



PARKS ACCESS AND HABITAT CONSERVATION

– *By: Environmental Stewardship Institute* –

CONTENTS

1. *About us*
2. *Issue #1: Park Access and Connections*
3. *Issue #2: Habitat Conservation and Community Gardens*



ABOUT US



ESI Youth Advisory Council is a group of high school students working towards environmental education and equity through community engagement. Young people gain leadership skills and learn about important environmental and equity issues.



**ISSUE #1:
PARKS
ACCESS AND
CONNECTION**

PARK ACCESSIBILITY

Park access is negatively affected by:

- Pollution
- Poor transportation
- Lack of awareness
- Safety concerns

“We need more parks and trees and public transit close to where people live.”



CONNECTION TO REGIONAL POLICY



- A focus on aspects of the system that create the greatest barriers to access for young, elderly, disabled, and BIPOC residents.
- Key activities to do in parks include environmental education and activities directed at children and youth.

“Areas with racial covenants don’t have equal accessibility to parks and trails. Going into the future, ensure that all communities have equal access regardless of background.”

HOW THIS AFFECTS MY COMMUNITY

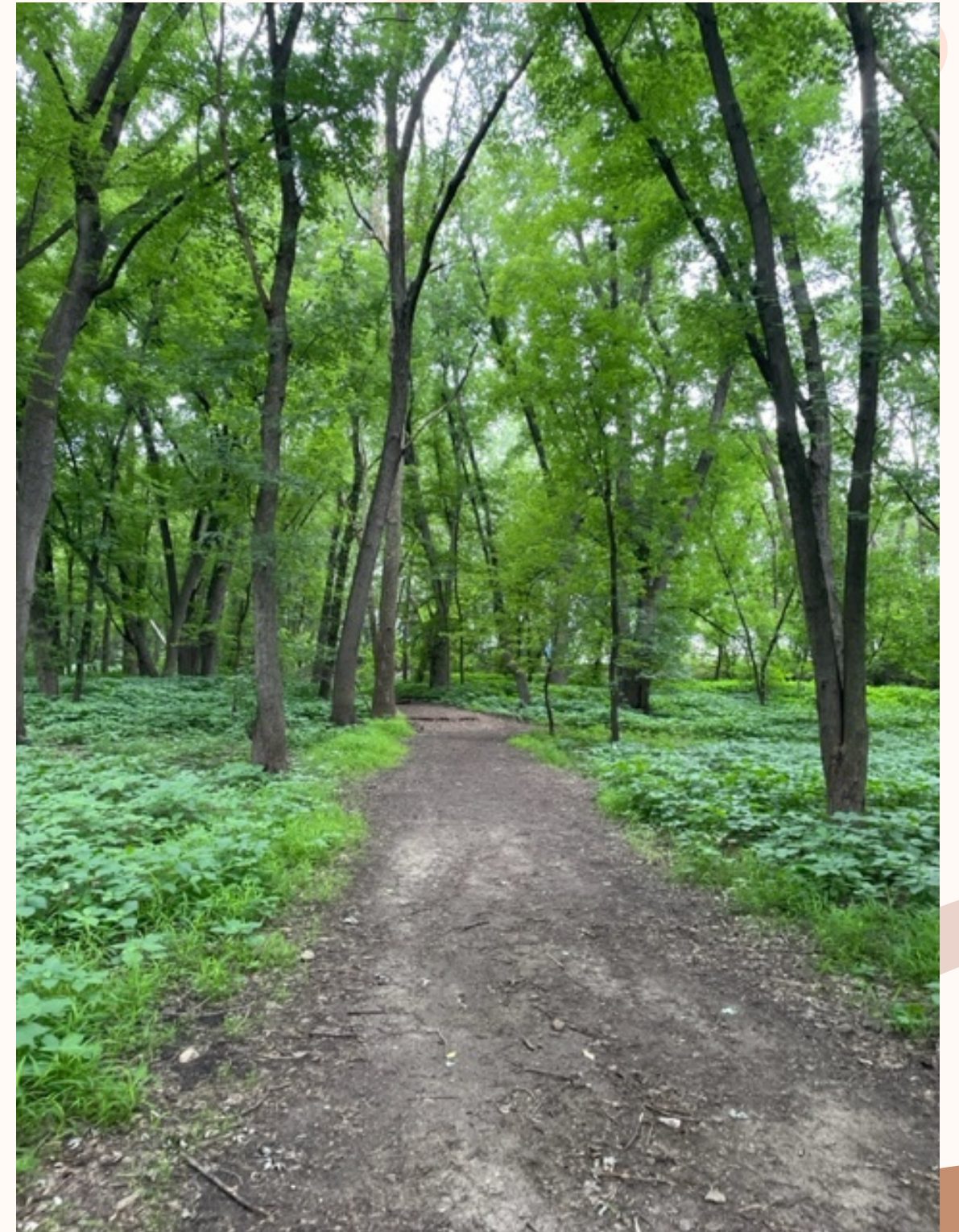
- Parks are a place of gathering
- Parks allow us to get away from technology



WHY IS THIS AN ISSUE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

- Parks are free
- Environmental education
- Mental health

“Parks and outdoor recreation spaces are important to destress, build communities, and make friendships bloom.”



VISION FOR SAFETY

Vision Statements:

- Parks are safe for everyone regardless of age, gender, race or ability.
- Safety and equality are priorities for parks in our region.

Goals

- Animals and plants are healthy in our region, free of the effects of pollution and litter.



VISION FOR EDUCATION

Goals

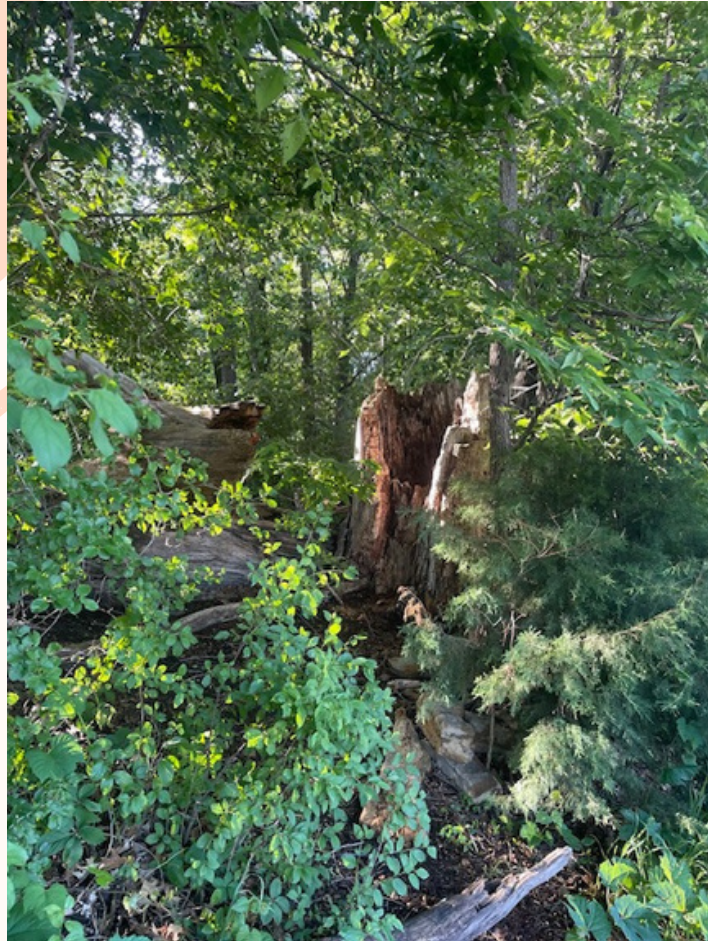
- Every school has a field trip to a regional park once a year.
- Our region's children and youth have knowledge of native plants, animals, and biodiversity through public education in regional parks.
- Young people's passion and care for parks grows from environmental education, resulting in better protection and accessibility of green spaces in the future.
- We encourage youth to utilize and benefit from regional parks by providing inclusive programming that meets their needs





ISSUE #2: HABITAT CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY GARDENS

HABITAT CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY GARDENS



Cities and residents are disconnected from the habitat around them. Community gardens are a place to create cultural meaning as they bring their neighborhood together.

CONNECTION TO REGIONAL POLICY

- Communities in comprehensive plans can describe how they will protect native habitats and create community garden space through comprehensive plans.
- Proposed transit and environmental services projects should consider how to preserve and restore habitat and create spaces for community gardens and nature-based parks.



HOW THIS AFFECTS MY COMMUNITY

- Community gardens create food secure communities
- Parks and green spaces connect neighborhoods and communities
- Native habitat makes for a more resilient future



“Think about the cause and effect of what you do. How is this going to affect the place in the future. What difference will happen in the future?”

WHY IS THIS AN ISSUE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

Young people need direct exposure to plants and animals so they can develop a connection with nature and a desire to care for it.

Young people's mental and physical health require time with nature. Community gardens benefit mental health.



VISION FOR HABITAT AND COMMUNITY GARDENS

VISIONS

- Our region's cities have abundant tree canopy, green space, natural habitat and community gardens.
- Our region's housing investments are made with concern for preserving native habitat.
- Our region supports biodiversity in every neighborhood.
- Throughout the region, humans can connect with nature by having local parks with many elements of nature in them.

GOALS

- Our region is a national leader for coexistence between human and nonhuman species.
- Native habitat conservation and community gardens exist in every neighborhood.
- Communities invest in planting events and provide residents access to learning about growing food and preserving native habitat.
- Native plants and trees grow near every transit station and stop in the region.



**THANK
YOU**