

## THE COMO PATHWAYS PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE WAYFINDING IN COMO REGIONAL PARK

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District 10 Como Community Council



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### PURPOSE AND MISSION

The Como Pathways Project is an initiative of Como Community Council District 10, in cooperation with the Como Regional Park Advisory Committee and Saint Paul's Department of Parks and Recreation.

The overall purpose of the Como Pathways Project is to create a roadmap that will increase the walkability of Como Regional Park so that pedestrian and bicycle paths are more useful to more people more often.

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### COMO PATHWAYS SUBCOMMITTEE

Formed by D10 Environment Committee, September 2017

Teri Alberico	Michael Kuchta	Suzanne Rhees
Tom Beach	Jess Landgraf	Tim Post
Rebecca Calvo	Jenny Larson	Priscilla Wyeth
Andrew Gustin	Don Magnuson	Cody Zwiefelhofer
Richard Herriges	Dan Marckel	
Mike Ireland	Jenne Nelson	

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### INITIAL WORK: MAPPING THE PARK

- Map current pathways and sidewalks
- Mark locations of benches, picnic tables, water fountains, etc.
- Take pictures of all current signs
- Identify problematic signage; note the condition and quality of pathways
- September 2017 – June 2018

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### INITIAL WORK: MAPPING THE PARK

**BASE LAYERS**


- Road Map
- Geologic
- Satellite
- Topographic
- Terrain
- Night Map

District 10 Lines

- Paths
- Sidewalks
- Alleys
- Roads
- Other

Como Park Points

- Attractions
- Bridges/Tunnels
- Crosswalks
- Signs
- Benches
- Picnic Tables
- Barbecue Grills



Andrew Gustin, GeoPOI LLC

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### SURVEY DESIGN AND GOALS

- The Como Pathways Project designed and conducted a survey to collect data from park users.
- The survey had 10 content questions, an additional question for open-ended comments and suggestions, and 5 demographic questions.
- The survey was configured so it could be administered online and in-person on paper. Both versions were created in English, then translated into Hmong, Somali, and Spanish.

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### SURVEYWORK

- The survey was administered July 10 – August 5, 2018.
- The online version was promoted via the D10 website, the D10 weekly email newsletter, the D10 Facebook account, and neighborhood newspapers.
- D10 volunteers surveyed at 9 locations in the park.
- In addition, "lawn signs" were placed in 20 locations in the park.



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### SURVEY RESULTS

- **573** people completed the survey: 377 online, 196 in-person
- **63%** said they visited the park weekly.
- **64%** reported arriving at the park on foot, bicycle or other non-motorized means.
- **59%** said the park needs additional signs to help pedestrians and cyclists navigate.
- **85%** said they would use wayfinding signs if they were posted on kiosks in the park.

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### SURVEY RESULTS


- Park visitors tend to overestimate their ability to navigate the park.
- Although more than 80 percent said they "know their way around the park," when asked if they know how to get to 30 specific attractions in the park, only 6 locations exceeded that 80 percent threshold: the Lake, Lakeside Pavilion, Conservatory, Carousel, Zoo, and Hamm Waterfall.
- More than 320 respondents provided comments, suggestions, and ideas that informed this project's recommendations beyond what raw data support.

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## COMO PATHWAYS PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

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### INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS



Based on survey results, project team drafted initial recommendations. These recommendations:

- Were publicized on District 10 website in February 2019.
- Shared for additional feedback at community open houses at the Streetcar Station on Feb. 27 and March 9, 2019.

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### RECOMMENDATION I: CREATE A NEW MASTER MAP OF COMO REGIONAL PARK, DESIGNED TO BE USED BY PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS



Existing map of Como Regional Park

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### RECOMMENDATION 2: DIVIDE THE PARK INTO 5 SECTIONS




- 1) Golf Course
- 2) Zoo and Conservatory
- 3) Picnic Grounds
- 4) Pool and Fields
- 5) Lake and Pavilion

- Color code each section and match the color for wayfinding symbols
- Add an in-depth list of attractions for signs in each section of the park

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### RECOMMENDATIONS 3 AND 4: DISPLAY MAPS ON KIOSKS AND ONLINE




- Kiosks should be unobtrusive – should not block sightlines of cyclists, pedestrians, or drivers
- Follow Exterior Signage Design guidelines from St. Paul Parks and Recreation

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### RECOMMENDATION 5: FILL KIOSKS WITH INFORMATION PANELS

- Include information panels specific to location in park
- Highlight interesting historical sites, geology, flora and fauna
- "You Are Here" information
- Geo-caching or scavenger hunt mobile app



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### RECOMMENDATION 6: PLACE KIOSKS AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS

Kiosks should be placed, at a minimum, at the following locations:

- outside Lakeside Pavilion
- outside Zoo/Conservatory Visitor Center
- Midway Parkway at Hamline near Stonebridge pillars entrance
- East side of lake near Wheelock Parkway entrance
- McMurray Field/Pool parking area
- near the confluence of the Como/Horton/Lexington paths outside the Streetcar Station

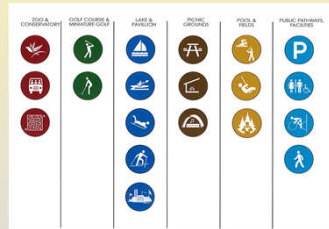
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### RECOMMENDATION 6: PLACE KIOSKS AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS




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### RECOMMENDATION 7: USE ICONS TO HELP UPGRADE NEW AND EXISTING SIGNS



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### RECOMMENDATION 8: UPGRADE EXISTING SIGNS

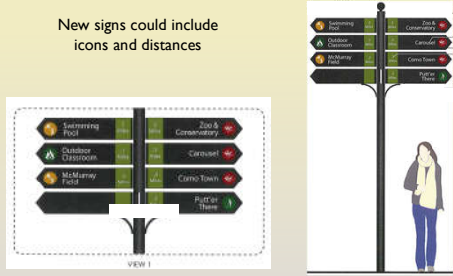


- Use signs to do more than mark pedestrian, cycling, or combined-use paths
- Some current signs are in disrepair or do not give correct wayfinding directions

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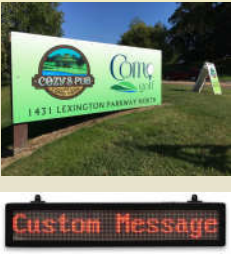
### RECOMMENDATION 8: UPGRADE EXISTING SIGNS

New signs could include icons and distances



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### RECOMMENDATION 9: ADD MESSAGE SIGNS



- Located at Lakeside Pavilion and Golf Clubhouse / Ski Chalet
- Hours of operation
- Promote special events

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### RECOMMENDATION 10: BETTER AMENITIES



- Add benches along paths. Assess current bench placement and adjust locations as necessary.
- Add recycling, compost and trash bins, especially along the lake paths, and at restaurants and high-use buildings.
- Add water fountains and/or water bottle refill stations at selected locations, especially along the lake paths.




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### RECOMMENDATION 10: BETTER AMENITIES

- More vigorous tree and shrub maintenance where vegetation hinders use of paths, creates visual blind spots, or creates safety hazards.
- Commercial-size trash containers at the Lakeside Pavilion should be screened and/or moved away from the building to reduce their visual and olfactory impact.

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### RECOMMENDATION 10: BETTER AMENITIES


- Upgrade bicycle racks, especially near the Zoo, Conservatory, and picnic areas, to contemporary standards. Place them in more-convenient locations.
- Investigate adding portable restrooms, especially off-season.
- Reduce speed limits on roads through the park. Enforce speed limits throughout the park.



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### RECOMMENDATION 11: IMPROVE COMO LAKE BICYCLE PATHS

- Make bike path two-way
- Plow the path during the winter
- Improve paths around Pavilion:
  - Paint a bike lane through the parking lot
  - Repave and widen the existing shared path west of the parking lot
  - Make better utilization of the bike path that runs parallel to Lexington Parkway west of the Pavilion.



Pathways currently plowed

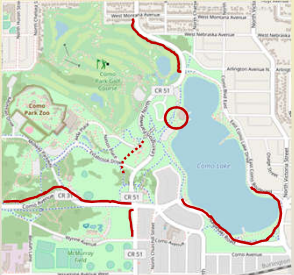
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### RECOMMENDATION 11: IMPROVE COMO LAKE BICYCLE PATH

- Eliminate gaps
- Add discrete but visible signs and information to indicate that:
  - Strollers, wagons, and dogs should use the pedestrian paths
  - Motorized wheelchair users, skateboarders, and skaters should use the bicycle paths
- Bike sharing should be required to operate out of fixed locations away from areas of high pedestrian traffic.
- Shared motorized scooters should not be allowed on park paths.

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### RECOMMENDATION 12: REPAVE, REBUILD PATHS AND CURB CUTS



- new path
- repave or repair

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### RECOMMENDATIONS 13 & 14 NEW PATHS



Consider a new north-south path across Estabrook Drive, west of Lexington toward the Pedestrian Bridge.

Consider adding signs to the existing but informal east-west path through the woods of the Como Golf Course from Arlington Ave./Chelsea St.

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### NEXT STEPS

- Finish assessing existing signs along paths.
- Obtain recommendation from District 10 Environment Committee.
- Obtain recommendation of District 10 Como Community Council Board.
- Seek adoption from Parks and Recreation Commission as a "shovel-ready" project with which to seek funding and implementation.

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