

Phalen-Keller Long-Range Plan Amendment

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

In 1978, the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County, completed a joint master plan for the Phalen - Keller Regional Park. An amendment to this plan was adopted by the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) in 2011, [click for report](#). Currently, a second amendment to the long-range plan is proposed to incorporate the Daylighting Phalen Creek Project as required by Met Council, [click for report](#). Once adopted, project will be consistent with the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan and the City will be eligible to apply for funding to implement the Daylighting Phalen Creek project.

The [Daylighting Phalen Creek Project](#) is a joint initiative led by the City of Saint Paul and Lower Phalen Creek Project (d/b/a Wakanj Tipi Awanyankapi), a registered 501(c)(3) Minnesota non-profit corporation (“LPCP”). The goal of the project is to daylight Phalen Creek (“Creek”) from Lake Phalen to the Mississippi River, an ecologically and culturally important waterway that has long been pushed underground by development. The Initial Reaches (Phase I) will restore aquatic habitat directly connected to the south end of Lake Phalen, along the west side of Johnson Parkway between Wheelock Parkway and Jessamine Ave. The ecosystem intended to be restored will include wet meadows, shallow fresh marshes, and seasonally flooded wetlands. A 1,500-linear-foot segment of Phalen Creek will be daylighted and approximately nine acres restored to native habitat within City of Saint Paul property.

The total project cost is \$4.8 million. LPCP was awarded a \$3.3 million-dollar Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) grant. The balance of project cost is being raised through private fundraising by the LPCP and will cover the remaining construction costs, design costs, and initial operating costs.

STAFF COMMENTS:

In August 2024, the Parks and Recreation Commission held a 20-day public comment period and recommended the amendment go to the Saint Paul Planning Commission. City staff presented the amendment to the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission and the committee recommended the plan go to the Planning Commission. The Saint Paul Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission recommended the amendment for approval on Friday October 11th and November 14th, respectively. Upon approvals, City Staff will take the plan to Metropolitan Council as an amendment to the Phalen-Keller Long-Range Plan (November – January 2025). The document should be adopted as an amendment to the Phalen-Keller Long-Range Plan.

Plan Name Reference

Please note that the reference to the 1975 & 2011 Phalen-Keller Regional Park “Master Plan” has changed to Phalen-Keller Regional Park “Long-Range” Plan Amendment. As the City of Saint Paul takes initial steps to acknowledge its role in systemic racism, we recognize the power of language. The term “master”, which is often defined as commanding control or being eminently skilled, has been identified as a word to remove in certain contexts due to its connection with the history of masters and slavery in the United States.

REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION:

Adopt Resolution # 24-XX recommending the Phalen-Keller Regional Park Long-Range Plan Amendment



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go to the Metropolitan Council for review and approval.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

There were preliminary concerns from regulatory agencies that the creek functions with existing lake levels and existing lake infrastructure. The project team has alleviated these concerns by working closely with the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District, project engineers, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.



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