

DOWNTOWN SERVICE AREA MASTER PLAN



**Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board**



November 2017

Adopted November 29, 2017 by
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners
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Consultant Team
LHB, Inc.
MIG
SRF Consulting Group



Acknowledgments

The Downtown Service Area Master Plan (DSAMP) is the result of dedicated and ongoing collaboration among residents, visitors, and workers of downtown Minneapolis. The Plan was shaped by those who served on the appointed Steering Committee (SC), Technical Advisory Committee, downtown neighborhoods, community service organizations, and members of the public (downtown residents, visitors, and workers). MPRB Planning division staff thanks all these individuals for their contributions to the plan.

MPRB Project Team

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- » Michael Schroeder, Assistant Superintendent for Planning
- » Colleen O'Dell, Park Planner/Designer
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Consultants

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Steering Committee

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- » Nicholas (Nick) Cichowicz
- » Jay Cowles
- » Steve Cramer
- » David Hile (Alternate)
- » Joanne Kaufman
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- » Sally Westby
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- » David Wilson

Franklin Steele Square

Size: 1.57 acres

Address: 1600 Portland Avenue South

Location: Franklin Steele Square is located in the far southwest corner of the Elliot Park neighborhood, bordered on two sides by the I-94 freeway and off-ramp, to the east by Portland Avenue South, and to the north by a residential apartment complex. Half of the parcel closest to Portland Avenue is owned by MPRB and the other half is part of the residential property.

Motivators:

Action/Adventure/Challenge
Be Entertained
Competition/Sport
Explore/Learn
Family + Friends
Fitness+ Health

History

The park was named to honor Franklin Steele, one of the first European settlers in the area and a civic activist who built the first bridge over the Mississippi at Nicollet Island. The land for the park was donated to the city in 1882 by the daughters of Franklin Steele and later transferred to the newly created Park Board. A condition of the donation was that the city appoint Charles Loring to supervise improvements to the park, a condition that both the City Council and Loring accepted.

In 1912 a playground was added, and in 1948 the park was integrated with adjacent Madison School by the vacation of 16th Street. Additional improvements were made at that time, including a wading pool, a children's play area, a small athletic field, picnic facilities, basketball and volleyball courts and a shelter. A portion of the shelter had removable walls that could be stored in summer to provide an open air structure, yet provide protection for skaters as a warming house in winter. Franklin Steele Square lost 0.14 acre in 1962 to freeway construction. The land lost was not as significant as the fact that freeways on two sides of the park isolated it from parts of the

neighborhood it had once served. The park was completely rebuilt in 2008-2009. A new splash pad and playground equipment were the main features of the new park, but renovations also included a new picnic shelter with tables, benches and grills.

Existing Conditions and Character

Franklin Steele Square was once a formal square surrounded by city streets prior to construction of the freeway (Figures 1.30 and 1.31). In 1962, part of the neighborhood was removed to allow for the construction of the freeway, and as a result, the park lost its urban edge and was cut off from neighborhood context (Figure 1.32). Vehicular access to the park is now limited to Portland Avenue which is a southbound one-way street.

In the 2002 Elliot Park Neighborhood Master Plan, Franklin Steele Square was identified as a neighborhood commons. The master plan recommended the creation of new housing along the freeway to bring more "eyes on the park" and help foster a sense of ownership for the park.



Franklin Steele Square Existing Conditions

Issues

- » Difficult to access from parts of the neighborhood
- » Bounded to the south and west by noisy freeway
- » Portland Avenue is a busy one-way street headed out of downtown
- » Residential use is located between 15th Street and the park and park is “hidden” behind residential use
- » Main walkway into the park does not align with the intersection crossing
- » Side yard between residential use and park land is underutilized and appears to be part of the park
- » Coniferous trees around the south and east edge of the park block sightlines into the park
- » Many residents, especially to the south and west, don’t know the park exists

Opportunities

- » Partner with the City of Minneapolis to create safer crossings across Portland Avenue
- » Consider teaming with nearby programs/agencies to create additional park programming opportunities for youth
- » Expand park into the residential side yard owned by MPRB
- » Activate the park edge along Portland Avenue
- » Increase park access, police and emergency access, and bicycle access along freeway edge
- » Consider development of freeway edge for residential use to separate park uses from the freeway



Figure 1.30 Franklin Steele Square (1938) Aerials from Borhardt Library, MN Historical Aerial Photos Accessed Online, Composite Image by MPRB, 2016

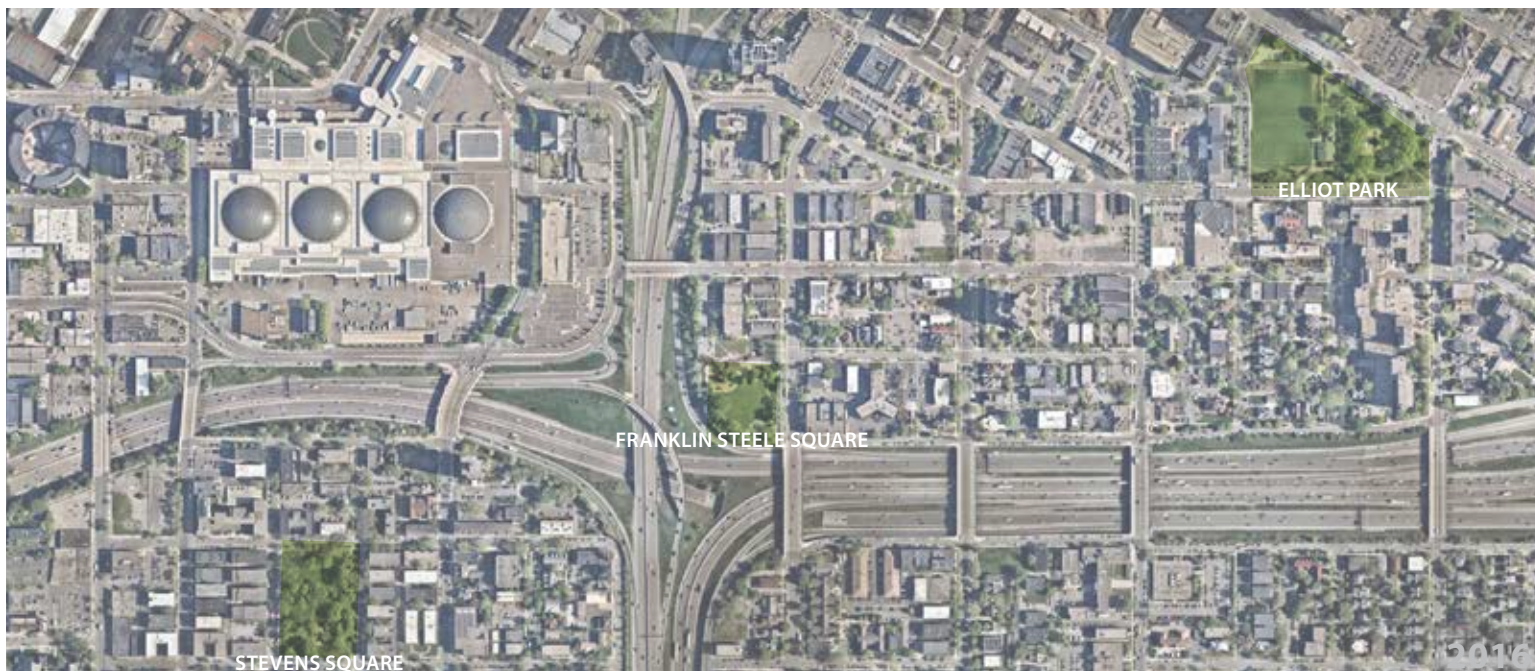


Figure 1.31 Franklin Steele Square Context (2016)

Franklin Steele Square Existing Conditions

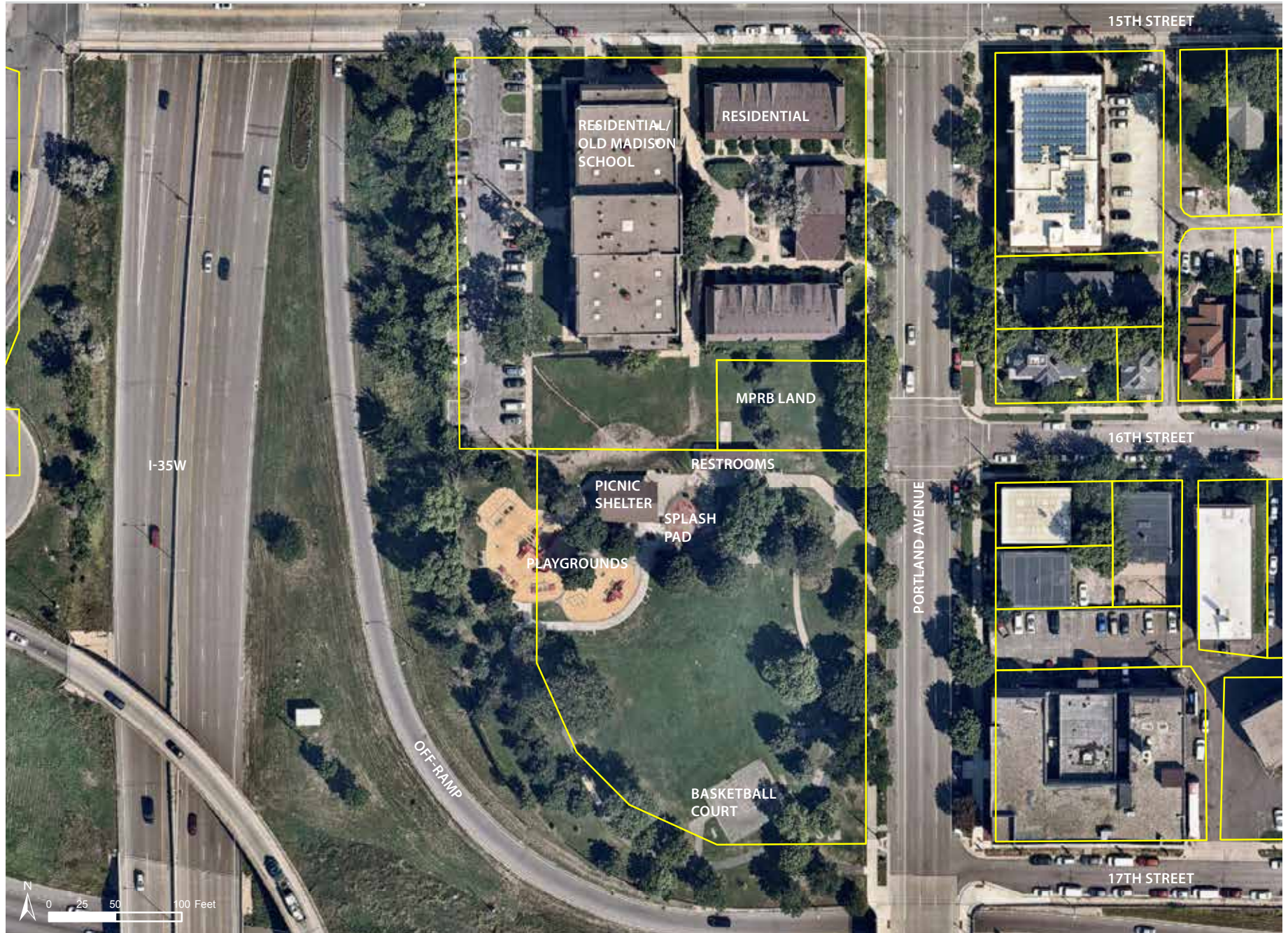


Figure 1.32 Franklin Steele Square Existing Conditions

Franklin Steele Square Proposed Plan



Figure 1.33 Franklin Steele Square Proposed Plan



Precedents for Franklin Steele Square

Connections

Wayfinding and connections to and from Franklin Steele Square should focus on:

- » The existing City of Minneapolis bicycle lane on Portland Ave South which connects the park to downtown as well as neighborhoods south of the freeway
- » The existing City of Minneapolis 15th Street Bikeway which connects to the Convention Center, Loring Park, and the Kenilworth and Cedar Lake Trails

- » Main pedestrian street sidewalk connections to downtown, the rest of Elliot Park neighborhood, and to residential areas south of the freeway, including Portland Avenue South, 11th Avenue South, and East 16th and 17th Streets
- » Police access from East 15th Street parking lot north of park

Proposed Design

The concept for Franklin Steele Square utilizes the current boundaries of the freeway, Portland Avenue, and residential housing. It strives to enhance what exists today to create a viable vibrant park that provides higher quality programming and recreational opportunities for the neighborhood. The concept pushes the play areas and recreation areas away from the noisy and noxious freeway and suggests access along the freeway edge for police, bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles. If an opportunity presents itself to further remove the park from the



Precedents for Franklin Steele Square



freeway edge via residential development, the MPRB will explore a land swap to provide safer, healthier, and a more centralized park space for the Elliot Park Neighborhood.

Desired Key Features

- » Introduction of community agriculture by providing garden program space near Portland Avenue
- » Creation of a one-way traditional woonerf style roadway for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians with parking along freeway edge

- » Incorporation of a native planting palette throughout park
- » Reconfigured and expanded plaza that aligns with pedestrian movements from the intersection at 16th Street and the transit features along Portland Avenue
- » Introduction of a secondary entry walk aligned with the 17th Street intersection that highlights enhanced connections from the neighborhood
- » Reoriented play areas closer to the middle of the park and away from the freeway, with the splash pad, shelter, and restroom building remaining in their existing locations

- » Reorganization of active spaces so they are more identifiable along the street and so activities are legible from Portland Avenue
- » Relocated bus stop along Portland Avenue so it aligns with the main park entry plaza (partner with Metro Transit)

Processes - Franklin Steele Square

Initial Design Guidance and Ideation by Design Team	→ Design Week Products	→ Design Week Feedback	→ Final Design Product
Provide opportunities for partnering with local food/gardening and neighborhood organizations	→ Community garden	→ OK	→ Community garden
Create pleasant atmosphere for walking	→ New trails and circulation in park	→ OK	→ New trails and circulation in park
Provide shade	→ Increased tree canopy	→ OK	→ Increased tree canopy
Create comfortable waiting space at bus stop	→ Move bus stop north along Portland	→ OK	→ Move bus stop north along Portland Ave
Create identifiable entry into park	→ Plaza aligned to intersections and crosswalks	→ OK	→ Plaza aligned to intersections and crosswalks
Expand basketball to full court and move closer to Portland Ave	→ Full court	→ Keep basketball visible to street	→ Full court along Portland Ave
Continue to offer an expansive play experience	→ Play area kept in similar location	→ OK	→ Play area moved closer to center of park
Continue to offer a water play feature	→ Splash pad in same location	→ OK	→ Splash pad in same location
Continue to offer a covered pavilion and restrooms	→ Pavilion in same location	→ OK	→ Pavilion in same location
Extend park use at night	→ Increased lighting levels with light feature facing interstate on sound wall	→ No soundwall, only retaining wall	→ Increased lighting levels with light feature facing interstate above retaining wall
Introduce flexible seating in plazas	→ Movable chairs and tables	→ OK	→ Movable chairs and tables
Host cultural events	→ Partner with area organizations	→ OK	→ Partner with area organizations
Explore ways to increase park size	→ Landswap between Madison Apartments on the north to the space between freeway and park	→ Madison Apartments not interested	→ Utilize unused parcel north of park and build East 15th Street Park
Increase safety in recesses of park	→ Swap land to build residential units between freeway and park	→ Madison Apartments not interested, increase occupation of this area	→ Woonerf drive and trail with limited parking
Mitigate noise and pollution from freeway	→ Swap land to build residential units between freeway and park	→ Increase occupation of area and provide access by police, peds and cyclists	→ Woonerf drive and trail with native plantings
Provide recreation center programming from a “storefront” park community room, further activating the park, increasing safety and use	→ Recreation center built into development	→ Madison Apartments not interested	→ Explore future opportunities to develop land between freeway and park for recreation center

Cost Estimate - Franklin Steele Square

Project	Quantity	Units	Total Project Cost (2017)	Implementation	Prioritization Category
Park Pavilion and Restrooms			\$ 471,200	Stand Alone	Planned
Park Pavilion	1200	sf	\$ 223,200		
Restroom Building	400	sf	\$ 248,000		
Play Area and Splash Pad			\$ 1,846,011	Package 1	Planned
Splash Pad	1	each	\$ 1,186,722		
Combo Playlot	1	each	\$ 659,290		
Basketball Court			\$ 26,372	Stand Alone	Planned
Full Court	1	each	\$ 26,372		
Community Garden			\$ 92,301	Stand Alone	Planned
Garden	1	each	\$ 92,301		
Native Plantings			\$ 15,500	Stand Alone	Planned
Native Planting	0.5	ac	\$ 15,500		
Great Lawn and Balance of Park Land			\$ 556,535	Package 1	Planned
Sod	30000	sf	\$ 22,320		
Overstory Trees	30	each	\$ 23,250		
Picnic Table	10	each	\$ 49,709		
Outdoor Light	15	each	\$ 111,856		
Grill	3	each	\$ 4,845		
Sign	2	each	\$ 22,373		
Drinking Fountain	1	each	\$ 13,671		
Bike Rack	10	each	\$ 4,650		
Benches	20	each	\$ 24,862		
Concrete Paving and Paths	18000	sf	\$ 279,000		
Modify Entry Plaza			\$ 260,400	Stand Alone	Planned
Entry Plaza	1	each	\$ 260,400		
Woonerf Path and Parking			\$ 176,700	Package 1	Planned
Curb	1250	lf	\$ 23,250		
Woonerf Asphalt Paving	11000	sf	\$ 153,450		

\$ 2,973,819

Annual Operations Estimate - Franklin Steele Square

Asset Type	Asset Name	Current Quantity	Units	Annual Operating Cost Per Unit	Park Plan Quantity	Park Plan Operating Costs	Change in Asset Quantity
Buildings	Picnic Shelter	112	capacity	\$ 30	112	\$ 3,372	0
Play	Playground	1	each	\$ 7,500	2	\$ 15,000	1
Courts	Half-Court Basketball	1	each	\$ 1,000	0	\$ -	(1)
Courts	Basketball	-	each	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500	1
Aquatics	Splash Pad	1	each	\$ 35,000	1	\$ 35,000	0
Circulation & Gathering	Plaza	-	sf	\$ 1.00	11,000	\$ 11,000	11,000
Circulation & Gathering	Pedestrian Path	65,304	sf	\$ 0.05	79,304	\$ 3,965	14,000
Furnishings	Bike Rack	10	loop	\$ 20	50	\$ 1,000	40
Furnishings	Lighting	5	each	\$ 200	15	\$ 3,000	10
Furnishings	Wayfinding/Signage	-	ls	\$ 2,000	1	\$ 2,000	1
Furnishings	Drinking Fountain	-	each	\$ 1,500	1	\$ 1,500	1
Furnishings	Seating/Picnic Furnishings	20	each	\$ 25	33	\$ 825	13
Landscape	Naturalized Landscape	-	ac	\$ 1,500	0.50	\$ 750	1
Landscape	Trees	50	each	\$ 25	30	\$ 750	(20)
Landscape	Lawn - Unirrigated	0.8	ac	\$ 4,500	0.69	\$ 3,099	(0)
Landscape	Urban Agriculture Area	-	ac	\$ 15,000	0.17	\$ 2,479	0.17