

### Community Development Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 23, 2018

**Subject:** Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Review File No. 50132-2

#### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan.

#### Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Senior Planner Jake Reilly presented the item to the Community Development Committee. Council Member Gail Dorfman inquired whether access and circulation related to the Southwest LRT (METRO Green Line Extension) station area proposed for West Lake Street and the Bde Maka Ska – Lake Harriet portion of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park is discussed in the plan. Mr. Reilly stated that it is, and further detail may be found in the plan documents online at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's website.

The Community Development Committee unanimously recommended approval of the proposed action at its meeting on May 7, 2018.

## Community Development Committee

Meeting date: May 7, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 23, 2018

**Subject:** Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Review File No. 50132-2

**District(s), Member(s):** 6, Council Member Gail Dorfman

**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statute 473.313; Planning Strategy 1 *2040 Regional Park Policy Plan*

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Jake Reilly, Senior Planner (651-602-1822)

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan.

### Background

The *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP)* states that new capital improvements at Regional Parks must be consistent with a Council-approved master plan to receive funding. The Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet portions of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park have not received significant capital investment since 1997. This new master plan brings this portion of the Chain of Lakes Regional Park up-to-date, as it was last updated in 1989.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) conducted a community-based planning process in 2015-2016 to develop a master plan for Bde Maka Ska (formerly known as Lake Calhoun) and Lake Harriet. The master plan will set a 25-year vision for Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet.

Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet are the most popular portions of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, which is the most heavily used park in the seven-county metropolitan area. As iconic destinations within the Minneapolis park system, these two parks form the backbone of Minneapolis's historic Grand Rounds: a system of parkways, trails, and green space.

### Rationale

The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan is consistent with the requirements of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, including Planning Strategy 1 and other Council policies.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan advances the Thrive outcome of Equity, through engaging a full cross-section of the community in decision-making; the Thrive outcome of Livability through increasing access to nature and outdoor recreation, which enhances quality of life in the region. The master plan also advances the Thrive outcome of Sustainability through promoting improved water quality.

## **Funding**

The estimated development costs for implementing the master plan are \$126 million based on 2016 construction costs, including a 25% contingency for design and engineering and other project “soft costs.”

Approval of the master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time. The acquisition and development costs based on this master plan may be awarded through the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund, the Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund. Council action is required to approve the CIP, the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund project list, and specific grants to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

## **Known Support / Opposition**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board approved the Master Plan at its May 3, 2017 board meeting. There is no known opposition to the master plan.

## **Summary of Discussion**

Jake Reilly, Senior Planner, presented the staff report to Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Adam Arvidson, Director of Strategic Planning for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, was in attendance. Commissioners asked questions regarding the community engagement process, accessibility of different development components, and timelines associated with master planning for the rest of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park. Mr. Arvidson provided additional details on the engagement process and clarified different plan components for the commissioners. Commissioners expressed support for the breadth and depth of community engagement that the MPRB had completed as part of the master planning process.

The Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission approved the proposed action with a unanimous vote at its meeting on May 1, 2018.

## Community Development Committee

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For the Community Development Committee meeting of May 7, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 23, 2018

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**District(s), Member(s):** MPOSC District C, Margie Andreason

**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statute 473.313; Planning Strategy 1 *2040 Regional Park Policy Plan*

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## *Analysis*

Planning Strategy 1 of the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* requires that master plans for regional parks address the eleven items listed below.

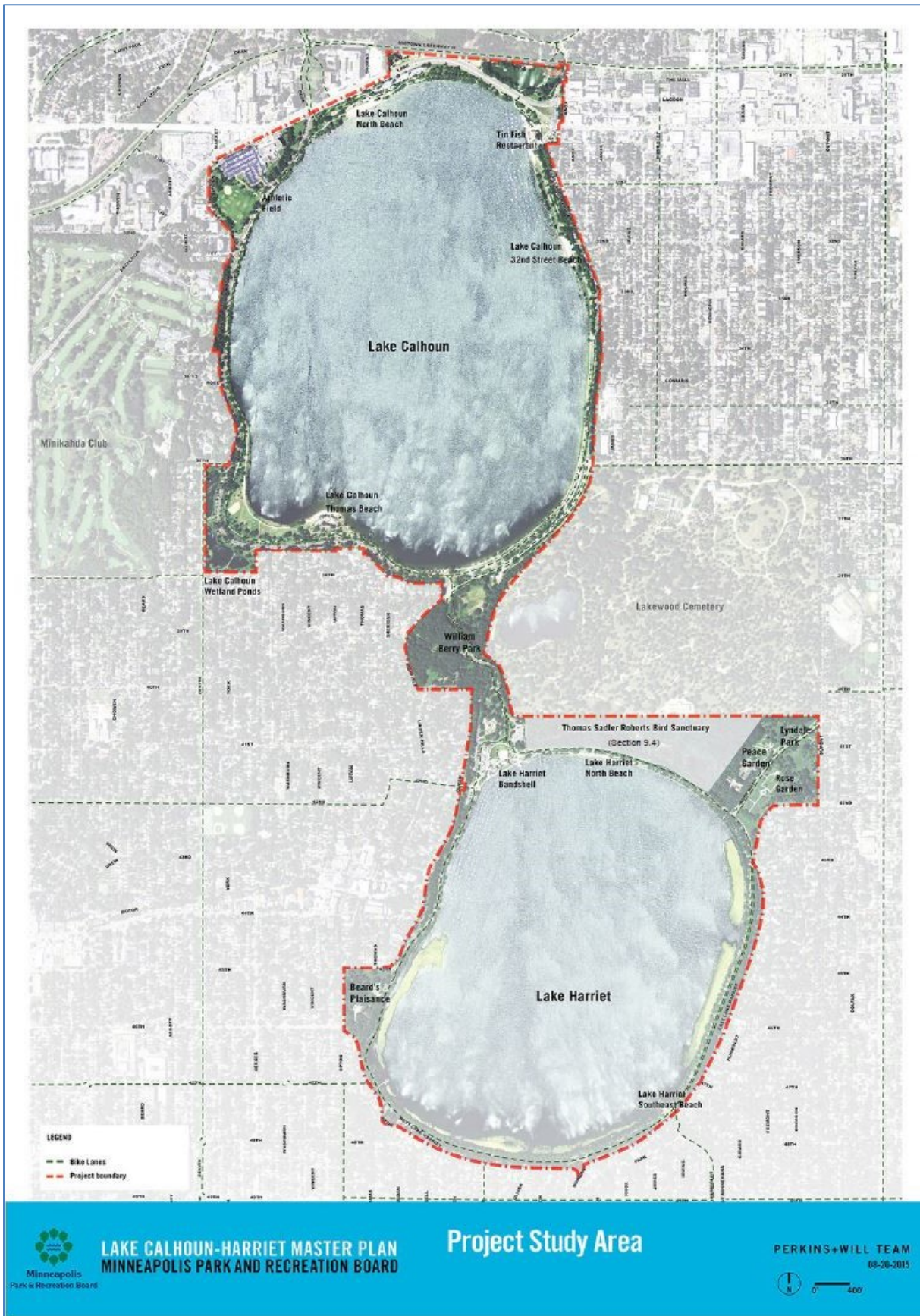
### **Boundaries and Acquisition**

The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park is located in the southwestern quadrant of the City of Minneapolis. It includes 1,066 acres of water and 489 acres of land (1,555 total acres) associated with Lake Harriet, Bde Maka Ska, Lake of the Isles, Dean Parkway, Cedar Lake, and Brownie Lake. The boundaries of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park have not changed in the last half century, and no additional acquisitions are planned because of this master plan.

With a few exceptions, the master plan boundary is formed by the MPRB property line, which generally follows the outer edge of the parkways encircling Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet. The Midtown Greenway is the northern edge of the study area. MPRB parcels contiguous to the parkways are also included: Northwest Bde Maka Ska is bounded by Excelsior Boulevard, and southeast Bde Maka Ska by Lakewood Cemetery. William Berry Parkway, between Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet, is part of the project study area. Lake Harriet's project boundaries include Lyndale Park eastward to King's Highway and also Beard's Plaisance. The Thomas Sadler Roberts Bird Sanctuary (RBS), on the northern shore of Lake Harriet and adjacent to Lakewood Cemetery, was excluded from the project because it had its own parallel master planning process and funding. The master planned area is shown on Figure 1.



Figure 1: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan boundary



## **Demand Forecast**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation board estimates that a majority of the estimated 5.7 million visits to the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park are for use of the trails.

The master plan discusses the regional population trends forecasted by the Metropolitan Council, including:

- Population will grow by 824,000;
- More than 20 percent of the population will be age 65 and older in 2040; and
- Approximately 40 percent of the population will be people of color in 2040.

These trends will influence park and trail planning and decision-making. The master plan discusses the importance of the regional park to serve all ages of people who want to spend time outdoors and stay physically active. The master plan acknowledges that outdoor recreation participation is declining for children and young adults and increasing for Baby Boomers. Further, it acknowledges a need to improve functionality in park facilities for all users and includes recommendations to develop initiatives to address existing cultural and economic barriers to park use.

## **Development Concept**

Planning for the regional trail route was guided by a vision, guiding principles, and themes that were developed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Planning Staff and a Community Advisory Committee (CAC), and facilitated in part by a consultant team. The vision states, “Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet, as part of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, are a dynamic convergence of human and natural systems where the community can connect with the outdoors and each other to enjoy nature, to recreate, and to celebrate stories, past and present.”

Further, the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park: Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan vision is supported by seven guiding principles:

- Stewardship,
- Identity,
- Ecology,
- Balance,
- Memory, and
- Equity.

The Bde Maka Ska – Harriet Master Plan identifies current conditions and recommendations for the entire area covered by the master plan associated with natural resources; access and circulation; recreation, events, and enterprises; cultural and historic resources; and equity. In addition, there are nine focus areas around the two lakes: six at Bde Maka Ska and three at Lake Harriet.

## **Overarching conditions and recommendations**

*Natural Resources:* The plan addresses preservation and enhancement of natural resources, particularly water quality, to balance the ecological health of the park and the two lakes with the high-volume recreational use by the public. The plan addresses water quality, stormwater management, lakeshore erosion, and invasive species and the landscape.

*Access and Circulation:* The plan focuses on improving access to and around both lakes, particularly for non-motorized uses, including a recommendation to modify trail systems and recreational features to make them universally accessible. In addition, the plan seeks to improve the safety at crossings and reduce conflicts between park users and roadway users, including transit.

*Historic and Cultural Resources:* The plan addresses the fact that the Chain of Lakes is part of the Grand Rounds and has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As such, changes to the facilities will be viewed in light of “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties,” and that the Native American story of the landscape is considered of primary significance. The plan highlights the interpretation of the natural and human history of the lakes, paying close attention to the Native American use and history, and balancing historic preservation with current recreational needs and ecological health, while maintaining flexibility to respond to contemporary uses and needs.

*Recreation, Events, and Enterprise:* The plan calls for recreational uses and facilities to be distributed to alleviate congestion and safety concerns; expand recreational offerings to respond to changes in trends and demographics; expand winter programming; and improve way-finding and comfort facilities.

*Equity:* The MPRB defines equity as “the access for all people to services and resources especially those that lead to success and quality of life.” Since 2011 the MPRB has been implementing a range of efforts to address equity, inclusion, and diversity focused on racial equity, accessibility for people with disabilities in response to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and gender inclusion. This plan continues those efforts through the inclusion of universal design principles; universal icons in wayfinding and interpretive signage; and including diverse community perspectives and racial equity principles in planning and programming activities.

### *Bde Maka Ska Focus Areas (6)*

Northeast Bde Maka Ska:

1. Reduce congestion and improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists while preserving the energy and character of the area.
2. Remove and relocate away from this area the two boat launches currently flanking the Bde Maka Ska refectory (currently Tin Fish).
3. Relocate the sailing school and yacht club away from this area once the northwest corner is developed as a recreational hub. Retain the dock and buoy field.
4. Relocate rental concessionaire (currently Wheel Fun) to south side of the Bde Maka Ska refectory once the sailing school and yacht club are relocated.
5. Construct an all-gender restroom and storage building.
6. Add an at grade, shared-use trail on the west side of the intersection of Lake Street and East Calhoun Parkway.
7. Create a gateway or enhancements in the triangle between eastbound and westbound Lake Street.
8. Replace the turnaround at the existing boat launch with a curbside drop-off area that includes designated spaces for deliveries and accessible parking.
9. Restore historic objects and structures (Works Progress Administration wall along the lagoon, Naval and Marine Corps Memorial Tablets and the World War I Memorial Mast).

10. Improve waterfront access for pedestrians.

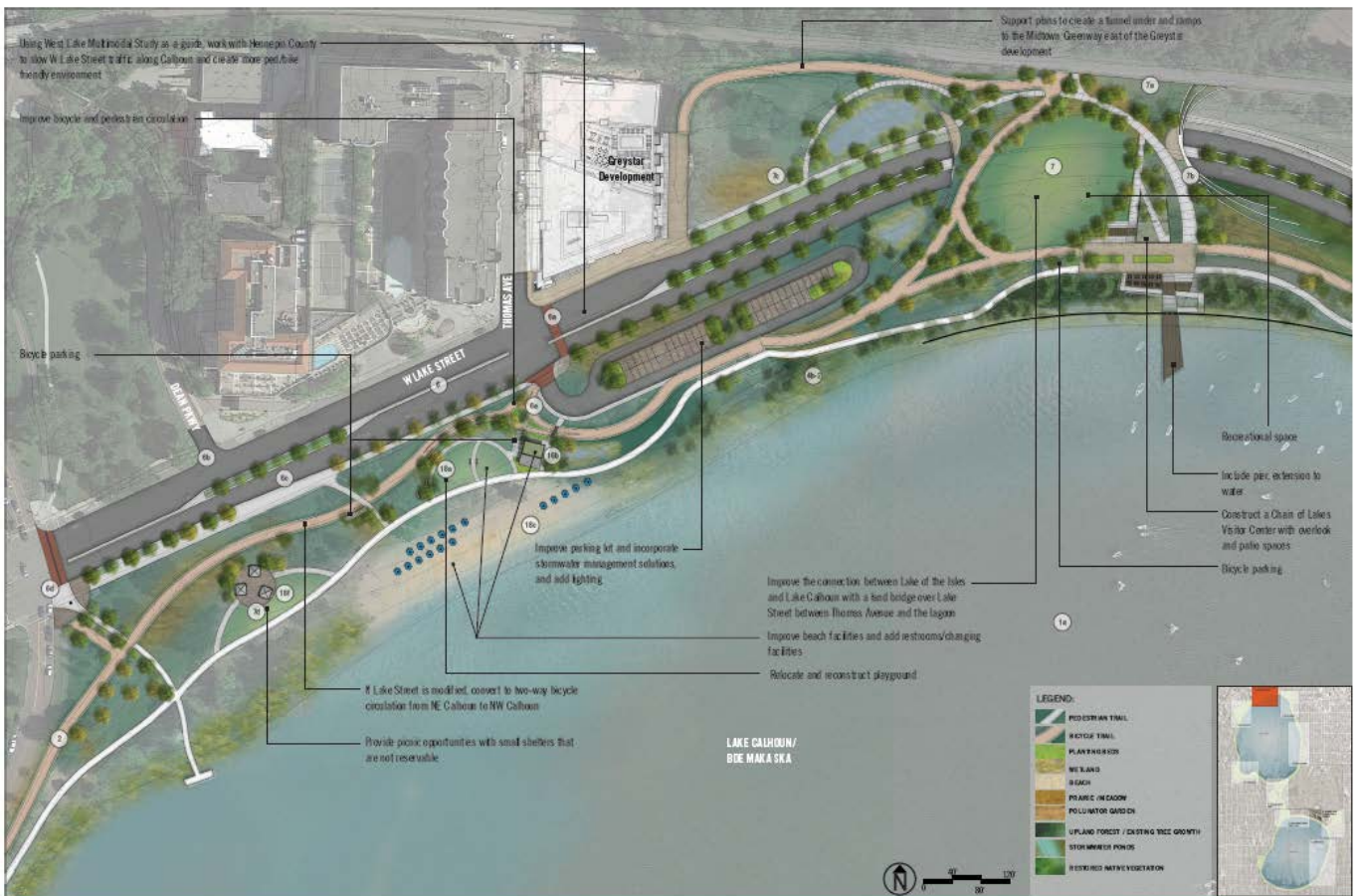
Figure 2. NE Bde Maka Ska Focus Area



North Bde Maka Ska:

1. Align improvements with the West Lake Multimodal Transportation Study and continue to work with other agencies to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Lake Street at Dean Parkway, Thomas Avenue, and East Calhoun Parkway.
2. Improve the connection between Lake of the Isles and Bde Maka Ska. Preserve opportunities for creating a land bridge over Lake Street between Thomas Avenue and the lagoon. In the short-term, support plans to create the tunnel under and ramps to the Midtown Greenway east of Thomas Avenue.
3. Improve North Beach facilities. Add restrooms/changing facilities with storage and picnic opportunities (including non-reserved small shelters). Relocate and reconstruct the playground.
4. Improve the north parking lot through stormwater treatment and added lighting (per MPRB standards).

*Figure 3: North Bde Maka Ska Focus Area*



### Northwest Bde Maka Ska Focus Area

1. In any discussions of future redevelopment of adjoining private property, ensure its alignment with the master plan. Advocate for benefits to the lake and park users, such as shared use parking and transit connections.
2. Realign a section of West Calhoun Parkway to increase recreational space along the lakeshore.
3. Create a lakeside building with restrooms and sufficient space for the sailing school and yacht club. The building may include a Chain of Lakes visitor center, concessions, meeting rooms and gathering spaces. Provide supporting facilities along the shore for the sailing school. Relocate buoy field as necessary.
4. Add a dock and an in-lake boardwalk along the shoreline where space for trails is limited. Restore riprap shoreline to native vegetation and incorporate features to improve water quality.
5. Provide a boat launch with related short-term parking. The launch and supporting infrastructure off the parking lot shall be sufficient for public launching, emergency access, and MPRB's environmental stewardship operations.
6. Create a promenade from the terminus of Market Street at Excelsior Boulevard to West Lake Calhoun Parkway that could be used as a staging area for programming and events and that could integrate recreational amenities, such as a skate park.
7. Consolidate and integrate drainage, flood storage, and treatment of on-site runoff.

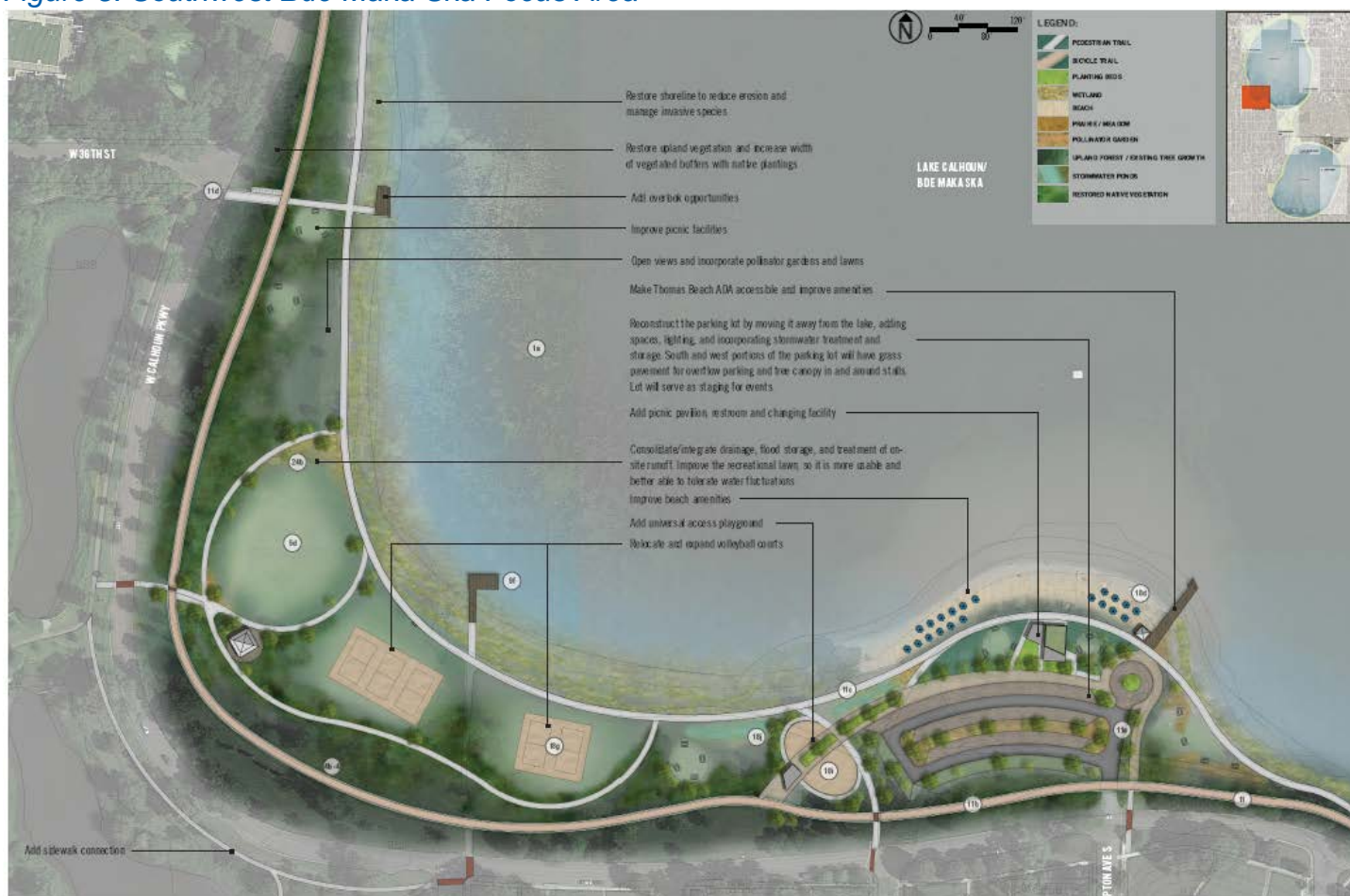
Figure 4: Northwest Bde Maka Ska Focus Area



## Southwest Bde Maka Ska Focus Area

1. Consolidate/integrate drainage, flood storage, and treatment of on-site runoff. Improve the recreational lawn, making it resilient to water fluctuations and more usable.
2. Add universal access playground.
3. Make Thomas Beach accessible consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
4. Add a building with a changing facility, restrooms, and with space for aquatics program.
5. Provide improved small and large picnic facilities to support gatherings of various sizes with nearby open lawn; relocate and expand volleyball courts.
6. Reconstruct the parking lot, moving it away from the lake, adding spaces, lighting, and incorporating storm water treatment. Minimize loss of usable park space when reconfiguring the parking lot.

Figure 5: Southwest Bde Maka Ska Focus Area





### East Bde Maka Ska Focus Area

1. Convert the playground south of the beach to nature play, with play opportunities for all ages.
2. Improve water quality entering the lake from the ECCO neighborhood watershed by daylighting the storm sewer at 33rd Street and integrating recreational amenities such as boardwalks into the storm water treatment.
3. Provide an ADA compliant ramp at 32nd Street and make the crossing and access at 34th Street fully ADA compliant.
4. At parkway crossings, provide sufficient landing areas along the west curb of East Calhoun Parkway. Reconstruct stairways leading down to the lake.
5. Collaborate with the City of Minneapolis to improve the 36th Street West intersection for bicycle circulation.
6. Protect and restore the oak woodlands

Figure 6: East Bde Maka Ska Focus Area Recommendations



### South Bde Maka Ska and William Berry Focus Area

1. In collaboration with the Native American community, descendants of Mahpiya Wicasta/Chief Cloudman and other interested participants, create a *gathering place*/ interpretive area along the south and southeast shores of Bde Maka Ska to commemorate Cloudman Village and honor the broader history and culture of the Dakota and other indigenous peoples who frequented and/or resided in this area.
2. Prioritize at-grade pedestrian and bicycle circulation at the intersection of Richfield Road and William Berry Parkway. Explore a “Barnes Dance” solution in collaboration with the City of Minneapolis.
3. Replace and enlarge the maintenance facility and screen related outdoor storage. Consider a multi-functional facility that can serve other park uses (such as restrooms).
4. Add a bicycle trail in the eastern part of William Berry that provides a two-way connection to 36th Street.
5. Consider the possibility of adding a trolley stop.
6. Improve drainage and create more usable turf for recreational areas and features, restoring the remainder of the site to wetlands and native plant communities.
7. Add picnic facilities and related bay parking along the parkways.
8. Adjust the location and upgrade the archery range with target challenges and ADA access.
9. Provide a medicine garden of historic plants used by the Dakota at the southeast corner of Bde Maka Ska or near the existing archery range.
10. Improve crosswalks for all visitors at William Berry Parkway, 39th Street (west side of William Berry Woods), Richfield Road, and East Calhoun Parkway.

Figure 7: South Bde Maka Ska and William Berry Focus Area



### Lake Harriet Focus Areas (3)

#### *Lake Harriet Bandshell Focus Area*

1. Remove turnaround at the terminus of 42nd Street West and landscape the space for trail use and stormwater management.
2. Relocate the south entrance to the west parking lot and convert a short segment of West Lake Harriet Parkway to two-way circulation with a parkway roundabout adjacent to the north end of the parking lot.
3. Create a pedestrian east-west axial path between the west entrance of Roberts Bird Sanctuary and West Lake Harriet Parkway, prioritizing pedestrian movement and providing ample bicycle parking. Construct an all gender restroom along the path.
4. Remove the bicycle trail which crosses north of the Bandshell area, rerouting it along West Lake Harriet Parkway north of the playground and picnic area "bowl".
5. Rework the plaza and circulation between the Bandshell and the lake, improving access to the water, clarifying circulation around use areas, including the boat launch.
6. Add a semi-circular pier at the Bandshell that incorporates storm water treatment and provides a lawn and seating.
7. Improve the west entrance into Roberts Bird Sanctuary, making it ADA accessible.
8. Add a dock designated for boat rental concessionaire.
9. Create a dock with facilities for the adaptive sailing program.

Figure 8: Lake Harriet Bandshell Focus Area



### Lake Harriet - Lyndale Park Focus Area

1. Add a multi-use two-way trail west of Roseway Road.
2. On Roseway Road, increase on-street parking that more directly serves the gardens.
3. Strengthen the physical and visual connection between historic rose gardens and lake including enhanced plantings and a raised road section between the lake trails and gardens. Keep views open to the lake.
4. As the crabapple grove at south side of gardens ages and declines, remove the trees to create a formal and historically appropriate access and gateway into gardens from the parkway.
5. Restore the gardens, respecting their historic integrity. Provide accessible paths to and within the garden, and comfort facilities, such as benches and shade, for park visitors. Replace fencing with a style more suitable to the historic character of the gardens.
6. Reorganize and improve maintenance facilities west of Roseway Road, a shared restroom facility on the south end of the Roberts Bird Sanctuary parking lot. Restore unused areas to bird habitat.

7. Expand and improve the garden experience with added arboretum features and interpretation. Add accessible paths.

Figure 9: Lake Harriet – Lyndale Park Focus Area





*Lake Harriet Lower Road Focus Area*

- 1. Close the Lower Road on the east side of Harriet to motorized traffic.*
- 2. Convert the abandoned alignment to a two-way bicycle trail. Enhance stormwater treatment and consider pollinator gardens.*
- 3. Create open lawn areas as sun pockets along the east shore with overlooks and views to the lake.*
- 4. Improve parkway crossing for trails at Minnehaha Creek.*
- 5. Reconstruct and improve the existing stairway at 47th Street West. Add ramp and access at 44th Street West, preserving significant trees.*
- 6. Protect and restore the oak woodlands along the east and south slopes of Lake Harriet.*

Figure 10: Lake Harriet Lower Road Focus Area



## **Conflicts**

The master plan did not identify any conflicts between the Bde Maka Ska – Lake Harriet Master Plan and any existing or proposed projects or land uses.

## **Public Services**

The master plan does not identify any non-recreational public services or facilities that are needed to accommodate the proposed master plan.

## **Operations**

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's ordinances and Comprehensive Plan define the rules and regulations for the use of its regional parks and trails.

Maintenance of the facilities are completed by the MPRB's Environmental Stewardship Division which includes: The Asset Management department to handle mowing, snowplowing, debris removal, lighting and facilities maintenance; Environmental Management department for the park's natural resource protection; and the Forestry department for maintenance of the urban forest, including park trees.

The maintenance plan also includes seasonal condition assessments and periodic inspections, with subsequent maintenance actions when necessary. Routine maintenance throughout the year will include sign inventory and replacement, spring cleanup, and minor bridge and underpass repair (April-May); erosion repair, fence repair and sign replacement (July-September); and bituminous patching and striping replacement (October-November), as needed. Three Rivers' regional trail maintenance crews will maintain the trail. An additional 0.5 FTE maintenance position will be needed to provide regional trail maintenance services.

MPRB will continue to maintain and operate Bde Maka Ska and Harriet as it has in the past. Capital replacement of site facilities and equipment will be scheduled as needed and as funding allows. Operation and maintenance (O&M) expenditures throughout Bde Maka Ska and Harriet are and will be funded by the MPRB's annual operations and maintenance budget with supplementary funding from the State appropriations that are passed through the Metropolitan Council to regional park implementing agencies for operations. Revenue generated by parking fees, special events, or programs are normally placed in the MPRB's general revenue budget and typically do not fund O&M in its regional parks. Certain projects that include habitat restoration efforts or significant water quality improvements may qualify for additional State funding programs, such as the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment or federal funding programs.

New facilities envisioned in the master plan will require an increase in operational funding and staffing. Currently, MPRB does not track maintenance expenditures for Bde Maka Ska and Harriet separately from the overall Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park. Based on a general per-acre cost of maintenance for regional parks as a whole, current maintenance expenditures for Bde Maka Ska and Harriet can be estimated at \$2.036 million. The annual maintenance cost with full master plan built out is estimated to increase by approximately \$10.6 million.

## **Public Engagement and Participation**

A process to engage stakeholders including the public as well as affected agencies, and local units of government was identified at the beginning of the planning process. Public engagement and participation activities occurred beginning with a design charrette in 2012. The majority of the master

plan engagement activities took place during 2015 and 2016 and consisted of a variety of meetings and events through to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board public hearing in April 2017.

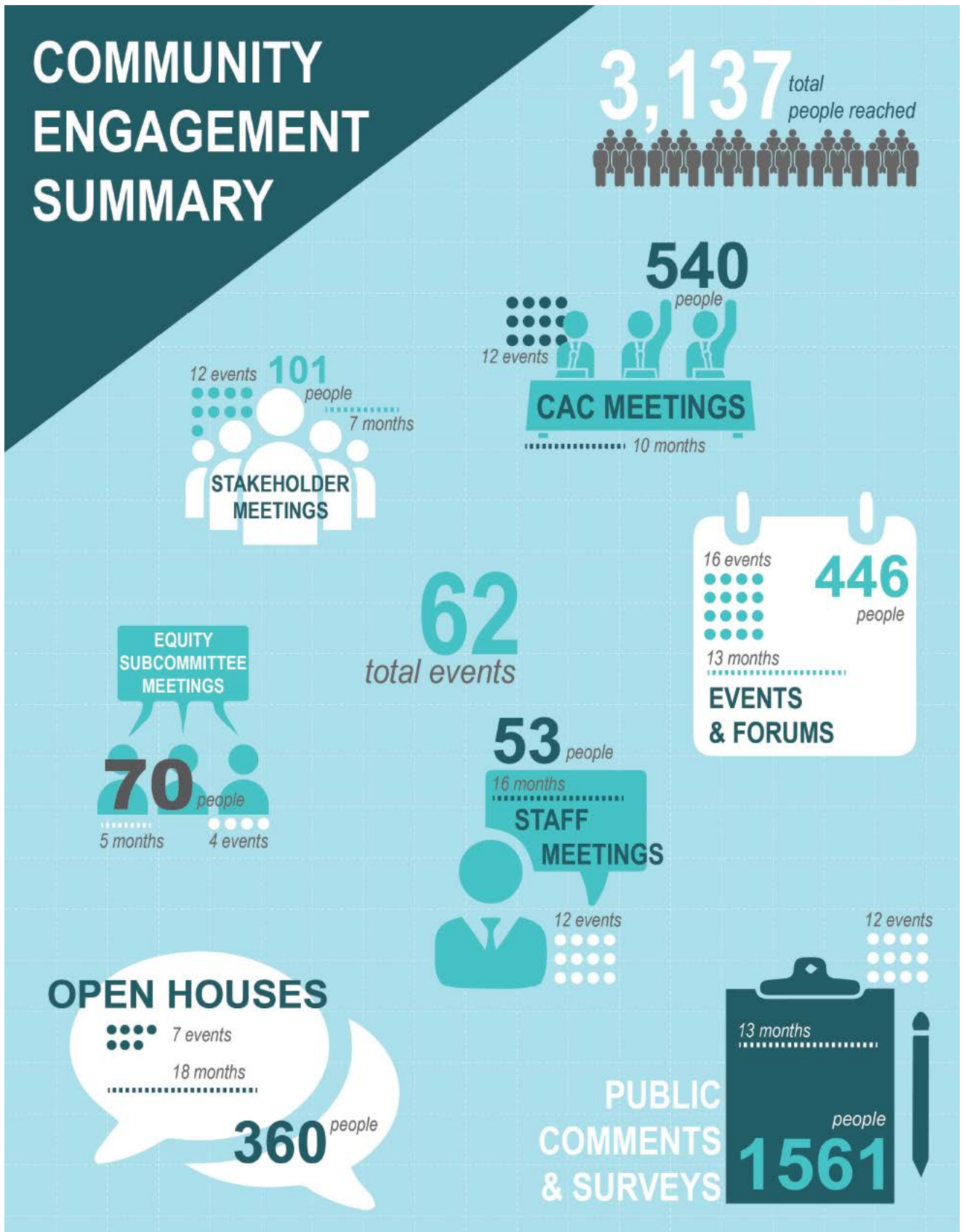
The official master plan process for Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet began with the preparation of a Community Engagement (CE) Plan submitted to the MPRB Commissioners in early 2015. The Community Engagement Plan included the determination that the community engagement would involve a “COLLABORATE” level of engagement.

Because of the complexity of the project and the need for deeply informed decisions, an appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was recommended to guide the master planning process. An appointed committee would insure continuity in the process; members would understand the project background and the rationale that led to design recommendations. In total, twelve CAC meetings were held. The CAC completed its charge in May of 2016.

CAC meetings were only one method of community engagement for the process. The project schedule also included five open houses. A majority of the attendees at the CAC meetings and open houses were from the neighborhoods around the lakes, with the exception of CAC Meeting #9, when the recommendation to restore the name Bde Maka Ska to Lake Calhoun was discussed and voted upon. The topic drew residents from the entire city, many of whom were people of color.

Surveys were another method of collecting input from the community. Research assistants conducted intercept surveys at the lakes during the summer of 2015, interviewing those who were actually using the parks. The MPRB project webpage posted a link to a survey, which collected comments throughout the planning process. Below (Figure 11) is a graphic from the plan summarizing the extent of the community engagement.

Figure 11: Community Engagement Summary



At the end of the CAC process, MPRB staff and consultants began preparation of the Master Plan report. The master plan draft was written over an eight-month period. The MPRB Commissioners offered a 45-day comment period beginning on January 18, 2017 and running through March 4, 2017. Each of the more than 2,200 comments were read by MPRB staff, sorted into 171 themes, charted on a spreadsheet, and grouped as “no impact,” “low impact,” moderate impact,” and “high impact.” Comments that fell into the first group did not warrant changes to the draft document and were generally supportive. Comments in the low and moderate impact groups resulted in changes to the draft document. Those changes were accepted by the MPRB when they approved the plan. At the public hearing, 30 people spoke, generally in support of the plan, or in support of the most substantive changes in the “moderate impact” group such as keeping the Lake Street bicycle underpass open. Addressing themes in the “high impact” category would necessitate system-wide policy discussion and changes in how the MPRB currently does business. The MPRB adopted the plan at its May 3, 2017 regular meeting.

### **Public Awareness**

The public was informed of the master planning process through the MPRB project web page, through news releases, GovDelivery (a digital communications platform for government organizations, through social media), and on-site signage. News releases, including those about surveys, are sent to those who shared their email addresses on sign-up sheets at CAC meetings and open houses or who have sent emails to MPRB staff. The *Star Tribune* and many neighborhood newspapers and electronic newsletters have posted articles on specific issues discussed by the CAC during the master plan process.

The Board’s approved master plan will be posted on the MPRB website. As improvements are funded and constructed, the MPRB will follow established community engagement procedures which currently include project web pages, news releases, surveys, mailings, and emails. Explanatory signs will be posted on site once a project is under construction. The park webpage will be updated to reflect added amenities. As wayfinding signs and MPRB system maps are updated/replaced, changes to the parks will be added.

### **Accessibility**

The master plan indicates that all regional park facilities will be designed in accordance with Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards and guidelines. Specific improvements for accessibility for the various focus areas are detailed in the Development Concept section of this report. MBRB does not charge entrance fees for use of its regional parks and trails, making them available for all users.

### **Natural Resources**

Early in the planning process, the public identified preservation and enhancement of the park’s natural resources as one of its top priorities. Water quality was especially important. The community expressed concern that the ecological health of the park and the two lakes are compromised by the current amount of human use and wanted to protect and improve these natural resources for future generations. The community also recognized that recreational use of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, and of Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet in particular, will only increase in the future. Throughout the public engagement process, the community consistently favored a balance between preserving and enhancing natural resources and accommodating recreational use.

The plan has six focus areas for recommendations regarding natural resources:

1. Maintain and improve water quality in Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet.

2. Consider stormwater management in all new development and redevelopment in the Chain of Lakes, including use of Best Management Practices to reduce runoff and retain and treat stormwater, and green infrastructure solutions where feasible and in harmony with other park uses.
3. Reduce and repair erosion along the shorelines, while maintaining views and adequate access from the parkways and trails.
4. Increase efforts to prevent and control invasive species, both terrestrial and aquatic.
5. Protect, maintain, and enhance existing native plant communities. Increase pollinator-friendly native plantings and habitat.
6. Regarding vegetation:
  - A. Using the master plan as a base, develop and implement a tree planting plan for the parks in consultation with Forestry and Water and Natural Resources staff.
  - B. Replant heritage native trees as they age and die out.
  - C. Strive for a no-net-loss of trees in project areas.
  - D. In manicured landscapes, plant trees and vegetation that preserve views and the open space designated for recreation as well as providing sun and shade options for park users.
  - E. Plant species-appropriate natural areas and landscapes (e.g. in oak savannah restoration areas, eliminate non-oaks and restore savannah groundcover).

*Review by Other Council Divisions*

**Community Development – Environment and Surface Water Management** (Jim Larsen 651-602-1159) – No comments

**Environmental – Sewers** (Roger Janzig 651-602-1119) – Any proposed project for new construction or updating may have an impact on multiple Metropolitan Council Interceptors in multiple locations. To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system, prior to initiating any proposed project, preliminary plans should be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503), at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment.

**Metro Transit** (Steve Mahowald 612-349-7775) –We encourage the Park Board to work with Metro Transit to explore the possibilities of making more convenient connections between bus Route 6 and the historic streetcar line to improve access between bus transit and events at the Lake Harriet Bandshell. The funding required for enhancing the existing historic streetcar service would likely be less than the funding which would be required for an all-new circulator bus around the lakes.

**Transportation Planning** (Russ Owen 651-602-1724) – No comments.

**Local Planning Assistance** (Michael Larson 651-602-1407) – The Master Plan’s recommended improvements are consistent with Thrive Land Use policies for Natural Resource Protection and Water Sustainability in that the plan further conserves, restores, and protects the region’s natural resources to ensure availability, supports public health, and maintains a high quality of life. Given the land use intensity of the Uptown area of Minneapolis, as well as the significant popularity of this regional park, the plan also supports policies related to Access, Mobility, and Transportation Choice. The plan acknowledges the risks and challenges associated with busy roadways and conflicts between modes, and makes recommendations for improvements that improve access, circulation, and safety by non-motorized users.

**Regional Parks and Natural Resources** (Emmett Mullin 651-602-1360) – Approval of the skate park is contingent on pending design standards in the Regional Parks Policy Plan.