

I believe that one of the most important things leaders can do is help communities grapple with change. Today I am coming out with a statement of support for the Hiawatha Golf Course Area Master Plan, which I believe is a necessary change for the district I seek to represent, and is the only way forward that adequately balances needed environmental changes with the very real concerns around equity within public spaces and honoring the historical legacy of integration.

I support the 9-hole plan because of the extensive research and community engagement that has led to this compromise plan. This plan recognizes that an 18-hole course is not environmentally feasible and will lead to continued unmanaged flooding, unsafe lake water, and millions of public dollars in clean up and repair. With climate change causing more severe weather, I see this plan as one of many compromises our communities will need to make in the coming years. I also believe in a vision of environmental justice in which we focus on what we gain by making these changes. By moving forward with this plan we will gain a safer and healthier community where water is protected, and communities of color can continue to enjoy use of the space for public recreation.

The 9-hole plan honors both the history of Black golfers who fought for equality on the course as well as the history of the Dakota people who stewarded the land and water for thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers. It also adequately acknowledges the realities of our changing climate. That is why, if elected, I would support this project through bonding requests.