



**Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board**

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles Regional Park Master Plan
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #1

9/29/2020 6:00-8:00pm
Zoom Online Video Call

MPRB Staff Present: Emma Pachuta (Project Manager), Adam Arvidson, Madeline Hudek, Alyssa Gilmore

CAC Members Present: Win Rockwell (CAC Chair), Linda Mack, Anna Eleria, Adam Braun, Laura Kinkead, Nan Dreher, Ben Surma, Alice Lehman, Drew McGovern, Aaron Shader, Lilia Thiesen, Eric Gangl, Jim Romlin, Will Stensrud (Alt), James Reid (Alt)

CAC Members Absent: Michaela A. West, Agleska Cohen-Recountre, Constance Pepin (Alt)
Approximately 35 people in total joined the meeting (including MPRB Staff, CAC Members, Consultants, and members of the public)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Emma Pachuta (MPRB, Project Manager) started the meeting at 6:04pm, welcoming everyone to the first official Community Advisory Committee Meeting (CAC #1) for the Cedar Lake & Lake of the Isles Regional Park Master Plan. Emma then asked Win Rockwell (CAC Chair) to start the meeting by saying a few words. Win explained that the CAC would be moving forward with virtual Zoom meetings, as was discussed at the previous introductory meetings. Win explained the first few Zoom meetings moving forward would be centered around providing a basis for the CAC, rooted in history, facts, and site context. Win explained that he and a few other CAC members, in conjunction with MPRB staff are creating walking tours so that people are able to look at the project site on their own time, with some maps and commentary. Win reiterated the CAC charge, to create a 20-30 year policy and planning view, which requires the CAC to take the long view at the fundamentals of the space, thinking about how the space is used today and how that can evolve. Win reminded CAC members not to get too micro-level when having tonight's and future discussions.

Emma thanked Win for speaking, gave an overview of the meeting flow for the evening, and then had CAC members give a quick introduction so that people could see faces. Emma called on CAC members present in alphabetical order.

After introductions, Emma gave a quick Land Acknowledgement, honoring the fact that the project site is on land that was forcibly taken from Dakota inhabitants. Emma said that she aims to incorporate Indigenous voices and visibility throughout this process and welcomes feedback and strategies for moving forward.

Emma went over the CAC Group Agreement and Online Forum Guidelines [*Staff Note: a more comprehensive list of the CAC Group Agreement and Online Forum Guidelines are available in the CAC Meeting #1 Presentation*]. Emma also showed folks a map of the project site and gave an overview of the conversations that were had at the introductory meetings.

STAKE AND POWER MAPPING ACTIVITY

Alyssa Gilmore (MPRB) introduced the Stake and Power Activity. Adam Arvidson (MPRB) broke participants into break out rooms/small groups to work on the activity together for about 25 minutes. The small groups consisted of both, members of the public and CAC members, as well as staff and consultant facilitators. The activity is designed to get folks thinking about what stakeholders should be at the table; while also considering the stakeholder's stake (how much the plan impacts them) and power (how much ability they have to influence the plan).

The individual boards that were created in the small groups can be viewed via Miro:

[Group 1](#), [Group 2](#), [Group 3](#).

TENxTEN PRESENTATION

[*Staff Note: this portion of the presentation is available in the CAC Meeting 1 Presentation*]

Emma gave the floor to Maura Rockcastle of TENxTEN to give their portion of the presentation. Maura gave an overview of some of the projects TENxTEN has been involved in locally, and introduced the 6 firms that are coming together for this project, giving an overview of all the jobs/components of the process/design that each firm will be covering.

Initial Observations

One of the initial observations that they made about the two lakes and surrounding parkland was the theme of dualities, which has come up since the beginning of the project with the community listening session. These are area that the MPRB, consultants, CAC and Community will need to consider balance in. These dualities were: Preservation/Innovation, Regional/Local, Nature/Culture, and Animal/Human.

Approach

Maura went over the approach that the consultants will be using for this project, what they aspire to foster through design: Balance, ritual, belonging, and resilience.

What is a Master Plan?

Maura touched on what a master plan is, explaining that it is a visioning framework that is meant to bridge design vision and implementation.



Discovery and Assessment

When thinking about the first few meetings, have been thinking about how to bring themes to the CAC and to the public in an organized and sequential series that allows for enough context, history, and background to get everyone on the same page. After grounding people in that information, will allow them to move forward into the vision and guiding principles for the project. Maura gave an overview of the meeting topics for the next few meetings. CAC #1's conversation is meant to be geared toward access and circulation (which directly addresses some of the questions that came up during the Summer Introductory Meetings). Then will move into conversations about History, Resilience, and Safe Spaces and Programming in later meetings.

CAC DISCUSSION

Maura passed the mic back to Emma and Zakcq (Asakura Robinson) to facilitate the Access and Circulation Discussion.

Emma started by using the Poll function in Zoom to ask the CAC about what they'd like to talk about first (Access or Circulation; Access was the winner of the Poll).

ACCESS

Emma then went through some slides related to Access, including a map of the 15 and 30-minute walksheds (within a 15 or 30 minute walk to the project site utilizing existing sidewalks and paths) and the 15 and 30-minute bikesheds (within a 15 or 30 minute bike to the project site utilizing existing bike infrastructure including both on street and off street options. Emma also mentioned the various barriers to walking and biking) such as folks biking from North Minneapolis would have to cross highways. Emma also showed the 15-minute transit shed (within a 15-minute transit ride of the project site) based on EXISTING bus routes and transit lines/stop compared with a map that includes the new Light Rail (LRT). A major thing to think about in terms of access is the new SWRT connection, thinking about how it will change the site and what that means for design.

(Project Staff) An added consideration for transit access, is not only that transit access expands but also that the center of gravity for transit moves. Currently the center of transit to this area is via Uptown (Lake and Hennepin area). More access moving west (Downtown Hopkins almost within a 15 minute transit ride). With 30 minute transit ride, it would be expanded to Eden Prairie, and St. Paul, huge amount of new people with access.

(CAC) Have heard that there will also be bus line extensions once the LRT is finished, do you know which route that would be?



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(Project Staff) We can look into this a little more, but typically the re-routing doesn't happen until the new rail line is operational so that it can help with transfers. This model doesn't take into account changes to the bus system with the addition of the LRT. Also don't have exact times between stations totally mapped out, more theoretical until it actually starts moving.

(CAC) With 15-minute transit shed, another consideration is how much this will increase access for folks who will have a ONE seat, one trip transit access to the area.

(CAC Alternate) It would be great to see a map of this, everywhere that could be accessed in one trip.

Emma showed a map that outlines where the Future LRT stops are, the current stops, and some informally identified primary and secondary access points. Zakcq opened the discussion with the questions, how do you know you've arrived at the park? What are people experiencing and seeing when they get to the park system?

(CAC) The area by Cedar Lake wetlands may be another informal access point for local residents.

(Project Staff) When thinking about how arrival feels, potential to think about that in an important way, how do we foster a relationship between the new LRT station and platform and the actual park space itself.

(CAC Chair) It would be helpful for the consultants to make projections/estimates for increases in use for areas. Want to understand the impact of increased usage. That will help CAC plan an approach that allows for increased volume of users to be accommodated in the area.

(Project Staff) Also need to consider that how many people will use the new 21st Street station depends on how welcoming the space is. Also want to think about connections to other lines and what makes sense to highlight as wayfinding opportunities.

(CAC) Is there data available about the current numbers of people who travel via transit lines versus people who park their cars/park in neighborhoods?

(Project Staff) Data not available along these lines; have data about where people get on and off adjacent transit lines (see where transit lines are currently most popular) but there is no way to know how many people are using transit to get to the lakes (project site) versus other destinations in the same general area.

(Public) Considering that more people will be using/accessing the area, has there been any consideration in closing the parkways around the lakes? (Similar to when MN was in



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lockdown, trying to give people more room to move around the lakes). Any consideration that they would be shut down forever to turn into a pedestrian path or bikeway?

(Project Staff) Reminded folks that this portion of the discussion was meant to be for the CAC, and to hold questions until public comment. Explained that any idea is on the table, here to talk about and investigate the possible opportunities. Will talk more about how to move around in these spaces during the circulation conversation.

(Project Staff) There is a large spectrum of options for parkways; can have conversations about how these spaces will be regulated/divided up for different modes of transportation. Can think through ways design could change to incorporate closures more often.

Emma showed a circulation map which included where parking is, and where there are one-way parkways, and two-way parkways around the two lakes. The areas of overfill parking into neighborhoods was not identified on this map.

(CAC) The 21st Street LRT Station will provide immediate access to Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles; the Lake Street LRT Station also isn't too far away. Question about Bryn Mawr Station looks adjacent to the park site, but there aren't any roads or walkways there. Possible connection to Kenwood Park there as well?

(Project Staff) Because of geography (ridge/hill to the South) this makes a connection to Kenwood difficult (would need additional stairs and accessibility accommodations. Planned new elevated walkway/access point over the Rail Line to connect up to Penn/Excelsior Boulevard/394 Frontage road.

(CAC) So that will serve the area to the north?

(Project Staff) Yes

(Project Staff) The Station will also have direct access to the Cedar Lake Bike Trail. There will be a connecting bus study as they move closer to opening SWLRT. There are many opportunities for feedback on how the existing network can connect.

(Project Staff) How will having additional transit access change the project site, which is typically accesses by walking and biking. How could having this mode of transportation change how people use or access the area?

(Project Staff) What modes of transportation feel the most important for providing access, is this different between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles?

(CAC) One big conversation that is yet to be had is about the natural areas around the lakes. There is a portion of the group that feels a strong sense of retaining natural areas, and another side of the group that wants the parks to be



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more accessible. How to balance this will be a conversation to have moving forward.

(CAC Chair) One thing that hasn't been mentioned yet tonight is Climate Change. We don't want to encourage more people to drive to these areas, so we can contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions. In terms of thinking about emphasis of where we invest money and how we try and bend the curve of access, we want to think about biking, walking, and transit as important parts of a long-term plan with sensitivity to climate change.

(CAC) Parking along Lake of the Isles (parking bays along Lake of the Isles) feels different than parking along Cedar Lake; only half of Cedar Lake is easily auto accessible (North and East aren't very accessible by vehicle). Trails on the North and East side are maintained so Bryn Mawr station could provide additional access, as well as 21st St.

(CAC) Quick clarifier about the maps, what do the orange circles "formal access provided" indicate?

(Project Staff) This is some sort of access point that allows pedestrians to cross a barrier

(CAC) Echo access in terms of Climate Change. Need to be thinking about how to carve out space for more people. Currently Cedar Lake has minimal access and as a result is lower utilized. Imagine that will change with the addition of new people with access from the SWLRT. Need to think about WHERE those people are going to go once they get off the LRT. If you want to experience Cedar Lake it will be a beautiful stop, but what happens next? How can we encourage people to get to Isles? How do we wayfind so that people know where to go and what they can do at these parks?

CIRCULATION

Emma and Zakcq transitioned to talking about circulation. Emma went through a series of maps that showed the off street and on street bike paths, sidewalks and off-street pedestrian paths. It was noted that the Lake of the Isles bikeway travels ONE WAY. Emma also went through a parking and vehicular circulation map (shows where there is one way parkways, two way parkways as well as where paid parking lots are; overflow parking into neighborhoods was not identified by this map). Emma also showed heat maps that demonstrate where people travel when they are walking, biking, running, swimming, paddling, skiing and skating (self reported data obtained from Strava). The major questions that Emma prompted the CAC with to get the conversation going where: How is movement happening both around these parks and between them? Are there any missing connections that would make the area more accessible? Why are people driving to/through this part of the system? Where is there parking overflow? How do we want people to be driving along other modes of transportation (i.e. separated bike lanes)?



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Where are there spaces for rentals? Where are there bike share stations? How do we think about the lakes/water in terms of circulation? How do we think about how different people use the space in different ways (differently abled, different family types, ages)?

Zakcq started the conversation with the CAC.

(Project Staff) Thinking about entry points right now, how do you know that you've arrived at the park(s)?

(CAC) You see the lake. The view of the water is an important component to feeling like you've arrived.

(CAC) Crossing the parkway is a mental access point, feels like you've entered the park system

(CAC) Feel like you arrive when you see Kiosks that have directions/maps of the trails. Kiosks feel like a reminder that this is part of a park SYSTEM, and not just a sidewalk going around the lakes.

(CAC) For residents who live close to the park sites, entering the woods can feel crossing from your home into the parks.

(CAC) Feel like I'm getting close to the parks based on bike activity on the bike paths; can usually follow a group of bikers toward a kiosk or information center. Wouldn't otherwise know which direction to go around the lakes inherently without presence of other bike traffic.

(Project Staff) How does it feel when you arrive at the park?

(CAC) It should feel relaxing, should feel like a connection to nature

(CAC) Once you've crossed the parkway, there is no more vehicular traffic between me and the park and the lake. Feels like you're leaving the hustle and bustle behind.

(CAC) Feels freeing, like you're taking a burden off.

(CAC) It feels nice to not have to cross a heavily trafficked street the whole time, it is a heavily pedestrian area with miles of uninterrupted walkway. You eventually stop looking for cars while you're walking and can start looking for other things (wildlife, plants).

(CAC) Want it to feel welcoming, even to someone who has never visited the park before. Would like to see more things that provide information on what way traffic moves, what to look out for around the parks (wildlife and plants). Don't know if everyone feels welcome (What's the experience of BIPOC folks, or people with lower incomes than the average of the area). Want to create a sense of welcome.

(Project Staff) Hearing that these two lakes in particular feel different from other lakes in the Chain of Lakes?



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(CAC) Feels different from Bde Maka Ska and Harriet. On those two lakes there are clearly defined access points. Have found that even if people have interacted with the water, they don't know about the trails around Cedar Lake. Didn't know that Brownie Lake existed before this process. Would be helpful to see signs and things that ensure people are circulating the Chain of Lakes, making them feel like they have access to the whole system.

(CAC Chair) Not many kiosks around the lakes/park system, but they are helpful where they exist. There are many points of intersection where there is no meaningful signage. You might only know if you're in the park if you've been there before and explored it; signage isn't there now to tell you where to go. We should think about kiosks but also beyond, what other kinds of signs and things can aid traffic flow for folks that haven't been to Cedar or Isles before?

(Project Staff) These are great points. This will also come up during our larger conversations about inclusion, belonging, and programmatic elements. Part of the reason that Nokomis, Harriet, Bde Maka Ska, etc. feel more accessible is because there is more visibility from the roadways. There are also things like the sailing club at Bde Maka Ska, the Bandshell at Harriet and other iconic moments at the lakes. There are potentially these iconic moments around Cedar and Isles, but they might not have entry points/emphasis on them (thinking about the bridges). Continue to think about if there are any spots that are missing as entry points or could be emphasized?

(CAC) The bridge near the Northwest portion of cedar, with engraving underneath it with the history of Cedar Lake could be a more formal entry point. Hardly see people stop at the stairs to read the wall; there is no wayfinding information from this area that tells you how to get to other points on the lake. It's a cool spot, but it's poorly informative.

(CAC) Want to make a point about circulation around Cedar Lake. Need to think about bike traffic on southern and western sides; used less for recreation, and more as a transportation corridor. Should be thinking about circulation from both the recreation and commuter point of view. Think about how we can use Cedar Lake to connect to other lakes in the Chain and to other Regional Parks (Theodore Wirth, can connect with mountain biking trails, skiing, etc.). In agreement that we need to think about how to guide people to and around the lakes with considerations for climate change. Also need to recognize that because this is a regional park with regional draw, to get some recreation equipment to this space (canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, etc.) there is no current rental, so you have to drive. Going to have to keep in mind cars will be an important mode of transport.



PUBLIC OPEN TIME

Emma Pachuta started public open time, asking participants to write their name in the chat box if they would like to speak this evening. Emma gave participants one minute to speak, and also welcomed folks to share their comments via the chat box if that was more comfortable.

(Public) Live near Cedar Lake and agree that there isn't a lot of great access points. Bike trails are used for a lot of commuting, and the area feels like it is primarily used by pedestrians and bike traffic. Would like Cedar Lake South Beach area to have a parking lot/access hub to park to be able to go to the lake or use the trails. Think that Cedar Lake Parkway should be closed to vehicles from France Avenue to the South Cedar Beach area. Would love to see that place used and reclaimed for pedestrians and green space. Could create more of an access point/push off point for Cedar Lake.

(Public) Believe that Cedar Lake needs a formal loop path around it. Seniors and mobility challenged folks are currently restricted from going around the north/northeast corridor because it is primarily desire-line paths (informal soft surface paths) full of rocks, etc. In general, to make the lake more useable need a path around it. Should have paths to better connect Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles to one another. Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles are underused in the Chain of Lakes; spoke to number of TripAdvisor reviews for Cedar/Isles versus Bde Maka Ska and Harriet. Lake of the Isles needs a public space where people can meet; not even a picnic table around Lake of the Isles currently.

Public Comment (*in chat; read out loud by Emma*) For any signage added, should make sure it's provided in different languages (Spanish, Somali, Hmong)

Emma asked if there were any more public comments, and seeing none directed the conversation back to the CAC for the last 5 minutes to see if they had any additional comments around circulation or access.

(CAC) Thinking about one-way bike routes and how that impacts folks differently depending on where they access the lake from. Should be thinking about possible connections between the lakes, for transit, biking and walking.

(Project Staff) One-way bike routes are a good point, on the walking/biking tour, people had to bike on the sidewalk because of the one-way.

(CAC) It would be beneficial to have a clear route to circulate around Cedar Lake. People can't figure out how to get all the way around. Need a clear path (can be natural). Also need clear delineation about biking and walking in Burnham woods.

(Project Staff) If you're not familiar with the site, Burnham Woods is in the northeast area of the site/Cedar Lake. Currently those paths are designated walking or hiking only,



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but apparently mountain bikers like using those trails as well. We can explore who gets what route if there is bike usage and figure out how to separate bike and walking paths more formally.

(CAC) On the south and west sides of Cedar Lake (around South Cedar Beach), the paths get really narrow for pedestrians and bike traffic (lots of bike commuter traffic). Wants to make sure that bike traffic can remain going both ways, but with greater separation between bikers and pedestrian. Not advocating for full, permanent parkway closure, but maybe the parkways could go different directions so that bike traffic could share the parkway with one-way traffic.

(CAC) Thinking about the future, need to consider electric scooters, skateboards, bikes, etc. and other electric modes of transport because they may become even more common. Know that currently they're not allowed on parkways, but still see a lot of usage along parkways and trails.

THANKS, AND NEXT STEPS

Emma thanked everyone for their participation in the conversation, and willingness to dive into these big topics. She communicated that their feedback would be taken in to help narrow in on future conversation topics and design discussion as the process continues.

ADJOURN: 7:55pm

Staff Note: this meeting ended at 7:55pm (rather than 8:00pm) so that folks who joined the evening meeting could also have time to watch the Presidential Debate at 8:00pm.