As outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, the city is committed to following guiding principles, which highlight community values regarding parks, trails and open spaces in the city. When deciding on the location for new park amenities, the city considers the broader system makeup creating a comprehensive approach to the entire city park system. The goal is to provide high-quality services while promoting recreational facilities, neighborhood and community parks, a city-wide network of trails, and preservation of and access to natural resources.

The project is being completed in partnership with South Washington Watershed District and with other potential grant funds as available.

The Project incorporates three distinct aspects to improve habitat, water quality and park usability over a period of three to five years. Project components include:

- Vegetative restoration of Hasenbank Woods that will focus on the protection of healthy oaks and other native trees, removal of buckthorn and other invasive species and the replanting of native species typical of oak savanna and oak woodlands. Practices will rely on the use of forestry mowing and goat grazing to remove invasive species in order to reduce the use of herbicides during site preparation.

Future project considerations include:

- Treatment of waters entering Powers Lake through a series of Stormwater Best Management Practices integrated into naturalized park spaces along the western and northern portions of the site.
- Development of plans for the vegetative restoration of wetlands and associated habitats surrounding Fish Lake, which is currently dominated by near monotypes of invasive Reed Canary Grass and Hybrid Cattail.

Future project planning will include consideration of features to provide access into and through restored natural areas and stormwater treatment practices as appropriate. Conversion to native plant communities will consider long term management strategies to support resilience and sustainability through periodic, but regular maintenance practices.

The project website including the anticipated schedule, plans, and concept can be found at: www.woodburymn.gov/parkprojects.

Public engagement for the project included a resident letter delivered to the 71 current households in the neighborhood and a Community Open House held February 8, 2022. Additional public engagement will take place for future phases of the project with appropriate neighborhoods and impacted homes.
Recommendation

Staff recommends the Parks and Natural Resources Commission approve the concept plan for the Hassenbank Woods and Fish Lake Vegetation Management and Restoration Project as presented.

Timeline and Next Steps

- Winter 2022: Invasive vegetation management
- Winter 2022: Continued evaluation of potential water quality improvements
- Fall 2022: Goat grazing

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Josh Kinney
Parks Planner

Attachment(s): Site Plan with scope of work considerations
Site Plan with Scope of Work Considerations
Parks and Natural Resources Commission Members:

Subject: Community Garden Pilot Project

Woodbury Thrives contacted staff in early 2021, about the possibility of adding a community garden to the city. Park and Natural Resources Commissioner Montgomery also worked with Woodbury Thrives and the city to evaluate potential locations and needs to develop the community garden pilot project. Resident Master Gardeners were invited to the table to provide input and feedback once the pilot project planning was moving forward and a location was selected.

Recreation and park maintenance staff determined that a space located adjacent to Andy’s Bark Park would serve as the ideal location for the Community Garden Pilot Project. The site is not being used, has access to water nearby, parking available on site and could accommodate the garden plots with the option for future expansion, if the pilot program proves to be successful.

City staff will assist with site preparation this spring 2022 which will include tilling the garden plot area and applying fertilizer, as needed. The water source will be extended to the center of the garden plots with two hoses available for gardeners use. Water is provided through a well with no city water available on site.

There will be sixteen 8-x 12-foot garden plots in total. Each plot will be grouped into four sections with 8-foot walking paths between each plot to provide easy access for gardeners and maintenance.

City staff will assist with promoting the community garden and place information in the 2022 summer recreation brochure. Additional communication will be provided by the city to help bring awareness to the program including program information on the city’s website. Woodbury residents will have the opportunity to register for a single plot online, for a yearly fee of $25.

Woodbury Thrives will assist with managing the community garden pilot program and work with each individual gardener. Each gardener will be required to review and sign an agreement before taking possession of a garden plot.

Woodbury Thrives has applied for a Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) – Healthy Eating grant funds through Washington County. If awarded, the grant will provide $5,000 that will be used to purchase additional equipment and supplies.

Commissioners are asked to provide feedback and input on the Community Garden Pilot Project located next to Andy’s Bark Park.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Reed Smidt
Recreation Manager

Attachment: Community Garden Pilot Program Map and Layout
Community Garden Pilot Project
Eagle Valley Golf Course (EVGC) – Dan Moris

Eagle Valley Golf Course staff members continue to prepare for the upcoming season. The maintenance staff is finishing up with equipment repairs and annual preventative maintenance measures. Each piece of turf equipment and the entire fleet of golf cars will be ready to go when the golf course opens. Golf operation’s staff has pre-ordered golf shop merchandise, which will start arriving in early March. Staff continues to prep program materials for the opening of the golf shop in mid-March.

The seasonal hiring process is now underway, we are looking forward to filling out our staff over the next couple of months. Based on the trend, as to the availability of part-time workers, staff is hoping both the number and quality of applicants increase for this hiring cycle.

HealthEast Sports Center (HSC) – Katie Ryden

The high school and youth hockey regular seasons will come to an end in February. Post-season playoffs, district, regional and state tournaments will be played through March. Skating lessons continue to see record registration numbers; classes fill up quickly and have waiting lists. Skaters are busy preparing for test sessions and the annual ice skating show, which will be held April 1-2.

Spring sports have started their pre-season practices in the field house. The high school teams are hosting captains’ practices for lacrosse, baseball and softball. At the youth level, soccer is still in full swing, but baseball, lacrosse and flag football have also added into the mix.

The outdoor rink continues to be a popular evening and weekend destination for skaters of all ages. The Recreation Adult Broomball League wraps up league play mid-February.

HSC staff are already planning for spring and summer maintenance projects to be completed during our off-peak times, including the removal and reinstallation of the west and east rink ice sheets.

Recreation Division – Reed Smidt

The annual Family New Year’s Eve Celebration took place Friday, Dec. 31, at HealthEast Sports Center. Attendees enjoyed running and jumping on huge inflatables, playing Bingo, ice skating, a photo booth, crafts, a raffle, dancing and music with a DJ. New this year was an additional afternoon New Year’s Eve Matinee Celebration to provide a celebration for the youngest ones in the community. Between the two events, over 800 attendees enjoyed celebrating the New Year in a family-friendly environment.

The second annual Coin Quest: Woodbury’s Winter Medallion Hunt, kicked off on Monday, Jan. 17, and continued through Friday, Feb. 4. This three-week long medallion hunt was a partnership between Woodbury Public Safety, Woodbury Community Foundation and Woodbury Parks and Recreation, and included three coins – one hidden in a Woodbury park each week! Each week a clue to the hidden coin was shared on the Woodbury Parks and Recreation and the Woodbury Police, Fire and EMS Facebook pages each Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Once the hidden coin was found, the winner received $100 worth of gift cards to local businesses and the Woodbury Community Foundation donated $100 to a local non-profit. This year’s non-profit donation recipients were: The Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf, SoWashCo Cares and The Tubman Family Alliance. The Recreation team enjoyed seeing residents’ engagement on these social media posts and loved seeing all the footprints in the snow at the park where the coins were hidden.
Facility and Project Updates - Josh Kinney

- **Highcroft Park and the park in the Briarcroft Development** – Project bids will be received February 15, with construction anticipated to start late spring/early summer. Project completion is anticipated in September of 2022.
- **Park Monument and Wayfinding** – Planning for additional replacement of old park signs, new wayfinding signage, and installation in 2022.
- **Valley Creek Park Phase II Trails** – Project bidding is complete and under budget. Tree removals will commence in late February, with completion prior to March 31, to avoid Oak Wilt and Long-Eared Bat restrictions. Trail completion is anticipated in July 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Michelle Okada
Parks and Recreation Director