



Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board  
Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles Master Plan  
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Water Quality Subcommittee Meeting #3

4/21/2022 6:00-8:00pm  
Zoom Online Video Call

**MPRB Staff and Consultants Present:** Emma Pachuta (Project Manager), Madeline Hudek; Erica Christensen (TENXTEN), Pat Conrad (EOR), Adam Arvidson

**CAC Subcommittee Members Present:** Anna Eleria (Subcommittee Chair), Craig Wilson, Drew McGovern, Jim Romlin, Laura Kinkead, Nan Dreher

**CAC Members Absent:** Constance Pepin, Win Rockwell (CAC Chair)

**Public:** Throughout the evening approximately 11 members of the public joined the meeting

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Emma welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the subcommittee members to introduce themselves followed by staff and project consultants. Following introductions, Emma went through a land acknowledgment, the agenda, CAC group agreement, public online forum guidelines.

Emma then turned the presentation over to Anna to go through the meeting purpose for the evening. Anna thanked the group for doing meetings in quick succession – good overview last week. But now transitioning into a discussion about goals for these lakes that will be attainable over the life of the Master Plan.

Reviewed all the different planning levels – tonight, the focus is on the boundaries of the Master Plan. But there are other types of planning that will be affected by the outcomes of this meeting – they operate at different scales and are critical to the holistic improvement of water quality at these lakes. (*See presentation for more details*).

Anna then turned the presentation over to Pat Conrad, water quality specialist from EOR. Pat then reviewed the highlights from his last presentation. (*See presentation for more details*). Videos from the Water Quality Subcommittee #2 presentations are in the [meeting page](#).

Pat opened it up for CAC questions.

(CAC) What would need to happen to determine the actual loading and effects of watershed vs in-lake?

- (Project Staff) You'd need to assess the trends over a number of years and then do your best draw conclusions from the multiple year trend.

(CAC) Where are we with Lake of the Isles Trophic State Index (TSI)?

- (Project Staff) It's generally meeting its goals

(Project Staff, *in chat*) Videos of the presentations from water quality cac subcommittee meeting #2: [https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/project\\_updates/water-quality-cac-subcommittee-meeting-2/](https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/project_updates/water-quality-cac-subcommittee-meeting-2/)

(Project Staff, *in chat*) Currently we have 11 panelists and 9 attendees in the meeting

### **EXISTING GOALS REVIEW**

Pat gives an introduction to Clean Water Partnership (CWP) goals – they are 6 high level goals. Pat goes over each goal, their relative objectives and provides some commentary about the progress on these objectives.

1. Increase Public Awareness of Water Quality Issues
2. Protect Public Health and Safety
  - a. Beach closures have not been due to overall water quality but to incidents (porta potty overturned, etc)
3. Reduce in-Lake Pollutants – trapping in-lake nutrients. Did this through an Alum treatment.
  - a. There have been some attempts to manage zooplankton and fish but not comprehensive
4. Reduce Pollutant Loading through Implementation of BMPs
  - a. Watershed wide – the Cedar Lake Meadows as an example
5. Improving Government Management
  - a. Objective to essentially do a lake management plan for each lake but hasn't been done (rivers do have them)
6. Monitor lake water quality and management practice: clearly this goal has been in place since the CWP

(CAC) In the areas that haven't been done, can you give context on why?

- (Project staff) There's a need for a lake management plan – speculate that it was capacity and has been reinforced in the Ecological System Plan.

Pat then reviews the numeric goals from the CWP (*see slides for details*). As a point to clarify the reduction goals – these and the TSI numbers would need to be vetted and might be outdated.

Emma then reviews the Ecological System Plan (ESP) Goals. There are several from different categories that are applicable. (*See slides for details*).

(CAC) Were the Ecological System Plan goals quantified?

- (Project Staff) The Ecological System Plan calls for metrics to be identified in subsequent planning efforts. Right now, there's a process taking place to identify which pieces of the plan can have metrics.

(CAC, *in chat*) It would be helpful to have water quality/quantity staff attend the subcommittee. It seems like people like Deb Pilger, etc., would hold the relevant institutional knowledge. How are water quality/quantity staff being included? On the water volume/quantity side, is "bounce" an issue being considered? Is it a problem for the lakes?

- (Project Staff) Water quality staff has been very involved in preparation for these meetings.
- (CAC, *in chat*) Thank you for explaining... You may want to define bounce... bounce - water level fluctuations due to topography, soils, and runoff inputs during and after precipitation events. <https://stormwater.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/Glossary>
- (Project Staff) Yes, volume is integral and assumed in assessments. Bounce is a natural thing. Quantity is factored in, part of the equation of the loads.

(CAC) Is managing invasive species a part of the water quality equation?

- (CAC) It is. Algae can be harmful – so it's really about balance because they can uptake. Looking for native, diverse community to achieve balance.
- (CAC) Not just water quality, but could broaden the definition to include Lake Health

#### **Public comments from the chat:**

- Were any of these Ecological system plan goals quantified?
- It would make a lot of sense to bring water quality staff to water quality meetings.
- What is bounce?

#### **CAC GOALS DISCUSSION**

(Project Staff) Shows the goals from the first WQ sub-committee meeting. Shows the questions from the first meeting

- It's important to set goals and guidance. We will talk about best management strategies, but not tonight. Defining goals
- Goals for what is the desired future condition that we want to obtain – within the timeframe of the plan or longer – sets up accountability.

- Goals can be measurable. What do we expect to see accomplished with the plan? What would they look like after the implementation of the plan?

Anna led the CAC subcommittee members through a discussion around a few specific questions.

(CAC) Building on existing goals. Can we start with the clean water partnership goals? Also revert back to the goal that was established numerically.

- (CAC) Yes, return to 1990 standard. Looking at the same BMPs that were successful. Evaluating that infrastructure and determining if it's still functional.

(CAC) Develop a target species to use as a litmus test, indicator: quantifying water quality success on those populations

(CAC) Strike a balance between human recreation and water quality. Define what the tipping point is? (Ex: Are the chemicals that people put on their bodies contributing? Are the docks and canoes on the private properties contributing?)

(CAC) A lot of work was put into the 1990 goals. Update them – invasive species and new people anticipated.

- (CAC) Agree with previous comment about balancing human use with preserving things
- (CAC) Can we review the CWP goals one by one

(CAC) 90% of the eastern side of Cedar Lake should be naturalized with exceptions for formalized access points

(CAC) Provide better protection where people do access the lake (i.e. stone steps, permeable-robust surfaces)

(CAC) Like the goal of raising public awareness

(CAC) Want a strong goal on the watershed issue.

- (CAC) How do we do that?

(CAC) Maintaining water quality and habitat quality at 1990 levels

- (Project Staff) Comprehensive Plan has a statement about “stewarding a continuum of nature and recreation”

(CAC) Likes the text in Strategy 2 from the ESP

(CAC) Reduce run-off from own impervious surfaces (parkways, parking lot)

- (CAC, *in chat*) Yes to what CAC member is saying

- (Project staff) ESP has some specific guidance on impervious and pipes (removing it and disconnecting)
- (CAC) Recommend that we hold those up in this master plan

(Project staff) Also likes the bacteria reduction goals and goose dropping text from the ESP

- (CAC) Likes the explicit goal for reducing waste into the water
- (CAC) Yes, too much Ecoli makes these beaches “unswimmable” Meet the state swimmable standards (bacterial water quality standards) 100% of the time during the recreation season)
- (CAC) What are the lakes providing habitat for? Not geese. (strategy 4.7 from ESP relates to modifying habitat to discourage geese)

(CAC) Are the higher level standards from the 90s a good target? Do we know this yet?

- (CAC) Been contemplating this. They were good but think they should be looked at.
- (Project Staff) Thinks we could challenge Lake of the Isles load reduction percentage based on where we are today
- (CAC) Also want to consider the TSI numbers

(CAC) Did the prior plan accommodate climate projections? Would it be good to factor any new data to change the goals?

- (Project Staff) Climate change will make it more challenging to meet those goals.
- (CAC) If we do modeling, will that help determine the goals or how to get to the goals?
- (Project Staff) That will help us with the reduction goals.
- (CAC, *in chat*) So is there a climate related goal that we should consider or is it too early to consider than until we have seen a more detailed model?

(CAC) Responding to density comment from other CAC...don't think we can stop this moment. Recognize we will have more use vs less use.

- (Project Staff) In addition to more people, there's additional impervious surface. 2040 plan asks for shoreline overlay district tackle impervious and city is updating their ordinance to set stricter standards for run-off.
- (Project Staff) When you see redevelopment in areas with good rules, should see an improvement to water quality.
- (CAC) See access points as important strategy to respond to the loads
- (CAC) Could the goal be about new pathways and always looking for ways to create pervious surfaces?
- (CAC) What limits degradation to habitat – beyond pervious paving.

(CAC) Any new impervious surface needs to prioritize water quality (where we locate paths because of erosion and how we are revegetating): improving water quality through design (and allowing for recreation in the mean time)

- (Project staff) Very similar to 1.1 from ESP

(CAC, *in chat*) Look at the development happening along Excelsior Blvd, Uptown, West End...soon to be the area around Glenwood/Van White... It's happening... Thanks community member. How many units have been added since 2010? Do you know? I'd like to know too. (*in reference to comment in chat*). (CAC, *in chat*) Thanks community member (*in reference to comment in chat*).

CAC) Some goal about getting all the stakeholders to the table and accountability. Watershed level. (ex: MCWD, City of Minneapolis, City of St. Louis Park and any others who may need to get involved to address watershed level considerations.)

CAC Some goal around habitat that has intentional and separate effect on water quality

- (CAC) Is it for aquatic and terrestrial?
- (CAC) Improve existing and expand habitat. Does it need to be removed from humans. Observe and identify target species.
- (CAC) Could the islands be enhanced to support habitat?

CAC Reduce internal loading of phosphorus in our lakes. Estimate relative magnitude so we can really target appropriate strategy.

(CAC) Frequency of rainfall and changing seasons...how do we capture a goal around climate change?

- (CAC) It will help with types of strategies and how they are designed.

(CAC) Goal to formalize this committee into a long-term advisory committee? Create a permanent oversight plus a group that can make a rapid response. Including adaptive management strategies and consideration for climate change.

- (CAC) Support that
- (Project Staff) Other CACs have recommended things beyond this MP process, so City-wide or other jurisdictional entities.

(CAC, *in chat*) That's terrifying. Where did you hear that? (*in reference to comment in chat*).

**Public comments from the chat:**

- Sounds like Park Board Commissioner's are working on lake water quality. Do any of the CAC go to or are up-to date on their efforts?
- The 1997 long range plan used the term "overuse" in relation to the lakes. Assuming that is a legitimate concept, how do we define it?
- How does a dock differ from a boardwalk? Docks are out 6 months of the year. Dock are used by ducks to hide under as well as Great Blue Herons. Docks do shield the shore from thru traffic. Keeping water craft at a distance from sunfish fisheries. Docks are

used by public. Fishing around them. Pulling in to docks to rest. Swimmers and watercraft

- The 1997 long range plan included access around cedar lake and access through the kenilworth channel connecting isles and cedar by pedestrian paths.
- What Adam is saying makes sense — goes back to CAC member's question about how measuring the impact the various contributors good and bad.
- Water quality at lake harriet and lake bde maka--two of the busiest user lakes, have the best rated water quality in th echain of lakes system--A rated. This suggests that it is not recreation that has the greatest impact on water quality but other factors in play!
- Related to paddle use (SUP, kayaks, canoes, etc), MPRB environmental stewardship staff have indicated the lakes have neared carrying capacity. This was in response pursuing additional canoe rack on Cedar Lake.
- A good goal, IMO: Renewing the CWP goal of "Develop water quality goals and management plans for each lake..."
- CAC member--give us a number of "all the people moving into the area" . Cedar Lake needs more users--it is the least populated lake --next to brownie in the chain of lakes-- by far-- and with it's current access pattern does not attract many park users--the park users are off to Bde and Harriet!
- CIDNA has approx 8,000 people per sq mile based on 2010 census data, has increased since. For reference, this is a density akin to Seattle
- According to the presentation The main source of phosphorus for Cedar is the watershed from the west. Maybe that should be the main effort?
- I don't know off the top of my head, but info sb available
- My guess is that there have been around 400-500 units added in the last few years. The large buildings have around 120-150 units, and there have been several of them. Good question.
- Does the capacity currently exist to do the kind of modeling Patrick is talking about?
- Last meeting seemed to point to a repeat alum treatment for Cedar. Should this be something the CAC recommends
  - Community member makes a good point. One would think that the Mpls 2040 plan — a wall to wall upzoning of the whole city — would have included an environmental study of some kind, but it did not. That is actually the subject of an ongoing lawsuit brought by the organization Smart Growth Mpls.
- (Commissioner Abene) Hi. Quick thing. The city has had rules for development and redevelopment for 20 plus years and the benefit still isn't showing in the quality of the water.
  - Re Cathy's observation: I took a city-planning dept tour of development downtown a year or so ago. It was astonishing how everything was being built out to the street, no green space. And I think of the apartment being built on the

old gas station on Lake and Excelsior, right next to Bde Maka Ska — it is concrete, curb to curb. No green space, no permeable surfaces at all.

- Why does the human use on parks not impact the water quality of harriet and bde which constantly get A ratings for water quality? Also, harriet and bde have hard surface paths through the entire area?
- I'm feeling curious about Light rail construction impact on our green spaces and water quality
- At the south cedar lake meeting with cedar isles dean neighborhood representatives they said as part of the redesign of south cedar beach they had requested a canoe rack. They offered to fund this. The Park Board denied this as they said traffic on Cedar is already at maximum. I think this should remove the rental kiosk at Cedar east beach near light rail stop?
- How do we define "natural Areas"? Cedar Lake has been defined by the Park Board study of natural ares as a "altered" woodland--not a natural area. Also, there is scrub/scrub area on N/NE section of cedar--not natural. And let's not forget about the main vegetative invasive species--buckthorn--riddled throughout Cedar especially in the wild and natural N/NE c
- Climate change will actually be colder winters as the polar ice caps melt initially then the heat wave
- When will information presented at the water quality meetings be available for viewing on the website and where would it be found?
- SWLRT destroyed 40 acres of densely wooded area and prairie restoration. We estimate around 3,000 trees taken in our area alone.
- Rather than maximizing usage. Should a strategy be to keep traffic at a level that will not severely negatively impact our Lakes
- The lakes are the 2nd most-visited attractions in the state, after the MOA. They receive millions of visitors per year. I would like to ask staff — Is there a mandate to attract more people to the lakes? If so, what is it based on?
- Has there been any recent advances in the development of techniques to better manage and control the negative impacts on our Chain of Lakes from milfoil and curly pond weed?
- The idea is to make all the lakes available to the public--especially since it all is public property

### **PUBLIC COMMENT TIME**

Following the discussion, Emma transitioned the conversation to public comment time and explained that it was a time for community members to make comments related to the master plan. Emma asked folks to write 'yes' or their name in the chat box if they wanted to share feedback verbally. Folks could also write feedback in the chat box during this time (recorded below).

- (Public, *in chat*) Kudos to Mark Sorensen at the MPRB for the amazing job he did in 2021 managing the extreme algae bloom at Lake of the Isles hauling tens of thousands of pounds of residue away from the lake!!!
- (Public) Thanks the park board for the Ecological System Plan. 15 pages on water pages and 45 specific recommendations. There's a life section and a land section. If you were a contractor and you have that walk through at your final check list – excellent to include these details. Also include management briefs in the contractor walk through. Encourage everybody to review the work from the MPRB. Please include the Natural Areas Plan and Ecological System Plan in the master plan.
  - (Public, *in chat*) They are correct on the potential utility of the Natural Areas Plans (Phase 1 and Phase 2) and Ecological Systems Plan in the master planning process
- (Public) 1. Important to understand the degree of contribution, pro and con – needs to be done with modeling. Hope we have the capacity to do that – but big project and needs funding. 2. Go back to the goals of the Clean Water Partnership – set goals for each of the lakes. 3. Likes the suggestion of setting up extension of city-wide water quality group – enables us to go out and educate our communities in turn
- (Public) Main focus on Southwest Lightrail – during those community meetings still have concern of deicing on the mouth of the tunnel, one of which is right on the channel. Please pay attention to that. Really wonderful to get this education.
- (Public) Thanks for all your hard work – appreciate all the time and effort. Southeast corner came up again. We put \$100k into a really good retaining wall. Mike and Strawberry Islands can't be walked on so not everywhere needs to be accessed – our property only has 7 feet of land to do a path so please don't jam something through where you have a nature reserve.
- (Public, *in chat*) I would really like someone to summarize these meetings in an article for the Hill & Lake Press in May. Any volunteers? Contact me at [hillandlakepress@gmail.com](mailto:hillandlakepress@gmail.com)
- (Public, *in chat*) My question was already listed
  - Project staff asked for clarification from commenter on their question. Impact from SWLRT
- (Public) Project staff reads a comment from the chat: " Mark is correct on the potential utility of the Natural Areas Plans (Phase 1 and Phase 2) and Ecological Systems Plan in the master planning process."
- (Public) Project staff reads a comment from the chat: 20 or so years ago the Lake of the Isles shoreline was naturalized. How successful was [it?]
- Project staff asks for clarification on what they mean.
- (Commissioner Abene) Great discussion and progress, thank you!
- (Public, *in chat*) Thanks for joining again Cathy!

- (Public) - responding to the comments about SE side of Cedar. If we can think Theodore Wirth purchased this land for private use that idea is preposterous. Suggests we have a public meeting for on east side of lake – take a look at the opportunities and how it could really work.
- Has there been any recent advances in the development of techniques to better manage and control the negative impacts on our Chain of Lakes from milfoil and curly pond weed? When will information presented at the water quality meetings be available for viewing on the website and where would it be found?
- (Project Staff, *in chat*) [WQ Subcommittee Meeting #1](#) and [WQ Subcommittee #2](#) - videos are up, other content to follow
- (Public, *in chat*) Thank you everyone. Excellent analysis EOR.
- (Public, *in chat*) Thanks Emma!