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October 26, 2023

Mr. Emmett Mullin
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Submittal of the MPRB Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles for Approval by the Metropolitan Council

Dear Mr. Mullin:

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) would like to request review and approval the MPRB Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles which was adopted by the MPRB Board of Commissioners on July 5, 2023.

The project area includes Cedar Lake and the surrounding parkland, Lake of the Isles and the surrounding parkland, the Kenilworth Channel, Dean Parkway, and a portion of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail to the west of Cedar Lake.

The plan includes six chapters:
1. Introduction
2. History of the Lakes
3. Community Engagement
4. Existing Conditions
5. The Cedar-Isles Plan
6. Implementation

It also includes Appendix A and B. These documents have been uploaded to the Met Council portal and you can also access them through One Drive here: 2023 October Met Council Cedar-Isles Submittal.

Please let me know what else I can provide to help move this process forward.

Sincerely,

Emma R. Pachuta
Senior Planner
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

CC: Adam Arvidson, MPRB
Colin Kelly, Met Council

Accredited CAPRA ACCREDITED since 2010

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board is grateful to the many community members, advisory committee members, organizations, consultants, MPRB sta, and partner agency sta who contributed to this park plan.

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INDIGENOUS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We collectively acknowledge that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board system is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. This land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region.

We also acknowledge that restrictive covenants were used to deny Black, Indigenous, Asian and in some cases Jewish individuals access to property in surrounding neighborhoods. This had an impact on who was and was not o□cially welcome in this area.

Cedar-Isles Plan Native land acknowledgment co-created by MPRB project sta□ and CAC members.

Dock at Lake of the Isles. Source: TEN x TEN

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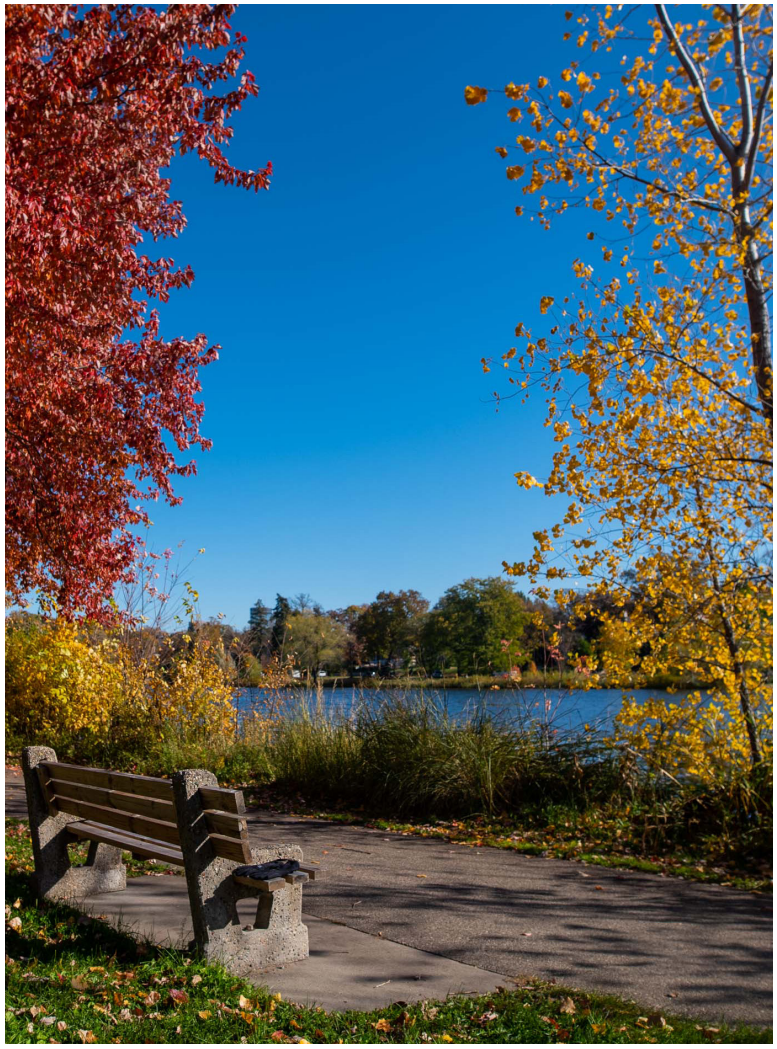

Bench at Lake of the Isles

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

1.1 OVERVIEW
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1.1 OVERVIEW

Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, Dean Parkway, the Kenilworth Channel, and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail are destinations for millions of local and regional of visitors each year. People who visit these parks enjoy a multitude of year-round activities including walking, biking, swimming, fishing, canoe/kayaking, cross-country skiing, and ice skating. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board spent more than three years creating a community-centered vision for this area of parkland to be implemented over the next 20 to 30 years.

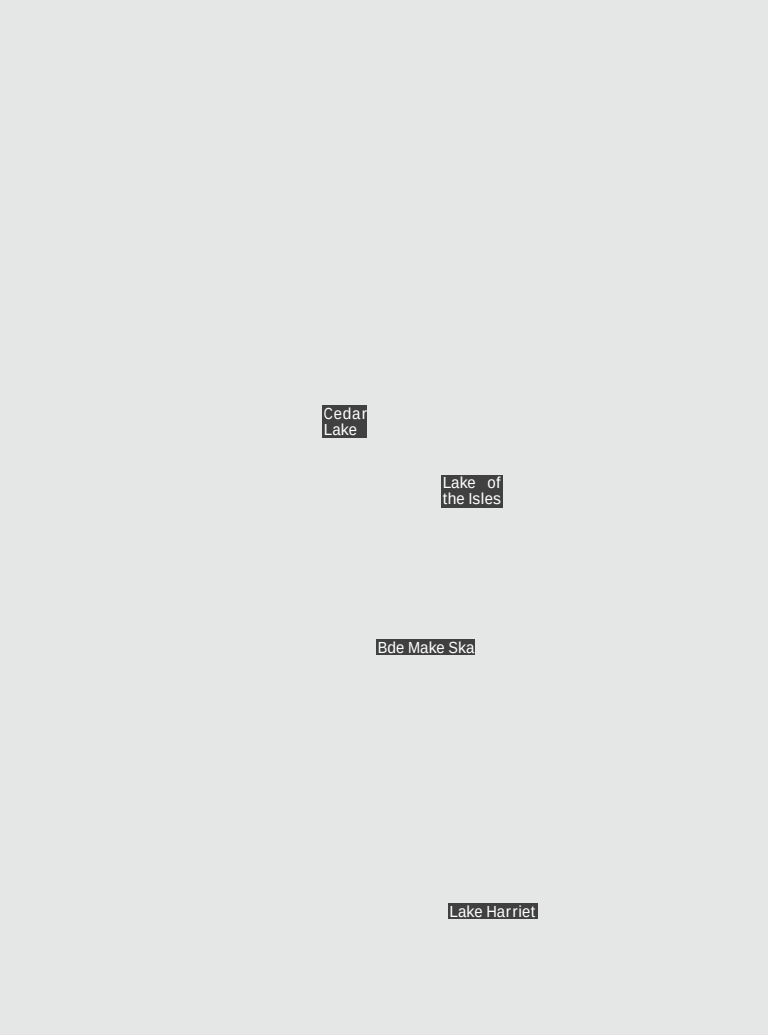


Figure 1.1: The Cedar-Isles Plan Area within the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park

1.2 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) oversees neighborhood and regional parks in the City of Minneapolis. MPRB's twenty regional parks and trails received an estimated 24.2 million visits in 2021 according to the Metropolitan Council's Annual Use Estimate, its highest visitation ever. Park types range from local neighborhood play lots to large natural areas to the 55-mile Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. MPRB provides administration, planning, development, maintenance, and protection for parks and recreational facilities in the system. Environmental, recreational, and other programs and services are provided for park users of all ages and abilities.

Established in 1883, MPRB is the governing agency responsible for improving, operating, and maintaining Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. The nine-member Board of Commissioners is an independently elected body responsible for ensuring that the Minneapolis Park system meets the needs of Minneapolis community members. Every four years, commissioners are elected to this Board: one from each of the six park districts within the city and three that serve at-large. This unique structure allows for independent decision-making so MPRB can e□ciently oversee a diverse system of land and water.

REGIONAL PARK PLANNING

Two agencies approve regional park plans: the Metropolitan Council and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Metropolitan Council guides regional parks in the seven-county Twin Cities area. These regional parks have many purposes, from preserving green space and wildlife habitat to providing a wide range of natural resource-based recreational opportunities. They are significant to their local and regional communities. The Regional Parks and Open Space System (MPOSC) was established in 1974. It was created in response to state legislation and is supported by the Metropolitan Council in partnership with ten implementing agencies representing cities, counties, and special park districts who operate regional parks and trails.

The regional parks are funded in large part by the State of Minnesota and the Metropolitan Council. They are considered the state parks of the metropolitan region, and as such are meant to be enjoyed by everyone: people that live in the adjacent neighborhoods, people who live in Minneapolis and adjacent cities, and people visiting from outside of the region. As dictated by Minnesota Statute 473.313, the Metropolitan Council requires a plan to be developed and updated regularly for each regional park, park reserve, trail, and special recreation feature in the seven-county Metro Area.

As the implementing agency for the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, the MPRB is therefore responsible for developing this plan for this park. Plan approval is necessary to be eligible for regional parks system capital funding for land acquisition and development, as well as planning, funding, and advocacy support from the Metropolitan Council. The Brownie Lake Plan was adopted by MPRB in 2012 and the Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Park Plan was completed and adopted by MPRB Commissioners and the Metropolitan Council in 2017. There have been several previous planning e□orts completed for portions of parkland within the project area, however, this will be the first o□cially adopted plan for the Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles area.

1.3 ABOUT THIS PLAN

PLAN PURPOSE

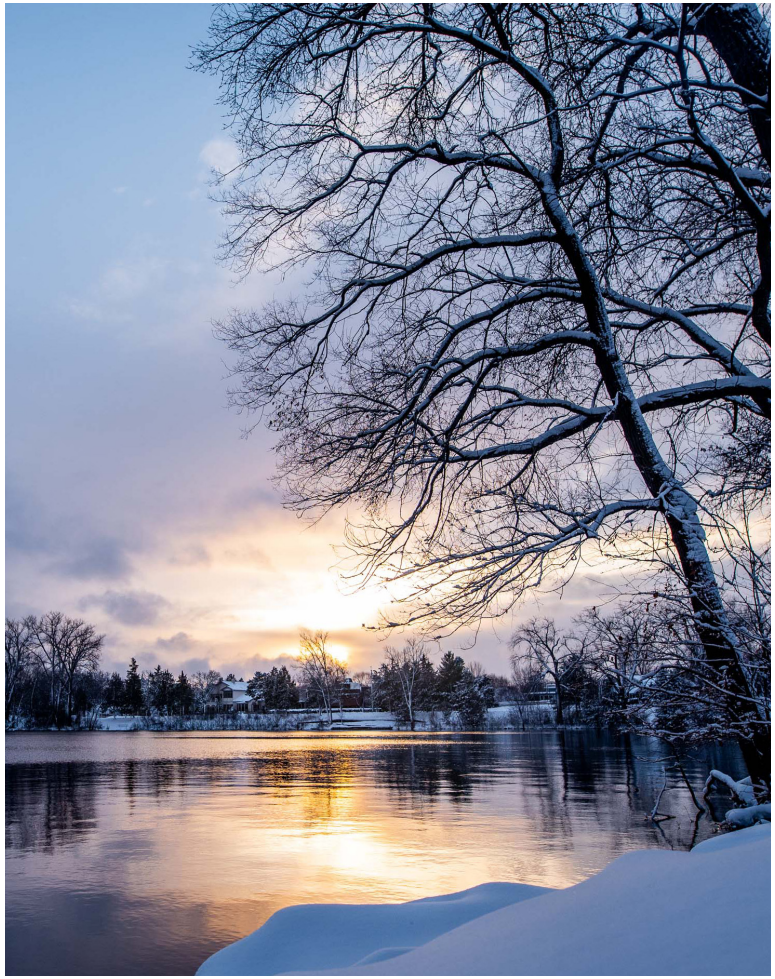
Park planning plays a critical role in the Park Board's mission. Objectives of a park plan include the following:

- Set a vision to guide long-term development and improvements to a park or group of parks,
- Guide stewardship and help ensure that park features and amenities reflect the needs of the communities they serve,
- Help ensure long-term financial and ecological sustainability,
- Involve extensive engagement with individual and group stakeholders, other community partners, and governmental entities, and
- Foster and include extensive review and comment by the public through a variety of methods, and achieve approval by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) of Commissioners.

The completed park plan will direct policy and design implementation for the park land in the project area for the next 20 to 30 years.

RENAMING OF THE "MASTER" PLAN

Over the last few years, universities, organizations, and government institutions have begun to grapple with their role in institutional and systemic racism. One facet of this is the power of language. The term "master," which is often defined as commanding control or being eminently skilled, has been identified as a word to remove in certain contexts due to its connection with the history of masters and slavery in the United States[1]. In addition, "master" connotes an inability for the general public to impact decision-making, as opposed to responsive planning by an accountable public agency. As MPRB continues to acknowledge its role in systemic racism, sta plans to eliminate the term "master" when referring to MPRB planning processes and final plan documents. This current plan is titled The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles. Though MPRB is changing its naming procedures moving forward, this planning document still refers to previously named "master" plans and images as applicable.



Sunset at Cedar Lake

1 Christian Science Monitor, June 2021. "As English evolves, so too does the word 'master'"

STUDY AREA

The Cedar-Isles Plan includes Cedar Lake and the surrounding parkland, Lake of the Isles and the surrounding parkland, Dean Parkway, the Kenilworth Channel that connects both lakes, and a portion of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail beginning at Highway 100 in St. Louis Park and running east to where the trail connects to the Kenilworth Regional Trail (see Figure 1.3).

WATER QUALITY FOCUS

Water quality was consistently identified as a top theme and priority by the public throughout the planning process. During the spring of 2022, additional water quality-specific CAC meetings were added to the schedule in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the health of the lakes and establish robust goals. The final recommendations and plan were developed through the lens of addressing and improving water quality within the project area.

TIMELINE

Park planning processes generally take 18-24 months to complete. Due to challenges outside of the project's control, this plan process took 36+ months with the longest timeline extension happening in 2020 to respond to statewide COVID-19 shutdowns (see Figure 1.2).

Though this process took longer than usual, a number of residents, organizations, and Community Advisory Committee members stayed engaged throughout the entire process

IMPACT FROM GLOBAL ISSUES

The Cedar-Isles planning process o□cially launched in December 2019, a few months before the Minnesota statewide COVID-19 shutdowns. The COVID-19 shutdowns, alongside the murder of George Floyd and racial reckoning that followed in May 2020, completely upended social norms and protocols throughout the city of Minneapolis and across the country. Due to these realities, MPRB sta□ adapted, delayed, and extended original timelines to better respond to current situations. These delays had their own impact, both positively and negatively, on who was able to engage throughout the planning process.

The Cedar-Isles Community Advisory Committee (CAC) gave guidance to proceed forward virtually in the fall 2020 and MPRB sta□ ultimately began the plan process virtually, which included all community engagement and meetings.

As COVID-19 guidelines continued to shift in 2021 and 2022, MPRB began to o□er a combination of virtual, outdoor in-person, and eventually indoor in-person meetings and engagement to account for as many people's comfort levels and safety concerns as possible.

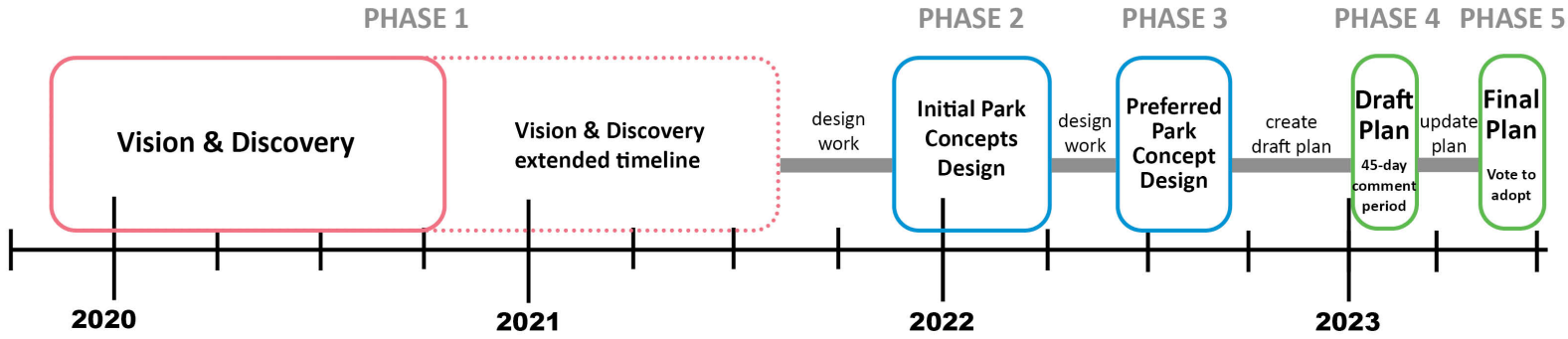
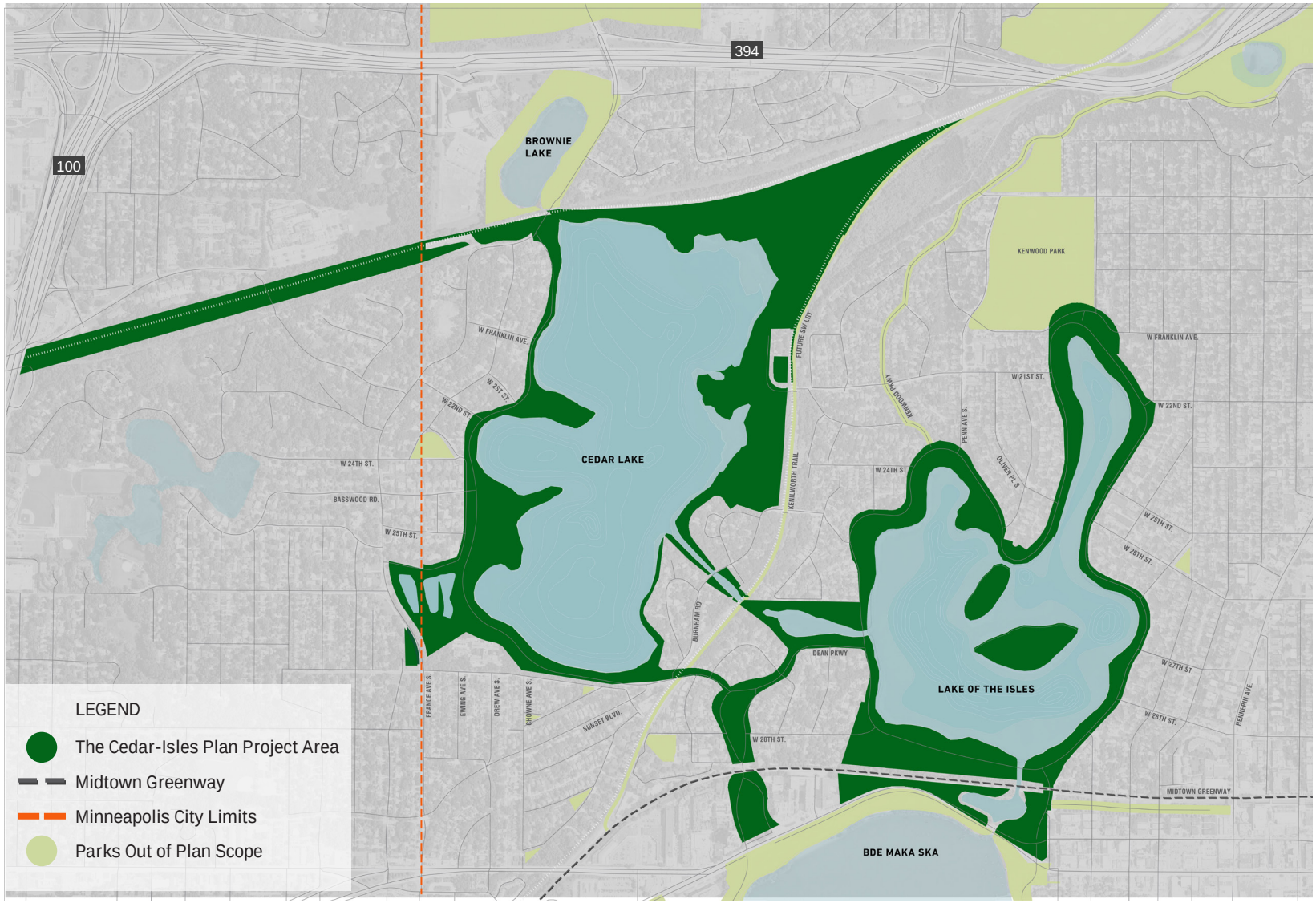


Figure 1.2: Timeline of plan process

Figure 1.3: The Cedar-Isles Plan Project Area



1.4 RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

MPRB PLANNING EFFORTS

A number of recently adopted MPRB plans have informed and are informed by the Plan for Cedar-Isles, including:

PARKS FOR ALL: MPRB COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2021-2036 (2021)

This document sets policy direction for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board from 2021 through 2036. It includes an updated mission, vision, and values along with subsequent goals and strategies.

SOUTHWEST SERVICE AREA MASTER PLAN (2020)

A 20 to 30-year vision for the neighborhood parks located south of I-394 and west of I-35W that will guide park improvements, provides cost estimates for improvements, and includes operations and maintenance cost estimates. A number of the parks in the planning document are in the neighborhoods adjacent to the project area for this park plan.

ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM PLAN (2020)

A plan that provides a system-wide framework for how environmental considerations can be addressed in ongoing planning e□orts for MPRB and outlines how MPRB can partner with other local, regional, and statewide organizations to achieve shared environmental goals.

NATURAL AREAS MANAGEMENT PLAN PHASES 1 & 2 (2017 & 2021)

Phase 1 identifies a preliminary inventory and definition of plant communities throughout the 2,800+ acres of natural areas within the MPRB system. Phase 2 lays out methods and strategies to manage natural areas and the resources needed to accomplish this.

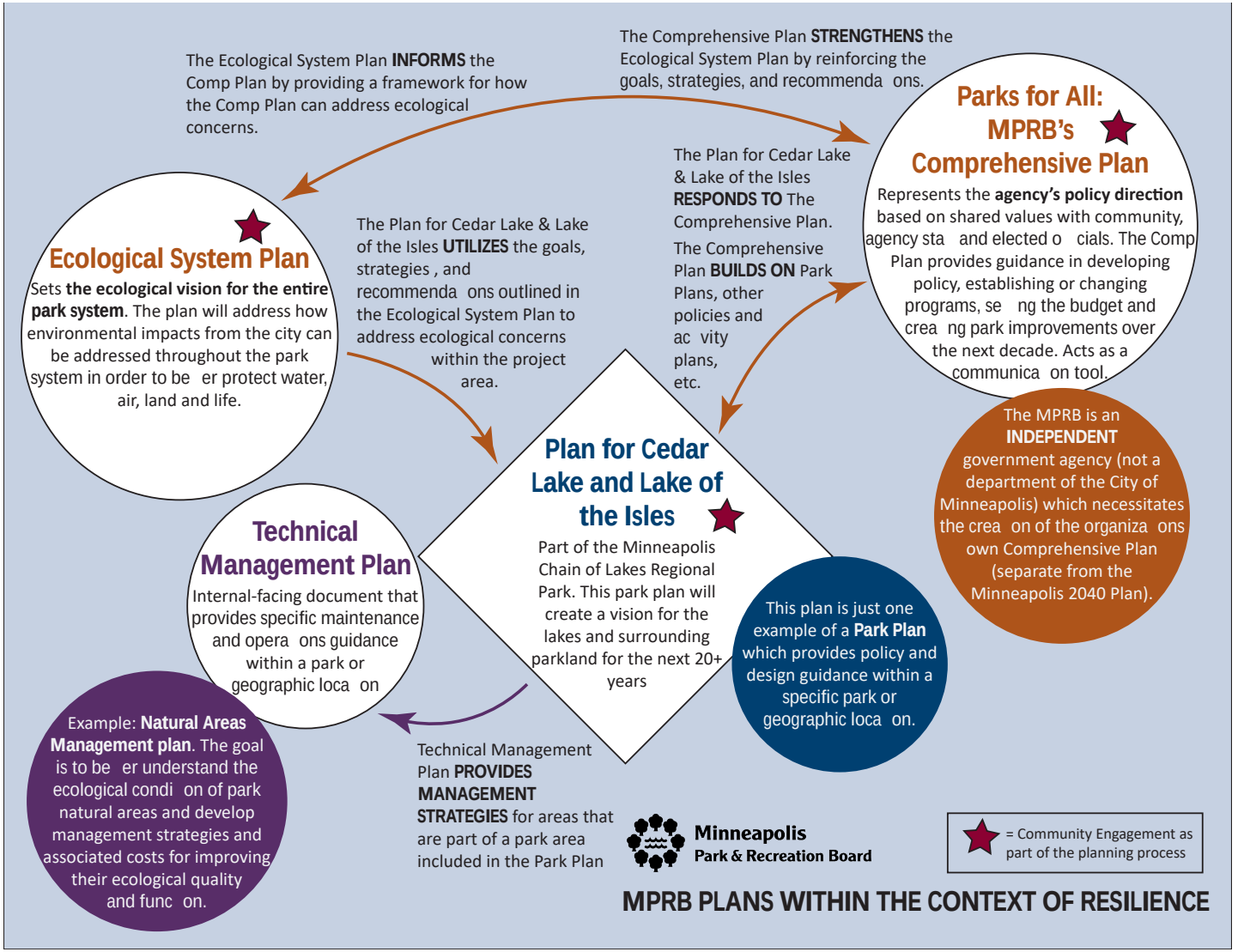
GRAND ROUNDS CANAL SYSTEM AND LAKE OF THE ISLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN (2023)

This planning document has been created alongside the Cedar-Isles Plan to meet 106 requirements to mitigate adverse a□ects from the southwest light rail project on parkland. MPRB has a Memorandum of Understanding with Metro Transit to complete this portion of the work. The final document is included as Appendix A.

OTHER CURRENT PLANS OF NOTE

- Southwest Light Rail (SWLRT) planning process and construction (currently underway)
- City of Minneapolis Transportation Action Plan (2020)
- Minneapolis 2040: The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Minneapolis (2018)
- The Metropolitan Council's 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (2018)
- Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Watershed Management Plan (2018)
- MPRB's Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Master Plan (2017)
- MPRB's Brownie Lake Plan (2012)

Figure 1.4: Image created for CAC Meeting #4 depicting how other MPRB plans inform the Cedar-Isles Plan



HISTORY OF THE LAKES AND THEIR CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

CHAPTER 2

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2.2 INDIGENOUS LEGACY
2.3 PHYSICAL CHANGE OVER TIME
2.4 DESIGN AND PLANNING
2.5 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE
2.6 GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING AND DESIGN WITHIN A HISTORIC PROPERTY OR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

2.1 OVERVIEW

Lake of the Isles shoreline. Source: TEN x TEN

This section describes the historical, environmental, and cultural understanding of Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, Dean Parkway, the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, and the Kenilworth Channel. It begins with Indigenous legacy, followed by physical change over time, design and planning context, historic significance, and preservation recommendations for the cultural landscape.

Refer to the Lake of the Isles and Grand Rounds: Canal System Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) in Appendix A for more detailed information on site history, changes over time, and its historic significance. The HPP evaluates historic integrity and provides strategies for the preservation of the historic landscape and its features. Of note, this plan and the HPP study area have di□erent boundaries: the HPP study area boundaries encompass the Grand Rounds Historic District: Canal System, which includes the **Bde Maka Ska-Lake of the Isles Channel, the entirety of Lake of the Isles Park, and the Kenilworth Channel and Lagoon. The HPP constitutes a portion of the historic investigation associated with the Cedar-Isles Plan and is therefore an adopted part of this plan.

**Bde Maka Ska is the original Dakota name for Lake Calhoun, renamed in the late 1880s following the forced displacement of the Dakota people. During the planning process for Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet, many acknowledged the dark history of John C. Calhoun and discussed changing the name of the lake. The plan ultimately made a recommendation to return the lake to its original Dakota name. Following the plan's adoption in 2017, the MPRB changed the name of the lake back to Bde Maka Ska, as well as the surrounding street names that fell under its jurisdiction.

2.2 INDIGENOUS LEGACY

The region of the project area has been home to Indigenous communities for thousands of years. Despite relentless attempts to remove Indigenous Peoples from Minnesota, the descendants of the earliest inhabitants of this landscape are still present here today and their cultures rely on continued relationships with places of significance.

The land that is now Minnesota is significant to living indigenous people including members of the Upper Sioux Community, Lower Sioux Community, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Prairie Island Indian Community, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and other descendants of indigenous peoples who were here before Euro-Americans arrived.[1]

The project area is part of a broader landscape that is very significant to these communities. Places of importance include burial/earthwork sites, village sites, and sacred places. Figure 2.3 shows some of these significant places along the Minnesota and Mississippi River Valley.

Ancestors of today's indigenous communities were well established in Minnesota prior to the arrival of European Americans. At the time of European contact in the late 1600s, many Eastern Dakota peoples lived along and east of the Mississippi River. Today known as the Dakota, the term "Eastern Dakota" originally referred to the four eastern living tribes of the Oceti Sakowiŋ, or the seven council fires. Seven nations from the four cardinal directions make up Oceti Sakowiŋ. The Eastern Dakota refers to the Sisituŋwaŋ/Sisseton, the Wahpetuŋwaŋ/Wahpeton, the Wahpekute, and the Bdewakaŋtunwaŋ/Mdewakanton.

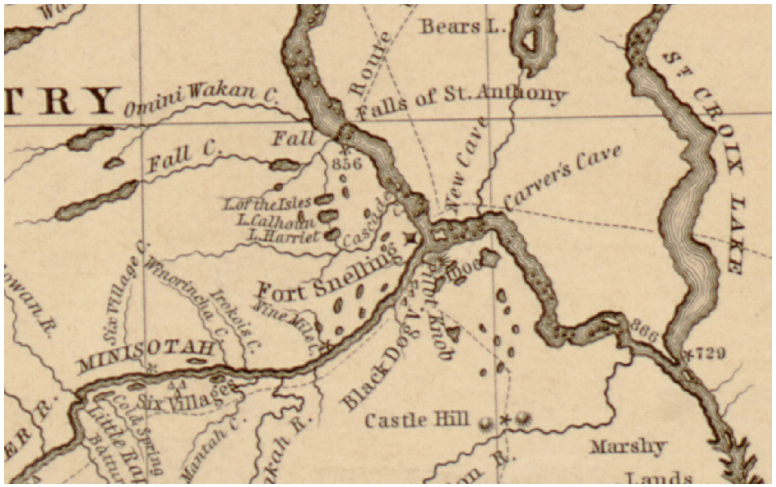


Figure 2.1: J. Nicollet. Map of the Upper Mississippi River, 1843.

Figure 2.2: European settlers noted a Dakota Mdewakanton village, 1839.

1 The first four tribes listed frequently refer to themselves as the Minnesota Dakota or Eastern Dakota.

These peoples settled in relatively permanent villages within the prairie/forest border along and east of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. Among other practices, these peoples made tools of stone and bone, cooked with earthen pots, made bu□alo hunting trips to the plains, buried their dead with grave goods in earthen mounds, and developed deep and complex relationships with the land.[1]

1 John O. Anfinson, Thomas Madigan, Drew M. Forsberg, and Patrick Nunnally, "River of History: A Historic Resources Study of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area" (National Park Service, 2003), 51.

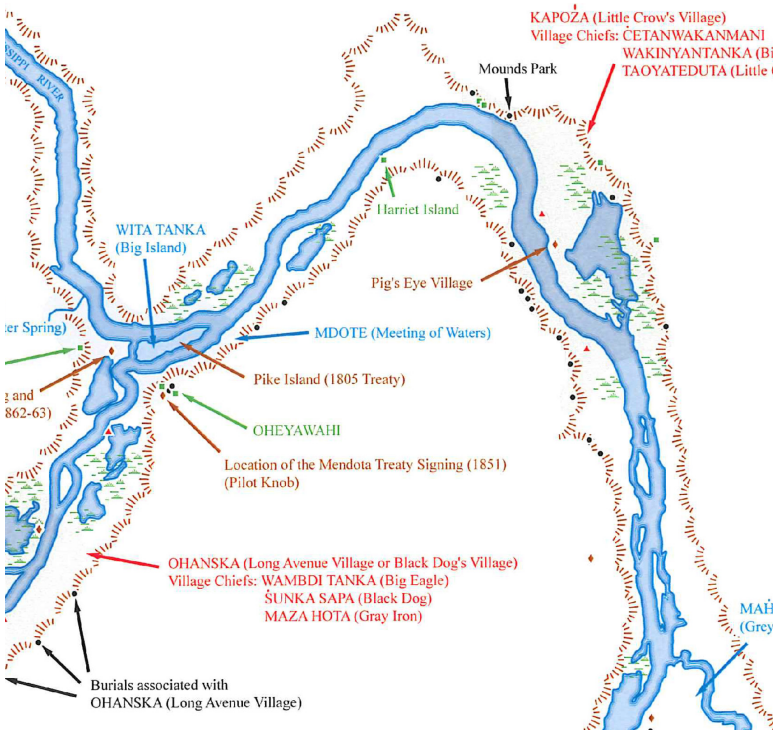


Figure 2.3: Dakota presence in the River Valley. Source: Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

In pursuit of westward expansion, the United States government undertook a series of actions that stripped indigenous tribes of ancestral land. In Minnesota, this process was initiated in 1805 with a treaty that resulted in the United States government taking more than 100,000 acres of land at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers - known as Bdote to the Dakota. Only two of the seven Dakota leaders present at the signing agreed to sell the land. No amount of money was specified for the "sale" and Dakota people were never paid for the value of the land. The treaty was never proclaimed (the final step in the ratification process) yet the United States considered the land to be sold and began altering the landscape. Subsequently, treaties in 1830, 1837, 1851, and 1858 transferred land rights from the Dakota to the United States, although the terms of the treaties were biased and rarely fulfilled by the government.

Following the Treaty of 1837, Dakota people were removed to reserved land. The "ceded" land was opened to Euro-American settlement, leading to the development of cities including Minneapolis.

One of the Dakota names for Lake of the Isles, Wita Tomna, means four islands lake. Although the project area landscape has changed over time, indigenous connections remain for members of tribes. Bodies of water are particularly important spiritual sites for the Minnesota Dakota. As explained in Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota, "In the beginning, the water—Mni—was pure, part of the land, and therefore part of the people. It was the first medicine given to our people because water keeps everything alive. Water that comes from within the earth is pure and as such is considered wakan or sacred." [2]

2 Gwen Westerman and Bruce White, Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota (St. Paul, Minnesota: The Minnesota Historical Society, 2012

2.3 PHYSICAL CHANGE OVER TIME

Parks have shaped Minneapolis' history and established its reputation as the City of Lakes. Early in the city's history, citizens were concerned about the city council's limited investment in public parks. The state legislature authorized a public referendum to create a park board and voters approved the formation of the Minneapolis Board of Park Commissioners (MBPC) in 1883 (this Board was later renamed the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board).[1]

The new board was authorized to acquire land for city parks. To guide this development, the MBPC brought in noted landscape architect, Horace Cleveland, in 1883 to present his plans for a system of parks and parkways throughout Minneapolis. Cleveland's vision eventually grew into the Grand Rounds, a connected series of parks highlighting the city's lakes, rivers, and creeks.[2]

The Grand Rounds has undergone several periods of development and change. They include the parks' initial development (1880s), the expansion of the park system into the Grand Rounds (1890s), Theodore Wirth's leadership (1906-1935), WPA improvements (1930s), alterations by Eckbo, Dean, Austin, and Williams (1970s), and the system's designation as a National Scenic Byway and later ecological improvement projects (1990s-2000s).

Additional information on the development and historic significance of these resources can be found in the draft National Register nomination for the Grand Rounds (available through MPRB) and "Kenilworth Lagoon/Channel Context, History, and Physical Description," prepared for the SWLRT project.[3]

Figure 2.4: Historic Context Map, 1854. Source: Government Land O□ce

PRIOR TO PARKS

The development of parks around Lake of the Isles and Cedar Lake did not begin until the late 1800s. Earlier in the city's history, the area was better known as a railroad corridor.

The Saint Paul and Pacific First Division, a subsidiary of the Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad (StP&P), constructed a mainline southwest from downtown Minneapolis that ran along the east and south shores of Cedar Lake. Rails were laid in 1867 when the railroad completed a bridge over the Mississippi River. The line crossed the east bay of Cedar Lake on a causeway.

1 The first four tribes listed frequently refer to themselves as the Minnesota Dakota or Eastern Dakota.

2 John O. Anfinson, Thomas Madigan, Drew M. Forsberg, and Patrick Nunnally, "River of History: A Historic Resources Study of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area" (National Park Service, 2003), 51.

3 Berglin, "Grand Rounds."

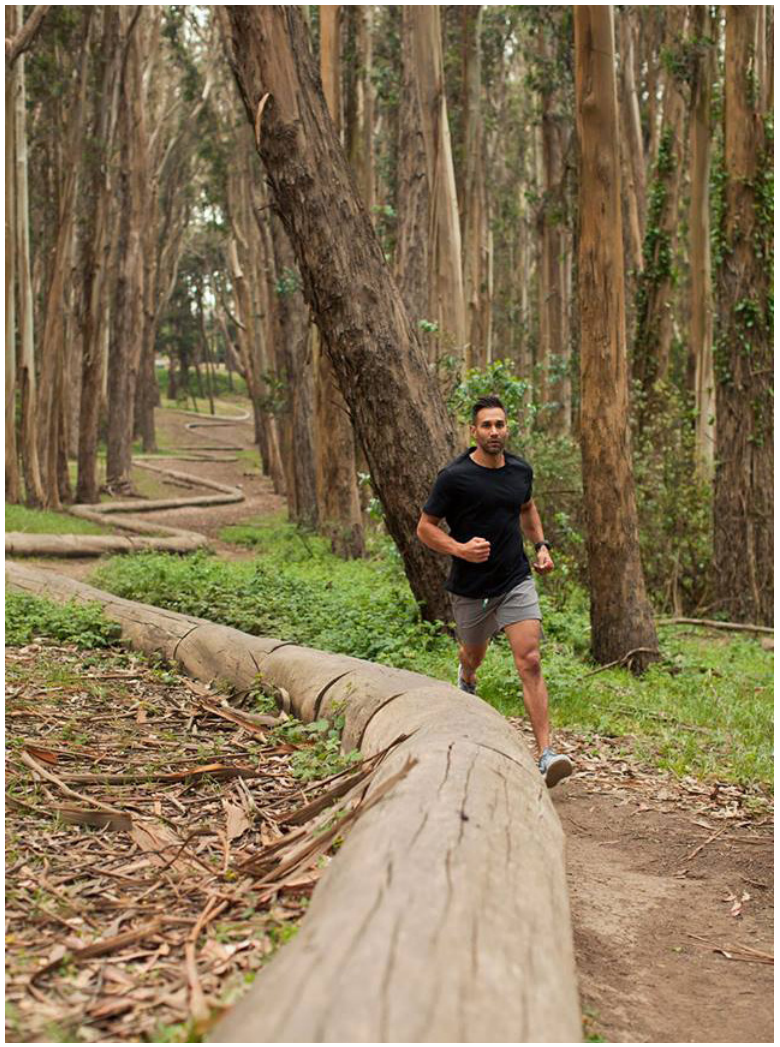
ESSENTIAL SERVICES RECOMMENDATION

Access to restrooms becomes more essential during certain life stages. Being uncertain about their availability along a trail is enough to prevent large segments of the population from being able to get out and enjoy the park. Having well-maintained restrooms available along trails makes a di□erence for pregnant women, families with little kids, and many older adults. The Cedar-Isles Plan calls for additional restroom facilities at:

- The athletic fields on the southern side of Lake of the Isles
- The canoe racks and dock on the northwest side of Lake of the Isles
- Near W 22nd Street and the parkway at the northern arm of Lake of the Isles
- A permanent restroom facility at Cedar Lake East Beach instead of the current temporary restrooms

While certainly an improvement, providing restrooms at these locations still falls short of the recommendations for similar MPRB facilities, such as the Central Riverfront and Above the Falls Regional Parks, which suggest permanent or portable restrooms at 10-minute walking intervals (about every 1/2-mile).

Recommendation A: Essential visitor services, such restrooms, drinking fountains, or seating, should be considered for inclusion at other areas within the project area as individual projects are identified for detailed design.



Soft Surface Trail with Edge of Natural Materials. Source: Lovers' Lane at the Presidio

SAFETY

Safety of park and trail users is always a top priority. Recommendations related to safety along parkway roads, trails, and at intersections are covered in those respective sections, however, there are some additional safety-related considerations that support park access and recreation as a whole.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Parkland within the project area must provide safe spaces and passage for those moving in and around the parks. While many areas feel completely safe during the day, at night, without proper lighting, they can feel unsettling or unsafe. Ensuring adequate access points, wayfinding, lighting, and/or trail markings are visible ways to improve safety for users and encourages a more positive perception of these areas.

During the community engagement process, along with safety improvements that are similar for everyone, there were safety topics that were shared from personal lived experiences. For example, more women reported feeling unsafe in the current hiking conditions within the forest near Cedar Lake than men. At Cedar Lake East Beach, people of color were more likely to report that the police presence did not make them feel safe, while many white and local residents reported that the police presence helped them feel safe. The Safety Recommendations aim to balance safety for as many people as possible.

Recommendation A: Provide lighting in accordance with The American Association of State Highway and Transportation O□cials (AASHTO) guidelines, including at the following locations:

- Areas with grouped amenities
- Along parkway roads
- Crosswalks
- Where paths intersect
- Where key signage is located

Recommendation B: Consider providing emergency buttons at locations that where less lighting is intended or in less traveled areas.

Recommendation C: Increase sight-lines through the forest to enhance visibility along paved and soft surface trails through removal of understory invasive species like buckthorn.

Recommendation D: Revisit safety conditions at Cedar Lake East Beach once the Southwest Light Rail line is up and running. Evaluate current park police presence, and consider other safety improvements, such as programming, lighting, signage, etc.

People spending time at Cedar Lake East Beach

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles have a robust history, beginning with the indigenous communities who lived and utilized these lakes and natural areas, through the development of the railroads, the City Beautiful movement, and up to present day. It will be important to retain elements of the landscape and history from these many layers.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation A: Work with tribal advisors to connect people with the full story and broad history of the lakes, including indigenous history. Develop appropriate strategies to amplify indigenous stories, cultural practices, and connection to the land.

Recommendation B: Protect current and desired use of the landscape by indigenous people through:

- Working with indigenous community members to advise on land management and plant species
- Improved communication about approved harvesting

Recommendation C: Add culturally important plants through guidance by tribal representatives.

Recommendation D: Provide a connection to the exiled communities today by:

- Increasing partnerships and programming with tribes and indigenous community members
- Providing spaces for ceremonies and interpretation
- Creating events and experiences that invite indigenous community members to the area
- Considering indigenous land management
- O□ering reduced or free parking, rentals, programming, and other costs associated with parkland

Recommendation E: Expand opportunities for Minnesota Dakota community members to connect with the lakes.

Recommendation F: Use Dakota language on site signs to improve understanding that this is Dakota homeland and help indigenous people feel more welcome.

Recommendation G: Preserve archaeological sites by discouraging visitor use at those locations. Some archaeological sites are currently in active use, so limit development and avoid ground disturbance in those areas.

Recommendation H: Consider incorporating native plants to improve ecological health while maintaining the historic waterbody outline that was created in the early 20th century.

Public Art at Bde Maka Ska

WPA Walls in Kenilworth Lagoon

Bridge and Channel to Lake of the Isles

Recommendation I: Complete documentation of historic features whenever they must be substantially altered or removed as part of plan implementation projects, such as WPA-era walls and other features.

Recommendation J: Appropriately document archaeological resources, including any below the water's surface, according to professional best practices, and conserve findings in accordance with applicable rules and laws.

Recommendation K: Repair the ecological condition and littoral edge of the lakes by improving habitat for animals and adding native plants.

Recommendation L: Protect significant cultural resources and historic features that characterize the design and development of the parks

Recommendation M: Retain the historic design intent of being able to travel between the lakes, either by water or other means.

Recommendation N: Preserve portions of the lawn around Lake of the Isles that are at key intersections and provide views across the lake, as seen in park plans.

Recommendation O: Maintain the historically created topography and contoured edge of Lake of the Isles.

AMENITIES AND PROGRAMMING

Programming and amenities, the features and/or facilities that are o□ered within the parks, are key elements that allow users to enjoy di□erent experiences within the park system. They allow visitors to easily access and feel comfortable in a place.

The Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles area o□ers amenities and programming for activities both on land and water. In Minnesota, parks change significantly seasonally, with winter activities overlapping with land and water spaces throughout the parks, including skating rinks and ski trails.

Planning for year-round comfort, accessibility, and engagement is key to sustaining the energy and care felt for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles for existing and future visitors.

Amenities are defined as features that help meet the basic needs of individuals. They can include desirable or useful features, facilities, or places.

Programming refers to the planned activities, events, and experiences at the parks that oftentimes take advantage of the amenities provided. Programming can help invite community members to a location that they would otherwise not visit and can adapt and evolve based on the needs of the public and MPRB over time.

AMENITIES AND PROGRAMMING GOALS

Amenities and Programming Goal 1: Take cues from how people use the parks and lakes today to maintain, improve, and in some cases, build upon existing amenities within the project area.

Amenities and Programming Goal 2: Retain existing year-round and seasonal activities and enhance safety at entry points and areas with grouped activities.

Amenities and Programming Goal 3: Honor the unique qualities of each lake and connect visitors to these distinct experiences.

Amenities and Programming Goal 4: Respect and celebrate the history of the landscape through programming and interpretation.

Amenities and Programming Goal 5: Balance protection of and access to previously disconnected areas of parkland with careful circulation, amenity, and wayfinding planning.

Formalized water access. Source: Sharon Brodwin, Twin Cities Outdoors

AMENITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation A: Group and sensitively site amenities to reduce impact to viewsheds and open park areas.

Recommendation B: Formalize plan-identified water access points using strategies that blend with the natural environment and support non-motorized boat access, fishing, general viewing, monitoring and maintenance activities, informal experiences.

Recommendation C: Remove informal water access points not identified in the park plan and restore with land or water-based plant communities.

Recommendation D: Provide amenities that are flexible, light touch, and provide a mixture of informal and formal experiences.

Recommendation E: Provide temporary and permanent restrooms that make spending time at the lakes comfortable year-round.

Year-round permanent restroom. Source: Studio Room 11

Recommendation F: Provide and design spaces and amenities to support existing and future programming opportunities.

Recommendation G: Ensure all proposed and enhanced amenities fit within the character of their location, use appropriate natural materials, and include reference to appropriate history.

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation A: Encourage and support existing and new MPRB-led and partner-led programming opportunities to promote social, multi-generational, and cross-cultural interaction.

Recommendation B: Strengthen human relationships with nature by continuing to provide and support nature-based programming, education, and/or experiences.

Recommendation C: Cultivate long-term relationships with community members and organizations to inform programming implementation.

Recommendation D: Continue to provide educational programming opportunities for youth within the DNR Friends School boundary.

Recommendation E: Collaborate with indigenous community members and tribes to create multigenerational experiences that honor their legacy.

5.4 PROJECT-WIDE DESIGN

OVERVIEW

This section describes the project-wide design across di□erent topics, which will be implemented over the next 20 to 30 years. Water quality and natural areas have been centered within the design of this plan and include recommendations focused on stormwater runo□ management, lake access, and natural resources. This is followed by recommendations for access, circulation, seasonal amenities, and programming.

Sections 5.5 and 5.6, which include areas identified with more detail, should be reviewed for additional detailed recommendations.

WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Several improvements are proposed to address water quality, natural resources, and increased habitat within the project area. Design elements include treating stormwater runo□ within the park, maintaining and stabilizing shoreline areas without formal water access, preserving and improving the tree canopy, and maximizing and restoring habitat (land- and water-based). Together, these recommendations work together to address water quality. They also provide additional ways for people and wildlife to enjoy the parks by creating, enhancing, or expanding habitat and nature-based recreational opportunities. Several of the plant communities and stormwater recommendations below have inherent flood mitigation benefits.

METHODS FOR MANAGING STORMWATER AND IMPROVING WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Expanding, Enhancing, and Restoring Plant Communities: Diversifying plant communities expands habitat opportunities within parkland. Many plant communities contribute to filtering stormwater runo□ from neighboring amenities, trails, and roads. As these di□erent plant communities are expanded, enhanced, and/or restored over time, so will their ability to filter stormwater runo□ and support wildlife. Enhancement and restoration involve activities such as removal of invasive species, establishment or re-establishment of existing or historic plant communities, timing seeding with nearby plant communities, and using a phased approach in implementation.

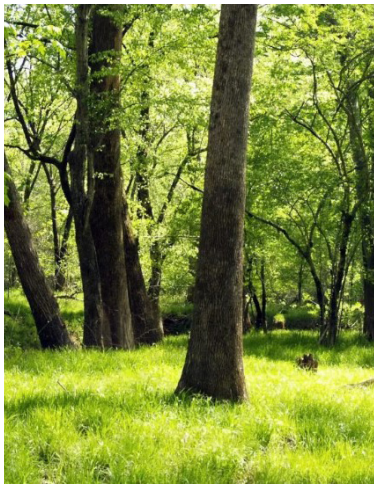
Additional details related to existing and future management of these plant communities is in the MPRB Natural Areas Plan Phase 2 or will be part of a future Natural Areas Management Plan. Target species within the proposed habitat improvements include Common Moorhen, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Blanding's Turtle, Western Harvest Mouse, Eastern Hognose Snake, Lark Sparrow, Acadian Flycatcher, Regal Fritillary, Smooth Green Snake, Grasshopper Sparrow, Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, and Cope's Grey Tree Frog. For more details about what and where plant communities are planned, review the Natural Resources Design Recommendations on page 150.

Floodplain Forest: Floodplain forests are low-lying forest plant communities that are often near bodies of water and are subject to flooding following heavy rainfall. They provide habitat and water quality benefits through flood storage and recharging groundwater. Floodplain forest will be restored in the southwest part of Cedar Lake near Cedar Meadows Wetland and the south parking lot. See Natural Resources Design Recommendations for details.[1]

Formal Lake Access: Formal lake access includes shoreline areas that have been formally designated and designed for park visitors to access the water. Reducing the quantity of lake access points that were informally created over time will minimize erosion, reduce nutrient loading, and reduce negative impacts on habitat and wildlife. See the Lake Access Recommendations for more details.

Lawn: Lawns are open, grassy areas that generally don't provide benefits to habitat; however, they can improve water quality when

1 Michigan Natural Resources Inventory, MSU extension: https://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/communities/description/10658/floodplain-forest



Floodplain Forest. Source: Mark Daniels

Formal Water Access. Source: PWP Landscape Architecture

Littoral Edge Expansion. Source: Aquagenix

Lawn at Lake of the Isles

compacted soils are restored and they are able to take in and filter stormwater. Lawns also provide views, access, and gathering areas for people who would like to use the park for formal and informal activities. Lawn will be retained in historic and well-used areas, mostly located at Dean Parkway and Lake of the Isles, as well as some areas around Cedar Lake. See Natural Resources Design Recommendations for more details.

Littoral Edge: A littoral edge is an improved vegetative edge beginning from the ordinary high-water mark and extending into permanently submerged shoreline. This collection of plants can provide habitat for wildlife and also help to reduce impacts from rain events, protect the shoreline, and filter stormwater runo before it enters the lakes. The littoral edge will be expanded, enhanced, and restored at both lakes and is shown and described under the Stormwater Runo Management Recommendations.

Marsh: A marsh is a type of treeless grassland that sits under water for long periods of time, often accompanied by rich soil deposits and biodiversity. Marshes provide important food and habitat spaces for land and water species. They also provide water quality benefit by reducing phosphorus loading and improving soil health. Additionally, marshes can reduce the risk of flooding. Marsh will be expanded, enhanced, and restored where there are existing marsh areas in northeast Cedar Lake, with small pockets of restoration at Lake of the Isles on the southern end and northwest side between Penn and Newton Avenues. See the Stormwater Runo Management Design Recommendations for details.[2]

Mesic Oak Forest: Mesic oak forests are a mixture of leafy overstory trees and understory plants and shrubs. These areas support wildlife habitat for a variety of species, provide ample shade, and include many plants and trees to view and enjoy. Existing mesic oak forest areas on the west and a little on the east side of Cedar Lake will be enhanced and expanded. Additionally, most of the altered forest/

2 National Geographic Resource Library: https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/marsh

woodland areas on the west and east sides of the lake will build on what's there and be restored to mesic oak forest. At Lake of the Isles, there will be enhancements for the northern island and the area along the multi-use fields with restoration from altered forest/woodland on the southern island and land along Lake Street. For specific locations, see the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

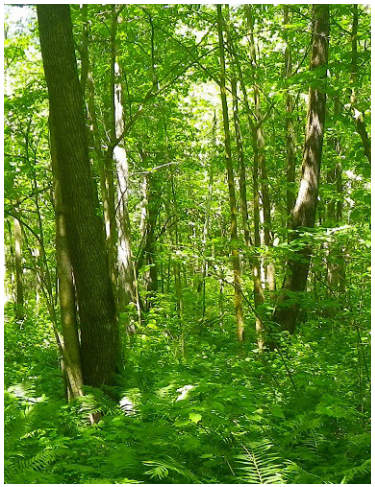
Oak Savanna: Oak savannas include large overstory trees, understory plants, and shorter grasses. Oak savanna restoration from primarily altered forest/woodland will cover Cedar Lake in the north and northeast portion of the park. To see the full extents, review the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Prairie: Prairies are a mixture of flowering plants and taller grasses that are densely grouped together. Today, the existing prairie along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail is home to a number of di□erent species, which will expand with future enhancements. The prairie will be enhanced along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail and restored in a small segment on the east side of Cedar Lake near South Upton Avenue. For more details, see the Natural Resources Design Recommendations.

Prairie/Pollinator Plantings: Prairie/pollinator plantings often include dense groups of flowering plants that are beneficial to pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Once established, these plantings along with the existing prairie and rain gardens will create a chain of pollinator habitat connections. Prairie/Pollinator plantings are proposed in a few spots on the southwest side of Cedar Lake, linear stretches throughout Lake of the Isles, and large swaths along Dean Parkway. Pollinator plantings can include plants that thrive in anywhere from full sun to full shade depending on the plant type. See the Natural Resources Design Recommendations for details.

Rain Gardens: Rain gardens are a type of bioretention pond where soils and vegetation have been selected and established to support

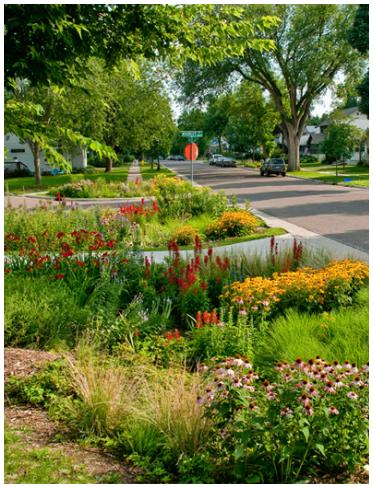
Marsh Restoration. Source: MN Wetland Professionals Association



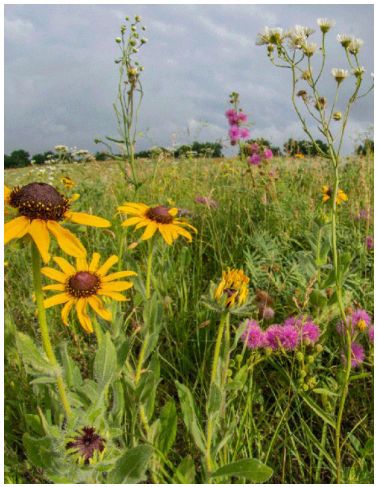
Mesic Oak Forest Restoration. Source: MN DNR

Oak Savanna. Source: Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, Jacob Miller

Prairie



Rain Garden. Source: Capitol Region Water District



Pollinator Planting. Source: Chris Helzer, The Nature Conservancy

Shoreline Bu□er. Source: East Otter Tail Soil & Water Conservation District

Cedar Meadows Wetland

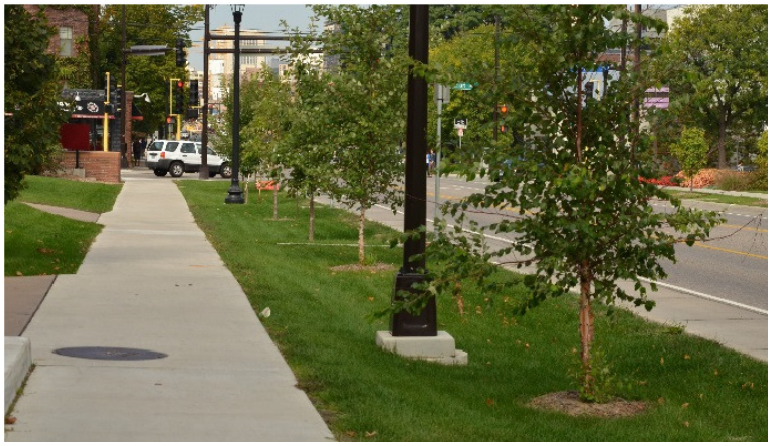
groundwater recharge, pollutant removal and runo□ detention. In addition to treating stormwater and improving water quality, they can also provide habitat benefits. Collectively, the proposed rain gardens and prairie/pollinator plantings will provide habitat patches that pollinators can utilize to expand their range(s). Rain gardens are located at Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, and Dean Parkway. See the Stormwater Runo□ Management Recommendations for details.

Shoreline Bu□er: Shoreline bu□ers are enhanced vegetative areas varying in character located along the lakeshore. These areas can provide habitat for wildlife, help stabilize shorelines, minimize impacts from heavy rain events, and filter stormwater runo□ before it enters the lakes. Some of the areas where the shoreline bu□er has been expanded are to address areas of erosion from informal water access points. Shoreline bu□ers are featured at both lakes and along the Kenilworth Channel, which is shown and described under the Stormwater Runo□ Management Recommendations.

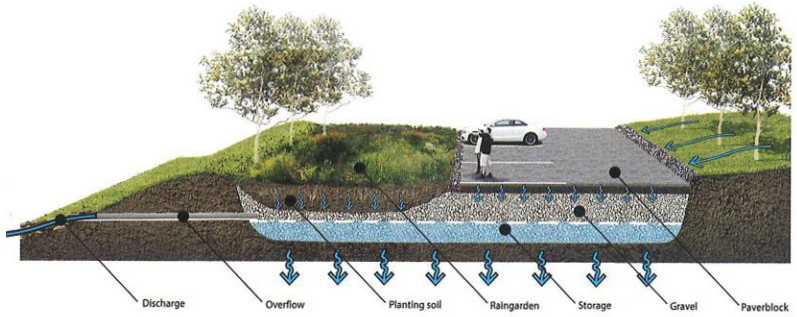
Retrofits to Constructed Wetland: Cedar Meadows Wetland is a constructed wetland designed to help filter a large amount of stormwater before it enters Cedar Lake. Other benefits include flood storage, habitat for wildlife, and opportunities for enjoyment and education for people through signage and docks. Retrofitting this constructed wetland is one of the most e□ective and cost-e□ective ways to address runo□ into Cedar Lake and will benefit from upgrades, or retrofits, to improve how well it functions. The details around what retrofits may be needed will be determined during detailed design and implementation. Cedar Meadows Wetland is located on the southwest side of Cedar Lake.

Tree Trenches: Tree trenches are an engineered landscape practice that uses a linear system of trees connected by an underground infiltration structure to manage stormwater. The underground portion of the system is designed to filter runo, water trees, and slowly release water back into the ground, which helps to improve water quality and support the urban tree canopy. Tree trenches are often located near roads with one proposed along Cedar Lake Parkway and the majority planned along Lake of the Isles and Dean Parkways. See the Stormwater Runo Management Recommendations for more details.

Underground Parkway Stormwater Treatment: Underground parkway treatments are designed to collect stormwater from impervious surfaces and bring it to underground storage units. Once there, water is filtered and slowly released into the lake or ground. Underground parkway treatments don't provide habitat directly, however utilizing this treatment option means parkland can be open to other uses. Underground parkway treatments are proposed along Cedar Lake Parkway in the northwest and south. At Lake of the Isles, smaller segments are proposed along the parkway in the southern half of the park and the northern arm. See the Stormwater Runo Management Recommendations for exact locations.



Tree Trenches. Source: Minnesota Stormwater Manual



Underground Parkway Treatment. Source: Artful Rainwater Design, Echols and Maurer

Figure 5.3: Section of selected proposed improvements at western Lake of the Isles

walking direct access to trails and amenities. The parkway and parking lots will be retained to maintain vehicular access to the park. To improve safety for park visitors crossing the parkway, a number of enhanced intersections have been proposed.

Lastly, a parcel of land to the east of Cedar Lake is identified for future MPRB acquisition and designated as a natural area. The plan envisions a formalized pedestrian connection from the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Kenwood Parkway down to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. This connection will improve access to the new Bryn Mawr light rail stop for people traveling from the Lowry Hill neighborhood. See Chapter 5.5 for more details about Cedar Lake circulation.

Lake of the Isles will retain the current paved bike and pedestrian trails, the parkway, and parking bays in their same general location. The existing paved bikeway will continue to be one-way, opposite vehicle tra□c, and will be complimented with a one-way on-street bikeway traveling the same direction as vehicle tra□c. The discussion of possibilities for two-way o□-street bike tra□c around Lake of the Isles was one of the top circulation and access topics throughout the process, with both strong support and opposition from the public. Through discussion, the CAC reached a compromise and recommended the stated configuration. The CAC also recommended that a raised counterclockwise bicycle path be considered around Lake of the Isles when the parkway is fully reconstructed. Lake of the Isles also has a number of enhanced intersection improvements around the park to connect people to parkland, amenities, and to improve safety.

There are a few additional paved pedestrian trails planned, including a paved sidewalk on the south side of Isles to provide access to the multi-use fields and dog park, formalizing a paved connection of an existing ad hoc trail along the Lagoon between Isles and Bde Maka Ska and finally, a realignment of the existing trail near the seasonal warming house to allow access around the seasonal structure without having to trudge through the snow or grass in its current alignment. This realignment improves accessibility though winter and spring.

A new soft surface pedestrian connection will connect up to the Midtown Greenway adjacent to the dog park; this trail informally already exists. See Section 5.6 for more detail about what has been proposed.

The paved bike and pedestrian trails and parkway along Dean Parkway will be retained. In areas where possible, the trails should be widened to improve safety. The plan also proposes to improve safety for all transportation modes with enhanced intersection improvements where Dean Parkway intersects with Cedar Lake Parkway, Lake of the Isles Parkway, and on both sides of the Midtown Greenway.

No trail changes have been proposed for the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, although the new formal soft surface trails from the remnant lands and northeast forest will provide additional pedestrian access to this trail network.

In order to mitigate e□ects of seasonal flooding on circulation, all proposed trails will be designed at an elevation above seasonal flood levels. Existing trails will be raised to this level during routinely scheduled rehabilitation.

Area to formalize soft surface trails at Cedar Lake

Dean Parkway Trails

WINTER AMENITIES DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The project area is used for many winter activities including cross country skiing, ice fishing, ice skating, snowshoeing, community events, walking, and biking. All existing amenities for these activities will be retained. No new winter amenities are proposed at Cedar Lake, Dean Parkway, or the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, but there are a few changes at Lake of the Isles.

The seasonal warming house will remain in the same general location and is proposed to be updated with a new structure. To alleviate conflicts between where the warming house sits and the pedestrian path along the shoreline, the path will be re-routed around the temporary warming house location and run parallel to the bike trail for a short distance. Once rerouted, the old section of pedestrian trail will be removed.

Lake of the Isles will also have a new ice-skating ribbon that will extend north from the existing ice rink.

LEGEND

EXISTING

- Cross Country Ski Trails
- Ice Skating Rink

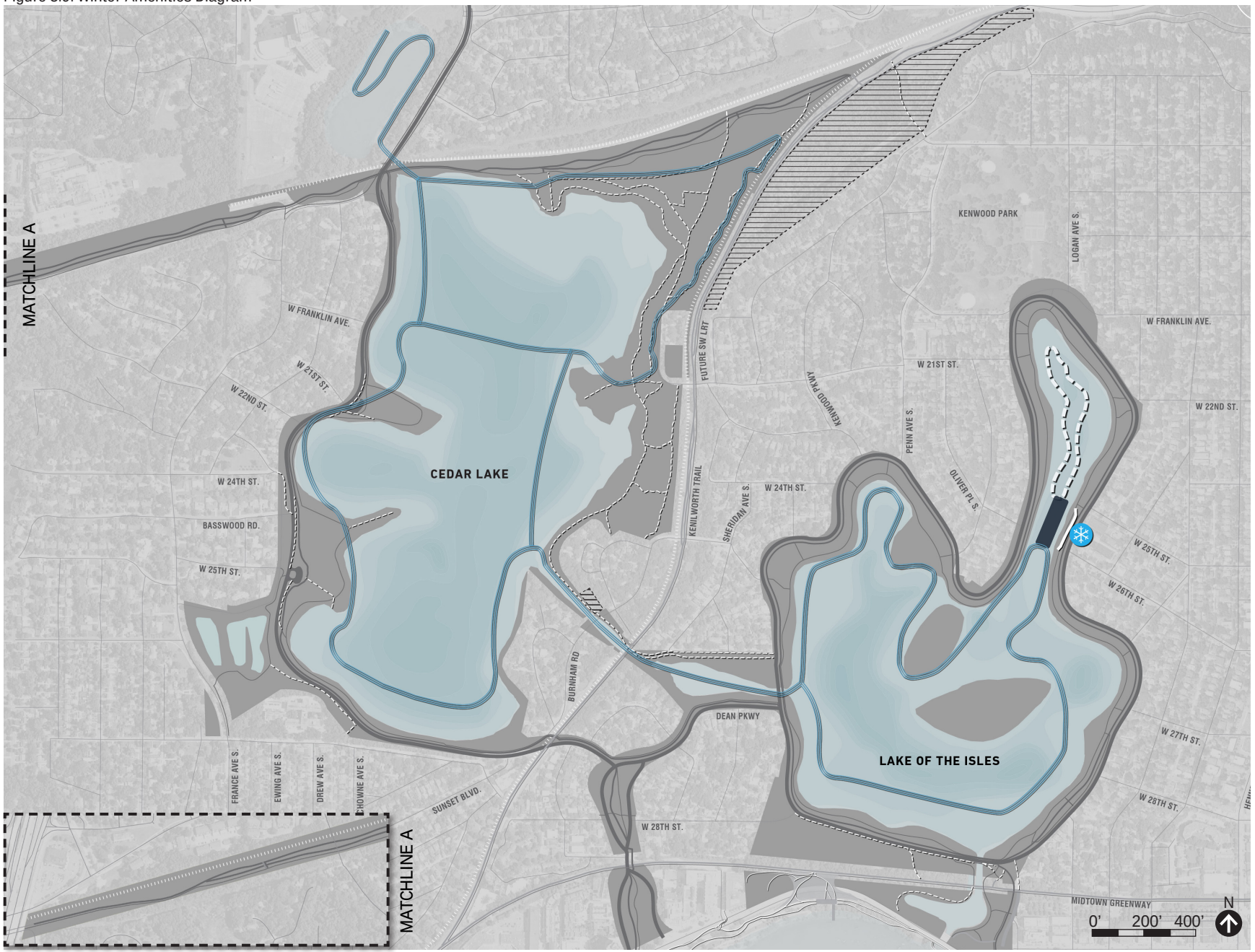
PROPOSED

- Ice Skating Ribbon
- Land Acquisition
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Upgraded Temporary Warming House

Ice Skating Rink at Lake of the Isles

Cross Country Skiing on Cedar Lake and Kenilworth Channel

Figure 5.9: Winter Amenities Diagram



PROGRAM AND AMENITIES DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the existing amenities work as is and are enjoyed by people using the parks, trails, and lakes within the project area. To respond to consistent community feedback, the majority of the existing amenities are retained in their same general location. Existing amenities that are retained will be maintained and/or improved. While many current amenities work well, there are a few areas that could benefit from new or modified amenities to support increased access, accessibility, and programming.

Existing amenities at Cedar Lake include picnic areas, restrooms, canoe racks, a kiosk, and a variety of lake access opportunities. New amenities for Cedar Lake include a dock, several formalized water access points, viewing spots, a picnic area, and enhanced signage and welcome.

At Lake of the Isles, existing amenities include one year-round portable restroom and two seasonal (one in winter and one in summer) portable restrooms, canoe racks, kiosks, a variety of lake access opportunities, multi-use fields, and two adjacent dog parks (one for little dogs and one for larger dogs). New amenities include a dock, a few formalized water access points, some picnic areas, and enhanced signage and welcome.

With the many activities available through the project area, amenities that support comfort, accessibility, welcome, and the ability for people to stay in the park for longer periods of time, are important considerations for the future. One of the ways the plan supports these considerations is by modifying and expanding restroom options within the project area. Today, many of the restrooms throughout the project area are portable, with just one permanent restroom at Cedar Lake South Beach. The mixture of permanent versus portable restrooms and the overall number was a consistent topic

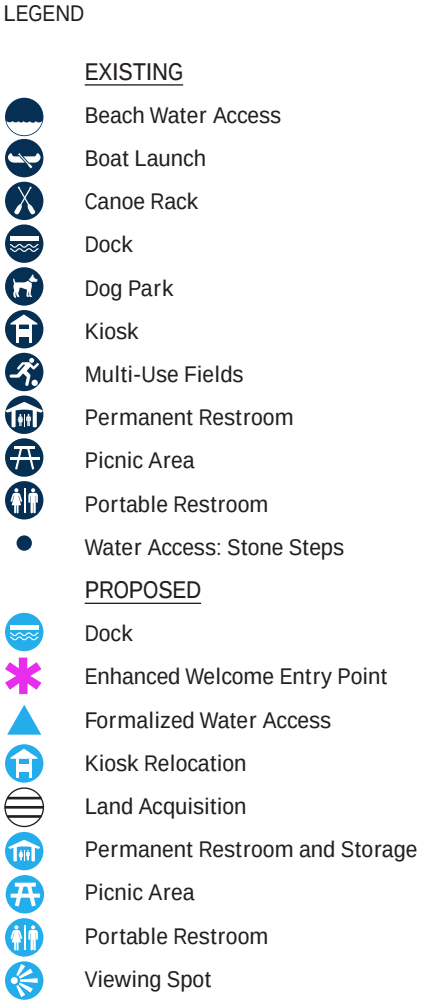
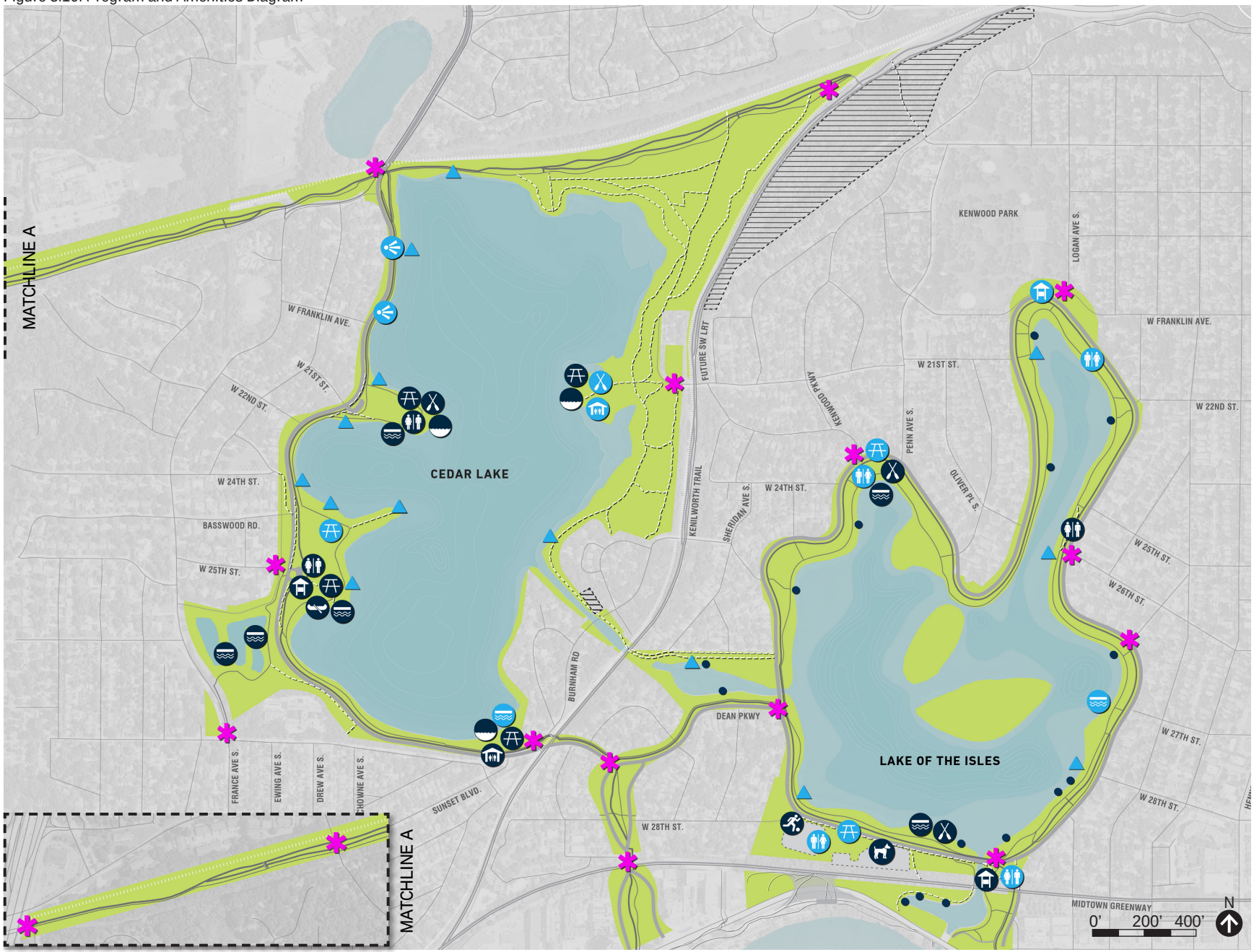


Figure 5.10: Program and Amenities Diagram

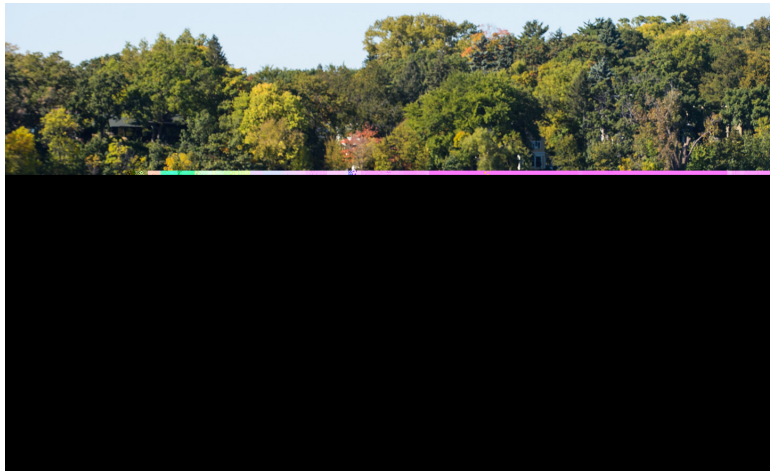


throughout engagement and there was not universal agreement about type or quantity. At Cedar Lake, existing restrooms are well spaced and in areas where groupings of amenities exist. A change from a portable to a permanent restroom is proposed at Cedar Lake East Beach where there are a variety of activities and programming, both recreational and educational, that could benefit from having a permanent option. For Lake of the Isles, the plan proposes to expand the number of restrooms near existing and proposed amenities; at the northern arm, near the dock at the northwest side of the lake, and the multi-use fields to the south. The restroom proposed at the northern arm was identified through further analysis of restroom access and availability following the 45-day public comment period.

Cedar Lake Regional Trail and Dean Parkway do not currently have any major amenities proposed outside of trails and roads. The plan adds a few enhanced welcome entry points which will support navigation through these transportation-heavy portions of the project area.

Viewing spots and lake access opportunities are retained with some additional spots are proposed, expanding the ways in which people will be able to enjoy the park. New or formalized locations are described in further detail under Access and Circulation Recommendations and Lake Access Recommendations but are included here to show the variety of available land and water activities these amenities support.

To welcome and guide people in and around the project area, many locations along road or trail intersections are proposed to have enhanced welcome entry points. These entry points will build upon existing signage and include welcome and wayfinding signage and some locations may include other amenities such as seating areas, bike racks, city bikes, gardens, and/or water fountains. There are sixteen enhanced welcome entry points throughout the project area including four along Cedar Lake Regional Trail, four around Cedar Lake, two along Dean Parkway, and six around Lake of the Isles.



People canoeing on Lake of the Isles

South Cedar Lake Beach

Projects implemented north of the Midtown Greenway within or adjacent to Focus Area D: South Lake of the Isles Parkway will need consultation from the Tribal Historic Preservation O□cers

Picnic area. Source: Forma6

Lake of the Isles dog park

Green Bump-Outs. Source: National Association of City Transportation O□cials

Dock and canoe rack

LEGEND

EXISTING

- Canoe Rack
- Dock
- Dog Park
- Dog Park Boundary
- Outfalls Treated in the Plan
- Paved One-Way Bike Trail
- Parkway
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Water Access: Stone Steps

PROPOSED

- Enhanced Intersection Improvements
- Green Bump Outs
- Improved Shoreline Bu□er
- Expanded Littoral Edge
- Marsh Restoration
- Mesic Oak Forest Restoration
- One-Way On-Street Bicycle Lane (arrow indicates direction of travel)
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Picnic Area
- Prairie/Pollinator Planting
- Rain Garden
- Soft Surface Trail
- Tree Trench
- Underground Parkway Stormwater Treatment

Figure 5.20: Focus Area D: South Lake of the Isles Parkway

Kiosk at Lake of the Isles

Lake of the Isles shoreline

Lake of the Isles Parkway intersection

Pedestrian trail over bridge at Lake of the Isles

LEGEND

EXISTING

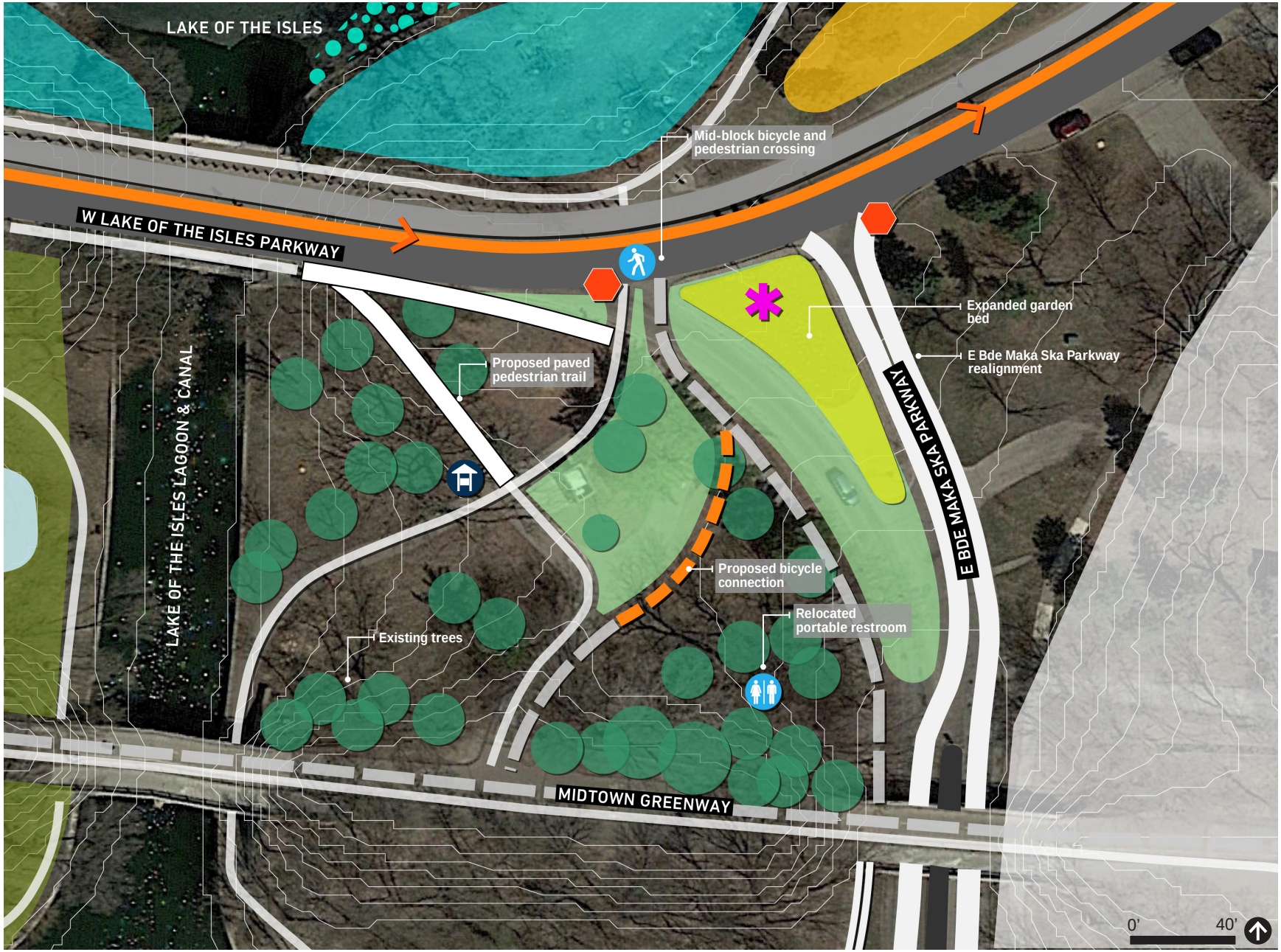
- Kiosk
- Paved One-Way Bike Trail
- Parkway
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Paved Two- Way Bike Trail

PROPOSED

- Enhanced Intersection Improvements
- Enhanced Welcome Entry Point
- Expanded Littoral Edge
- Expanded Garden Bed
- Improved Shoreline Bu□er
- Lawn
- Marsh Restoration
- One-Way On-Street Bicycle Lane (arrow indicates direction of travel)
- Parkway Realignment
- Paved Pedestrian Trail
- Portable Restroom
- Prairie/ Pollinator Planting
- Paved Two-Way Bike Trail
- Stop Sign

*A stop sign has been included at the mid-block crossing to communicate right-of-way, however, final trail crossing signage should be determined during project implementation

Figure 5.21: Focus Area E: Lake Of the Isles Parkway Intersection



ZONE 4: NORTH LAKE OF THE ISLES

Zone 4 is the northern arm of Lake of the Isles, including the intersection of Franklin Avenue and Lake of the Isles Parkway on the north to the intersections of Newton Avenue South and Euclid Place with Lake of the Isles Parkway on the southern end.

WATER QUALITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The shoreline of Zone 4 has a narrow strip of naturalized plantings that are relatively high in quality. The shoreline plantings were added in the 2000s to help address flooding issues, along with infill to level portions of turf around the lake and trails. Over the last few years, portions of the trails in this area are again experiencing flooding during high rainfall events. MPRB received feedback to address flooding to both improve the trails and to ensure that the shoreline ecosystem thrives. Aquatic species observed in this area include Lady's Thumb, Eurasian watermilfoil (non-native), and American White Water-lily. Rice and canary grasses cover some areas near the shoreline. Volunteers help to manage much of the shoreline around Isles, which includes trash pick-up and removal of invasive species.

The plan proposes maintaining and expanding the already well-established shoreline bu□er and littoral edge, helping to address future flooding and add additional habitat areas. Since this area of shoreline has fairly high-quality plant species established, it can serve as a precedent for other areas with less established shoreline communities throughout the project area. The northern arm also contains informal water access spots that have created erosion near the shoreline, and three sets of stone steps. A formalized water access spot is proposed at the intersection of W 21st Street and Lake of the Isles Parkway, providing improved access to the shoreline, and all stone steps have been retained. All other informal access spots will be removed and restored to habitat.

A majority of green space in Zone 4 is lawn, or turf grass, which is used for informal activities including picnicking. Tree species include green ash, hackberry, sandbar willow, and others. Large portions of the lawn have depressions that collect water during heavy rain events. These depressions are a byproduct of previous improvements that avoided infilling within a specified radius of established trees to avoid root damage. Rain gardens will take advantage of these existing basins, capturing and filtering stormwater, reserving surrounding turf for gathering and recreational uses. Where there are no existing depressions, rain gardens are strategically placed in areas less commonly used for gathering and recreation and where they will best be able to collect runo□ from the parkway. Proposed pollinator plantings work in tandem with the rain gardens to provide habitat and add visual interest. These plantings also serve as opportunities for interpretation and engagement and are placed around the rain gardens, expanding habitat opportunities. Tree trenches are proposed in a narrow strip of land near W 26th Street and an underground stormwater treatment is proposed near the Oliver Place S., capturing stormwater from the adjacent parkway.

Depressions in the lawn

CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

Franklin Avenue is a major entry point for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians to access Lake of the Isles Parkway and Lake of the Isles Park. There is currently no formal crossing across Franklin Avenue or Lake of the Isles Parkway for pedestrians or bicyclists arriving from the neighborhood, Logan Avenue, or Kenwood Park. Early design concepts proposed ideas such as closing portions of the parkway or reconfiguring the parkway and Franklin Avenue to increase habitat and provide safe connections for people walking and bicycling. The parkway reconfigurations were supported by some members of the public but due to concerns about the impact to traffic and parking from neighbors and some CAC members, these ideas didn't make it into the final plan. To improve safety and access, enhanced intersection improvements are proposed for crossing Franklin Avenue and Lake of the Isles Parkway, at the parkway entrance off of Franklin Avenue. An additional intersection enhancement is identified for W 21st Street, another frequently used crossing for park visitors accessing parkland.

Lake of the Isles includes a well-used pedestrian trail and one-way bicycle trail that circles the entire lake. The plan adds an on-street bicycle lane that would go in the same direction as the one-way vehicle traffic and would travel counter to the existing off-street bicycle trail.

Currently, the seasonal warming house is placed on top of the pedestrian trail in the winter and spring, forcing people walking around the structure and leave the paved trail, walking through the snow, mud, or grass. The plan redirects the pedestrian trail around the structure, fixing an accessibility issue and avoiding user conflicts.

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES

The northern arm of Lake of the Isles is primarily used for informal activities, such as picnicking, fishing, launching a watercraft, walking, bicycling, or driving around the lake. Two enhanced welcome entry points are proposed in Zone 4, one at the intersection of Franklin Avenue and Lake of the Isles Parkway and one at the intersection of Euclid Place and Lake of the Isles Parkway. These locations may include amenities to welcome and guide new and existing park users including bike racks, seating, water fountains, interpretation, and/or wayfinding. Additionally, the existing informational kiosk will be relocated from near W 21st Street to the parkway entrance off Franklin Avenue to serve a higher volume of visitors accessing the park. In this new location, the kiosk can be incorporated as part of the new enhanced welcome entry.

A seasonal warming house and restrooms, supporting winter activities, are also located within Zone 4. Initial concepts proposed a permanent warming house and restroom at this location to create a year-round destination. This idea was well-received by some in the community but many were strongly opposed to adding new structures of any sort to Lake of the Isles. Based on CAC discussion and feedback from community engagement, the plan maintains a seasonal warming house with improvements that could include a temporary or permanent deck structure for gathering. The plan upgrades the exterior style of the warming house to fit better with the unique, natural character of Lake of the Isles. Further detailed design decisions will be determined during design and construction.

The plan proposes one more portable restroom near W 25th Street. This restroom was added based on feedback during the 45 public comment and assessing how far a park visitor may need to travel to find a restroom.

Example of an upgraded temporary warming house. Source: KES Group

Prairie/pollinator planting areas. Source: Phyto Studio

Example of enhanced welcome entry point. Source: MTWTF

Stone steps