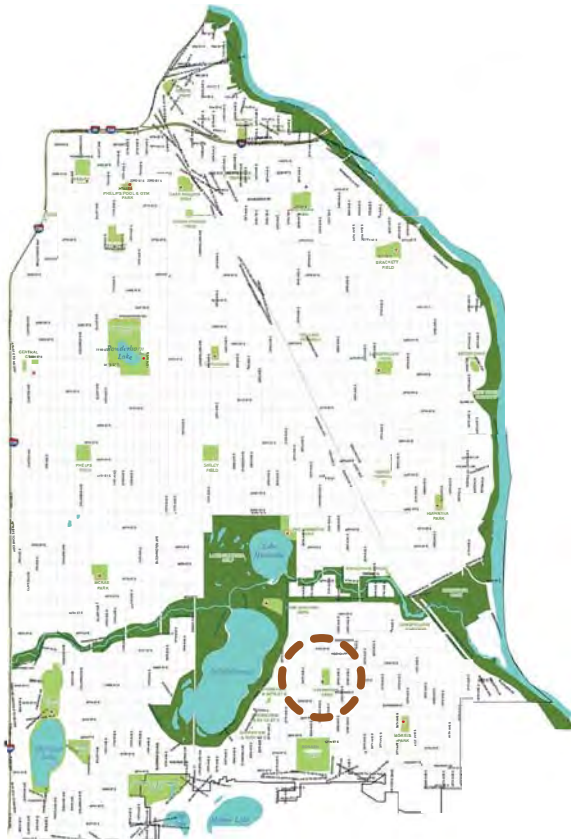


# KEEWAYDIN

## LOCATION AND HISTORY

Keewaydin Park, like Hiawatha School Park, shares a city block with a public school. The block is bound by 52nd Street, 31st Avenue, 53rd Street, and 30th Avenue. The park sits on the eastern half, and the Lake Nokomis Community School's Keewaydin Campus sits on the western half.

Keewaydin came into being as the result of votes by the school board and park board in 1927 to cooperate on the purchase and use of a new school and playground. The school would provide a gym and shelter while the park board would develop outdoor playground and



recreation facilities. The 1928 annual report called this the first instance of close cooperation between the two boards, although earlier efforts to develop Audubon and Stewart parks also involved collaboration between the two boards. The name comes from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Song of Hiawatha." Keewaydin was the "Northwest Wind, the Home Wind."

The land to the east of the already built school was purchased through condemnation procedures. After the acquisition, Nokomis Avenue between the park and school was vacated. Improvements began immediately in 1928 and 1929, when 38,600 cubic yards of fill were used to create a level playing field. By the summer of 1930, the park board provided recreation instructors for the new park after playground equipment was installed and two tennis courts—with backstops—were built. In 1930 and 1931 the park board continued to haul in fill in a fight to keep the land at a level grade. Because the park was built on a former swamp, the fill kept settling. Finally in 1932, the fields were regraded and the tennis courts and a concrete wading pool were finished. In 1959 year-round recreation programming began at the park.

The park board redeveloped the park and built a recreation center there in 1971-1972. At that time the park board and school board considered making the recreation center part of the school, but ultimately decided to build a free-standing facility.

In the early 2010s, the school planned an expansion southward on the site. That would put the school's front entrance in close proximity to the existing wading pool and would require shrinking of the playground—both facilities were on school property under agreement with MPS. MPRB created a new master plan for the park that relocated park facilities onto park land. Those improvements have not yet been completed.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Keewaydin Park has a somewhat unusual layout, when property ownership is taken into consideration. The wading pool and playground, along with the shared parking lot, actually sit on MPS property. The recreation center building is half on MPRB land and half on MPS land. East of the school on MPRB property are four multi-use diamonds with open field space between

them. This arrangement is typical of south Minneapolis parks, but at Keewaydin the diamonds are particularly tight because the park is so narrow.

South of the diamonds and above a slight rise is another open field. This used to be the location of tennis courts, which were previously removed.

Though MPRB spent considerable effort in the late 1920s filling the site for athletic fields, the park is still in a bowl below street level. On the east and north sides of the park in particular the land slopes steeply down into the park. The northern slope is somewhat heavily forested, with an understory of mostly volunteer grasses and other plants. Pathways flank the northern and western (school) side of the park.

The park is used regularly by the school for recess, and many kids participate in after school programs at the recreation center building. The school has a direct entrance into the park on its eastern side, where lower level doors allow a connection without slopes. A paved vehicle access to the building near the recreation center doubles as an area for basketball and other court games.

## CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Wayfinding and connections from Keewaydin Park should focus on:

- The existing City of Minneapolis bicycle/pedestrian route Nokomis Avenue, including an enhanced connection through the park, to connect to Minnehaha Parkway to the north and Bossen Field to the south. The southward connection is important as Bossen will have the nearest wading pool to Keewaydin.
- A proposed pedestrian and/or bicycle route running on 53rd Street west to Lake Nokomis. This connection is important for access to the 50th Street Beach.



Existing Conditions: Keewaydin



Proposed Plan: Keewaydin

## THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The Keewaydin Park plan draws on but modifies—through additional community engagement—a 2011 master plan prepared when the school expanded. That master plan called for all MPRB facilities to be moved off school property and onto the green space east of the recreation building (the building itself would remain). In addition, the plan called for reduction of the multi-use diamonds from four to two, to allow for greater flexibility in athletic use.

The Keewaydin Park plan developed as part of SSAMP makes the same changes to the athletic fields, positioning the two remaining diamonds on opposite corners, instead of on one side, as in many parks, due to the small size of Keewaydin. The slopes around the fields would be naturalized with pollinator-friendly plants, and new and refurbished pathways create a walking loop (with city sidewalks) around most of the park.

The entire grassy area east of the recreation building will become a play area with multiple options for multiple ages. All three play types will occur here: a smaller traditional play area in the center, a nature play area to the west under the trees, and an adventure play zone to the east made up of a vertical climbing/bouldering wall. This would be the first climbing facility in the MPRB system. It will be designed to be used either unsupervised or as part of MPRB programming.

There will be no aquatic facility in this park. The existing wading pool and playground in front of the school will be removed and the land returned to MPS use.

The addition of a varied and unique play environment will make Keewaydin a special park sure to draw users of all ages to try their hands at bouldering or experiment creatively with logs and stones.

## KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

Ongoing coordination with MPS is necessary, as some pathways and half the recreation center building sit on MPS property. MPRB should ensure the agreement with MPS is up to date prior to major capital improvements associated with play areas.

## UPDATE EXISTING



Traditional Play Structure



Multi-use Field



Multi-use Diamond

## NEW/ ADDED



Adventure Play



Nature play area



Walking Loop Trail

## PROCESSES

	<b>1: General Input</b> <b>Spring-Fall 2015</b> <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	<b>2: Initial Concepts</b> <b>Fall-Winter 2015/2016</b> <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	<b>3: The Preferred Concept</b> <b>Now</b> <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	no comments →	Wading pool not necessary, due to proximity of Lake Nokomis and other parks →	No aquatic facilities planned for this park
play	no comments →	Many comments in support of climbing/bouldering wall →	Addition of multi-faceted play area east of recreation center, to include traditional play elements, a nature play area, and a climbing/bouldering wall
athletics	no comments →	Very few comments with clear stances →	Removal of two multi-use diamonds to create more multi-use field space (NOTE: this recommendation is included in the previous master plan for the park)
courts	no comments →	Concern about removing basketball court (NOTE: court is on school property) →	No court facilities planned for this park (basketball and court games area exist on school property)
winter	no comments →	no comments →	No formal winter facilities planned for this park
landscape	no comments →	no comments →	Addition of naturalized areas on park slopes and near play area and recreation center
other	no comments →	no comments →	Addition of paths to create walking loop around park

## COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2017 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT	Implementation Sequence	Prioritization Category	Applicable SSAMP Actions
Play	<b>Play Area:</b> small traditional structure and climbing wall in new containers, including demolition of existing wading pool	\$ 1,256,685	stand-alone	FUNDED	7, 11, 16, 18, 23a, 23b, 23d
Play	<b>Nature Play area</b>	\$ 349,079	stand-alone	PLANNED	11, 16, 23a, 23b,
Athletics	<b>Athletic field renovation,</b> incl. demolition of 2 diamonds, renovation of 2 diamonds, renovation of 2 fields	\$ 1,162,228	stand-alone	PLANNED	11, 16, 21a, 21b, 21d
Landscape	<b>Naturalized areas</b>	\$ 23,409	stand-alone or with other projects, as appropriate	PLANNED	11, 25, 26, 29
Other	<b>Renovate walking paths</b>	\$ 106,843	stand-alone or with other projects, as appropriate	PLANNED	11, 16, 17
Other	<b>Miscl. signs, trees, furniture</b>	\$ 57,827	with other projects, as appropriate	PLANNED	9
n/a	<b>Update agreement with MPS related to capital improvement</b>	\$ -	before major capital improvement	PLANNED	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 2,956,070</b>			

## OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost
Wading Pool	\$ 15,000	-1	\$ (15,000)
Nature Play	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500
Adventure/Climbing Play	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500
Multi-use Diamond	\$ 20,000	-2	\$ (40,000)
Full Court Basketball	\$ 1,500	-1	\$ (1,500)
Walking Loop Trail	\$ 5,000	1	\$ 5,000
<b>Difference</b>			<b>\$ (36,500)</b>