

Sustainable Shoreview: Landscape-Level Planning & Policy for Wetlands & Forests

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VISION STATEMENT:

To inform and advise Shoreview decision-makers within the realm of landscape-level planning and policies in order to assist the city in its ongoing environmental leadership.

LANDSCAPE LEVEL PLANNING:

We recommend a landscape-level approach for Shoreview and the surrounding communities as they deal with environmental issues, simply because most environmental problems cannot be solved without enlarging the scope to cover multiple municipalities. Deer do not see political boundaries, tree diseases do not stop once they reach the next city, and runoff within watersheds flow through multiple communities. Therefore, because of the landscape-level nature of these issues, solutions must transcend municipal borders. This is why collaboration with surrounding communities is so crucial, because a landscape-level approach is truly the only way to deal with a wealth of environmental issues.



This map shows the political boundaries of Shoreview and the municipalities that makeup its border. (Metro GIS)

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Focus initially on a current topic having clear benefits from collaboration such as deer management.

Deer population management has been identified as a topic of interest for several municipalities surrounding Shoreview. Landscape-level in nature, the benefits of collaboration would be made clear. This issue came up in several interviews with city planners and natural resource experts, and in some cases deer are explicitly managed for. Other cities, not currently managing deer, cite a lack of resources, personnel, authority, and ability to manage a deer population that migrates beyond their borders. We found that the possibility of sharing costs associated with deer management is a primary interest in some cities and has the potential to promote participation and collaboration with Ramsey County, as well as amongst the communities surrounding Shoreview.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Utilize relationships initiated in deer management efforts to address other landscape-level issues while expanding and fortifying relationships.

To further increase landscape-level planning and policy, relationships built in the initial collaboration on deer management could be used to collaborate on other issues. An issue ripe for collaboration is tree disease management. Tree diseases and pests were identified as a concern among city officials in and around Shoreview. Of particular interest was prevention of major disease outbreaks, managing an outbreak quickly and efficiently in order to minimize the negative effects for trees in the region. Currently, there are several discrepancies between city ordinances, specifically the types of tree disease each regulates for. Creating a more consistent foundation of ordinances, communication, and reporting methods would help with efficient and effective mitigation in the case of a tree disease infestation in the region.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Expand work with watershed organizations to further collaboration with surrounding communities.

The majority of Shoreview's land area is within the jurisdiction of Grass Lake Watershed Management Organization and Rice Creek Watershed District. One of the main charges of these organizations is to preserve and restore water quality across municipal borders. Expanding work with these watershed organizations could facilitate communication and cooperation between Shoreview and its surrounding municipalities as well as help create policies that apply to a broader portion of the landscape. Such policies could include landscape wide education programs on shoreland management or lawn care. Collaborative incentive programs that aim to decrease nutrient runoff into water bodies could also be facilitated through work with watershed organizations.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Maintain collaborative efforts toward landscape-level planning by holding annual workshops to continue relationships for future challenges.

The relationships established thus far focus on current environmental challenges faced by the communities today. It is important to understand that new challenges and opportunities will continue to evolve in the future. Providing a mechanism to address these challenges proactively and with a united effort will be critical in developing institutional resilience and adaptability for moderating future issues. Holding an annual workshop that addresses natural resource and planning issues could be an effective way to facilitate this process. The workshops could serve as a tool for communicating about an issue that is affecting several of the stakeholders to some degree. If others are having similar issues and if there is a possibility for cooperation, pooling of resources may allow for a more efficient, cost-effective solution.

Effective deer management was identified as a common goal by which collaboration could begin between Shoreview and neighboring communities.



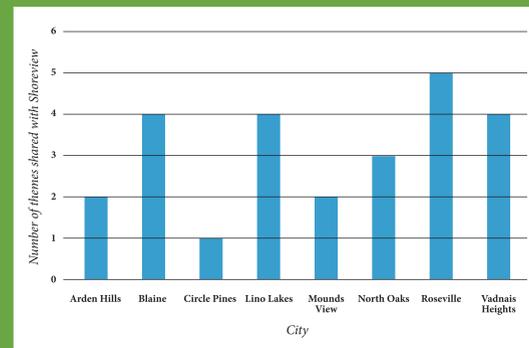
The health of this wetland in Shoreview depends not only on local policy, but also on those policies of communities whose water eventually drains into it.

OBJECTIVES:

- Inventory plans and policies for neighboring municipalities,
- Identify opportunities and challenges for landscape-level stewardship of urban wetlands and forests, and
- Recommend decision-making criteria and initial steps Shoreview can take to improve cooperation with neighboring municipalities to achieve landscape-level environmental services from urban forests and wetlands.

METHODS:

- Interviews with city officials in cities surrounding Shoreview, Ramsey County officials, and watershed officials.
- Document review of city codes and comprehensive plans.



This graph shows the number of natural resource goals/themes each of the surrounding municipalities share with Shoreview within their comprehensive plans.



Preventing the spread of tree disease across municipal borders is an environmental issue that requires a landscape-level approach.