



Greenways and Open Space Commission

June 10, 2026 – Meeting Notes

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Recording:

[06-10-26-Greenways-and-Open-Space-Commission](#)

In Attendance:

- Jeanie Nelson, Commission Chair
- Mark Deutschmann, Commission Vice-Chair
- James H. Moore
- Joseph Y. Lee
- Tonya Hancock
- Morey Hill,
- Cedric Duncan

Absent:

- Brenda Gilmore
- Olivia Hill
- Edward Henley

Department representatives in Attendance

- Capt. Chris Holden Park Police
- Tom Palko, Asst Director Metro Stormwater
- Will Ezell, Planner 3, NDOT
- Akriti Pokhrel, Planner, Metro Planning
- Amrita Chatterjee Metro Greenways staff.

Other

- Meg Morgan, Executive Director Greenways for Nashville

Meeting Proceedings

I. Call to order

Jeanie Nelson, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order and provided an outline of items to be discussed at the meeting.

II. Consideration of Minutes from the April 8, 2026 Commission Meeting

Minutes were approved.

III. Public Comment Period

1. Mark Schlicker, District 27 Participatory Budget Delegate – spoke about Seven Mile Creek Greenway and requests that Parks restore the funding originally earmarked for the project and deliver the promised greenway.
 2. Robin Owen - Resident of District 27 – delivered comments relevant to Seven Mile Creek Greenway and requested a concrete plan with a definitive timeline using City capital funds to complete the promised extension.
 3. Indy Periera – Resident and user of the greenway – spoke about Seven Mile Creek Greenway. She emphasized the value of the project relevant to the neighborhood’s diverse community. Ms. Pereira highlighted that the extension was selected through Participatory Budgeting and requested dedicated funding with a clear timeline to ensure accountability and to restore trust, citing earlier unmet commitments from many years prior.
 4. Grace Renshaw - A longtime District 24 resident – asks to prioritize funding for greenways due to recognition of benefits brought by greenways. Highlights how they connect neighborhoods to parks, stores, and workplaces. Notes the need for more connected trails across Nashville and urge prioritizing transparent greenway funding in all neighborhoods.
- Commission Chair expressed appreciation to those who commented and noted that the Commission will report back to the Parks Department.
 - Commissioner James Moore asked whether Parks has a formal process for responding to public comments and how the committee should structure that response.
 - Commissioner Chair stated that the Parks Director submitted a statement explaining the process that was followed. The commission will receive copies of the statement and the associated email correspondence. **See PDF attached: “SevenMileCreek652026-Parks-Response-Statement”**
 - Commissioner Tonya Hancock invited residents to contact council members to support greenway funding. Also noted a feasibility study for Peeler Park pedestrian path in the last CSP.
 - Attendees were encouraged to submit written materials for inclusion in the record, which will be shared with commission members.

Greenways Updates

- Jeanie Nelson, Commissioner Chair welcomed and introduced the new Asst Director for the Greenways and Open Space division.
- Asst Director Francois de Kock introduced himself and spoke about his personal and professional background, observations on Nashville, and the importance of collaboration and clear communication amongst different entities as critical for the implementation of the greenways and open space system. **See PDF attached: “2026-06-10-introduction-final”**
- Jeanie Nelson, Commissioner Chair thanked GOS staff members for their support during the transition.

Plan to Play Update

Tim Netsch, Asst Director, Planning and Facilities Development Division presented an update on the Plan to Play Update with a focus on recommendations and actions for Greenways. He explained that greenways and open space planning must be viewed within the larger Parks Department context, referencing the 2017 master plan and its 2026 update.

- Key changes since 2017 were reviewed, including population growth, budget constraints, and other events.
- The update includes an action plan and five-year work plan through 2031.
- Recommendations emphasized collaboration, policy tools, land acquisition criteria, conservation priorities, funding opportunities, and sustainable maintenance.
- Greenway priorities included partnerships, updating the greenways master plan map, and ensuring connectivity.
- Three funding tiers have been identified for future planning, from flat funding to expanded growth scenarios.

Response from Commissioners

- Commissioner Mark Duestchmann expressed enthusiasm for collaboration across departments and raised the question whether philanthropic/corporate funding could accelerate implementation of greenway system such as Browns Creek Greenway. Potential was recognized.
- Designated Natural areas policy was discussed.
A council-level DNA ordinance was referenced as a potential future step once a Parks Board policy is in place.
- Greenways Map and Ordinance
The updated Greenways Map may eventually be adopted via ordinance. Needs alignment with broader planning measures.
- The commission thanked Tim Netsch and the consulting team for their effort.

Planning Department Report

- Donald Anthony, Community Plans Manager - shared website address for Ecological Conservation study - <https://engage.nashville.gov/ecsplan>
- Public encouraged to complete the survey and provide feedback.
- Announced a popup event at Centennial Park on Juneteenth for additional public input and information.

Metro Water Services Report

Tom Palko, Asst Director, Metro Stormwater – shared a presentation on Flood Risk, mitigated properties and remaining risks in Nashville.

- 485 homes bought out; 250 acres of open space created; 111 mobile homes removed since 2010. Examples of specific buyout areas shared (Mill Creek, Whites Creek, Richland Creek, Browns Creek).
- Discussion of ongoing risks and remaining properties needing action.
- Mention of subdivision issues, levee concerns at Metro Center, and flood behavior on Harpeth River.

The Commission Chair expressed appreciation for Tom Palko's 41 years of service and collaboration.

Greenways for Nashville (GfN)

Meg Morgan, Executive Director, GfN provided an update:

- Updated Greenways maps on the GfN website – in process to reflect upcoming projects and projects in development.
- Greenways Connector program – shared recommendations from community from the first phase of the program.
- Meeting with developers – shared private sector recommendations.
- GfN participated in Coffee, Conversation and Cleanup at Browns Creek Park.

Other Business

- Commissioner Chair Jeanie Nelson requested Vice Commissioner, Mark Duestchmann to be the acting Chair for the next 2 months.
- Commissioner Chair requested for a deeper understanding and involvement in development of greenways.
- Commissioner Mark Duetschmann proposed to connect with the commissioners to convene on action items to develop the Greenway system.
- Commissioner Morey Hill agreed and would be willing to do a field trip as suggested by Commissioner Mark Duetschmann.
- Commission Chair Jeanie Nelson thanked everyone for joining the meeting and adjourns.

Remaining 2026 Meeting Dates: 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m., Parks Boardroom, 2565 Park Plaza, unless otherwise noted:

- August 12, 2026
- October 14, 2026
- December 9, 2026