

# Wading pool removal at Keewaydin Park

## Keewaydin Park Phase 1 Improvements Project

November 2021



During the community engagement phase of the [Keewaydin Park improvements project](#), MPRB staff addressed comments and concerns regarding the 2016 decision to remove of the park's wading pool.

The information below outlines facts and the broader context surrounding the removal, including costs, land ownership and long-term ramifications at Keewaydin Park and the neighborhood, service area and citywide levels of the park system.

- Built in 1972 and updated more than 20 years ago, the pool at Keewaydin does not meet current ADA accessibility standards and is near the end of its lifespan.
- Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) owns the land under the pool and existing playground. Through discussions with the MPS school board, MPRB has decided to remove its facilities from MPS land.
- MPRB is also assessing all wading pools next to schools, which tend to be more expensive investments than other pools because they do not open until the school year is over.
- Aquatics facilities are currently offered nearby at Bossen Park, Morris Park, and at Lake Nokomis 50th Street Beach (Little Beach).
- Removal of Keewaydin's pool was approved by MPRB's elected Board of Commissioners in 2016, in adopting the [South Service Area Master Plan](#) (SSAMP). Pros and cons regarding the pool were debated and contested during development of the SSAMP, a process that included:
  - Collaboration with an appointed Community Advisory Committee (CAC) whose members included a representative of the Nokomis East neighborhood, a Park Commissioner and a City Council Member. The CAC ultimately voted for removal as the best decision
  - Review and consideration of a previous park plan completed in 2012
  - More than one-and-a-half years of community engagement, development and design
  - Over 100 community engagement events, including 11 CAC meetings, roundtables, open houses, park and community events, a public hearing, outreach to communities of color and recent immigrant communities
  - A system-wide examination of MPRB aquatics facilities that prioritized equitable access to aquatics citywide, including in historically underserved and well-served areas, while recognizing that no single park can accommodate all amenities
- The current improvements project adds nature play, adventure play, and a climbing/bouldering component to Keewaydin Park: features that are all growing in popularity and engage a wide range of ages and abilities. In particular, the bouldering component will be the first of its kind in the Minneapolis park system and supports a newer sport highlighted at the 2021 Olympics.
- Retaining the pool would require a process to amend Keewaydin Park's master plan and the South Service Area Master Plan, including a review of the factors above.