

HARRISON PARK



LOCATION AND HISTORY

Harrison Park is a relatively large park adjacent to and south of Olson Memorial Highway in the Harrison Neighborhood. The park takes its name from the adjacent Harrison School, which was named for president William Henry Harrison. The park board's first involvement on the property, in 1958, was developing a playground for the school—even before the land for a larger park was acquired.

The park was purchased in 1959 from the federal government as a part of the Minneapolis Housing Redevelopment Authority (MHRA) redevelopment of the Glenwood housing area. The park board had been reviewing the possibilities of playground development at the site with the MHRA since 1953. The park board initially approved plans in 1959 to develop the park with funds to be obtained through assessments on property in the neighborhood, but the project would lose federal funds under that scenario, so the board approved spending city bond funds for the entire cost of the improvements. Those improvements included a shelter with office space; ball fields and hard surface courts for tennis, basketball and volleyball; and a wading pool and children's play areas. The shelter was built to a design similar to earlier shelters constructed at Franklin Steele Square and Peavey Field, which had removable exterior walls for conversion from winter to summer use.

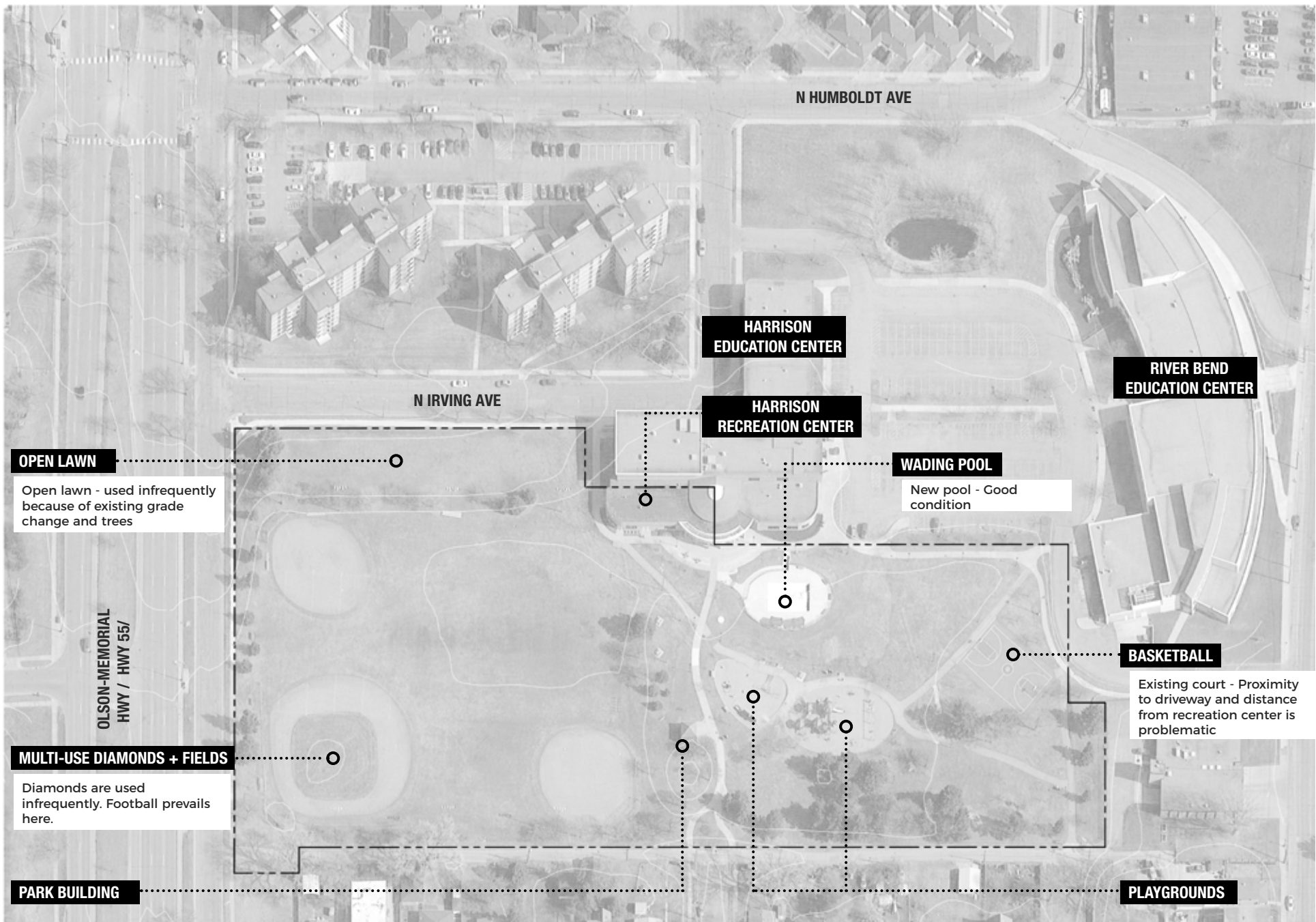
In 1975, the park's tennis courts, walkways and walking paths were renovated. Additional improvements were made to the park in 1984 when the original shelter was renovated and fully enclosed. Between 1997 and 1999 a new secondary school and neighborhood center were

built to replace the old school and recreation shelter. The new building housed a gym, a park board neighborhood center and the offices of the Harrison Neighborhood Association. The playground was updated and other improvements were made to the park in 2003 and 2004. The kitchen in the community center was renovated in 2008. In 2015 a new wading pool opened. It was shifted closer to the neighborhood center and contains a number of colorful play features.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CHARACTER

Harrison Park is active park with a vibrant youth sports program—both indoors and outdoors. The northern half of the park features three multi-use diamonds (one with grass infield) and a football field. A small open lawn area to the east of and at a lower elevation than the field areas seems isolated and under-used. Near the recreation center entrance in the middle of the park's eastern side is a large paved plaza, the wading pool, and (a little farther into the park) the play areas. The southern half of the park is quite open and unvegetated. It seems to have no real purpose other than for the single full-court basketball court at the far southern edge of the park. Visibility of the basketball court is limited in this location.

The park, for as large as it is, is actually rather secluded and somewhat difficult to get to. The large parking lot east of the park (shared with the school) does not connect directly to a main street and the western side of the park fronts on an alley and garage doors. Busy Highway 55 and its frontage road forms the park's northern boundary. The park nearly bridges all the way from Highway 55 to Glenwood, which could be an



N HUMBOLDT AVE

**HARRISON
EDUCATION CENTER**

**RIVER BEND
EDUCATION CENTER**

N IRVING AVE

**HARRISON
RECREATION CENTER**

WADING POOL

New pool - Good
condition

OPEN LAWN

Open lawn - used infrequently
because of existing grade
change and trees

OLSON-MEMORIAL
HWY / HWY 55/

MULTI-USE DIAMONDS + FIELDS

Diamonds are used
infrequently. Football prevails
here.

BASKETBALL

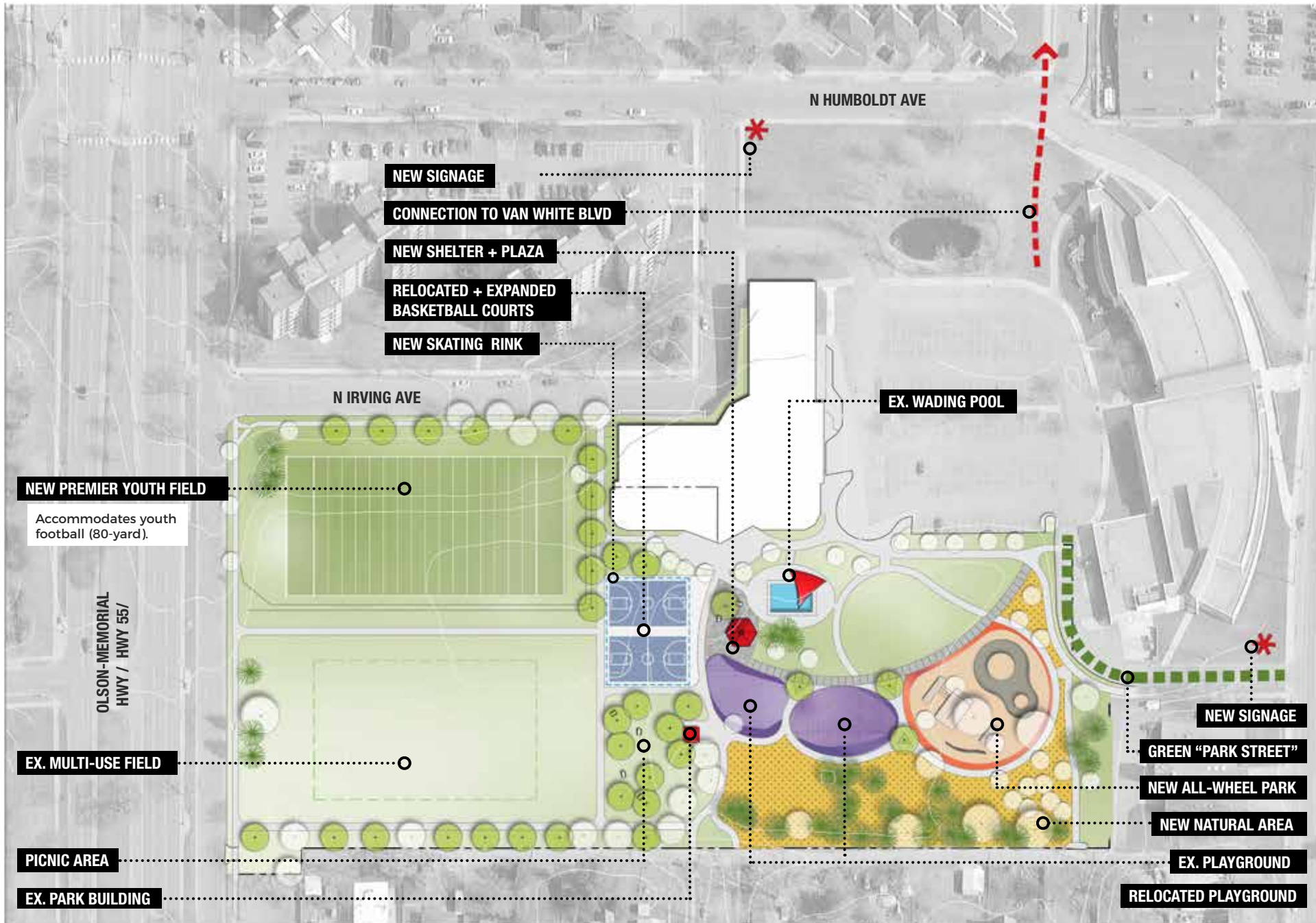
Existing court - Proximity
to driveway and distance
from recreation center is
problematic

PARK BUILDING

PLAYGROUNDS

EXISTING CONDITIONS: HARRISON PARK





PROPOSED PLAN: HARRISON PARK

PROCESSES

HARRISON

	1: General Input Spring-Fall 2017 <i>Input themes prior to initial concepts</i>	2: Initial Concepts Winter 2018 <i>Input themes on initial concepts</i>	3: The Preferred Concept Now <i>Key elements of the concept</i>
aquatics	Mixed opinion on pool, mostly people want a bigger deeper pool →	Suggestion to add shade →	Wading pool in same location; add shade structure
play	Playground well liked, with some suggestions for more swings →	no comments →	Traditional play areas in generally the same location; one contained slightly relocated
athletics	Multi-use field and diamond not well liked due to condition. → Suggestion to upgrade to synthetic turf	Significant support for premier field → Significant support for multi-use field instead of ball diamond	New premier youth football soccer field (80 yard) Removal of ball diamonds to create more space for multi-use fields
courts	Request for more and improved basketball courts outside →	Support for 2 basketball courts near building →	Two new full-court basketball near building
winter	no comments →	Support for ice skating rink →	New ice skating rink on basketball courts, adjacent to building's warming room
landscape	no comments →	no comments →	Natural areas around southern edges of park
other	Picnic tables considered in poor condition, though desired → Add more picnic tables	Support for skate park / bike park → Support for adult fitness	New skate park in southern half of park New picnic/gathering shelter and plaza

advantage, but it is cut off from the latter by the River Bend Education Center and Fire Station 16, which front Glenwood.

Harrison Park has almost everything a typical neighborhood park has: aquatics, play, athletics, courts, a recreation center with indoor gym. As a result (and also because of its location in a very dense neighborhood) it is well-used and busy. Capitalizing on some areas of underutilized space, however, could make this park truly exceptional.

THE PROPOSED DESIGN

The proposed design for Harrison keeps the basic bones of the park intact, but rearranges some facilities and capitalizes on the whole space of the park. The northern athletic portion of the park is re-envisioned as a field sports venue, with both a large natural surface field and a large premier (artificial turf) field. Grades in this area are modified to create two level fields at different elevations, stretching all the way from the alley to Irving Avenue. The diamonds would be decommissioned in favor of these fields.

The wading pool and play areas remain in their current locations, while improved picnic areas occupy the space between them and north of the existing storage building. A new open air shelter near the pool would provide space for family gatherings or community events. Basketball is relocated to the area north of the wading pool and picnic area, and the court count is increased to two. Moving the courts here allows for greater visibility from the recreation center.

COST ESTIMATE

Asset Type	Project	2019 ESTIMATED COST/PROJECT
Aquatics	Wading Pool	\$ 854,268
Play	Traditional Play Structure in existing container	\$ 806,809
Athletics	Athletic Field renovation: 1 premier field and multi-use field space, decommission diamonds	\$ 3,160,793
Courts	Basketball Court (2), with winter ice (non-refrigerated)	\$ 308,486
Landscape	Naturalized areas	\$ 29,425
Other	Gathering/picnic plaza, with shelter	\$ 332,215
Other	Renovate walking paths	\$ 759,350
Other	All-wheel park	\$ 949,187
Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	\$ 144,011
TOTAL		\$ 7,344,544

NOTE: pool recently replaced: cost included to reflect total park renovation, including recent costs

In winter, these courts would be flooded for free ice skating—in close proximity to the warming room entrance. Harrison Recreation Center has a warming room with a fireplace, something the park design should definitely take advantage of.

A new all-wheel park occupies the former basketball area south of the play areas. This fun, custom-built venue for skateboards, scooters, and BMX bikes will attract more activity to the park, especially at that underutilized southern

end. Naturalized areas west of the skate park buffer homes and provide improved habitat and visual quality. The driveway access heading south to Glenwood Avenue is re-envisioned as a greened “park street.” This corridor includes clear signage at Glenwood, high quality street trees, and blooming boulevards. It will welcome people to the park from Glenwood and encourage use of this access point to the park, which will ensure safety in this area.

The design for Harrison Park builds on the park’s high activity and brings even more excitement to the neighborhood. New improvements (all-wheel park, expanded basketball, premier sports fields) strive to attract older youth, who have fewer options in the current park. The inclusion of year-round activities also leverages current activity to keep the all-year momentum going. Harrison is already fun, active, and exciting, and under the proposed plan will become even more so.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

The proposed Olson Highway cycle track to be implemented along with the Bottineau LRT line (Blue Line Extension) will run on the northern side of Olson Highway, making direct connection to the park difficult. The proposed Van White station is just a block east of the park.

A park connection should be implemented to provide an eastward connection to the trails on Van White Boulevard, which connect through city- and MPRB-owned green spaces running north-south.

The City of Minneapolis bikeway on Glenwood Avenue would provide direct connection to the

OPERATIONS ESTIMATE

HARRISON				
FACILITIES	Total Per Unit Operations Cost	△ Qty	△ Cost	
Multi-use Diamond	\$ 20,000	-3	\$ (60,000)	
Premeir Field	\$ 25,000	1	\$ 25,000	
Full Court Basketball	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500	
Skating Rink	\$ 30,000	1	\$ 30,000	
All-wheel Park	\$ 7,500	1	\$ 7,500	
Group Shelter	\$ 4,000	1	\$ 4,000	
Plaza	\$ 10,000	1	\$ 10,000	
Kiosk/Signage	\$ 2,000	1	\$ 2,000	
Difference			\$ 20,000	

park if the southern “green street” entrance is implemented. The Glenwood bikeway connects westerly to Wirth Park and the Bassett’s Creek Valley. With implementation of the Luce Line Trail, a neighborhood mini-loop will be possible by connecting Glenwood, Luce Line, and Van White Boulevard

KNOWN LAND USE AND COORDINATION ISSUES

Coordination with Minneapolis Public Schools should be pursued with most improvements, because of the long shared history and shared uses in the area. Coordination will also be necessary for the “Green street” access to the south.